

The  
Economist

INTELLIGENCE  
UNIT

A report from The Economist Intelligence Unit



OUT OF THE SHADOWS:

# SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

A 40-country benchmarking index

Supported by:

CHILDHOOD  
WORLD CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION  
FOUNDED BY H.M. QUEEN SILVI OF SWEDEN

OAK  
FOUNDATION

With additional  
support from:

CARLSON FAMILY FOUNDATION

# Contents

<b>About the research</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A global agenda priority</b>	<b>8</b>
Socioeconomic impact	8
Defining sexual violence against children	9
Emerging from the shadows	10
<b>Exploring the index</b>	<b>11</b>
1. Environment	12
<i>Risk factors</i>	13
<i>Protective factors</i>	14
<i>Societal norms and attitudes</i>	14
2. Legal framework	15
<i>Subnational law</i>	16
<i>Child marriage</i>	16
<i>Box 1: Overlooking boys</i>	18
3. Government commitment and capacity	19
<i>Box 2: Bridging knowledge gaps</i>	20
<i>Cross-border challenges, technology and innovation</i>	21
<i>Box 3: Innovative prevention strategies</i>	22
4. Engaging industry, civil society and media	22
<i>The private sector</i>	23
<i>The media</i>	23
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>28</b>
Appendix 1: Definitions of CSA and CSE	28
Appendix 2: Index methodology	29

An Economist Intelligence Unit research programme supported by World Childhood Foundation and Oak Foundation. With additional support from Carlson Family Foundation.

## About the research

***Out of the shadows: Shining light on the response to child sexual abuse and exploitation* is an Economist Intelligence Unit research programme supported by the World Childhood Foundation and the Oak Foundation with additional support from the Carlson Family Foundation.**

It is based largely on a country-level benchmarking index that evaluates how stakeholders are responding to the scourge of sexual violence against children in 40 selected countries. They include: Albania, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Cambodia, Canada, China, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Serbia, South Africa, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tanzania, Turkey, the UAE, Uganda, the UK, the US and Vietnam.

The Out of the Shadows Index examines four categories within which these responses take place:

- **Environment:** the safety and stability of a country, the social protections available to families and children, and whether norms lead to open discussion of the issue.
- **Legal framework:** the degree to which a country provides legal or regulatory protections for children from sexual exploitation or abuse.
- **Government commitment and capacity:** whether governments invest in resources to equip institutions and personnel to respond appropriately, and to collect data to understand the scope of the problem.
- **Engagement of industry, civil society and media:** the propensity for addressing risks to children at the industry and community levels, as well as providing support to victims.

Created with input from international experts, the index draws on the latest available quantitative data and qualitative research. The index model is available at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com>. A detailed description of the index construction and research process is available in a downloadable methodology paper, alongside other resources related to working with the model.

As a complement to the index's country-level focus, this report broadly examines the barriers and pathways towards addressing sexual violence against children. It spotlights the index's key findings and includes interviews with global experts and in-depth secondary research.

## Acknowledgements

The Economist Intelligence Unit convened a panel of experts in Stockholm, Sweden, on February 15th 2018 to discuss the index framework and project goals. We would like to extend our thanks to the experts who participated in the panel and the additional experts consulted for their insights and advice throughout the project (listed alphabetically by surname):

- **Ernie Allen** (WePROTECT Global Alliance)
- **Manizeh Bano** (Sahil)
- **Gary Barker** (Promundo)
- **Lise Bergh** (Save the Children)
- **Claudia Cappa** (UNICEF)
- **Benjamino Cislighi** (London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine)
- **Elisabeth Dahlin** (Save the Children)
- **Brigitte De Lay** (Oak Foundation)
- **Mary Ellsberg** (George Washington University)
- **Donald Findlater** (Lucy Faithfull Foundation)
- **David Finkelhor** (University of New Hampshire)
- **Meg Gardinier** (ChildFund Alliance)
- **Chandre Gould** (Institute for Security Studies Africa)
- **Maureen Greenwood-Basken** (Wellspring Advisors)
- **Alessandra Guedes** (Pan-American Health Organization)
- **Mary Healy** (Human Dignity Foundation)
- **Britta Holmberg** (World Childhood Foundation)
- **Natasha Jackson and Jenny Jones** (GSMA)
- **Shiva Kumar** (Know Violence)
- **Daniela Ligiero** (Together for Girls)
- **Greta Massetti** (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- **Catherine Maternowska** (Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children)
- **Tia Palermo** (UNICEF)
- **Shellie Pfohl and Katie Hanna** (Safesports)
- **Lorraine Radford** (University of Central Lancashire)
- **Alan Robertson** (Survivors UK)
- **Fiona Rotberg** (Global Child Forum)
- **Dorothy Rozga** (ECPAT International)
- **Camilla Schippa** (Institute for Economics and Peace)
- **Guido Schmidt-Traub** (UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network)
- **Lindsay Stark** (Columbia University, CPC Learning Network)
- **Helena Sunnegårdh** (Swedish Red Cross)
- **Paula Tavares** (World Bank)
- **Shimelis Tsegaye** (African Child Policy Forum, at time of attendance)

**Niskua Lightfoot** (World Childhood Foundation USA) provided operational support.

We would also like to thank the following for contributing their insights to this report:

### Interviewees:

- **Fatima Akilu** (Neem Foundation Nigeria)
- **Carol Bellamy** (ECPAT International)
- **Anna Borgström** (NetClean)
- **John Carr** (European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online)
- **Julie Cordua** (Thorn)
- **Prita Jha** (Peace and Equality Cell)
- **Santi Kusumaningrum** (University of Indonesia)
- **Elizabeth Letourneau** (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health)
- **Paul Stanfield** (INTERPOL)
- **Lakshmi Sundaram** (Girls Not Brides)
- **Pooja Taparua** (Arpan)
- **Christine Wekerle** (McMaster University)

Special thanks to **Joanna Rubinstein** and **Nicole Epps** (World Childhood Foundation USA) and the Oak Foundation for their invaluable advice and guidance throughout the project.

The index was constructed by an Economist Intelligence Unit project team including: Leo Abruzzese, project director; Katherine Stewart, project manager; Lian Lin, research manager; Stacie Bishop, research fellow; Priya Bapat, senior consultant; Vaibhav Mogra, analyst; Ayesha Khan, analyst; and Kadeem Khan, intern. Manisha Mirchandani was project adviser and wrote this report.

Research for the index was conducted by Andrei Franklin, Anne-Marie Blajan, Christine Pulvermacher, Colin Meyn, David Butter, Diane Alarcon, Enkhbat Natsagdorj, Isadora Arrendondo, Jaekwon Lim, Juna Miluka, Kelvin Tan, Kim Andreasson, Joel Levesque, Norah Alajaji, Ognjen Miric, Ozan Cakmak, Peter Laurens, Portia Hunt, Prita Jha, Sabika Zehra, Susan Evans, Tom Felix Joehnk, and Yoshie Ueno. The index model was constructed by William Shallcross.

Veronica Lara and Gilda Stahl were the editors of this report.

## Executive summary

**It takes place mostly in the shadows, but sexual violence against children is happening everywhere, regardless of a country's economic status or its citizens' quality of life. It is a universal threat—no boy or girl is immune—and one that is enabled by vastly improved communications connectivity and mobility. Yet this especially pernicious form of abuse is rarely discussed, even though its emotional and health consequences linger and there are sometimes devastating socioeconomic consequences**

Supported by the World Childhood Foundation and the Oak Foundation, with additional support from the Carson Family Foundation, The Economist Intelligence Unit has developed a benchmarking index to cast a spotlight on how 40 countries (which represents 70% of the global population of children) are addressing sexual violence against children. The Out of the Shadows Index does not attempt to measure the scale of the problem in each country and does not provide information on the prevalence of sexual violence against children. Rather, it serves as a tool to show how child sexual abuse and exploitation are being prioritised at the national level, highlighting areas for advancement against the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, which include a target (16.2) to end all forms of violence against children by 2030. This report leverages key findings from the index as part of a broader exploration of the barriers and pathways to progress on fighting sexual violence against children.

Given the complexity of this issue and the many forms of sexual violence, spanning both child sexual abuse and exploitation, we do not purport to cover wholly its many nuances in this report. Instead, we focus on the aspects that are critical to developing a better understanding of the issue, highlighting where progress is needed and the factors that can potentially drive change.

The key findings of the index and the additional research conducted for this paper include:

- **Child sexual abuse and exploitation are ubiquitous and pressing concerns for both wealthy and poor countries alike.** There is no link between the prevalence of sexual violence against children (proportion of the population that has experienced it) and a country's economic and financial status. The top ten countries in the index are among the world's richest, but only three score as high as 75 (out of 100), revealing substantial gaps in the protective conditions for children in even the wealthiest countries. Some high- and middle-income countries are in the bottom quartile of the overall rankings.
- **Data to measure and understand the scale of the problem are lacking.** Despite efforts globally to combat and catalogue online child sexual abuse and high tracking of reported incidents of sexual violence against children, of the 40 countries reviewed in this index, 20 collect prevalence data on child sexual abuse and only five collect such data on child sexual exploitation.
- **Girls are the primary victims, and boys are overlooked.** Just over half (21) of the 40 countries have legal protections for boys within their child rape laws, while only 18 countries collect prevalence data about the sexual abuse of boys. Just five collect prevalence data for boys related to child sexual exploitation.

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

---

- **Social norms and attitudes toward sex, sexuality and gender matter.** There is evidence that gender inequality is linked to the acceptance of violence against women and girls, and to sexual violence against children.
- **Country action has been most pronounced on the legal framework, while performance varies greatly on government commitment and capacity.** All countries receive some credit in the former category, with 27 of 40 countries scoring between 75 and 50 (where best = 100). Results show that international coalitions can be a path to legislative reform. Countries that score very well on the latter have strong fundamentals in place, including designated national plans, policies and institutions to combat sexual violence against children.
- **Combating child sexual abuse and exploitation is becoming a priority in many countries, and progress is possible even in the face of limited resources.** The index shows that the issue of sexual violence against children is being driven by growing momentum, and that resource constraints are not necessarily a barrier for countries to move forward in addressing it. Connecting the dots between government agencies, the private sector, local faith groups and civil society can keep children from falling through the gaps.



## Introduction

The birth of the #MeToo movement has turned sexual violence into one of the defining issues of our time. Revelations of alleged abuse by Hollywood film producer Harvey Weinstein, and the intense reactions of government, industry and millions of ordinary people, cracked open a long-running taboo that had prevented many victims from speaking openly about sexual violence. Common themes have emerged from the stories told, including the revelation that an individual's first experience of sexual violence often occurred in childhood.<sup>1</sup> More and more long-hidden cases of child sexual abuse have emerged from respected religious, educational and sporting institutions since, rocking some to the foundations.

Evidence suggests that sexual abuse is happening everywhere, regardless of a country's socioeconomic status or its citizens' quality of life, and is increasingly enabled by the internet. "Every day, across all countries and levels of society, millions of girls and boys face the alarmingly common childhood experience of sexual abuse and exploitation," says Amina Mohammed, deputy secretary-general of the United Nations.<sup>2</sup> Sexual violence is a universal threat to which no boy or girl is immune, although children with disabilities, those displaced through trafficking or forced migration, those living in care institutions and those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender can be especially vulnerable. To say that these incidents hit "close to home" is an understatement; in some 90% of cases of sexual abuse, the perpetrator is known to the child.<sup>3</sup>

It is, nevertheless, a largely silent epidemic. Recent studies estimate that more than 1bn children have experienced physical, sexual or psychological violence in the past 12 months.<sup>4</sup> While data on boys are severely lacking (see Box 1 on page 18), the research on girls shows that 120m have been subjected to some form of sexual abuse,<sup>5</sup> yet only 1% who have experienced forced sexual intercourse have sought professional help.<sup>6</sup> However, the adverse effects of sexual violence in childhood on health and mental wellbeing carry into adulthood, foreshadowing societal and public health risks that, like abuse itself, remain largely overlooked.

**"Every day, across all countries and levels of society, millions of girls and boys face the alarmingly common childhood experience of sexual abuse and exploitation."**

*Amina Mohammed, deputy secretary general of the United Nations.*

---

### Footnotes:

1. This is consistent with data collated by UNICEF from 20 countries that 9 in 10 adolescent girls who have been victims of forced sex report that this happened for the first time during adolescence: UNICEF, "A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents", 2017 [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_101397.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_101397.html).
2. United Nations press release. "Deputy Secretary-General Urges Governments to Invest in 2030 Agenda Targets, at Event on New Index Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse." October 3rd 2018. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/dsgsm1230.doc.htm>
3. Based on US data: D Finkelhor et al, "Characteristics of crimes against juveniles", 2012, Crimes against Children Research Center, [http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV26\\_Revised%20Characteristics%20of%20Crimes%20against%20Juveniles\\_5-2-12.pdf](http://www.unh.edu/ccrc/pdf/CV26_Revised%20Characteristics%20of%20Crimes%20against%20Juveniles_5-2-12.pdf)
4. S Hillis, J Mercy, A Amobi et al, "Global prevalence of past-year violence against children: a systematic review and minimum estimates", 2016, *Pediatrics*, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26810785>
5. UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Statistical Analysis of Violence Against Children", 2014, [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_74865.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_74865.html)
6. UNICEF, "A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents", 2017 [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_101397.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_101397.html)

SECTION 1:

## A global agenda priority

For much of the 20th century, violence against children—much less sexual violence—was not a priority for advocates of international economic and social development. This changed when the United Nations (UN) General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1989, establishing a legal imperative to protect children from all manifestations of violence, including child sexual abuse and exploitation.<sup>7</sup> Yet, the elimination of sexual violence against children did not feature prominently as a global target until the UN adopted its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a set of 17 priorities—measured by more than 200 indicators—underpinning the global development agenda for 2015-30.

Target 16.2 seeks to end all forms of violence and torture against children, while 5.2 mandates the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. Target 8.7 seeks to eradicate child labour and human trafficking, including that of children for sexual exploitation. While the CRC is legally binding, the international consensus provided by the SDGs offers a strong impetus for countries to look more closely at the problem and incorporate monitoring sexual violence against children into their national development goals.

### Socioeconomic impact

In part, the emergence of sexual violence against children as a global priority has come from both the moral imperative to protect children and a growing understanding of its financial consequences. A 2014 study by ODI, a UK think-tank, estimated that the worldwide cost of physical, psychological and sexual violence against children could be as high as 8% of global economic output, or US\$7trn, based on associated productivity losses.<sup>8</sup> More specifically, a recent academic study placed the lifetime economic burden of sexual abuse of children in the US at approximately US\$9.3bn in 2015, including the costs associated with government spending and productivity losses.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, sexual violence experienced in childhood is intimately linked to mental health challenges later in life, including depression, behavioural problems and post-traumatic stress,<sup>10</sup> translating into a deferred cost for national health systems. Sexual violence against children can also make them more vulnerable to substance abuse, poor sexual health later in life, increased risk of sexual revictimisation<sup>11</sup> and sexual deviance among men in adulthood.<sup>12</sup> Sexual abuse and its consequences, such as early pregnancy, can be a driver for girls dropping out of school.

Taken with the ethical and legal obligations to protect children, these outcomes make a strong case for countries to devote much more attention to sexual violence against children, and to invest in its prevention. “Violence against children [including sexual violence] in homes and at school has dire effects on their education, health and employment prospects. Violence, therefore, has a high economic and development cost for societies,” says Chandre Gould, senior research fellow in the Crime and Justice Programme at the Institute for Security Studies Africa.

Footnotes:

7. United Nations, “Convention on the Rights of the Child”, 1989, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>. See articles 19, 34, 35, 36, and 39 which cover child sexual abuse and exploitation as special areas of concern. A 2000 Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography provides guidance to states about their legal obligations in these areas. See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/opscrcr.aspx>, 1989.
8. Within this study, losses pertaining to sexual violence against children can be the result of health-related consequences, and the loss of schooling and workforce opportunities to children who become pregnant and those who are forced out of school by sexual violence: P Pereznieta, A Montes, S Routier and L Langston, “The costs and economic impact of violence against children”, 2014, Child Fund Alliance, [https://www.childfund.org/uploadedFiles/public\\_site/media/ODI%20Report%20-%20The%20cost%20and%20economic%20impact%20of%20violence%20against%20children.pdf](https://www.childfund.org/uploadedFiles/public_site/media/ODI%20Report%20-%20The%20cost%20and%20economic%20impact%20of%20violence%20against%20children.pdf)
9. E J Letourneau et al, “The economic burden of child sexual abuse in the United States”, May 2018, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, pages 413-22, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S014521341830084X>
10. Know Violence in Childhood, “Ending Violence in Childhood: Global Report 2017”, <http://www.knowviolenceinchildhood.org/publication>
11. K A Ports et al, “Adverse childhood experiences and sexual victimization in adulthood”, 2016, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, pages 313-322. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4713310/pdf/nihms741804.pdf>
12. J Levenson and M D Grady, “The Influence of Childhood Trauma on Sexual Violence and Sexual Deviance in Adulthood”, 2016, *Traumatology*, pages 94-103, [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303826280\\_The\\_Influence\\_of\\_Childhood\\_Trauma\\_on\\_Sexual\\_Violence\\_and\\_Sexual\\_Deviance\\_in\\_Adulthood?\\_sg=qV554vzhsk9MLc65nTGxw-TmxvaqHTHzbM0GZIC3Zm0Oz0G6k8H8Zb3L0jSpRFgX5TduKCrATw](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/303826280_The_Influence_of_Childhood_Trauma_on_Sexual_Violence_and_Sexual_Deviance_in_Adulthood?_sg=qV554vzhsk9MLc65nTGxw-TmxvaqHTHzbM0GZIC3Zm0Oz0G6k8H8Zb3L0jSpRFgX5TduKCrATw)



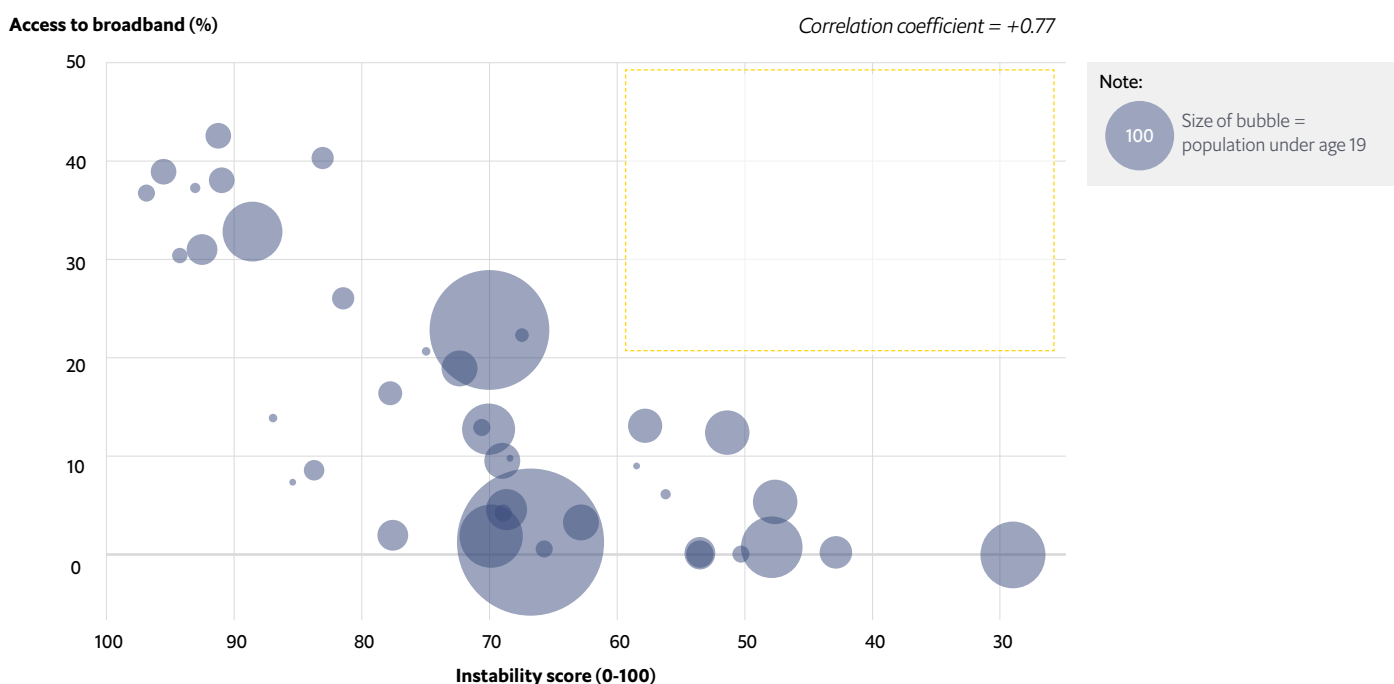
# OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Furthermore, for all its developmental benefits, greater connectivity through the internet is enabling new forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation to emerge as countries go online and upgrade to broadband networks. The confluence of rapid broadband penetration, booming youth populations and heightened instability due to armed conflict, social unrest and natural disaster risk<sup>13</sup> creates some urgency for action (see Figure 1).

Figure 1

## Future risk?

40 countries showing % of broadband penetration and instability score, population under age 19



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs

The magnitude of the problem is only amplified in some of the world's fastest-growing and most populous countries. In India, a government survey reported that over 50% of children had experienced one or more forms of sexual abuse.<sup>14</sup> In Nigeria, the most populated sub-Saharan African country in the index, around one in four girls under 18 has experienced some form of sexual violence.<sup>15</sup> And, in China alone, a 2015 estimate suggests that the number of people under 18 who have experienced some form of sexual abuse by adults was a staggering 25m.<sup>16</sup>

## Defining sexual violence against children

Sexual violence against children may evoke the most graphic forms of abuse, such as violent rape or the trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, but in practice these represent a minority of offences. Child sexual abuse (CSA) includes any activity that involves a child for the sexual gratification of another person (or any sexual activity before a child has reached the age of consent), including rape, assault and harassment, of which the most highly reported form is unwanted sexual touching.<sup>17</sup> It also includes non-contact abuse, such as exposure to sexual language and images.

### Footnotes:

13. As reflected in the index's instability indicator (best =100)
14. Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, Study on Child Abuse, 2007. <https://www.childlineindia.org.in/pdf/MWCD-Child-Abuse-Report.pdf>
15. National Population Commission of Nigeria, UNICEF Nigeria, and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Violence Against Children in Nigeria: Findings from a National Survey, 2014. Abuja, Nigeria. UNICEF, 2016. [https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/resources\\_10185.html](https://www.unicef.org/nigeria/resources_10185.html)
16. Estimated by Fang Xiangming of China Agricultural University, cited in "A horror confronted", *The Economist*, August 25th 2016, <https://www.economist.com/china/2016/08/25/a-horror-confronted>
17. UNICEF, "A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents", 2017, [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_101397.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_101397.html)

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

---

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) takes place when a child or someone else receives a benefit in return for the sexual activity,<sup>18</sup> and can sometimes be associated with organised crime, such as when children are groomed and trafficked for sexual purposes, or for the creation and sale of CSA materials.<sup>19</sup> It is often children living in poverty or in situations of conflict or forced migration that are most at risk of CSE—for example, the kidnapping and sexual abuse of 274 school girls by Boko Haram, an extremist group in Nigeria.<sup>20</sup> (See Appendix 1 for more detailed descriptions of CSA and CSE.) Commonly, CSE can include the exchange of sex for materials, goods or cash.

The global incidence of CSA is far greater than that of CSE, given the ubiquity of settings—CSA can take place within homes, schools, communities and public spaces, as well as in cyberspace.<sup>21</sup> This means that sexual violence against children cannot be tackled by a single entity. Rather, government, law enforcement, health and education systems, civil society and the private sector must acknowledge the responsibility of what is happening within their respective jurisdictions and play a part, says Carol Bellamy, former executive director of UNICEF and currently global chair of ECPAT International, a global network seeking to end the sexual exploitation of children. The Out of the Shadows Index is structured to reflect this reality.

### Emerging from the shadows

While the discussion around sexual violence has changed irrevocably in the wake of the Weinstein scandal, abuse of children hasn't been elevated in the same way, says Ms Bellamy. "We are at the beginning of attitudes changing with adults, but not particularly when it comes to children," she notes. Acknowledging child sexual violence remains difficult in communities the world over because of the historical shroud of silence around this issue.

The social stigma that is associated with coming forward, along with fear, shame and the limited capacity of children to be able to do so, means that the problem remains difficult to quantify. (See Box 2, page 20, for more details on knowledge gaps.) Many victims do not disclose CSA for many years and are hindered by statutes of limitations, which place a time limit on filing charges. Furthermore, the influence of authority figures within communities can be a factor in dissuading child victims and caregivers from speaking out. This was illustrated by the 2018 trial of US national gymnastics team doctor, Larry Nassar, for the sexual abuse of hundreds of girls under his care, and the ongoing series of sexual abuse accusations levelled against clergy within the Catholic church.

**"Government, law enforcement, health and education systems, civil society and the private sector must acknowledge the responsibility of what is happening within their respective jurisdictions and play a part."**

*Carol Bellamy, global chair of ECPAT International*

---

#### Footnotes:

18. Government of Scotland, "Child Sexual Exploitation: Definition and Practitioner Briefing Paper", 2016, <http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2016/10/8235/downloads#res-1>

19. The preferred term to replace child pornography is child sexual abuse material. For further details see ECPAT International & ECPAT Luxembourg, "Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse", 2016, <http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/terminologyguidelines.pdf>

20. UNICEF, "A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents", 2017, [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_101397.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_101397.html)

21. Know Violence in Childhood, "Ending Violence in Childhood: Global Report 2017", <http://www.knowviolenceinchildhood.org/publication>

SECTION 2:  
Exploring the index

The Out of the Shadows Index shows that child sexual abuse and exploitation is becoming a priority in many countries. Overall results show that high-income countries occupy the top quartile in the index (meaning that they score best on measures that acknowledge the problem of child sexual abuse and exploitation, and in providing protections for children) but that, in fact, the correlation between the level of wealth (as measured by GDP per head) and a country's overall standing on the index ( $r = 0.67$ ) is not very strong. Low- and lower-middle-income countries have broken through into the top half of the overall rankings, while some high- and middle-income countries are in the bottom quartile. Moreover, less wealthy countries feature in the top quartile in a number of categories, showing that there are areas in which progress is not necessarily contingent on the availability of financial resources.

Figure 2

Overall scores, quartiles

First quartile		Second quartile		Third quartile		Fourth quartile	
UK	82.7	Brazil	62.4	Romania	52.8	Kazakhstan	47.3
Sweden	81.5	Serbia	58.2	Mexico	52.7	Indonesia	47.0
Canada	75.3	India	57.6	Cambodia	52.5	Nigeria	46.4
Australia	74.9	Turkey	57.0	El Salvador	52.4	Russia	45.9
US	73.7	South Africa	56.1	Sri Lanka	50.8	Argentina	45.4
Germany	73.1	Philippines	55.3	Albania	50.6	China	43.7
South Korea	71.6	Tanzania	54.2	UAE	49.7	Vietnam	42.9
Italy	69.7	Kenya	53.8	Jamaica	49.4	Mozambique	37.8
France	65.2	Uganda	53.7	Mongolia	49.3	Egypt	31.2
Japan	63.8	Malaysia	53.4	Rwanda	48.8	Pakistan	28.3

There is a stronger correlation between the overall rankings and the results of the latest Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index<sup>22</sup> ( $r = 0.80$ ). Given the negative repercussions that stigma and a lack of open discussion about sex, children's rights and gender can have on a country's ability to address sexual violence against children, the Democracy Index's emphasis on freedom of expression and association is indicative of attitudes that are conducive to protecting children. "The first step is [acknowledging that sexual violence against children] exists," says Ms Bellamy. This finding is also consistent with existing research that demonstrates the positive relationship between good governance and political stability and reduced violence against children in general.<sup>23</sup>

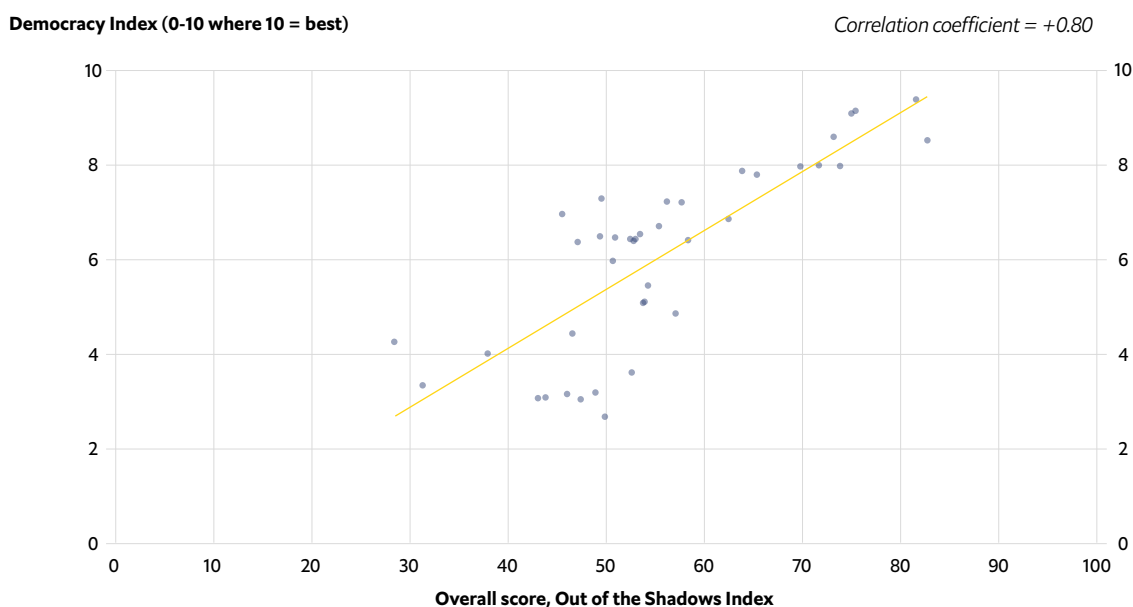
Footnotes:

22. Democracy Index, 2018, categories include: electoral process and pluralism; civil liberties; the functioning of government; political participation; and political culture, <https://www.eiu.com/topic/democracy-index>

23. Know Violence in Childhood, "Ending Violence in Childhood: Global Report 2017", <http://www.knowviolenceinchildhood.org/publication>

Figure 3

**Index overall scores and the results of the Democracy Index**



Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit

By examining the key barriers and opportunities for progress within the context of the index framework, we can better understand specific areas where action can be taken to reduce sexual violence against children. To do this, we explore the index's four categories:<sup>24</sup>

1. The **environment** in which sexual violence against children occurs and is addressed;
2. The **legal framework** for protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation;
3. **Government commitment and capacity** to invest in institutions, personnel and data collection to respond appropriately; and
4. The **engagement of industry, civil society and media** in tackling the issue in their own spheres and providing support to victims.

**1. Environment**

Although this is not the case in all index categories, wealthier countries perform better in this category than poorer ones; higher incomes give governments the means to invest in social protections for children and families, and richer countries generally have lower levels of social instability. The category also emphasises societal attitudes related to sex, marriage, LGBT people, gender equality and violence, where high-income countries also score reasonably well. However, middle-income countries such as Serbia, Mongolia and Sri Lanka also break through into the top half of this category.

Footnote:

24. See Appendix 2 for index weightings and explanation. Further information on how the index was constructed and an Excel model and data visualisations are available at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com>

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Specific cultural and contextual factors within countries mean that the socioeconomic drivers that are linked to other health and development issues do not necessarily apply when it comes to sexual violence against children. “The evidence is clear that even as countries develop and get richer, there is not a direct correlation with [a reduction in] sexual violence against children,” says Daniela Ligiero, CEO of Together for Girls, a global public-private partnership focused on ending violence against children. “But there is some evidence to show that economic fragility does [correlate with higher levels of abuse].”

**The socioeconomic drivers that are linked to other health and development issues do not necessarily apply when it comes to sexual violence against children.**

Figure 4

### Environment scores, banded

Scores 75 or more		Scores 50-74.9				Scores 25-49.9	
Sweden	82.4	Japan	71.8	Turkey	58.9	El Salvador	48.8
Canada	77.8	Australia	71.6	Vietnam	58.9	Uganda	47.2
France	77.0	Italy	67.9	India	58.6	Pakistan	45.2
Germany	76.3	US	66.4	Kazakhstan	58.4	Tanzania	45.0
UK	75.6	South Korea	64.9	China	58.3	Mozambique	44.7
		UAE	64.9	Rwanda	58.3	Nigeria	34.3
		Serbia	62.6	Jamaica	58.0		
		Mongolia	61.2	Philippines	55.4		
		Brazil	61.0	Albania	53.5		
		Romania	60.7	Cambodia	53.4		
		Malaysia	60.4	Mexico	52.2		
		Argentina	60.2	South Africa	52.0		
		Russia	60.0	Egypt	51.9		
		Indonesia	59.6	Kenya	50.1		
		Sri Lanka	59.5				

### Risk factors

There is broad agreement that social and economic instability renders children more vulnerable to sexual violence. Structural inequalities that emerge from poverty, armed conflict, social unrest and forced migration are linked to sexual violence because of the associated societal volatility, making communities riskier places for children to navigate. For example, reports of widespread CSA and CSE of unaccompanied minors living in Italian refugee camps alarmed the EU in 2017, when a migrant crisis brought some 20,500 children from African nations to the country.<sup>25</sup>

For Fatima Akilu, executive director of the Neem Foundation in Nigeria, situations of conflict amplify the power imbalance between perpetrators and victims. For instance,

Footnote:

25. *The Guardian*, “Horrific’ levels of child abuse in unsafe refugee camps, warns EU”, April 14th 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/apr/24/eu-urgent-protection-23000-unaccompanied-child-refugees-squalid-camps-greece-italy>

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Boko Haram used sexual abuse as a weapon of war in the context of the insurgency to both increase their population and maintain control over the kidnapped girls, she says.

At the household and community level, chaotic lifestyles resulting from neglect and alcohol and substance abuse are linked to most forms of violence against and among children.<sup>26,27</sup>

### Protective factors

“The absence of protective relationships and environments are factors that are often predictive of sexual violence [against children] across cultures,” says Greta Massetti, senior scientist in the Division of Violence Prevention at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “For instance, family connectedness and adult supervision are important lines of defence, and are protective for youth.” Yet of the 40 countries featured in the index, only 12 had parenting programmes available to the entire population free of charge.

Education (from pre-school upwards) for children and afterschool programmes can have a shielding effect.<sup>28</sup> Still, the increased mobility that comes with school attendance can increase vulnerability to CSA, as can the fact that, given the extensive time spent there, schools and universities can be a setting in which children are exposed to sexual violence, illustrating how context-specific the drivers for sexual violence can be.

However, the time spent also points to opportunities for school-based interventions. In the US, where around one-third of all sexual offenses are committed by children under age 18 and some half of sexual offences are committed by older children against prepubescent children, working with children in schools to counter ignorance and impulsivity makes sense, says Elizabeth Letourneau, director of the Moore Center for the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health.

### Social norms and attitudes

Social norms, or behaviours to which individuals are expected to conform, can determine how a community reacts to incidents of sexual violence against children, says Lakshmi Sundaram, executive director of Girls Not Brides, an international partnership of civil society organisations focused on ending child marriage.

Patriarchal family structures, the association of manhood with heterosexual prowess and the conferring of greater power to men are linked to violence against women and children.<sup>29</sup> Evidence suggests that “anti-social behaviour” related to manhood is a major predictor of sexual assault among prior offenders, as indicated by the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (IMAGES), which measures men’s attitudes and practices related to gender equality in nearly 40 countries.<sup>30</sup> “If countries show up on the inequitable side, men are more likely to say that they’ve perpetuated various forms of violence, particularly against female partners. In some countries, this association is also seen with sexual violence [against children] as well,” says Gary Barker, founder and CEO of Promundo, a non-governmental organisation that conducts the IMAGES study, and engages men and boys in promoting gender equality and preventing violence.

Prevailing attitudes also shape the environment for discussing and reporting cases of abuse. For example, there is evidence that encouraging abstinence is ineffective,<sup>31</sup> given

**“Family connectedness and adult supervision are important lines of defence, and are protective for youth.”**

*Greta Massetti, senior scientist in the Division of Violence Prevention at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

#### Footnotes:

26. B Heilman, L Hebert and N Paul-Gera, “The Making of Sexual Violence: How does a Boy Grow Up to Commit Rape?”, 2014, ICRW, <https://www.icrw.org/publications/the-making-of-sexual-violence/>
27. S H Shin, Y Chung and R D Rosenberg, “Identifying sensitive periods for alcohol use: the roles of timing and chronicity of child physical abuse”, 2016, Alcoholism, Clinical and Experimental Research, pages 1020-9, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27079899>
28. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Child abuse and neglect: Prevention strategies, 2018, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/prevention.html>
29. B Heilman with G Barker, “Masculine Norms and Violence: Making the Connections”, 2018, Promundo-US, <https://promundoglobal.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Masculine-Norms-and-Violence-Making-the-Connection-20180424.pdf>
30. IMAGES Men and Gender Equality Survey: <https://promundoglobal.org/programs/international-men-and-gender-equality-survey-images/>. The results have been translated into a Gender Equitable Men Scale (GEMS), which indicate the level of support for equitable gender norms in each of the surveyed countries.
31. UN Population Fund, “The Evaluation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education Programmes: A Focus on Gender and Empowerment Outcomes”, 2015, <https://www.unfpa.org/publications/evaluation-comprehensive-sexuality-education-programmes>

the imperative for perpetrators to keep sexual activity under the radar and for victims to avoid speaking out. But there are also factors that can make it easier for victims to seek help, such as the presence of women police officers, says David Finkelhor, director of the Crimes Against Children Research Center, co-director of the Family Research Laboratory and professor of sociology at the University of New Hampshire.

## **2. Legal framework**

While the index was not designed to distinguish between “good” and “bad” laws, it does aim to capture the degree to which each country’s legal framework acknowledges CSA and CSE, and whether it provides critical protections for children from sexual violence. While enforcement is not captured here, the legal framework is a means for governments to emphasise the importance of protecting children from sexual abuse and exploitation. This category considers whether laws exist to protect children against child sexual offenses; in the context of child marriage; in the exploitation and procurement of minors for sexual services; and related to the production and dissemination of CSA materials.

Lawmakers face the dual challenges of distilling the complexity of these issues while responding to the specific priorities of their country. An absence of legal protections for children from sexual violence signals to society an acceptability of such behaviour and a lack of accountability. “The fact that it is state sanctioned is much worse and gives the impression that this kind of abuse is normal and the way it should be,” says Ms Sundaram.

In this category, certain middle-income countries appear in the top quartile of the index, demonstrating concerted efforts to align the legal framework with a national priority to address sexual violence against children. El Salvador and South Africa, which appear in the top quartile for this category, are “Pathfinding” countries, which have signed up to accelerate achievement of goals established by the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, a cross-sectoral platform of partners committed to preventing and responding to violence against children. (See Figure 5.)

Laws to protect children from some forms of CSE are fairly well developed globally: procuring female minors is prohibited in all but one country, as is the production or reproduction of visual depictions of sexual activities involving minors. But notable gaps remain in legislation for CSA. Engaging in sexual activity in front of a child is banned in 19 of the 40 countries, while laws that explicitly prohibit the sexual touching of minors exist in just over half (21) of the countries.

**Lawmakers face the dual challenges of distilling the complexity of these issues while responding to the specific priorities of their country.**

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Figure 5

## Legal framework scores, quartiles, “Pathfinding” countries bolded

First quartile		Second quartile		Third quartile		Fourth quartile	
India	85.5	Cambodia	71.0	Russia	63.7	<b>Japan</b>	53.1
Australia	82.6	<b>Brazil</b>	70.0	<b>Nigeria</b>	61.8	Albania	52.4
<b>Sweden</b>	82.5	<b>Mexico</b>	69.3	<b>Uganda</b>	57.2	Argentina	51.9
<b>Canada</b>	81.3	Serbia	68.6	Turkey	56.7	Rwanda	51.8
Italy	79.3	Kenya	68.5	Kazakhstan	56.5	<b>Sri Lanka</b>	50.4
US	77.9	<b>Romania</b>	68.1	<b>Jamaica</b>	56.4	China	48.4
<b>South Africa</b>	77.2	Malaysia	67.6	Egypt	56.0	Pakistan	47.3
<b>El Salvador</b>	77.0	<b>Philippines</b>	66.4	Vietnam	55.7	<b>Indonesia</b>	43.1
Germany	73.0	South Korea	64.6	<b>Tanzania</b>	55.1	<b>UAE</b>	42.3
UK	73.0	France	64.0	<b>Mongolia</b>	54.1	Mozambique	39.3

### Subnational law

A number of countries featured in the index delegate some or all aspects of legislation pertaining to issues of sexual violence (and implementation) to subnational entities, including Australia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Nigeria, Tanzania and the US.<sup>32</sup> While this allows legislators to shape laws that are suited to the specific context of each jurisdiction, it can create a complicated patchwork at the national level. This is no truer than for the US, where federal laws set standards and guidelines, but child abuse issues are governed by state laws and regulations.<sup>33</sup>

### Child marriage

In 10 of the 40 countries within the index, some exceptions are allowed for customary law when it comes to child sexual violence. This can sometimes translate into a lower age of consent for marriage than what is allowed under national law.

Ms Sundaram observes that marriage can be one of the biggest drivers of CSA and can even offer a safe haven for offenders in countries where marital rape is permitted. “There’s a fundamental rights-based argument that children should not be forced to have sex against their will, but that is something that is completely taken away in the context of child marriage,” she says.

Ms Sundaram notes that this underscores the importance of communicating the negative impact of child marriage and other traditional forms of sexual violence against children, but warns, “[This] doesn’t mean walking into the community and wagging your finger at someone.” Part of the answer lies in engaging directly with girls, their families, and especially men and boys, in a dialogue on how harmful practices are holding the community back. Prita Jha, the founder and president of the Peace and Equality Cell, a legal justice society and trust in India, emphasises the importance

**“There’s a fundamental rights-based argument that children should not be forced to have sex against their will, but that is something that is completely taken away in the context of child marriage.”**

*Lakshmi Sundaram, executive director, Girls Not Brides*

#### Footnotes:

32. In these cases, indicators were scored at the sub-national level where appropriate, taking into account the largest metropolitan area in the country. Please see the methodology paper available for download at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com> for further details.

33. Tahirih Justice Center, “Falling through the cracks: How laws allow child marriage to happen in today’s America, August 2017, <https://www.tahirih.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/TahirihChildMarriageReport-1.pdf>



## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

---

of this. “So far we have been trying to empower women and girls directly,” she says. “But we really need to work with the men to change their mindsets to empower women and girls.”

Santi Kusumaningrum, director at the Center on Child Protection and Wellbeing at the University of Indonesia, says that community and religious leaders can be receptive when less controversial topics are used as the entry point for discussions, such as tying limited educational opportunities for girls to child marriage. Such conversations are beginning to drive change—UNICEF estimates that 25m child marriages have been averted in the past ten years, driven largely by progress in India.<sup>34</sup>

Footnote:

34. Unicef, “Child Marriage: Latest trends and future prospects”, 2018, <https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Child-Marriage-Data-Brief.pdf>



BOX 1:

**Overlooking boys**

Boys are barely addressed in some legal frameworks that cover sexual violence against children, nor are they the focus of much governmental attention. Child rape laws in just under half (19) of the 40 countries in the index lack legal protections for boys, or do not make such information explicit or available. Only 18 of the 40 countries collect prevalence data about boys on CSA, and just five do so on CSE.

Although data on girls are often available, only seven countries have internationally comparable data on sexual violence against boys, according to UNICEF.<sup>35</sup> “We have to keep reminding ourselves that there are at least two genders, and not to forget about boys,” says Ms Bellamy. Girls are more likely to experience sexual violence than boys in most countries, but this is not always the case. Surveys show that among 18-24 year old Ugandan men, about one in six (17%) reported experiencing sexual violence during their childhoods,<sup>36</sup> while two in ten men (20%) did in Kenya.<sup>37</sup> This compares with a global estimate for lifetime prevalence of childhood sexual abuse of 8% for boys, and 18% for girls.<sup>38</sup>

In some settings, myths exist that can render boys even more vulnerable to sexual violence. “There are certain practices that are couched in culture that reinforce [the occurrence of] male sexual violence,” says Christine Wekerle, associate professor of paediatrics at McMaster University in Canada. For example, such violence is sometimes a part of gang initiations and it is prevalent at “*bacha bazi*”<sup>39</sup> parties in South Asia, where boys dress up as girls to perform dances and are forced into sex with patrons. Boys are also especially vulnerable in the dissemination of CSA material on the internet—research has shown a link between images and videos featuring boys and an increased severity of sexual abuse.<sup>40</sup>

Social stigma associated with sexual violence against boys discourages formal reporting, and is exacerbated by “machismo” masculine norms, homophobia and fears of being viewed as feminine, vulnerable or helpless. “Males as victims is the taboo of taboos,” says Ms Wekerle. There is work to be done around attitudinal change and giving boys the language and tools to



feel comfortable with disclosing sexual abuse. Ms Wekerle’s research shows that boys may not even be aware that they have been sexually abused because they are sometimes coached by perpetrators on how to interpret their experiences.

She notes that part of the answer lies in educating children on what sexual violence is, including the subtler aspects of how force and control can be misinterpreted as love and protection. Governments and institutions working with children can also play a part by providing safe havens for victims or by helping those who have witnessed or suspect child sexual abuse to disclose such acts. Of the 40 countries in the index, 25 have explicit laws that require professionals who work with children, such as doctors, teachers, social workers or law enforcement, to report incidences of CSA to the authorities.

Footnotes:

35. UNICEF, “A Familiar Face: Violence in the lives of children and adolescents”, 2017, [https://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_101397.html](https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_101397.html)

36. Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, “Uganda Violence against Children Survey: Findings from a National Survey, 2015”, [https://www.unicef.org/uganda/VACS\\_Report\\_lores.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/uganda/VACS_Report_lores.pdf)

37. UNICEF Kenya Country Office, Division of Violence Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, “Violence against Children in Kenya: Findings from a 2010 National Survey”, 2012, <http://evaw-global-database.unwomen.org/en/countries/africa/kenya/2012/violence-against-children-in-kenya-findings-from-a-2010-national-survey>

38. M A Stoltenborgh, M H van Ijzendoorn, E Euser and M J Bakerman-Kranenburg, “A global perspective on child sexual abuse: Meta-analysis of prevalence around the world”, 2011, Child Maltreatment, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21511741>

39. Predominant primarily in parts of Afghanistan, which has not been included in the study.

40. ECPAT and INTERPOL, “Towards a Global Indicator on Unidentified Victims in Child Sexual Exploitation Material”, February 2018, <http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Technical-Report-TOWARDS-A-GLOBAL-INDICATOR-ON-UNIDENTIFIED-VICTIMS-IN-CHILD-SEXUAL-EXPLOITATION-MATERIAL.pdf>

### 3. Government commitment and capacity

Even with the most comprehensive legal frameworks, tackling sexual violence against children is only possible if there is a political mandate and sufficient resources. As such, the index examines both government commitment to international standards and to their own domestic policies, as well as the existence of institutional capacity for specialised agencies and programmes. Ratification of international laws—for example, the undertaking of a legally binding obligation to the CRC and its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography—is one such expression of a government’s commitment to address the issue.

One crucial element is that data need to be collected and used strategically to inform decision-making. Moreover, the availability of prevention and treatment services for children at risk of sexual violence is evidence that governments attach importance to the issue. While the existence of such measures does not ensure their adequacy or effectiveness, it does reflect some level of political will.

Countries that score highly (the UK and South Korea score above 80) have strong fundamentals in place, including designated national plans, policies and institutions to combat sexual violence against children, efforts to collect data and resources available to support legal and law enforcement professionals. Most of the countries that scored lower on the index lack these capabilities. Some lower-middle-income and lower-income countries perform well, scoring between 50-75 in this category, suggesting that there are accessible ways for countries to improve their scores and do more to protect children.

**One crucial element is that data need to be collected and used strategically to inform decision-making.**

Figure 6

#### Government commitment and capacity scores, banded

Scores 75 or more		Scores 50-74.9		Scores 25-49.9		Scores less than 25	
UK	84.2	Sweden	72.8	Brazil	48.1	Pakistan	13.7
South Korea	82.9	Australia	70.9	India	47.5	Egypt	9.5
		Germany	70.1	Romania	46.3		
		Italy	67.4	El Salvador	45.5		
		US	65.7	South Africa	44.7		
		Kenya	63.5	Nigeria	44.1		
		Canada	62.9	Jamaica	42.7		
		Tanzania	59.1	Mozambique	42.0		
		Cambodia	57.7	Argentina	40.4		
		Philippines	56.2	Indonesia	39.6		
		France	54.6	Malaysia	39.3		
		Uganda	54.2	Sri Lanka	38.8		
		Mexico	53.8	Vietnam	38.4		
		UAE	53.6	China	36.4		
		Turkey	53.0	Russia	31.6		
		Japan	52.1	Kazakhstan	29.5		
		Serbia	51.6				
		Albania	50.7				
		Mongolia	50.7				
		Rwanda	50.3				

**BOX 2: Bridging knowledge gaps**

While there are ongoing efforts globally to combat and catalogue online child sexual abuse—including Interpol’s International Child Sexual Exploitation database and the work of the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and Crimes Against Children Research Center—the sensitivities around asking individuals who might have been victims about this sort of violence and lack of understanding and cultural attitudes still prevent victims from coming forward, making sexual violence against children a chronically under-reported issue.

Of the 40 countries reviewed in this index, the national governments of 20 have produced or endorsed data on the proportion of the population that has experienced CSA prevalence, while only five collect such data on CSE. This points to a shortage of information about the scale and nature of sexual violence against children. In many countries, it represents a relatively new area of monitoring, and some have expressed concerns about their capacity to do so, particularly on indicators that lack internationally agreed standards.<sup>41, 42</sup>

Collating prevalence data on sexual violence against children is critical to understanding and fixing the problem, but it poses additional challenges. There are ethical and privacy considerations associated with speaking directly to minors on such issues, and social stigma can inhibit adult survivors from speaking openly about their experiences. Incidents of child

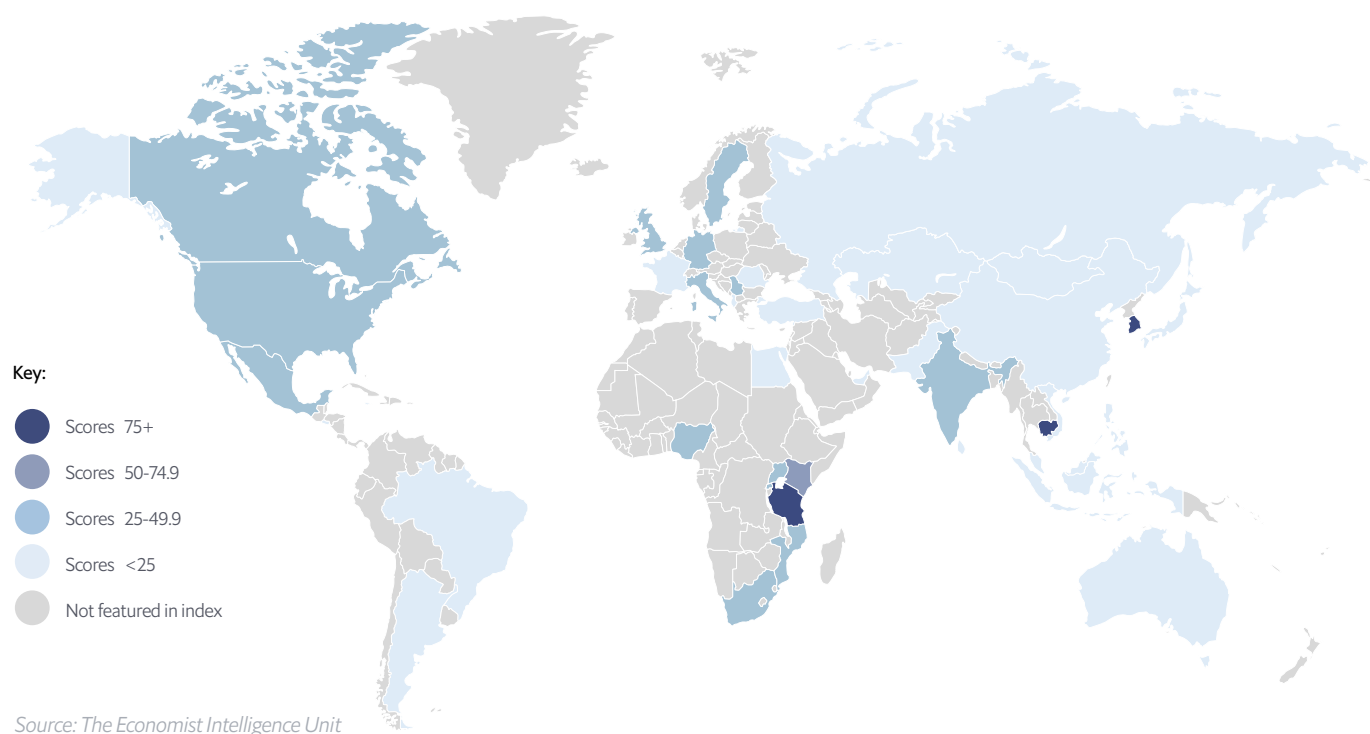
sexual violence reported to law enforcement or the authorities is another potential source of information. Thirty-three of 40 countries collect such information on CSA and CSE, while 37 have a hotline for reporting CSA, although only 11 collect data on the nature and number of calls.<sup>43</sup>

There are signs of progress, however. In the UK, reporting by men and boys in England and Wales climbed from 3,819 notices in 2006-07 to 12,130 in 2016-17, according to the Office for National Statistics. The global #MeToo campaign and high-profile cases reported in the British media, such as the perpetration of child sexual abuse within professional soccer, are bringing the issue closer to home, encouraging men and boys to come forward.<sup>44</sup>

This trend is encouraging both in enabling victims to speak out and in improving the quality of data generated. Ongoing efforts to improve data collection include initiatives to integrate questions on childhood sexual violence within existing national health surveys<sup>45</sup> and to roll out specialised Violence Against Children Surveys, as has been done in 22 low- and middle-income countries.<sup>46</sup> Through these efforts, a better understanding is emerging from resource-constrained settings—almost half the countries in the index that collect prevalence data on CSA are lower-middle or low income.

**Figure 7**

**Indicator scores, data collection on prevalence of sexual violence against children (3.4)**



For footnotes see page 21.

### Cross-border challenges, technology and innovation

The Philippines appears in the top third of the 40 countries for the government commitment and capacity category, reflecting a willingness by the authorities to tackle online CSE by prohibiting CSA materials and creating a specialised law enforcement agency. It is also one of the 18 countries in the index that has signed up to the 2015 WePROTECT Statement of Action by Governments to tackle online CSE. However, the growth and concentration of live streaming of CSA and other forms of CSE there belies these developments,<sup>47</sup> and is intimately linked with the proliferation of high-speed internet in any country. “It is absolutely crystal clear that the arrival of fast broadband in a particular country will be followed by the patterns of offending behaviour that we’ve seen in richer countries,” says John Carr, expert adviser to the European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online.

The dissemination of online CSA materials is especially difficult for law enforcement to tackle because activities are often conducted through encrypted networks and on the so-called dark web, where perpetrators operate in the shadows. “Everyone is searching for the holy grail [for removing online images], but it’s important to understand the complexity of the problem and how the internet is built,” says Anna Borgström, CEO of NetClean, a company that develops technical solutions to stop the dissemination of CSA material online.

Mr Carr estimates that the number of CSA images circulating online could be in the billions. Since the majority of the images are copies, solutions powered by machine learning hold promise. One such example is Project Arachnid, an artificial intelligence-based web crawler launched by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection that searches the open internet and dark web for matches with a database of existing CSA images.<sup>48</sup> It is currently discovering around 80,000 unique images per month, which are then passed on to analysts to approve removal.

The cross-border nature of online CSE requires law enforcement agencies to reach beyond their domestic jurisdictions. This is not always easy, says Mr Carr, especially for those countries where agencies work with limited resources and face competing priorities. Of the 40 countries in the index, 26 have a designated law enforcement agency or unit to counter CSE, but only eight have allocated a dedicated budget. “There is a lot of talk about international collaboration, but it is not systematic or deeply entrenched,” says Mr Carr.

Multinational organisations can help. INTERPOL, the global police agency, plays a role in building capacity and co-ordinating between countries. It has developed the International Child Sexual Exploitation Database, a tool that uses image and video comparison software to identify victims. It is accessible to law enforcement in 54 countries and contains over 1m unique CSA images and videos as of 2017.<sup>49</sup>

**“It is absolutely crystal clear that the arrival of fast broadband in a particular country will be followed by the patterns of offending behaviour that we’ve seen in richer countries.”**

John Carr, expert adviser, European  
NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online

#### Footnotes (this page):

47. ECPAT, “Online Child Sexual Exploitation: An Analysis of Emerging and Selected Issues,” 2017, [http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Journal\\_No12-ebook.pdf](http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Journal_No12-ebook.pdf); and Varrella, Andrea, “Live Streaming of Child Sexual Abuse: Background, Legislative Frameworks and the Experience of the Philippines”, 2017, [http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Journal\\_No12-ebook.pdf](http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Journal_No12-ebook.pdf)
48. Project Arachnid press release, <https://www.cybertip.ca/app/en/projects-arachnid>
49. ECPAT and INTERPOL, “Towards a Global Indicator on Unidentified Victims in Child Sexual Exploitation Material”, February 2018, <http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/TOWARDS-A-GLOBAL-INDICATOR-ON-UNIDENTIFIED-VICTIMS-IN-CHILD-SEXUAL-EXPLOITATION-MATERIAL-Summary-Report.pdf>

#### Footnotes (Page 20):

41. The International NGO Council on Violence Against Children, “10 Years On: Global Progress and Delay in Ending Violence Against Children – The Rhetoric and The Reality”, 2016, [http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Int\\_NGO\\_Council\\_VAC\\_Report2016.pdf](http://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/Int_NGO_Council_VAC_Report2016.pdf)
42. New guidance is available to help governments track progress to prevent and respond to violence against children in the form of the INSPIRE Indicator Guidance and Results Framework, 2018, which includes a set of core indicators and guidance on how to measure and define these. <https://www.unicef.org/protection/files/UNICEF-INSPIRE-Book.pdf>
43. In countries in which prevalence surveys have been conducted, figures tend to be higher than what is suggested by cases of child sexual violence reported to law enforcement or child helplines.
44. New York Times, “Reported Cases of Sexual Abuse Against Men Triple in England and Wales”, February 2nd 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/02/02/world/europe/uk-sexual-assault-male.html>
45. These include the proportion of young women and men aged 18-29 years who experienced sexual violence by age 18 (SDG indicator 16.2.3) and the proportion of women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to sexual violence by persons other than an intimate partner in the previous 12 months (SDG indicator 5.2.2).
46. Led by the US government’s Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as part of Together for Girls, a global public-private partnership dedicated to ending violence against children.

BOX 3:

### Innovative prevention strategies

When considering the scale of sexual violence against children and the capacity of countries to pursue criminal activity, the deck is stacked heavily against law enforcement. “We are never going to be able to arrest and prosecute all these people,” says Ernie Allen, chairman of the WePROTECT Global Alliance, a group convened to stop online CSE. “The solution is to identify them early, and to intervene to get them help.”

While there is some limited interest in working with child sexual offenders as part of a prevention strategy, dated stereotypes prevail and there remains a huge stigma around being identified. In the UK, for example, perpetrators are immediately put on suicide watch upon arrest. Most eventually do stop, says Donald Findlater, adviser to the Lucy Faithfull Foundation, a UK charity dedicated to preventing CSA. “Supporting the majority to lead better lives is a doable task,” he says.

According to Ms Letourneau of the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, addressing CSA through criminal justice interventions may not even be a cost-effective way of improving public safety, given the high costs associated with incarceration and sex offender registration and unproven community safety outcomes.<sup>50</sup> “The way we address CSA at the national level is after the fact,” she says. “Most countries do not treat CSA as a preventable public health problem.”

One of the most proactive approaches to date has been rolled out in Germany, with the support of the federal government.

**“To date, few preventative interventions have been funded or rigorously tested at scale—and are not likely to be until child sexual abuse is recognised as a public health issue.”**

*Elizabeth Letourneau, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health*

Operating since 2005, the Dunkelfeld (“Don’t Offend”) project provides past and prospective child sex offenders with confidential treatment and therapy. There is a growing toolbox of approaches that can work with adult perpetrators, such as cognitive behavioral therapy and medical approaches that enable greater self-management of libido.<sup>51</sup> Of the 40 countries in the index, just four had government-supported programmes that made prevention services available to at-risk or prospective offenders.

Community re-entry programmes, such as circles of support and accountability, can provide companionship and peer support to known adult sex offenders, says Mr Findlater. Furthermore, there is anecdotal information that online self-help groups for those with an unwanted sexual interest in children can be helpful, says Ms Letourneau. A few educational programmes targeting older children within schools to prevent peer-on-peer sexual abuse are also being evaluated in the US. But, to date, few preventative interventions have been funded or rigorously tested at scale—and are not likely to be until CSA is recognised as a public health issue, she says.

## 4. Engaging industry, civil society and media

Although governments have the ultimate responsibility for writing and enforcing laws, sexual violence against children is one area where governments cannot address the problem alone. “We also know that ending sexual violence requires us to harness the energies, skills and resources of all parts of society,” says Ms Mohammed.<sup>52</sup>

Where CSA or CSE are occurring in homes and communities, local civil society organisations (CSOs) familiar with prevailing cultural attitudes are doing much of the effective work to support victims and children at risk. In half of the countries studied in the index, at least one indigenous CSO offers services, including providing victims with support for medical care, emergency accommodation, therapeutic care, legal aid and raising awareness among the public. In addition, a quarter of countries have at least one local CSO that provides therapeutic support for perpetrators.

Footnotes:

50. E J Letourneau and M F Caldwell, “Expensive, harmful policies that don’t work or how juvenile sexual offending is addressed in the U.S.”, 2013, International Journal of Behavioral Consultation and Therapy, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0100979>

51. Karolina Institutet, “Wants to take action before it is too late”, interview with Christoffer Rahm, 2018, <https://ki.se/en/research/wants-to-take-action-before-it-is-too-late>

52. United Nations press release. “Deputy Secretary-General Urges Governments to Invest in 2030 Agenda Targets, at Event on New Index Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse.” October 3rd 2018. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/dsgsm1230.doc.htm>

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

The G20 countries dominate the top quartile of this category, reflecting the scale and resources available to industry to engage on the issue of child sexual violence. A national internet industry association in 14 countries has made addressing sexual violence against children a priority, while a leading mobile telecoms association has done so in 12 countries. Ms Bellamy notes that there is a smart case for the private sector to help foster security and peace in the marketplace, and to reduce reputational risk. “It’s in their best interest and in the long run, they need to be interested,” she says.

Figure 8

### Engagement of industry, civil society and media, quartiles

First quartile		Second quartile		Third quartile		Fourth quartile	
UK	98.0	France	66.7	India	50.0	China	31.0
Sweden	93.3	South Africa	63.3	El Salvador	48.7	Rwanda	30.7
US	93.3	Turkey	61.0	Albania	45.0	Cambodia	28.3
Canada	86.7	Uganda	59.3	Philippines	45.0	UAE	23.3
Brazil	81.3	Tanzania	58.3	Indonesia	44.3	Argentina	27.7
Australia	80.0	Sri Lanka	58.0	Jamaica	42.3	Mongolia	26.7
Japan	80.0	Malaysia	54.7	Romania	39.7	Mozambique	20.3
Germany	73.3	Nigeria	54.7	Mexico	38.3	Egypt	17.3
Italy	68.3	Serbia	54.3	Russia	35.0	Vietnam	17.3
South Korea	68.3	Kazakhstan	52.7	Kenya	31.7	Pakistan	12.7

### The private sector

There are existing guidelines for companies on how they can take action to support children’s rights, and a clear business case for doing so when it comes to responding to sexual violence against children.<sup>53</sup> “Most legitimate companies do not want child sexual abuse on their platforms—it’s not good for business,” says Julie Cordua, CEO of Thorn, a company that builds technology to empower those on the front line of fighting CSA on the internet. But, too often, the private sector is not aware of its obligations or what they can do to address the problem. For companies that share data and content online, such as internet service providers (ISPs) and mobile telecoms operators, the existence of a notice and takedown system, which allows members of the public to report potentially unlawful CSA content, has emerged as a global solution, and is present in 28 of the 40 countries in the index. ISPs in some countries are mandated by law to report, block or delete content or keep user records, but these vary greatly across jurisdictions.

Companies should be aware that they incur risk with how employees use IT infrastructure. Ms Borgström says that illegal child sexual abuse images are often accessed on work devices, especially through USB sticks or external devices, in offline mode or through virtual private networks, meaning that companies are failing to prevent employees from committing a crime. This represents a direct risk for the company and its shareholders, placing an onus on businesses to monitor networks and work devices for illicit usage.

Footnotes:

53. “Children’s rights,” “Children’s Rights and Business Principles,” UNICEF, United Nations Global Compact, Save the Children. <http://childrenandbusiness.org/>

In the travel and tourism industry, research shows that the sexual exploitation of children has grown in the past two decades due to increased international and domestic travel, cheaper flights, and the use of mobile technologies.<sup>54</sup> CSE often occurs in hotels and travel venues, so industry players are especially well placed to implement prevention measures. ECPAT's Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism ("The Code") outlines standard operating procedures, including staff training, to help companies recognise and respond to the problem. All countries in the index host local operators that have signed up to The Code, and 18 countries host the headquarters of companies that have done so.

Paul Stanfield, director of organised and emerging crime at the global law enforcement agency INTERPOL, says the private sector can help shut down threats by sharing data on the movement of finances as well as people. Banks in some countries are legally obligated to look out for signs of human trafficking, for which some are now applying software originally designed for the detection of money laundering.<sup>55</sup> Algorithms flag up suspicious transactions that suggest possible activity around trafficking of children for sexual purposes, such as transactions made for even amounts overnight and credit card payments for the advertising of online escort services.<sup>56</sup> "[Looking at] how money is moving around the payments chain is one way of going about it," concurs Mr Carr.

### The media

Media coverage is a double-edged sword when it comes to reporting on sexual violence against children. While it can be a positive force for raising awareness and providing the affirmation that victims need to come forward, misleading or irresponsible media coverage can have negative consequences. Only 17 countries in the index have guidelines published by a leading journalist association for the ethical reporting of sexual violence against children.

A 2014 study by Arpan, a non-profit focused on ending child sexual abuse and exploitation in India, confirmed a tendency toward media coverage of sensational stories, reporting the more severe cases of CSA, including rape and murder.<sup>57</sup> "This helped [shape public opinion] that sexual abuse is only about rape, whereas a much larger prevalence of sexual violence is non-penetrative abuse as well," says Pooja Taparia, founder and CEO of Arpan. Furthermore, the media can reinforce inaccurate stereotypes on the profile of child sex offenders and victims. Ms Taparia observes that despite high prevalence, cases of CSA among the middle and upper classes in India rarely make the news.

But the media can be powerful in inspiring action and changing perceptions, as exemplified by coverage of the global child sex abuse scandal engulfing the Catholic church, and of the criminal trial of Larry Nassar, the former US gymnastics team doctor, for which more than 150 victims were given a platform to share statements on the impact of sexual abuse they experienced as children. The influence of media coverage is amplified when prominent or notable individuals come forward as CSA victims, observes Mr Finkelhor. For Mr Findlater, this means that the media can also be a platform for highlighting solutions. "Can the media include what parents can learn? Can we celebrate the fact that a child has spoken out? The media can be a place for educating the public."

---

#### Footnotes:

54. A Hawke and A Raphael, "Offenders on the Move: Global Study Report on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Travel and Tourism 2016", May 2016, <http://globalstudysect.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Global-Report-Offenders-on-the-Move-Final.pdf>
55. The Economist, "Software that detects human trafficking", May 3rd 2018, <https://www.economist.com/science-and-technology/2018/05/03/software-that-detects-human-trafficking>
56. American Banker, "How Banks Can Help Stop Human Trafficking", July 17th 2015, <https://www.americanbanker.com/opinion/how-banks-can-help-stop-human-trafficking>
57. Arpan, "Between the Lines—an analysis of media reportage on child sexual abuse", 2014.



## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

---

Some focused, longer-term efforts are under way. The CNN Freedom Project focuses on ending modern-day slavery and is an example of a media organisation highlighting an issue to amplify the voices of survivors and hold government and businesses accountable,<sup>58</sup> while the Solutions Journalism Network's Solutions Story Tracker database curates reporting on responses to social problems, including child sexual abuse and exploitation.<sup>59</sup> Coverage and social media pertaining to adult sexual violence provides an opportunity to address child victims and offer solutions, according to Ms Wekerle. She suggests posting child helpline contact numbers alongside coverage of relevant events to provide resources for concerned parents and caregivers.

---

### Footnotes:

58. The CNN Freedom Project, Our Mission, <https://www.cnn.com/interactive/2018/specials/freedom-project/#mission>

59. Solutions Story Tracker, <https://storytracker.solutionsjournalism.org/>



## Conclusion

Since the adaptation of the CRC in 1989, advocates have focused on understanding how to prevent violence against children in its many forms and placing the issue on the global agenda.<sup>60</sup> Coverage of sexual violence is drawing new attention to the experiences of children, and the imperative to protect them.

The consensus is that child sexual abuse and exploitation are preventable. Evidence-based strategies to end violence against children are represented by the “INSPIRE” framework, a set of actions that include the implementation and enforcement of laws; addressing social norms and values; creating safe environments; enhancing parent and caregiver support; income and economic strengthening; delivering response and support services; and the provision of education and life skills training.<sup>61, 62</sup>

While progress has been made in knowing what works, the problem persists. One of the biggest challenges is that of implementation and connecting the dots across government ministries and agencies, the private sector and civil society groups to ensure that children do not fall through the gaps. For Ms Mohammed, this will necessitate better co-ordination across organisational and sectoral silos.<sup>63</sup>

To what extent will gains made so far translate into a tangible reduction of child sexual abuse and exploitation? Mr Barker expects that in the short term, there is a chance that prevalence will spike due to higher reporting as awareness grows, and victims and survivors feel prepared to come forward. “Because there are more cases of child sexual abuse being reported, a shift in the public’s awareness and tolerance for abusers is happening,” concurs Ms Akilu. “It is slow, but it is happening.” In the longer term, advocates are optimistic that prevention strategies, enhanced reporting and investigation, support for survivors, and reduced stigma around disclosure will help to bring down prevalence rates.

The SDGs recognise that there is a critical interplay between reducing sexual violence against children and overall development objectives. They can play a role in encouraging governments, companies and civil society groups to act and measure progress to end violence against children in the run-up to the 2030 deadline. And there is promise for advancement—today’s incorporation of HIV/AIDS prevalence data in healthcare measurement sets a precedent in showing how resources can be mobilised and social stigma overturned when it comes to filling critical gaps in knowledge.

The Out of the Shadows Index shows that the issue of sexual violence against children is gaining momentum on the global agenda, and that resource constraints are not necessarily a barrier for countries in addressing it. Mr Stanfield says that this reflects a welcome change in attitudes, but also shows that there is more to be done. “The countries where there is most risk is where we have the least information on the issue,” he says. “We have to find ways of better understanding the threat.”

The dynamics around CSE and CSA will continue to change quickly. In some ways technology will exacerbate the threat. Mr Allen notes that the emergence of live streaming of sexual abuse against children and other crimes on the dark web are challenges that will require fresh responses. Mr Stanfield warns that technology is enhancing the opportunities for offenders to communicate and find each other online,

**The issue of sexual violence against children is gaining momentum on the global agenda, and resource constraints are not necessarily a barrier for countries in addressing it.**

---

### Footnotes:

60. International initiatives include a 2002 General Assembly Special Session on Children; a 2006 United Nations Study on Violence Against Children; and a 2013 Global Survey on Violence Against Children by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children which reviewed progress in children’s protection from sexual abuse and exploitation (see <https://violenceagainstchildren.un.org/content/global-survey-violence-against-children>). Further, United Nations World Congresses Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents were convened in 1996, 2001 and 2008.

61. World Health Organization, “INSPIRE: seven strategies for ending violence against children”, 2016, [http://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/inspire/en/](http://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/inspire/en/)

62. See also WePROTECT’s Model National Response (<https://www.weprotect.org/the-model-national-response/>)

63. United Nations press release. “Deputy Secretary-General Urges Governments to Invest in 2030 Agenda Targets, at Event on New Index Protecting Children from Sexual Abuse.” October 3rd 2018. <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/dsgsm1230.doc.htm>

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

---

source funds, and access private devices. Yet, according to Ms Cordua, there is now enough collective experience among stakeholders to anticipate how new technologies can be exploited by offenders, enabling the authorities to be proactive rather than reactive. Technology is also emerging as a critical part of the response to combatting child sexual abuse and exploitation, on and offline. For example, big data may have a role to play in identifying prospective perpetrators in the future, while there are clear applications for forensic anatomy and facial recognition technology, which have already been deployed in the fight against CSA and CSE.<sup>64, 65</sup>

Further disclosures of previously hidden instances of sexual violence against children will continue to make headlines and build pressure for reform, even in religious, sporting, educational and care institutions, which until now have been largely immune. As new cases come to light and combine with new momentum to improve environments, deter offenders, support victims and survivors and engage more stakeholders, this taboo of taboos can be chipped away.

---

### Footnotes:

64. BBC, "How a paedophile's hands led to his conviction", August 15th 2018, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/stories-45190746/how-a-paedophile-s-hands-led-to-his-conviction>

65. Daily Dot, "Can law enforcement be trusted with facial recognition technology?", August 6th 2018, <https://www.dailydot.com/layer8/facial-recognition-id-arrests-police/>



APPENDIX:

## Appendix 1: Definitions of CSA and CSE

Examples of different forms of contact and non-contact child sexual abuse and exploitation experienced by children:

	Contact	Contact and non-contact	Non-Contact
<b>Child sexual abuse</b> (under age of sexual consent; or forced or coerced)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rape of a child</li> <li>• Sexual touching of a child</li> <li>• Child sexual assault</li> <li>• Harmful practices (ie, female genital mutilation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual harassment of a child (ie, physical and verbal)</li> <li>• Online-facilitated sexual abuse</li> <li>• Solicitation of children for sexual purposes</li> <li>• Child, early and forced marriage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corruption of children for sexual purposes (ie, visual exposure, grooming)</li> </ul>
<b>Child sexual exploitation</b> (child sexual abuse + benefit to the child or others)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual exploitation of children in or for prostitution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of children for sexual performances (ie, CSA materials)</li> <li>• Online child sexual exploitation (ie, live streaming of sexual abuse)</li> <li>• Commercial child sexual exploitation (ie, in prostitution)</li> <li>• Sexual extortion of children</li> <li>• Sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism</li> <li>• Trafficking of children for sexual purposes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extortion of children through the threat of sharing CSA materials online</li> </ul>

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, ECPAT International and ECPAT Luxembourg.<sup>66</sup>

Footnote:

66. Adapted from ECPAT International and ECPAT Luxembourg; "Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse", June 2016, <http://cf.cdn.unwto.org/sites/all/files/docpdf/terminologyguidelines.pdf>

APPENDIX:

## Appendix 2: Index methodology

### Choosing the indicators

Indicators were chosen using a two-step process. First, The Economist Intelligence Unit carried out an academic literature review to choose indicators for which there was a sound intellectual basis for measuring a country's resilience at the national level. Second, The Economist Intelligence Unit consulted with an expert panel as a means of verifying the choice of indicators. The composite indicators, of which there are 34, were finalised after considering the inputs from each step in the process.

### Types of indicators included

#### *Quantitative indicators:*

24 of the index's 132 sub-indicators are based on quantitative data (see page 30 for a full list of indicators).

#### *Qualitative indicators:*

108 sub-indicators are qualitative assessments of different aspects of how a country is addressing sexual violence against children. The qualitative indicators were scored by Economist Intelligence Unit analysts based on available data and interviews. In most cases, qualitative indicator questions were designed to be binary, where "yes" equals one and "no" equals zero. This substantially removes subjectivity in the scoring.

#### *Background indicators:*

There are 19 sub-indicators that serve as background information. These indicators were collected but not included in calculating the final scores for each country.

### Data sources

A team of in-house researchers from The Economist Intelligence Unit collected data for the index from February to December 2018. Wherever possible, publicly available data from official sources have been used. A complete list of sources is included in the table of indicators at the end of this appendix.<sup>67</sup>

### Data review and confirmation process

After researching the indicators and gathering publicly available information, The EIU provided all 40 countries with an opportunity to review and comment on the indicator scores.

To make this process as simple as possible, The EIU developed country confirmation documents that present the data for most of the indicators. Not all indicators, however, were subjected to this confirmation process: for instance, The EIU did not include data that were easily verifiable from publicly available sources or that were drawn from proprietary EIU databases.

The EIU used the submitted responses to confirm and/or re-evaluate its scores. Upon being contacted, country representatives were given a minimum of eight weeks—between late October and late December 2018—to respond to the data review and confirmation request. Please see the methodology paper, which is available at

<https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com> for a list of countries that participated in the data validation process.

### Indicator normalisation

Since the variables are measures in different units, to compare data points across countries, as well as to construct aggregate scores for each country, The Economist Intelligence Unit had to make the gathered data comparable. To do so, all indicators were "normalised" on a scale of 0 to 100 using a min-max calculation. Normalisation rebases the raw data to a common unit so that it can be aggregated. The normalised value is then transformed into a positive number on the scale of 0-100 to make it directly comparable with other indicators. This calculation has the benefit of being simple and it does not require a large sample size. Even with a diverse set of countries, normalisation allows us to capture the performance of countries at both ends of the spectrum.

### Index construction

The index is an aggregate score of all of the underlying sub-indicators listed below. The index is first aggregated by indicator and then category and finally, overall, based on the composite of the underlying category scores. To create the category scores, each indicator and sub-indicator was aggregated according to an assigned weighting. The category scores were then rebased onto a scale of 0 to 100.

### Weightings

Based on input from experts on CSA and CSE,<sup>68</sup> The Economist Intelligence Unit weighted the four categories of the index to reflect agreed priorities when it comes to driving progress on the issue of sexual violence against children. While the legal framework is deemed to be important in providing much-needed protections for children and deterrents for offenders, progress has been made on this front in recent years, and experts highlighted how the engagement of industry, civil society and media could be potentially transformative in advancing progress to end sexual violence against children. The environment too, particularly societal attitudes and the social protections provided to children, also play a critical role in driving change, and it was weighted heavily as a result. But perhaps most importantly, the commitment and capacity of government to lead the charge on fighting sexual violence against children can coalesce action. Therefore this category has been given the highest weighting within the index.<sup>69</sup>

---

#### Footnotes:

67. See the methodology paper available at <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com> for a fuller description of the research process and data sourcing.

68. See Acknowledgements for the full listing of experts consulted.

69. See the accompanying methodology paper for further details on the weighting scheme and sources. The interactive Excel model, available on <https://outoftheshadows.eiu.com> allows users to adjust weights, and set their own scheme based on their priorities.

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

## Category weights

	Nominal	Percentage
1) Environment	1.75	29.2%
2) Legal environment	1	16.7%
3) Government commitment and capacity	2	33.3%
4) Engagement: industry, civil society and media	1.25	20.8%

Within the categories, higher weighting has been applied (2:1) to the indicators highlighted by experts as those where action could amplify progress on addressing sexual violence against children—for example, 1.3) social protections and 1.5) societal attitudes, 2.3) child sexual offenses and 3.4) data collection: prevalence. In addition, sub-indicators that captured a country's attention to gender and the inclusion of both boys and girls in laws and data collection efforts were weighted by a ratio of 3:1.

## Indicator framework

Indicator	Description	Source
<b>1. Environment</b>		
<b>1.1 Instability</b>		
1.1.1 Armed conflict	Qualitative assessment 0-4; 0=lowest risk	EIU Risk Briefing
1.1.2 Social unrest	Qualitative assessment 0-4; 0=lowest risk	EIU Risk Briefing
1.1.3 Orderly transfers	Qualitative assessment 0-4; 0=lowest risk	EIU Risk Briefing
1.1.4 Societal vulnerability to natural disaster risk	Qualitative assessment 0-4; 0=lowest risk	EIU Risk Briefing
1.1.5 Child soldiers	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	Child Soldiers International
1.1.6 Migrant population, boys under 19	Male migrants under 19 years as % of total male migrants	UN DESA
1.1.7 Migrant population, girls under 19	Female migrants under 19 years as % of total female migrants	UN DESA
1.1.8 Public safety	Number of homicides per 100,000 people	UNODC
<b>1.2 Livelihoods</b>		
1.2.1 National poverty	% of people under the national poverty line	World Bank; Central Intelligence Agency; OECD
1.2.2 Income inequality	Gini coefficient	World Bank
<b>1.3 Social protections</b>		
1.3.1 Sexual health services	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	UNAIDS
1.3.2 Social assistance programmes	% GDP	World Bank
1.3.3 Parenting programmes	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
1.3.4 Early child education	Enrolment, pre-primary, % gross	UNESCO
1.3.5 Universal health coverage	0-100 (100 = best)	WHO
1.3.6 Primary education	Enrolment, primary, % gross	UNESCO
1.3.7 Birth registrations	% of children under age five whose births are registered	UNICEF
<b>1.4 Consumption of stimulants</b>		
1.4.1 Abuse of amphetamines	Annual prevalence, adults	UNODC
1.4.2 Abuse of cocaine	Annual prevalence, adults	UNODC
1.4.3 Abuse of stimulants	Annual prevalence, adults	UNODC

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

## Indicator framework (continued)

<b>1.5 Societal attitudes</b>			
1.5.1	Attitudes to sex before marriage	Weighted average, where 10 = sex before marriage is always justifiable	World Values Survey; Pew Research Center
1.5.2	Attitudes to gay or lesbian people	% who said it is a "good place"	Gallup World Poll
1.5.3	Sex-selective abortions	Boys born for every 100 girls	UN DESA; Population Research Institute
1.5.4	Gender equality	0-1 (1=high inequality)	UNDP Human Development Reports
1.5.5	Laws against corporal punishment	Qualitative assessment 0-3; 3=best	Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children
1.5.6	Adolescent pregnancy	Births per 1,000 women ages 15-19	United Nations Population Division, World Population Prospects
<b>1.6 Perceptions of violence</b>			
1.6.1	Violence and justice	Violence against other people, weighted average, where 10 = violence is always justifiable	World Values Survey
1.6.2	Violence in the community	% who said yes	Gallup World Poll
<b>1.7 Attitudes to law enforcement</b>			
1.7.1	Confidence in law enforcement	% of respondents who say yes	Gallup World Poll
1.7.2	Confidence in the judicial system	% of respondents who say yes	Gallup World Poll
1.7.3	Presence of female police staff	%	EIU research
<b>2. Legal framework</b>			
<b>2.1 Contextual legal framework</b>			
2.1.1	Enabling legislation for child rights	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	KidsRights Index
2.1.2	Constitutional protections	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
2.1.3	Mandatory reporting	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.1.4	Sub-national jurisdiction	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.1.5	Statute of limitations	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.1.6	National sex offender registry	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research; SMART
2.1.7	Persons in a position of trust	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>2.2 Age of consent</b>			
2.2.1	Age of consent for girls	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.2.2	Age of consent for boys	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>2.3 Child sexual offences</b>			
2.3.1	Prohibiting sex with minors	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.3.2	Prohibiting sex with minors: penetration	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.3.3	Prohibiting sex with minors: touching	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.3.4	Engaging in sexual activity	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.3.5	Protection of wards	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

## Indicator framework (continued)

<b>2.4</b>	<b>Child marriage</b>		
2.4.1	Legal minimum marriage age for girls	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	Women, Business and the Law
2.4.2	Legal minimum marriage age for boys	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	Women, Business and the Law
2.4.3	Legal marriage age exemptions	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	Women, Business and the Law
2.4.4	Penalties for early marriage	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	Women, Business and the Law
<b>2.5</b>	<b>Child-specific rape laws</b>		
2.5.1	Child-specific rape (forced sex) laws	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; WHO
2.5.2	Age coverage of child-specific rape laws	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.5.3	Child-specific rape laws: protecting girls	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.5.4	Child-specific rape laws: protecting boys	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>2.6</b>	<b>General sex laws</b>		
2.6.1	Sex outside of marriage	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
2.6.2	Close-in-age exemption	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.6.3	Sexual orientation laws	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ILGA
<b>2.7</b>	<b>Exemptions and qualifiers</b>		
2.7.1	Child prosecution	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
2.7.2	Proof of knowledge	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.7.3	Marriage exemptions for rape	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	Women, Business and the Law
2.7.4	Customary law	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>2.8</b>	<b>Purchasing sexual services</b>		
2.8.1	Purchasing children	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.8.2	Purchasing children: gender	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
<b>2.9</b>	<b>Procuration of minors</b>		
2.9.1	Procurer: girl	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.9.2	Procurer: boy	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.9.3	Trafficking: girl	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.9.4	Trafficking: boy	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
<b>2.10</b>	<b>Visual depiction of minors engaging in sexual activities</b>		
2.10.1	Coercion: visual depiction of sexual activities	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.10.2	Production or reproduction: visual depiction of sexual activities	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.10.3	Transport or distribution: visual depiction of sexual activities	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.10.4	Sale: visual depiction of sexual activities	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT
2.10.5	Possession: visual depiction of sexual activities	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ECPAT



## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

### Indicator framework (continued)

<b>2.11 Online grooming</b>			
2.11.1	Legislation specific to online grooming	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
2.11.2	Online grooming: intent to meet the child	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
2.11.3	Online grooming: regardless of intent to meet the child	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
2.11.4	Showing pornography to a child	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
<b>2.12 Protecting child interests</b>			
2.12.1	Best interests of child	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	KidsRights Index
<b>2.13 Internet protections</b>			
2.13.1	ISPs: mandatory reporting	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
2.13.2	ISPs: mandatory content blocking and deleting	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
2.13.3	ISPs: mandatory record keeping	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>3. Government commitment and capacity</b>			
<b>3.1 International standards or conventions</b>			
3.1.1	Convention on the Rights of the Child	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	OHCHR
3.1.2	Optional Protocol (Sale of Children)	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	OHCHR
3.1.3	Optional Protocol (Communications Procedure)	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	OHCHR
3.1.4	Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	UN
3.1.5	Government commitment: online sexual exploitation	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	WeProtect
<b>3.2 National plans and policies</b>			
3.2.1	National plan: sexual violence against children	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
3.2.2	National plan: sexual exploitation in travel and tourism	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research; ECPAT
3.2.3	National education curriculum	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.2.4	National communications programme	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research; ICMEC
3.2.5	WePROTECT's Model National Response	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	WeProtect
<b>3.3 Resources for legal and enforcement professionals</b>			
3.3.1	Guidelines for prosecutors	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.3.2	Guidelines for law enforcement	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.3.3	Guidelines for legal aid workers	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.3.4	Guidelines for public reporting to the authorities	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research

## OUT OF THE SHADOWS: SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

### Indicator framework (continued)

<b>3.4</b>	<b>Data collection: prevalence</b>		
3.4.1	Data on child sexual abuse	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.4.2	Data on child sexual abuse by gender	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
3.4.3	Data on child sexual abuse by age	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.4.4	Recent data on child sexual abuse	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.4.5	Data on child sexual exploitation	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.4.6	Data on child sexual exploitation by gender	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
3.4.7	Data on child sexual exploitation by age	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.4.8	Data on child sexual exploitation by type	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.4.9	Recent data on child sexual exploitation	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>3.5</b>	<b>Reporting</b>		
3.5.1	Recorded sexual abuse offenses against children	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.5.2	Recorded sexual exploitation offenses against children	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
<b>3.6</b>	<b>Government and law enforcement capacity</b>		
3.6.1	Dedicated government agency	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
3.6.2	Dedicated CSA law enforcement agency/unit	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.6.3	Dedicated CSA law enforcement agency/unit annual report	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.6.4	Dedicated CSE law enforcement agency/unit	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.6.5	Dedicated CSE law enforcement agency/unit annual report	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.6.6	Violent Crimes Against Children International Task Force member	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.6.7	Dedicated budget for CSA/CSE law enforcement unit	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>3.7</b>	<b>Complaint mechanisms</b>		
3.7.1	Dedicated helpline: child sexual abuse	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
3.7.2	Use of dedicated child sexual abuse helpline	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.7.3	Dedicated government helpline: child sexual exploitation	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ICMEC
<b>3.8</b>	<b>Access to victim support programmes</b>		
3.8.1	Help-seeking for lifetime childhood sexual violence	Qualitative assessment 0-2; 2=best	EIU research
3.8.2	Access to support programmes for victims	Qualitative assessment 0-5; 5=best	EIU research
3.8.3	Access to financial remedy and reparations	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>3.9</b>	<b>Access to offender support programmes</b>		
3.9.1	Availability of prevention services	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
3.9.2	Availability of rehabilitation services	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research

OUT OF THE SHADOWS:  
SHINING LIGHT ON THE RESPONSE TO CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

Indicator framework (continued)

4. Engagement: Industry, civil society and media			
<b>4.1</b>	<b>Technology industry engagement</b>		
4.1.1	Technology industry reporting mechanisms	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
4.1.2	Response: mobile telecoms	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
4.1.3	Response: internet industry	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Travel and tourism industry engagement</b>		
4.2.1	Commitment to The Code (headquartered companies)	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ECPAT
4.2.2	Commitment to The Code (operators)	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	ECPAT
4.2.3	Response: travel and tourism	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>4.3</b>	<b>Frontline support workers</b>		
4.3.1	Guidelines for teaching professionals	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
4.3.2	Guidelines and protocols for healthcare workers	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
4.3.3	Guidelines for social workers	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
4.3.4	Guidelines for psychiatric workers	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>4.4</b>	<b>Civil society engagement</b>		
4.4.1	Civil society organisation support	Qualitative assessment 0-5; 5=best	EIU research
4.4.2	Existence of civil society organisations (offenders)	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research
<b>4.5</b>	<b>Media industry engagement</b>		
4.5.1	Guidelines for journalists/media	Qualitative assessment 0-1; 1=best	EIU research

While every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of this information, The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd. cannot accept any responsibility or liability for reliance by any person on this report or any of the information, opinions or conclusions set out in this report. The findings and views expressed in the report do not necessarily reflect the views of the sponsor.

**London**

The Adelphi  
1-11 John Adam Street  
London  
WC2N 6HT  
United Kingdom  
Tel: (44.20) 7576 8000  
Fax: (44.20) 7576 8476  
Email: london@eiu.com

**New York**

750 Third Avenue  
5th Floor  
New York, NY 10017  
United States  
Tel: (1.212) 554 0600  
Fax: (1.212) 586 0248  
E-mail: newyork@eiu.com

**Hong Kong**

1301 Cityplaza Four  
12 Taikoo Wan Road  
Taikoo Shing  
Hong Kong  
Tel: (852) 2585 3888  
Fax: (852) 2802 7638  
E-mail: hongkong@eiu.com

**Geneva**

Boulevard des  
Tranchées 16  
1206 Geneva  
Switzerland  
Tel: (41) 22 566 2470  
Fax: (41) 22 346 93 47  
E-mail: geneva@eiu.com

**Dubai**

Office 1301a  
Aurora Tower  
Dubai Media City  
Dubai  
Tel: (971) 4 433 4202  
Fax: (971) 4 438 0224  
Email: dubai@eiu.com