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CHILDREN AND THE SEX TRADE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

A STUDY ON THE COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF
CHILDREN IN METRO MANILA

CHILDREN AND THE SEX TRADE IN THE **DIGITAL AGE**

**A Study on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of
Children in Metro Manila**

COMMISSIONED BY
Plan International

RESEARCH BY
**Psychosocial Support and Children's
Rights Resource Center**

PUBLISHED BY
The Girls Advocacy Alliance



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study was made possible through the contributions and guidance of many individuals.

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The following individuals and institutions also extended their support for this research:

- Salvacion Cion of the Quezon City Social Services and Development Department
- Herbert Carpio and Helen Quinto of ChildHope Asia Philippines
- Ana Aban of Tahanan Sta. Lucia
- Maria Trinidad Maneja of ECPAT Philippines
- Amihan Bajade and Nancyline Agaid of Stairway Foundation Inc.
- Susan Mantua of the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines
- Rodelio Ablir and Melani D. Margallo of Zone One Tondo Inc.

Special thanks to Aude Diepenhorst, Child Protection Specialist of Plan International Netherlands, as well as our colleagues at the Plan International Headquarters, namely, Jacqui Gallinetti, Director of Research and Knowledge Management and Mariama Deschamps, Head of Child Protection Policy.

Photography for this publication was supplied courtesy of Dennese Victoria and Geric Cruz. We thank the ECPAT Youth and Child Advocates and Plan International Youth for their participation in the creative visualization of these photos.

The Communications and Advocacy Unit of Plan International Philippines lead the publication process of this research. Paulene Santos, Campaigns and Advocacy Specialist, served as the editor.

Lastly and most importantly, the children and adolescent respondents deserve utmost thanks for their willingness and openness to participate in this study.

FOREWORD

Despite increasing recognition of the scale of commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) in the Philippines, data remains hard to come by, and cultural taboos prevent serious and wide discussion leading to policy change. As the nature of the sex industry shifts from being primarily establishment-based to a virtual on-line network, this leaves children in countries like the Philippines, one of the world leaders in social media use, increasingly vulnerable to exploitation and abuse.

Plan International commissioned the study, Children and the Sex Trade in the Digital Age: A Study on the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Metro Manila, to investigate the sex industry in Metro Manila. We recognize, however, that it only skims the surface of the entire CSEC situation in the Philippines. Through the conduct of document reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions with various individuals involved in the sex industry, and validation of the findings with experts and a range of stakeholders, the research sheds some light on the dark and often overlooked world of CSEC. We hope that more research will move all sectors of the country towards a greater understanding of its numerous complex issues and a greater resolve towards confronting those issues.

Much still has to be learned in order for us to collectively and effectively fight CSEC. At Plan International, we strive for a just world that advances children’s rights and gender equality everywhere we work, so we wholeheartedly commit to taking an active role in eradicating CSEC in the Philippines and realizing a future where no child’s life is put up for sale.

Join us in this fight.

Dennis O’ Brien
Country Director
Plan International Philippines

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ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome	NGO	Non-Government Organization
ALS	Alternative Learning System	NSO	National Statistics Office
AMLAC	Anti-Money Laundering Council of the Philippines	NTC	National Telecommunication Commission
BI	Bureau of Immigration	NYC	National Youth Commission
CFIS	Child-Friendly Investigation Studios	OCC	Office of the Cybercrime
CFO	Commission on Filipinos Overseas	OFW	Overseas Filipino Worker
CPCP	Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection	OSCY	Out-of-School Children and Youth
CPU	Child Protection Unit	OSY	Out-of-School Youth
CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children	OSEC	Online Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSPC	Committee for the Special Protection of Children	PATD	Philippine Anti-Trafficking in Persons Database
CWC	Council for the Welfare of Children	PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
DepEd	Department of Education	PCTC	Philippine Center for Transnational Crime
DFA	Department of Foreign Affairs	PD	Presidential Decree
DILG	Department of the Interior and Local Government	PES	Parent Effectiveness Service
DOJ	Department of Justice	PNP	Philippine National Police
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment	PNP-ACG	Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development	POEA	Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
EAPRO	East Asia and the Pacific Regional Office	PPAC	Philippine Plan of Action for Children
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution and Trafficking	PSTCRRC	Psychosocial Support and Children's Rights Resource Center
EO	Executive Order	QCSSDD	Quezon City Social Services and Development Department
ERPAT	Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Training	RA	Republic Act
FPOP	Family Planning Organization of the Philippines	SAFE	Sexual Abuse Free Environment
GM	Gentleman or Generous Man	Seg	inversion for the word 'guest', a customer
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus	STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
IACACP	Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography	SFCR	State of the Filipino Children Report
IACAT	Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking	SMS	Short Messaging Service
ICT	Information and Communication Technology	TIP	Trafficking in Persons
ILO	International Labor Organization	TVPA	Trafficking Victims Protection Act
IRA	Internal Revenue Allotment	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
JJWC	Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council	UP CIDS	University of the Philippines Centre for Integrative and Development Studies
LCPC	Local Council for the Protection of Children	UP CIDS PST	University of the Philippines Centre for Integrative and Development Studies' Psychosocial Trauma Program
LGU	Local Government Unit	US DOS	United States Department of State
LTO	Land Transportation Office	WCPU	Women and Child Protection Unit
MC	Memorandum Circular		
NBI	National Bureau of Investigation		

The photos of children that were used in this publication do not depict the actual respondents who participated in the study. The subjects featured in the photos are youth advocates who want to raise awareness for various advocacies on child rights.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Available data and information on commercial sexual exploitation of children are scarce and outdated. This research was commissioned because of the need for more reliable and updated data and information that can be used to provide a comprehensive and clear understanding of the nature, forms, and extent of the problem of CSEC in the Philippines.

The multi-method approach of this research involved in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with 32 children and adolescents involved in the sex industry in selected areas of Metro Manila, as well as document reviews and key informant interviews with a contact-facilitator, a pimp, and service providers. Purposive sampling was used in the study.

There were 22 females and 10 males included in the study, with a mean age of 18. The boys were generally younger than the girls. Less than half of the respondents finished high school. Prior to entering the sex industry, half of them had other sources of income - mostly from working in the service industry. Family living conditions were generally poor, with large household sizes.

The children and adolescents in this study were between the ages 12 to 18 years when they were first initiated into the sex industry. The length of their involvement ranged from 2 months to 5 years, yielding a mean of 2 years.

Presented below are the study's key findings related to the nature of CSEC:

The CSEC landscape has greatly changed with the advancement of technology. The facilitation of CSEC has become easier and its containment or control more complex as transactions are facilitated through the internet with the use of smartphones and computers. Internet-mediated transactions occurred in pornography websites and social media sites, blurring the formerly defined geographic boundaries of the industry.

Technology has also provided new pathways

and more options for sex trade involvement with those involved in the industry having the option to either transact face-to-face (personal) or online (internet-mediated); go freelance or through a pimp; be a sex provider or have other concurrent roles (attacker, group administrator, pimp).

Children and adolescents involved in the internet-mediated sex industry are older. More often, they are freelancers and generally charge higher fees compared to their non-internet-mediated counterparts. Reasons for remaining in the sex industry are more varied in the internet-mediated group as well. These reasons include family, interpersonal, social, educational, and personal needs.

There is an evolving language being used in CSEC which reflects the evolution and dynamism of the industry. The use of generally common terms appears to lessen the stigma involved in the sex industry and allows for CSEC to be more mainstream.

Poverty is still the main reason for entry into the sex industry. Initiation is largely influenced by peers and the desire to support the needs of one's family. However, other reasons for getting involved in the sex industry have also surfaced. These include the desire to have disposable income for material belongings such as new clothes and gadgets, and the desire to satisfy one's curiosity or "just to try it". Although there are children and adolescents who are forced into CSEC, most of the ones involved in the study decided on their own to enter the sex industry.

On the other hand, the main reasons for voluntary exit from the sex industry include health-related concerns and no longer needing extra cash. Research participants expressed that having economic and educational opportunities would conditions for leaving the sex industry. Majority of the respondents also want to go back to school or have an alternative source of income that does not involve paid sex.

There were self-protection and mutual protection strategies among children and adolescents as well as pimps within the sex industry. For example, access needed to be granted in order for a potential client to enter a closed Facebook group. A pimp might also trace the identity of a potential client before mediating a transaction.

Common issues and concerns related to being involved in the sex industry were abuse and exploitation in different forms, as well as, health-related concerns including pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and mental health.

National legislation, policies, local mechanisms, and structures to address the problem of CSEC are in place. However, there is no child protection system in place. The effective implementation of programs and activities to address the problem is hampered by budgetary constraints, lack of awareness that mechanisms and structures exist, and the lack of political will. Additionally, civil society organizations play a major role in policy advocacy, training and capacity building, public advocacy, as well, as research.

It is evident that the best way to curb the problem is still prevention. At the national level, regulation of information and communication technology must be enforced. Mechanisms for regulating access to certain websites and social media, particularly in schools, are available but not known to the public, especially to parents. There is a need for wider information campaigns that will increase the technological proficiency, including the responsible use of technology, among parents, teachers, and service providers.

At the core of child protection is the efficient and effective delivery of the most basic services of fundamental systems including family, social, political, educational, economic, law enforcement, church, cultural, and technological.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

There is a general consensus in the research community that available data and information on the commercial sexual exploitation of children need to be updated. For instance, there is reason to believe that the often-quoted estimate of 60,000 to 100,000 children in prostitution lacks the support of solid research to generate reliable statistics.

It is essential that the information about the lives and experiences of children in the sex industry, the analyses of the information, and the recommendations regarding how best to address the problem of CSEC involve the children

themselves. Relevant, child-centered, and up-to-date evidence on CSEC is necessary in lobbying and advocating for the protection of children to the government so that at the very least, child protection mechanisms at all levels are functional. It is in this context that Plan International Philippines has commissioned this research.

The research focuses on selected areas in Metro Manila as better understanding of the state of CSEC there could contribute to long-term multi-stakeholder solutions and the development of concrete programs to fight CSEC with special interest in the context of tourism and trafficking.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The research aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in selected areas of Metro Manila.

The four major areas of investigation and assessment were:

- 1) the current state of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking for sexual purposes in Metro Manila;
- 2) the current government policies, practices, and local child protection mechanisms in place to fight child sexual exploitation and abuse;

- 3) the role of public and private stakeholders in the prevention of CSEC with a special focus on multi-stakeholder cooperation; and
- 4) and the mechanisms for public participation.

The overall goal of the research was to generate evidence-based data and information for advocacy purposes that will call for the Philippine government to be accountable for the establishment of policies and procedures against CSEC; to design protection mechanisms and structures at all levels; and to ensure that these are implemented and fully functional.

RESEARCH AREAS

The following research questions were used for each area of investigation:

1. Nature, forms, and extent of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking of children and adolescents in Metro Manila

- a. What is the socio-economic profile of victims, their families, and communities?
- b. Which parts of the country are children in prostitution originally from and what are the push factors contributing to this?



Dennese Victoria/ Plan International

- c. What are their ages? At what age did they start to be involved in the sex industry?
 - d. How did they get into this activity? Who initiated their going into this activity? What gender factors come into play in the commercial exploitation and trafficking of children?
 - e. How is information and communication technology especially social media influencing CSEC?
 - f. What is the picture of the future for CSEC? What do those involved hope for? What options do they see?
2. Local child protection mechanisms in place to raise awareness and provide services to victims/survivors of both CSEC and trafficking
 - a. What national and local policies and legislation exist?
 - b. Which local child protection mechanisms are in place and how are they functioning?
 - c. Which (multi) stakeholders are part of the
- local child protection mechanisms?
 - d. Which local government child protection services are available for CSEC?
 - e. What local government programs and services are available for CSEC?
 - f. Is there (potential for) a multi stakeholder cooperation between the government, civil society, and the private sector?
3. The role of civil society organizations (CSOs) and the public in the protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation
 - a. Which CSOs are involved in the protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation? What are their programs/ services?
 - b. What is needed to strengthen the capacity of civil society to actively engage in the issue of CSEC?
 - c. What are the gaps that civil society can help address?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

FILIPINO CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

In the Philippines, a child refers to a person under the age of 18 years old. In 2010, the median age of the country's population was 23.4 years old, which means that half of the household population was younger than 23.4 years. Forty percent (40%) of the population were below 18 years old. On the other hand, the National Youth Commission, which was created by the Youth in Nation Building Act, defines the youth as the population aged 15 to 30 years old.

According to the State of the Filipino Children Report (CWC 2015), about one-third (35.5%) of all children below 18 years old were considered living in poverty in 2009. Living in poverty means that the children do not meet minimum food requirements and other basic needs such as clothing, shelter, water and sanitary toilets, medicine and medical attention when needed, as well as, basic education. In fact, as of 2014, the completion rate at the elementary level was less than seventy nine percent (78.6%). The 2010 Youth Study also reports that twenty six percent (26%) of those aged 15 to 17 years old and thirty nine to forty eight percent (39-48%) of those 18 to 24 years old, drop out of school due to financial hardships.

The conditions of poverty and the lack of basic education contribute to children's vulnerability to hazardous conditions, and situations of abuse and exploitation. (National Youth Commission, 2010). Some of the other relevant highlights of the 2010 Youth Study that included a sample of 5,850 youth between the ages fifteen and thirty are the following:

1. Education

- a. Twenty-six percent (26%) of adolescents or those belonging to the 15 to 17-year-old age bracket had to drop out of school due to financial hardships

- b. Seven to eight percent (7-8%) of the youth dropped out of school after becoming drug dependent
- c. Sixty percent (60%) of those who had dropped out and belonging to the age group of 15 to 17 years old claimed that they could have been more active in school if they could speak better English

2. Employment

- a. Those in the age bracket of 18 to 24 old were the most keen to seek employment overseas (59.6%) followed by those in the age bracket of 15 to 17 years old, and then by young adults aged 25 to 30 years old (58.6%) because of higher pay
- b. Majority of the youth (73.9%) felt that the overseas Filipino worker (OFW) phenomenon was not healthy for family stability despite its economic advantage
- c. Eighteen to twenty-one percent (18-21%) of the youth said that they were on the streets most of the time as it is their home and source of livelihood
- d. More than half (54.4%) of the respondents agreed that the youth have entrepreneurial skills but they lacked collateral for loans to start a business

3. Health and Wellness

- a. Majority (82%) said that health information campaigns and user-friendly health services and facilities for adolescents and youth should be available to reduce risky behaviour among them
- b. Thirty-eight percent (38%) of those aged 15 to 17 years old said they believe that early sexual encounter is acceptable in today's society
- c. There was a high incidence of early sexual encounters involving younger age groups

or those belonging to the age bracket of 15 to 17 years old

- d. In-school youth (49.8%), working youth (43.4%), and out-of-school youth (41.8%) agreed that there is a high incidence of early sexual encounters
- e. About half (51.4%) of the respondents agreed while at least thirty percent (30.2%) strongly agreed that health services should be made available to the youth to protect them from Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
- f. Most families, particularly low-income groups, did not get proper nutrition and the most affected were children and youth; their health and academic performance were affected, resulting in low grades and eventually disinterest to finish studies; the problem with nutrition was rooted in poor income, high cost of goods, and large family sizes
- g. Many of the youth claimed that what made them happy were family, friends, and their girlfriend/boyfriend, the order of which changed according to circumstances; they were happy to have friends with whom they could open up about their joys and difficulties
- h. Seventy-three percent (73%) believed that the youth abuse substances to escape from their desperate situation

4. Family Income and Expenditures

- a. A great majority (83.3%) of the youth wanted to extend financial assistance to their families; expectedly, the most contributors were the working youth (85.1%)
- b. Most of the youth (91.2%) were interested to find a job that can support family needs
- c. Half of the youth (51.1%) received allowance; more youth in the younger age group or those belonging to age bracket of 15 to 17 years old received allowance (66.9%), followed by those belonging to age bracket of 18 to 24 years old (48.1%)
- d. There was a strong interest in achieving economic independence; the method they preferred most was "saving money and resources" (85.7%) followed by "identifying

and improving their talents that can make them economically independent" (85.6%) and "gaining new knowledge and updates on economic trends"

5. Leisure

- a. Almost two-thirds (64.6%) of the respondents across age brackets were in social media networking in whatever form
- b. Internet was attractive to the youth for computer gaming (48.7%); playing computer games (offline or online) were usually done by the youth aged 15 to 17 years old (51.8%) followed by those 18 to 24 years old (49.8%)
- c. Sixty-six percent (66%) or two-thirds of those in the 15 to 17-year-old age group and fifty two percent (52%) of those in the 25 to 30-year-old age group who dropped out of school used social networking sites
- d. More than three-fourths (77.9%) agreed that the internet is hazardous to one's health and addictive
- e. More than half (58.7%) of the respondents indicated that they share stories and do social drinking with friends; they also engaged in ball games and sports competitions (59%); nearly half (49.6%) of the respondents across age brackets joined groups, music bands, and hip-hop dancing
- f. Children aged 15 to 17 years old had the most number of those who indulged in ballgames (63.1%), followed by youth aged 18 to 24 years old

6. Cross-cutting Findings

- a. Perception of Government Service Delivery
 - Majority of the youth felt that agencies that provided services for the youth need to improve their performance to meet the youth's expectations (84%)
- b. Concerns of Specific Youth Groups
 - Twelve to fifteen percent (12-15%) of all ages claimed to have experienced abuse or exploitation
 - Twelve to fourteen percent (12-14%) of all ages claimed that their lives were disrupted because of armed

- conflicts
- c. Relationships
 - Three-fourths (75%) of those 15 to 17 years old were looking for a healthy boy-girl relationship; the percentage rose to 85% for those aged 25 to 30 years old
 - Nineteen percent (19%) of 15 to 17-year-old children and twenty-seven percent (27%) of 25 to 30-year-

- old young people thought that same-sex relationships were accepted in society
- Fifty-seven to sixty-two percent (57-62%) across age groups thought that lesbian, homosexual, and transgender individuals are now accepted in Philippine society

COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN THE PHILIPPINES

Commercial sexual exploitation of children is defined as “the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration” (Article 2b, Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution, and Child Pornography). The three primary and interrelated forms of CSEC are exploitation of children for prostitution, pornography, and trafficking for sexual purposes. Other forms of CSEC include sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism which generally falls into the category of prostitution, child marriages, and forced marriages (Subgroup against the Sexual Exploitation of Children 2005:56-60). The last two are the least visible manifestations of CSEC in the Philippines whether at the level of discourse, advocacy, or intervention.

Prostitution, which flourished in the seventies, remains a serious problem in the Philippines as there is a high incidence of children being exploited, particularly in tourism-related industries (ECPAT International 2011:8-9, Zafft and Tidball 2010, The Protection Project 2007:134). A 2009 survey of CSEC by the National Statistics Office and the International Labour Organization was piloted in Cebu City. It provided a reliable indication of the extent of CSEC as Cebu City serves as one of the primary locations for child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism in the Philippines (Campo 2013, ECPAT International 2011:8, The Protection Project 2007). Using the sample household referral approach, the pilot

survey estimated that about two percent (1.8%) of the total 5 to 17 year-old population were involved in CSEC, with a sex ratio of 63 males for every 100 females. This translated to an estimate of 4,364 identified children out of a total of 242,471 children aged 5 to 17 years old in Cebu City .

Based on the survey, children identified to be involved in CSEC come from large families. Almost thirty percent belonged to a family of five siblings, and almost half (47.4%) were first-born. All had attended school at some point and were able to read and write. Almost half (46.3%) were high school undergraduates and none had graduated from college. About nine in every ten children involved in CSEC cases (88.7%) were not currently attending school either because they could not afford their schooling needs or they were not willing to attend school. One-third had a job prior to engagement in CSEC, working in an establishment, farm, or household (domestic work).

About two in every ten children (18.9%) reported that they started their CSEC activity between the ages 18 and 25 years old, while others (15.9%) reported to have started between the ages of 15 and 17 years old. Girls usually started earlier than boys. However, it should be noted that a more than half of the respondents (56.1%) did not report the age when they started their involvement in CSEC. Additionally, the survey reported that poverty might have affected the child’s decision

to be involved in CSEC. The profile of forty children in the sex industry who participated in an ethnographic study conducted by the University of the Philippines Centre for Integrative and Development Studies’ Psychosocial Trauma Program (Protacio-Marcelino et al. 2000) in the four cities of Angeles, Quezon, Cebu and Davao, mirrors that of the profile of those surveyed by NSO and ILO in Cebu City.

Children in prostitution are traditionally classified according to the location where the client interacts with them; they are either establishment-based or freelancers (Natividad et al. 2011). Given that the minimum age for employment is 15 years old, children in entertainment establishments such as bars, nightclubs, karaoke joints, massage parlors, and other such places which serve alcoholic drinks falsify their age in order to be employed. Although sexual services are not supposed to be available in these establishments, such can be arranged to be rendered within (e.g. in private rooms) or outside the establishments with the managers or with the child employed. Children who are “freelancers” cruise known places for prostitution such as shopping malls, movie houses, public parks, street corners, and even under bridges .

It is noted in an ethnographic study of children in the sex industry (Protacio-Marcelino et al. 2000) that these classifications, as a tool for analysis, fail to capture the organizational culture of the sex industry, where children and adults are bound by rules and structures that are at the same time being negotiated continually by its members. The ethnographic study further notes that the classifications are not mutually exclusive. For example, those working in establishments also freelance online or offline at the same time. Likewise, being a freelancer does not entail more mobility and autonomy such as when a prostituted

street child is under a controlling pimp or a syndicate and the sexual images of the child may be sold online to a network of paedophiles.

Children exploited for prostitution are often found in sex tourism-related industries driven in part by a lucrative tourism industry amidst widespread poverty and a convoluted trafficking network. Child sex tourism grew exponentially in the eighties (Zafft and Tidball 2010), with the Philippines widely marketed by travel agencies as a haven for child prostitution in pornographic magazines and internet advertisements targeting sex tourists (Trinidad 2005). The primary locations that were identified for child sexual exploitation in travel and tourism were Sabang in Puerto Galera, Cebu City, Boracay, Angeles City, and Pasay City (The Protection Project 2007). However, this form of exploitation was not organized or facilitated solely by travel agencies. Alarmingly, there were tourists who developed close and long-term relationships with families and communities as a way of grooming children, and even created foundations and philanthropic organizations for street children with the intent to exploit them for prostitution and pornography (Trinidad 2005).

After 2000, there was a decrease in reported cases involving child sexual exploitation in tourism; thus, questions were raised as to whether this could be an indication that the problem had abated. While there were indeed fewer documented cases, this was largely because of the attention and priority given to combating the issue of trafficking in persons (The Protection Project 2007). However, child sexual exploitation in tourism remained to be a considerable problem as the industry thrived in areas where poverty, prostitution, and sexism persisted; so much so that then US Ambassador to Philippines, Harry Thomas, was quoted at a judicial conference on human trafficking as

¹The 2009 pilot survey on CSEC of the National Statistics Office and International Labor Organization defined CSEC as “sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or in kind to the child or a third person or persons. The child is treated as a sexual object and as a commercial object,” (1996 World Congress against CSEC). It utilized two approaches, namely the list and enumerate households approach (Approach 1) and the sample household referral approach (Approach 2). Children were classified as “identified CSEC” and included in the list if they: a) admitted that they were CSEC; or b) denied CSEC activity but were tagged as CSEC by the interviewer based on the answers in the probing questions in the individual CSEC questionnaire.

²Computation made by the PSTCRR research team is based on NSO’s population projection of children 5-17 years old in Cebu City as cited in the Final Report of the 2009 Pilot Survey on CSEC, p. 18.

³As reported by A.B. See in the Philippine Daily Inquirer on 10 December 2015.

saying that “maybe up to forty percent of foreign men come here for sexual tourism and that is unacceptable” (Tubeza 2011).

Some studies and reports note that there is a link between sexual exploitation for prostitution or tourism, and child trafficking, with these terms often being used synonymously and interchangeably. This is aided no less by the definition of trafficking under international and domestic laws, which theorize that any person under the age of eighteen involved in prostitution or other illegal activities is trafficked, regardless of consent or the tactics used in recruitment (Campo 2013, Ricardo 2007). While this paradigm of child prostitution finds resonance in reports on child trafficking and prostitution in other countries, Montgomery (2011) argues that the connection between these two phenomena can be sometimes tenuous on the grounds that it does not allow for any possibility that children can make an informed decision about their own migration or prostitution even when they know the dangers, and that there are some children who do not relate to the stereotypical representations of themselves as victims of trafficking or someone forced into prostitution.

Although many of the children who were exploited in prostitution were also victims of trafficking, there were children in prostitution who were not trafficked (The Protection Project 2007:136). Unfortunately, available figures on prostituted children who were also trafficked are limited to those served by government and non-government organizations. The Department of Social Welfare

and Development was able to serve a total of 806 cases of child trafficking within the period of 2006 to 2007, out of which 264 were victims of prostitution, twenty were victims of pornography, and seventeen were victims of cyber pornography (Save the Children 2011). On the other hand, based on the evaluation report of an anti-trafficking initiative of the Visayan Forum Foundation, Inc. which was implemented between the years 2005 to 2008, its direct assistance was able to reach a total of 9,690 persons , of which 2,793 were children (Macapagal et al. 2009:36-37).

This data suggests that either the extent and magnitude of child trafficking for sexual purposes are significantly lower than the claims made by local or international groups, or that a huge number of children are not being reached or are not benefitting from services for victims of trafficking or prostitution. From the lens of international trafficking, the Philippines is known as a source country, and to a much lesser extent a destination and transit country for children who are trafficked for sexual purposes (US DOS 2015, ECPAT 2011). Known destination countries for sex trafficking of Filipino women (and possibly children) are Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Hong Kong, Japan, and the Middle East (ECPAT 2011:9).

However, a UNICEF commissioned country assessment of trafficking in persons in the Philippines indicated that international or cross-border trafficking of children is less of a problem compared to internal trafficking (Miller 2008 as



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cited in UNICEF EAPRO 2009: 31). Children from impoverished families, rural areas, and disaster-affected communities fall prey to a network of sex traffickers and are transported to urban areas of Cebu City, Manila and Quezon City as well as to known tourist destinations such as Boracay, Olongapo, Puerto Galera, and Surigao where there are thriving sex tourism industries (US DOS 2015:279, ECPAT 2011:9, UNICEF EAPRO 2009:31). Consistent with the gender profile of children in prostitution, girls outnumber boys who are trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation. However, there are increasing reports of boys trafficked particularly for pornography (US DOL 2014:2).

With the increased usage of new communication technologies, a third location in the form of the internet has surfaced which has created a new category called “technology-mediated sex work” (Natividad et al. 2011). The internet and mobile phones are used as a venue to engage in actual

sexual behaviour (e.g. phone sex, cybersex, pornography) and as a channel to advertise and solicit sexual services. Filipino children face potential risks in cyberspace everyday, with the introduction of social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, and Tumblr, as well as quicker global connectivity through the use of Viber, Skype, and Facetime to name a few. Actors in the sex industry use various channels for interaction and transaction. These include chat rooms, instant messaging applications, online forums, emails, personal and group websites, and social networking sites (Natividad et al. 2011, Trinidad 2005).

Up until the mid-2000, not much attention was paid to the problem of child pornography in the Philippines as indicated by the low number of cases reported and assisted by service providers. For instance, between the years 2000 and 2003, only 33 cases of child pornography were reported to the Department of Social Welfare

⁶The First World Congress on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children defined child sex tourism as, “the sexual exploitation of children by a person or persons who travel from their home district, home geographical region, or home country and have sexual contact with children. Child sex tourists can be domestic travellers or they can be international tourists. Child sex tourism often involves the use of accommodation, transportation, and other tourism-related services which facilitate contact with children and which enable him or her to be anonymous to the surrounding population and environment.”

⁷Other locations mentioned in the literature where child prostitution is prevalent are Las Pinas, Manila, Quezon City, Ilocos Norte, San Pablo City, Tagbilaran, and Davao City (Zafft and Tidball 2010, Protacio-Marcelino 2000).

⁸Republic Act No. 10364 or the “Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2012” defines trafficking as “the recruitment, obtaining, hiring, providing, offering, transportation, transfer, maintaining, harbouring, or receipt of persons with or without the victim’s consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat, or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation which includes at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring, adoption or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation or when the adoption is induced by any form of consideration for exploitative purposes shall also be considered as ‘trafficking in persons’ even if it does not involve any of the means set forth in the preceding paragraph. “

Republic Act No. 9775 or the “Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009” defines child pornography as referring “to any representation, whether visual, audio, or written combination thereof, by electronic, mechanical, digital, optical, magnetic or any other means, of child engaged or involved in real or simulated explicit sexual activities.”

and Development compared to 902 cases of child prostitution (Trinidad 2005:49). This is not to say that child pornography is not a serious issue. Arrests of foreign paedophiles caught with pornographic photos of children they abused even made the headlines in the late eighties (Trinidad 2005:53-55). However, child pornography as a social problem was eclipsed by related issues of paedophilia, sex tourism, child prostitution, and later on, child trafficking which were, at different periods, on the priority agenda of international development agencies.

It was not until the mid-2000's that a comprehensive study on the issue was done and published by UP CIDS PST and UNICEF Manila (Trinidad 2005) which helped raise the problem as a priority social and policy issue (Delfin 2008). However, in more recent years, disturbing reports of a new form of commercial sexual exploitation of children have found their way to the international media. Referred to in various terms such as cybersex, webcam child sex tourism, and webcam child prostitution, the new trend refers to the "commercial online live streaming of child sexual abuse that enables active abuse of children from a great distance" (Kuhlmann and Auren 2015:6).

What makes this a new phenomenon is the shift of child sexual exploitation from offline to online; from brothels, streets, and other public places to hidden locations of the home and sex dens where children are made to perform live sexual acts in front of clients watching through webcams. This makes child abuse materials more accessible to a more diverse host of offenders around the world. The anonymity that online sexual exploitation of children provides offenders makes it more difficult to track and monitor them as well. Even more disturbing are reports that victims of OSEC tend to be younger than victims of other forms of commercial sexual exploitation, with victims as young as 1-year old children (Kuhlmann and Auren 2015:36).

Live streaming of child sexual exploitation was not discovered until 2011 (Terre des Hommes 2013:5) with the successful prosecution of a case involving two Swedish nationals and three Filipinos (BBC 2011). However, the issue had been mentioned in the media as early as 2005, with a report surfacing

about Boracay becoming a cybersex haven (The Protection Project 2007:153). In 2008, there was also an award-winning investigative report on child pornography with a lead story featuring the rescue of a 16-year-old girl from a suspected cybersex den in Bacoar, Cavite (Delfin 2008). This new form of CSEC is now believed to be taking place on a large scale in the country as indicated by a monthly average of 1,005 reports of child exploitation received by the Cybercrime Division of the National Bureau of Investigation for the year 2014 (Philippine Country Report 2015:5).

With the proliferation of OSEC reports in recent years, the Philippines has been reported as a global "source" for the child cybersex industry (Agence France-Presse 2014) and the country has become the "epicentre" of these practices (Kuhlmann and Auren 2015:6). Filipino children and youth are among those in Asia with high access to and usage of the internet. This has raised concerns and calls to build online protection and safety against a range of threats Filipino children face from online harassment, cyber bullying, online sexual solicitation, and exposure to sexually explicit content and pornography to sexting and cybersex targeted to both boys and girls (UNICEF Philippines 2015).

Given that children in prostitution have been found to utilize various strategies in looking for prospective clients and in negotiating with them (Protacio-Marcelino et al. 2000:107-110), it would not be unthinkable for children to use electronic devices and digital communications, which have become the dominant medium for interpersonal interaction, and maximize the opportunities made possible by the internet and the wide spectrum of services and applications available online. However, most of the information available on online protection of Filipino children positions children as targets of online predators and victims of exploitation without acknowledging that children may have a different lens which could affect the design of interventions. Programs must also be anchored on a comprehensive understanding of children's internet sexuality .

CHILD PROTECTION MECHANISMS IN THE PHILIPPINES

Child protection encompasses all processes, policies, programs, interventions, and measures that aim to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, and abuse against children, with the ultimate goal of ensuring the overall development of children to their fullest potential. A review of national legislation is presented in this section. At the heart of all policies on the protection of children is the provision in the Philippine constitution which states, "The State shall defend the right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development."

In 1974, the Child and Youth Welfare Code, also known as Presidential Decree 603 (PD 603) was promulgated. It articulated the responsibilities of the State and its institutions towards children and youth, together with the rights and privileges of children. It also served as the basis for the creation of the Council for the Welfare of Children (CWC) which is the body responsible for the formulation, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation of plans, programmes, projects, and services for children. The CWC is currently an attached agency of the DSWD whose Secretary serves as the chairperson of the council, alternating with the Secretaries of Health, Education and Interior and Local Government. The members of this council are representatives from different government agencies, three private individuals concerned with the welfare of children and youth, as well as, a youth representative .



The Philippines is one of the countries in Asia with extensive legislation on the protection of children. The table below presents the timeline of legal provisions for the protection of children and youth.

As shared in the Regional Conference on Online Child Protection held in Malaysia on 24-25 March 2015, "The Filipino children are amongst the children in Asia with high access to the internet. According to Cartoon Network's New Generations 2012 study, 82% of Filipino children access the Internet at least once a week, while 37% get online on a daily basis. More than half of Filipino children surveyed were found to live in internet-enabled homes. Further, mobile phone ownership among kids in the Philippines has risen 71% from 38% in 2009 to 65% this year." See Philippine Country Report 2015. "Internet sexuality" (or online sexual activities) refers to sexual-related content and activities (e.g. pornography, sex education, sexual contacts) observable on the internet (e.g., websites, online chat rooms, peer-to-peer networks) (Doring 2010). Retrieved from: http://www.unafei.or.jp/english/pdf/RS_No69/No69_13VE_Yangco.pdf

Table 1. National Legal Provisions for the Protection of Children and Youth in the Philippines

Republic Act No. (Year)	Title of the Legislation
Republic Act 7610 (1992)	An Act Providing for Stronger Deterrence and Special Protection Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination, and for Other Purposes (Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation, and Discrimination Act of 1992)
Republic Act 8972 (2000)	An Act Providing for Benefits and Privileges to Solo Parents and Their Children, Appropriating Funds Therefore and for Other Purposes (Solo Parents Welfare Act of 2000)
Republic Act 8980 (2000)	An Act Promulgating a Comprehensive Policy and a National System for Early Childhood Care and Development, Providing Funds Therefore and for Other Purposes (Early Childhood Care and Development Act of 2000)
Republic Act 9231 (2003)	An Act Providing for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child, Amending for This Purpose Republic Act No. 7610 (Anti-Child Labour Act of 2003)
Republic Act 9208 (2003)	An Act to Institute Policies to Eliminate Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Establishing the Necessary Institutional Mechanisms for the Protection and Support of Trafficked Persons, Providing Penalties for Its Violations, and for Other Purposes (Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003)
Republic Act 9262 (2004)	An Act Defining Violence Against Women and Their Children, Providing for Protective Measures for Victims, Prescribing Penalties Therefore, and for Other Purposes (Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004)
Republic Act 9255 (2004)	An Act Allowing Illegitimate Children to Use the Surname of Their Father, Amending for the Purpose Article 176 of Executive Order No. 209, Otherwise Known as the Family Code of the Philippines
Republic Act 9344 (2006)	An Act Establishing a Comprehensive Juvenile Justice and Welfare System, Creating the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council Under the Department of Justice, Appropriating Funds Therefore and for Other Purposes (Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006)
Republic Act 9745 (2009)	An Act Penalizing Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, and Degrading Punishment (Anti-Torture Act of 2009)
Republic Act 9775 (2009)	An Act Defining the Crime of Child Pornography Prescribing Penalties Therefore and for Other Purposes (Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009)
Republic Act 10175 (2012)	An Act Defining Cybercrime, Providing for the Prevention, Investigation, Suppression and the Imposition of Penalties Therefore and for Other Purposes (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012)

Among the national policies and strategies that protect children and provide the framework for child welfare and development are the following:

- Child 21: The Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children
- National Plan of Action for Children
- Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP)
- ASEAN Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Trafficked Children
- Philippine Guidelines for the Protection of Trafficked Children
- Manual on Law Enforcement and Prosecution

- of Trafficking in Persons Cases
- Philippine Anti-Trafficking in Persons Database (PATD)
 - National Telecommunication Commission (NTC) Memorandum Circular No. 01-01-2014
 - Department of Education Child Protection Policy

How the above are implemented at the local level is one of the research areas of this study. Policies, programs, and interventions are also presented in the study results.



Denise Victoria/Plan International

METHODOLOGY

EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The epistemological approach of this research heeds the clamour for the conceptual autonomy of children and childhood (Brannen and O'Brien 1996, Mayall 2001; Thorne 1997 in Corsaro 1997) in which children are regarded as social actors; active in the construction of their own lives and of those around them (James and Prout 1997; James and Prout 2004). In other words, the study recognizes children as social agents which is important in taking a rights-based approach to research, as well as, working with and for children. They are treated as competent individuals with ongoing lives, needs, and desires. They experience and influence their social worlds in unique ways inasmuch as their experiences and perspectives are being shaped by it.

However, unlike the child rights approach, which has been widely accepted and used as a guiding framework in research and action for and with children, the recognition of children as social actors has just recently become explicit in working with and for children in the Philippines. UP CIDS PST's research on the world of children in the sex industry (Protacio-Marcelino et al. 1998) is considered the first study in the Philippines to articulate that children are social actors, active in the construction of their own social lives and affecting those around them. Viewed in this frame, the research did not see children in prostitution, for instance, as innately passive victims but also as agents continuously acting to evade or resist abuse, capable of creating a sub-culture together with the other children, in order to cope with and survive the violence of their world.

Therefore, in recommending policies and programs, the children should not be regarded as merely passive objects of protection measures and services, but as active participants in

negotiating for solutions to their problems and needs. As people with agency, the nature of children's interactions and social relations makes a difference in their own lives, in the lives of people around them, and in the society where they live. Hence, the epistemological approach of this study is informed by the notion that children are not a homogenous group, but are ordered by gender, class, age, and generation (Alanen 2009).

This approach also provides a conceptual and methodological point of departure in both research and practice – from treating children as 'objects', to treating them as 'subjects' with their own rights. Following the tenets of participation in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, there is recognition and appreciation of children's capacities in forming their own views and participating in matters that affect them. This is reflected in the design of this research, and in the choice of data collection methods. This follows the growing body of evidence showing that participatory research can elicit richer and more responsive data for analysis and action.

STUDY PARTICIPANTS

The study respondents and participants are classified into four categories: the children and adolescents involved in the sex industry, the service providers, the contact facilitator, and the pimps or handlers. The last three are considered key informants. The children and adolescents included in this research were those whose involvement in the sex industry started before the age of 18 years but were not older than 21

years old. They can be further classified according to the mediation of their transactions which can take the form of internet-mediation, non-internet/ personal mediation, or both. Additionally, although the research prioritized participants involved in prostitution, it also took into account those involved in other forms of commercial sexual exploitation.

CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS INVOLVED IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

Included in this study were thirty-two children and adolescents involved in the sex industry. They are referred to as respondents in the context of this research. Twenty-two were female and ten were male. Among the male respondents, three identified themselves as homosexual, four identified themselves as bisexual and three identified themselves as heterosexual. Their ages

ranged from 13 to 21 years old with a mean age of 17.75 years. At the time of the study, almost all of the participants were residing in Metro Manila, although some made transactions and engaged clients outside Metro Manila. A more detailed description and discussion of the children and adolescents involved in the sex industry can be found in the section that discusses the results.

KEY INFORMANTS

Service providers refer to individuals or organizations, government or non-government, who are engaged in providing protection services to children and adolescents involved in the sex industry. There were eight individuals representing five organizations who served as key informants in this study. Four worked for NGO's, two of whom were directly involved in CSEC themselves. Three worked in government agencies. They have been given aliases and are briefly described below:

1. Mrs. S, 50 years old, is a female house parent of Marilac Hills.
2. Ms. T, 25 years old, is a female child counsellor of Marilac Hills.
3. Sarmi, 40 years old, is female clinic supervisor of the Community Health Care Centre in Quezon City.
4. JS is a female information officer of ECPAT Philippines in her mid-20's.

1. Ayu, 20 years old, is a transgender woman who was involved in the sex industry and eventually became a pimp but later turned into a volunteer of the Family Planning Organization of the Philippines.
2. Jericho, 19 years old, is a male beneficiary turned volunteer of the Stairway Foundation.
3. Wanda, 60 years old, is a female social welfare officer of the Quezon City Social Services and Development Division.

The contact facilitator refers to the individual tasked to connect with children and adolescents involved in internet-mediated sex transactions for this research. He is given the alias Mervin and is a 45-year-old male who is married with two children. He is a college graduate who went on to become a human rights worker for nearly two decades. He willingly agreed to be the contact facilitator being well aware of the risks involved. He was able to access secret Facebook groups in order to invite children and adolescents involved in CSEC

to participate in the research. His technological proficiency and grasp of the research topic made him an appropriate choice. It goes without saying that he has had no direct experience engaging in CSEC prior to assisting in this research.

Handlers, also known as pimps, refer to individuals who control children or adolescents for prostitution, arrange clients for them and take a part of their earnings. A mamasan is a female pimp who may run a bar or brothel. Handlers can make transactions with clients online or in person. Among the five adult handlers contacted through the internet, only one agreed to be interviewed. He is given the alias Drake and is a 25-year-old

single male who has fathered three children by three different women. He lives with a partner and his youngest child, a 2-year-old girl. He has two older sons, aged 4 and 7 years old, whom he claimed to support occasionally. Aside from Drake, there were a few adolescent respondents who, during the course of the interview, admitted to having acted as pimps. In this study, however, they were considered primarily as children and adolescents involved in the sex industry.

RECRUITMENT OF STUDY RESPONDENTS

Thirty individual children and adolescent respondents in selected areas of Metro Manila were to be identified with the help of different government agencies and non-government organizations that were known to provide services for children and adolescents involved in the sex industry. However, out of the twenty-one NGO's contacted, only five were able to refer a child or adolescent involved in the sex industry. After two months of actively searching for respondents, the referrals from NGO's did not yield the required sample size. This development, coupled with the increased reports on cybersex; the proliferation of dating websites and commercial sex related sites; and the rise of the internet-mediated commercial sex trade as reported in previous studies, paved the way for the recruitment of study respondents

through the internet.

Thus, the children and adolescents involved in the sex industry who were included in this study were identified either through referrals from government and non-government organizations (non-internet mediated study recruitment), or through social media and other websites (internet-mediated study recruitment). There were also children who were referred by other respondents and by the pimp that the study was able to engage. Furthermore, as the inclusion of internet-mediated respondents was explored, it became clear that the geographic area of the study could no longer be confined to the selected sites in Metro Manila.

ASCERTAINMENT OF COMMERCIAL SEX INVOLVEMENT

When a child or adolescent below 18 years old with a history of commercial sex involvement is encountered either through referral from a government agency or NGO; or through internet-mediated means, the preliminaries of an interview were used to verify if the child or adolescent met

the inclusion criteria for this study. These criteria include commercial sex involvement before the age of 18, current age of not more than 21 years, and commercial sex involvement of any form – prostitution, pornography, trafficking or sex tourism. In some instances, referrals from

government agencies and NGO's did not involve commercial sex engagement but other cases of sexual or physical abuse, hence, these children were not included in the study. There was also

a potential respondent who was above 21 years old at the time of the interviews, so she was not included in the research.



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INTERNET-MEDIATED INCLUSION OF RESPONDENTS

The Philippines has one of the highest digital populations in the world despite its problems with internet connectivity. For the country's generally young population (median age of 24 years old), the internet has become a fundamental need and plays a major part in their daily lives. With the rise in internet usage, there has also been an increase in reports of cybersex. Thus, it is very likely that the children and adolescents involved in CSEC have moved from streets, bars and brothels into online communities that can offer them anonymity and some degree of protection.

The possibility of accessing children and adolescents involved in internet-mediated commercial sex transactions and how best to approach them was carefully considered. This entailed scrutinizing social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram); mobile applications (i.e. Grindr, Tinder, Viber, Whatsapp); dating websites; job finder sites (i.e. Craigslist); and e-commerce sites (i.e. OLX.ph). Search phrases like "men for hire" and "looking for men" were used to generate results. Online messages were exchanged with children who had placed online advertisements. They were engaged in a conversation to explain the reason for contact.

As much as thirty children responded to initial messages. Half of them sustained online exchanges for some time, but only four eventually agreed to participate in the research.

Social media platforms, specifically Facebook which offers its users the function of closed or secret groups, were a little more difficult to navigate through. A closed group grants exclusive access to members added by the account administrator and posts are seen only by the group's members. A secret group is basically the same; however, the name of the secret group is not searchable, whereas closed groups are searchable. In order to gain access to closed and secret Facebook accounts used for commercial sex purposes, a contact facilitator was recruited. The contact facilitator had to search for, identify, and contact a child and/or adolescent to be included in the study. He would introduce himself, explain the research and the interview process, and secure their initial consent even without meeting in person. The contact facilitator was chosen based on careful consideration of his credibility and his understanding of the ethical implications of his task.

A contact facilitator supports researchers to access and recruit child and adolescent respondents. His primary role is to contact children and adolescents involved in the sex industry through secret facebook accounts in order to invite them to participate in the research.

Mervin was the alias used by the contact facilitator who focused on accessing closed Facebook group accounts. Using a dummy account, he gained membership into closed groups and studied the language used by the children involved. He also studied how dealings were conducted and how the children interacted with their handlers. Initially, he searched several closed group accounts and went on to identify, contact, and converse with potential respondents. Once consent was secured from a potential study respondent, Mervin would meet with the respondent accompanied by the interviewers. He would make the necessary introductions and would buy or order food for the group during the interview. He did not participate in nor listen to the interview. Instead, he waited from a distance until the interview was over.

After the first interview was conducted, Mervin was given a good gentleman’s review or GMR which was posted in the closed Facebook group by the girl who had participated. This lead him being able to connect with five other female respondents.

Two of which, upon understanding the value of the research, facilitated the participation of five others in the study. One of the female referrals was able to identify another girl. A pimp on Facebook also referred one female respondent. The six girls are then classified as “referred by other children/adolescents involved in the sex industry” which also includes the referral made by the pimp. All of which were recruited through the internet.

There was never an instance in which a respondent (internet-mediated) refused to be interviewed at the chosen venue. After each interview, Mervin escorted the respondent to a nearby place where the latter could get transportation to go home. During this brief period, he sought feedback from the respondent regarding the interview. Everything that Mervin did was in coordination with the research team and under the direct supervision of the team leader. The table below shows the number of children and adolescents interviewed according to gender and the source of their referral for participation in this study.

Table 2. Gender and Referral Source of Children Involved in the Sex Industry

Source	Females	Males			Total
		Heterosexual	Bisexual	Homosexual	
Social Media Platform	6	0	4	0	10
Government Agency/NGO	9	1	0	2	12
Pimp or Handler	1	0	0	0	1
Other Children or Adolescents Involved in CSEC	6	1	0	0	7
Others	0	1	0	1	2
Total	22	3	4	3	32

Out of the thirty-two respondents, twelve (37.5%) were recruited through government and non-government organizations (not internet-mediated). There were ten children (31.25%) whose recruitment were directly mediated through

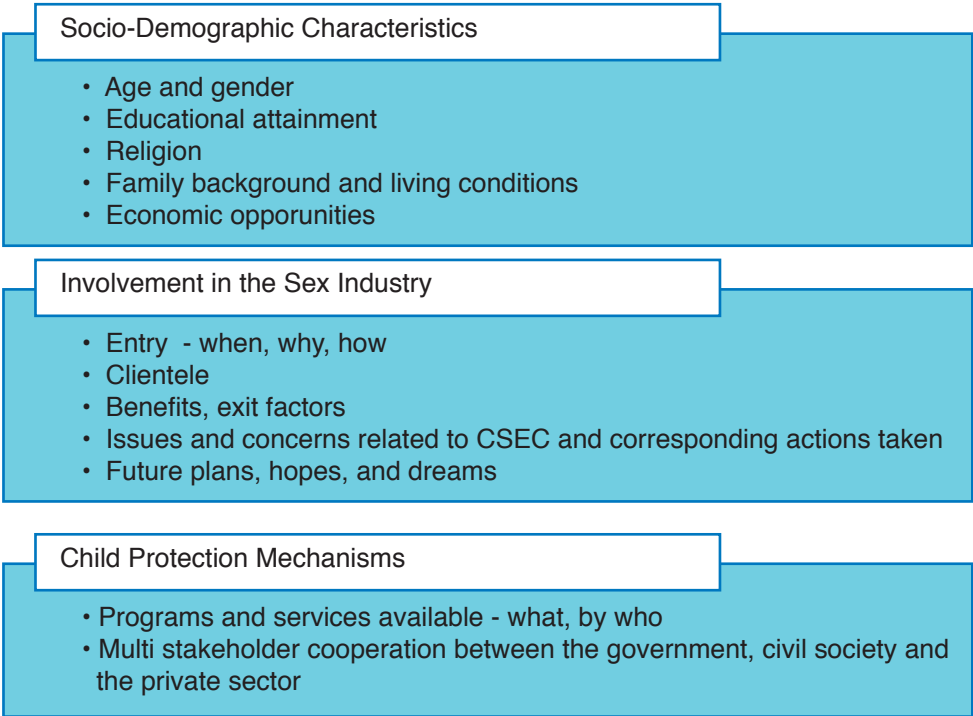
the internet while the other ten were identified through referrals from the internet-mediated respondents. The latter therefore are considered internet-mediated respondents, albeit indirectly.

GMR: Gentleman’s Review; a written statement by a walker or sex worker about her GM; usually done for a newbie GM; may contain comments on appearance, hygiene, generosity and reliability. In this case, the GMR was “Mervin, thank you for a wonderful time together.”

DATA COLLECTION

Data, mostly qualitative, was gathered in order to address the research questions. They are categorized into the following groups: (1) socio-demographic characteristics; (2) nature of involvement in the sex industry; and (3) child protection mechanisms. The components of each group is illustrated in the figure below.

Figure 1. Data Collected for the Study



Collection of the above data employed a variety of methods. This multi-method approach ensured complementarity and provided different lenses from which CSEC could be viewed. The data collection methods were the following:

- a) Individual in-depth interviews were used to get the children and adolescents’ views on the nature, forms, and extent of CSEC through their own narratives. An interview guide was developed around a number of key themes relevant to the research. The length of interviews varied from less than one hour to more than two hours depending on how open the study participant was to the questions. The places where the interviews were conducted took into consideration the safety of the interviewers who worked in pairs, and the preference of the study participant. Interviews were done mostly in places open to the public such as restaurants for the children and a hotel for the pimp.
- b) Focus group discussions were held with two groups of respondents that were divided according to the way they conducted transactions, namely, internet-mediated and not internet-mediated. These were carried out after conducting individual interviews in order to gather the children’s perceptions of and experiences with services or other forms of assistance that they had sought and/or received. It also aimed to generate ideas and

- recommendations on what else, from the children and adolescents’ perspective, was needed to address their concerns.

c) Key informant interviews were conducted with individuals who were purposively selected because of their knowledge on CSEC. Key informants included service providers, a contact facilitator, and a pimp or handler.

d) Participant-observation was necessary due to the difficulty involved in accessing closed and secret online groups of children and adolescents involved in the sex industry. A contact facilitator worked under the direct supervision of the research team and gained access to groups, identified potential respondents, interacted with respondents online, explained the purpose of the interview, secured their consent, and finally, set an interview. He served as the direct link to the child or adolescent in the internet-mediated commercial sex trade, as well as, to the handler.

e) Consultative/validation workshops with key stakeholders were held to present and review preliminary results, key findings, conclusions, and recommendations for the integration of research findings into Plan International Philippines’ child
- protection work.

f) Document reviews were conducted as part of preliminary work for this research. They served to guide the design and development of the data collection methods and tools. There was a need to review documents covering local policies and legislation, child protection mechanisms, and child protection services at the local government unit in order to supplement the research area on child protection mechanisms.

The research employed a number of strategies to ensure the reliability of the information gathered. These included having multiple data sources (triangulation), making the children and adolescents’ voices central to the analysis and conclusions of the research, and employing reflexivity or practices that allow for critical reflection on the part of the researchers, respondents, and participants. The language used for individual in-depth interviews and focus group discussions were in Filipino with English words and phrases used sparingly. The table below presents a summary of the data collected, their sources, as well as, the method and tool used to collect them.

Table 3. Summary of Data Gathered and Their Collection

Data Collected	Data Source	Data Collection Method	Data Collection Tool
Socio-Demographic Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General data (age, gender, etc.) Economic opportunities Family background and living condition 	Children and adolescents involved in the sex industry	In-depth individual interview	Interview guide
	Pimp or handler	Key informant interview	Interview schedule

Involvement in the Sex Industry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Entry - when, why, and how Clientele Perceived benefits Factors for exit Related issues and concerns and actions taken Plans, hopes, and dreams 	Children and adolescents involved in the sex industry	In-depth individual interview, focused group discussion	Interview guide, guide questions
	Pimp or handler	Key informant interview	Interview schedule
	Contact facilitator	Participant observation	
Child Protection Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs and services available – what are they and who provides them Multi stakeholder cooperation between the government, civil society, and the private sector 	Children and adolescents involved in the sex industry	In-depth individual interview, focused group discussion	Interview guide
	Pimp or handler	Key informant interview	Guide questions
	Multiple stakeholders including NGO workers	Consultative/ validation workshop	Interview schedule
	Selected organizations	Document review	Presentation, open discussion

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of data was done using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative analysis (content or narrative analysis) involved transcribing, translating, categorizing, interpreting and organizing the data into themes and sub-themes. On the other hand, quantitative analysis used simple calculations to derive frequencies and percentages as deemed necessary. Numbers were matched and verified further per theme and sub-theme to ensure the consistency of the reported results in numbers with that of the written text. Furthermore, there were different levels of analysis involved. They are described below:

a) Level 1 involved transcribing all the data and translating these from Filipino to English. Individual case summaries were also developed in English for a deeper and more nuanced appreciation of the child’s own narrative. Initial data was

sorted (per case), based on the interview guide, according to the nature, forms and extent of CSEC. These were extensively discussed and reviewed by each member of the research team.

b) Level 2 involved data grouping and clustering data into possible categories. Based on the collective report of the Level 1 data analysis, discussions and reviews were conducted to come up with data sets or clusters that might constitute possible categories. This process entailed another round of extensive discussions to include, exclude and qualify data to fit into various categories. These were again subjected to further review by each member of the research team. At this point, results of the data were described and data tables were made.

- c) Level 3 involved generating themes and sub-themes and interpreting and organizing data. Particular categories, sub-themes, and themes were elaborated upon. At this point, interpretation of data meant going beyond merely describing the results, but also giving individual and collective insights and reflections on themes and sub-themes. A workshop was conducted to write, revise, and refine the first draft of the final report.

During the course of this process, a CSEC framework evolved from the data and it took into serious consideration the presence of information and communication technology, as well as, how this had affected the lives of the study respondents. Thus, interpreting the data meant looking deeply into how ICT impacted and altered the once familiar CSEC landscape, and identifying the implications of the research findings on strengthening child protection mechanisms. It is also important to note that at each level of data analysis, there were serious efforts to bring to the surface and articulate each child's individual voice, as well as, the children's collective thoughts.

While there was an attempt at some generalization of the results and findings, a nuanced approach was applied. The study respondents were not put in one category (e.g. victims of commercial sexual exploitation); but rather, they were differentiated

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In researches where children and adolescents are respondents, ethical considerations include the protection of children, consent and assent, privacy, confidentiality, addressing power imbalances, and reflexivity (Alderson and Morrow, 2011; Morrow 2009). When necessary, referrals were made and options for seeking services were provided to the study respondents. Furthermore, during the conduct of this research, there were adjustments made in its operationalization to facilitate the identification of and access to the respondents and participants. As mentioned in the previous sections, a contact facilitator was included in the research as a participant-observer. The participant-observer, by gaining access to

by gender, class, age, and other characteristics that the children used to present themselves to the online community. As technological advancement provided the study respondents with the opportunity to decide for themselves about many areas of their lives while in the CSEC environment, the analysis highlights the recognition of these children as social actors, as well as, the nature and the extent of their interactions and social relations. They are recognized as active participants in the construction of their own lives and in the negotiation of the solutions to their problems.

restricted online groups, was able to connect with potential study respondents and a handler.

Throughout the entire process of this research, ethical guidelines were strictly observed under the constant supervision of the team leader. There was also a lot of critical discussions and reflection involved. The ethical guidelines included the following:

1. Informed Consent
Clearly written consent forms were prepared, and its content read out and explained to the respondents. However, it was difficult to convince the respondents

to sign a form. In addition to this, some of them were minors and needed a guardian present. Hence, modifications to secure consent within the bounds of ethical research were explored. It was later decided that the respondent's verbal consent would be recorded in lieu of the signed consent forms. Interviews were audio recorded with consent and photographs were taken only when allowed. These were then kept in secured files.

2. Privacy and Confidentiality
The use of audio recording was limited to the transcription of the interview. Photographs taken, when allowed by the respondents, were used only to identify the respondents and participants, as well as, to ensure the proper matching and identification of the audio interviews. The study participants decided on the date, time, and place of the interview. The safety of all those involved were taken into consideration; hence, almost all individual interviews were conducted in places accessible to the public during the daytime. Additionally, in the research reports, the respondents and participants were assigned aliases to protect their identity.
3. Non-Judgmental Attitude and Behaviour
While some information disclosed by the respondents cannot be validated and in some cases, stories revealed a few inconsistencies, all information provided by the respondents were accepted without judgement. The children and adolescents involved were reassured and thanked for their cooperation in the research.
4. Professional Skills and Knowledge of Researchers
All of the members of the research team had previously worked with or worked on material concerning children. They are well-versed with child protection policies and protocols. There was a review of

policies and protocols on dealing with children prior to the actual data collection. The contact facilitator was closely supervised and advised regarding ethical considerations in dealing with children and adolescents, particularly in an online environment.

5. Tokens and Transportation Allowance
Research participants referred by partner agencies and organizations were given tokens (i.e. clothes, art materials, groceries, etc.) depending on the children's preference as advised by the focal person of the agency or organization. However, participants who were not referred by organizations and were active online, did not prefer gift items and instead, wanted cash. Potential respondents contacted online inquired how much they would get in exchange for participating in the research. One potential male participant who worked in a massage parlor, for example, explained that he needed money to give to his handler since he was only allowed to go out for work; hence, he was expected to turn in a commission. Others preferred cash to pay for bills (i.e. rent, phone bill, internet subscription, etc.)

It was considered that the offer of money as reimbursement for time or expenses incurred could make research participation a revenue-neutral activity for participants (Grady 2005). In this regard, money may enable the involvement of individuals who otherwise would not be able to afford participation, or who would not be willing to make the financial sacrifice in order to do so. Alternatively, payment could help recruit individuals who believe they should be fairly compensated for their time and effort.

In terms of whether cash can exert undue influence on the children's decisions to participate in the study, an argument can be made that coercion involves a

Grady, Christine (2005). Payment of clinical research subjects. Journal of Clinical Intervention. <http://www.jci.org/articles/view/25694>

threat of harm; thus, an offer of money in return for research participation is no coercion (Grady 2005). Supporting this is the provision in the International Ethical Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving Human Subjects by the Council for International Organizations of Medical Sciences which states, “Subjects may be reimbursed for lost earnings, travel costs and other expenses incurred in taking part in a study; they may also receive free medical services. Those who receive no direct benefit from research may also be paid or otherwise compensated for inconvenience and time spent. The payment should not be so large, however, or the medical services so extensive as to induce prospective subjects to consent to participate in the research against their better judgement.”

In this regard, 500 pesos was given to the participants since this amount is relatively close to what they would usually earn per transaction. There was no undue inducement exerted on the participants. Moreover, the children were assured during the process of getting their consent that they can withdraw and/or stop the interview at any point they feel like doing so without the cash being withheld from them. This was done in tandem with other explanations made to them related to the conduct of this study. In addition to the 500 pesos, the respondents were also given 100 pesos as transportation allowance. Food was also provided before the in-depth interviews.

6. **Advice and Follow-Ups**
During the interview, the study participants were invited to ask questions about various topics such as health, stress relief, education, employment, abandonment, and adoption. The researchers were careful in providing reliable and relevant information, correcting misconceptions or misinformation, and giving advice and options.

7. **Other Safety Nets**
The respondents were presented with the identification cards and/or calling cards of the interviewers. They were given time to read these and ask questions. Additionally, the study participants were provided with an office telephone number in case they had questions, needed a medical referral, or simply wanted to talk to someone. It was deemed critical that they were linked to appropriate support and that safety was maintained at all times.

Gigi narrated that she was rescued at 17 years old after being pimped by her mother. She was temporarily sheltered at the Youth Reception and Action Center where she also received counseling and skills training. As she was turning 18 at the time of interview, she shared that she planned to desist from pressing charges against her mother and stepfather. Probable ways to help her were explored as she was no longer qualified to stay in the shelter in light of the policy that the shelter was for children, that is, those below 18 years old.

Upon following up on her six months after the data gathering, new information about Gigi surfaced. First, she was actually 18 years old when she complained to the police, but she declared that she was 17 years old; thus, she was considered a minor. A birth certificate was later retrieved showing the real date of her birth. Second, Gigi was not engaged in prostitution; instead, she was a victim of cyber-pornography for 5 years. Lastly, she and her siblings were released from the shelter by a court order two weeks ago as of this writing.

Gigi now lives with a maternal aunt in an area next to the barangay where her parents live. Her case was dismissed by the court. Alias Gigi and her parents are to report to QCSSDD every month.



Denness Victoria/Plan International

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF THE STUDY

The research was aimed at looking into the current state of commercial sexual exploitation in Metro Manila. By definition, this includes prostitution, pornography, and trafficking for sexual purposes. While all forms were considered in the research, prostitution was the primary focus. Unfortunately, there was limited data gathered on trafficking for sexual purposes and cyber pornography.

Additionally, while selected sites were identified for the recruitment of respondents in Pasay City, Quezon City and Caloocan City, it became clear as the study progressed that it was impossible to specify the geographic area of the study nor the sample size per area. As seen from the description of the demographic data of the child respondents, while they were generally residing in different cities in Metro Manila and their commercial sex involvement was within Metro Manila, there were a few who were residing and engaged in CSEC outside of Metro Manila (e.g. Bulacan, Cavite). Thus, the results cannot be generalized to all other children and adolescents involved in the sex industry, even within Metro Manila.

Child respondents were selected based on a specific criteria set which was agreed upon at the

onset of the study. This included age; however, children who were above 18 years old, but not more than 21 years old were included as long as their involvement in the commercial sex industry started before they were 18 years old. Determining the age of the respondents was a challenge though, partly because they did not always provide correct information about their age. Nevertheless, the age they declared was reported as is since there was no way of verifying the accuracy of the information they had given at the time of the interview.

Initially, only study respondents referred by government and non-government organizations that provide services for children involved in CSEC were to be involved in this study. As these referrals were not enough to meet the required sample size for the study, the research considered and included internet-mediated recruitment of study respondents. This was viewed as problematic at the time but eventually, it was treated as an innovative approach to the study after much consideration and discussion. It was only a challenge since there has been no previous experience in this regard; thus, there were no hard and fast rules to follow during the process of data gathering.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS INVOLVED IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

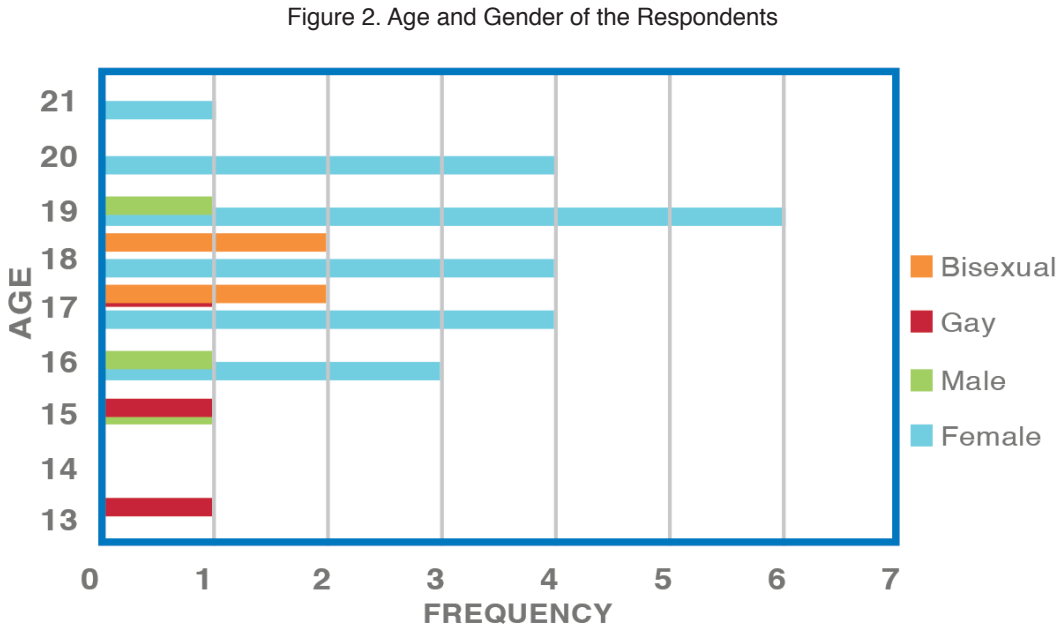
This section on socio-demographic profile describes only the children and adolescents engaged in CSEC who were interviewed for this study. These children and adolescents are referred to as respondents throughout the report. The information they provided was taken as fact

although there was some possibility that the respondents provided inaccurate information. For example, one female respondent who claimed to be 18 years old looked to be much younger than her declared age but there was no way to verify this during the research period.

AGE AND GENDER

Overall, the females (mean age = 18.31) were older than the males (mean age = 17.00). A closer look at gender revealed that the three homosexual males were younger (ages 13, 15 and 17) compared to the three heterosexual males

(aged 15, 16, and 19) and the bisexual males (17 and 18 years old). The figure below presents the frequency distribution of the respondents according to age and gender.



ECONOMIC STATUS

Prior to involvement in the sex industry, half of the children and adolescents were earning some income. They were engaged in various types of work to help augment the family income or support their personal and social needs. These included employment as either a sales clerk, cashier, cook, administrative staff, domestic helper, call center agent, choreographer, or food vendor. The issue of children working to help meet the basic needs of the family is very common in the Philippines. In fact, the 2010 Youth Study revealed that 83.3% of the youth wanted to extend financial assistance to their families. It was gleaned from the research that outside the sex industry, some were able to earn a living. Although based on the nature of the work, these would be considered as irregular sources of income.

Less than a third (28%) had other sources of income while they were involved in the sex industry. There were six respondents involved in internet-mediated transactions who derived additional income from at least one of the following: providing home services for massage, manicure and/or pedicure; repairing mobile phones or computers; selling food; preparing food in a restaurant; providing choreography services; getting pension from their father; and getting

financial support from their mother. Depending on the job, their income ranged from 300 to 1,000 pesos a day. On the other hand, there were three respondents involved in personal (not internet-mediated) transactions who were working as either a bet collector, a barker for jeepney drivers, or a domestic helper while being involved in the sex industry. The bet collector earned 400 pesos a day while the barker earned 500 pesos daily.

It is important to note that among those who had extra income while at the same time being engaged in CSEC, there were more from those respondents who conducted internet-mediated transactions compared to those involved in non-internet mediated transactions. In the internet-mediated group, there were more freelancers, or those not managed by a handler, compared to the personal transaction group; therefore, they were more likely to hold other jobs. It was evident that the children and adolescents had the capacity to earn outside of the CSEC environment despite their young age as half of the respondents had a job before entering and/or while involved in CSEC. In the 2009 Pilot Study of CSEC in Cebu, a third of their study participants who were engaged in CSEC also had jobs prior to their involvement in the sex industry.

PLACE OF RESIDENCE OR ORIGIN

Almost all of the study respondents recruited for the research resided in Metro Manila. Two were residing outside Metro Manila; one in Bulacan and the other in Cavite. Three were living in shelters at the time the interviews were conducted. Additionally, two were originally from Samar and Aklan in Visayas, one was from Dipolog in

Mindanao, and five were from the Luzon provinces of Abra, Bulacan, Cavite, Laguna, and Pampanga. Transfer of residence to Metro Manila was for personal or family-related matters; none of the respondents moved to Metro Manila for purposes of CSEC. Majority were residents of Metro Manila since birth.

RELIGION AND CIVIL STATUS

Majority of the respondents (78%) provided information on religion. Among them, three were born-again Christians while one belonged to the religious sect, Iglesia ni Cristo. The majority were Roman Catholics. Additionally, all the respondents

reported to be single, although eight of them who were between the ages 16 to 21 years old, already had children. Of these eight, one was a 19-year-old male and the rest were female. Two of the girls with children lived with their respective

partners while the rest did not live with the father of their children. One adolescent respondent was pregnant at the time of the interview.

EDUCATION

Only four of the respondents were enrolled at the time of study: one in college, one in high school, and two in the Department of Education’s alternative learning system (ALS) program. All of them were involved in internet-mediated transactions. The college student was on her third year of a hotel and restaurant management course in a private college and was involved the sex industry to augment the money provided by her father for her education. The high school student was a 17-year-old male. The table below presents a summary of the highest educational level attained by the respondents according to transaction mediation.

Table 4. Educational Attainment of the Respondents

Educational Attainment	Internet-mediated	Personal	Both	Total Number of Respondents
Elementary Level	1	5	1	7
Elementary Graduate	-	1	-	1
High School Level	8	4	1	13
High School Graduate	4	0	-	4
Vocational Course	1	0	-	1
College level	5	0	-	5
No Answer	-	1	-	1
Total	19	11	2	32

Less than a quarter of the respondents completed high school and although being a high school graduate does not necessarily translate to employment, it can at least provide more options for work or further studies. One of the respondents mentioned that she had difficulty finding an alternative job that did not require a high school degree. Additionally, among those who reached high school, two completed a vocational course while five pursued college education but did not complete it. One of the two graduates from vocational courses completed a training on massage and nail care while the other took a course on computer and mobile phone repair. There was no information on the educational attainment of one of the respondents. Overall, those in the internet-mediated group had higher educational attainment relative to those in the non-internet-mediated or face-to-face transaction group.

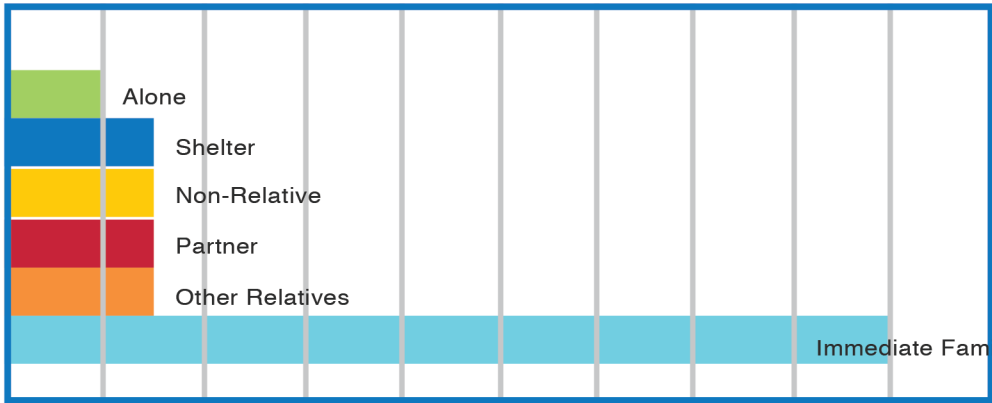
According to the National Youth Commission, a quarter of all Filipino youth aged 15 to 17 years old drop out of school because of economic reasons. The same was true in this small sample. There were only a few who were able to pursue their education. Ironically, it is the same pursuit for education that has served as a reason for some of these respondents to be involved in the sex industry, with the expressed purpose of emancipating themselves from the trade in the end. The 2009 Pilot Study of CSEC in Cebu had similar findings. Almost half of their respondents were high school undergraduates and none had graduated from college; about nine in every ten were not in school partly because of economic reasons.

FAMILY BACKGROUND AND LIVING CONDITIONS

More than half of the respondents (56%) lived with one or both of their parents, either biological or otherwise (step-parent). The figure below shows that only two of them claimed to live alone, while the other twelve lived with either their other relatives, partner, non-relatives such as friends or co-workers, or with other youth in a shelter catering commercially exploited children. Three lived with their partners while another three were living in shelters. Of the three who lived in shelters, two were rescued with on-going court cases which involve trafficking and/or incest rape.

Household size ranged from one to twenty people with a mean of six persons per household. Half of the respondents had a household size of seven or more. These were composed mostly of extended families or relations resulting in the unions of families (stepparents and stepsiblings). Taking the number of siblings as a measure of family size, it was evident that majority had large families as only four had two or less siblings. The rest had three or more siblings. Siblings included full siblings, half-siblings, and step-siblings. Two respondents had no siblings.

Figure 3. Living Arrangements of Respondents



Only half of the respondents provided an answer to the question on the kind of shelter they lived in. Nine claimed to live in rented houses or rooms including low-cost housing. Two said their families owned their houses. One boy belonged to a family living on the street in two pedicabs with his birth mother, stepfather, and 11-year-old sister. As previously mentioned, three respondents lived in shelters, and they had strained relationships with family members prior to living in the shelters. In fact, two had filed court cases against their family members.

relationship were having an unwelcoming step-parent who made them feel as if they were outsiders or as if they were a burden; having a father who had another family; and having financial issues. The financial issues cited by the respondents included those brought about by having an OFW mother who would send remittances to the respondent instead of the father, or having an older sibling in the household who would receive the money but would not share in family expenses. Less than half (44%) described their relationship with other household members as good.

Relationships with household members were described as “not good” in half of the study participants. Reasons given for the strained

Information on the educational attainment of the respondents’ parents was also collected. However, the data available was provided by less

than half of the study participants. According to the list of occupations seen in the table below, only twelve of the respondents' fathers, biological and non-biological, were employed. Those engaged in informal work had irregular income. Half of the respondents' mothers did not have any occupation. Only eight of the fathers and six of the mothers had regular paying jobs. Three fathers and mothers were engaged in illegal activities such as being a "fixer" at the Land Transportation Office and drug pushing.

According to the Philippine National Census, the average Filipino household and family size is 4.6; hence, it can be said that the respondents generally belonged to large households. Again, this was found to be congruent with the 2009 Pilot Study of CSEC in Cebu where almost a third of

their respondents came from large households. The findings of this research on household size, taken together with the fact that more than half of the respondents live with their immediate family, and that the occupation of their parents were mostly irregular, implies poor socio-economic conditions.

The pattern of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents however cannot be taken as the only factors associated with sex industry involvement. Not all of the respondents, for example, come from impoverished families. Caution must be exercised in generalizing these characteristics to all children and adolescents involved in the sex industry since the respondents in this study are not representative of the entire population of children and adolescents in the sex

Table 5. Occupation of Respondents' Parents

Occupation	No. of Respondents with Fathers Employed	No. of Respondents with Mothers Employed
Transportation Service, Public Utility (pedicab, tricycle, jeepney, taxi driver)	4	0
Transportation Service, Private (company, family, truck driver)	3	0
Company Employee	1	1
Service Worker (domestic helper, food server)	2	4
Construction Worker	3	0
Tailor	1	1
Security Guard	1	0
Masseuse	0	1
Illegal Work	3	3
None	3	15
Not Applicable (deceased)	3	3
No information	8	4
Total	32	32

NATURE OF INVOLVEMENT IN THE SEX TRADE

This section discusses the nature and dynamics of the sex trade. Results are presented in the following subsections: language and terms used;

entry and initiation into the commercial sex industry; transactions in the sex industry; and clients or customers.

LANGUAGE AND TERMS

Children and adolescents used various terms related to their commercial sex involvement. There were terminologies referring to sex providers, clients, pimps, as well as, sex transactions. There were different terms predominantly used in non-internet mediated commercial sex involvement which differed from the set of terms more commonly used in internet-mediated commercial sex involvement. Many terms used in the sex industry were ordinary and commonly used outside the industry; thus, they were not stigmatizing. For example, a booking in general would mean the act of reserving accommodations, making travel arrangements, or engaging an entertainer to perform. In the CSEC context, it meant reserving sexual services to be rendered by a child for a client.

Online commercial sex involvement was referred to as talking a walk which, in Filipino, translates to "lakad" – a generic term for having an appointment or simply going somewhere. It was noted that there was a difference in terms used depending on the child's gender. An example of this was the use of the word sideline; a term shared by female and the LGBT children to refer to commercial sex involvement outside a regular job. Booking on the other hand, was used across all genders. The use of these gendered terms was mostly observed in internet-mediated transactions and the coining of these new terminologies was recognized and accepted by its users, as in any culture or sub-culture.

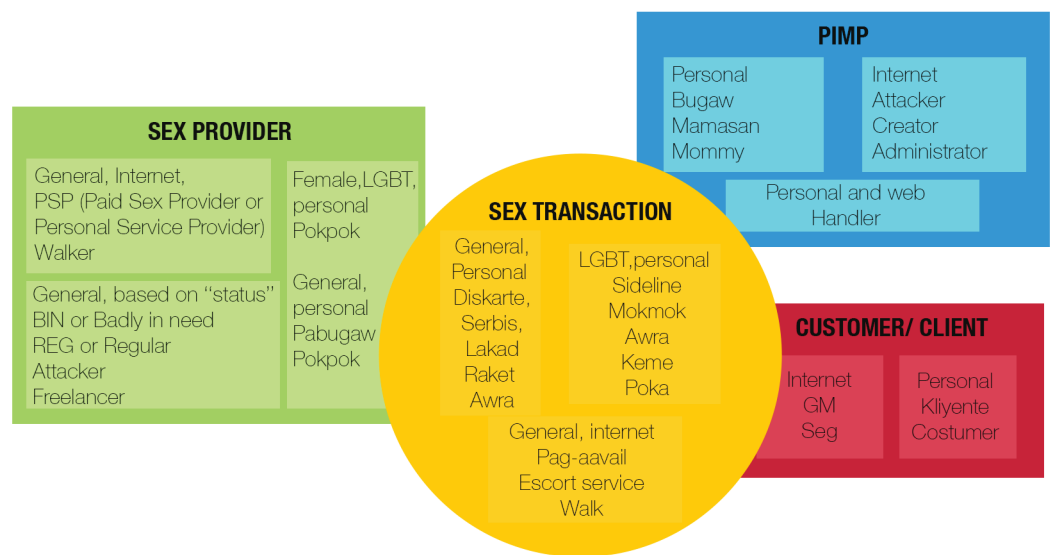
Playsan, a term used by a bar girl or street walker, could have been derived from "pleasant house" or "pleasure house" which refers to a house or apartment rented by a mamasan where girls stayed to wait for walk-in customers. In internet-

mediated transactions, a customer would be referred to as a GM, meaning a gentleman or generous man. Additionally, seg, which is a rough inversion of the word guest, was a term used by girls who belonged to a particular attack group to refer to a customer. An attack group is a group of children or adolescents who assist other children also involved in CSEC to get clients for no pay, unlike handlers who would get a commission.

AFAM, an acronym for "A Foreigner Assigned in Manila", was used by male children who were involved in online commercial sex transactions to refer to a foreigner who may or may not be a customer. Aura or awra meant simply going out or searching for paid or unpaid sex. This term was part of the gendered vocabulary, used mostly by gay men, bar girls, and street walkers. Other terminologies used in internet-mediated transactions as in Facebook or sex websites is PSP which is short for "personal service provider" or "paid sex provider". A PSP could also pertain to a walker who is able to post a GMR in a closed Facebook group. A GMR or a gentleman's review is feedback on a customer in terms of his or her looks, hygiene, sexual performance, and payment. These terms emerged as part of the entire CSEC operation that is happening online.

A word map presented in the figure below shows the different terms used for sex providers, pimps, sex transactions and customers. The terms are grouped together according to the gender and the type of transaction mediation employed by their users. These terminologies were gathered from children and adolescents involved in CSEC, their customers, and the pimp included in this research.

Figure 4. Commercial Sex Terminologies



The CSEC vocabulary presented here is limited only to the terms gathered from the interviews. As CSEC becomes more complex because of internet mediation and technological advancement in general, it is highly probable that a wider CSEC vocabulary exists for transactions and processes that were not revealed in this study. Evolving language in CSEC reflects the evolution and dynamism of this trade. The use of common terms appeared to lessen stigma and even mainstream sex trade. This was apparent in the use of

words like personal service provider, book, walk, administrator, or GM. The growing complexity of commercial sex involvement is described in the succeeding discussions.

CUSTOMERS OF THE SEX INDUSTRY

All of the customers of the respondents in the study were adults between 20 to 50 years old. Some of the respondents preferred younger customers because they looked more presentable and were reportedly better in bed. However, some of the younger customers were also more likely to be sadistic, demanding, and abusive. In this study, all customers were males – heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual. In terms of nationality, one in three respondents in this study provided sexual services to foreigners which included German, French, Kuwaiti, Arabic, American, Chinese, Korean, Mexican, Indian, and Lebanese nationals.

Foreigners were reported to pay higher than local customers, provide more tip, and sometimes, even shoulder transportation expenses. Some of the respondents admitted to deceiving the foreigners, making them believe that they were in dire financial need, which resulted in extra pay. A few girls complained of sadistic sexual demands made by foreigners. This was why there were also respondents who claimed to cater exclusively to Filipinos. The customers reported by the respondents were involved in various jobs and were connected to companies such as banks, construction firms, business process outsourcing ventures, and airlines. There were

Michael, a 13-year-old male, was first exposed to CSEC by his own mother who was a street walker herself. He learned that what they were doing was “nag-papabugaw”. Now, he refers to this as “pag-aura”.

Living on the streets, he was subjected to multiple instances of rape and physical abuse. His first aura involved being sold off by a street walker (“pokpok”) to foreigners whom he referred to as “Amerikano” and “Itim”. Together with a friend, he was forcibly dragged inside the foreigners’ car by street walkers and taken somewhere in Zambales or Laguna.

For Michael, this is not something he nor his friend wants to do. They are just too afraid to do anything about it. He said, “Hindi po naming gusto yung e-aura nila kami...Hindi po namin ginugusto kaso nga lang natatakot lang po kami...”

also government employees and politicians.

According to Drake, the handler who participated in this study, customers who contacted him were Filipino males. They were mostly professionals who were in their 30’s or older. There were occasions when he came across customers as young as 16 years old, with no history of sexual experience and contacted him simply because they wanted to have one. When a customer was a public figure, only the customer’s secretary transacted with him. According to him, during Christmas and other holidays, there were more foreign customers.

ENTRY AND INITIATION INTO CSEC

The children and adolescents who participated in this study entered the sex industry between the ages 13 and 18. Involvement in the sex industry ranged from two months to five years, yielding a mean of two years. Half of the respondents in this study have been in the industry for one to three years. Seven have been involved in CSEC for less than a year while five have been in the trade for four to five years. The youngest of the respondents was a 13-year-old homosexual male from Pasay City who entered the industry at the age of 12, having been forced into it by a street walker who was also a pimp. He was rescued and is now in a shelter.

Three of the children reported that they had been forced into the trade. Their socio-demographic profile is presented in the table below. Two of those living in shelters have pending court cases against their parents. They cited the need for money and protection from harm as the reasons why they got involved in CSEC. Among all of the respondents, all were prostituted except for two respondents, Kaycee and Gigi. Kaycee worked in cyber pornography, uploading child sexual abuse materials online and having highly sexual chat exchanges with customers over the internet. Gigi and Mitz have also been engaged in cyber pornography. One boy, Michael, was trafficked for sexual purposes.

Table 6. Profile of Children Forced into CSEC

Alias	Age and Sex	Age of Entry	Educational Attainment	Individual Responsible	Mediation of Transaction	Current Residence
Gigi	18, female	13	High school graduate	Mother	Internet-mediated	Shelter
Mitz	17, female	11	Elementary level	Mother	Internet-mediated	Shelter
Michael	13, male	12	Elementary level	Street pimp	Non-internet-mediated	Shelter

The table below presents a list of the different forms of CSEC that the children and adolescents who were a part of this study were involved in. The frequency distribution of the respondents is further categorized by sex and circumstances of entry into the commercial sex trade. Proportionately, there were more male children engaged in sex tourism specifically relative to female children.

There were also children and adolescents who became pimps. One boy started out as a pimp but became a sex provider later, while two girls became pimps when they had to stop being sex providers temporarily because of childbirth.

Table 7. Terms of Entry into Different Forms of CSEC

Actual Involvement in CSEC	Circumstances of Entry						Total
	Voluntary		Involuntary		No Info		
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Prostitution	7	18	1	3	1	1	31
Sex Tourism	3	0	0	2	1	1	7
Pornography	0	0	0	2	1	0	3
Child Pimping	1	2	0	0	0	0	3
Transactional Sex	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Trafficking	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

*Total exceeds number of respondents because some children engaged in more than one form of CSEC

The respondents cited various reasons for their involvement in the sex industry. However, both the children engaged in CSEC and the key informants interviewed identified the need for income to support one’s family as the primary reason for entering the sex trade. From the children and adolescents’ viewpoints, they needed to help pay for household expenses which included food, clothing, water, electricity, and house rent. Other reasons mentioned included the desire for luxury items or luho such as gadgets or smartphones, the pleasure derived from sex, and the opportunity to explore one’s sexuality among others. By nature, children and adolescents are strongly influenced

by their peers and the need to belong. In the case of some respondents, getting new gadgets and nice clothes made them feel equal to their peers.

Some respondents reported that they entered the sex industry in order to save for or support their education. In addition to this, they also needed the money for health-related expenses for themselves and members of their family. For some, a personal health concern could include cosmetic products and treatments to enhance one’s looks. On the other hand, two respondents engaged in CSEC did so as a means to secure money to pay for the hospitalization of family members. When

there was no longer a need for money to sustain hospitalization, they stopped their involvement in the sex trade. Their involvement can be considered as child sexual exploitation through transactional sex.

Table 8. Reasons for Entry into CSEC

Reason of Respondents for Entering the Sex Industry	Number of Respondents
Living expenses, support children and family	22
Intra/interpersonal reasons: social life, sustain relationship with a partner, satisfy curiosity, explore sexuality, protect one’s self, influenced by friends	7
Health expenses: eat well, improve one’s body, hospitalization of family members	6
Education expenses	5
Steady job and earning	4

*Some respondents had more than one reason.

Further analysis of the data showed that a majority of the study participants were introduced to the sex trade by their friends or acquaintances through Facebook. Usually, these friends and acquaintances were also already engaged in CSEC. It was possible that since a majority of the children entered the sex trade with a specific problem, they had sought support or asked for help from their friends. These friends, referred to

as ka-tropa or kabarkada, then introduced them to the sex industry as a way to earn money. It was observed that almost half of the friends and acquaintances who introduced the respondents to the sex trade were homosexual males. Careful attention must be given to the fact that only one respondent was forced into prostitution by a friend. All others decided, on their own, to enter the sex trade.

Table 8. Reasons for Entry into CSEC

Person Responsible	Number of Respondents
Friend	14
Acquaintance	9
Pimp	3
Mother	2
Cousin	2
Neighbour	1

TRANSACTIONS IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

The most common form of commercial sex involvement by the children and adolescents in this study was exploitation for prostitution. There were also cases of sex tourism, pornography, child pimping, child sexual exploitation through transactional sex, and child trafficking for sexual purposes. Compensation was usually

agreed upon beforehand and the transaction was mediated either face-to-face (non-internet-mediated) or online (internet-mediated). The CSEC landscape has greatly changed because of the way transactions were being mediated. With the advancement of technology and the availability of the internet, computers and smartphones could

now facilitate CSEC while, at the same time, making it harder to monitor and control. Internet-mediated transactions can occur in porn websites and social media sites; and are no longer confined to bars or brothels.

Traditionally, there were three actors in commercial sex dealings: the sex provider, the pimp, and the customer. In addition, the pimps controlled the sex providers or trafficked them to reach different customers. Over time, those in prostitution started to transact for themselves and, on their own, searched for and chose their prospective customers – a mode referred to as freelancing. By freelancing, the child or adolescent received all of the customer’s payment instead of sharing a portion of it with a pimp. It also meant being free from the control of a pimp. However, it implied absence of a certain amount of protection or help in situations of abuse by a client or customer. There were children and adolescents in the sex industry who shifted from freelancing to having pimps so they could be protected from abuse and fraud. Others moved from being controlled by a pimp to freelancing for higher income.

Previous studies made in recent years have recognized freelancing, as well as technology-mediated commercial sex transactions. Children and adolescents who possess adequate IT literacy can navigate their way through social media and other platforms, utilizing these online channels for commercial sex transactions. In addition to this, while the likelihood of freelancing was higher with the internet mediated group, there were still pimps in online sex trade web sites taking on different roles and strategies. Hence, pimps involved in non-internet-mediated transactions who booked a child or adolescent to provide sex services for a customer could do this online by becoming a site creator or administrator.

A creator is someone who opens an account, whether on a social media site or for a website, assigns account settings such as visibility and other restrictions, and maintains it by updating content such as profiles and photos of sex providers. On the other hand, a site administrator simply updates or screens the content of the site, allows or denies entry of users, and moderates the conversations that happen within the site. According to Drake,

an online pimp who served as a key informant for this research, a Facebook group account would usually include around five to fifteen girls and would be active in a particular geographic area, but this account could be dissolved or changed as deemed necessary

Accounts managed by a pimp for online transactions were active only when they were needed. After which, they became inactive and eventually, the group account would be closed. However, when this happens, another account with a different set of children and adolescents would be set up. Drake has set up 61 group accounts in his nine years as an online pimp. The attackers who helped with the booking of fellow sex providers online could also be site administrators. As previously mentioned, attackers

NJ, 18 years old, is a full time college student taking up Hotel and Restaurant Management. She has been in the sex trade since she was 16 years old, as she needed to pay for school expenses including tuition fees.

She was introduced to the sex trade in a Facebook group account that was created and managed by a photographer. She became a group account administrator herself, a handler, and an attacker, but recently she has also become active as a sex provider. As a group administrator and handler, she used to manage 15 girls between the ages 16 to 18 years old. She has never met the girls she managed. She simply referred them to GMs.

NJ does not own a computer, laptop, or tablet. She only has a smartphone.

did not receive any payment or commission from those engagements they helped to book. This differentiates them from pimps who receive payments or commissions

In this study, at least a third of the respondents (34%) were engaged in face-to-face or non-internet-mediated transactions. They were managed by a pimp in most cases. In this type of transaction, the customer would be physically present to transact a sex deal with the pimp or the sex provider unlike in internet-mediated

transactions where deals were made on social networking sites, porn websites, and mobile chat applications. Majority of the respondents in this study (66%) transacted online in order to directly or indirectly solicit customers. Some of them were still managed by a pimp even if their transactions were mediated online. Two of them transacted both online and face-to-face. Some of the handlers identified in this study included online pimps on Facebook, homosexual street pimps, the children’s mothers, and a pimp in a bar.

Table 10. Summary of Respondents’ Commercial Sex Involvement

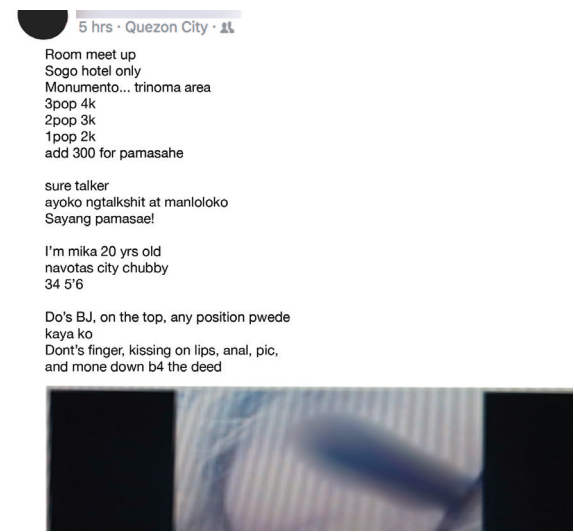
Nature of Sex Trade Involvement	Transaction Mediation			Total
	Internet-mediated N=21	Non-internet-mediated N=11	Both N=2	
Circumstances of Engagement				
Involuntary	2	1	0	3
Voluntary	19	9	1	29
Management				
Pimp	3	7	0	10
Freelance	17	3	0	20
Pimp/Freelance	1	1	0	2
Form of CSEC				
Prostitution	14	16	2	32
Sex Tourism	4	2	1	7
Pornography	3	0	0	3
Child Pimping	2	1	0	3
Transactional Sex	1	1	0	2
Trafficking	0	1	0	1

From the table above, it can be noted that there were more freelancers among those whose transactions were internet-mediated. More cases of sex tourism and all cases of pornography were internet-mediated. There were also children who would play the role of a pimp for their peers but would also be a sex provider at the same time, depending on circumstances. These child pimps are present both online and offline.

Information on what constituted a transaction was also gathered from the respondents, contact facilitator, and the pimp. Transactions included agreements on the characteristics of the child or adolescent and/or the customer; terms of payment; specific sexual acts to be performed including the do's and don'ts; length of the sexual service; date, time, and location of the service; and other conditions which could include transportation service or use of condom among others. These conditions were often posted in the Facebook group by freelancers. Sometimes, only the contact details of the handler or pimp was posted along with photos of one or more children

or adolescents being pimped. In one occasion, an adolescent female posted a “promo” in the Facebook group that Mervin, the study’s contact facilitator, had accessed. She advertised that she needed company in her sister’s house because she was alone. Mervin expressed interest in accompanying her without having sex. His offer was ignored.

Examples of the names of the Facebook group accounts included: PSP Crib 2; Favorite Walk; PSP for Rent; Take a Walk; PSP Walkers; Walker Finders; Metro Walkers; Chubby Bunnies; PSP on the Go; Favorite Coffee; Cainta-Rizal Walkers; Need Pizza, Candy, Coffee, etc.; Legit GM PSP; Walking Confession; Private Pinay; and Extreme Overdose to name a few. On the other hand, the websites that were used for CSEC included manila.craigslist.com; manila.backpage.com; planetromeo.com; wechat.com; and grindr.com. The mobile applications for WeChat and Grindr were also used. Below are photos of some of the posts used in a closed Facebook group for CSEC.



A freelance walker posts the conditions, location, and price for her service



A handler posts about a “promo” on massage services in specific locations with pictures of girls, some in provocative poses.

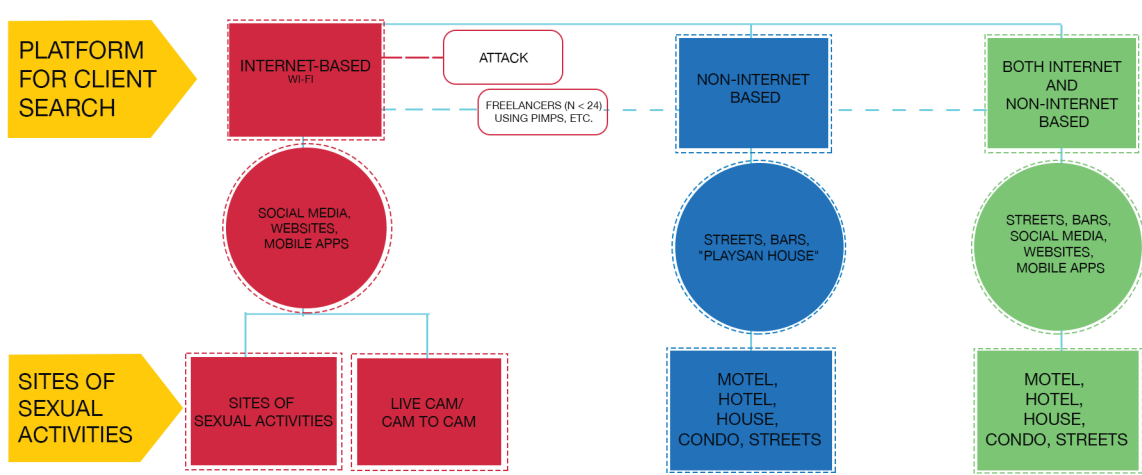
Non-internet-mediated transactions, which were the original form of transactions for providing sex services, were still common whether or not through the pimp. Like freelancing, these transactions have also evolved. Such transactions were categorized into either a personal/street deal, “meet-up then sex” deal or direct/sure deal transactions. Personal or street deals happen in the usual places where those involved in commercial sex and their pimps find their prospective customers or clients. Upon agreeing on the terms and conditions of the sexual service to be provided, the client and the PSP decide on a particular place where they can go for the agreed services to be rendered. Respondents mentioned that street transactions took place in areas like Malate and along Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City.

For the “meet-up then sex” deal, the client or guest is instructed to go to a particular place, which is convenient for the pimp and/or PSP. The meet-up is usually conducted in public places like malls. The respondents of this study identified Robinson’s Mall, Gateway Mall, and Mall of Asia as meet-up points. Prior to the meet-up, there

would have already been an agreed-upon sexual service with terms of payment and other conditions already established. The usual reason for a meet up is for the pimp or PSP to check the appearance of the client and evaluate if there are any safety issues. After the validation, they go to the agreed place for the sexual service to be rendered.

Direct or sure-deal online transactions, on the other hand, happen when the pimp or PSP have already ascertained the identity of the customer; thus, meet-ups would be unnecessary. This may be a result of the client having previously availed of sexual services from the PSP or having already built a reputation or relationship with the pimp. The reputation of a client can be built through recommendations and guarantees from PSP’s and other pimps. The pimp and the client agree on a particular place and time, which is usually a room in a hotel or a motel. The client then simply sends a message to the PSP indicating a room number. Among the hotels and motels that the respondents identified were Sogo, Manila Grand Opera, Eurotel, Nice Hotel, and Astrotel.

Figure 5. Process Flowchart of CSEC Transactions



The figure above presents the process of CSEC transactions that was gleaned from the respondents. First, potential clients were identified either through the internet, in person, or both. Depending on the medium, different platforms were used. Internet-mediated transactions utilized social media, websites, and mobile applications

to search for clients while non-internet-mediated transactions occurred on the streets, in bars and in a playsan. As previously mentioned, there are also combinations of internet-based and non-internet-based mediation.

The diagram also reveals the existence of an

attacker who is tasked to perform the search for clients. This form of internet-based searching allows the PSP to remain virtually anonymous. The attack or search is carried out by one of the PSP’s peers who then negotiates with the potential customer either personally or through the internet, free of charge. It has to be emphasized that this type of online mediation is different from cyber pornography. Cyber pornography is a form of CSEC where there is no actual sexual contact between the sex provider and the customer. It is a purely technology-mediated engagement where the PSP performs different sexual acts in front of a webcam while being watched and on occasion, being instructed, by his or her customer during a live streaming session over the internet.

Another form of cyber pornography is the use of recorded video material of children performing sexual acts instead of them performing it in real time for online streaming. In this case, the exploited child in the video can be different from the person who is chatting live with the customer. Among the respondents of this study, three were involved in cyber pornography. Two of them were pimped by their mothers and now live in shelters. The other one works in a highly organized cybersex trade. The table below presents their socio-demographic profiles.

Table 11. Profile of Respondents Involved in Cyber Pornography

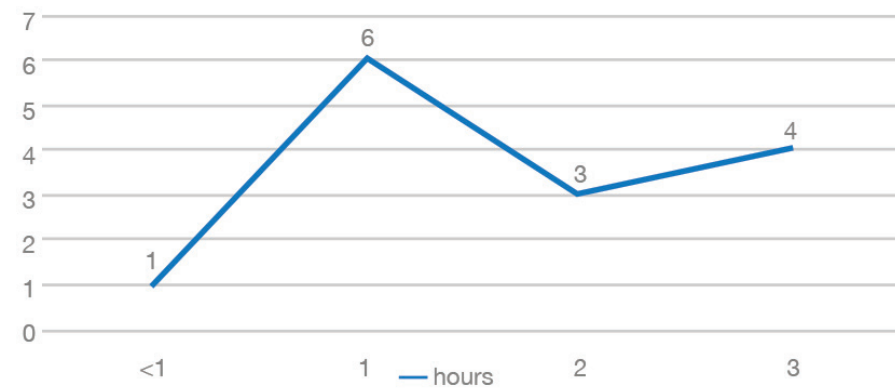
Alias	Age and Gender	Age of Entry into Sex Trade	Educational Attainment	Person Responsible for Entry	Mediation of Sex Transaction	Current Residence
Gigi	18, female	13	High school graduate	Mother	Internet	Shelter
Mitz	17, female	11	Elementary level	Mother	Internet	Shelter
Kaycee	17, gay male	16	High school level	Gay friend	Non-internet	Caloocan

TIME SPENT AND INCOME EARNED

In this study, the amount of time spent engaged in the sex industry only considered the actual time spent attending to a booked customer. It did not include the time spent searching for a client nor the amount of time spent in transacting and negotiating for a sexual service. Thus, time engaged in sexual services ranged from less than one hour to three hours per transaction. One hour was the usual amount of time set for engagements although majority of the girls in this study reported to spending two to three hours with a client. Among male respondents, engagements lasted from half an hour to one and a half hours. Some transactions have a number of “pops” or times of ejaculation specified instead of length of time with a customer.

Half of the respondents claimed to provide sexual services on call. They did not have a direct connection with any particular establishment nor did they have a specific shift as in to on the streets at a certain time. They recruited clients through social media, and from referrals from a friend or a pimp. Those who claimed to go on a regular shift recruited their clients through pimps or in establishments they were associated with. The figure below presents the amount of time the study’s respondents spent engaged in CSEC.

Figure 6. Time Spent Engaged in CSEC



With regard to payments, the most common were cash transactions, although money transfer was used to pay for cyber pornography. The usual arrangement as practiced by almost half of the respondents (44%) was payment after sex. In some cases, “money down” before sex was observed. In this case, the client would show the cash payment to the PSP and place it on a table, only to be taken by the PSP after the sexual service was provided. Other forms of payment can include the provision of clothes, mobile phones, gadgets, food, or a place to stay.

One respondent involved in cyber pornography reported on a payroll system where a certain number of hours was required to receive bi-monthly income issued every 15th and 30th day of the month. Based on this case, it was found that there was a particular administrative process that computed for the total amount earned per period depending on log-in times, number of chats, and duration of video streaming of children. This case

of cyber pornography is highly organized and involves several operation sites, many employees, and bank transfer commissions.

Majority of the respondents involved in internet-mediated sex were paid between 1,000 to 3,000 pesos per transaction. Children and adolescents involved in personal (non-internet-mediated) transactions were paid 500 pesos or less. One male respondent earned up to 5,000 pesos per transaction. Several factors affected the pricing of the sexual services to be rendered by the children. These included the nationality of the customer, the type and degree of sexual acts agreed upon, and the required characteristics of the PSP such as his or her age. Age was usually associated with the child’s “freshness”. To summarize, the table below shows the range of fees all the respondents received per sex transaction. The data is further categorized based on the type of mediation used for the transactions.

Table 12. Income Generated by Children’s Commercial Sex Engagement

Range of Fees (PHP)	Internet-Mediated	Personal
Up to 1,000	3	8
1,001 to 2,000	4	1
2,001 to 3,000	6	3
3,001 to 4,000	4	0
Above 4,001	2	0

Extrapolating the earning per transaction to the projected number of sex deals per week, majority of the respondents earned at least 2,000 pesos a week. This translates to a monthly income of no less than 8,000 pesos. A closer look at the income of the respondents according to type of transaction mediation revealed that the internet-mediated group earned more than the non-internet-mediated group. The children in the internet-mediated transaction earned between 1,000 to 4,000 pesos for two to three hours of sexual service while the many of those in non-internet-mediated transactions earned 1,000 pesos and up only when their customers were foreigners. For those working in the bars, there were commissions earned from drinks ordered by customers in addition to the payment for sex. Some received free food, groceries, or accommodations.

The two respondents who earned more than 4,000 pesos per transaction were pimped by their mothers for both cyber pornography and prostitution. Their customers were foreigners. One girl involved in cyber pornography earned up to 50,000 pesos for one transaction as shown on a payment transfer receipt. Another girl earned up to 20,000 pesos for one day from both prostitution and cyber pornography. On the other end of the spectrum was a street-based homosexual boy who was pimped by female prostitutes and never given a portion of any earnings. These three children are now living in shelters.

Apart from cash, some children and adolescents welcomed other material things such as food, clothing, or groceries as a form of payment. One girl was gifted with a mobile phone and tablet on top of the cash payment. Although for children

whose main driver was survival, sex was usually provided in exchange for meals or a place to stay. Additionally, based on key informants, students who engaged in prostitution were likely to charge higher fees and still attract customers because it is perceived that students take better care of themselves and that they are active only when in need of cash for enrolment. On the other hand, a girl who had already given birth, referred to as a MILF for “Mother I Like to Fuck”, was usually paid lower. In general, there were higher rates for foreigners

Billy, 17 years old, makes online commercial sex transactions. Both his parents have a job but his mother is an overseas worker. He described his activity as “pag-avail” or getting a guest or client online for paid sex. He got involved in this type of activity at the age of 16 years old. He learned about it from friends and decided he wanted to join them.

According to Billy, his friend didn’t force him to get into it. He said, “Hindi niya ako in-invite...parang nakita ko sa kanya na kumikita siya ng ganung pera. Kaya ko kasi pinasok ‘yun for self-support. I mean ‘pag may gusto kang bilhin, kaya mong bilhin tapos may ano ka pag aalis, may sarili kang pera.”

PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF COMMERCIAL SEX INVOLVEMENT

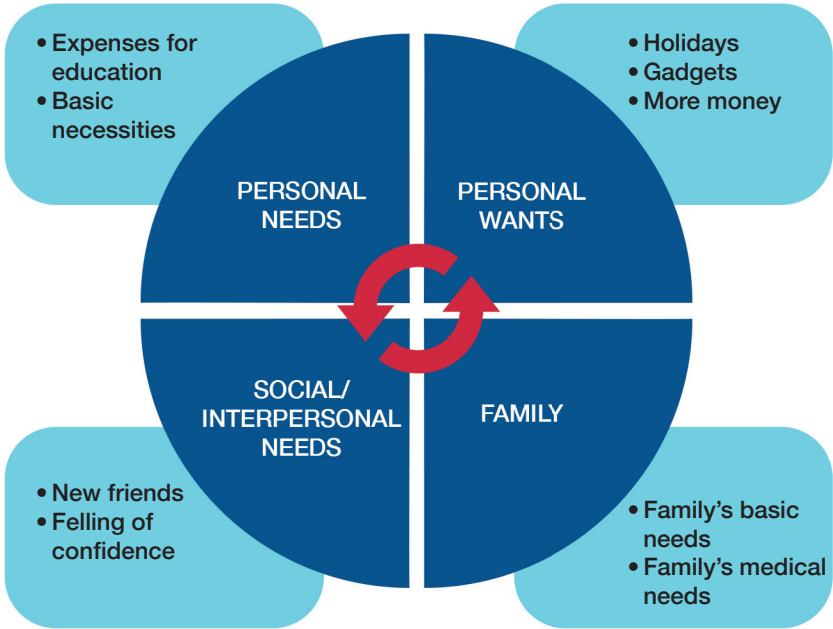
The respondents were asked why they were involved in CSEC and they cited several perceived benefits which included being able to satisfy personal needs, purchase “wants”, sustain social relationships, and provide for one’s family. The figure below presents the components of

these categories. It can be noted that the main benefit mentioned by majority of the respondents was having money to support one’s family and provide for their children. This included paying for household expenses, schooling, and medical needs. Others mentioned having an upgraded

lifestyle as a benefit while others still cited that they benefited from the feeling of belonging as well as a sense of independence. Some said that they developed confidence from being able to earn

and provide for their needs. From this information, it is evident that commercial sex involvement is perceived as a quick way to earn money.

Figure 7. Perceived Benefits from Involvement in the Sex Industry



REASONS FOR REMAINING INVOLVED IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

At least a third of the respondents (38%) reported that the reason why they remained in the sex trade was to help support their family’s needs. There was a notable difference in the reasons provided by the internet-mediated group and the non-internet-mediated group. Almost all of those in the latter group - or 7 out of 8 - have not exited the industry and remained in it mainly because of the need to support their family and to support themselves. In the internet-mediated group, there was more variety in their reasons. Such reasons included being able to support one’s self including one’s education, and to simply afford some luxuries. The key informants validated these reasons as well. From the narratives of many of the respondents, commercial sex involvement was considered a

job and if they had another source of income, they would not engage in it. The table below details the reasons for staying in the industry as expressed by the respondents.

By way of discussion, a framework for understanding the CSEC environment is presented in the figure above. This evolved from the data gathered during the course of this research. It considers the reality and presence of ICT which is continuously evolving; therefore, it will continue to affect the landscape of CSEC. Technological advancement has undeniably increased the vulnerability of children who have access to ICT, introducing several pathways, modes, settings, and forms of sexual exploitation

Table 13. Reasons for Staying Involved in CSEC

Reasons	Internet-mediated	Personal	Total
Support family	5	7	12
Support self	5	1	6
Social life	4	0	4
Education	2	0	2
Saving up	1	0	1

to the CSEC landscape. Considering that two-thirds of the youth have social media accounts primarily for the purpose of connecting with and gaining more friends, the way has been paved for these platforms to become vehicles for CSEC.

The inner circle shown in the figure is the CSEC zone where the child is surrounded by facilitating actors. These actors include the child's family, peers, pimps, or customers who offer money for sex and/or deceives a child into CSEC. These actors are dynamic and can sometimes become larger and stronger depending on the child's exposure to them. Two of the most relevant social circles for children and adolescents are their family and friends. Data revealed that children and adolescents in the sex industry were more open to their friends than to their families in discussing their involvement with the sex trade. However, the child can be influenced by any, some, or all of the actors in the figure. Alternatively, the child can simply move his or her way out into the safe zone outside the CSEC environment.

Located in the outer circle are structures that can facilitate or help a child move away from the CSEC environment by acting as a magnet for the child. It is a well-defined safe zone that no matter where the child exits, the child is supposed to find help. However, the structure has a wall that can be permeated by other factors. In this case, the internet, represented by thick or thin arrows, is a factor that could break down the protective wall or the safe zone so that the child is surrounded by a CSEC environment. Thin arrows are inherent and easier to regulate, as they do not cause much damage to the wall. The thick arrows are damaging and represent unregulated, irresponsible use of technology, breaking the wall of the safe zone. Thus, in order to make the wall less permeable

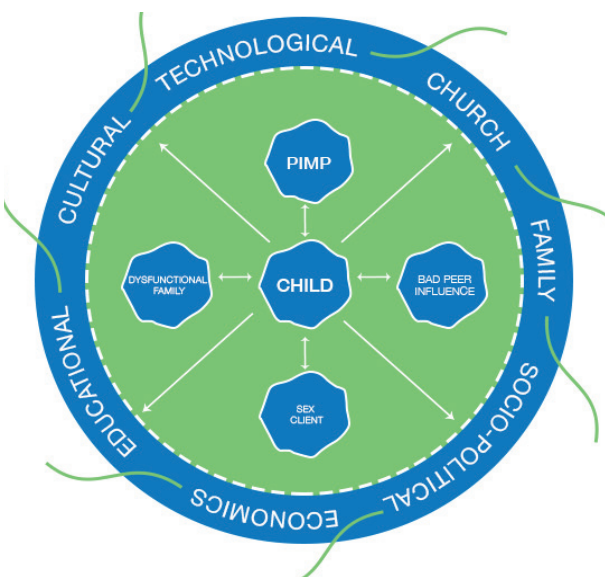
Jane, who was turning 16 years old the day after the interview, lives with friends in a room provided by Pabahay, a housing project by the municipal government. She started working in a beer house/ videoke bar three months before the interview. She learned the trade through her friend who is a bar girl herself. Jane decided to become a bar girl in order to support her own basic needs, as she no longer gets any financial support from any family member. She claimed that she only earns enough to support herself and does not give any financial assistance to family members.

Though Jane has had no negative experiences relative to her working in a bar, she has expressed guilt when she is "taken out" but stated that she will remain in the job for the money. She has thought about going back to school but prefers to be working. She dreams of having her own business in the form of a grocery or sari-sari store.

to negative influences or irresponsible use of technology, the entire safe zone and the structures within it must be strengthened.

While there are several mechanisms that regulate ICT in order to protect its users, including filtering of fraud and taking down or blocking of inappropriate content, access is far easier than control. A case in point is a group account that is supposed to operate in a specific catchment area but it is in this

Figure 8. A CSEC Framework Based on the Research



catchment area that sexual exploitation happens and specific group account engaged in CSEC cannot be easily identified. Traditional pathways where customers have to physically go to locations that are known to provide sex services are much easier to monitor.

A more detailed analysis of the data gathered revealed more differences between those engaged in internet-mediated transactions and those engaged in non-internet-mediated transactions. Those in the former group were slightly older with a mean age of 18 years old compared to those in the latter group where the mean age was 17 years old. There were also proportionately more girls in the internet-mediated group compared to the non-internet-mediated transactions group. Additionally, there were more boys involved in personal transactions. Those in the internet-mediated group also had higher educational attainment, more economic opportunities, and smaller household sizes compared to those engaged in non-internet mediated transactions.

In terms of the nature of CSEC, the data showed that:

- a) there were more freelancers in the internet-mediated group while there were more children managed by pimps in the non-internet-mediated transaction group;
- b) the range of fees per sex transaction was

generally higher in the internet-mediated group;

- c) the reasons for remaining in commercial sex were more varied in the internet-mediated group and included the need to support needs of the family, interpersonal and social needs, educational expenses, and personal wants needs while in the non-internet-mediated transaction group, the reason for remaining in the industry was mainly for supporting one's family.

Technology has provided the children and adolescents the opportunity to decide how to present themselves online. Thus, status updates, photos, and videos can be uploaded by the children and adolescents themselves. Similarly, they are able to control the content of their exchanges through social media or messaging applications. While there are benefits to this such has socialization and communication, enhanced learning opportunities, and access to health information (O’Keeffe and Clarke-Pearson, 2011), the risks of social media use should also be considered. These risks include cyberbullying, online harassment, exposure to sexting, and Facebook depression.

Cyberbullying is the deliberate use of digital media to communicate false, embarrassing or hostile information about another person, and it can cause profound psychosocial outcomes such as depression, anxiety, isolation, and sometimes, suicide. The phenomenon of sexting, defined as the sending, receiving, or forwarding of sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images via a cell phone, computer, or other digital devices, has become a pathway for pornography. Facebook depression on the other hand has been linked to social isolation followed by visits to risky internet sites and blogs that may promote substance abuse, unsafe sexual practices, or aggressive or self-destructive behaviours.

While much of the discussion at this point has been on the impact of technology on CSEC, personal factors remain and still have much significance. By nature, more Filipino youth today think that early sexual encounters are acceptable. The strong interest of the youth in achieving economic independence was evident in

the survey on the Filipino youth. This interest for economic independence also translates to being independent in decision-making. Many of the respondents in the study have reported that they decided on their own to enter the sex trade and to remain in it for the meantime.

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

The issues and concerns faced by the children and adolescents involved in CSEC were related to abuse, violence, fraud, health, alcohol abuse and substance abuse. They are discussed in this section with much consideration for the viewpoint of the respondents.

ABUSE, VIOLENCE, AND FRAUD

Thirteen respondents claimed that they had no experience with abuse, violence, or fraud during the course of their involvement in the sex industry. One respondent did not provide information on this subject. However, more than half of the respondents (56%) admitted to having experienced abuse, violence, or fraud. Among them, physical abuse was most commonly reported, followed by being forced to perform a sexual act that was not agreed upon, such as having anal or oral sex and having sex without a condom. Respondents usually experienced more than one type of abuse. The third most commonly reported issue was being paid a smaller amount than what was previously agreed upon or not being paid at all.

Almost a third of the respondents (31%) reported being cheated and/or scammed by their customers. One respondent reported that a customer stole her mobile phone. There were also instances where the customer was not who he claimed to be during the time the deal was being mediated. Other times, customers did not show up and so they would be tagged as customers who “talk shit”. Five respondents were threatened with violence by either a pimp, parent, or customer. One got a death threat from her mother and another was not fed until she agreed to render sexual services. There have also been attempts at detaining respondents, holding them captive, and abandoning them in an unfamiliar place.

Table 14. Number of Reports on Abuse, Violence, and Fraud

Form of Abuse, Violence or Fraud	Frequency of Reports
Physically Abused	10
Forced to Perform Sexual Acts	5
Reduced or Refused Payment	5
Scammed	3
Forced into the Sex Trade	3
Abandoned in Unfamiliar Place	2
Sexually Abused	2
Held Captive	2
Threatened	2
Robbed	1
Verbally Abused	1



Dennese Victoria/Plan International

Outside the actual sex transaction, the respondents also reported different forms of abuse such as physical, sexual, and verbal abuse from parents as well as fellow residents and staff in shelters. Physical abuse experienced was in the form of being punched, slapped, forcibly grasped and/or beaten. Sexual abuse included being molested while staying in a shelter, which was the case with one respondent. The children and adolescents also reported that they were aware that abuse was being experienced by their peers, friends, and/or family members who were also involved in the sex industry.

Although more than half of the respondents experienced abuse, violence, and fraud, only one of them reported it to the police. The initial report did not include the respondent’s involvement in CSEC; however, this was revealed in the course of the investigation. Two respondents reported incidents to their respective pimps who then blacklisted the customers. One respondent asked assistance from the barangay tanod. Those who did not seek help cited fear as the reason why they did not report the incidents. They were afraid that their family would find out they were prostitutes, that they would be busted for being prostitutes, that the authorities would not help them, or that the abuse they experienced was not serious enough to merit reporting.

In relation to this, there were narratives describing

self and mutual protection among the children and adolescents involved in the sex industry. Strategies included the following:

- a) Facebook accounts of would-be guests were collected and extended communication was established to ensure that intent to engage was real which was a measure against segs who “talk shit”;
- b) a PSP can size up the seg during a meet-up and when the guest did not look like the person he claimed to be based on photos he had sent, if he looked dangerous or he looked like he was hooked on drugs, and/or if the PSP feared for her safety, then he or she can decide to not push through with the transaction;
- c) a PSP could walk out on a customer when the customer makes a demand for the PSP to perform sexual acts outside the original agreement;
- d) and PSP’s can call on practices like “money down” or “no condom, no sex” to be observed.

These strategies showed the capacity of the children and adolescents in the sex industry to conduct risk assessments, which their own experiences, and that of their peers, could have contributed to. It implies that they have the ability to make choices regarding how the sexual services are to be transacted and delivered. For online-mediated transactions in particular, it is clear

that the children and adolescents were able to navigate their way around the online environment; thus, enabling them to assess risks and make decisions.

Such ability to negotiate, transact, and make choices reiterates what has been previously described two decades ago, that children are social actors, active in the construction of their own social lives and affecting those around them. Viewed in this frame, the research did not see children in prostitution, for instance, as innately passive victims but also as agents continuously acting to evade or resist abuse, capable of creating a sub-culture together with the other children, in order to cope with and survive the violence of their world (Protacio-Marcelino et al. 1998).

The contact facilitator and the pimp involved in this study mentioned that internet-mediated transactions offered mechanisms which enabled the screening of customers. This was established through restriction of access, giving feedback through the posting of a GMR, or gentleman's

HEALTH

Almost a third of the respondents (31%) claimed to have no physical problems or illness at the time of the interview. A quarter of them were noted to be underweight for their age. Four respondents were either observed to be coughing during the interview or shared that they had a cough. Three respondents said they suffered from occasional headaches and had difficulty of sleeping. When asked about the difficulty in sleeping, one girl said she would be awake all night chatting with friends or with clients.

Aside from their general health condition, the respondents were asked about their reproductive health. This included condom use, knowledge about sexually transmitted diseases, history of sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy. More than half (63%) of the respondents reported that they always required their clients to use condoms, primarily to avoid infections and secondarily, to avoid pregnancy. Eight children, including male respondents, reported that they

review, as well as verification of the customer's identity, which was usually done by the pimp. A more in-depth discussion of protection mechanisms offered by service providers can be found in the section on Protection Mechanisms.

only required condom use sometimes and not all of the time.

Again more than half of the respondents (69%) claimed to have some knowledge of STI's, HIV, and AIDS from various sources but mainly from friends and the television. Three respondents said they did not know about these diseases. It was noted that although many had heard of STI's, HIV, and AIDS, not all had the correct information. Examples of misconceptions included gonorrhoea or "tulo" being able to progress into HIV; HIV causing bad skin; having many partners could lead to HIV; smoking can cause HIV or; withdrawal can prevent HIV. Half of the respondents felt they were at risk for sexually-transmitted infections and HIV. Two did not consider the question relevant because they were involved in online pornography and had no direct physical contact with clients.

The understanding of the respondents about the prevention of infections was also probed. Condom

use was the most popular method of STI prevention. Some mentioned standing up and urinating right after a sexual contact as a preventive measure against STI's. Others considered getting a Pap smear, which was interpreted as "nagpapalinis", as means to cleanse the vagina from the dirty semen. A few revealed that they used cotton swab with alcohol and/or betadine to clean their vaginal orifice while others self-medicated with antibiotics. One respondent reported that she would press on the lower abdomen of the client to see if there is pain, or check if his penis smelled foul to determine if he was clean.

Almost half of the respondents shared that they had no ailment related to their reproductive health, and felt they had no need to see a doctor or a health professional although some of them recognized the need to consult a doctor. Among the complaints related to reproductive health was pain or burning sensation upon urination and foul-smelling vaginal discharge, which, along with multiple sex partners, implies a sexually-transmitted infection. One girl sustained vaginal injury from a client who was very aggressive while she had minimal vaginal lubrication.

Although almost half of the respondents (46%) perceived HIV as a possible risk, only three respondents had undergone HIV screening. One regularly visited a private HIV clinic in Cubao,

another visited a government facility, while the other regularly tested herself with a kit for HIV that she buys from a friend for 700 pesos per unit. Accordingly, test kits for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections are not available from drug stores but can be bought over the internet.

Two boys and one girl revealed that they previously suffered from "tulo" or gonorrhoea. The two boys were street-based and acquired the condition from gay clients but did not seek medical attention. One claimed to drink lots of water to clear his urinary tract while the other said he drank coconut juice for the same reason. A piece of advice given to one of the boys, which he did not follow, was to drink RC Cola mixed with Tide detergent. A girl who was forced into prostitution was brought by her mother to the hospital due to vaginal bleeding, which was caused by an incomplete abortion. Incidentally, she was found to have gonorrhoea as well. The girl underwent dilatation and curettage; antibiotics were also prescribed.

Almost a third of the girls (31%) became pregnant while they were active in the sex industry but only seven of them had live births. Their children, ages ranged from 2 months to 6 years old at the time of research, are living with them. One respondent was pregnant at the time of research. Two others had terminated pregnancies through abortion. The fathers of the children, except for one who



Dennese Victoria/ Plan International

was a customer, were boyfriends of the female respondents. Only one respondent was living with the father of her child at the time of interview. The rest of the female respondents have never been pregnant; two used birth control pills.



MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Two girls apparently had unresolved emotional issues. Annie was one of them. She was abandoned at birth by her parents and raised by a gay man until he passed away when she had just graduated from high school. She was gang-raped and currently lives alone with her 2-month old baby, with whom she has mixed feelings for. She was unsure whether she wanted to give the baby up for adoption or not. During her interview, she was very talkative, even about topics that were not being probed. However, at some point during the course of the study, she expressed emotional distress. It was noted that Annie wanted to unload her emotional baggage by talking to people whom she had not met before and who would probably not judge her. She was assured that her identity would be kept confidential.

Ashley, on the other hand, came from a dysfunctional family. She became a mother at 14 years old and entered the sex industry when she was 15 years old. At the time of the interview, she was 16 years old and had an older partner who was not aware of her commercial sex involvement. Moreover, she and her partner were active in their Catholic church. Ashley was poorly groomed and unkempt for her interview. She was very distressed until the end, fearing that the interview was a set-up. Many inconsistencies in her stories were noted and she exhibited poor eye contact.

Myka, verbalized that she found it difficult to stop her involvement with the sex trade because there were “voices in her mind” that commanded her remain in the sex industry. She admitted to smoking marijuana but denied that she was hooked on drugs. She considered her marijuana use as therapeutic and as a means to help her gain weight. She is one of the four who admitted to smoking marijuana. One respondent sniffed solvent in order to fall asleep while another one admitted to drug use. Less than a third of the respondents (31%) directly denied drug use. Additionally, majority of the respondents (75%) drank alcoholic beverages and it was usually done with friends and relatives. Only six respondents did not drink alcoholic beverages.

Another psychosocial aspect related to the adolescent developmental stage is sexuality. Michael, 13 years old, explained that his sexuality which he referred to as his “gayness”, was partly due to his being pimped to male customers. He was forced into performing sexual acts and fearing for his life, he learned to oblige. According to him, this led to his overt homosexuality. All forms of abuse, neglect, and exploitation undeniably have psychosocial consequences on the children and adolescents, although this was not discussed in detail with the research respondents.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Half of the children and young people in the study had not accessed programs and services of any kind from government agencies, non-government organizations, nor the private sector. Reasons for this included lack of knowledge of the availability of the services, lack of knowledge on how to access these services, having the perception that they will not be helped, and fear of finding out test results, specifically for those who are aware of the services for HIV testing. There were some who accessed government and NGO programs and services directly related to CSEC. These included health education seminars, reproductive health seminars, HIV information dissemination, and HIV/AIDS testing.

Others experienced dealing with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Philippine National Police (PNP), National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), especially those with court cases. Some mentioned their experiences with NGOs such as ECPAT, Stairway Foundation, and Child Hope. Most encounters with government agencies

and NGOs were generally positive except for two cases where respondents reported that they were reprimanded by a social worker or were not really helped by the police. One reported to being sexually molested while in a shelter.

Some accessed programs and services that were not specific for CSEC such as regular check-ups and consultation in government health centres, confinement in public hospitals, benefits from PhilHealth, scholarship from their LGU’s, and housing benefits. Others had access to the DepEd’s Alternative Learning Systems and the DSWD’s Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4P’s), the conditional cash transfer program of the government. There was one who benefited from the services and programs offered by the church - specifically, Youth for Christ - which was described as a source of comfort and help, especially in times of difficulty. Another asked a friend for information on HIV AIDS testing and condoms.

Table 15. Experience with Available Services

Services Accessed	Nature of Experience
Services not directly related to CSEC: scholarships, health check-ups, 4Ps program	Positive, provision of food was an incentive to attend health education, had no money to prepare scholarship requirements
Services directly related to CSEC: HIV testing, shelter, police, reproductive health education	Both positive and negative, experienced being reprimanded by a social worker, experienced sexual abuse
Church services	Positive experience, comforting

EXIT FROM THE SEX INDUSTRY

A great majority of the respondents were still active in the sex trade at the time of interview, although many of them expressed that they wished to leave the sex industry someday. Eight of the respondents have already exited the sex trade. Three respondents exited because they were

rescued from their pimps and were consequently placed in shelters while five respondents exited voluntarily. Among the five respondents, four were freelancers while one was managed by a pimp. Reasons for the voluntary exit of these five respondents are presented in the table below.

Table 16. Reasons for Voluntary Exit from the Sex Trade

Alias	Age and Gender	Transaction Mediation	Reason for Exit	Remarks
Jomar	19, male	Personal	Contracted gonorrhoea	Initiated into CSEC when he was “picked up” in Divisoria by a gay man, works as “barker” and jeepney conductor, claims he will not to do it again
Leen	19, female	Internet-mediated	No more need for extra income, prohibited by boyfriend	Entered the commercial sex industry at 17 years old to pay for the health expenses of her sick mother and decided to quit when her mother died, does not intend to go back to the sex trade
Rose	20, female	Personal	Went home to parents and had to take care of her child	Engaged in the commercial sex industry because boyfriend was jobless and she had a child to support
Isha	18, female	Internet-mediated	No more need for extra money	Had sex with a suitor she got to know through Facebook in exchange for the payment of her mother’s hospital bills but never did it again
Gemma	19, female	Personal	Got pregnant and was in her 7th month of pregnancy at the time of the interview	Entered the sex trade at 16 years old and was handled by a pimp in a bar, she stopped when she was 4 months pregnant, will re-enter the sex trade if she is unable to find another job

From the information gathered, the main reason for remaining in the sex industry was the lack of alternative employment that could provide a source of income to support one’s family. Another reason mentioned by a few of the respondents was the desire to sustain a particular lifestyle which required disposable income to afford gadgets, sustain vices like smoking, and pay for gadgets and pay for expenses related to going out with friends. There were other respondents who also cited the lack of assistance as a reason why they remained in the sex industry.

There were a few respondents who admitted that they enjoyed having sex with their customers but there were also others who were engaged in prostitution because they were threatened or

forced to. It is important to remember that not all of the perceived benefits from commercial sex involvement gathered by the study served as reasons for staying in the trade. Service providers confirmed that the girls found involvement in the sex industry as an easy source of income which enables them to meet their basic needs and afford luxuries. They also noticed that there has recently been a rise in the exploitation of boys in prostitution and cyber pornography due to a growing demand from gay clients.

PERCEIVED CHALLENGES AND CONCERNS

The respondents were also asked about the challenges they faced and their areas of concern. Lacking enough money for basic needs, getting an education and family problems were still the most common challenges identified by the children and young people in CSEC. They also reported on problems related to abusive customers and the stigma associated with commercial sex involvement. On the other hand, from the point of view of pimps and customers, challenges faced by children and adolescents in the industry had to do with their age and forced exit from CSEC. They said that children often had to fake their ages; pretending to be older to enter the industry, or younger in order to stay longer and/or have more customers. The pimp in this study only managed girls who were aged 15 to 17 years old. He would “retire” the girls he managed depending on their age or sexual performance.

The children cited financial and education-related assistance as part of their major concerns. Almost half of the respondents (47%) were not able to provide information about the kind of assistance they needed. Those who did were able to identify their priority needs to include direct financial assistance (53%), educational assistance (41%) and employment opportunities or livelihood assistance (26%). Assistance related to access to food, clothing, medical needs, and general support for the family came after. Other concerns were related to getting counselling, skills training, values formation, business opportunities, and transitional or long-term housing.

From the pimp’s perspective, opportunities for education and employment were the most urgent needs of the children and adolescents, which was consistent with what the children identified as part of their concerns. Although the pimp, Drake, stated that he could not identify a factor that was a sure deterrent from getting involved in the sex industry, he believed that a caring and loving family would lessen the chances of children and youth entering the sex trade. Service providers also acknowledged that poverty alleviation, formal and informal education, as well as support and education on the side of the family, are critical

in the prevention of children’s commercial sex involvement as well as the facilitation of their exit from it.

Rose, 17 years old, is a high school dropout and lives in a rented house in Quezon City with her parents, an older brother and his wife, two younger siblings, and a cousin.

Although she was born and raised in Metro Manila, she went to high school in Dipolog City where she lived with her grandparents. She used to cut classes with her friends and eventually dropped out of school to work in Cebu City as a domestic helper without her parents’ knowledge. After a few months, she returned to Manila upon her parents’ insistence and held various jobs as a domestic helper, waitress, and employee of a computer shop.

She entered the commercial sex trade to earn a higher income. She was introduced to the industry by a male friend whom she later learned was a creator of a Facebook group account of PSP’s, as well as, a pimp. She earned 1,500 pesos for 3 hours from her first two clients. Her third client stole her cell phone and did not pay her.

Rose said she would quit only if she was able to find another source of income. At the same time, she wants to finish high school and dreams of a good life for her family. She wants them to have their own house and a store.

PLANS AND HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

Some of the respondents (41%) stated that they wanted to continue with their studies, whether it was in the form of formal education, alternative learning systems or a vocational course through TESDA. Involvement in the sex industry was considered as a temporary job for some respondents. A quarter of the respondents (25%) hoped to have regular and decent jobs locally while others (16%) hoped

to find better work abroad. A few (19%) hoped to own a sari-sari store or start their own business. There were also those who wanted to live a simple life with their basic needs met, marry their partner, have a family, and/or raise their kids in better conditions. Desired professions mentioned by the respondents included being an engineer, lawyer, designer, cosmetologist, celebrity, and chef.

PROTECTION MECHANISMS

One of the aims of this research is to look at local child protection mechanisms that raise awareness and provide services to victims/survivors of CSEC. It also discusses the role of t in the protection of children from commercial sexual exploitation as viewed by the respondents

and other key informants. Child protection encompasses legislation, policies, processes, services and interventions, as well as, systems and structures that aim to prevent and respond to violence, exploitation, and abuse committed against children.

LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

As a State Party to a number of international human rights instruments including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, the Philippines is not lacking in legislation and policies that ensure the prevention of and protection from all forms of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse; neglect or negligent treatment; and exploitation. The literature review revealed several national laws on child protection in general, as well as child sexual abuse and exploitation specifically. These constitutional and legal provisions include the following:

- a) Article XV Section 3 of the Philippine Constitution states that “right of children to assistance, including proper care and nutrition, and special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions to their development” is to be safeguarded by the State;
- b) The Child and Youth Welfare Code (Presidential Decree No. 603) stipulates that every child has the right to protection against

- exploitation, improper influences, hazards and other conditions or circumstances prejudicial to his physical, mental, emotional, social and moral development;
- c) The law on the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination (RA 7610), as amended by RA 7658 and RA 9231, declares that it shall be the policy of the state to provide special protection to children from all forms of abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation and discrimination, and other conditions prejudicial to their development;
- d) The Anti-Rape Law of 1997 (RA 8353) has a provision for mandatory death penalty if the crime of rape is committed with any of the following aggravating/ qualifying circumstances, among others: a) when the victim is under eighteen years old and the offender is a parent, ascendant, step-paent, guardian, relative by consanguinity or affinity

- within the third civil degree, or the common-law spouse of the parent of the victim, and b) when the victim is a child below seven years old;
- e) The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (RA 9208) punishes certain acts of trafficking, acts that promote trafficking in persons, use of trafficked persons for prostitution and violation of confidentiality;
- f) The law on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Affording Stronger Protection for the Working Child (RA 9231) specifically limits the employment of children below 15 years old, with the same exceptions as R.A. 7658, with additional provisions regarding restrictions on the number of hours children are allowed to work, provisions on expanding working children’s access to education, social, medical, and legal assistance;
- g) The Violence Against Women and Their Children Act (RA 9262) reiterates that the State values the dignity of women and children and guarantees full respect for human rights, recognizing the need to protect the family and its members particularly women and children,from violence and threats to their personal safety and security;
- h) The Revised Penal Code (Act 3815) defines and punishes the following among other relevant crimes:

- Exploitation of Minors
- Rape (as amended by RA 8353)
- Acts of Lasciviousness
- Qualified Seduction
- Simple Seduction
- Acts of Lasciviousness with the consent of the offended party
- Corruption of Minors
- White Slave Trade
- Forcible Abduction
- Consented Abduction

However, it was revealed that while the Philippines has a good number of laws, policies and programs on child protection, there are limited funds and trained personnel for their implementation (Madrid et al, 2013) . Republic Act No. 7610 or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act is a comprehensive national legislation aligned with the Philippine Plan of Action for Children where a rights-based approach is adopted in developing plans for children, particularly in the areas of survival, protection, development, and participation. From 1990 to 2002, RA 7610’s implementation was poor largely because of the lack of budget. Additionally, in 2012, there were 31 laws and 17 pending bills in Congress, and a total of 93 Executive Orders, Administrative Orders, Memorandum Circulars, and Board Resolutions related to child protection from various government agencies but all of them had no budgetary allocations.

There remains a gap between the legislation and the programs or services available on the ground. It is also clear that the local government units are the key implementers of the legislation, particularly - by virtue of the law - the Local Council on the Protection of Children (LCPC). As of 2008, there was no clear and specific budget allocated to child protection, and prevention of child maltreatment in the health, education, and social welfare sectors (Madrid et al, 2013). It was only when DILG Memorandum Circular 2012-120 was issued that all local chief executives, down to the barangay level, were mandated to allocate 1 percent of their internal revenue allotment for the strengthening and implementation of programs, projects and activities of the LCPC per Section 17 of RA 9344 or the Juvenile Justice Act.

The Child and Youth Welfare Code codifies laws on the rights of children and the corresponding sanctions in case these rights are violated. Pursuant to its provisions, as well as that of Executive Order 233, the Council for the Welfare of Children was created as an attached agency of the DSWD. It serves as the focal inter-agency body of the Philippine government for children, mandated to coordinate the implementation and enforcement of all laws, as well as to formulate, monitor, and evaluate policies, programs, and measures for children. In its State of the

Filipino Children Report (SFCR), the CWC cited significant projects and initiatives to address child labour, street children, violence against children, child sexual abuse, children in armed conflict, child trafficking, children in cybersex and child pornography, as well as, children of indigenous peoples (CWC, 2014). They are summarized in the table below.

Table 17. Projects and Initiatives Addressing CSEC Issues

Selected CSEC Issues	Significant Projects and Initiatives (2014)
Child Sexual Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• “Keeping a Sexually Abuse Free Environment (SAFE) for Out-of School Children and Youth (OSCY) Through Protective Behaviour” aims to reduce the reported cases of abuse and violence of children and youth in the family or the community• Parent Effectiveness Service (PES) and Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Training (ERPAT) are separate modules regularly used by the DSWD to discuss children’s rights and child abuse issues
Child Trafficking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 500 communities have been reached and mobilized against child trafficking• The Philippines retained its Tier 2 ranking in the 2014 Global Report on Trafficking in Persons which means that though it does not fully comply with the minimum standards of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), they are making significant efforts to do so
Online Sexual Exploitation and Child Pornography	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Department of Justice organized a national conference of agencies focused on the protection and well-being of children; these included the Committee for the Special Protection of Children (CSPC), Inter-Agency Council against Trafficking (IACAT), Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council (JJWC), and the Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography (IACACP)• The National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) issued a memorandum establishing guidelines for implementing the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009; the law gives the NTC an authority to promulgate rules and regulations of the installation of filtering software that will block access to or transmission of any form of child pornography

The Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking is the body created by law to coordinate and monitor the implementation of Republic Act No. 9208, otherwise known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003. Since its creation, the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking has been at the forefront of the drawn-out battle against trafficking in persons. With support from an expansive range

of partners which include government agencies, the private sector, civil society, international development organizations, and law enforcement organizations, it has made significant strides in the Philippine government’s campaign against trafficking in persons. However, it is still yet to be established how this multi-sectoral network is actually utilized by or integrated into the LCPCs, where much work on CSEC needs to be done.

IACAT is composed of the Secretaries of the Department of Justice and the Department of Social Welfare and Development as the chairperson and co-chairperson, respectively. Other agencies included as members of the council are the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Philippine

Overseas Employment Administration, Bureau of Immigration, Philippine National Police, Philippine Commission on Women, Commission for Filipinos Overseas, Department of Interior and Local Government, Philippine Centre for Transnational Crime and three NGO’s representing the sectors of women, overseas Filipino workers and children respectively. Other ex-officio members include the National Bureau of Investigation, Council for the Welfare of Children, the National Youth Commission, and the Anti-Money Laundering Council of the Philippines. The Office of the Vice-President was also given an ex-officio status as Chairman Emeritus of the Council.



As of June 2017, the US State Department ranks the Philippines at Tier 1 for the second year in a row, which means that the Philippine Government fully meets the Trafficking Victims Protection Act’s minimum standards

Bernadette J. Madrid, Laurie S. Ramiro, Sandra S. Hernandez, John J. Go, and Juanita A. Basilio. (2013) Child Maltreatment Prevention in The Philippines: A Situationer. Acta Medica Philippina. Retrieved from: <http://actamedicaphilippina.com.ph/content/child-maltreatment-prevention-philippines-situationer>
DILG Memorandum Circular 2012-120 signed by Secretary Jessie Robredo. Retrieved from: http://www.dilg.gov.ph/PDF_File/issuances/memo_circulars/DILG-Memo_Circular-201275-70d3a46722.pdf.

LOCAL SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

The Local Council for the Protection of Children is recognized to have the power to advance the development of the Filipino child; however, The Filipino Child Policy Brief No. 7 stated that “Its current status in the country does not quite show it. Evidently, the primary challenge is how to convince all LGUs to organize their own LCPC and - more importantly - how to encourage them to activate, strengthen, and sustain the already organized LCPCs. Factors that hinder LGUs from organizing/reorganizing and strengthening the existing LCPCs should be addressed.”

While Presidential Decree 603 Article 205 created the Council for the Welfare of Children, Article 87 of the same PD mandated that every barangay council should encourage the organization of a Local Council for the Protection of Children and coordinate with the CWC in drawing and implementing plans for the promotion of child and youth welfare. The LCPC is hosted at the local government unit, operating at a multi-level system that includes the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children; City, Municipal, and Provincial Councils for the Protection of Children; and the Regional Committee for the Welfare of Children.

Included in the functions of the LCPC are the preparation of an annual action plan focused on children with a corresponding budget, preparation of the annual progress report on the situation of children, and monitoring of compliance with laws and ordinances on children. Memorandum circulars have been issued to organize/reorganize the LCPC in all levels of LGU’s to ensure the synchronization and integration of policies, programs, and projects for children. However, not all LGU’s have heeded and responded to the DILG’s call.

In a review of the effectiveness of the LCPC’s on the protection of child rights, it was concluded that the LCPC’s have been largely ineffectual in improving the situation of children even with substantive investments (CWC 2012) . The major issues affecting LCPC effectiveness that were identified by the review included the following:

- a) the lack of understanding about what the LCPC is for and why it is organized coupled with the perception that the memorandum circulars simply encourage but do not mandate its establishment since the directives only enjoin compliance;
- b) the weak link between the LGU and the LCPC which should push and sustain the LCPC functioning;
- c) the LGU’s perception that they do not have enough budget and have too much to do in multiple barangay committees, leading to confusion about what to prioritize;
- d) the lack of “follow through” after the LCPC orientation has been given;
- e) the unavailability of baseline information on problems and issues, which is critical to mobilization and consensus formation; and even when there is reliable information, certain issues are not addressed – e.g. drugs, violence;
- f) changes in leadership (election periods) which affects functionality.

Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2010). The Filipino Child Policy Brief No. 7. Retrieved from: http://www.unicef.org/philippines/brief07_fnl.pdf...

The Council for the Welfare of Children commissioned a study in partnership with UNICEF on the functionality of LCPC’s entitled, “Towards More Effective Local Councils for the Protection for Children in Child Rights Responsive Governance in the Philippines”.

SERVICE PROVIDERS

CHILD PROTECTION UNIT NETWORK

The Child Protection Unit Network , initially set up at the Philippine General Hospital, developed 19 units as of the end of 2005 and works in various regional and provincial hospitals, to provide expert services for abused and exploited children. The services include medical examination, video cameras for interviews with child victims, an initial visit from a psychiatrist for screening or assessment of the degree of trauma the child may be experiencing, therapy sessions for the child as needed, and on-site social workers who also conduct home visits. Should the child live outside

their catchment area, the child will be referred to relevant agencies.

Aside from having the most comprehensive services to offer which include a wide range of medical, psychological, and legal services, it also has strong links with the PNP, NBI, DOJ, other health facilities, as well as, other NGO’s. While DOH regional hospitals have Women and Children Protection Units, the comprehensiveness of the CPU at the PGH, as well as, its organizational structure has yet to be replicated.

CHILD-FRIENDLY INVESTIGATION STUDIOS

The Rules on Examination of a Child Witness established by the Philippine Supreme Court have been effective in ensuring better testimonies by children in legal proceedings. Child-Friendly Investigation Studios , one of the main features of such rules, have been increased across the country to give child victims the necessary support when recounting their traumatic experiences, and to provide all the needed legal, medical, psychological, and rehabilitation services. CFIS are managed by the Violence against Women and Children Division of the NBI.

Five out of the sixteen CFIS are considered “one-stop shops” that are equipped with interview rooms with audio facilities and cameras for closed circuit TV (CCTV) and one-way mirrors, a medico-legal examination cubicle, a therapy room, a playroom and an investigation room. They are staffed with a team of social workers, a medico-legal officer, and an investigator. The remaining eleven CFIS are more simply equipped. The NBI provides a space for the CFIS in their regional and selected district offices which are located in big cities.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

As a concrete example, services for CSEC in Quezon City include temporary shelter, counselling, financial assistance, educational assistance, medical assistance, and legal assistance, including assistance during court hearings. According to a key informant from QCSSDD, the DSWD national office has a budget for victims of trafficking that includes the capital assistance of 10,000 pesos as part of the reintegration program. QCSSDD works

with ECPAT, Third World Movement against the Exploitation of Women, Women’s Crisis Centre, and International Justice Mission. They meet and coordinate regularly at the local committee level of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT). QCSSDD also shares information, joins meetings, and pursues advocacy up to the barangay level.

Based on the Global Monitoring Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation by ECPAT

ECPAT’s Global Monitoring Report can be retrieved from: http://www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/global_monitoring_report-philippines.pdf

Mrs. Cion, Social Welfare Officer III of the Special Projects Division and the Women Welfare Coordinator of the Quezon City Social Service Development Department (QC SSDD)

SPECIALIZED UNITS FOR CYBERCRIMES

The Philippine National Police Anti-Cybercrime Group or PNP-ACG investigates all cybercrimes. It maintains a database of information on all crimes where ICT is used. The National Bureau of Investigation Cybercrime Division also investigates all cyber-related crimes and maintains an Incident Response Team and Digital Forensic Section. However, despite the existence of these units, there is still concern about how law enforcement officers apply child-sensitive and gender-sensitive investigation in their work. There are also procedural limitations that have been raised because existing legislation does not have clear provisions on search warrants involving telephone intercepts, listening devices,

IP addresses, and the like. Since cybercrimes - particularly cybersex and cyber pornography - may occur outside the geographical jurisdiction of the Philippines, the Department of Justice Office of Cybercrime acts as the central authority when it comes to all matters relating to international mutual assistance and extradition for cybercrime cases. It has a linkage with the PNP, NBI, as well as, the Philippine Centre on Transnational Crime. This center is where INTERPOL Philippines, which carries out investigations beyond the country’s borders, is housed.

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

The research team identified 14 CSOs that were likely to be involved in the protection of sexually exploited children and adolescents in Metro Manila. However, only half of them currently have programs or services for children in the commercial sex industry. The most common services or programs undertaken by the seven CSOs listed are medical, dental, and psychological care, as well as lobbying and/or advocating at the policy level. Secondary to these were educational assistance

including access to non-formal education; skills training for commercially exploited children; training or capacity-building of stakeholders such local government officials law enforcers, teachers, women, and employees in the tourism industry; and campaigns or public advocacy. Three organizations managed shelters. One provided legal support while another conducted research on CSEC. This information is summarized in the table below.

Table 18. Selected CSOs in Metro Manila with Services for CSEC

Programs and Services	Tahanan Sta. Lucia	ECPAT	Child-hope	Stairway	FPOP	CATW-AP	PACT
Direct services							
Residential facility/home care/shelter							
Medical/dental/psychological care							
Educational assistance/non-formal education							
Legal/paralegal support							
Support services							
Policy advocacy/lobbying							

Training/capacity- building							
Campaign/public advocacy							
Research/publications							

Of the seven CSOs, only five provided direct services – Tahanan Sta. Lucia, ECPAT Philippines, Child Hope Philippines, Stairway Foundation, and Family Planning Organization of the Philippines. Two CSOs, Philippines Against Child Trafficking and the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women-Asia Pacific, provided only support services as they were coalitions or networks composed of member-organizations. Both ECPAT Philippines and Stairway Foundation provided a comprehensive package of direct services to identified CSEC victims/survivors. These included residential facilities or home care; educational assistance or access to non-formal education; medical or psychological services; and legal/paralegal support and skills trainings. Aside from direct services, they were active in support services such as policy advocacy and lobbying, as well as, training and networking.

The children and adolescents interviewed reported to have sought out intervention services offered by both government offices and NGOs. This could be because a part of the sample of respondents were identified through GO’s and NGO’s. It was duly noted that there was a lack of services which the children needed considering the protection issues that they reported on, such as abuse and health concerns. Youth and adolescent programs, in general, are much less visible than programs for children, more so in the area of protection. Reproductive health-related initiatives were accessed by the respondents in the study and recognized as necessary services.

Protection mechanisms shown in this research were largely in the area of social services and health. For health, this included some prevention like health education. Raids and rescue operations were perceived as detrimental and the respondents reported that they, along with their pimps, had protection mechanisms against them.

These came in the form of identifying hiding places or getting advanced information about the raid. A respondent involved in cyber pornography felt that the virtual environment was a “safe environment” as far as his physical safety was concerned.

Considering that there are budgetary constraints for the implementation of legislation, the role of NGO’s cannot be overemphasized, particularly in the area of support services. From the data gathered, the NGO’s were partly supporting the GO’s interventions from policy advocacy, lobbying and research to training, capacity building and public campaigns. During the research, it was found that a residential care facility worker in a government agency was on “placement” which meant working in a government institution but being paid by an NGO. Apart from support services, NGO’s also provide direct services like medical, dental, and psychosocial care services among others.

Aside from gaps in implementation, there appears to be room for optimization of existing systems and structures brought about by different factors. These include a lack of awareness of the general public and even service providers on the existence of structures and mechanisms; lack of clear procedures and protocols; lack of resources including facilities, human resources, and financial resources; fragmentation of services; poor LGU cooperation; poor coordination and collaboration between and among agencies; dearth of research, particularly evaluation studies of services and policies; and predominance of rescue mechanisms over protection and prevention mechanisms that involve families, communities, and socio-political institutions.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The key findings of this research are presented in this section. First, with regard to the respondents included in this study, a mean age of 18 was determined, with boys generally being younger than girls. Less than half of them completed high school. Prior to entering the sex trade, some of the children and adolescents had other sources of income, mostly in the service industry. Family living conditions of the respondents were generally poor, with large household sizes.

The traditional players in CSEC, namely the pimp, the client, and the sex provider, still exist but their dynamics have changed largely because of technological advancements. Whereas before, sex providers could be found either in establishments or on the streets; now they are present in a virtual environment through social media, commercial sex websites, and commonly used applications. This has given sex providers the various options; whether to transact face-to-face or online, whether to go freelance or through a pimp, whether to remain a sex provider or have other concurrent roles such as being an attacker, group administrator, and/or pimp.

The children and adolescents in the sex industry were able to navigate, negotiate, and transact within both real and virtual CSEC environments. The pimps have also evolved in the way they operate in the industry. In the same manner, customers now have several means to access or book paid sex services without having to go to the streets, bars, or clubs. Children and adolescents involved in internet-mediated sex transactions were likely to be older, have higher educational attainment, work as freelancers, receive higher income, and enter the sex trade for reasons other than to help meet their family's basic needs.

Entry and initiation into the industry was largely influenced by peers and the need to support one's family. Transactions were facilitated by technology. The main reason for entry remained to be poverty but other reasons such as wanting to have extra money for personal wants such as clothes, gadgets, among others; and getting involved in paid sex "just to try it" were revealed by the children and adolescents. These reasons were confirmed by the pimp, clients, and service providers. Common issues and concerns related to the sex industry are abuse and health-related concerns including pregnancy, STIs, and mental health.

The main reasons for remaining in the industry were to have a steady job and to support the needs of one's family. Income from commercial sex involvement ranges from less than 1,000 pesos to 50,000 pesos. On the other hand, the main reasons for voluntary exit included no longer needing extra cash as in no longer having to pay for the hospitalization of a family member, and health concerns such as getting STI's or becoming pregnant. Expressed conditions for exit were access to educational and economic opportunities.

National legislation and policies, as well as local mechanisms and structures to implement these laws, are in place. However, the effective implementation is hampered by budgetary constraints, lack of awareness about the existence of the mechanisms and structures, and the lack of political will, among others. In relation to this, CSOs play a major role in ensuring that laws are implemented and mechanisms are functional as take on activities related to policy advocacy, training and capacity building, public advocacy,

and research.

As the CSEC landscape is evolving, so is the language being used. Language appears to put the sex trade in the mainstream as many of the words commonly used in the CSEC environment, particularly for the internet-mediated transactions,

are ICT-related terms. It is used to destigmatizing the sex industry, increasing tolerance for CSEC, signifying a culture that is constantly evolving. With the strong influence of peers and ICT, particularly social media, any child, or adolescent is at risk of being engaged in CSEC.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations are geared towards identifying the needs of CSOs so their capacity to address CSEC can be strengthened, as well as, the gaps that they can help to address

CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR CSOS

CSOs working on CSEC need to develop an understanding of the commercial sex industry within the context of ICT. There is also a need for service providers to be more technologically competent and proficient. Additionally, discourse and discussions on child protection within the context of the view of children and the youth on work versus non-work must be reopened, in consideration of the sexuality and sex behaviour of adolescents. Ultimately this will have an impact on lobbying for the effective and efficient provision of appropriate and relevant basic service for children and adolescents as there needs to be more services for the youth as much of the current

interventions are already geared towards children.

The youth in particular are able to make their own decisions and act on them; thus, they must be guided in making choices and they must be provided with options. However, each CSO has a set of limited services for CSEC which may impede their ability to respond to all of the needs of the youth. Thus, CSOs must foster stronger networks and collaborate with each other so that they can assist children and adolescents with accessing the specific needs that they the young people themselves have identified.

EXISTING GAPS TO BE ADDRESSED

Educational assistance must be provided to help at-risk children complete their secondary education. Many of the girls involved in this study found that without a high school diploma, it was difficult to find a job even as a crew member of a fast food franchise. Others still realized that they were not eligible for vocational training. Completing one's high school education, whether in a formal or informal setting, provides a wider range of options for adolescents; enabling them to advance their education, get vocational training or find employment. Indirectly, it can also delay pregnancy or marriage.

The youth need support to develop alternative marketable skills for employment. At the same time, they need access to micro-credit loans or micro-grants for income-generating endeavours as low family income exerts pressure on them to seek ways to support the needs of their family. Many of the respondents wanted to be owners and managers of their own businesses but easy money generated from commercial sex involvement proved to be very attractive as well. Some respondents had stated that even if they had other sources of income, these would become supplementary to the income generated from their engagement in the sex industry.

There must be greater investment in programs and campaigns for social and behaviour change that is aimed at promoting and facilitating changes in knowledge, attitudes, norms, beliefs, and behaviours. This could take the form of mass-media campaigns that could include the use of ICT such as short message services and websites. A website could be developed to support physical and mental wellness for children involved in the commercial sex industry which should include online tools that are interactive and educational. In this way, the children and adolescents who don't want to openly seek out information about sensitive topics can still access reliable health information, advice, and treatment.

Ideally, adolescents should be leading mass campaigns, or at the very least, they should be involved in such. CSOs can help to facilitate this and advocate for community programs that raise the awareness of families and community members, including the schools and the church, on CSEC. Responsible use of technology, its long-term effects on children and adolescents, as well as, services for CSEC should also be promoted. Additionally, CSOs can strengthen their partnership with government to build systems for CSEC prevention and provide intervention programs that go beyond direct service provision. These interventions must be enhanced to make them child-centred, as well as, family-focused.

Government programs that could directly or indirectly impact CSEC must also be reinforced. This includes the Adolescent Reproductive Health Program of the DOH and the promotion of the responsible use of technology under the recently formed Department of Information and Communication Technology. In relation to this, the regulation of ICT in general must be enforced at the national level. It can be noted that while mechanisms for restricting access of children to certain websites in schools exist, they are not known to the public, especially to parents. Thus, there is a need for a widespread information campaign that will increase the technological proficiency of parents, teachers, and service providers.

At the local level, the LCPC must be fully functional as it was designed with clear mechanisms on how the council can coordinate with the different levels

of government – from the municipal or city level to the provincial, regional, and national levels. This is primarily the responsibility of the LGU. Additionally, they should be able to support the social workers in the documentation and case management of CSEC cases. In Quezon City, a senior social worker said that there were not enough social workers to address the many concerns of various subsectors. These included women, children, the elderly, PWDs, and the homeless, among others. There was also no one who could focus on anti-trafficking for sexual purposes or sexual abuse.

In terms of research, it is recommended that this particular study is expanded to cover a national scale with more attention to protection mechanisms. The needs or capacity assessment of service providers in the area of CSEC; the document and identification of best practice models for CSEC promotion, prevention and intervention; support for care-givers program of service providers; and community-based interventions to balance centre-based approaches should be covered.

Finally, it is evident that the best way to curb the problem is still prevention. There are just too many factors that are pushing children and adolescents into CSEC and not enough deterrents. If the family unit, and other fundamental systems such as the socio-political, educational, economic, religious, cultural, and technological systems were able to deliver the most basic services, there would be less children and adolescents in the sex trade. The government at all levels and society as a whole must take more active measures to ensure protection mechanisms for children are in place

ANNEXES

INTERVIEW REPORT FORM FOR CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

Research on Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children In Metro Manila

Interview Report Form

Interviewer/s: _____

Date of Interview: _____

PART ONE: Summary / Profile / Interview Highlights

PART TWO: Demographic Profile

Category of CSEC: (check all that apply)

- ☐ Child prostitution
- ☐ Child pornography
- ☐ Child trafficking for sexual purposes
- ☐ Child sex tourism
- ☐ Child marriages and forced marriages
- ☐ Others _____

If necessary, provide an explanation: _____

General Information on the Child/Family

- 1. Name of Participant (Alias):Jane
- 2. Present Age: turning 16 (if not known, estimate)
- 3. Sex:
☐ Female ☐ Male ☐ Others_____
- 4. LGBTQS¹: _____ (self-declared)
- 5. Educational attainment:
- 6. Religion:
- 7. Ethno-linguistic group:
- 8. Civil status:
☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Cohabiting ☐ Others
- 9. Place of birth:
- 10. Present place of residence:
- 11. Household Size:(number of people):
- 12. Parent’s occupation:
Father:
Mother:
- 13. Parent’s educational attainment:
Father
Mother
- 14. Number of siblings:
- 15. Number of children (if applicable):
Ages of children: _____

¹As declared by the child: lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, straight

PART THREE: Detailed Thematic Report/Narrative

Some points to consider when completing the Interview report Form

- 1. For some questions, a checklist of responses was provided to help us quantify the findings/results. The lists were taken from previous studies on prostitution. Do not be limited by the items on thelist. Add as much items as necessary.
- 2. In the narrative – narrate the story as told by the participant. At the end of each narrative, it is recommended that you add your impressions, thoughts, interpretation, and what you think would be relevant to the analysis. This would help in the analysis.

A. PRESENT LIVING CONDITIONS/FAMILY BACKGROUND

PRESENT LIVING CONDITIONS

Where do you live?
How long have you been living there?
How would you describe the place where you live?
Who do you live with (at present)? How would you describe your relationship with the people you are living with?
(If not from this area) What made you come here? How did you end up here?

FAMILY BACKGROUND

Where does your family hail from?
(If there are family members not living with child), Where are they? What do your parents/siblings do?
How would you describe your relationship with your parents/siblings?

B. INVOLVEMENT IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

ENTRY/INITIATION

Can you describe your involvement in this “activity”²? What do you do?
How old were you when you first started in this activity? Age:
How did you end up in this activity?
Who got you involved into this activity?

Narrative: Entry/Initiation

CUSTOMER/CLIENT

Where and how do you look for a client/customer? Or how do they contact you?
Have you ever met a “customer” or “pimp” through social media/internet?
How would you describe your customers? (appearance, social status, etc.)
What good and bad things can you tell me about your customers?

²It is advisable to use the term used by the child when referring to the “activity” or his/her involvement in the sex industry. In the previous research of PSTCRRRC (formerly UP CIDS PST) on children in the sex industry, the child participants used terms such as e.g. pangongostomer, gimik, to refer to their involvement. This yielded interesting and nuanced insights on their involvement with significant implications for interventions. Do not use “work” or “trabaho” (there are fierce debates on this) unless they refer to their involvement as such. It is not advisable to use adult and technical terminologies such as “CSEC”, “child sex tourism” when referring to their involvement, and in case the child uses such terms, ask the child to explain his/her understanding of it.

HOURS AND INCOME

In a day, how much time do you spend in this activity? in a week?
How much do you earn from this activity?
How are you paid? How often?
Is it enough for your living? Why?

How are you paid?	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know
Money				
Food				
Alcohol				
Drugs (This includes marijuana, herbals, party pills, etc.)				
Place to stay/shelter				
Paying off debt				
Barter _____				
Others _____				
Others _____				

Narrative: Hours and Income

FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

Do your parents/family know that you are in this activity?
If yes, what was their reaction and what did they tell you? If no, why not?
Do you have family/relatives/close friends who are in a similar kind of activity?
What's your general impression of their situation?

Who knows about your involvement in sex industry	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know
Mother				
Father				
Sister				
Brother				
Close friend (specify e.g. in school, neighbor, etc)				
Partner				
Others (only friends at the bar know)				
Others _____				

Significant Others in the Sex Industry	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know
Mother				
Father				
Sister				
Brother				
Close friend (specify e.g. in school, neighbor, etc)				
Partner				
Others _____				
Others _____				

Narrative: Family and friends in the sex industry

C. PROTECTION ISSUES AND BEHAVIOR

EXPERIENCE OF ABUSE, VIOLENCE AND EXPLOITATION

Have you experienced harassment/abuse/violence/injury related to this activity?³
Who did this to you? How often does this happen? How did it affect you?
Have you ever experienced harassment and abuses because of your gender/sexual orientation?
Did you report it to the police? Why? Why not?
Where/who did you go to for help or advice?
How and where did you get information of where to go for help? Were you able to get the help that you needed?

	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know	Didnt Answer
Have you experienced harassment/abuse/violence/injury related to this activity?					
Did you report it to the police?					

³E.g. refusal to pay, money stolen by client, threat or actual physical assault or violence, rape, received abusive text messages

Bad Experience in prostitution (check all that apply)
☐ Customer refused to pay
☐ Pimp refused to pay
☐ Money stolen by customer
☐ Physically assaulted by customer
☐ Physically assaulted by pimp
☐ Threatened with violence
☐ Received abusive text messages
☐ Rape
☐ Others ☐ Others

If child did NOT report harrasment/abuse/violence to police, why not?
(check all that apply)
☐ Not serious enough
☐ Not believe police would help
☐ Didn't want to reveal I was a sex worker
☐ Police will blame me because I'm a sex worker
☐ Fear of being busted for prostitution
☐ Didn't want the hassle of court, etc.
☐ Too much hassle
☐ Fear of repercussions
☐ Manager advised not to
☐ Others
☐ Others
☐ Don't know
☐ Didn't answer

Narrative:

RAID AND RESCUE

Are you aware of raids being conducted by the government (police, NBI, with DSWD) on places where minors are reported to be exploited?
What do you think of raids? In what ways are they helpful to the child or not?
Have you ever been caught in a raid?
If yes, what was your experience during the raid? After the raid?
If no, ask the child: Do you personally know anyone who was “rescued” during raids?

	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know	Didnt Answer
Are you aware of raids being conducted by the government?					
Have you ever been caught in a raid?					
Do you personally know anyone who was “rescued” during raids?					

Narrative: Raid and Rescue

HEALTH ISSUES

In general, how would you say your health is?

Narrative: General Health Condition

	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know	Didnt Answer
Has there ever been a time when you needed to see a doctor/health professional since you started in this activity?					
Have you heard of STI, HIV, and AIDS?					
Do you feel that you are at risk for infection with STI/HIV?					
Condom use?					
HIV Screening?					
Do you drink alcohol?					
Have you tried taking drugs?					
Have you ever been pregnant?					

What illness/conditions have you suffered since you started in this activity?
What did you do to get well? Where/who did you go for help or advice? Were you able to get the help that you needed?
Has there ever been a time that you needed to see a doctor/health professional since you started in this activity? How come?
Who paid for the treatment cost?

Narrative: Illness/conditions

Have you heard of STI, HIV, and AIDS? How? From where?
Do you feel that you are at risk for infection with STI/HIV? Why or why not? What do you do to protect yourself from / prevent HIV/STI?
Condom use/access? Why? Where?
HIV screening? Why? Where?

Narrative: STI, HIV, and AIDS

Do you drink alcohol?If yes, how much? How often? Why?
Have you tried taking drugs? Why? Why not?
When you drink and/or take drugs, who are usually with you?
Have you ever been pregnant? (if yes, probe circumstances)
Who helps you take care of your child, especially when you are not at home?

Narrative: Alcohol/Drugs/Pregnancy

EDUCATION

If child is going to school:
Where do you go to school? (if ok to reveal name of school)
How are you doing in school? Have you ever repeated a year? Dropped out of school?
If yes, why?
Have you encountered any problems in school? If yes, who/where did you to go for help?
What assistance do you need when it comes to your schooling?

	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know	Didnt Answer
Is the child currently enrolled in school?					
Problems encountered in school (enumerate):	Assistance needed: (enumerate):				
Narrative: If child is going to school					

If the child is not going to school:
If you are not in school, why?
Do you want to go back to school? Why? Why not?
If yes, how do you think this will be possible? What do you plan to do?
What assistance do you need? Who do you think can help you?

	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know	Didnt Answer
Do you want to go back to school?					
Reasons why you want to go back to school?	Assistance needed to go back to school: (enumerate):				
Narrative: If child is NOT in school					

CSEC and the School system
Do/did you talk about CSEC issues (e.g. children in prostitution) in school, or with your classmates?
What do/did they think about it; about the people in this kind of activity?
Do/did they (teachers, classmates) know about your activity here? If yes, what do/did they say about it?

Narrative: CSEC and the School system

VOCATIONAL SKILLS/TRAINING

Do you have any vocational skills?
If yes, what types of vocational skills do you have?Where and how did you learn these skills?
What (other) skills are you interested to learn? What skills do you think would be useful?
Do you know where to go for training?

Narrative: Vocational skills/training

OTHER SOURCES OF INCOME, AND ACCESS TO CREDIT

Did you have any other job before this activity? If yes, where and when?
Do you have other means of earning a living⁴, aside from/outside of this activity?
How did you become involved in this?
How do you use/spend your earnings?
Are you able to save money? If yes, how? How much? If no, why not?
If you are short on cash, where do you go for help/credit?

Narrative:Other sources of income / Use of income

Narrative:Savings and Access to credit

⁴May be in the informal sector, probe carefully for any alternative/extra-legalsources of income

D. EXPERIENCE IN ACCESSINGPROGRAMMES AND SERVICES
(GOVERNMENT/NGO)

Have you tried going to the barangay/government/NGO⁵ and ask for (any form of) assistance?
If yes, why? If no, why not? If yes, which agencies/NGOs/other groups did you approach?
What kind of assistance did you ask for? What kind of assistance did they offer?
How did you know of those agencies/services? How and where did you get information of where to go for help or assitance?
What can you say about the assistance that you received? About the staff/officials?

Narrative:Experience in accessingprogrammes and services
(government/ngo)

E. SELF-REFLECTION AND PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

REASONS FOR ENTERING THE SEX INDUSTRY

Looking back, can you tell me the reasons why you got involved in this kind of activity?

MAIN Reasons for entering the sex industry (check all that apply)

To pay for household expenses (bills / food / rent)

To pay for Social life / Going out / Luxuries

Saving up

Pay for my education

To support my kids/family

Forced/deceived into prostitution

Exploring sexuality

Other/previous jobs did not pay well

Friend was doing it

⁵You may need to specify an agency to help the child in answering this question.

Family was doing it

Thought it looked exciting and glamorous

Curiosity

Support gambling

Support alcohol/drug use

Others

Others

Narrative:reasons for entering the sex industry

BENEFITS / GOOD EXPERIENCES IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

You shared some bad experiences. Can you share some good experiences that you’ve had, if any, since starting at this activity?

What have been the benefits of being in this kind of activity?
What do you see are the benefits and disadvantages of being male/female/trans/ gay/lesbian/others in this activity?

Benefits of involvement in the sex industry	Yes	No	N/A	Dont Know
I’ve been able to save for my education				
I’ve made new friends				
I've become more assertive/confident				
I’ve got more skills				
I’ve had a better lifestyle				
I’ve got more money				
I’ve been able to travel/go on holidays				
I’ve been able to pay for my schooling				
I’ve been able to pay my debts				

I've been able to provide for my children/family				
I can now afford to pay for social life/going out/ luxuries				
There have been no benefits				
Others _____				
Others _____				

Narrative:good experiences and benefits

REASONS FOR STAYING IN THE SEX INDUSTRY

What makes you remain in this activity?
For how long are you prepared to remain in this activity?

Reasons for remaining in the sex industry (check all that apply)
<input type="checkbox"/> To pay for household expenses (bills / food / rent)
<input type="checkbox"/> To pay for Social life / Going out / Luxuries
<input type="checkbox"/> Saving up
<input type="checkbox"/> Pay for my education
<input type="checkbox"/> To support my kids/family
<input type="checkbox"/> Threatened / forced to stay in prostitution
<input type="checkbox"/> Enjoy sex
<input type="checkbox"/> No other sources of income
<input type="checkbox"/> All my Friendsare doing it
<input type="checkbox"/> Family are doing it
<input type="checkbox"/> It is exciting and glamorous
<input type="checkbox"/> Support gambling
<input type="checkbox"/> Support alcohol/drug use
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't want to do anything else
<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know what else to do
<input type="checkbox"/> Can't get help to leave

<input type="checkbox"/> Don't know how to leave
<input type="checkbox"/> Others _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Others _____

Narrative:Reasons for remaining in the sex industry

PLANS FOR LEAVING THE SEX INDUSTRY

Do you have any plans to change/leave this kind of activity? If yes, why?
When? If no, why not?
What could be the alternatives for you?
What are you doing now to make this happen?
What assistance do you need to make this happen?

Assistance needed to leave the sex industry (please enumerate)

Narrative:Plans for leaving the sex industry

PLANS AND DREAMS

What plans and dreams do you have for yourself (next year? in the next five years? long-term?)
What plans and dreams do you have for your family?

Plans and dreams for self		
Next year?	Next five years?	Long-term?
(Enumerate)	(Enumerate)	(Enumerate)

Plans and Dreams for the family (please enumerate)

Narrative: Plans and dreams

F. CHILDREN AS KEY INFORMANTS: RECOMMENDATIONS:

What do you think are the MOST TYPICAL PROBLEMS/CHALLENGES THAT CHILDREN (IN PROSTITUTION/TRAFFICKED) FACE? What would you say are the three most common?

typical problems/challenges that children (in prostitution or trafficked) face (check three most common)
<div><input type="checkbox"/> Stigma</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Money</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Family</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Health</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Anger</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Threats from trafficker/agent</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Abusive customers</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Others _____</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Others _____</div>

Narrative: challenges that children (in prostitution/trafficked) face

What do you think are the TOP PRIORITY ASSISTANCE OR SERVICES NEEDED by (CSEC)? Mention at least three.

Top priority assistance/services needed by (CSEC) (mention 3)
<div><input type="checkbox"/> Emergency</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Transitional or long-term housing</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Counseling</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Legal Aid</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Medical care</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Clothing and feed</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Employment assistance</div> <div><input type="checkbox"/> Financial assistance</div>

___ Peer support

___ Security/protection from traffickers or pimps / customers

___ Others _____

___ Others _____

Narrative: Top priority assistance/services needed by (CSEC)

Do you know of other children who are in similar situation as yours? If yes, about how many? Where and how can they be found?
What advice would you give to other children who are at risk of, or who are in similar situation?

Narrative:

G. OTHER THEMES OR TOPICS THAT STOOD OUT IN THE INTERVIEW THAT ARE NOT COVERED IN OUR QUESTIONNAIRE

List each theme and provide a narrative

LIST OF TERMINOLOGIES USED IN CSEC

Category or Reference of Usage	Term	Definition
Sexually exploited child	Walker, nagpapa-bugaw	General term for sexually exploited child
	PSP	Personal sex provider or paid sex provider; another term for sexually exploited child
	Reg	Short for Regular; actively seeks for clients all the time
	BIN	Badly in need – actively seeks for clients when in need of money
	Attacker	One in the industry who refers GM (gentleman or generous man) to friends
	Freelancer	A sexually exploited child who does not have a pimp or handler; solo flight
Customer	GM	Gentleman or generous man; good client
	Guest, customer	General term for a client of a sexually exploited child
	Afam	Foreigner clients
Middle man or woman	Handler, bugaw	General term for pimp
	Mamasan	Pimp in a playsan house
	Mommy	Pimp in a bar
	Creator	Maker of a group account
	Admin/administrator	Mediator and manager of social media accounts; can also be the creator
Service	Walk, raket, service, pop, coffee, candy, pizza, escort service, poka, keme	Different terms for paid exploitation in prostitution in general
	Aura/awra/pag-aaura	Work in beerhouse/videoke bar
	Contct-contact, take out, magpalabas/magpapalabas	Taken out from bar for sex
	Table-table	Drinking, chatting with customer inside bar
	Booking	Client call or customer schedule
	Pasok	Going to the playsan

Venue of Transaction	Facebook	Closed account; membership requires approval by both admin and creator; members can freely post
	Secret group	A social media account with a very tight security where membership is by referral or endorsement by another member, duly approved by the creator or administrator, and where posts can be made only by the creator or administrator. A member could be a customer, walker or handler. The latter has priority for posting.
	Website	A static, non-interactive site; offers online sex, cyberpornography, and downloadable content
	Playsan/pleysant house	Probably derived from “pleasant house” or “pleasure house”, it is a house or apartment rented by a Mamasan where women walk in and display themselves for walk in customers to choose
Details of Transaction	Rate, fee	Amount paid per number of pops or duration of sex; for males in the industry, fees also depend on size or measurement of penis
	Arawan	Earnings from the bar are given daily at the end of each work shift
	Nilabasan	Ejaculation of customer that serves as basis for payment
	Palit-bato	Drugs for sex transactions
	Do’s and Don’ts	Services or sexual acts which the sexually exploited child will and will not allow, for example CIM, CIF, CIB, WOT, DATY, GEP
Requirements for Transaction	Past walk	Past experience, or the sexually exploited child’s track record, including FR (field record, feedback report);
	Fan review	term used by PSP; written by GM;

LEGISLATION AND POLICIES RELATED TO THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN

LAWS

THE CHILD AND YOUTH WELFARE CODE (PRESIDENTIAL DECREE NO. 603)

Article 3 (Rights of the Child), Sec. 8 stipulates that every child has the right to protection against exploitation, improper influences, hazards and other conditions or circumstances prejudicial to his physical, mental, emotional, social and moral development.

Chapter 2 (Working Children), Art. 107 (Employment of Children Below Sixteen years) provides that children below sixteen years of age may be employed to perform light work which is not harmful to their safety, health or normal development and which is not prejudicial to their studies.

Article 59 (as amended by RA 7610 as regards penalty) thereof attaches criminal liability to any person who:

- Conceals or abandons the child with intent to make such child lose his civil status
- Abandons the child under such circumstances as to deprive him of the love, care and protection he needs
- Sells or abandons the child to another persons for valuable consideration
- Neglects the child by not giving him the education which the family’s station in life and financial conditions permit
- Fails or refuses, without justifiable grounds, to enroll the child
- Causes, abets, or permits the truancy of the child from the school where he is enrolled
- Improperly exploits the child by using him, directly or indirectly, such as for purposes of begging and other acts which are inimical to his interest and welfare
- Inflicts cruel and unusual punishment upon the child or deliberately subjects him to indignities and other excessive chastisement that embarrass or humiliate him
- Permits the child to possess, handle or carry a deadly weapon, regardless of ownership • Allows or requires the child to drive without a license or with a license which the parent knows to have been illegally procured

SPECIAL PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AGAINST CHILD ABUSE, EXPLOITATION, AND DISCRIMINATION (RA 7610), RA 7658 AND RA 9231

As Amended By provides special protection to children from all forms of abuse, neglect, cruelty, exploitation and discrimination, and other conditions prejudicial to their development; provide sanctions for their commission and carry out a programme for prevention and deterrence of and crisis intervention in situation of child abuse, exploitation and discrimination.

Provides the general framework unto which all child protection laws in the Philippines are subsequently anchored.

Section 4 mandates the Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to formulate a Comprehensive Program Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination. It has developed the Comprehensive Program on Child Protection, which includes, as one of its components, the prevention of abuse and exploitation of children.

It serves to punish the following acts:

- Child Prostitution and Other Sexual Abuse (Art. III, Section 5, pars. a and b and Section 6);

- Child Trafficking (Art. IV, Secs. 7 and 8); Obscene Publication and Indecent shows (Art. V, Sec. 9);
- Other Acts of Abuse (Art. VI, Sec. 10, par. a, b, c, d & e);
- Sanctions for Establishments or Enterprises (Art. VII, Sec. 11);
- Working Children (Section 16),
- Subjecting Children of Indigenous Cultural Communities to any or all forms of Discrimination (Art. IX, Sec. 20)

SOLO PARENTS WELFARE ACT (RA 8972)

Provides for benefits and privileges to solo parents and their children.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT (ECCD) ACT (RA 8980)

AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOR AND AFFORDING STRONGER PROTECTION FOR THE WORKING CHILD (RA 9231)

Punishes the following:

- Violation on employment of children below 15 years of age, hours of work and prohibition on employment of children in certain advertisements
- Violation on Prohibition against worst forms of child labor/hazardous work
- Violation on engaging children in all forms of slavery, for prostitution and for pornography
- Violation on use of children for production and trafficking of drugs

ANTI-TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS ACT (RA 9208)

Considers as trafficking the adoption of children for prostitution, pornography, sexual exploitation, forced labor, slavery, involuntary servitude or debt bondage. Creates the Inter Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT)

Section 3 of the said law defines trafficking in persons as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer or harboring, or receipt of persons with or without the victim’s consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a persons having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation which includes at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs.”

“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall also be considered as ‘trafficking in persons’ even if it does not involve any of the means set forth in the preceding paragraph”.

Section 21 mandates the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) to formulate a comprehensive and integrated program to prevent and suppress trafficking in persons. It also calls government agencies to implement preventive, protective and rehabilitative programs for trafficked persons (Section 16)

This Act punishes certain acts of trafficking, acts that promote trafficking in persons, use of trafficked persons for prostitution and violation of confidentiality. It provides legal protection and establishes mechanisms for the support of trafficked persons as follows:

Considers trafficked persons as victims rather than as offenders

- Recognizes the right to privacy of trafficked persons during investigation, prosecution and trial
- Gives trafficked persons preferential entitlement under the government’s Witness Protection Program

- Provides protection and assistance to trafficked persons who are foreign nationals
- Mandates government agencies to establish and implement preventive, protective and rehabilitative programs for trafficked persons
- Establishes a trust fund to be used exclusively for prevention, protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs
- Creates the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking in Persons which is mandated, among others, to formulate a Comprehensive and Integrated Program to prevent and suppress trafficking in persons including reintegration program and develop a mechanism for the timely, coordinated and effective response to trafficking cases

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN ACT (RA 9262)

Under this enactment, it is reiterated that the State values the dignity of women and children and guarantees full respect for human rights. It also recognizes the need to protect the family and its members particularly women and children, from violence and threats to their personal safety and security

The law defines “Violence against women and their children” as “any act or a series of acts committed by any person against a woman who is his wife, former wife, or against a woman with whom the person has or had sexual or dating relationship, or with whom he has a common child, or against her child whether legitimate or illegitimate, within or without the family abode, which result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering, or economic abuse including threats of such acts, battery, assault, coercion, harassment or arbitrary deprivation of liberty.”

It includes, but is not limited to the following abuses committed against women and their children:

- Physical Violence;
- Sexual Violence;
- Psychological Violence; and • Economic Abuse.

Section 32 mandates government agencies and local government units to establish programs such as, but not limited to, education and information campaign and seminars or symposia on the nature, causes, incidence and consequences of such violence particularly towards educating the public on its social impacts. It further provides that it shall be the duty of the concerned government agencies and LGUs to ensure the sustained education and training of their officers and personnel on the prevention of violence against women and their children.

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND WELFARE ACT (RA 9344)

Establishes a comprehensive juvenile justice and welfare system and creates the Juvenile Justice and Welfare Council under the Department of Justice, and of its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR)

ANTI-CHILD PORNOGRAPHY ACT (RA 9775)

Provides the full legal armour against producers, transmitters, sellers and users of child pornography in whatever form, as well as the means of production, dissemination and consumption, in public and private spaces

THE ANTI-RAPE LAW (RA 8353)

This provides for mandatory death penalty if the crime of Rape is committed with any of the following aggravating/qualifying circumstances, among others, a) When the victim is under eighteen (18) years of age and the offender is a parent, ascendant, step-parent, guardian, relative by consanguinity or affinity within the third civil degree, or the common- law spouse of the parent of the victim; and b) When

the victim is a child below seven (7) years old. It further, classifies the crime of Rape as a Crime Against Persons (no longer a private crime or crime against chastity).

AN ACT PENALIZING TORTURE AND OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN AND DEGRADING PUNISHMENT (RA 9745)

Recognizes torture committed against children as punishable by law

REVISED PENAL CODE (RA 3815)

Revised Penal Code defines and punishes the following relevant crimes:

- Article 267 – Kidnapping and Serious Illegal Detention
- Article 268 – Slight Illegal Detention
- Article 270 – Kidnapping and Failure to Return a Minor
- Article 271 – Inducing a Minor to Abandon His Home • Article 272 – Slavery
- Article 273 – Exploitation of Minor
- Article 276 – Abandoning a Minor
- Article 277 – Abandonment of minor by a persons entrusted with his custody and indifference of parents
- Article 278 – Exploitation of Minors
- Article 335 – Rape (as amended by RA 8353)
- Article 336 – Acts of Lasciviousness
- Article 337 – Qualified Seduction
- Article 338 – Simple Seduction
- Article 339 – Acts of Lasciviousness with the consent of the offended party • Article 340 – Corruption of Minors
- Article 341 – White Slave Trade
- Article 342 – Forcible Abduction
- Article 343 – Consented Abduction

DATA PRIVACY ACT OF 2012 (RA10173)

AN ACT DEFINING CYBERCRIME, PROVIDING FOR THE PREVENTION, INVESTIGATION, SUPPRESSION AND THE IMPOSITION OF PENALTIES THEREFOR AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES (RA 10175)

POLICIES, FRAMEWORK, AND STRATEGIES

Organization/ Agency/Level	Title	Description
National	Child 21: The Philippine National Strategic Framework for Plan Development for Children	<p>A comprehensive guide for various stakeholders in designing their plans and programs for Filipino children. Using the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as its framework, Child 21 follows a rights-based approach to achieving its vision of a child-sensitive and child friendly society</p> <p>Sets a vision for Filipino children’s welfare and development in the year 2025. It provides a road map, rather than a comprehensive or detailed plan, for national government, local government units, private initiatives and non-governmental organizations to use when planning priorities for action and in allocating and utilizing resources to promote the rights of Filipino children. The vision of Child 21 was that the services of these stakeholders would converge on the child and on the protection of his or her rights throughout his or her life cycle</p>
	National Plan of Action for Children (2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• seeks to harmonize with the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and World Fit for Children (WFC) goals and target;• NPAC prescribes: a) broad nationwide interventions, cutting across life stages; b) interventions specific to a particular life stage; and sector specific interventions. In terms of protection, NPAC is aligned with the Comprehensive Program on the Protection of Children, a joint effort by the Department of Justice and the Department of Social Welfare and Development

Organization/ Agency/Level	Title	Description
	Comprehensive Programme on Child Protection (CPCP)	Envisions that by 2010, all identified CNSP will have been provided with appropriate interventions including rescue, recovery, healing, and reintegration services; and legal and judicial protective measures. Children at risk shall also be prevented from becoming victims of various forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence by making available and improving basic social services such as education, health, and nutrition.
Regional	ASEAN Guidelines for the Protection of the Rights of Trafficked Children (2007)	A set of guidelines stipulating the minimum standards of care and protection for child trafficking victims aims to lead the region towards protecting and upholding the human rights and dignity of trafficked children. Agencies, institutions, and social service providers are encouraged to meet the minimum standards while assisting children victims. More importantly, the ASEAN Guidelines lays down the basis for the formulation of national guidelines in each of the ten-member countries of the ASEAN
National	Philippine Guidelines for the Protection of Trafficked Children (2008)	Provides the minimum requirements that should be considered and observed at all stages of care and protection of children victims of trafficking. It includes specific measures on identifying a trafficked child, handling the child upon initial contact, providing protection and support on the child and his/her family, and securing the child's access to justice
	Manual on Law Enforcement and Prosecution of Trafficking in Persons Cases	Aims to provide law enforcers and prosecutors with a step by step guide from investigation to conviction of human traffickers. Prepared by law enforcers, prosecutors, and a consultant, the manual discusses the roles and responsibilities of relevant agencies in the enforcement and prosecution of the anti-trafficking law, the establishment of criminal liability, the tools and principles in handling cases of trafficking, and the programs and services for the protection of the victims.

Organization/ Agency/Level	Title	Description
National, IACAT	Philippine Anti- Trafficking in Persons Database (PATD)	<p>a web-based data banking system that can produce timely data that are essential for policy formulation and program development. It intends to systemize the information about the trafficked persons and the assistance provided for the victims from the moment of identification up to their full recovery and social reintegration.</p> <p>One component of PATD is the National Recovery and Reintegration Database. It aims to document the profile of trafficked persons. It is designed for the use of social workers and other social service providers who directly manage human trafficking cases. It is also an online facility that keeps track of the delivery of psycho-social, economic, and other reintegration services, as well as of the referrals made between service providers.</p> <p>The other component, the Law Enforcement and Prosecution Database, seeks to monitor the investigation and prosecution of trafficking cases and to facilitate the provision of legal assistance to victims. It also has the capacity to generate periodic reports on the investigation and prosecution of trafficking in persons cases. It is intended for the use of law enforcers, investigators, and prosecutors.</p>
National, National Telecommunication Commission (NTC)	Memorandum Circular No. 01-01-2014	Provides guidelines for ISPs for the installation of filtering software that will block access to or transmission of any form of child pornography

National, DepEd	DepEd CP Policy	<p>Aims for effective implementation of a zero tolerance policy for any act of child abuse, exploitation, violence, discrimination, bullying and other forms of abuse.</p> <p>Prohibited Acts</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Child abuse;2. Discrimination against children;3. Child Exploitation;4. Violence Against Children in School;5. Corporal Punishment;6. Any analogous or similar acts; and7. Bullying or Peer Abuse <p>Establishment of CHILD PROTECTION COMMITTEE (CPC)</p> <p>Composition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Head/Administrator –Chairperson• Guidance Counselor/ Teacher –Vice Chairperson• Representative of the Teachers as designated by the Faculty Club• Representative of the Parents as designated by the PTA• Representative of pupils/students as designated by the Supreme Student Council• Representative from the Community as designated by the Punong Barangay, preferably from the BCPC. Functions of CPC's:• Initiate information dissemination programs and organize activities for the protection of children;• Establish a system for identifying students who may be suffering from significant harm based on any physical, emotional or behavioral signs;• Monitor the implementation of positive measures and effective procedures in providing the necessary support for the child and for those who care for the child; and• Ensure that the children's right to be heard are respected and upheld in all matters and procedures affecting their welfare.

CASE SUMMARIES OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH ENGAGED IN CSEC

LUISA

Luisa is 19 years old and currently lives with her family in Pabahay, a local government housing project in Navotas City. She is the second eldest daughter among seven children. Her eldest sibling is 21 years old while her youngest sibling is about to turn 2 years old. Her father is a construction worker and her mother is a homemaker. Luisa talks about her family with much affection. She is also a mother to a 1-year-old child whose father is already married to someone else. He had abandoned Luisa when he found out that she was pregnant.

Luisa started her engagement in CSEC when she 16 years old. At the time, she had asked her friends in Pabahay if they knew about any possible work she could do to help support her family. “Kinakapos kami, minsan wala kaming kinakain,” she said. It was only after “getting booked” that Luisa found out what that actually meant, but she went ahead with the arrangement anyway because she needed the money. She said no one forced her into being with the men who paid for her services, and that she agreed because of her dire financial needs. She said, “Nasa akin yun kapag payag ako o hindi...pumayag na ako kasi magkakapera naman ako, makakakain na ang pamilya ko.”

For her first booking, she was taken by her friends to the customer’s house. These friends, a lesbian couple, served as her pimps for two to three months. A fee of 1,500 pesos would be charged per transaction, with 300 pesos going to her pimps. However, Luisa said her pimps could earn more money since they would ask the men to pay for extra fees on top of the cut they got from her. This was what influenced her decision to get bookings on her own. She did some networking and gave her phone number to contacts so they could directly contact her. This way, she avoided having to pay commission to her pimps.

Currently, she charges between 1,000 to 1,500 pesos per booking but accepts 500 pesos when she has no choice. She said, “Kapag walang-wala, kapag wala akong pera...eh kailangan ko ng pera. Pinapatos ko na, sayang din ‘yun. 500 din ‘yun eh. May magagawa pa ba ako? Magkano rin ‘to.” There are also instances wherein she allows her customers to negotiate or haggle with her, especially if they are regulars. Still, she feels bad when she has to take less money for each booking. “Kasi parang kapag ang baba, parang ang hirap na eh. Parang ayoko nang pumayag ng ganito kaliit. Baka sabihin nila sobrang baba ko. Hindi kagaya ng kapag malaki parang ang sarap sa pakiramdam – 1,500 ka na,” she shared.

When she doesn’t get direct bookings, she goes to a playsan where girls can walk in and wait for men to choose them for sexual services. The transactions are mediated by a mamasan so payment is a bit more complicated. According to Luisa, since the mamasan is the only one involved in the negotiation of payments with the customers, only the mamasan knows the actual price being charged to the customers. The mamasan can tell the girls a lower fee was charged when the actual amount could be higher. Girls must also give the mamasan 100 pesos out of the agreed upon payment for every transaction. This is in addition to the 200 pesos that the mamasan asks from the customers per booking.

Luisa also said that she has an advantage when she goes to the playsan because she is the youngest amongst the girls who go there. This means she usually gets chosen by a customer. She can end up going to the playsan two to three times a week if her family does not have enough money to buy food. Otherwise, she prefers to limit the number of times she goes there because it wears her out. Aside from the playsan, Luisa also has experience working in bars located in

Pampanga and La Union where she charges 2000 pesos to be taken out, with the bar receiving a cut of 500 pesos.

When she is out of commission and/or cannot take bookings, Luisa goes around their barangay getting bets placed for things like basketball games. She can typically earn up to 400 pesos per bet. She uses the money to buy food for her family whom she says is aware of what she does for a living. Even if they do not explicitly talk about it, she said, “Alam na nila ‘yun kasi matagal na nilang alam na ganito ang trabaho ko kasi para naman sa kanila yun.” In terms of her family’s reaction to what she does, she shared, “Wala na silang magagawa kasi walang trabaho ang nanay ko, walang trabaho ang tatay ko...hindi na namin iniisip na ganun na parang ang baboy...para sa amin lang kasi para mabuhay kami.”

During the course of her commercial sex involvement, Luisa mentioned two instances where she felt like she was in danger. The first one involved a customer who she spent hours trying to satisfy. She was already forced to do a lot of things she was uncomfortable with but when she tried to leave before he was able to finish, a struggle ensued between herself and her customer. The other experience happened when she was working in a bar in Pampanga where the customer performed odd rites while they were trying to have sex. He tried to prevent her from leaving, then chased her when she escaped.

According to Luisa, the use of a condom is dependent upon the preference of her customers.

JANE

Jane was about to turn 16 years old the day after she was interviewed. When she was 7 years old, her parents separated and her father has since gone on to have another family in Taytay, Rizal. She lived with her mother before she eventually moved in with her older brother. Most of her older siblings had already gotten married and are busy with their own lives but her older sisters are paying for the schooling of their youngest sibling. She said that they were a close family, although they

She and her peers do not necessarily associate condom use with protection from diseases. For them, protecting themselves has more to do with being able to identify customers who may carry diseases. For example, they assume that a customer with foul-smelling genitals has tulo or gonorrhea. It’s also considered a bad sign if the customer shows signs of being in pain when his pelvic area is poked or prodded. They try to perform these examinations on the sly. Additionally, Luisa takes amoxicillin, an antibiotic, and mefenamic acid, a pain medication, before each booking because she has been told that these can prevent contraction of diseases.

During the interview, Luisa expressed her desire to stop her commercial sex involvement as she thinks her body can no longer take it. Aside from this, she was worried about her child. However, what’s preventing her from leaving the sex industry is the lack of options that will enable her to support her baby, her parents, and her siblings. She dreams of having a small store so she can earn money while taking care of her child.

Luisa was referred by ZOTO as a potential respondent.

have problems relating to a lack of money.

Currently, Jane lives in Navotas with friends in a room provided by Pabahay, a housing project of the municipal government. There are seven of them living together and although the rooms are free, Jane and her friends still have to pay for food, electricity, and water. Jane is assigned to provide money for food. She decided to become a bar girl in order to support her basic needs, as

well as contribute to the living expenses of her household, since she no longer gets any financial support from any of her family members. She stated that she only earns enough to support herself and does not give any financial assistance to her family.

She has only recently gotten involved in CSEC, having just three months’ worth of experience with doing aura in a beer house/videoke bar. She learned about the sex trade through a friend who is a bar girl herself. Jane refers to being taken out by a customer for sex as contact-contact, from which she earns 1,000 pesos out of the 1,800-peso fee that is charged to the customer. The 800 pesos goes to the bar manager. On the other hand, table-table involves getting customers to buy drinks, from which she earns 60 pesos per bottle of beer. Her quota is seven bottles per night and if she is able to reach it, she is given an advance of 100 pesos. Jane said that earnings are given daily at the end of each shift. Usually, she goes to the

LOVELY

Lovely is a 16-year-old female who is a cousin of another interview respondent. She is a resident of Pabahay, a housing project of the municipal government, in Navotas. She lives with her parents, her siblings, and her siblings’ family. Her father is a contractual construction worker who sometimes does pamamalakaya, a kind of fishing activity, while her mom is a homemaker who occasionally does hilot or traditional massage. Her older siblings also engage in pamamalakaya at times. Lovely describes her family as close-knit. She said that everyone tries to pitch in with the household expenses whenever they can find work.

Lovely is also a mother of a baby who is less than a year old. The child was fathered by a 33-year-old male whom she was involved in a relationship with. The man abandoned her and her baby when he learned about her pregnancy and found out that she was working in bars, which she described as her raket. She’s worked in different bars in Angeles City and is currently the stay-in bar girl at a bar she calls Kuyapo, with a shift that lasts from 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM. According to Lovely, her

bar five days a week and earns between 2,000 to 2,200 pesos per week.

The only troubling experience she can recall was when a customer wanted her to go down on him but she did not want to, so she walked out on him. Her refusal to perform the act and subsequent walk-out did not result in any unfavourable consequences. Overall, Jane has had no negative experiences in the bar but she has expressed guilt over being taken out of the bar for sex. Despite this, she said that she will continue doing contact-contact because she needs the money. Additionally, she is torn between wanting to go back to school in order to continue her studies and having to make a living. She dreams of one day having her own business in the form of a grocery or sari-sari store.

Jane was a referral from ZOTO.

customers are males, usually aged 19 to 30 years old, as she does not go for customers who are 40 years old or older.

When she was 14 years old, Lovely decided to drop out of school against the wishes of her parents. She found out about the sex trade from her barkada or group of friends who also live in Pabahay. These friends told her that rather than just sitting around doing nothing, it’s better for her to work and earn money. By working in bars, she gets a commission from the drinks her customers buy her and she is paid when they take her out of the bar to have sex. This is called nagpapalabas and she says that she usually earns 2,000 to 3,000 pesos from it. At most, she’s earned 5,000 pesos in one day.

However, the expenses and debts which she has to pay the bar offset her income. Girls are required to pay for their food and to purchase things they need, like clothes and makeup, in order to become bar girls. These costs are tallied and then subtracted from their earnings. The cost for condoms, however, is not included in

Lovely's list of expenses since she doesn't want to use them. She said that if the customer looks ok, like if he looks clean, has nice clothes, and is well-groomed, then it's an indicator that he's not carrying any sort of disease and it's safe to have sex with him.

She expressed wanting to leave the industry, as she shared that she feels the way she has been making a living is demeaning. She wants to be

GEMMA

Gemma is a 19-year-old resident of Pabahay, a housing project of the municipal government of Navotas. Currently, Gemma, together with her parents, her brother, his wife, and her youngest sibling, live with two other families in one studio room. Her family decided to move there since they could no longer afford to pay the rent for a house. Her father has been out of work for the last year and her mother is also unemployed. Gemma supports the entire household.

She was exposed to bar work through her friends. Gemma herself asked them to help her get started in order to earn money. She began working in a bar she calls Kuyapo for about five months before transferring to bars in Angeles City. In Kuyapo, she works from 6PM to 6AM daily. Her income comes from what she gets from both table and take out services. Table services include sitting down with customers, talking to them, and flirting with them, so that they would order as many bottles of liquor as possible for both themselves and their bar girls. Gemma gets 5 pesos for every bottle of beer her customer orders, plus a tip of around 100 pesos. Take out or labas means a customer brings her out of the bar to have sex, usually in motels near the bar.

Transaction conditions and payments depend on the customer's agreement with the mamasan of the bar. Gemma usually gets 1,000 to 2,000 pesos per take-out. This is divided equally between herself and the mamasan. However, whatever money she gets is offset by the debts she owes the bar where she works. She said that she is left with barely enough money to support herself and

able to spare her parents from all the gossip and negative comments about her due to her commercial sex involvement. In addition, she worries about her baby and wants to focus on her child but she has no idea how to facilitate her exit from the sex industry.

Lovely was a referral from ZOTO.

her family. Outside of her income from the bar, she mentioned customers have also paid her by buying her grocery items. "Minsan may naawa sayo parang ganun," she said.

For protection against diseases like tulo or gonorrhoea, Gemma was advised by other bar girls to get a pap smear regularly. According to them the procedure would ensure that she is "cleaned up". As a result, she gets a pap smear done every month. This expense is covered by the bar's mamasan. Gemma mentioned that most bars in Angeles City require their bar girls to be regularly checked for their health.

At the time of the interview, she was seven months pregnant with her first child. The father of the baby ran out on her upon finding out she was pregnant. She temporarily stopped working in bars when she reached the fourth month of her pregnancy. She plans to go back to being a bar girl after her baby is born as she has no other source of income. However, according to Gemma, what she really wants is to have a store of her own. She also sometimes thinks of attending school through ALS but has mixed feelings about it.

Gemma was referred to the research team by ZOTO.

MICHAEL

Michael is about 14 years old. He is male and self-identifies as gay. He was born in Pasay City and was raised by his maternal grandparents. His mother works as a streetwalker, and he does not know who his biological father is. When he was 12 years old, he ran away from home due to verbal abuse and threats of physical assault made by his uncle. He started living on the streets where he experienced being sexually assaulted multiple times. He later went back to live with his grandparents until they were unable to take care of him due to sickness, at which point he started living with his mother and her partner, on and off. Failure of his mother to take care of him caused him to periodically go back to the streets.

His involvement with CSEC was forced upon him by adult female streetwalkers who were based in the same location where Michael and his friends usually hung out. The streetwalkers used intimidation and threat of physical violence from their male partners to exploit Michael and his friends for prostitution. His experiences with men whom he was sold to involved physical and sexual abuse, as well as, instances where he was held captive against his will. He shared that there was a time when he witnessed his friend being killed by a customer. According to Michael, he and his friends attacked the pokpoks or streetwalkers

LYZA

Lyza is a 19-year-old, single mother who was exposed to CSEC at the age of 15. She lives in a relocation site in Navotas together with her parents and four siblings. Her household consists of 15 people overall. Her father used to be a street fish vendor while her mother used to work as a housemaid/laundry lady. She and her siblings convinced their parents to stop working because of their age and poor health condition. They encouraged their parents to look after their grandchildren instead. As a result, Lyza and her sister are the main providers for their entire family. Her brother supplements the income from their commercial sex involvement with what he earns

in retaliation, with some of his friends actually stabbing some of the women.

Michael currently lives in a center for boys. However, before being transferred there, he was taken to a government-run shelter, where he talked about having suffered through physical abuse from both the staff members and older children living in the facility. Michael also reported an incident which involved non-consensual sexual contact from a fellow resident at the home for boys where he currently lives. This incident impacted his feelings about sex and his sexuality. Notably, Michael associates his being gay to the sexual abuse he has experienced, saying he did not consider himself homosexual before he was sexually abused. He attributes all the suffering he has experienced to his mother.

Despite the events in his life, Michael maintains a relatively positive outlook. He has expressed wanting to finish school and his desire to realize his dream of one day becoming a fashion designer.

Stairway Foundation referred Michael to the research team.

from fishing. Lyza says she loves her parents and her siblings, and enjoys a happy relationship with them.

A non-consensual sexual experience with one of her friends, as well as vices such as taking drugs, smoking, and drinking, paved the way for Lyza's initiation into CSEC. Her first exposure, was prompted by the need to feed her family. At the time, she was working as a laundry lady. Her male employer found her attractive so she decided to offer herself for sex in exchange for 2,000 pesos. Though she asked him to keep this transaction private, she eventually found out that

he had spread stories about her and had taken photos of her without her consent or knowledge. He eventually used these photos to blackmail her into coming back to him by threatening her that he would post the pictures online. At that point, she decided to continue providing sex for money since her reputation was already ruined anyway. “Sira na pagka-babae ko eh,” she said.

Her family is aware that she and her sister are involved with the commercial sex industry. They both decided to enter it because of financial difficulties but according to Lyza, their engagement in the sex industry is a source of grief for their mother who blames their family’s poverty on her husband’s inability to provide for their needs. This has led to many arguments between her parents. Her involvement with the sex trade has also affected her relationship with the father of her child, whom she met while she was working in a bar. When their relationship progressed, she stopped having sex for pay. However, when she got pregnant, her partner claimed that it was possible for him to not be the father since “other men had used her”. She eventually went home to be with her family when he insisted that she have an abortion.

Lyza experienced many forms of violence and abuse at the hands of her customers. This was the reason why she decided to have a pimp. To her, there would be a lot less risks involved as compared to being a freelancer. Her pimp

KAYCEE

Kaycee is a 17-year-old homosexual male who was exposed to online sexual exploitation three months prior to being interviewed for this study. His father works as a waiter in Makati and his mother is a homemaker. He has four other siblings. Three of them are still studying, and one is married. Kaycee used to live with his family in Malabon but now he lives at his workplace in Caloocan with two other co-workers and the family of their custodial officer.

Kaycee’s case is unique from the other respondents of this study, in that he does not

ensures that transactions go smoothly in terms of payments, availability of condoms, and security of the venue where she would have sex with her customers. However, throughout her experience in CSEC, Lyza said that she also learned to take care of herself, especially with regards to her health. She shared that during instances when she experienced bleeding from intercourse, she used cotton to apply alcohol and betadine to her vagina. For her UTI, she said her mother told her to drink amoxicillin, an antibiotic, and mefenamic acid, a pain reliever.

As a child, Lyza dreamt of being a flight attendant. Now, she has set aside that dream in lieu of her dreams for her son. She wants him to become a pilot one day. She also dreams of having a good and simple life with her family. She mentioned that she would exit the sex industry if she had an alternative source of income to support her family’s basic needs, such as having her own sari-sari store. When asked what she would tell other women and children about getting involved in the commercial sex industry, Lyza said she would advise because they would live very difficult lives. She reiterated that even though she asks for understanding with regard to why she entered CSEC, she would not want any other young person to be like her.

Lyza was referred to the research team by ZOTO.

personally engage in sex with customers, whether online or offline. Instead, he makes use of pre-recorded sexual exploitation materials of other children. He would log on to cybersex websites using a pseudonym and pretend to be the child featured in the video recording, while chatting with a foreign customer, whom he calls an afam. He coordinates his responses with the video to make it seem like he’s the one the foreigner is seeing online. The actual audio of the video is muted to lessen the chance of being found out. He said that the usual rate for this kind of engagement is 3 US dollars per minute. Out of that, he gets 21 pesos

per minute.

Kaycee was introduced to this kind of activity through his friends who were already involved in online sexual exploitation. At first he was hesitant about joining because there was no dire financial need. He said, “Hindi pa naman ganun yung pangangailangan ko. Yung wala pang kaarte-arte sa sarili, yung hindi pa ako ambisyosa sa mga gustuhin...” However, he was eventually enticed to enter the industry because he saw his friends earning money and having the ability to buy a lot of things. Moreover, he saw his involvement with child online sexual exploitation as a way to help his family financially. Otherwise, he would have to depend on money he earns from placing bets.

Unlike the other cases covered by the research, the operation Kaycee got involved with seems to have a high level of organization. Kaycee has a shift from 12:00 in the afternoon to 6:00 in the evening. He and his peers are fed and cared for by workers who serve as the “housekeepers”. Kaycee said that the payments from the customers go straight to the head of the operation’s account and are processed somewhere else before money is transferred to his personal bank account every

AMIEL

Amiel is an 18-year-old bisexual male who lives in a subdivision in Quezon City. He is a high school graduate, but he was unable to pursue further education due to financial difficulties. He currently lives with his grandparents since both of his parents are deceased. He has three siblings. He said that among them, one is “legal” while the other two are half-siblings. Their family’s income comes from his late father’s pension which amounts to 3,000 pesos per month, his grandparents’ pension, and money generated from their small computer shop.

According to Amiel, his involvement with CSEC started when he was about 16 years old. He learned about it through his friends who were already involved in the sex trade. Weekly, he would post “ads” on craigslist.com, under the casual encounters section. He said that he and

15 days. On average, Kaycee’s receivables every payment period amount to around 3,000 pesos.

Due to the nature of his engagement in online sexual exploitation, he has reported no case of physical abuse and no experience of contracting STI’s. According to him, he was not sexually abused. Thus, Kaycee stated that he would stay involved in this kind of operation, as he wants to help his brother graduate. In return, his kuya or older brother would help him finish his education so he can take up culinary arts in the future. He wants to continue to be able to help his family so he feels he has no choice but to continue his involvement with CSEC. “Wala namang ibang gagawa nun kung hindi kaming magpamilya ang magtutulungan,” he shared.

Still, he cautions other children and young people against getting involved in CSEC. He said that regardless of the child’s noble intention of wanting to help out his or her family, he or she should not be doing these kinds of activities. “Hindi mo pa rin kailangang gawin kasi bata ka pa, kasi mas kailangan mo eh mag-aral muna...for a better future,” he shared.

his friends’ commercial sex involvement was for “more aura” and more money. He clarified that it is not a big deal. “Trip trip lang...hindi siya yung parang kailangang kailangan. Parang extra lang ganun,” he said. The money they earned was used to pay for the costs involved whenever they went out to have fun or to buy new shoes and clothes.

Amiel does not engage in CSEC regularly. So far, he has had only two clients. His first transaction with a “guest” happened when an American emailed him about the ad he posted. He was paid 100 US dollars for that transaction. His other experience was with someone he described as bombay. He shared that encounters like these would usually take place in hotels in Pasay City and Quezon City. He added that he would do things with clients depending on whether he liked them or not, based

on factors such as their physical appearance.

For safety, he is usually accompanied by friends when meeting with potential clients. He reported no instance of abuse from clients and only complained of those who “talk shit” or those who would set up a meeting but would not show up. However, despite the money he earns, Amiel said that his commercial sex involvement has caused negative feelings such as feeling like he has lost his self-respect. “Parang ang dumi-dumi mo,” he said. However, he also said that he would not stop other children from engaging in CSEC if they really needed the money. He expressed that his position on the issue may change if he or his friends have a bad experience.

Additionally, Amiel shared that his grandmother

told him that he might be going back to school this June. Amiel is not sure how his education will be funded, but mentioned that his grandmother said, “May pension naman kami.” He is considering taking up either hotel and restaurant management or cosmetology.

Amiel was identified as a possible respondent through his advertisement on Backpage.com.

BILLY

Billy is a 17-year-old bisexual male living in Punta, Manila where he was born and raised. He lives with his father, siblings, and grandmother. His mother works as a domestic helper in Bahrain. He shares a close relationship with his grandmother and a conflicted one with his father. According to Billy, the tension between him and his father originated from his mother’s decision to wire the money she earned directly to him instead of his father. However, this arrangement stopped when he spent his college tuition fee on a trip with his friends. He was in his first year of college, taking up accountancy, when he dropped out.

Billy was exposed to CSEC only recently. He was 16 years old when he first got involved in internet-mediated commercial sex transactions and has been part of the sex industry for less than a year. He found out about it through his friend who is already engaged in internet-mediated commercial sex transactions. He said he was not invited by his friend but was enticed into it as he saw how his friend was earning a lot. He saw it as an opportunity to support himself and earn money to spend on things he wants to buy or on things he wants to do, like going out with friends.

Billy uses Backpage.com, a site where he can post his “ads” to find clients. After he posts an ad online, interested clients can contact him via text message to discuss particular details such as the price, the location of where they will meet, and what specific services can be provided. Billy said his decision to accept or reject a client depends on several factors. These can include how far the meet-up location is and whether he is in the mood to render sexual services which he usually renders in exchange for payment that ranges from 2,500 to 4,000 pesos. He described his usual “guests” as middle-class, Filipino men between 20 to 40 years old.

Billy also does professional choreography, for which he is paid 1,000 pesos per session. He mentioned finding work at the Municipal Hall, and that he plans to stop his commercial sex involvement when his work there starts. He also plans to go back to school so that he can become an accountant and work in a bank in the future, or maybe even work abroad.

Billy was identified as a potential respondent by the research team through his backpage.com advertisement.

JAY

Jay is a 17-year-old bisexual male currently living in Mandaluyong City with his parents and four siblings. His mother is a homemaker and his father works as a security guard. Jay said he feels closest to his eldest sibling as they have each other’s back. He described his relationship with his parents as fine, though he qualified that he feels closer to his mother as compared to his father, who he said does not know anything about him. These feelings towards his father stem from Jay not seeing his father as much while he was growing up since his father left them to work abroad when he was young. Jay is currently in his fourth year of high school.

Jay found out about the commercial sex industry after seeing his friends’ ads on Backpage.com. His curiosity eventually led him to make his own account. He said that nobody convinced him to do it. His friends would not have tried to get him into it since he would be seen as competition due to his being younger than them. Currently, Jay charges 2,000 to 3,000 pesos for sex and 1,500 pesos for blowjobs. His clients are usually 20 to 30-year-old bisexual males. He meets them in hotels around Sta. Mesa, where his clients do a “CI” or check in and then inform him of the room number so he can follow. Jay said he does not like staying long with the client after the transactions are finished. He limits the length of his transactions to a maximum of one hour.

Financial independence was Jay’s reason for getting involved in CSEC. He just wanted to be

able to spend money as he pleased, given that he is not in dire financial need and his family is able to support him. He said he uses the money he gets from commercial sex transactions to buy new clothes, shoes, perfume, bags, and watches. Sometimes he buys gifts for his family, gives some of the money to his mother, or buys something for his sibling’s child. In his family, only his sister knows about his involvement with the sex industry. He does not want other members of his family to know because he does not want them to feel bad. He shared, “Parang sisihin pa nila yung sarili nila kasi baka kulang sila sa pag-alaga sa anak nila.”

From his sister and friends, Jay learned about using condoms to protect himself from diseases. He gets regular monthly screenings for HIV, TB, and even cancer in a government hospital in Mandaluyong. His mother pays for these screenings. He knows that his involvement with the commercial sex trade puts him at a higher risk for STI contractions and that’s partly why he wants to exit the industry. Additionally, he wants to go to college and become a bank accountant - like his uncle - in the future so he can earn enough money and not be a burden to his family. However, his parents think his high school education is sufficient. His uncle does not agree and has told Jay he would be the one to support his college education.

Jay was referred to the research team by another respondent involved in the study.

MC

MC is 15 years old and identifies himself as gay. He lives in Pasay City and recently stopped his high school education. He was in his third year when he dropped out because of the lack of money. He lives with his mother, siblings, and cousins. He said that he did not receive any support from his father, who is a Middle Eastern foreigner. Their

family relies on the support provided by his gay uncle. Some of MC’s siblings help their uncle by working in different establishments in Pasay City. MC was exposed to CSEC at the age of 14 years old. MC had asked his friends who were already engaged in the sex trade for help because he needed to earn money. He viewed them as very

successful because they were able to earn a lot of money through their commercial sex involvement.

Some of them were even involved in the industry outside the Philippines, in places like Macau, China, and Hong Kong. He said that his mother and some of his siblings knew about his involvement in CSEC but they did not stop him. Instead, they simply gave him words of caution.

MC has no knowledge about STI's and HIV. However, when he was asked about AIDS, he provided his personal understanding on the matter. He said that he was not at risk of getting AIDS because his sexual practices were safe. According to him, this meant that he avoided letting his "guests" ejaculate into his mouth. MC has not been tested for AIDS, even though he has had multiple customers. They were mostly foreigners including Lebanese, Chinese, and Koreans. He has also had encounters with local guests and

it would usually take place in their vehicles. He never experienced abuse or exploitation from his guests.

MC said he only does blow jobs and he charges between 500 to 2,000 pesos per blowjob. He is willing to have anal sex upon the request of his guest but he would charge 3,000 to 5,000 pesos for it. He said that he needs the money to finish senior high school. He is very interested in learning how to bake and cook, as he plans to work for a fast food chain after he graduates. His message to other children who are considering being involved in CSEC is to focus on their safety because according to him, they need to avoid being abused and exploited.

ASHLEY

Ashley was born in Sta. Mesa, Manila. She is the third of four children. Her eldest sister is 23 years old and is an OFW in Italy while her youngest brother is 17 years old and works with their father. Her father is from Leyte and her mother is from Laguna. When she was 15 years old and her family still lived in Laguna, her parents fought constantly so she would often stay with her friends to get away from the conflict at home. Eventually her parents separated and they now have their own separate families, but it was during that tumultuous time that Ashley was initiated into the sex industry.

She belonged to a group of 15-year-old girls who had a "leader" who looked for their clients. After a misunderstanding over fees between herself and the group leader, Ashley left the group and found herself a female pimp. There were times this pimp would give her clients that she did not like so she refused to provide them with sexual services. Most of the clients were farm workers. Some were married and their ages usually ranged from 20 to 50 years old. Because she did not like this arrangement, she decided to leave for

Manila to become a freelancer. This allowed her to control the frequency of her commercial sex engagements so she could be free to do it only when she needed money. She also liked the fact that she did not have to share her earnings with a pimp.

Ashley is now 18 years old. She has a 4-year-old son from a previous relationship. For the past two years, she has been living in Quezon City with a partner who is 20 years her senior. He is employed in a printing shop while she is a stay-at-home mother who occasionally engages in commercial sex transactions without her partner's knowledge. What she earns is spent for her personal needs, as well as, that of her son's, particularly his school expenses. Her partner provides for their daily subsistence and utilities. The house they live in is owned by her partner. Sometimes, when she needs money, she asks from her sister who is an OFW. However, when there is no one to turn to, she takes on customers through a closed Facebook group account.

Ashley would be paid 1,000 for two hours by clients

who are exclusively male Filipinos. She does not require them to use a condom even though she has heard of AIDS. She once joined a group of girls in her neighbourhood for a blood drive to get a 500-peso participation fee. There, her blood test results revealed something abnormal but the results were not explained to her. According to Ashley, other than experiencing occasional pain during urination, she has never been sick. She does not smoke, hardly drinks, and does not do drugs. Additionally, she claims that she has never experienced any form of violence from her clients, although once, she was not paid for her services.

AIREEN

Aireen is a physically attractive young lady who claims that she is 20 years old, although she appears to be younger. She is a high school graduate and was articulate during her interview. Her parents separated when she was very young. Currently, both of them have their own families with other partners. She has six half-siblings on her mother's side and one half-sibling from her father's side. Her paternal grandmother took her in and cared for her when her parents separated. Later, she found herself moving around, living with her grandparents, mother, and father at different points in time. At one point, when she was 15 years old, she lived with a boyfriend.

For a year now, she has been living in Makati City with her mother, stepfather, and six half-siblings. Her stepfather works as a taxi driver, while her mother is a 40-year-old, stay-at-home mother who is originally from Butuan City. Aireen claimed that her stepfather could hardly support the family with his earnings and that she is a victim of domestic violence perpetrated by him. He makes her feel that she is not welcome in his house and according to Aireen, her mother, and her half-siblings also experience violence perpetrated by him.

When she was 18 years old, she was driven away from home by her stepfather. It was then that she was introduced into the commercial sex industry by a friend. She says that she takes in clients only when she is badly in need of money. She earns

Her priority right now is for her to be able to support her son's education. She wants him to be able to attend college one day and finish his education. For herself, she wants to finish high school and get vocational training because she never got the opportunity to graduate. She had dropped out when she was in her fourth year of high school. Meanwhile, she is still active in the commercial sex industry.

A peer who was also engaged in the sex industry referred Ashley to the research team.

4,000 pesos per client for 2 to 3 hours on good days. The lowest rate she has ever agreed to was 2,500 to 3,000 pesos. She says that she earns an average of 5,000 pesos a week or 20,000 pesos a month and that she gets her customers through an attacker. The customers are all Filipino males, aged 20 to 30 years old. Additionally, there were times that she agreed to do out-of-town arrangements.

Aireen is quite aware of the risks involved with regard to the sex industry. Her boyfriend accompanies her for regular medical check-ups, but has no idea what she does for a living. No one knows about her commercial sex involvement except her peers in the industry who are also her close friends. She has no plans of telling her boyfriend because she said she does not intend to continue doing this for long. She has heard about HIV and AIDS from her friends and from the TV. She requires her clients to wear condoms.

Aireen's attacker who was also interviewed for this study referred her to the research team.

SANDRA

Sandra is a 17-year-old girl who is very pretty and charming. She wears revealing clothes to flaunt her naturally well-endowed body and usually has makeup on. She lives in Makati City where she was born. She completed high school and enrolled in a course in information technology at the University of Makati but eventually dropped out. She grew curious of the commercial sex industry because of a girl in her neighbourhood who always seemed to have plenty of money. This girl initiated Sandra's entry into CSEC when she was 14 or 15 years old.

Sandra's father is from Isabela and had a family before meeting her mother, who is from Tarlac. She has six older half-sisters on her father's side. Her parents are separated and she now lives with her mother and stepfather, their 2-year-old daughter, an aunt, her grandmother, and two boarders.

Her segs or clients are exclusively male. They are either Filipinos or foreigners of various ages. They are referred to her by an attacker, or a peer who acts as a pimp without expecting any kind of remuneration. Sandra describes her segs as kind and, according to her, they treat her well. She said she used to earn up to 20,000 pesos per month but now it has gone down to just about 5,000 pesos per month. She also noticed that walkers are getting younger and younger. Now, her rate can go as low as 1,500 to 3,000 pesos per encounter with a seg. She also does not agree

ROSE

Rose is a 17-year-old girl who lives in Quezon City with her family. She was born and raised in Metro Manila but her parents are originally from Dipolog City. Her father is a delivery truck driver and her mother is a stay-at-home mother. She is the fourth of six children. She lives in a rented house with her parents, her brother and his wife, an unmarried brother, her sister, and a cousin. Her two other brothers live in the province. Her brother who is married works as a truck cargo

to out-of-town and/or overnight arrangements, and instead prefers short-term deals.

Sandra said she has never gotten sick. She has heard of AIDS and HIV and has made it a habit to protect herself from both diseases - as well as pregnancy - through condom use. She is also very particular about hygiene. Her friends who refer clients to her know that she does not like smelly and dirty-looking segs. Additionally, Sandra does not go on social media or online sites to book segs because she believes it is less discrete. Only her mother and grandmother are aware of what she does for a living, though they never talk about it.

Sandra uses her earnings to help buy food and LPG for her family. She also spends for personal needs and cigarettes. She has tried to find other sources of income, but the long hours and very low pay that she is usually offered are not attractive to her, so she ends up going back to the sex trade. She plans to find a job that has nothing to do with this industry once she turns 18 so that she can support herself through college. She wants to take up psychology and law.

Sandra was referred to the research team by one of her attackers.

handler but does not contribute to the household expenses. This is the reason why she has a tense relationship with her brother and his wife.

Two years ago, her cousin had asked for forgiveness for sexually abusing her when she was 7 years old. This was not the only time a family member had sexually abused her. When she was in first year high school, her grandfather also sexually abused her. He passed away

recently and she has since learned that he had also abused another cousin. Rose lived with her grandparents in Dipolog City when she was in high school, where she would cut classes with her friends. She eventually dropped out and moved to Cebu to work as a domestic helper without her parents' knowledge. After a few months, her parents asked her to return to Manila. She went from job to job as a domestic helper, waitress, and employee of a computer shop.

At the age of 17, in search of work with better pay, she entered the commercial sex industry. She claimed that she was new to the sex trade and has had only three clients so far. She was initiated into the industry by a male friend she met on Facebook whom she later learned was the creator of a Facebook group account of PSPs (Personal Services Providers) and was, in fact, a handler/pimp. Her asking price was 1,500 pesos for 3 hours from the first two clients. Her third client stole her mobile phone and did not pay her. She reported this to her handler and the client was blacklisted. However, it served as a lesson for her as she did not inform her handler before she met up with the client.

LEEN

Leen claims to be 19 years old despite looking much younger. She is frail, tall, and looks to be underweight. She lives in Makati City with her father, three brothers, and two sisters-in-law. She is the fifth among six children. Her mother passed away in October 2015 after a lingering illness. Her father is presently unemployed and does odd jobs every now and then. According to her, her family is not close but they do not quarrel either. Her siblings do not share in the costs of daily expenses for the household; thus, when her mother became ill, she dropped out of high school to care for her.

At 17 years old, Leen became her mother's caregiver and contributed to medical and household expenses. That was also the time when she entered the commercial sex industry, as her father was out of work and the family needed

Rose drinks alcohol but only with her friends. She does not smoke or do drugs. She protects herself from pregnancy and STI's by asking her clients to use condoms but she does not take birth control pills. She says that she had heard about HIV when she was still in school and believes that contraction of the disease is preventable by not having sex within the first 21 days from the start of menstruation. Rose says she has never been sick doing what she does but nonetheless, she would like to quit if she could find another source of income. She wants to finish high school and dreams of a good life for her family. She wants them to have their own house and a store. Some offers to work abroad have been made by relatives in Lebanon and Malaysia, but she is still too young to go for them.

Rose was identified by the research team from several closed group accounts on Facebook such as LoveMe4ever; Need Pizza, Walk, Candy, Coffee Etc.; Legit (GM/PSP); Private Pinay; Favorite Coffee; and Cainta-Rizal PSP Walkers.

money for the increasing costs of her mother's medicine. Leen knew the health risks involved so she took birth control pills and required her clients to use condoms. She claimed that she got herself "cleaned" every three months as advised by her friends. For her asthma, she visited their Barangay Health Centre.

A gay friend who was a pimp introduced her to the sex trade, but she eventually went freelance with her regular clients. Most were Filipino professionals, although some were foreigners. Their ages ranged from 20 to 40 years old. Her average income was 7,000 to 7,500 pesos a month. Clients were referred to her by an attacker, but she also searched for customers using Facebook and some websites. No one in her family knew about her involvement in CSEC and

no one asked her where she got the money she was contributing.

After her mother passed away, Leen exited the industry. Now, she stays home most of the time. She has no work experience except for the time she had a job at a convenience store. She resigned after one week because the manager sexually harassed her. Her sister is teaching her to bake. Additionally, she plans to finish high

ANNA

Anna is an attractive, friendly, and intelligent 20-year-old girl. She was born and raised in Makati City as the middle child among three children. Her mother passed away when she was 9 years old. Her father was a taxi driver and a strict disciplinarian who did not hesitate to physically punish his three young children. Later, her father remarried and had two children. Her stepmother caused major problems between Anna and her father. She suffered from repeated severe beatings from her father. She eventually left home at 16 years old. One of her sisters, likewise, left home and lived with their grandmother.

Anna moved to a boarding house and found a job as a call center agent. The pay was enough for her needs and her sister's college education. However, she was forced to resign after four months because her co-workers were bullying her. She was jobless and had a sister to support so her friends who were PSPs (Paid Sex Providers) urged her to try getting into the sex trade. Thus, at 17 years old, she entered the commercial sex industry under a pimp. With her first client, she earned 3,000 pesos for less than an hour's work. She gave 500 pesos of that to her pimp.

Later on, she decided to go freelance and searched for her own segs through friends. She then earned an average of 10,000 pesos per week, catering to segs who were young Filipino professionals. In 2015, she discovered social media and since then has been making transactions through Facebook. Only her sister and partner know about her involvement in the industry but all her friends

school through ALS and may take up a job offer at a fast food establishment. She also wants to go to college and take up computer science. Her older brother and father are now supporting the needs of the family and will support her education. She has no plans for marriage yet.

Leen was referred to the research team by an attacker who was interviewed for this study.

are PSP's like her. Her partner is 30 years old. Together they have an 11-month-old daughter. They currently live together in Makati City with her partner's family.

When Anna gave birth, she stopped being a PSP but continues to be involved in the commercial sex industry as a pimp and as an attacker. She said she needs the money because her partner is jobless and she is still sending her sister to school. At the same time, she is supporting her father who has become unemployed. She said that she would resume being a PSP if she has not found a job or an alternative source of income by the time her daughter turns a year old.

She is a high school graduate and plans to get TESDA vocational training someday. Then, she will set up a business for herself and help her father set up his own business as well. She does not ask much for herself. She just does not want her siblings and her daughter to experience the hardship she went through. Her life has been difficult even if she has had no experience of violence, abuse, or contraction of STI's. She is aware of HIV and AIDS, as well as, other infections so she makes sure her segs always use condoms.

Anna was identified through closed group accounts on Facebook such as Take a Walk; PSP Walkers; and Walkers Finder. She was instrumental in convincing four other girls to be interviewed.

ANNIE

Annie is a very attractive young lady who comes across as smart, happy-go-lucky, and optimistic. She has proven to be a survivor and a fighter. She has been a working student since she was in Grade 4. She also experienced being gang-raped when she was 14 years old. She was born in Bulacan and abandoned at birth by her parents. She was eventually raised by a gay male whom she called Mamu. Mamu passed away after her high school graduation. She is currently 21 years old and lives alone with her 2-month-old daughter in a rented room in Bulacan.

Annie has been a freelance PSP for at least three years. She said that she discovered she actually enjoyed and desired sex. She entered the commercial sex industry through Facebook to earn money for educational needs. She earned up to 10,000 to 15,000 pesos a week. She wanted to go to college but ended up taking vocational courses in information technology and hotel and restaurant management instead. She never finished either of the two courses due to financial difficulties. She held various jobs as a cashier lady at 7-11, gasoline girl, and janitress but each lasted only for a few weeks. No one has supported her since Mamu's death, not even her birth mother who she eventually met. On the contrary, her birth mother asks Annie for money and Annie consents with much resentment.

For clients, she prefers mature Filipino men who treat her with respect. She fell in love with one of them and had her daughter with him; however, he was already married. This client abandoned Anna and did not support their daughter. She was torn by the decision of whether she should keep the baby or give her up for adoption. She resumed being a PSP after giving birth, foregoing breastfeeding, as she needed income for their needs. She had to pay for additional expenses such as milk formula and a baby-sitter for when she would be out.

No one knows that she is a PSP. She tells her neighbours and the couple who owns the house where she rents a room that whenever she goes out, she has a job interview. She has cut down the number of hours she spends as a PSP because she needs to be home for her daughter. In order to cope with their needs, given her lower number of hours engaged in the sex industry, she used other knowledge and skills. She cooks chicken skin and sells them in the community. She also repairs mobile phones and computers. Because Mamu did not want her to be a beautician like him, he had not taught her the skills particular to his trade, such as haircutting and nail care services.

Presently, there are job opportunities available to her. A former client offered to help her get a position in his Makati-based trading firm. A job interview had been set up a few days after our interview. She likewise applied for a domestic helper position abroad and she hopes she will be able to leave by March 2016. She will temporarily leave her daughter to a co-church mate. She belongs to the Catholic El Shaddai and Christian Peace Church. She said that these opportunities will enable her to exit the sex industry, given that she no longer intends to pursue a college degree. Her dream is to have a business, maybe a two-bedroom apartment so she can rent out one room for income. She hopes this will eventually allow her the freedom to do away with having to work abroad.

Annie was identified through closed group accounts on Facebook such as Take a Walk; Coffee in Bed; Legit (GM/PSP); Chubby Bunnies PH; PSP on the Go; and Pinaywalk/Pinoywalk Private.

COLINE

Coline is 20 years old but looks a lot younger. She had a bubbly personality and laughed a lot during the interview. She was born in Manila but her family moved back to Bulacan where her mother, a retired hospital attendant, is originally from. Her father died when she was 7 years old. She has two siblings and states that she is close to her brother who is 24 years old and works in a computer shop in Manila. She is unmarried but says she is in a relationship. She likes to hang out with a group of girls who like to drink beer and brandy. Coline does not smoke or do drugs. She lives alone in Navotas with a pet shih-tzu.

In 2014, she lived with her brother in Navotas and enrolled in a computer science course at a university in Manila. It was during this time that she had her first experience related to CSEC, as she needed money for her school projects. She was unable to enroll after her first year of college because her brother started a family and could no longer support her financially. Coline then moved out of her brother's house and into a rented room while working as a cashier lady in a Japanese restaurant for three months. She later resigned due to the late hours she had to work. She said that she would often go home at midnight which made her feel unsafe.

After she resigned from her job, her cousin, who was formerly involved in the commercial sex industry, convinced her to enter the sex trade full-time. Since then, she has been a freelancer who searches for clients on Facebook. Last month she only had three clients, all males, one of whom is

a regular client who is 26 years old and hires her for her company without sex. She earned a total of 4,000 pesos from the three clients. Her rate is 1,500 pesos for two rounds. She charges extra for an additional round, and she spends a maximum of three hours per client. Her income pays for her rent and daily needs. She occasionally sends money to her mother. No one in her family and none of her friends know about her involvement in the commercial sex industry.

Her only negative experiences so far had been from two separate clients. One did not want to pay the rate they agreed on and haggled for a much lower rate, which resulted in her refusal to continue the encounter. The other client simply did not show up at the set meeting place. Additionally, she has never had any major illness in the past and has never been pregnant. She has little knowledge of sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and AIDS, though she does require her clients to use condoms. She said that she only wants to save enough money to go back to school and that the Japanese restaurant where she once worked has asked her to come back. She is considering taking the job.

Coline was identified from closed group accounts on Facebook such as Take a Walk; Friend Finder; Extreme overdose; Walking Confessions; Metro Manila Walk Underground and MetroWalkers.

currently lives with a partner, with whom she has two daughters and a son, in Manila. Nicole said she was her mother's favourite and was a spoiled child, but that changed when her mother had two children with her partner. On weekends, Nicole stays with her mother; but on weekdays, she stays with her maternal grandmother and sister in

Malate. Nicole's father lives in Ormoc City with her youngest sister.

Nicole shared that she currently has a boyfriend who knows about her involvement in the commercial sex industry. Apart from him, she often hangs out with a group of girls who drink, smoke, and use marijuana. A friend of a friend who is an attacker convinced her to do a seg. This friend got Nicole her first and only client, a 50-year-old man, whom they both attended to at the same time without protection. They were paid 1,000 pesos each for the 20-minute encounter. She now suffers from foul-smelling vaginal discharges but has not yet seen a doctor. At the time of her interview, she was suspected of being pregnant. She denied it but months later, her friend confirmed that she

was indeed pregnant.

Nicole said that she did not really need the money but that she would probably engage other clients if she wanted to buy something for herself. Previously, she was employed at a convenience store, but she resigned after three weeks. She was not paid because the cash she turned over was 600 pesos short. She was not that invested in the job because what she really dreams of becoming is a professional dancer and singer. On the other hand, her mother wants her to return to Ormoc City to resume her studies before she leaves for another two-year contract abroad.

Nicole was referred to the research team by a peer who was also involved in CSEC as an attacker.

DINA

Dina says she is 19 years old but based on her physical attributes and overall demeanour, she is most likely around 16 to 17 years old. She is very attractive and has a pleasant disposition. She was born and raised in Samar where her mother currently lives. Her father, a farmer, is deceased. She is the sixth of nine children and had to drop out of school after first year high school due to financial reasons. She is the only one among her siblings who was able to reach high school. The rest were only able to complete their elementary education, like her parents. She arrived in Manila last year to find work.

Currently, she lives in Sta. Mesa, Manila with an older sister and her sister's husband. She has no friends in Manila. She said it's hard to find work in Metro Manila because employers require at least a high school degree. Once, she found work in a food stall at a mall. However, she was eventually initiated into the commercial sex industry by a Facebook friend, who added her to a closed group account of walkers. She calls herself a walker as well and actively searches for clients or GM's on Facebook. She is a freelancer and considers this her job, one that allows her to send money to her mother, who was glaucoma.

Dina's family does not know about her involvement in the sex industry. Her mother thinks she is a sales clerk. When she was still working in the food stall, she was also already getting paid for sex every day. She charged 2,500 pesos for three hours and could earn as much as 7,500 pesos a day. However, when she lost her job, she could no longer find an excuse to go out so her earnings dropped to about 5,000 pesos a week. Her curfew at home is 7 PM, but - although she has no friends in Manila - the excuse she would often give her sister for going out is to meet up with friends.

All her GM's are Filipino males who are usually not older than 30 years old. According to Dina, she does not like foreigners because she cannot communicate with them. Her clients use condoms and the transactions usually involve "money down". This means that GM's must pay first in cash before the sexual service is provided; however, if the clients are regular customers and she already trusts them, they can pay afterwards. A GM might pay her less if her performance is not good based on the client's experience.

She admitted that walkers face some dangers, which include theft, fraud, and violence. Clients

can run off with a walker's cell phone, bag, or money. They can also present themselves as different people online or pretend to be able to pay the agreed fee for the sexual service when in fact, they cannot. Despite all of these, the clients are never reported to the police. Dina herself has experienced being scammed once but she said that walkers post their negative experiences and the names of the GM's responsible in their Facebook group to warn others.

Dina does not smoke or do drugs but she drinks beer. She has heard of HIV and AIDS from the

NJ

NJ is currently 18 years old girl and a full-time student in her third year of college. She is enrolled in a private university for a course on Hotel and Restaurant Management. She is small and wears eyeglasses. Except for lipstick, she wears no other form of make-up. Though she looks like a typical college student, she has also been in the commercial sex industry since she was 16 years old. She is a freelancer so she is quite active on social media. According to her, the primary reason she entered the industry was because her family could not afford to shoulder her tuition fees and other school expenses. Her father has a second family in Cebu.

NJ lives with her parents, four siblings, and two nephews in Quezon City. NJ is the youngest of four children. Her father works as a family driver and her mother is a homemaker. She and her siblings do not get along with their eldest brother who she said was unemployed, a drug user, and would occasionally become violent. This brother is a single parent to two young boys who are also being supported by NJ's father. No one in the family, nor her friends or classmates know of her involvement with the commercial sex industry. When asked about where her money comes from, she tells them that her boyfriend, who does not exist, and an aunt, both support her studies.

Her experience in the sex industry is not limited to only being a walker. She has also been a Facebook

TV. Once, she was caught by her sister with birth control pills and when asked to explain, she said she had a boyfriend. Her first sexual encounter was actually with a boyfriend in Manila but she and her boyfriend eventually broke up. She wants to finish school because she believes that it will be worth the investment. She also dreams of going abroad to write about people.

Dina was identified by the research team from a Facebook closed group account called PSP Crib II.

group administrator and a handler or pimp. She earns an average of 6,000 pesos a week as a walker. She only tries to get customers when she has an immediate need for money to pay for school expenses. One time, she advertised that she needed a loan to pay for her tuition fee. A man responded to her request, gave her money, and had dinner with her. She received 3,500 pesos from him without having to provide any sexual service. That was the first and last time she saw him.

All her clients are Filipino males. She requires condom use and prefers non-smokers. She does not drink alcoholic beverages and does not do drugs or marijuana. She has never been pregnant and does not take birth control pills. However, she said she was suffering from painful urination and would like to have a medical check-up as soon as possible. However, all the money she earns as a walker goes to her educational needs. She could potentially earn money from baking but she has no oven. She plans to exit the sex industry when she graduates and finds a job.

NJ was identified by the research team using two closed Facebook group accounts, Private Pinay at GM and PSP Legit.

JOY

Joy is now 19 years old. She is an only child and currently lives with her mother in Cavite. She lived a very comfortable life, until her parents separated four years ago. Her parents owned a grocery and a small restaurant, and she was able to attend a private Catholic high school. However, when her father abandoned them, she moved to a public school and was eventually forced to enter the commercial sex industry to support herself and her mother who had become depressed. Her mother was dependent on Joy as their businesses had closed down and her father had left them with huge debts.

She entered the commercial sex trade when she was 15 years old after her parents separated. No one knew that she was a walker except the group who introduced her to the sex industry. At 17 years old, she joined a Facebook group account created by a male pimp so she would not have to search and transact with clients directly. She also felt that she would be more protected and transactions would be more discrete. According to her, the payments she got after joining the group were higher than when she was freelancing.

She was able to finish her high school education and through the pimp's Facebook group, she met a married elderly man who became her sugar daddy. She then exited from the group and her sugar daddy sent her to TESDA for skills training where she was able to learn about massage therapy and nail care services. He even gave her regular allowance and paid for her transportation expenses. During this time, she continued to live with her mother and told her that the man was a suitor who wanted to help her. However, the man's wife discovered what was happening and the arrangement ended.

Though she was able to complete her TESDA course, she returned to the pimp and is currently still being managed by him. She tried to apply the

skills she learned from her TESDA course while being engaged in the sex trade for some extra income but she found that to be too physically exhausting. As a walker, she earns up to 10,000 to 15,000 pesos a week during peak season and 4,000 to 5,000 pesos a week during low season. Her income from being a massage therapist yielded 100 pesos per person per hour excluding tips. She said she could do massage treatments for three persons in one day.

She shared that she has had negative experiences from her commercial sex involvement. She had been physically assaulted and there was also a time when a client did not pay her for her services. After a foreign client had physically hurt her, she refused to entertain foreigners altogether for future engagements. She said she takes care of herself. She also tests herself for HIV and requires her clients to use condoms. The HIV test kit, she said, she buys from a friend. However, she also admitted that her health has deteriorated. She is underweight and at the time of the interview, she had a persistent dry cough.

She revealed that throughout her childhood, when she was 5 or 6 years old until she hit puberty, she was sexually abused by an uncle. Since she was 15 years old, she has been supporting herself and her mother. She says that she was able to maintain savings and plans to set up a sari-sari store for her mother. She also plans to find a decent job so she can exit the sex trade for good.

Joy was referred to the research team by her pimp who was interviewed for this study.

MITZ

Mitz is a pretty 17-year-old of mixed descent. She dropped out of school when she was in Grade 5 because her older brother got married and could no longer support her education. She said her mother had ten children from different fathers and gave away six of them. Mitz's father is Chinese and her older brother's father is Japanese. She is the second eldest child of her mother. Before living in a shelter run by ECPAT, she lived in Makati City with her mother, stepfather, and two half-siblings.

As early as 11 years old, she was forced into the sex trade by her mother. At first, it was through cyber pornography, from which her mother received a payment of 10,000 pesos; later, however, she was pimped by her mother every day to as much as four customers a day. She shared that she was drugged into unconsciousness and when she woke up, her private parts felt painful and she experienced bleeding. All her clients were foreigners in Makati City whose payments would add up to 20,000 pesos per day. Although she did not handle the money she earned, she said she got to keep gifts like the mobile phone and the tablet that were directly given to her.

To get clients, she would be brought to a place she described as having many gadgets so potential clients could see her through webcams. Her mother also had Facebook accounts which were used to search for Mitz's customers. When Mitz would refuse to meet the customers, her mother would beat her and lock her up in a room without food. Eventually, she said that she learned to like what she was doing because she was contributing to her family's needs. The money she earned helped to pay for the education of her siblings, the reclamation of their family's pawned property, and the renovation of their old house.

When she was about 14 or 15 years old, she reported her situation to the Makati City police but they did not believe her. This may or may not have had something to do with her stepfather being a known drug criminal in the city. Later, she ran away and it was the brother-in-law of her older brother who eventually listened and believed her.

However, he was also afraid of the consequences so she turned to her boyfriend for help. They filed a report in the MSWDO of Sta. Rosa, Laguna where she was referred to ECPAT for assistance in filing a complaint in Makati City. During this process, her own brother turned against her and it was her brother's brother-in-law, his family, and her boyfriend who gave her their support.

Mitz was a victim of child pornography, prostitution, sex tourism, and incestuous rape. This lasted for 3 to 4 years and throughout this period, she contracted gonorrhoea and had two induced abortions. Only one abortion was performed by a doctor. She said she was not aware of HIV or AIDS. She had been assaulted once by a Korean customer who dunked her head in a toilet after she refused to have sex with him because she was not feeling well. She experienced being given drugs and alcoholic beverages by her customers. One time, she shared that drugs were injected into her veins.

ECPAT helped her file complaints against her mother for child trafficking and child abuse. However, they were unable to file a rape case against her stepfather because no one, including her, knew his name. Her mother has not been arrested. Despite all of this, Mitz is happy where she is now. She has been living in a shelter run by ECPAT for the past year. ECPAT is sending her to ALS classes in a nearby public elementary school so that she may eventually attend regular high school. She is determined to seek justice for what her mother and stepfather have done to her.

Mitz was referred to the research team by ECPAT Philippines.

CHRISTOPHER

Christopher is 16 years old. He is underweight, small for his age, and suffers from the lack of proper hygiene. He lives with his family of six, which includes half-siblings from both sides of his parents and a nephew. Money is scarce despite the fact that everyone in his family has a job. His stepmother works full-time as a cashier and his father is a construction worker. All his brothers work as either tricycle drivers or construction workers. He is the youngest in his family; a family which he described as happy and supportive.

As part of his hobbies, Christopher enjoys playing basketball and online computer games which he accesses through Piso Net. He has a Facebook account which he only uses to connect with his family and relatives. Aside from this, he often just hangs out with his friends. He added that it is through them - as well as other peers and adults in the community - that he learned about the commercial sex industry. He eventually entered the sex trade when he was 13 years old and still in school. He dropped out of Grade 8 in September 2015 due to a lack of money to sustain his education.

His group of friends, or tropa, is composed of at least ten boys who are all willing to be pimped out to gay adults in their community. The adolescents are between 13 to 17 years old. Some are students who need money. Together, they rent a small 2-bedroom house to be used as their tambayan or place to hang out. This is also where sexual services are provided by the boys. Christopher said he gets his customers through word of mouth. His clients pay his tropa 1,500 pesos for 3

hours and out of that, he gets 200 to 300 pesos. He also gets a direct payment of 200 pesos from the client. He earns 500 pesos a week because he only entertains clients once a week.

His family does not know about his commercial sex involvement. He gives 300 pesos of his weekly earnings to his mother so she can buy enough food for the family. During times of great financial need, he engages clients on his own without any assistance from his tropa. When this happens, he gets paid 1,000 pesos. Every time his family asks where he gets his money, he says he was paid to clean yards. His father told him that he won't have to do that anymore because he will be re-enrolled by next school year. Christopher said if this does not happen, he wants to work with his father and quit the sex industry.

He has never had experience in approaching any government agency or NGO for assistance. Once, he contracted gonorrhoea, like some of the other boys in his tropa, but he had no money for a check-up, so he just drank a lot of water to clean his urinary tract. He said he has heard of AIDS but not of HIV. He smokes and occasionally drinks but does not do drugs or marijuana. He has been picked up three times by the police for vagrancy and once, he was sent to the Molave Youth Home. He has also been party to brawls and theft.

He was referred to the research team by a survivor of trafficking for sex who lives in the same community.

JOMAR

Jomar was born and raised in Manila until he was sent to Oriental Mindoro, where his parents were originally from, so he could attend elementary school. Jomar had been playing table tennis since he was 3 years old and his coach at the elementary school saw his potential. He became

an accomplished athlete and competed in London, Denmark and China. He proudly narrated how he won a gold trophy in Denmark and a cash prize of 50,000 pesos in London. He shared that he only kept 20,000 pesos and donated the rest to people who were hungry.

When he was in first year high school, he got his girlfriend pregnant and was sent back to Manila. There, he was exposed to his father's illegal activities which included theft and drug dealing. He said that during this time, life was comfortable for the family. However, this changed when his father was caught and sent to prison for six years. At 15 years old, he was unable to continue his studies and ended up on the streets of Manila where he was eventually initiated into the commercial sex industry. He admits to being hooked on solvent because it helps him sleep. He also smokes and hangs around a mixed group of street children in Divisoria.

Jomar has experienced being rescued, as well as being arrested. At the age of 6 years old, he was found on the streets and sent to Manila RAC and Boystown. More recently, at 19 years old, he was picked up for vagrancy and suspected theft. He said he was beaten until he admitted to the crime. He was only released because he told the police

ROSILYN

Rosilyn's parents are originally from the Bicol region and work full-time in garment factories. She is the middle child among five sisters and the only one who did not get much education. She dropped out during her second year of high school because she got pregnant. Her sisters, on the other hand, have either finished college or are still studying. Aside from this, she shared that she was a difficult child; getting into fights in school, hanging out with friends until late, smoking and drinking, and often coming home at dawn. This was why she suffered from corporal punishment from her father, until she left home after getting pregnant. She then ended up living with her 18-year-old boyfriend's family.

Rosilyn was initiated into the commercial sex industry by a cousin who worked in a bar in Bulacan. At the time, her boyfriend was jobless and she needed money to support their child. Even though she was under 18 years old, she found work at the bar where her cousin was employed and earned commissions from drinks. However,

he was 14 years old. His parents and brother live in a rented house in Manila but many times, he lives on the streets of Divisoria.

He claimed he only had one CSEC-related experience. A gay customer paid him 1,000 pesos and bought him new clothes, but the same customer also gave him gonorrhoea. He said that for four days, he drank fresh coconut juice twice a day in order to clean his urinary tract. Since then, he has not engaged in paid sex and now works as a barker and a jeepney conductor earning 500 pesos a day. Those are his main sources of income. He is saving to return to his girlfriend and 4-year-old son who both live in Oriental Mindoro. He wants to go back to school, help tend to his girlfriend's store, and compete again in 2017. Eventually, he wants to become an engineer or an architect.

He was referred to the research team by ChildHope.

she later learned about diskarte from the other bargirls who offered sex for pay. She then started accepting customers of her own, two or three of them a day, to earn more money. She got 2,000 pesos per customer but 1,000 pesos would go to the bar's manager.

Once, the police raided the bar where she worked but the manager was able to hide her. She was the only child among the bar girls. She continued working in this bar for six months. Then, she went home to her son and became inactive in the trade for the next six months. She was later recruited to work in another bar in Quezon City. This bar had VIP rooms like hotel rooms and most of the bar girls were children like her but there were fewer customers. She stayed here for 2 to 3 months until she finally decided to be with her son.

She left her boyfriend and returned home to her parents. She already had UTI then so her mother brought her to a hospital where antibiotics were

prescribed. She proceeded to exit the commercial sex industry at the age of 18; before that, however, Rosilyn regularly entertained men who frequented the bars where she worked and who were mostly in their forties or older. Some of her clients did not use condoms. She shared that she did not have any regular check-ups and did not take birth control pills. She also drank alcoholic beverages with her friends in the bars she used to work in. She said she did not do drugs but did smoke cigarettes and marijuana.

Rosilyn is now 20 years old while her son is 6 years old. They live with her parents, her three sisters, and nephew in a two-storey house in Quezon City. She is unemployed, with low

GIGI

Gigi is a 19-year-old girl who has been living in the QC SSDD Youth Reception and Action Centre in Payatas, Quezon City for the past year. When she was 18 years old, she showed up at the police station to complain that her stepfather had been raping her since she was 12 years old. Upon investigation, it was found that she was also being pimped to foreigners by her own mother and that it had been going on since she was 13 years old. At the time of her interview in October 2015, she had two ongoing cases which included child trafficking against her mother and attempted rape against her stepfather.

Gigi was born in Angeles City where her birth father, whom she has never met, hails from. Her mother, on the other hand, is from Leyte. Gigi is the eldest child of her mother. Second to her is a brother who has a different father. Four other siblings, two of which are girls while the other two are boys, are her mother's children with the accused stepfather. They all lived together in a one-story house in Novaliches, Quezon City. Her stepfather and mother are both fixers at the Land Transportation Office in Manila and in Caloocan City.

Her mother and stepfather did not want her out of the house when she wasn't in school. She was not allowed to have friends her age; thus, her friends,

educational attainment, and lacking in vocational skills. To earn money, she does domestic chores like doing laundry, ironing, and cleaning the house of her aunt. Her mother wants her to take up a TESDA vocational course, but to be able to do that, she has to finish her high school education. Rosilyn's biggest dream is for her child to finish school. However, she does not know how she will be able to do that.

Rosilyn was referred to the research team by a survivor of trafficking for sex

aged 10 to 13 years old, are younger than her. She was punished whenever she took too long to come home after an errand or whenever she would hang around with their neighbour because she was said to be disobeying her parents. She would get hit or be threatened on these occasions. She said she was allowed to go to the mall but only if she was with her siblings. She has never watched a movie in a theatre.

Though Gigi was able to complete her high school education, she dropped out of college in her first year because she was always absent and there wasn't enough money for her to continue studying. When she inquired with her college whether she could return to school, she was informed that if she wanted to enrol, she needed to pay the unpaid balance. She claimed that she shifted courses from education, care-giving, HRM, housekeeping, and finally to nursing. Nursing was her choice while the other courses were her mother's.

Gigi said that a foreigner, whom she called Mr. Mike, had been supporting her studies since 2013. She added that Mr. Mike wants to marry her. The man lives in Alaska and is described by Gigi as half-Indian and half-American. She said that Mr. Mike was supposed to marry her last February 2015 but it did not push through. According to her, he paid for her 18th birthday celebration and was

planning to visit her in December 2015. Gigi has never seen the man in person, only through the computer. She receives the money he sends her through Western Union or Cebuana Padala.

Her own mother and her mother's friends initiated her entry into the commercial sex industry. She was 13 years old when she was told by her mother's friends that she was going to be paid if she was touched by someone, but she needed to behave herself. Her first experience with cyber pornography resulted in a payment amounting to 100,000 pesos. The receipt of this transaction is with the police and is being kept as evidence.

Her mother became her pimp and searched for clients on social media and websites like Filipino Classmates and Dating Asian Women. Lakad or walk is the term used by Gigi and her mother to refer to cyber pornography. Several times a week, she goes online to meet clients - who are all foreigners - using a webcam. Her mother brings her to Robinson's mall in Ermita, where they would meet the foreigner and then, her mother leaves her. She said that all her clients would bring her to a hotel in Malate where the service would be provided. Afterwards, they would bring her home. She entertains one client a day.

She said there was a time when she was paid 50,000 pesos and her earnings were used to help pay for her family's vehicle, renovations on their home, and family vacations. Her mother received and managed her earnings. She was not sure whether she had savings. Once, her mother brought Gigi to Singapore with her but she stayed in a condominium alone while her mother and her friend went out at noontime and came back only at night. They stayed there for a week and said she never saw the city.

When she would refuse a lakad, her mother would physically hurt her and threaten her with death. Gigi shared that one time, her mother physically assaulted her with a knife, slashing her inner thighs and wounding her private parts. Gigi claimed she was forced to meet clients so that her mother would not hurt her. She said that her

mother treats her like an animal either way.

She was assisted by social workers of Quezon City. One focused on supporting her in her legal cases while another guided her at YRA center. During her stay in the center, a joint NBI-QCSSDD team rescued all her half-siblings when authorities found out that her younger half-sister was likewise being pimped by their mother. All children were put in a separate government shelter. Meanwhile, Gigi received counselling and skills training at the center. A social worker always accompanied her to the city hall for hearings.

In one of the hearings, Gigi was surprised to see her mother and father because she knew they had been arrested. She was told by her social worker that they were able to post bail. Her two cases dragged on for months. In fact, 9 months on, they were still at the preliminary investigation phase and had not reached the courts. The Quezon City court would try the case against her stepfather while the Manila court would try the case against her mother.

Gigi was getting bored and wanted to return to school but the QCSSDD did not have the resources to send her to school. At the same time, the center she was staying in was too far from any college. Gigi fled once during a hearing but she was returned by her mother for fear of being arrested. However, Gigi's behaviour worsened. She burned blankets and other proprietary materials in the center. She became a bad influence to the other children and it was found out that her parents were bribing the center's staff in an effort to present themselves as good parents.

Gigi decided to desist the case against her stepfather. At this point, it seemed likely that she would also drop the case against her mother as she verbalized that she pitied her mother and missed her. She also said that she missed her half-siblings and just wanted to resume her studying. However, she made it clear to the social workers that she would never return to her mother. Legally, she could make all these decisions because she was already an adult.

However, before the desistance was filed in court, her lawyers from the Department of Justice and National Bureau of Investigation consolidated the two cases into one case as the case against trafficking lacked evidence. This case was finally elevated to the court one year after the two original cases were filed but without any trial, the judge dismissed the case due to lack of evidence. The court ordered her immediate release. It likewise ordered the release of her siblings from the shelter.

Gigi, her parents, and her half-siblings were reunited after 13 months. She now lives with a maternal aunt in the adjoining barangay where her parents live.

The QC SSDD referred Gigi to the research team.


ABOUT PLAN INTERNATIONAL

Plan International is a development and humanitarian organization that has been working in the Philippines since 1961.

We strive for a just world, working together with children, young people, our supporters, and partners to advance children's rights and equality for girls.



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