

INTRODUCTION

The Network of ECPAT International has been expanding since the First World Congress in 1996. In West Africa, there are very active groups working directly or indirectly to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), but very little is known about these groups and very little progress has been made on effective networking in the region. Very little is also known about efforts that are being made by Governments, non governmental organisations (NGOs) and other actors at national and regional levels to combat CSEC.

The objectives of this mission were to prepare the ground for action for ECPAT's networking activities in West Africa and analyse the situation of CSEC in the region. Conducting an analysis of the organisations working against CSEC in the region was also included as an objective. This was undertaken by identifying possible ECPAT partners, assessing their needs, and identifying ways in which ECPAT can collaborate with them in the fight against CSEC. Other objectives were to identify a regional focal point on CSEC and a venue for a regional meeting to be organised by ECPAT. The meeting is intended for NGOs and other actors in the field and will address networking, awareness raising, advocacy and capacity building.

This mission report gives a brief analysis of the CSEC situation and an analysis of organisations visited country by country. These analyses were made by interviews with prostituted children, organisations and institutions working in the field, and by personal observations of the situation while in each country. The organisations that have been analysed are working on children and women's rights in general, and are also organisations with which ECPAT has been communicating for the past several years.

SENEGAL

Analysis of the CSEC Situation in Senegal

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

The commercial sexual exploitation of children is now recognised as a problem in Senegal and the phenomenon is on the increase. Urbanisation in Senegal has led to the breaking down of family structure and the abdication of rearing responsibilities. The country's street children, and also children in areas that are frequently and routinely visited by tourists, are particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Incidences of paedophilia, though a new phenomenon in Senegal, is now on the increase and there are almost daily reports on the phenomenon in local newspapers. The major reasons behind the increase of CSEC are poverty, urbanisation, high illiteracy rate, early and forced marriage, unemployment, low status of women in the society, consumerism, civil conflict (especially in the South) and tourism. These reasons for the increase of CSEC cut right across the West African sub-region.

Senegal is a major tourist destination with seven to eight months of peak tourist season. The tourists come mainly from Western Europe but there are also some who come from North America. According to UNICEF Senegal, sex tourism has emerged as a new phenomenon. It has been carrying out sensitisation campaigns against the issue in co-operation with local authorities in tourist areas, especially in M'bour.

According to the estimate of Defence for Children International, Senegal Section, there are over 400,000 children in Senegal that are living under extremely difficult circumstances. Over 50% of them are engaged in dangerous activities such as stealing, begging and hawking. The activities increase their vulnerability to CSEC. Some parents encourage their children to beg and enter prostitution. Children come from Guinea Conakry and Guinea-Bissau to engage in begging in the streets of urban Senegal. Boy prostitution is said to be on the increase, and children of both sexes harass tourists in the bid to lure clients.

Places Where CSEC is Practised

From observations made during the mission, the situation of CSEC is serious and the phenomenon is rising. Child prostitution is rife and most evident in bars, tourist resorts, night-clubs and restaurants. Bar Ponty, on Rue Ponty in Dakar is one of the hangouts for child prostitutes. CSEC is particularly evident in the fishing town of M'bour and the neighboring tourist resort of M'bour Sally. In M'bour Sally young Senegalese boys and girls are usually seen holding hands with older European men and women, indicating likely sex tourist activity.

Senegal is also a strategic French military base. The general belief is that there is a link between the military base and the increase in the CSEC situation the country; however no study has been carried out to verify this belief.

Child Trafficking

A report on the trafficking of children in West and Central Africa states that children are being trafficked to and from Senegal to neighbouring countries to work as

domesticsⁱ. Most of these children are ill treated and sexually abused and those that run away from the oppression end up in the street or get caught up in the circle of prostitution. The report specifically states that children, particularly girls, from the Southern Cassamance region of Senegal, where a guerrilla war has been going on for 17 years, go to work as domestics in neighbouring Gambia where they are very vulnerable to CSEC. According to UNICEF Gambia, young girls from Senegal go to Gambia for sex work during the peak tourist season.

Child Pornography

It is difficult to know the extent of child pornography but it is said to exist. The mission to Senegal took place in August 2000, and in May of the same year, two men from Holland were caught by the police making pornographic films with children. It is reported that the men, with the help of their consular authorities, bribed their way out of the country without any charge being brought against them. There was wide local press coverage of the incident.

Another emerging and dangerous trend in the region is the increase in the number of video salons where pornographic films are shown to everybody, including children. There are no age tags on these films and there is very little or no censorship on films shown to the public in these video salons.

Profile of Victims and Perpetrators of CSEC

The profile of victims and perpetrators of CSEC are the same right across the West-African sub-region. The victims of commercial sexual exploitation are children from very poor families, street children, refugees and internally displaced children, child hawkers of petty wares, children who are beggars, school drop outs and children of migrants.

The majority of perpetrators are rich local nationals like civil servants, politicians and businessmen. Other perpetrators are foreign military personnel and tourists. Pimps are usually older prostitutes who organised the sex work in brothels and bars. An interview with one prostituted child revealed that hotel staff also acts as pimps – they allow girls to carry out sex work in their hotels in exchange for a percentage of their earnings.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

Senegal ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as the ILO Convention 182 on child labour. The age of civil majority is attained at 21, while criminal majority is set at 18. The minimum age for marriage is set at 20 for boys, and at 16 for girls. Prostitution, though illegal, is regulated. This allows for the registration of adult females and the carrying of health certificates. Sexual abuse is a punishable offence.

The Constitution of Senegal, in article 15, second paragraph, provides that the State and local public communities shall protect the country's youth from exploitation and moral neglect. This principle is also embodied in the Labour Code, article 140 which provides that children may not be employed in any undertaking before the age of 14, even as apprentices, unless an exception is made.

On the 13th of January 1999, Law 99-05 of January 1999 was passed by the government that protects children from excision, sexual harassment, paedophilia, sexual aggression and violence and the incitement of a minor to debauchery. These laws are still inadequate and are also not properly enforced.

Children's Rights Organisations in Senegal

Defence for Children International, (DCI) Senegal Section

Defence for Children International, Senegal Section, was established in 1989 and was officially recognised in 1991. The aims and objectives of DCI are to increase the awareness and create solidarity on children's rights, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC); to foster, promote, evaluate and monitor the implementation of children's rights as set out in international law; to seek, promote and implement effective ways of securing the protection of children's rights in concrete situation and to encourage co-operation and action nationally and internationally to improve the mechanisms of protecting children's rights. The programmes of DCI Senegal cover monitoring, advocacy, information, training and co-operation. It has a good working relationship with a considerable number of NGOs in Senegal.

DCI is a grassroots and membership organisation that elects its executive from time to time. There are 34 members in all and the structure is divided into General Assembly, Board of Directors and the Executive. The Executive is made up of five members and they meet every Wednesday, the Board of Directors meet every three months whilst the General Assembly meets once every year.

DCI is a member of the drafting committee of Senegal CRC Report. With the help of UNICEF, in 1996 and 1997 they conducted training workshops on children in conflict with the law for social workers, police, judges, teachers, parents, prison officers and community leaders. Also with the help of UNICEF they carried out an investigation in 1998 on children in conflict with the law. During this research, it was found that prostituted children were being arrested and detained by the police – hence seen as criminals instead of victims. In 1998 they implemented an awareness-raising programme on children who work as apprentices that are often subjected to abuse of various forms. In 1999, they persuaded the presidential candidates to have a special children's programme as part of their presidential campaign manifesto. They also offer legal aid to children, especially those in conflict with the law.

DCI's major strength and expertise seems to be in the area of children in conflict with the law and training on children's rights in general. They are equally good on awareness raising, advocacy and organisation of workshops, seminars and conferences on children's issues. All DCI members are volunteers and most of them have full-time jobs elsewhere. The organisation receives some financial support from DCI Headquarters in Geneva, UNICEF and other INGOs.

International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

IOM works on child exploitation mainly in terms of trafficking for sexual or labour exploitation purposes. In the region of West Africa, IOM in co-operation with UNICEF is implementing a regional programme addressing child trafficking for labour exploitation purposes. The return, rehabilitation and reintegration components

of the programme consists of capacity building and awareness-raising. The organisation is also implementing counter-trafficking programmes on the trafficking of women and underage girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation. In connection with the trafficking of women and underage girls of other African nationalities to Europe, it has started the implementation of needs assessment in Nigeria, and will begin one shortly in Ghana.

UNICEF

UNICEF Senegal, in co-operation with local authorities in tourist areas such as M'bour, has been carrying out sensitisation campaigns against sex tourism which is an increasing problem in Senegal. In 1994 the Government of Senegal, with the help of ILO and UNICEF, adopted a National Plan of Action for the amelioration of conditions for working children (Plan d'Action Pour L'Amelioration de la Condition des Enfant qui Travaillent). UNICEF, in collaboration with the Senegalese Government, is running a "Programme for the Protection of Children at Risk" (1999-2001). The main activities are the establishment of a monitoring system of these problems, the reinforcement of the capacities of the judiciary, the police, legislators, government institutions and NGOs working with children at risk, the creation of centres to listen to and counsel children, improvement in family and public awareness, mobilisation of public and private actors, and as well as legislative and judicial reforms. UNICEF also intends to support the Government to carry out a research on the sexual exploitation of children in Senegal.

UNICEF and the Government of Senegal, in collaboration with the Italian Development Co-operation, are working on a project of the worst forms of child labour. The project is reported to include child sexual exploitation. The project also envisages an extra-territorial law between Senegal and Italy that will permit the extradition and trial of Italian citizens that commit sexual related crimes against children in Senegal.

Avenir de l'Enfants

Avenir de l'Enfants is a local NGO based in Rufisque and their work focuses mainly on street children. They carry out prevention, education and reintegration activities of street children. Most of the children are from Guinea Bissau, Gambia and rural Rufisque. The organisation runs a children's centre where it offers education and counselling services and helps reintegrate street children back into their families.

Centre de Guidance Infantile et Familiale

In collaboration with Terres des Hommes, Centre de Guidance Infantile et Familiale, has been carrying out awareness and information campaigns on paedophilia with participants from the public services, NGOs and education services. The same NGO has also been carrying out media and information campaign against sexual abuse of children particularly in relation to child sex tourism. It has carried out a research on sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children in Saint Louis, as a result of which it elaborated its own action plan on the protection of children against sexual abuse and paedophilia.

ENDA-ECOPOLE

This NGO is the Senegal section of ENDA Tier Monde and their main focus is working with street children. The bulk of the street children they deal with come from poor families and broken homes and children that have no access to social amenities like shelter, educational and health facilities. According to the organisation, this is what force the children to start work as apprentices, sex workers, child labourers and hawkers. Some come into conflict with the law when they steal in order to survive and are also at risk of sexual abuse. In some instances, it is the parents that encourage their children into prostitution or to beg in the streets. The organisation provides shelter, medical care, formal and non-formal education, as well as counselling facilities to the children.

GAMBIA

Analysis of the CSEC Situation in the Gambia

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

Sex tourism is a problem in Gambia although the authorities are refusing to recognise its existence. There are reports of a sizeable influx of European women seeking sex with underage boys, but there are also incidents of men seeking sex with young girls. This trend was also observed during visits in the tourist resorts. Local demand for CSEC is said to be limited though it does exist in the form of exploitation of street children, school dropouts and children from low-income families. UNICEF Gambia thinks that CSEC, especially sex tourism, is a problem and it is seriously affecting children and young people in Gambia. As a result of this observation it has planned to carry out a research on sex tourism in the country and hopes to do that in collaboration with ECPAT International.

Low rain fall, desertification and the huge drop on the world market in the price of peanuts, the country's major export, has resulted in the migration of Gambian youth from rural to urban areas, especially Banjul. Package tourism, whereby the tourist pays for everything in home country before travelling, is also having an effect on the Gambian economy that is now heavily reliant on tourism. There are reports of a steep decline in tourism in Gambia as a result of a violent student demonstration in April 2000 when security forces killed over 12 students and the reported harassment of tourists, especially female tourists, by so called bombstars or beachboys.

The Gambian population is exceptionally young. According to UNICEF, approximately 45% of the population is below 15 years of age with 19% aged between 15 and 24 years. The bulk of this population is either out of school, unemployed, or lacks the basic skills to earn a living. This has been cited as one of the major reasons why beach boys harass female tourists, as it is seen as the only way to earn a day's living or it may be a possible way to get a ticket out of the country.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that child abuse and sexual exploitation of children are indeed realities in Gambia. Both are underreported at official levels. According to statistics (which are not nationally representative) from the Department of Social Welfare, only a total of 19 cases of child sexual abuse were reported in 1999/2000.

According to UNICEF, the number of girls enrolled in schools has increased; however, young girls are still taken away from school and forced into marriage. Forced marriage is a huge problem in Gambia. Although there is no data, anecdotal evidence suggests that teenage pregnancy is also on the increase.

Places Where CSEC is Practiced

The predominant areas of CSEC are the capital, Banjul, the urban areas and places frequently visited by tourists.

Child Trafficking

There are unconfirmed reports of the trafficking of children from the Greater Banjul Area, the coastal borders, Basse and George Town into the city and other neighbouring countries, especially Senegal.

Child Pornography

Child pornography doesn't seem to be a problem and there were neither reports nor evidence of the phenomenon.

Profile of Victims and Perpetrators of CSEC

The profile of victims is children from poor families, child migrants from rural Gambia, street children, refugee children mainly from Cassamance in Southern Senegal, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Profile of perpetrators is local middle class men and tourists. Tourists here would mean both male and female, as Gambia is renowned as a place where middle aged and older European women come to buy sex from Gambian youngsters. Peak tourist season is from October to April and tourists come mainly from Sweden, Denmark, Norway and the UK.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

The Gambian legal system is based on English common law but customary and Sharia laws also form part of the legal system, and all these affect children in many ways. Laws relating to child protection are: The Maintenance of Children Act, The Children and Young Persons Act, The Education Act, The Criminal Code Cap 10. These laws need to be harmonised with international legal standards on child rights. The Children and Young Persons Act is not comprehensive and does not accommodate most of the provisions of the CRC. Although the Gambian population is over 90% Muslim, The Maintenance Act discriminates against Muslim children born out of wedlock and these are the children that are most vulnerable to CSEC. The age for marriage and sexual consent are still problematic. Religion, lack of political will, traditional practices and the patriarchal system, all undermine the attainment of the goals and objectives set out for children in the CRC.

In addition to being inadequate, CSEC related laws are not properly enforced. In most of the cases of child sexual abuse that have been brought to the attention of the police and Department of Social Welfare, settlements are reached among family members without the intervention of authorities.

Children's Rights Organisations in the Gambia

Foundation for Research on Women's Health, Productivity and the Environment (BAFROW)

BAFROW was founded in 1991 as an independent charitable trust and is financed by income generated from its programmes and donors. Its activities are directed by a Board of Trustees. The objectives of BAFROW are to carry out research on women's reproductive health, empower women to improve their quality of life, develop the capacity of the foundation and to expand inter-agency co-operation and networking.

BAFROW's current activities include assisting women by providing them with information, knowledge, skills through which they will be able to improve their reproductive life and environment; creating awareness on socio-economic, cultural and political issues affecting women and children; a campaign against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); a campaign on women's rights and economic empowerment; and a campaign against child abuse, especially child sexual abuse within the home.

The organisation runs a health clinic, "The Well Woman Clinic", where it offers medical and counselling services to women and children. It also helps enhance the economic status of low income women by making available to them small revolving loans for income generating activities and provides educational support especially for female students.

The organisation also runs a very impressive youth centre for information and counselling, the aim of which is to create awareness amongst the youth on the harmful effects of FGM and the prevention of HIV/AIDS and other sexually diseases (STDs). Other aims are to sensitise the population and provide counselling on sexual and reproductive health issues. The centre has been carrying out sensitisation campaigns in tourist resorts on commercial sex work and HIV/AIDS, as well as peer counselling. BAFROW produces a quarterly newsletter, "The Well Woman", while the Youth Centre produces a newsletter called "The Voice of the Young People".

Defence for Children International (DCI), Gambia Section

DCI's main aim in the Gambia is to raise awareness on the CRC and it has been using both the print and electronic media to carry out this objective. It works closely with other child rights NGOs like UNICEF and Save the Children. However, it does not carry out CSEC specific activities.

UNICEF The Gambia

The UNICEF office in the Gambia has been carrying out various activities on advocacy and community mobilisation on children and women's rights; legislative reforms; rights and civic education in schools; access to education of children, especially for girls; capacity building of local groups; juvenile justice; and child exploitation. The organisation also supports the national youth association and the National Commission on Women and Children's Rights.

UNICEF has discussed the issue of the adoption of a national action plan on CSEC with the Vice President of the Republic and Secretary of State for Women's Affairs. The Government, with the support of UNICEF, is implementing a Girls Education Programme to ensure access and retention of girls in schools. The programme is also trying to create the conditions to overcome gender imbalance in the school system and ensure educational opportunities for girls. The organisation has a draft country

strategy programme for 2002-2006 and wants to include specific CSEC aspects in the programme.

Department of Social Welfare

This department co-ordinates and oversees all social welfare policies and activities in the country. The Department has a Social Welfare Policy, which, if properly implemented, will go a long way to address children's issues, including CSEC. It admitted CSEC as a problem, but emphasised that child sexual abuse within the home is also on the increase.

National Association for Youth and Children's Organisation (NAYCO)

NAYCO is an independent umbrella organisation of 25 youth groups. It has been instrumental in breaking the culture of silence concerning HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Active participation of this group in online HIV/AIDS conferences has paved the way for the involvement of youth in the implementation of a Rapid Response HIV/AIDS National Programme to be funded by the World Bank.

COTE D'IVOIRE

Analysis of the CSEC Situation in Cote d'Ivoire

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

The political situation in Ivory Coast at the time of the mission was a very difficult one as a result of which the mission was very short and observations and contacts were limited. Only two local NGOs were briefly visited and interviewed.

With rising poverty, child prostitution of both sexes has been increasing, especially in urban areas of the country. There is occasional prostitution, which tends to be hidden by ostensible activities such as street sellers, young guards or domestic servants, in addition to professional prostitution run by criminal networks.

Cote d'Ivoire has the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence in West Africa. According to UNAIDS, 10.76 % of the adult population in the country are HIV positive. This has been attributed to sexual promiscuity and increase in prostitution in general.

The problem of paedophilia is reported to be a new and growing phenomenon in Ivory Coast. On 29th January 1999, thousands of children took to the streets in Abidjan and demonstrated against the rising cases of paedophilia and other forms of child sex abuse in Ivory Coast. The demonstration was organised by civil and human rights organisations. Child sexual abuse and rape is also said to be on the increase. According to SOS Violence Sexuelle, about 15,000 to 20,000 women and children are raped every year.

Places Where CSEC is Practised

An area called "Zone Four" where the tourists and expatriates live is renowned as one of the areas where child prostitution is highly prevalent. Police and security guards that protect this exclusive white area act as pimps as the girls have to bribe them to gain access. Hotel Ivoire and Grand Hotel are other places where child prostitution is

known to occur. However, as a consequence of the recent political upheaval few tourists currently visit the country.

Child Trafficking

A United Nations report on child trafficking in West Africa says that children in West and Central Africa are trafficked within the sub-region and sometimes to countries in Europeⁱⁱ. Children from Mali, Togo, Benin, Nigeria and other neighbouring countries are trafficked to Ivory Coast to work on plantations, for use as domestic servants, market traders, child beggars and prostitutes. Young girls also use the country as a transit point to the West, and they often end up in prostitution when they don't succeed to reaching the West.

It is reported that in most of the regions of Ivory Coast children as young as 8 years are taken from the rural areas to towns and cities to work as domestics. Many of them work for over 12 hours a day and are subjected to mental, physical and sexual abuse. Mali, with the co-operation of Ivory Coast, recently established a national commission to examine the incidence of child trafficking between the two countries.

An interview with a Nigerian NGO in Cote d'Ivoire revealed that there are nearly 2 million Nigerians living in Cote d'Ivoire and that there is an organised trafficking ring that brings young Nigerian girls for commercial sex work in the country.

Child Pornography

Child pornography doesn't seem to be a problem and there were neither reports nor evidence of the phenomenon.

Profile of Victims and Perpetrators of CSEC

The causes of CSEC and the profile of both perpetrators and victims of CSEC in the country is the same across the sub-region. However, during interviews with NGOs in Cote d'Ivoire it emerged that it is common practice amongst young girls to try and get money out of men for their maintenance, this has become one of the reasons for the high rate of promiscuity and prostitution.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

There are no specific legal provisions covering the sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes. Special emphasis should be placed on the protection of children in domestic employment and street sellers who are exposed to sexual abuse. Prostitution is not criminalised in Cote d'Ivoire and seduction is punished by a fine. Under articles 334 to 341 of the Penal Code, pornography is punishable by two years imprisonment and a fine. Procuring is punished under articles 335 and 336 of the Penal Code. The normal penalty is doubled, to between 2 and 10 years imprisonment, if the victim is under 21 years of age. Article 337 of the Penal Code punishes immoral incitement of minors. Even though Côte d'Ivoire has not ratified ILO Convention 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, it introduced a Labour Code (by Act No. 95-15 of 12 January 1995). The implementation of the Code, however, encounters certain difficulties in practice: a shortage of labour inspection facilities; conditions of poverty inducing parents to resort to income earned by their children; and a thriving informal sector which is where child labour is mostly used. As a result of the current political instability, law enforcement is almost non-existent.

Children's Rights Organisations in Côte d'Ivoire

SOS Violence Sexuelle

SOS Violence Sexuelle was formed in 1997 in reaction to the high numbers of reported rape, child abuse and incest cases in the country. The aims and objectives of the organisation are to offer moral and psychological assistance to victims of sexual abuse, offer legal aid to victims to take their cases to court, psychologically assist the perpetrators of sexual abuse crimes and to prevent the recurrence of sexual violence against women and children through awareness raising and sensitisation campaigns.

Structurally, the organisation is divided into three main organs: the General Assembly, Administrative Council and the Executive Secretariat. The General Assembly is the supreme organ of the organisation and meets once a year, it has the power to define the aims and objectives of the organisation, elect members of the Administrative Council and approves of the budget and other activities of the organisation. The Administrative Council is responsible for the administration of the organisation, whilst the Executive Secretariat is responsible for the implementation of the programmatic activities of the organisation. The Executive Secretariat is divided into four sections, namely the social, legal, communication and financial affairs sections, it is headed by an Executive Secretary.

SOS Violence Sexuelle has a multidisciplinary team of lawyers, psychologists and medical doctors and its activities are centred on prevention, legal action against perpetrators and rehabilitation of victims of sexual violence. The organisation has been carrying out sensitisation campaigns on both the electronic and print media ensuring that the issue is no longer taboo. They offer psychological counselling and legal aid to victims free of charge. They also pay visits to abusers in prison and offer them counselling.

Global Rights Charter for African Youths and Children

This organisation was founded about one year ago, and the brains behind it are Nigerian medical doctors practising in Cote d'Ivoire. As a result of their medical practice in the country, they found lots of Nigerian and other young girls reporting to them with problems of sexually transmitted disease. Contacts and interviews with these girls revealed a high level of prostitution amongst young girls in Cote d'Ivoire, especially young Nigerian girls. They also found out that there are organised criminal groups responsible for the trafficking of young Nigerian girls to Cote d'Ivoire for commercial sex work. With the help of the Nigerian community in Cote d'Ivoire, this group has been carrying out sensitisation campaigns on CSEC and other related issues like HIV/AIDS and other STDs.

TOGO

Analysis of the CSEC Situation in Togo

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

In Togo, the number of children living and/or working in the streets is on the increase. It is these children that are most vulnerable to CSEC. NGOs, IGOs and Government departments visited during the mission acknowledged that CSEC is a growing problem in Togo. The causes of CSEC in Togo are the same as can be found across the West African sub-region. Because of the extreme poverty in the country children are forced to work sometimes by their parents in order to earn a living for the family.

The Department for the Promotion and Protection of the Family and Child admits that incest, child abuse (both physical and sexual) within the home and child prostitution is a serious problem. Girls who run away from abuse within the home also get trapped in the circle of prostitution. With no education or skills they resort to prostitution as the only means of survival. There are numerous reports of such incidents, but the lack of concrete research into the problem makes it difficult to know the full extent of the situation. Bars, restaurants and hotels act as pimps by employing beautiful underage girls to satisfy the sexual needs of their clientele. Older women, in most cases business women, as well as older and/or retired prostitutes recruit children to sell their wares in the markets during the day and at night sell the girls to men for sex.

The rainy season is regarded as the worst time for Togo's burgeoning street children. The season is a difficult one for two reasons. Firstly, it is the planting season when there is very little food around. Secondly, there is a harsh and constant rainfall especially between the months of June and August. The children, desperate for protection, food and dry shelter, will sell their labour and sometimes their body. It is at this time of the year that the older women and sometimes local men take advantage of the children.

There have been incidents of the prostitution of boys as well, and unconfirmed reports indicate that young boys who act as tour guides sell their body for money and are sometimes abused by tourists. Due to HIV/AIDS awareness campaigns, most child prostitutes ask their clients to use condoms, but some take the risk of having sex without condom if the client is willing to pay more. One child sex worker interviewed admits that most of them charge their clients 1000 FCFA with condoms and 3000 without. Official exchange rate at the time of the visit was 747 FCFA to \$ 1.

Places where CSEC is Practised

The phenomenon of CSEC is on the increase and the areas where child prostitution takes place are bars, restaurant hotels and nightclubs. The area around the international airport, Cartier Amoutiévé on Boulevard Circulaire, Hotel Aho Dikpé, and Bar Rocardo are some of the places that are well known as areas where child prostitution is rife.

Child Trafficking

Child trafficking in Togo is a huge problem and one report indicates that children are trafficked from Togo to Ivory Coast and Gabon, as well as to other countries outside the sub-region. Another report estimates that more than 700 children of both sexes were rescued on the border between Benin and Togo during 1997. In the single month of January 1998, a total of 119 Togolese children were brought back and returned to their parents. The Government of Togo admits that trafficking in children is a real problem which is of concern to the Government, and the Togolese authorities have become particularly aware of trafficking in Togolese children after the Stockholm Congress. Since the emergence of large scale trafficking, the Government has been cooperating with Governments of neighbouring countries, particularly Gabon, to remedy the situation. In several cases, Togolese girls had been brought home with diplomatic assistance and returned to their families. Young girls from Nigeria, Benin and Ghana are also trafficked to Togo for commercial sex work.

According to the the Department for the Promotion and Protection of the Family and Child, there is a growing number of young Filipino girls who, according to unconfirmed reports, are being brought into the country for commercial sex work-specifically for the rich Lebanese business community. This was also partly confirmed by the very large number of young Filipino girls seen around the area of Hotel Aho Dikpé. Young Togolese girls are also reportedly trafficked to Lebanon.

Child Pornography

It is difficult to know the extent of child pornography in Togo. Interviews with NGOs on the ground indicate that it exists, especially in the form of foreigners filming child pornography for sale abroad and also the showing of pornographic films in video centres where everyone is allowed including children.

Profile of Victims and Perpetrators

The profile of victims and perpetrators of CSEC are the same right across the West-African sub-region. The victims of CSEC are in most cases children from very poor families, street children, refugees and internally displaced children, child hawkers of petty wares, child beggars, school dropouts and children of migrants.

The majority of perpetrators are rich local nationals like civil servants, politicians and businessmen. In Togo, for example, there are reports of vehicles with Government registration numbers, locally dubbed “RTG”, picking up and dropping off child prostitutes. Other perpetrators are tourists and foreign nationals resident in the country. Pimps are usually older women who organise the sex work in brothels and bars. At times, the owners of bars, restaurants and hotels sometimes act as pimps.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

Togo is a state party to the CRC and has also ratified ILO Convention 182, but national law on the protection of children against CSEC is inadequate and needs to be harmonised with international standards. For example, in cases of rape or attempted rape the Penal Code provides protection only for children under 14 years of age. The legal commission, which is part of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children (CNE), has noted that the provisions which protects children are spread over a number of codes. It has proposed introducing a children's code to bring all the relevant texts together in a single document. The draft code, which had been formulated with the cooperation of UNICEF and various NGOs, has been

circulated to members of the civil society for their suggestions. The code is yet to be approved and adopted.

The Department for the Promotion and Protection of the Family and Child says that there is difficulty in enforcing the law as some parents of abused children are too poor to hire lawyers. In addition, corruption within the justice department exists, and sometimes parents are paid off to drop charges.

Children's Rights Organisations in Togo

WAO-Afrique

WAO-Afrique is the African branch of WAO, a Belgian NGO with headquarters in Brussels. WAO-Afrique was founded in 1985 and was officially registered and recognised by the Togolese authorities in 1990. The organisation has its headquarters in Lome, Togo. It has an observer status with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights.

The aims and objectives of the organisation is to promote and protect the rights of the child in Togo and in Africa as a whole; to help enhance the capacity of NGOs working for the protection of children's rights; to initiate and carry out research on the violation of children's rights; to assist in legislative reforms on children's rights; to promote and reinforce peace and stability; to help promote education on children's rights; to engage the society in the fight against the exploitation of children; and to defend and promote socio-economic rights.

The areas of intervention of WAO-Afrique are studies, research and training. Specific programmes are on education, both formal and non-formal, for child labourers. There are campaigns for the mobilisation, sensitisation and participation of civil society, as well as education on children's rights and the media, and children's rights in general.

WAO-Afrique's main activities have centred on child trafficking and child labour. They have carried out research on child trafficking, and together with UNICEF and Plan International, they have carried out a lot of sensitisation campaigns and training workshops on child trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. The organisation provides counselling and rehabilitation services to child victims. On rehabilitation, the organisation helps and encourages victims to go to school and monitors their retention in school. In addition, it provides health care, legal aid facilities and provides micro credit to women who can't afford to feed or send their kids to school as it is the children of such women that are most vulnerable to trafficking.

With the help of Anti-Slavery International, the organisation started implementing a project on the eradication of child domestic servitude and trafficking in 2000. The project covers six countries in the region. It has also been carrying out sensitisation campaigns in video salons where pornographic movies are shown to people including children. WAO-Afrique encourages the owners of the video salons to show documentaries on children's rights and child trafficking instead of pornography. They pay the salons the difference in the earnings that the salons would have made by showing the pornographic films. This was a very successful child rights information campaign, but was stopped because of the lack of funds.

The Department for the Promotion and Protection of the Family and Child

In December 1993, the Government of the Republic of Togo established the Department for the Protection and Promotion of the Family and of Children. Together with its regional offices, it is responsible for implementing the policy for the protection and promotion of children. Its programmes deal with children and young people in difficulty. The Department has been carrying out education and sensitisation campaigns against sexual exploitation and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes.

The Department has been doing a lot of work especially in the area of child trafficking and child labour. This work has culminated into the elaboration and adoption of the Togolese National Plan on Child Trafficking and Child Abuse. It is also one of the strongest advocates for the adoption of the Children's Act.

Terres des Hommes

This NGO is one of the very few in Togo that offers safe havens for children in difficult circumstances. The visit to this place was made together with the Director of the Department for the Protection and Promotion of the Family and Child. It provides shelter for over 150 children, as well as food and basic medical care. There is no provision for psychosocial counseling services. The shelter houses children of all ages, from 2 to 18 year olds.

UNICEF Togo

UNICEF Togo has been giving both financial and technical support to local NGOs in carrying out education and sensitisation campaigns on children's rights, especially on child trafficking and child labour which is a serious problem in the country. UNICEF Togo does not implement specific child protection programmes, however, the organisation has been giving support to local groups, organisations and institutions on child rights education. Under its 2000 programme, the organisation has been offering assistance to the national Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children in carrying out their activities. This committee is composed of different government ministries, NGOs, UNICEF and various religious groups.

BENIN

Analysis of the CSEC Situation in Benin

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

There is very little information on CSEC in Benin. This is largely as a result of taboos surrounding issues related to sex, the underground nature of the phenomenon and the lack of concrete research on the issue. However, interviews with NGOs on the ground and with a couple of child sex workers indicate that CSEC as a phenomenon exists in Benin, and is on the increase. There is an increasing number of children in extremely difficult circumstances that are vulnerable to CSEC. These are mostly young girls aged 8 to 15, "vidomegon" (child domestic workers), child hawkers, street children, school dropouts and waitresses in bars and restaurants. Child prostitution is inextricably linked to socio-economic difficulties and child

labour where the young child is forced to work and/or prostitute herself to provide for the family.

There is a reported link between child sex abuse and sexual violence in general and the use of children in the satisfaction of these vices for economic ends. Tourism is seen as a contributory factor and hoteliers are known to be recruiting young girls under 15 years to satisfy the sexual fantasies of their clientele. Incest and sexual abuse within the home and in school are also reported to be very serious problems. One report indicates that some parents are discouraged from giving their daughters formal education for fear of them being sexually abused by their teachers.

Places Where CSEC is Practised

Child prostitution takes place mostly in bars, night-clubs and hotels especially in Cotonou and Porto Novo. In Cotonou, well-dressed young girls are usually spotted in large numbers in the Novotel and Hotel Croix de Sub areas, as well as in front of the restaurant “Marquis” in a bid to attract clients.

Child Trafficking

It is now acknowledged by NGOs and the government of Benin that there is a big problem of child trafficking in the country. A survey on the trafficking of children from Benin found that more than 49,000 rural Beninese children have been trafficked and are currently working abroadⁱⁱⁱ. The survey also shows that 61% of the children trafficked were boys and 39% were girls. These children are reported to be trafficked mainly to Ivory Coast to work in plantation fields and to Gabon to work as domestic servants. The scale of trafficking in Benin is such that 117 children were intercepted at the border in 1995 , 416 in 1996 and in 1998 the number increased to 1059 before it eventually fell down to 815 in 1999.

In Benin, there is both external and internal trafficking of children. Internal trafficking is where children are taken from the rural areas to urban towns and cities. With regard to external trafficking, countries which receive children from Benin are Gabon, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Congo Brazzaville, Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea. For transatlantic trafficking, the receiving countries are in the EU, the Gulf States and Lebanon. There are networks of traffickers working in the towns and countryside to entice young people, especially children in poor families into seeking fortunes abroad. As a result, a lot of parents have fallen prey to this ruse and have given up their children to traffickers. Although the main reason for the trafficking of these children appears to be for child labour, evidence suggests that some of them are sexually exploited. It is fact also that children trafficked for whatever purpose become vulnerable to CSEC.

Child Pornography

No concrete information was received on child pornography, though NGOs did say that they are very concerned over the types of movies that are shown to children in the numerous video salons in the urban areas of the country. This problem is not exclusive to Benin as it is reported and was also observed to be an increasing problem right across the West African sub-region.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

There is very little legal protection for children against CSEC in Benin. The laws exist side by side with customary law that encourages early marriages, especially in the rural areas. Article 332 of the Penal Code considers rape a crime only if the victim is under the age of 13. The law needs to be revised and harmonised with international legal standards on the rights of the child. Law enforcement is lax and there is lack of awareness on the part of law enforcement agents. There is also complete lack of awareness on the issue, especially on the part of politicians and policy makers. With regards to trafficking, the government adopted decree No. 95-191 in 1995, which lays down procedures for issuing of administrative permits to leave the country for persons under the age of 18 years. However, reports indicate that traffickers often bypass this procedure.

Children's Rights Organisations in Benin

Enfants Solidaire d'Afrique et du Monde (ESAM)

ESAM is a child rights NGO that was established in 1987 and was registered and officially recognised by the government of Benin in 1990. The aim of ESAM is to provide the poorest sector of the society, especially women and children with the minimum access to human rights protection, health and education. According to its multidisciplinary approach to achieving its aims, the organisation has the following as its objectives: to promote and protect the rights and development of women and children; to promote and encourage co-operation on children's rights between NGOs, countries and other institution and departments; to help local development initiatives in relation to women and children; to promote decentralisation in the implementation of initiatives and to help the education and retention in school of children, especially female children.

Structurally, ESAM is divided into three main organs: the General Assembly of members, the Administrative Council and the Directorate. The General Assembly is the supreme decision making body that meets once a year to define the vision and orientation of the organisation. Decisions at the assembly are taken by majority vote. The Administrative Council of the organisation appoints the director of the organisation, implements the decisions taken by the General Assembly, defines the priorities of the organisation and helps promotes the aims and objectives of the organisation. The Directorate is the executive organ of the NGO, headed by a director that oversees the day to day running of the affairs of the organisation. The organisation has six sub-offices country wide and over 100 staff.

With regards to concrete activities undertaken by ESAM, the organisation has been carrying out work in the agricultural sector, on education and the rights of the child, on health and nutrition and on micro credit to women and training and research. The organisation, together with World Education, implemented adult education programmes to educate parents on children's rights as well as enhance their capacity vis-à-vis their children. The organisation also carried out research on child domestics and on the trafficking of children between Benin and Gabon in 1999 and 1998 respectively. They give micro credit to rural women to enhance their earning capacity, so that they can afford to feed, clothe and send their children to school. Their strength is mainly in the areas of child labour and child trafficking, organising workshops and seminars, adult education on the children's rights as well as the micro

credit scheme to rural women. ESAM is the co-ordinator of CLOSE (Comité de Liaison des Organisation Sociale pour la défense des droits de l'Enfant). This coalition is made up of ten NGOs and other institutions working in the area of children's rights. The organisation identified research on CSEC and institutional capacity building as their most immediate needs.

Tomorrow Children

This NGO is based in Dangbo, about thirty kilometres outside the capital city of Cotonou. The NGO was not visited despite requests to do so, but an interview was conducted with the Executive Director of the organisation in Cotonou. The NGO was formed in 1989 and officially registered and recognised in October of the same year. The aim of the organisation is to fight against all forms of child exploitation, and its activities have centred around protection of children's rights, and combating child trafficking and the sexual exploitation of children. The organisation has been carrying out sensitisation campaigns on children's rights, child trafficking, HIV/AIDS and has established a rural committee in Dangbo to fight against child trafficking. This NGO has an excellent working relationship with other organisations both local and international in Benin. Tomorrow Children is a member of CLOSE.

UNICEF Benin

UNICEF Benin has been carrying out various activities on advocacy and community mobilisation on children's and women's rights; legislative reforms; rights and civic education in schools; access to education by children, especially girls; capacity building of local groups; juvenile justice; and child exploitation. UNICEF, in collaboration with NGOs and the Ministry of Social Protection and Family, has taken some positive steps with regards to child protection and the dissemination of the CRC. As a result of this dynamism, a National Committee on the Rights of the Child was formed in 2000. The organisation has assisted in the translation of the CRC in several local languages and has been supporting seminars and workshops to discuss the fight against child trafficking. It has also been carrying out activities with regards to the rehabilitation of child victims of trafficking and child labourers, especially in providing access to education for them. The organisation admits that it is not doing anything specific on CSEC and promised to include CSEC specific aspects in its 2001 programme. UNICEF also promised assistance in carrying out a research on CSEC in the country.

Minors Protection Unit (Brigade des Mineurs)

The Brigade des Mineurs is made up of one police commissioner, three inspectors and ten low ranking officers that deal with child related issues and problems. The department has a telephone hotline and it intervenes when called upon. The commissioner of the brigade said that 32, 27, and 19 cases of child abuse were reported to the department in 1998, 1999 and 2000 respectively. He admits that in reality the figures are much higher. However, taboos and intimidation discourage reporting of child abuse incidents. This is especially true in relation to children abused within the home. The commissioner reports that the department has difficulties following up on cases because parents often intimidate the victim. At times the child is forced to protect the family in cases where the abuser is a family member. In Benin, there is no government run centre for children in difficult circumstances. Abused and neglected children sometimes end up in the streets, and thereby become more vulnerable to CSEC. The commissioner thinks that if there is a

centre for the children to stay, where they have access to education and their future is assured, it will be easier to follow up on cases and punish culprits. The department, especially the head, is held in high esteem by both local and international organisations.

Department for the Family and Child, Ministry of Social Protection and Family

This department is charged with the implementation of the National Programme of Action on Behalf of Women and Children. The programme is aimed at social action with regard to issues like health, education and poverty alleviation in relation to women and children. The director of the department admits that CSEC exists and says it is an increasing phenomenon as young schoolgirls, child hawkers, street children are all moving into the sex trade. She also says that there is a well established ring of child traffickers that traffics children to places like Togo and Equatorial Guinea, as well as into Benin from Nigeria. This trafficking is specifically for commercial sex work. The department is not doing anything specifically on CSEC, although they are doing work together with NGOs on child trafficking and child protection in general.

NIGERIA

Analysis of the CSEC situation in Nigeria

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

CSEC is a phenomenon that is rife in Nigeria though it is sometimes concealed because of the social stigma attached to it. In Nigeria children as young as four or five years old are sometimes taken into families as domestic helpers because their parents are poor or in debt. These children are prone to sexual abuse and exploitation. When ill-treated, they run away and end up in the streets where they are vulnerable to CSEC. Lagos is reported to have the largest number of such street children in Nigeria. The problem of CSEC in Nigeria is compounded by the country's huge population, the bulk of which lives below the poverty line.

The economic situation in the country, arising mostly from the effects of the structural adjustment programme, the high rate of urbanisation and the resultant breakdown in the extended family system, has resulted in an unprecedented increase in the number of children in especially difficult circumstances. These children generally engage in hawking wares, load carrying, car washing, shoe shining, petty trading, refuse clearing, begging and prostitution. There is also an increase in the number of children endangered by abuse and neglect. These include sexually abused female children and children of prostitutes living with their mothers in brothels.

In Nigeria, commercial sex work is gradually becoming a profession solely for children where the average age for commercial sex work is 16 years. An increasing number of children are employed in Nigeria's bars and hotels, where they are made to work as prostitutes. Many children who have left school survive by prostitution and many who live or work in the street turn to commercial sex as a means of income generation.

Places Where CSEC is Practised

Child prostitution is more prevalent in the oil rich Niger Delta regions of Port Harcourt, Bonny and Akwa Ebom, as well as other big cities like Lagos. Here, young girls are enticed by the large amount of money offered by expatriates and oil workers. It is reported that the HIV/AIDS prevalence in this area is higher than in other parts of the country. The oil producing regions are neglected in terms of development and the local young girls turn to prostitution as a way of survival.

Child Trafficking

The trafficking of children for both child labour and for sexual purposes is a huge problem in Nigeria. Nigeria is both a sending and recipient country of children that are trafficked. Children are taken from Benin and Burkina Faso into Nigeria where they are forced to work as domestics. Some are exposed to sexual abuse and some find themselves in the commercial sex industry. Children are also taken from Nigeria to Gabon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Equatorial Guinea and Europe. The familiar transit route is through Ghana, though Mali is reported to be another route frequently used by the traffickers. One report on trafficking in Nigeria states that hundreds of women and young girls are trafficked from Nigeria to service the European sex industry. Italy is reported to be the main destination, but Germany, Holland and Saudi Arabia are also on the list of countries to which young Nigerian girls are trafficked. These young girls are trafficked in very large numbers, especially to Italy. Clear evidence of this is the deportation by Italian authorities of 64 Nigerian prostitutes back to Nigeria in March 1999.

The trafficking of women and children for commercial sex work from Nigeria is becoming more and more sophisticated and has become an industry in itself. The industry is run by criminal gangs who specialise in recruiting young girls, forging travel documents and smuggling their victims through various routes to Europe and other parts of the world.

Child Pornography

On the surface, there appears to be a consensus that child pornography is not a problem in Nigeria. However, there are some danger signs of it. There is a proliferation of both foreign and local pornographic materials which are easily accessible to children and which are in some cases targeted at young people. In some big cities like Lagos, pornographic magazines are openly displayed at newspaper stands while some are camouflaged as music magazines. In addition, romance magazines that are very popular with schoolgirls are spiced with pornographic pictures and video rental clubs rent pornographic films to underage children.

Profile of Victims and Perpetrators of CSEC

The profile of victims and perpetrators of CSEC in Nigeria is the same as in other countries in the sub-region. However, pimps in Nigeria are more organised and sophisticated than in the other countries in West Africa, especially with regards to trafficking. In addition, in Italy, the pimps are reported to be older and or retired Nigerian prostitutes who threaten the young girls into submission with police arrest, deportation and sometimes voodoo powers.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

The law protecting children against CSEC is old and inadequate and some of the laws date back as far as 1904 to the colonial period. There is no fixed definition of the child and there are different ages for different purposes. The age for marital consent under common law for example is fixed at 14, but under customary law this varies from tribe to tribe and is not the same for boys and girls. There is a draft Child Rights Bill, drawn up in 1993 and revised in 1996, but it has not yet been adopted. On the National Children's Day on May 27th 2000, the president pronounced his intention to send the Bill to the National Assembly for adoption. There are indications that the Ministry of Justice is updating the law, which is now referred to as "Draft Children and Young Person's Law".

In addition to the laws been old and inadequate, law enforcement is almost non-existent. Law enforcement agents are corrupt and most times the trafficking of children is carried out with their collusion. Sometimes girls are imprisoned for several months without charge when they are deported to Nigeria from Italy. Some are reported to be harassed and sometimes raped in detention, while some are forced to offer their body in exchange for their freedom. Despite this huge problem of CSEC, there is no co-ordinated national response to tackle it. The main response has come from the NGO community and the Catholic Church, as well as with the recent formation of a coalition of NGOs called the National Coalition of NGOs Against Trafficking in Persons. The aim of this coalition is to enhance co-operation and co-ordinate strategies for tackling the problem of trafficking of people, especially children.

Children's Rights Organisations in Nigeria

At the time of the mission to Nigeria, the country was paralysed by fuel shortages and transport workers' strike. There was also instability in the Northern part of the country as a result of which only few organisations were visited in Lagos.

Women's Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON)

WOCON is an NGO formed to ensure the enforcement of women's rights and the attainment of equality, development and peace. The objectives of the organisation are to monitor the implementation of women's rights for the attainments of their equal status in the socio-economic and political development of the country; to establish resource centres and share information on women's issues; to monitor and ensure the proper implementation of international legal standards in relation to women; to co-operate with national and international NGOs and agencies on women's issues; to educate the public on the rights of women; and to offer temporary shelter and counselling services to women and girls in distress.

WOCON is a network of NGOs and individual membership organisation with a Board of Trustees and an Executive Board. The Executive Board, headed by an Executive Director, is responsible for the day to day running of the organisation. The organisation's headquarters is in Lagos with two regional offices in Ogun state and Enugu State respectively. There are 14 members of staff at the organisation's headquarters in Lagos.

The organisation's main areas of focus are women's rights, violence against women, civic education, democracy and good governance and women's reproductive health. Its major areas of activities are sensitisation and lobbying campaigns, seminars and workshops on women's issues, research and case studies on women's issues and the sharing of information on actions and programmes on a periodic basis. The organisation publishes periodic newsletters highlighting its activities and that of other groups on women's issues and also publishes a yearly directory of women's organisations.

WOCON has been engaged in various activities including campaigns and workshops on trafficking in women in Nigeria, the formation of a women's caucus for gender justice, carrying out voter education campaigns and monitoring elections and carrying out campaigns on violence against women. The organisation conducted research in 2000 on trafficking of Nigerian women which was commissioned by the Netherlands Embassy. The organisation is the national co-ordinating headquarters for the Nigerian Coalition Against Trafficking in Persons.

Defence for Children International (DCI), Nigeria Section

DCI Nigeria Section was established in 1996 with the aim of protecting children from all kinds of abuse. It also acts, as a forum through which children's rights issue are voiced at national level. The organisation is part of the international movement of DCI that seek to execute all programmes of the international movement at national level as well as representing the interests of Nigerian children at international level.

The goals of the organisation are to increase awareness and create solidarity on children's rights issues; to foster, monitor and evaluate the implementation of children's rights as set out in international law; to seek the effective protection of children's rights; and to encourage co-operation and action nationally and internationally to improve the mechanisms for protecting children's rights. DCI Nigeria Section is a grass root and membership organisation that elects its executive from time to time. The executive members appoint the secretariat staff and the national secretary is the head of the DCI Section in Nigeria. At the time of visit the section had four staff and a number of volunteers.

The organisation is currently undergoing a registration process with the Corporate Affairs Commission, the body that is responsible for the registration of organisations. Previously the organisation could not register because human rights organisations were denied registration under the military regime. The organisation's activities include monitoring and investigating human rights abuses in relation to children; advocacy and information; and awareness raising campaigns on children's rights, especially the CRC. The organisation received some support from UNICEF in 1997 and 1998 to carry out CRC sensitisation campaigns.

Community Life Project (CLP)

CLP is a community-based organisation working with grassroots organisations and local institutions in partnership for HIV/AIDS prevention and towards a better reproductive and sexual health. It works in three communities (Isolo, Mushin, and Oshodi) in Lagos, and is based in Isolo. The activities of the organisation include conducting educational programmes; organising community for a; providing information and counselling services; developing theatre as a campaigning tool;

research and advocacy; and producing and disseminating educational material. The organisation works simultaneously with men, women, youth and children. In the course of its work in the communities, the organisation found out that CSEC is a common occurrence at both family and community levels. They also found out that some of the most vulnerable children are the children of commercial sex workers who normally hang outside while their mothers attend to their clients. While outside, they are sometimes sexually abused by barmen and other men around the hotels or brothels.

The organisation's strategy is largely preventive through community sensitisation. The organisation works with children by teaching them how to say "NO" to sexual advances and also encourages them to open up if they are sexually abused. CLP also offers counselling services to sexually abused children and their parents as well as commercial sex workers in brothels. This NGO is very good in carrying out CSEC prevention activities, especially in the area of its operation in Lagos.

ILO/IPEC

There is an ILO/IPEC programme on child labour in Nigeria. In September 2000, a memorandum of understanding was signed between the ILO and the Federal Government of Nigeria. As a result, the organisation has pledged to assist the Federal Government of Nigeria with the sum of \$700,000 to fight child labour in Nigeria. The ILO will also provide advisory service and technical support towards the National Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour. It is estimated that over 3000 child workers in the country will benefit from the programme. As part of the strategies to actualise the objectives of the programme, the National Labour Advisory Council is to review existing labour legislation with special references to improve protection of young persons and apprentices. The ILO project co-ordinator has moved from Lagos to Abuja, the Federal Capital to work closely with the Federal authorities.

UNDCP

The UNDCP is working with government authorities and NGOs to tackle the problem of crime in relation to large scale human trafficking from Nigeria. The organisation has commissioned a local NGO, BAOBAB, to carry out research on human trafficking in Lagos, Kano and Port Harcourt.

SIERRA LEONE

Analysis of the CSEC Situation in Sierra Leone

Child Prostitution, Causes and Trends

Sierra Leone has been going through civil war for the past ten years. The armed conflict has seriously damaged the infrastructure, disrupted social structures as well as the educational system. Thousands of children have taken part in the war and hundreds have been orphaned. It is also believed that there are more than 5,000 street and unaccompanied children in Freetown and other urban towns. These children are extremely vulnerable to CSEC. The ongoing war has resulted in the massive displacement of an estimated 690,000 children under 18 years of age of whom 145,000 are of primary school age. They have been hardest hit by the war and the

structural adjustment programme. With the majority of schools destroyed, almost 70% of children of primary school age are out of the school system and are faced with increased potential for high-risk behaviour including militarization and prostitution.

There are numerous stories of brutality and abuse of children in the war in Sierra Leone. There are reported incidents of rape and sexual abuse of children and also of young girls being abducted and used as sex slaves by the rebels. These incidents take place behind rebel lines and most of them go unreported. There are also reports of commercial sexual exploitation and of widespread sexual abuse of girls within the family, within internally displaced persons' camps and within communities.

As a result of the civil war and the massive displacement of the population in the urban areas, particularly Freetown, prostitution is reported to be rife. This is especially the case amongst teenage girls. Cut off from their roots and family and with no one to take care of them, these young girls turn to prostitution as the only means of survival. A situational analysis carried out in Freetown and Bo indicates that over 50% of street children in these cities survive through exploitative labour including sex.

Places Where CSEC is Practised

From observation, the situation is very serious and the phenomenon is on the increase. Paddis and Lagunda nightclubs as well as the beach areas of Lumley Aberdeen are some of the hangouts for child prostitutes. Susan's Bay is notorious as one area where child prostitution is rife. CSEC is also widespread in the mining areas of Kono and Tongo fields.

CSEC appears to have increased with the large number of UN peacekeeping forces in the country. Young girls are often seen in large numbers, apparently looking for clients, around the UN peacekeeping camps at Lungi, Hastings and Waterloo. Young girls move from one UN peacekeeping camp to another, and there are even rumours that the peacekeeping camp the girls visit the least is the Bangladeshi camp. This is because the Bangladeshis are said to be tight fisted as they don't pay sex workers well.

Child Trafficking

There is no concrete research or information on child trafficking in the country; however, reports indicate that the trafficking of children takes place mainly between Sierra Leone and neighbouring countries like Guinea and Liberia. The phenomenon has now become complex with the advent of the war. In Freetown, it is reported that there exists a well-organised syndicate of child traffickers at Banana Water, Murray Town. From this place boats ferry girls to waiting fishing trawlers, which in turn take them to other countries for various purposes including sex work. There are reports that children are trafficked to Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Lebanon, Costa Rica and sometimes Europe. A local NGO in Guinea "Groupe Guineén Contre la Violence Sexuelle" reported that refugee women and children from neighboring Sierra Leone and Liberia are being sexually exploited. Some of them take up to prostitution as a way of survival.

Profile of Victims and Perpetrators of CSEC

Most of the victims of CSEC are children from poor families, street children, refugees and children displaced from their homes as a result of the war. Like other West African states, the majority of the perpetrators are local nationals. However, as a result of the war, the bulk of the perpetrators now in Sierra Leone are military personnel either on the government or rebel side, UN peacekeepers and foreign expatriates working for humanitarian agencies in the country.

Legislation and Law Enforcement

Provisions in the national domestic legislation do not provide adequate protection to children from sexual exploitation and abuse. Sections 6 and 7 of Cap. 31 of the Laws of Sierra Leone make provision for the protection against sexual abuse of girls under 14 years, with or without their consent. Regrettably, the provisions are only academic in areas where customary law is practiced, and there is a need for the harmonization of the law relating to children with international standards. Under customary law there is no minimum age of marriage as the girl child is given into marriage at a very tender age. In civil or Christian marriage, however, the minimum age is 18. In section 2 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Cap. 31 of the Laws of Sierra Leone, a child is defined as a person under the age of sixteen years. Notwithstanding this definition, the girl child is given into marriage under customary law when she is far below 16 years.

In 1991, the National Council for Children (NCC) presented the National Constitutional Review Commission with some observations and recommendations on children's rights. As a follow-up, the Government and the Sierra Leone Bar Association, with support from UNICEF, are currently drafting "A New Comprehensive Bill on the Rights and Welfare of the Sierra Leonean Child". As a result of the violent civil conflict and instability in the country, law enforcement as a whole is very limited.

Children's Rights Organisations in Sierra Leone

Children Associated with War (CAW)

CAW is a catholic NGO that was born in 1993 in response to the emotional, physical, and traumatic stress of war affected children who in one way or the other have been both victims and perpetrators of violence. These are mainly children associated with the fighting forces, sexually abused girls, unaccompanied children, orphans and children separated from their parents. The aim of the organisation is to help the successful reintegration of the Sierra Leone children affected by the brutal civil war.

CAW has a board of directors and an executive headed by a programme director that oversees the day to day running of the organisation. The organisation's national programme is operated through the catholic mission network with sub-offices in Bo, Pujehun, Moyamba, Kenema and Makeni.

The organisation is currently carrying out the following activities: trauma healing, psychosocial counselling and rehabilitation; interim care centre where children are provided with shelter, food medical care, teaching and skills training; family tracing, mediation and reunification; advocacy for the rights of the child and child rights violation with particular reference to sexually abused girls, pregnant ex-child

combatants and single parents; and community sensitisation. CAW also provides school fees for children in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions as well as micro credit facilities to girl mothers, young single parents and ex-child combatants living in vulnerable communities.

CAW is one of the most solid local NGOs working in the area of children's issues, especially children associated with war. The main strength and expertise is in the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-child combatants.

UNICEF

The child protection division of UNICEF in Sierra Leone admits that the situation of CSEC got worse since January 1999, but the organisation is not doing anything specific on the issue. As a result of the ongoing war, the organisation is more preoccupied with humanitarian assistance to children. However, the organisation has been carrying out various activities on advocacy and community mobilisation on children and women's rights; legislative reforms; rights and civic education in schools; access to education by children, especially girls; capacity building of local groups; juvenile justice; and child exploitation. The organisation has also been supporting the Sierra Leone Bar Association in drafting the new legislation on children's rights, as well family tracing, reunification and the rehabilitation of the ex-child combatants.

The Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs

This Ministry was created in 1996 in response to the war situation in the country which adversely affected women and children. Though Sierra Leone is a party to the Stockholm Declaration and Agenda for Action, the ministry admits that they have done nothing about CSEC since Stockholm as a result of the war situation in the country. The ministry is preoccupied with trying to rescue abducted children, child combatants and the thousands of children that are trapped behind rebel lines. The ministry, in co-operation with NGOs, has been carrying out advocacy campaigns on children's issues as well as family tracing and unification.

GOAL Ireland

The organisation runs a street children's programme and works specifically with commercial sex workers. At the time of the visit, the organisation was working with over 110 commercial sex workers. The organisation has built a temporary shelter for commercial sex workers at Susan's Bay where they are provided with food, clothing and non-formal education. The organisation provides counselling for drug addiction, as some of the commercial sex workers are drug addicts, in addition to counselling on the ills of commercial sex work. The organisation also runs a mobile clinic that takes care of their health. The clinic operates in four different areas in Freetown: Susan's Bay, City Hall, George Street and Bus Station. The organisation is also doing some sensitisation campaigns with senior police officers. According to the organisation, it started this campaign when a 12-year-old sex worker was picked up by the police for loitering and detained for one month because she could not pay the fine of 10,000 Leones.

Campaign Against Violent Events (CAVE)

This NGO was formed as a result of the violent civil conflict with the aim of creating a violence free nation and to uphold the tenets of human rights. The organisation

seeks to curb violence by launching preventive measures targeting the home, community and nation, as well as educational, religious, developmental and human rights programmes. Its main focus is violence prevention through campaigns working mainly with youth and children.

Social Services Division, Freetown City Council

There is a Children's Rights Desk Office that works mainly with street children and children in difficult circumstances in the capital Freetown. The organisation also supervises all other agencies that work with children in difficult circumstances in the capital. This division acts as a referral service (i.e. they send children to other organisations or agencies with shelter when they are contacted) for children in need of assistance.

CONCLUSION

The ECPAT Mission to West Africa and its subsequent findings indicate that despite slight differences, the CSEC situation in the countries of the region have general commonalities with regards to various aspects of the problem. There is also a general agreement amongst NGOs that despite any specific research into the problem, there are indications that the problem is serious and is on the increase.

There is also paucity of information on the issue, which coupled with taboos and stigma attached to CSEC, begs the question of research into the issue. The ILO/UNICEF research on child trafficking in the region has been a great help in raising awareness on children's issues in general, and there is now some sort of awareness of the link between child trafficking and CSEC. The research also shows that there is a serious problem of child trafficking in the region, but there is still very little information on child prostitution and child pornography.

Besides CSEC, information received from the mission also indicates that there are serious problems of child neglect, incest and child sexual abuse within the home and the community in all the countries in the region. These are contributory factors to CSEC.

The causes of CSEC and the profiles of victims and perpetrators of CSEC are almost the same in the countries in the region. The sole exception is in Sierra Leone with the continuing civil war and the large number of peacekeepers in the country. There is also an organised criminal network that is currently involved in the trafficking of young women and children from Nigeria specifically for commercial sex work. This makes the problem more complex than it seems on the surface.

Legislation on CSEC in the region is inadequate and there is the need for a complete overhaul of the legal system in relation to not only CSEC, but also on children's issues in general. Even in countries where some legal reforms have taken place, like Senegal, law enforcement is still a problem in the region as a whole.

There is very little awareness on the issue, not only on the part of the general population, but also on the part of politicians and policy makers. The need for CSEC advocacy, education and awareness raising can not be stressed enough. Awareness raising is what is seriously lacking on the issue in the region.

CONTACT DETAILS

(of NGOs, Government Departments and other institutions visited during the Mission)

BENIN

FANOU-AKO, Nobert
Director

Enfants Solidaire D’Afrique et de Monde (ESAM)

08 B.P. 0049, Cotonou, Benin

Tel: (229) 305237 (office)
302490 (home)

Fax: (229) 313837

E-mail: esam@firstnet.bj

GONGNOLFIN, Hector
Director

Tomorrow Children

B.P. 41, Dangbo, Benin

Tel: (229) 931887

Fax: (229) 212525

Email: childrentomorrow@hotmail.com

AGBOTA, Madame Martine
Directrice de la Famille et de l’Enfance

Ministere de la Protection Sociale et de la Famille

01 B.P. 2802, Cotonou, Benin

Tel: (229) 316707

Mobile 937750

E-mail: Martine674@caramail.com

DEGAN, Mr Martin Kokou
Chef de la Brigade de Protection des Mineurs

Direction Generale de la Police

Ministere de l’Interieur de la Securite et de la l’Administration Territoriale

Tel: (229) 313480/313481/312628

BEDARD, Mrs Dominique
Regional Director, West Africa

World University Service of Canada

01 B.P. 2027

Recette Principale, Cotonou, Benin

Tel: (229) 301297

Fax: 300901

Email: eumc.ben@bow.intnet.bj

PRON, Nicholas
Coordinateur de Programme

UNICEF Benin

Rue du College Aupais

01 B.P. 228, Cotonou, Republique de Benin
Tel: (229) 30 02 66/30 09 42
Fax: 300697
Email: npron@unicef.org

ADAM, Zakari
Child Protection Officer
UNICEF Benin
Rue du College Aupais
01 B.P. 228, Cotonou, Republique de Benin
Tel: (229) 30 02 66/30 09 42
Fax: 300697
Email: zadam@unicef.org

BADAROU, Michele Akan
Chargee de plaidoyee et de la communication
UNICEF Benin
Rue du College Aupais
01 B.P. 228, Cotonou, Republique de Benin
Tel: (229) 30 02 66/30 09 42
Fax: 300697
Email: mbadarou@unicef.org

COTE D'IVOIRE

NHAWAY, Philip
KOUAKOU, Ossei
SOS Violences Sexuelles
06 B.P. 1889 Abidjan 06, Cote d'Ivoire
Tel: (225) 22 42 0404
Fax: (225) 22 48 7962
E-mail: sosviolsexuelles@hotmail.com

SHINA, Dr Fawole
Global Rights Charter for African Youths and Children
Centre Midico-Pediatric
23 Rue Des Brasseurs
17 B.P. 545, Abidjan 17
Cote d'Ivoire
Tel: (225) 21240140

GAMBIA

GREY-JOHNSON, Nana
Defence for Children International
P.O. Box 107
Banjul, The Gambia
Tel: (220) 394627

Email: ngreyjohnson@yahoo.com

SOMPO-CEESAY, Yassin

BAFROW

214 Tafsir Demba Mbaye Road

Tobacco Road Estate, Banjul

P.O. Box 2854, Serekunda

The Gambia

Tel: (220) 225270

223471

Fax: (220) 223266

E-mail: bafrow@gamtel.gm

OLIVIER, Viviana

UNICEF Gambia

5 Kofi Annan Street, Cape Point

Greater Banjul, Gambia

Tel: (220) 494766

Fax: (220) 494787

E-mail: volivier@unicef.org

vivoli70@hotmail.com

NIGERIA

OLATERU-OLAGBEGI, Bisi

Executive Director

Women's Consortium of Nigeria (WOCON)

2nd Floor, 13 Okesuna Street, off Igbosere Road

P.O. Box 54627, Ikoyi, Lagos, Nigeria

Tel: (234) 1 2635300/2635331

Fax: (234) 1 2635300

E-mail: Bisi@rcl.nig.com

OJIDO, Chuks

Community Life Project

9 Ilori Street, Isolo

P. O. Box 159 Apapa, Lagos

Nigeria

Tel: (234) 1 452 1992

Fax: (234) 1 452 1992

E-Mail: clp@fordwa.linkserve.org

de MAEYER, Erik
UNDCP
P.O. Box 975
Ikoyi, Lagos Nigeria
Tel: (234 1) 2269 21 41/2693816
Fax: (234 1) 2696281
Email: erik.maeyer@undp.org

FAYOYIN, Dr Adebayo
Information and Public Affairs Officer
30 Oyinkan Abayomi Drive
P.O. Box 1282
Lagos, Nigeria
Tel: (234 1) 2690276/2690729
Fax: (234 1) 2690726
Email: afayoyin@unicef.org

UDO, Pius
Information Officer
ILO
188 Awolowo Road
South West Ikoyi
P.O.Box 2331
Lagos Nigeria
Tel: (234 1) 269 3916/2693917
Fax: (234 1) 2690717
Email: udo@ilo-los.org

UDO, Mrs. Ekere
Defence for Children International
34A Ogugbamila Street
Off Idowu Street, Ilaje, Bariga
Lagos Nigeria
Email: dcinigeria@hotmail.com

SENEGAL

DIOUF, Ibrahima
Defence for Children International
Sicap Liberte IV No 5009
B.P. 3422, Dakar, Senegal
Tel: (221) 8224074
Fax: (221) 8220702
E-mail: deisenegal@hotmail.com

MOR MBAYE, Sereign
Centre Guidance Infantile et Familiale

Avenue Bourgiba, Sicap Amitié, Villa 3093
B.P. 7221
Tel: (221) 8244917
E-mail: cgid@enda.sn

DIEDHIOU, Clemence/Oumar Tandia
Enda Tier Monde, Enda Ecopole
B.P. 21394, Dakar, Senegal
Tel: (221) 8220378
Fax: (221) 8239558
E-mail: ecopole@enda.sn

KEJSER, Lotte
Programme Offocier
IOM
Dakar Senegal
Tel: (221) 825 0406/8250604
Fax: (221) 825 0474
E-mail: lkejs@iom.int

WANE, Mamadou
UNICEF
2 Rue Carnot X Salva
Tel: (221) 823 5080
E-mail: mwane@unicef.org

SOW, Moussa
Avenir de l'Enfant
B.P. 261, Rufisque
Tel/Fax: (221) 8361308
E-mail: msowade@hotmail.com

SECK, Adama
Direction Action Social
B.P. 150, Dakar, Senegal
Tel: (221) 8219192
Fax: (221) 6806453
E-mail: seckadama@hotmail.com

VARGHA, Corrine
ILO (Dakar)
P.O. Box 414, Dakar, Senegal
Tel: (221) 8221633/8234478
Fax: (221) 8236874/8210956
E-mail: vargha@ilo.org

SIERRA LEONE

VAMBOI, Mrs Theresa

Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
New England, Freetown
Sierra Leone

de BURCA, Roisin
Child Protection Officer
UNICEF Sierra Leone
Central Medical Stores, New England
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel: (232 22) 241422
Fax: (232 22) 241009
E-mail: rdeburca@unicef.org

TAYLOR, Glenis
UNICEF Sierra Leone
Central Medical Stores, New England
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel: (232 22) 241422
Fax: (232 22) 241009
E-mail: gtaylor@unicef.org

MOMOH, Rev. Fr. Theophilus
Children Associated with the WAR (CAW)
2B Kingtom Bridge
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel: (232 22) 241106
Fax: (232 22) 222438
E-mail: cawsierraleone@hotmail.com

LEBBIE, Hindowa Sam
Goal Ireland
53 Freetown Road, Lumley
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel: (232 22) 230042
Fax: (232 22) 22 230636
E-mail: goal@sierratel.sl

BUANNIE, George
Campaign Against Violence Events
13 Ross Road,
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel:(232 22) 251508/240779/263637

NALLO, Gassimu
Desk Officer on Children's Rights
Freetown City Council
Wallace Johnson Street
Freetown, Sierra Leone
Tel: (232 22) 223168/229196

TOGO

AHO, Suzanne
Directrice de la Promotion de et de la Protection de la Famille et de L'Enfant
Ministère des Affaires Sociales,
B.P. 3858
Lome, Togo
Tel: (228) 221527
Fax: (228) 251850

MALLY, Cleophas
WAO-Afrique
128 Rue Kemeni
B.P. 80242
Lome, Togo
Tel: (228) 218043
Fax: (228) 217345
E-mail: waoafrique@hotmail.com

de GRANGES, Verinique
Assistante, Droits de l'Enfant
UNICEF Togo
B.P. 80927, Lome, Togo
Tel: (228) 215390
Fax: (228) 218949
Email: vdegranges@unicef.org

REFERENCES

ⁱ UNICEF – Bureau Regional Pour L'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Centre, “
Problematiche du Travail et du Traffic des Enfants Domestique en Afrique de
l'Ouest et du Centre” 1998.

ⁱⁱ Ibid

ⁱⁱⁱ Child Trafficking From Benin - CRINMAIL Digest 177, 11 July 2000.

