

**International Child Redress Project
Community Dialogue Forum & Youth Workshop
Report
September 2016**



***In Partnership with the Children’s Legal Bureau, Inc. Cebu,
Y-PEER Pilipinas, and ECPAT UK***





■ About ICRP

The International Child Redress Project (ICRP) is a UK based non-profit organisation which aims to ensure that all child abuse victims have access to remedies. ICRP was established in 2015, and is currently in a startup phase of development, which means that so far it is entirely volunteer-led.

By using a child rights based approach ICRP aims to connect children everywhere with their right to be heard and protected from abuse and exploitation, and to access a remedy when they are legally entitled to do so.

How can the law help child victims?

Hundreds of vulnerable children from poor communities throughout Southeast Asia are being sexually exploited by foreigners, as well as by predators in their own communities. National law enforcement agencies such as the NCA in the UK, ICE in the US, and AFP in Australia, are making significant efforts to find Western perpetrators and prosecute them.

However, the child victims are left in the care of their local social services, which in poor communities often struggle to respond to the children's needs for protection from further abuse, and to provide essential recovery services for them.

Making the perpetrators pay for the solution

The Western perpetrators of child sex crimes can be sued under their own national laws, for compensation by the child victims, in theory for significant sums of money. But right now, few cases are being brought. This is because transnational compensation claims are complicated, and require coordination between different legal systems, NGOs, lawyers, parents, and children.

However, if compensation cases can be brought successfully, then potentially significant sums of money can be claimed from the perpetrator. This could result in the perpetrator funding recovery services for the victim, and potentially also other services to address the reasons that the child and their family became vulnerable to exploitation in the first place. It is possible that suing the perpetrators will also act as a deterrent for these kind of crimes.

Access to legal services

With the assistance of iProbono, ICRP is building a network of specialised lawyers in European, North American, and Asian countries, which are some of the main source countries for perpetrators of child sex crimes. There are many different kinds of law firms which could be of assistance to child victims of sexual exploitation, and ICRP will ensure that the best available lawyer is found to promote the interests of the child's particular circumstances. Lawyers vary in their expertise, capacity to investigate cases, and in their payment structures. In some countries lawyers may ask for a percentage of the compensation award for their fee, or legal aid may be available. It is also often possible to find pro bono lawyers willing to take on cases without charge. ICRP will assess which lawyer or firm is most appropriate in each case to further the best interests of the child.

ICRP will maintain contact with the lawyer assigned to the case as it progresses, to ensure that a clear line of communication is maintained between the child and the lawyer. ICRP will also work with the child and the lawyer to ensure that any compensation award is put into a suitable trust fund on behalf of the child, which is managed by an independent entity that is not susceptible to misappropriation.

Putting together the pieces in transnational legal cases

ICRP is working to fill an emerging gap in both capacity and expertise of existing NGO staff to identify victims, gather the necessary evidence, and support the child victim through the legal process.

Encouraging community generated solutions

It has become clear that it is not possible to focus on transnational compensation cases independently of the local legal system in the child victim's country. Gathering the evidence necessary to bring a civil compensation claim is dependent on competent law enforcement investigations at a local level. Furthermore, child victims must receive sufficient psychosocial support to be able to go through another legal case. If a compensation award is to be in the best interests of the child there must be services available locally that the money can pay for which will improve that child's life and enable them to recover from abuse. Our approach is to work collaboratively with government and civil society in the child's local area. We use a human-centred-design approach, which means that we will work with the child and their community to understand their needs, and to find innovative solutions to meet those needs.

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About the Children's Legal Bureau

The Children's Legal Bureau (CLB) was created in Cebu in 1996, and since then its vision has been to create a just world for children. The CLB is committed to empowering children and communities while engaging with law enforcement, prosecutors, corrections, courts, and local government units, for the protection of rights and the attainment of justice for children in Cebu.

The CLB's main goals are to advance the rights of children and develop the capacity of duty bearers and rights holders towards child protection; to influence policy makers' child-friendly legislation and policies; and to intensify collaboration and partnership with other relevant service providers and institutions.

CLB's core program, *Laban Bata*, is focused on litigation and advocacy related to child sexual exploitation in Cebu and on child rights protection. CLB is working to empower communities and build partnerships to prevent trafficking. Part of *Laban Bata* also involves the juvenile justice strengthening program.

The CLB is involved in investigation of child sexual exploitation cases and rescue of victims. CLB lawyers provide legal assistance to the victims and ensure that victims can access support services. CLB lawyers also aim to build the capacity of children's service providers within both government and civil society. The *Laban Bata* program also includes work towards policy development and advocacy for the rights of children.

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About Y-PEER Pilipinas

Y-PEER, the Youth Peer Education Network, is a groundbreaking and comprehensive youth-to-youth initiative pioneered by UNFPA. Y-PEER is a network of more than 500 non-profit organizations and governmental institutions; its membership includes thousands of young people who work in the many areas surrounding adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

As of 2007, Y-PEER linked more than 5,000 members from 36 countries. The network continues to grow as more young people and organizations join.

In the Philippines, Y-PEER is represented by Y-PEER PILIPINAS. The group was launched in November 2009 with 17 youth organizations as its charter members representing the youth-sectors and regions of the Philippines.

Members of Y-PEER PILIPINAS include young people, active peer educators, trainers and youth advocates for adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

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About ECPAT UK

ECPAT UK, established in 1994, is a leading UK-based children's rights organisation campaigning and advocating for the right of children to be protected from threats of trafficking and transnational child sexual abuse. ECPAT UK has a long history of campaigning against child trafficking and exploitation in the UK, having produced the first research into trafficking of children in the UK in 2001. ECPAT UK has been instrumental in raising awareness in government of the plight of children trafficked into the UK for all forms of exploitation. ECPAT UK campaigns against transnational child abuse has led to introduction of new legislation to protect children and prosecute British nationals who sexually abuse children abroad. An on-going programme of research, training, youth participation and advocacy informs our campaigning efforts.

ECPAT UK works directly with child victims of trafficking, which provides insight into the experiences of these children and the processes/systems that they encounter. ECPAT UK works with police and the travel and tourism industry..

ECPAT UK provides training throughout the UK and internationally on the protection of children in tourism and the protection of child victims of trafficking. They also work on policy development & legal reform, and capacity building. They regularly work with other ECPAT partners in Europe on projects and policy development. Two examples are the adoption of the Code of Conduct for the protection of children from sexual exploitation in tourism and since 1999 working on a joint East-West 20 country counter-trafficking project involving training for police and social workers.

In 2015, ECPAT UK launched an online campaign calling on the UK Secretary of State for Justice to grant access to recovery funds for child victims of online sexual abuse. Modelled on significant legal developments in the United States, the campaign seeks to introduce a financial order to enable child victims of online sexual abuse to claim compensation from their abusers.

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Community Dialogue Forum

“Every one of us should take social responsibility. Multi sectoral seminars like this one today are very important. They make things better because we gain perspective. They contribute a lot to our approach and make this world a better place.”

Forum Participant

ICRP held a Community Dialogue Forum in Cebu City, which is part of the Visayas region of the Philippines, on September 27th, 2016. The forum was held in partnership with the Philippines Department for Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) for Region 7, and the Children’s Legal Bureau. ECPAT UK also attended the forum and made a presentation.

The forum was well attended by over 40 people from the area, including police, cybercrime specialists, social workers, community based organisations, community leaders, faith leaders, parent leaders, teachers, and lawyers. This made for a rich exchange of ideas and perspectives, from an inter-disciplinary group of people whose lives are directly affected by child sexual exploitation. The purpose of the forum was to encourage discussion and the exchange of ideas, and to brainstorm possible ways of ensuring access to justice for child victims. The morning session started with some brief presentations to set the context and to provide necessary background information for discussion. The afternoon session consisted of group exercises based around key questions that ICRP were keen to pose to the community.

The Presentations: introducing transnational child sexual exploitation

- **ICRP: Intention and direction**

Emma Day, Co-Founder, ICRP

Case study: a fictional boy called John



“John is currently ten years old and lives in Cebu. When John was around 6 years old a British businessman started to visit John’s mother frequently. The British man lived in the local area and was well respected and considered to be a very kind man. The British man started to visit more and more often and was very friendly to John, buying him sweets and toys, and often talking to John about God. John doesn’t know when it started, but the man started to become more than friendly, and persuaded John to perform sexual favours. By this time the British man had paid for a new roof for his family’s house, and school fees for his siblings, so John felt that he owed him a lot.

The man started to come more and more often, and he wanted John to do more and more things and he started to take photos and videos of these things. One day John’s house was raided by police and his mum was arrested. John and his siblings were taken to his aunt’s house. John felt really guilty and ashamed.”

The participants were asked to reflect on **“what does justice mean for John?”**

There are many boys like John, and likely many of them live in Cebu. We imagine that following his mother’s arrest John would be interviewed by police and social workers and given a chance to tell his story. If the police manage to gather enough evidence they would find the British man and put him in prison. They would also have to explain to John what his mother’s role in the exploitation had been, and why she had been sent to prison. Under criminal law the State would take legal action against the British man and John’s mother on behalf of the public.

But what happens to John? John has legal rights under international and Filipino law to a remedy. He has the right to recovery and to rehabilitation which means he has a legal right to receive psychosocial support. He also has a legal right to redress. This means he has the right to claim compensation from the State or the perpetrator, or both.

The questions ICRP wants to address are:

- **Who is accountable to John?**

- **What happens if John's legal rights are not fulfilled?**
- **How can we make John's legal rights a reality?**

Why did ICRP, a team of foreigners, decide to come to the Philippines to address this issue?

We know that child sex offenders from Western countries are taking advantage of their economic power, to exploit vulnerable children in poorer countries, whose families are struggling to make enough money to survive. Some of these perpetrators come from our own countries: the UK, the US, and Spain, and we feel responsible for ensuring that these people are held accountable. Under the law in many Western countries, foreign victims (including Filipino children) have the right to claim compensation from the perpetrators in the perpetrator's jurisdiction under civil law. For example, if a British man abuses a child in the Philippines, the Filipino child victim can bring a claim for compensation against that man in the British courts, provided that the perpetrator has sufficient assets. At the moment, very few such cases are being brought worldwide, and ICRP is seeking to raise awareness about the options available to child victims to access justice in this way.

We know that realising this right is not easy because the victim must know they have a right, and then they need to be put in touch with a lawyer in another country who can bring a claim on their behalf. ICRP can assist the child and their representative to find the most appropriate lawyer to bring a claim, often on a pro bono basis, and will stay involved in the case as it progresses to ensure that the child's best interests are protected throughout. ICRP will also work with the child and their representative to ensure that a suitable trust fund is established where compensation is awarded, to ensure that compensation awards do not become an incentive for further abuse.

Our current focus is on Southeast Asia, and the Philippines is a priority for us because the available evidence suggests that there is a significant problem in the Philippines of foreigners targeting children both in person and online.

- **Access to justice for children. International challenges, learning and sharing best practices**

Bharti Patel, CEO, ECPAT UK

A key part of ECPAT UK's work involves addressing transnational child exploitation, which is defined as the global phenomenon of sexual exploitation of children across borders and digital spaces, and which involves foreign nationals traveling, working or residing abroad and exploiting children directly or through business supply chains. ECPAT UK is also working to address child trafficking and online child abuse.

Child sexual exploitation is a global problem and exists in the UK as well. There are around 10,000 new cases of contact child sex abuse reported in the UK each year, and there were

49,466 registered sex offenders in the UK as of 31st March 2015. Also in 2015, 154 British nationals were detained abroad for child sex offences.

The 21st century challenge is the online remote child sexual exploitation. The UK's National Crime Agency receives 1800 referrals a month to investigate online abuse of children involving child sex abuse images or live streaming of abuse. In 2012 there were 50,000 UK individuals involved in downloading and sharing child sex abuse materials, whereas less than one percent of this material is hosted in the UK which means that perpetrators are sourcing material from overseas or generating their own.

ECPAT UK identified several **factors which contribute to a denial of access to justice for child victims of sexual exploitation:**

- Poverty
- Deficit in child protection and social welfare systems
- Deficit in knowledge and resources of frontline professionals to execute responsibility to protect children and ensure justice for children
- Hidden and unreported crime against children
- Deficits in data collection and sharing of intelligence
- Failure of legal systems to protect children and ensure their access to justice
- Lack of voice of the young victims of trafficking in policy making and practices to protect victims

There have been a number of new laws enacted in the UK and EU which protect victims' rights and provide for extraterritorial jurisdiction. These include:

- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Sexual Offences Act amendments introducing two new civil orders - Sexual Harm Prevention Orders (SHOP) & Sexual Risk Orders (SRO) which can place restrictions on the movements and activities of anyone convicted or cautioned for violent sexual offences, including those committed overseas, or who pose a risk of sexual harm to children in the UK and abroad.
- EU Victims Rights Directive which gives victims the right to be made aware of their rights in a manner they can understand, as well as the right to access compensation and restoration through financial damages, mediation or restorative justice.

Child sexual exploitation remains an unpunished crime

There has been a lack of prosecutions for child sexual abuse abroad by British nationals under Section 72 of the Sexual Offences Act. Several factors contribute to this. Prosecutions are expensive and complex, and require effective cooperation and information sharing between authorities from different jurisdictions. Bureaucratic obstacles hinder mutual legal assistance processes and the capability to acquire evidence from child witnesses and others in foreign jurisdictions. Invariably children and their guardians are not informed of their rights, and the debate on the right to compensation for victims of abuse is missing in the current discourse.

Child sexual exploitation carries a high cost

[New research](#) by UNICEF on the cost to the child, families, communities, and countries in East Asia and the Pacific of child maltreatment – physical, emotional and sexual – is estimated at US\$209 billion.

In a USA case, Amy (now an adult) was awarded US\$35.4 million for the continued abuse she suffered in the hands of the people who viewed the images of her sexual abuse by her uncle when she was 13 years old and which was taped and distributed on-line.

ECPAT UK launched a campaign calling on the UK Secretary of State for Justice to introduce a financial order to enable child victims to claim compensation from their abusers for the cost of recovery and rehabilitation from the negative social, psychological and financial impacts. – 40,000 signed the ECPAT UK petition. The UK government is now reviewing its compensation scheme.

Giving child victims of sexual exploitation access to justice requires global, national and transnational partners and active collaboration between NGOs, law enforcement, legislators, legal professionals and local public sector professionals to co-create solutions and tools to make broader, transformative changes in child protection, policies and practices, as well as in access to justice procedures.

- **International law**

Silvia Nicolaou Garcia, Co-Founder, ICRP

Child sexual exploitation is a global problem, which requires a global solution. It generally involves people abusing a position of power, some recent examples from the UK being Gary Glitter and Jimmy Saville, who were both very famous and rich celebrities who were later discovered to have been sexually exploiting multiple children. Child sexual exploitation can also be highly lucrative, and involves serious and organised criminal groups, as well as individuals.

Statistics from the US Federal Bureau of Investigation, there are thought to be 750,000 sexual predators connected to the internet viewing child sexual abuse materials at any one time. However, insufficient resources have been allocated by any government to address such crimes, particularly for multi-jurisdictional operations.

Access to high speed internet in the Philippines is growing, and according to a study by Terre des Hommes, by 2011 a third of the population was online. The level of English language amongst the Filipino population, including children, is relatively high compared to the rest of the Southeast Asia region, which makes children easier to access directly in English via the internet. Foreign perpetrators have accessed live sex shows involving Filipino children for as little as \$10.

Globally there has been a shocking culture of impunity surrounding child sexual abuse and exploitation. However, things are starting to change. In the UK recently Jimmy Saville and Gary Glitter, the two celebrities mentioned earlier, were convicted and put in prison and a number of their victims are bringing civil damages claims against them. In the Philippines, Operation Endeavour which was coordinated by British, Australian and American law enforcement in 2012 resulted in 29 international arrests, and the rescue of more than 15 Filipino children who were being abused on front of webcams, often by their own families. In the Philippines law enforcement efforts continue to ensure convictions of the Filipino perpetrators involved.

In addition, the Philippines government is strongly committed to fighting child sexual exploitation and trafficking, and has enacted some of the strongest legislation in the world against these offences. The challenge now is to ensure effective implementation of these laws in the Philippines, and to ensure that the sending countries where perpetrators come from also have effective laws in place to deter and address crimes of child sexual exploitation when they are committed by their nationals anywhere in the world.

How can the law help?

Every country in the world except for the United States has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Contained in the UNCRC are provisions concerned with child protection. Articles 34- 36 specifically deal with the protections that should be afforded to children to prevent their sexual exploitation Article 2 also makes clear that the CRC applies to all children, whatever their race, religion or abilities; whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from. It doesn't matter where children live, what language they speak, what their parents do, whether they are boys or girls, what their culture is, whether they have a disability or whether they are rich or poor. The CRC's Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography (OPSC) has also been widely ratified.

Key provisions:

Article 2 CRC:

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

Articles 34-36 CRC:

Article 34

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;*
- (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;*
- (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.*

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

Article 36

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

Article 9 OPSC

1. States Parties shall adopt or strengthen, implement and disseminate laws, administrative measures, social policies and programmes to prevent the offences referred to in the present Protocol. Particular attention shall be given to protect children who are especially vulnerable to such practices.

2. States Parties shall promote awareness in the public at large, including children, through information by all appropriate means, education and training, about the preventive measures and harmful effects of the offences referred to in the present Protocol. In fulfilling their obligations under this article, States Parties shall encourage the participation of the community and, in particular, children and child victims, in such information and education and training programmes, including at the international level.

3. States Parties shall take all feasible measures with the aim of ensuring all appropriate assistance to victims of such offences, including their full social reintegration and their full physical and psychological recovery.

4. States Parties shall ensure that all child victims of the offences described in the present Protocol have access to adequate procedures to seek, without discrimination, compensation for damages from those legally responsible.

5. States Parties shall take appropriate measures aimed at effectively prohibiting the production and dissemination of material advertising the offences described in the present Protocol.

Transnational reach of the law

There is an increasing willingness in many countries to give criminal provisions in domestic law extra-territorial effect, which means that nationals are still liable for criminal offences they commit abroad. In the UK, Section 72 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 makes British nationals liable for sex offences they commit against children abroad. This means they can be prosecuted in the UK for an offence they commit in the Philippines.

Damages claims in the UK

In the UK these are some of the ways in which victims of child sexual exploitation can claim financial compensation:

1. Suing the abuser or the organisation which failed in their duty of care (could be an individual or an organisation)
2. Getting a criminal compensation order if the abuser is successfully prosecuted
3. Making a claim to a State Compensation Fund (Criminal Injuries Compensation Authority)

Victim Compensation Funds

Very few countries in the world currently have victim compensation funds which are accessible to child victims of sexual exploitation. In the UK, the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme (CICA) is only accessible by child victims who are resident in the UK. The Australian Victims of Crime Compensation Scheme, however, is available to both Australian and foreign child victims of exploitation through prostitution and pornography. The fund covers financial assistance for rehabilitation and counselling. This is an important way of assessing compensation where the perpetrator has no assets or it is not possible to locate him or his assets.

Purpose of a civil remedy

There are many reasons why civil remedies for child victims are important. In the current context where implementation of criminal laws globally in relation to child sex offenders is lacking, an order for the perpetrator to personally pay compensation acts as an added penalty for perpetrators in addition to any criminal penalty. It is hoped that when such compensation cases against perpetrators become routine this may also act as a deterrent.

Recovery from child sexual exploitation can take a lifetime, and it has a financial cost to the child and their family. The child needs access to psychosocial services and healthcare. They may also need to take time out of their studies to recover, leading them to fall out of the state system which means they may need to pay for education when they are older.

There are clear correlations between poverty and child sexual exploitation. Money is needed to address the situation of poverty and lack of opportunity which contributes to families exploiting their own children, and children themselves seeking to make money at whatever cost.

Durable solutions

Addressing child sexual exploitation calls for a multi-jurisdictional approach which includes both criminal and civil law. There is global recognition that transnational crime requires multi-jurisdictional law enforcement efforts, and Interpol works with national law enforcement agencies to support such efforts. Most governments accept responsibility for assisting with criminal justice for their own nationals when they commit crimes abroad. However, we must ensure that the victims are not lost in the criminal justice process. There is a huge gap in terms of victim identification, treatment and follow-up, and ICRP sees a need for governments to take more responsibility for ensuring that child victims of their nationals realise their right to a legal remedy.

There is a need for greater support for domestic law and enforcement and social work in the countries where victims are targeted. For this to be effective local community stakeholders must be involved in raising awareness levels regarding what the law says, what children's rights are, and where they can go for legal assistance.

There are many challenges facing those trying to secure remedies for victims of transnational sexual exploitation. The fight against transnational sexual exploitation and online exploitation of children is a global issue which needs a joined up global response.

- **Filipino law on civil compensation for children: Civil Action for TIP Survivors**

*Jedrek Ng, Prosecutor at the Department of Justice, Inter-Agency Committee Against Trafficking Member
Advisory Board Member for ICRP*

Child victims of sexual exploitation are entitled to compensation under the Republic Act 9208. The key provisions of this Act are as follows:

Republic Act 9208

- **Section 13. Exemption from Filing Fees.** - When the trafficked person institutes a separate civil action for the recovery of civil damages, he/she shall be exempt from the payment of filing fees.
- **Section 14. Confiscation and Forfeiture of the Proceeds and Instruments Derived from Trafficking in Persons.** - the court shall order the confiscation and forfeiture, in favor of the government, of all the proceeds and properties derived from the commission of the crime.
- **Section 15. Trust Fund.** - All fines imposed under this Act and the proceeds and properties forfeited and confiscated pursuant to Section 14 hereof shall accrue to a Trust Fund to be administered and managed by the Council to be used exclusively for programs that will prevent acts of trafficking and protect, rehabilitate, reintegrate trafficked persons into the mainstream of society.
- **SEC. 17-C. Immunity from Suit, Prohibited Acts and Injunctive Remedies**-The remedies of injunction and attachment of properties of the traffickers, illegal recruiters and persons involved in trafficking may be issued *motu proprio* by judges.
- **SEC. 28-A. Additional Funds for the Council.** – The amount collected from every penalty, fine or asset derived from any violation of this Act shall be earmarked as additional funds for the use of the Council.
- **Section 3(i)** of the same Act is hereby amended to read as follows:
"(i) 'Unlawful activity' refers to any act or omission or series or combination thereof involving or having direct relation to the following:
(19) Violations of Sections 4 to 6 of Republic Act No. 9208, otherwise known as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003;
(31) Violation of Section 4 of Republic Act No. 9775, otherwise known as the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009
"(32) Violations of Sections 5, 7, 8, 9, 10(c), (d) and (e), 11, 12 and 14 of Republic Act No. 7610, otherwise known as the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination
- **SEC. 10. Freezing of Monetary Instrument or Property.** –
Initiated by the AMLC

the Court of Appeals may issue a freeze order which shall be effective immediately, and which shall not exceed six (6) months depending upon the circumstances of the case: the court should act on the petition to freeze within twenty-four (24) hours from filing of the petition.

No court shall issue a temporary restraining order or a writ of injunction against any freeze order, except the Supreme Court.

- **Section 12**

(a) *Civil Forfeiture.* –the AMLC shall file with the appropriate court through the Office of the Solicitor General, a verified *ex parte* petition for forfeiture.

The Hodge Case

The only known case of a foreigner paying compensation for child sexual exploitation in the Philippines is that of Dr. Marcus Hodge, an Australian national, who worked for the World Health Organisation (WHO) in Manila between 1992 and 1995. He was convicted for paying a 12 year old boy \$8 for sex. Hodge was eventually ordered to pay \$6,000 of compensation into the IACAT fund, but it is not clear what happened to the money and how it was spent.

- **The Children’s Legal Bureau Inc., Cebu**

Attorney Joan Saniel, Executive Director, Children’s Legal Bureau Inc.

There are many obstacles to prosecution of child sexual exploitation crimes in the Philippines, which include factors related to the child, to the perpetrators, to the community, and the justice system.

Child factors

Children generally do not file cases against the perpetrator for various reasons:

- They do not know they are already abused/ exploited
- They do not know where to report cases
- They are afraid no one will believe them (especially if the perpetrator is a family member)
- They are afraid of the perpetrator because s/he has threatened to harm to her or her family
- “voluntary” – no disclosures, refuse medical examination

When children file cases, they still encounter problems:

- They are traumatized in the process
- Difficulty in testifying because of development factors
- They are afraid, they do not feel safe and secure
- The family, community and justice system factors

Perpetrator Factors

In cases of online child sexual exploitation, there is difficulty in identifying the perpetrator (customer) because they are on the other side of the globe, and the child victims do not know them. Usually, only the local operators of the computer (who may be parents or relatives) are arrested.

- In cases where the foreigner is present, they are travelling and are mobile making it difficult to arrest them, especially if the victims are “willing” victims and do not report the incident.
- Perpetrators are using “grooming” techniques and the child/relatives think that they are helping
- If ever arrested, the offense is bailable (since the children rescued do not disclose sexual abuse) or if the judge finds that evidence of guilt is not strong, they can post bail and then they are nowhere to be found (they jump bail), the case is archived.
- The perpetrator finds ways (they bribe and threaten the victims) so they will not pursue the case
- If the perpetrators are parents/relatives, the child is not willing to pursue the case, will not testify against her own parent, at times the child has nowhere to go and is not willing to be placed in temporary shelter and will cause problems in the shelter.

NOTE: Theoretically, the case can still be pursued but most of the time, some elements of the crime could not be proven without the victim’s testimony (eg. the purpose in TIP cases)

Family and Community Factors

- Lack of support from family and community (financial, material and moral)
- Parents are easily bribed by the perpetrators so they will persuade the child not to pursue the case
- Community and school environment may cause stigma to the victims

Justice System Factors

- Multiple interviews before a case is filed causes trauma to the victims
- Insensitivity of the players in the justice system from barangay, police, prosecutors, judges
- Delay in the court proceedings
- Child witness rule is not maximized

Compensation for victims

- Civil case is deemed filed with the criminal case unless the civil case is filed separately
- For CLB cases since CLB is appearing as private prosecutor, this is deemed filed with the criminal case
- Most of the time in the preparation of affidavits and gathering of evidence, the civil aspect is left out especially if there is a rescue since there is limited time for filing of the case, victims are usually not cooperative and so there is difficulty in getting their statements

- There is perceived difficulty in enforcing any civil liability because most of the perpetrators are relatives or parents of the victims, others do not have any property and since they are in jail, they do not have work
- For foreigner accused, there is also difficulty in getting information regarding their property, businesses, etc. Some perpetrators jump bail

How to Overcome Obstacles

- Capacitate the children to protect themselves and know where to report
- Build supportive environment for the child (families and communities)
- Provide support services for the victims (may be done through referrals to the appropriate agencies)
- Child sensitivity of the pillars of the justice system
- Maximize the Child Witness Rule (i.e., support persons, environment, methods of presenting child witnesses)
- Be conscious in including the civil aspect of the case (in taking of affidavit, presentation of witnesses)
- Be conscious to identify the “customers” in online child sexual exploitation cases
- Provide legal support for cases where the perpetrators are outside of the country from appropriate bodies (possibility of cases both criminal and compensation to be filed outside if they jump bail, possibility of extradition, how to find their properties abroad to enforce any civil liability)

Panel Discussion – Q&As

Panel: Emma Day (ICRP), Silvia Nicolau Garcia (ICRP), Jedrek Ng (IACAT), Joan Sanjel (CLB), Bharti Patel (ECPAT UK)

Participants were given the opportunity to ask the panel of presenters questions and to respond to their presentations.

Q: What is the process to claim compensation in the Philippines?

Jedrek: A civil case can be filled separately. A private lawyer can help. Many things can be claimed, including the reparation of moral harm, anxiety, and trauma, as well as any actual expenses, such as hospital bills.

Joan: If someone has no assets, there is the “OJ Board” of Claims. Yet the amount claimable is limited to 10,000 pesos. Access to this fund and the amount recoverable needs to be increased through advocacy work.

Silvia: IRCP will lobby in the UK to expand the access to the victim funds to foreign victims too, not just UK nationals.

Emma: There is a need to check systematically if the person has money or not, even in cases where it seems like he/she does not. Checks have to be done routinely. Even if the perpetrator has a small amount of assets there should be a way to make them pay something according to their means.

Barthi: We need to work with local partners who are aware of John's situation. We do not need John to be flown to another region to testify. There are ways to collect evidence locally that can be presented to courts internationally.

Silvia: The British Airways case, which involved a pilot who abused several girls in Kenya and Uganda, was settled out of court. Since the terms of the agreement are not publicly disclosed, it is difficult to say whether this is a real case of "vicarious liability" or not. Yet the case is interesting and promising.

Joan: We have not tried yet to bring foreigners to pay compensation to Filipino victims.

Q: Is there a perpetrator profile?

Emma: Despite a range of perceptions, we actually do not have the data to say that perpetrators are predominantly western men. Maybe it appears like that - for instance because ICRP is focusing on foreigners, so we do present that image. Yet the internet has grown so much and people are online everywhere abusing children. The US authorities estimate at 750,000 the number of online sexual predators operating on the internet at any given moment, but we don't know where this figure comes from either. Yet it is true that we are more aware of westerners.

Barthi: There is an increasing online demand for non-western boys and girls. Where is the demand coming from? From white rich people? Or from in-country demand? This is a very open question and something that needs to be looked into.

Q: Among the victims, are there more boys or girls?

Jedrek: It seems to be the case that victims are mostly girls. Yet, saying so, there is an issue that boys might be neglected.

Emma: In fact, in all the cases ICRP has come across so far, all victims have been boys. An NGO in Cambodia, named APLE, recorded statistics about hundreds of cases they saw. They found that western men were overwhelmingly targeting boys while Asian perpetrators focused on girls. No data is available globally yet on this issue.

Q: What does trafficking actually mean?

Jedrek: Trafficking means putting someone in conditions of exploitation. This can include prostitution, pornography, forced labor, organ trade, etc. And this is done by means of deceiving the person. Trafficking is about treating the person as a mere commodity while traffickers gain benefits from it (although the profit is not part of the crime). If a minor is involved, it does not matter the way it is done: it is trafficking in any case.

Barthi: ECPAT has been leading on re-thinking this question in the UK. Trafficking is a whole process that starts from recruitment all the way to exploitation. At every stage there is harm done to the child and we need to go further up and down the chain to properly understand and address it.

Q: Is there any willing victim?

Joan: Children cannot technically give "informed consent". They have no informed knowledge. They seemingly give "consent" because of the money, etc. Abuse is sold for chance of a better life. Many kids go down this journey. There is a willingness to go to the

UK, for instance, to be educated, to get money, etc.

The Group Exercises: community knowledge and ideas about child sexual exploitation online

- **Initial Presentation: a legal empowerment approach**

Emma Day, ICRP

A core belief of ICRP and the lawyers we work with is that nobody can swoop in and save child victims like a superhero. If we are going to really achieve justice we need to empower children and young people to access their rights, and to take back control over their lives.

Legal empowerment approaches have been used in a variety of other contexts, including land rights, health rights, women's rights, and drug users' rights. However, this approach is not often used with children and young people. One example of how this approach has been used in the context of land rights, is taken from the Philippines, and a social justice group called the Alternative Lawyers Group (ALG). The Children's Legal Bureau is a member of the ALG.

ICRP played a [short video](#) produced by the ALG, which explains the concept of legal empowerment in the context of land. The forum participants were asked to think while they watched the video about how this approach could apply to working with children and young people on access to justice.

ICRP also gave two more examples of legal empowerment projects from other countries which have addressed access to justice for children:

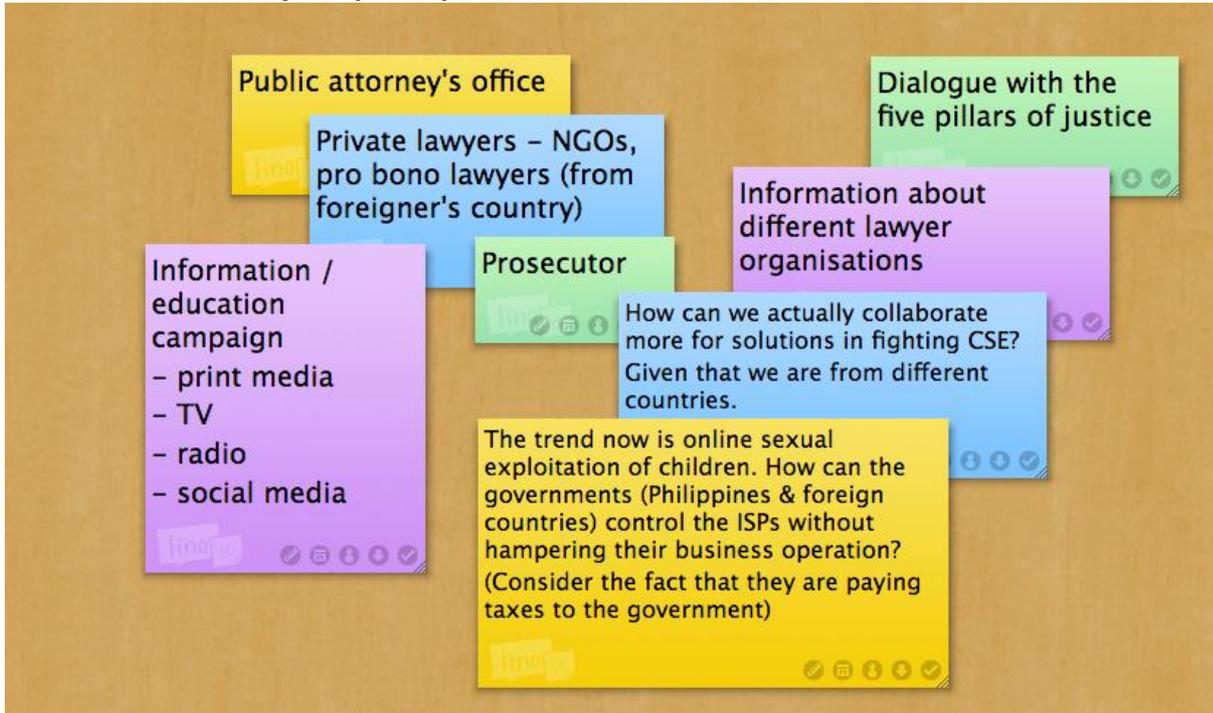
SANLAAP, an Indian NGO which was supported by the International Development Law Organisation (IDLO), trained barefoot legal counsellors on child trafficking laws. The barefoot counsellors gave basic rights information to girls to raise awareness in the community. They also referred girls to a local referral network including law enforcement, lawyers, and social workers.

Gulu Women's Economic Development and Globalisation (GWED-G), a Ugandan NGO which was supported by the Open Society Foundation, trained human rights volunteers in the community to educate people about their rights, investigate crimes related to sexual violence, and document cases of rape which is used as evidence. The human rights volunteers, some of whom are young people, also testify in court. The human rights volunteers ensured that children and women rape victims got access to HIV prophylaxis and counselling, and together with War Child Uganda, saw a reduction in sexual violence in the area through improved access to justice.

Participants were asked to keep these examples in mind as they separated into groups to answer the seven challenge questions posed by ICRP. Participants were free to go to whichever question they wanted to work on.

1. How might we ensure that child victims can get access to lawyers to help them bring cases abroad against foreigners?

Post-it note answers from participants:

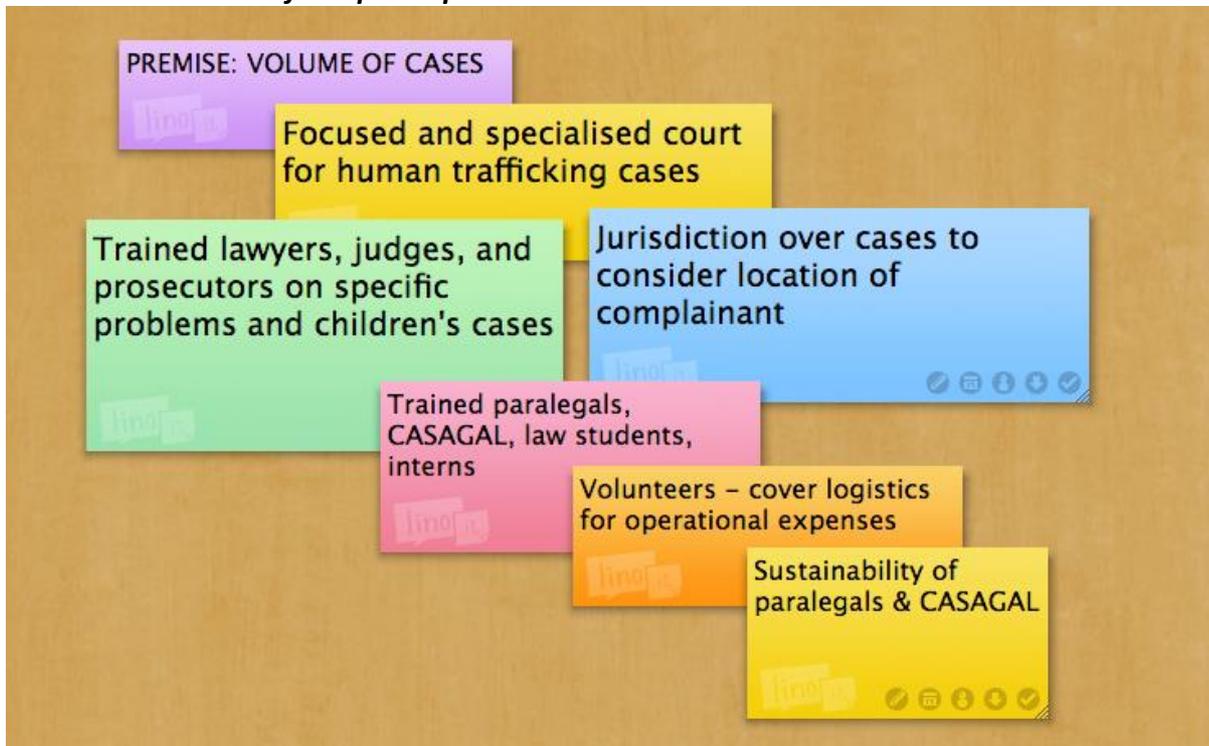


Participants discussed how to get access to justice for child victims in transnational cases, which may involve connecting with a lawyer abroad. It was suggested that there is a big information gap in this area, and that people need to know what is possible in terms of prosecutions and compensation claims abroad. The Philippines criminal justice system is based on “five pillars of justice” which includes law enforcement, prosecution, the courts, the penal system, and the community itself – participants agreed that how to address transnational cases needs to be incorporated into this five pillar system. The idea is for the five pillars to work in concert with each other, but with proper checks and balances in place.

Questions were raised related to how collaboration is possible across countries and continents, and how people can get information about different lawyers and organisations in other countries. It was suggested that a media educational campaign on access to justice could be helpful, and that efforts should be made to engage internet service providers to address online child sexual exploitation.

2. Why are compensation cases not currently being brought in the Philippines? How might we overcome the barriers? (System perspective)

Post-it note answers from participants:



As outlined by Atty. Joan in her presentation about the Children’s Legal Bureau and compensation cases in the Philippines, it is rare for civil compensation claims to be brought at the moment by child victims at a national level. This is partly because lawyers and prosecutors are focused on criminal justice, which is already quite overwhelming, and which seems urgent when the alternative is impunity for perpetrators.

Based on the premise that there are large numbers of cases involving child sexual exploitation and child trafficking and sexual exploitation in the Philippines, it was suggested that a special court could be established just to deal with trafficking cases. The judges, prosecutors, and lawyers involved with this court would be trained on the specifics of child trafficking and sexual exploitation cases, and would incorporate the criminal and civil compensation aspects of the case into their work as part of their case management system.

It was suggested that the jurisdiction of cases involving child victims should be determined giving due consideration to the location of the claimant, to ensure that the court is accessible to the child. There was also a need identified to train paralegals, CASAGAL, law students, interns and volunteers on both criminal and civil justice for children. Concerns were raised about the sustainability of paralegals and CASAGAL who all are often volunteer run and suffer from high turnover and lack of consistent funding.

3. How might we create a national victim's fund? - Who and how might we fund it?

Post-it note answers from participants:



There are several limited funds that child victims of sexual exploitation can currently apply for. These include the DOJ Board of Claims which provides a 10,000 pesos one-off payment; the DSWD which provides financial assistance to families in some circumstances; the LGU discretionary funds available from mayors and governors; and the witness protection programme fund for witnesses of crime. The Interagency Committee Against Trafficking (IACAT) also manages a trust fund for trafficking victims created from the assets of convicted traffickers. However, there is currently no guidance available on how to manage these trust funds. One of the issues highlighted was that there is not enough awareness about existing funds, and child victims should be given access to current funds on a routine basis. It was also thought that the existing funds do not provide a very large amount of money, and therefore are not sufficient to cover the costs of the child's recovery or to address the issues of poverty experienced by some children's families in any meaningful way.

The possibility of creating a new government fund for child victims of sexual exploitation was discussed. The challenges involved in doing so relate to the fact that the creation of a government fund would require new legislation, department of budget and management (DBM) approval, and further approval at the next congress budget hearing, all of which would take a great deal of time and lobbying energy. One of the difficulties in funding this kind of national fund is that assets are rarely collected from the perpetrators, even when they are ordered to pay fines.

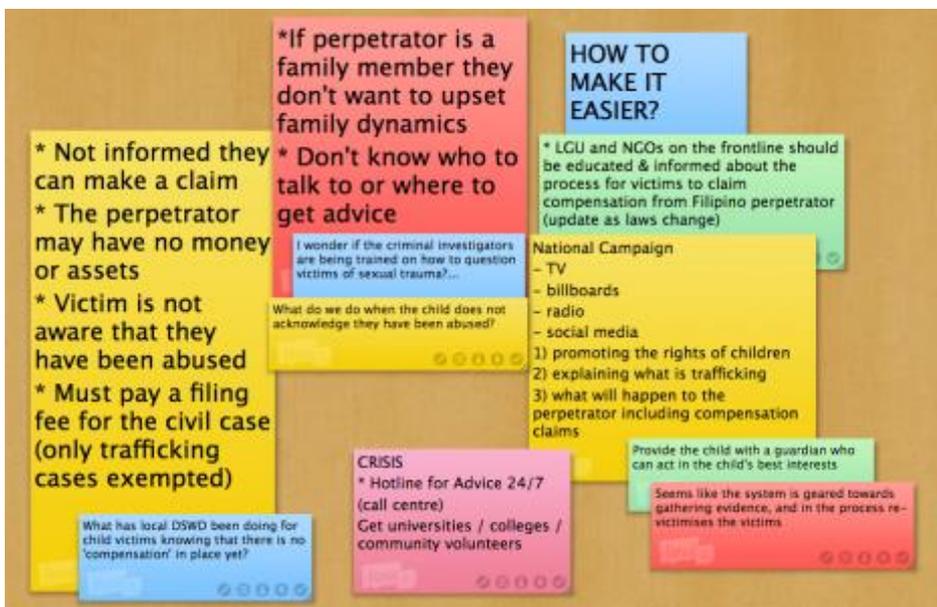
It was suggested that funds for victims could be allocated in the IACAT budget under the General Appropriations Act. A need was also identified for better and more extensive

financial investigations into perpetrators assets, as currently it is often assumed that they have none. It was also proposed that donations to a national fund could come from NGOs, international donors, national corporations through their CSR programs, and from international corporations, especially those related to the ICT sector.

Where any significant sum of money is awarded to child victims it was emphasised that there must be a clear plan for who should manage the money, whether it is an NGO, government, or private person, and checks and balances must be put in place to ensure that whoever manages the money is accountable for how it is spent.

4. What deters children from bringing a compensation claim against a Filipino perpetrator? How might we make it easier for children? (Child perspective)

Post-it note answers from participants:



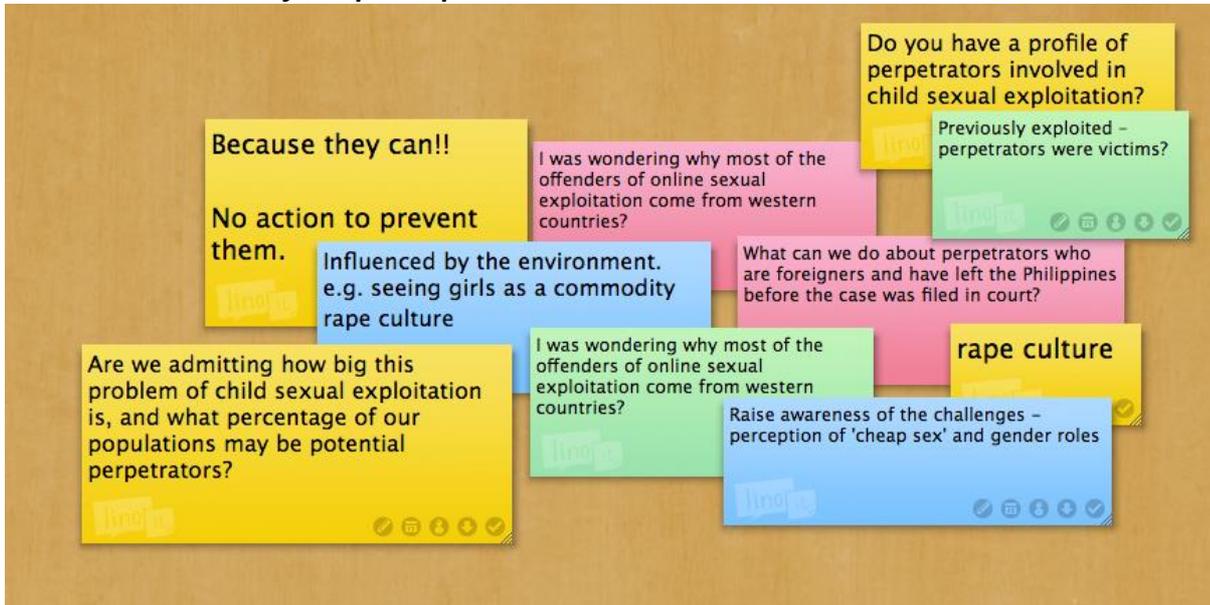
The participants agreed that it is currently very difficult for a child to make a compensation claim at a national level. The barriers to making such a claim include a lack of information that making a claim is possible; the perpetrator may have no assets; the victim may not be aware that they have been abused; the victim may not know who to talk to or where to get advice; and if the victim is a family member the child may not want to upset family dynamics.

It was thought that the most important step would be to educate the LGU and NGOs who work on the frontline with victims about the process for victims to claim compensation from Filipino perpetrators. It was also suggested that there was a need for a national campaign on TV, billboards, radio, and social media; promoting the rights of children; explaining the meaning of child trafficking and sexual exploitation; and warning perpetrators what the consequences are in terms of both criminal law and potential compensation claims. It was

also felt that the child needs to be provided with a guardian to guide them through the process of claiming compensation.

5. Why do perpetrators sexually exploit children? What new approaches might prevent them from doing this?

Post-it note answers from participants:

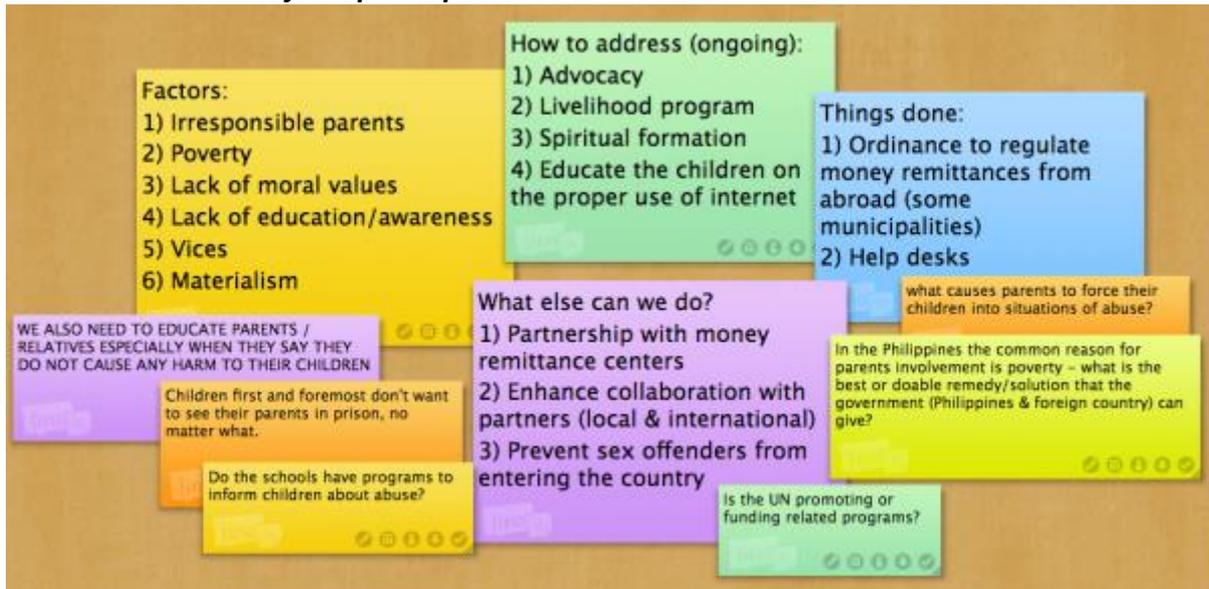


It was generally felt that perpetrators sexually exploit children because they can get away with it. There was also a discussion about different kinds of perpetrators, and how some of them may be more opportunists who are offered sex with a child and decide to give it a try, whereas others have a primary attraction to children and actively seek to pursue this. Rape culture and gender dynamics were also highlighted as contributing to a societal level acceptance of child sexual exploitation.

New approaches proposed included looking at the chain of supply and demand, and trying to get companies to invest more through CSR in preventing child sexual exploitation. There was also a need identified to train law enforcers better to investigate such crimes, and to ensure that they have the correct incentives in place in their department so that reporting and investigating such crimes is rewarded, even when the case cannot be solved. It was also suggested that multi-agency training was needed, and more male advocates, including peer advocates, should be recruited to address violence against girls. There was a perception that rape culture and violence against women is a big problem in society and that this is an underlying reason why perpetrators feel justified in exploiting children.

6. What are the others factors (outside of the perpetrator) that contribute to the sexual exploitation of children? How can we address them?

Post-it note answers from participants:



In terms of prevention, there is a need to understand the other underlying factors that contribute to the sexual exploitation of children, apart from the perpetrators themselves. Various socio-economic factors were identified, as well as issues related to morality at a family and community level. Such factors included 'irresponsible' parenting, a lack of moral values, vices, and materialism. There was also a perceived lack of education and awareness around the issue of child sexual exploitation, and poverty was also seen as a contributing factor.

It was noted that perpetrators meet some of the real needs of people and fill something of an aspiration gap. Perpetrators often provide what is needed by children and their families such as jobs, clothing, education etc. It is therefore necessary to meet the basic needs of the people in other ways to free them from the influence of these men.

There are already many initiatives being carried out to address these underlying causes, including advocacy, livelihood programs, spiritual formation, and education for children on the proper use of the internet. In addition some municipalities have enacted ordinances to regulate money remittances from abroad in order to address online payments for abuse.

Other ideas for prevention that are not yet being carried out include partnerships with money remittance centres; an enhanced collaboration between local and international partners; and the prevention of identified sex offenders from entering the Philippines.

7. How can we empower child victims to claim their rights? How might we mobilise children themselves?

Post-it note answers from participants:



It was agreed that before children can be empowered their objective safety must first be ensured, and he or she needs to feel protected and subjectively safe. This involves providing a healthy and supportive environment where they feel heard, understood and accepted. It was also proposed that the whole family should receive counselling after a child is sexually exploited to enable the family to give appropriate moral support. It was noted that for the child to understand the abuse they have been through takes a long time, and they will need psychosocial and perhaps spiritual support from trained professionals along the way. One participant who self-identifies as a survivor of child sex abuse said that he was not able to define what safety meant for himself until he was in his 30s. There is also a need for trauma assessment, and appropriate trauma-related counselling. Monitoring is also important, so someone needs to check up on child survivors from time to time.

In order to empower child victims and survivors it was stressed by participants that children need to be educated about their rights, and then encouraged to participate in awareness raising activities. This may include becoming active members of local councils that express concerns and solutions to stakeholders. It was suggested that a slogan could be used as part of an education campaign, similar to those used to raise awareness of what to do in the event of an earthquake – triangle of life, and in the event of fire – stop, drop and roll. The proposed slogan for what to do in the event of child sexual exploitation was “break the silence”.

It was suggested that a peer support group could be created to identify solutions seen as an issue in the child’s community. The members of the support group would be children with knowledge about relevant child rights laws. It was also proposed that children should be

given mentoring and support, and that adult survivors should model their own example of survival and claiming their rights. Older children and young adults could also be trained as legal advocates.

Whole Group Sharing Session

“Today I learned much more about the interconnection of cases in Philippines with foreign countries. I work in courts. We only know the situation here in Cebu. We do not even know the situation at the national level. Today brought very good information to us. We can still fight for the right of compensation of children even though we are here in Cebu.”

- Forum Participant

ICRP noted at the beginning of the whole group sharing session that it was apparent from all of the small group work that there are so many things NGOs are trying to do and to work on to address child sexual exploitation already, and that many of the forum participants are already working very hard on this. This is exhausting. People already do a lot, and we cannot just keep adding more and more on the top of that. ICRP stressed that in terms of claiming compensation in transnational cases, ICRP together with a network of lawyers around the world are ready to help.

“I am the only person from the corporate sector here today and I learned a lot. I normally approach this at a law enforcement level. I never realized the magnitude of the issues raised here today. I worked a lot with law enforcement. We process transactions at the international level. We can also see the UK money senders operating within the Philippines. So sometimes the people are already there. We have done a lot of work on that, in a global perspective. Feel free to reach out to us.”

- Participant from Western Union

Participants agreed that multi-sectoral seminars such as this are a very important learning opportunity for everybody involved and they would like to see more of them. An important issue that several participants highlighted is that a lot of services are available but the problem is people are not aware of what is available. Collaborations are difficult. Information is not flowing. Maybe people do not know what to think, what to do, when they face a situation. For example, trained people could answer a 24/7 hotline. Also useful would be a database, and some kind of community mapping, of what services are available for victims.

One lawyer participant noted that information about the law cannot just be provided on Twitter and Facebook, and it was refreshing to hear that radio could be a great way to disseminate information and opportunities for children to have better access to their rights. Another participant proposed that children should be invited to forums such as this to participate in these discussions, have their views heard, and be involved in decision-making.

“We are very happy to have a link with help abroad because many local victims have

perpetrators that are aboard. ICRP can be the link with the Philippines, helping with the compensation process abroad. This is a huge problem for the Philippines. We do not know whom to contact and how to access them. What is the process for the victims to proceed. I am very happy with the ICRP existence and its work.”

- Participant from DSWD, Region 7

ICRP met with a total of 15 young people aged 16-25 comprised of child rights advocates from the Children's Legal Bureau who came from the Cebu City area, and sexual health and reproductive rights advocates from Y-Peer Pilipinas who travelled from Tacloban for our workshop.

Our aim was to explore the possibilities of establishing a youth-led legal empowerment program in Cebu. The young people we chose to brainstorm with already have experience providing advocacy services for children, and were able to guide us on their vision for how a legal empowerment project could work in their local context.

Our key questions

- What is child sexual exploitation in the Philippines?
- What's being done and what's not being done?
- How might we get children to know about their rights?

Child sexual exploitation in the Philippines – the youth perspective

The young people were well aware of the issue of child sexual exploitation in their communities. They told us that recently cyber pornography has become more popular, and this can involve live webcam sex shows, and is often a form of 'child sex tourism'. Some young people knew of children who had been forced to watch pornographic videos, and there were also many cases of rape and incest reported. Child trafficking and forced prostitution were mentioned, as well as high school students selling sex to support their financial needs, and girls working as 'escorts'. Child sexual exploitation was also thought to be linked to child drug couriers, and teenage pregnancy.

The participants felt that the main targets were vulnerable children, including 10-12 year old boys who regularly get sexually harassed by adult men; street children (boys and girls); and for cyber pornography they felt the age range of the children targeted was around 6 to 9 years old. The exploitation happens throughout Cebu, including metropolitan cities, tourist destinations, and rural areas. There was said to be an increase in child sexual abuse and exploitation following disasters in affected areas.

The perpetrators of child sexual exploitation were identified as being family members, society, politicians, foreigners, peers, neighbours, and family friends.

Causes

The young people recognised that the causes of child sexual exploitation in Cebu are complex and numerous. Poverty was seen as a major driver, coupled with demand from comparatively wealthy foreigners willing to pay money to sexually exploit children. It was believed that many parents are involved in the exploitation of their children by third parties, including foreigners, and they are not very aware of the consequences for the child. Increased internet accessibility has led to more online exploitation, and this also provides easy money for poorer parents who need or want to generate income. Some young people thought that foreigners pay around 2,000 pesos (USD40) per hour to watch online child sex shows. It was felt that there are generally poor support services for poorer parents, service providers are unequipped to help, and implementation of social welfare policy is often poor. Social welfare services are overworked, social workers are not trained enough, and law enforcement do not strictly implement criminal laws against the perpetrators.

At a community level, people say child sexual abuse and exploitation is a 'family affair', and choose not to interfere. There are also gender biases which contribute to the exploitation and sexualisation of girls and a form of 'rape culture'. At the same time there is a low level of awareness of rights amongst children themselves. In many cases extended families live together in confined spaces, and often share bed space. Child sexual exploitation was also thought to go together with the use of illegal drugs and broken families.

What's being done?

The young people reported that considerable efforts have already been made in Cebu to address child sexual exploitation. The government has opened rehabilitation centres, and has revised the penal code to deal with online child sexual exploitation. International NGOs such as Plan International and Save the Children are also active in the region, and at a national level the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) and the Interagency Council Against Child Pornography (IACACP) aim to bring together stakeholders to address child sexual exploitation. At a local level the Children's Legal Bureau is currently handling around 25 cases involving child sexual abuse. The LGUs are now being trained on child sexual exploitation and how to properly handle such cases. Cebu Against Sexual Tourism (CAST) was created recently as a network of stakeholders advocating against child sex tourism in Cebu.

What's not being done?

There was a strong feeling that not enough foreigners are being prosecuted for sexual crimes against children. It was felt that there was a lack of priority given to this issue by government, which was reflected in what was seen as a failure to fully implement the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC) mandate issued by national government to all Barangays to establish a council that looks after the protection of its children. The young people felt there was a lack of government facilities for children and young people, particularly in remote areas such as mountain barangays. There is also a lack of advocacy materials that have been translated into local languages, and it was felt that the

competency of teachers and trainers to discuss child sexual exploitation issues was not very good.

What can be done?

The young people brainstormed in groups ideas on what can be done to address child sexual exploitation, and how young people can be empowered to promote children’s rights:

<p><i>Awareness raising</i></p> <p>Distribution of IEC materials in schools Symposium on CSE Debates Concerts with a message Youth Development Sessions (YDPs) Train child rights advocates Train peer educators & peer counsellors Radio guesting Utilisation of all forms of media (i.e social media, print, YTV, radio, etc)</p>	<p><i>Accessibility</i></p> <p>Train youth/child friendly service providers Set up child friendly spaces in every barangay with trained facilitators Train youth paralegals and youth social workers Set up a network of service providers Technology-based animated presentation</p>
<p><i>Implementation</i></p> <p>Establish a database of children and youth in every barangay Activate BCPC (Barangay Council for the Protection of Children) Funding allocation (1%) from the IRA of the LGU/BLGU for child related activities and services Establish trafficking help desk in all ports of entry Hotels to strictly impose the need for proof of identity / relation between adult and minor. Partnership between LGU, CLB, individual advocates and CSOs Interpol should make a database of child offenders and put them on a blacklist. Watch groups in the community to identify victims Training for parents complicit in abuse on the 4Ps Peer educators and peer facilitators</p>	<p><i>Innovation</i></p> <p>Develop a mobile app on child sexual exploitation Cosplays PETA Infomercials Games UNFPA & Commission on Population (Popcom) Youth for Youth Programme (U4U) – using the internet and mobile phones to deliver critical information on teen health for the Filipino youth.</p>

Enforce the powers of barangays Education in school and across all sectors Justice and compensation	
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The young people thought that it would be possible to have a youth-led paralegal service that worked with both the Children’s Legal Bureau and Y-Peer Pilipinas. They advised that MOUs should first be signed with the barangays before rolling out such a programme. CLB would be a bridge to train the child rights advocates, but CLB is currently only in 10 of 80 barangays in Cebu. Currently the Barangays send children to the CLB for legal advice. Young CRAs from the CLB said they will meet with the 5 pillars of justice and will work with the LGU to train child rights advocates. The CRAs take a youth to youth approach, working in each barangay to teach about laws and rights, and to gather data. They work with children in school, out of school youth, children in conflict with the law, children at risk, and children with special conditions.

The young people were very much in favour of the creation of a mobile phone application which helps people to contact the referral point for reporting child sexual abuse in each barangay. They also appreciated existing theatre groups which spread the message to children about what sexual abuse and exploitation is and how to respond if it happens. Philippines Education Theatre Association (PETA) is a theatre group that works on awareness raising.

It was suggested by several participants that cosplays (the practice of dressing up as a character from a movie, book, or video game, especially one from the Japanese genres of manga and anime) can be used to gamify the issue. It was agreed that radio is still a useful way to spread messages to people outside of the cities.

Next Steps

It was very useful for ICRP to have the opportunity to connect with young people and brainstorm with them how to address child sexual exploitation in their area, and how we can work together on a legal empowerment programme.

It is clear that there are already multiple child rights advocacy groups operating in Cebu, some of which are also youth-led. So far ICRP is aware of the Child Rights Advocates from the CLB, Y-Peer Pilipinas advocates, CASAGAL, and ChildHope outreach and protection workers. ICRP plans to undertake a mapping exercise to ensure that any proposed legal empowerment programme strengthens and brings together existing advocacy efforts.

There seems to be a lot of potential to work on producing technological solutions, involving youth, which can help to empower children and young people to address the issues of child sexual exploitation. This is another avenue that ICRP plans to explore in the coming months.

ICRP will draw up a plan for a youth-led paralegal programme in collaboration with the Children's Legal Bureau, and in consultation with Y-Peer Pilipinas and CASAGAL, which it is hoped can be implemented in 2017, subject to funding.

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