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COSTA RICA CHILD SEX TOURISM ASSESSMENT

CHILD SEX TOURISM: A GLOBAL PROBLEM

...**SEX** with
CHILDREN
under 18?

COSTA RICA
will pursue and
PROSECUTE YOU!

Costa Rica Child Sex Tourism Assessment

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Prepared for:

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Contract Number: HNE-1-00-00-00038-00
Task Order 3

June 2006

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The authors' views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Agency for International Development or the United States Government.

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Acronyms

BEPS	-	Basic Education and Policy Support
CANACOES	-	National Chamber of Hotels and the National Commission
CST	-	Child Sex Tourism
CSEC	-	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSE	-	Commercial Sexual Exploitation
CRC	-	Conventions on the Right of the Child
ECACL	-	Education to Combat Abusive Child Labor
ECPAT	-	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
GoCR	-	Government of Costa Rica
ICT	-	Institute of Tourism of Costa Rica
ICOT	-	Association of Tourism Operators
ILO	-	International Labor Organization
IADB	-	Inter-American Development Bank
IPEC	-	International Program on the Eradication of Child Labor
INEC	-	National Institute of Statistics and Census
MTSS	-	Ministry of Labor and Social Security
NGO	-	Nongovernmental Organization
PANI	-	Patronato Nacional de la Infancia
TIP	-	Trafficking in Persons
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Fund
WTO	-	World Tourism Organization

I. Introduction

Purpose

Under the Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity, the Education to Combat Abusive Child Labor (ECACL) task order has focused on research, training, and the development of pilot projects in five countries aimed at assessing strategies that contribute to the elimination of the worst forms of child labor. BEPS is conducting an assessment of child sex tourism in Costa Rica in an effort to identify gaps and possible interventions that might assist the Government of Costa Rica (GoCR) in its fight against this growing phenomenon in Latin America.

This assessment includes data from an extensive desktop study as well as information from phone and on-site interviews in Costa Rica with representatives from the government of Costa Rica (GOC), tourism industry, and nongovernmental organizations. Literature reviewed included assessments, regional reports, and global studies.

Background

Costa Rica's historical progress on economic, social, and political fronts has attracted significant levels of foreign investment and tourism. The abolishment of the military in 1948 and subsequent consolidation of democratic institutions helped Costa Rica build a long history of investment in health and education. Today, Costa Rica has achieved many of the objectives defined in the World Summit for Children¹ and is ranked fourth among Latin American countries in the Human Development Index after Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay.² Against the backdrop of progress, however, is Costa Rica's struggle to respond to the needs of its vulnerable youth and the concurrent battle against child sex tourism (CST) and the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).

Over the last 20 years, the Costa Rican economy experienced significant shifts—from high expenditures on public welfare (1950s—to early 1980s), to cost-cutting reforms from the mid 1980s to the present. Additionally, the last two decades have ushered in a significant trend away from the historically sound agricultural sector (e.g., coffee and bananas) towards an emphasis in the tertiary sector (i.e., services such as hotels, restaurants, and financial and technology establishments).³ While the growth of the high-tech and financial sectors has helped Costa Rica ease its dependency on agriculture, it has had limited impact on the local economy. Approximately 20 percent of Costa Rica's

¹ UNICEF, *At a Glance: Costa Rica*, <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/costarica.html>

² OneWorld UK, *In Depth Country Guide, Costa Rica*, <http://uk.oneworld.net/guides/costarica/development>

³ Ana Lucia Calderon Saravia, "In-Depth Analysis of Child Labour and Education in Costa Rica," (Costa Rica, National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INEC), Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MTSS), Statistical Information on Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC, International Programme on the Eradication of Child Labour (IPEC), International Labor Office (ILO) July 2004, 5-6.

population lives in poverty and over 5 percent in extreme poverty.⁴ Overall unemployment reached 6.4 percent in 2002; for the 12-24 year age group, the rate was at 13.8 percent for men and 17.2 percent for women.⁵ While the most recent poverty reduction plan (2002-2006) relies heavily upon higher economic growth to combat poverty, the growth to date has mostly benefited a limited portion of the population.

Tourism is one of Costa Rica's more significant industries. Known for its ecological beauty, the country is home to more than 30,000 private American citizens, including many retirees.⁶ In 2004, the income received from tourism amounted to \$1.2 billion.⁷ During that same year, 1.6 million tourists visited Costa Rica—more than 50 percent of them were Americans.⁸ After Americans, Canadians and Germans are the most significantly represented groups in the overall tourist population.

Costa Rica is also recognized by many, including anti-trafficking organizations and donors, the World Trade Organization, and the Government of Costa Rica (GoCR), as a CST destination. In spite of laws making child prostitution (solicitation and pimping) punishable by law, CST has increased in Costa Rica (as well as other Central and Latin American countries) over the last five years. On the demand side, promotion through various venues, including the internet, tourist packages, tourist establishments, and individual solicitations, contributes to the facility with which children are exploited. The supply side of CST is characterized by all the factors that increase child vulnerability, including poverty, lack of quality education, weak family and social support structures, and child abuse within families. Other contributing factors include the irregular migration from surrounding countries and Costa Rica serving as an international hub for trafficked victims.

As a country of origin, transit, and destination for trafficking in persons Costa Rica is reported to not have met minimum standards to prevent trafficking; however, it continues to make a concerted effort to meet compliance criteria established by the U.S. Department of State.⁹ ¹⁰ The GoCR has ratified all key conventions regarding child labor and trafficking, including ILO conventions 138 and 182,¹¹ and has adapted a legal framework in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

⁴ Ibid, 3-4.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Davidson, Julia O'Connell, and Sanchez Taylor, Jacqueline, "Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism – Costa Rica," ECPAT, 1995.

⁷ Luis Roberto Lic. Ramirez, Instituto Costarricense de Turismo, telephone interview.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ U.S. Department of State, "Trafficking in Persons Report," June 2005, 87.

¹⁰ Costa Rica is currently listed as a Tier 2 country in the State Department Trafficking in Persons Report for 2005.

¹¹ Under ILO Convention No. 182, Costa Rica commits itself to take immediate action to prohibit and eliminate the worst forms of child labor. Convention No. 138 sets a larger framework for the longer-term objective of the effective abolition of child labor.

Additionally, various international donor organizations such as the U.S. Department of Labor, the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), and UNICEF are collaborating with the GoCR and local NGOs to address prevention, protection, and prosecution issues as it relates to human trafficking in general. Most pertinent to this assessment is a multi-sector partnership with the tourism sector in initiating the “Code of Conduct” in which government agencies, nongovernmental organizations and private sector companies (such as hotels, taxi and car rental companies, etc.) educate staff through training seminars on the prevention of and laws against commercial sexual exploitation (CSE).

II. Assessment Findings

Education Context

Costa Rica is close to reaching universal primary education. With a long history of compulsory basic education (grades 1-6 for primary school and 7-9 for middle school) and free public high school and linked alternative education programs, there has been an overall steady improvement of basic education outcomes. A closer look, however, reveals suffering public school quality and social inequities contributing to problems in retention and access for Costa Rica's more vulnerable youth.

Data illustrating Costa Rica's success include:

- A 96 percent adult literacy rate, fairly evenly distributed between males and females.
- An increase in net primary enrollment rates from 86 percent in 1990 to 91 percent in 2000; (91 percent for girls, 89.9 percent for boys); gross primary enrollment rates have remained the same at 108 percent for girls and boys since 1999.
- High persistence through primary and secondary school: the percent of primary school children persisting to grade 5 is 92 percent and persistence through secondary school is at 80 percent. Between 1999 and 2003 the average number of years in school has remained at 10yrs for both boys and girls.¹²

In spite of such figures, other data suggest a possible stagnation or regression in educational progress:

- An estimated 25 percent of the adult population has not completed school.
- While the percentage of teachers with training and/or degrees had risen from 78 percent in 1992 to a high of 93 percent in 2000, it has been declining since then to 88 percent in 2003.
- Over the last 3 years, 10 percent of enrolled primary students have been grade repeaters (17 percent for girls and 9 percent for boys in 2003).
- In 2001, an estimated 5 percent of the primary school and 12 percent of the secondary school population had dropped out. The highest dropout rate during this period was in the 7th grade at 20.9 percent. Other data suggest that 40 percent of the school-age population drop out of the education system before completing secondary school.

¹² UNESCO Institute for Statistics,
http://www.uis.unesco.org/ev.php?URL_ID=5187&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201

- Deficiencies in public school infrastructure contribute to students' permanence in school. Many lack basic resources, including access to teaching material. In 2002, 79 percent of the public schools lacked libraries.¹³

While historically Costa Rica has made significant investments of its GDP in education (as legislated, no less than 5 percent), achievement has slowed down since the 1980s as a result of various economic crises. Before the downturns, Costa Rica marked consistent increases in enrollment across all levels of education. In the 1980s, however, poor educational outcomes including declining enrollment and completion rates, and poor educational quality reversed progress.¹⁴ In spite of public spending increases of more than 70 percent on public education in the 1990s, efforts to improve the system focused mostly on tertiary education and schools in affluent parts of the country, resulting in notable inequities across economic and geographic boundaries.¹⁵ Most significant is the achievement gap between students in public and private schools.

Child Labor and Education

"I lived with my mother; my dad left her because of his drug issues. Many men came through my house. We're 5 siblings; I have 3 brothers and 1 sister. One of my brothers is a drug addict and another one is an alcoholic, and my sister and I also have drug problems. When I was 6 or 8 years old, my grandfather tried to abuse me—he would lie in my bed and touch me; he would get naked and told me to rub him. My brother one day saw that my grandfather was trying to kiss me, so he told my father and he kicked him out of the house (he was my mother's father), but then my dad, who also was an alcoholic tried to do the same things to me. My friends told me that if I let a man who lived in the neighborhood touch me, I would get money for it. So we would all go and get touched and got paid. Sometimes he masturbated, I was 10 years old. My mom kicked me out of the house when I was 14 years old, because I messed with her 18-year-old boyfriend. I moved in with my aunt, but my sister, who had started consuming drugs, moved in with her too and that's when I started doing drugs as well. I got 6th grade done, and then my mom kicked me out of the house. I had won an English language scholarship, but I told my mom I didn't want it because I didn't like English. I moved out of my aunt's house and into some ladies home that would make us prostitute ourselves. We didn't get any money but she would give us drugs and tell us that we owed her thousands of pesos in debt. Many of our clients were from San Jose; some were "gringos. I want to get out of this life, I want to improve and be "someone." (Claramunt, 2002)

According to a GoCR-sponsored report, Costa Rica's formal education system offers limited incentive for school permanence for children who are at risk or who have already become economically active.¹⁶ Reasons given include the lack of interest in and relevance of the curriculum, lack of access, and/or grade repetition.

¹³ Ana Lucia Calderon Saravia, "In-Depth Analysis of Child Labour and Education in Costa Rica," July 2004.

¹⁴ Human Development Unit, Latin America and the Caribbean Region, "Project Appraisal Document on a Proposed Loan in the Amount of US\$30 Million to the Republic of Costa Rica for an Equity and Efficiency Education Project," (World Bank, March 2005) Annex I, 22-23.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Saravia, Ana Lucia Caldeon, "In-Depth Analysis of Child Labour and Education in Costa Rica," July 2004.

Fundamental challenges of placing CST victims into classrooms include the lack of a formal process for reintegration as well as reported resistance from student and teachers.¹⁷ Interviews with caregivers at the Albergue Barrio San Jose (a shelter for sexually exploited and drug addicted girls whose average age is 14 years) and with representatives of the Ministries of Education and of Children and Infants (PANI) indicate that Costa Rica has no formal, viable process through which children are reintegrated into the formal school system. A caregiver at Albergue Barrio San Jose noted that if the girls start classes, they drop out relatively soon after registration. Teachers in a nearby school reportedly found the children disruptive, and both students and teachers found them difficult to work with. Many girls leave both school and shelter to return to the streets to get access to drugs and to earn money.

Costa Rica's Special Protection Regime for Working Adolescents sets the legal age limit for lawful employment at 15 years or older provided that the work does not put them at risk physically, emotionally, or mentally or endanger their development. Eligible youth can work a maximum of 6 hours a day and 36 hours a week. Youth are banned from working in mines, quarries, bars, and other potentially harmful environments. Article 87 of Costa Rica's Code of Children and Adolescents (1988) affirms the right and obligation of working children to have access to education and to not have their education interrupted. Prostitution is legal in Costa Rica for 18 year olds and older.

In 2002, approximately 113,523 youth between the ages of 5 and 17 years were economically active, and of that, 68.4 percent came from rural areas while the remainder (31.6 percent) resided in urban cities. The majority of reported child labor occurs in agriculture and hunting, followed by commerce and car repair and lastly, manufacturing.¹⁸ Other data indicate that approximately 5,000 to 10,000 children are commercially exploited outside of legal boundaries for permissible child labor.¹⁹ The limited availability of employment opportunities influences children's and parents' decisions to dismiss school as a mechanism to improve job opportunities. Since child sex prostitution is illegal in Costa Rica, little is documented about the volume of children involved in commercial sexual exploitation, drug addiction, or their levels of school attendance and completion.

The younger the child in Costa Rica, the fewer hours they work and the more opportunity they have to stay in school.²⁰ Attendance rates of working children between 5 and 9 years old across the country is 70.5 percent whereas in the 15-to-17-year-old age group, it is at 63 percent. Thirty percent of the 15-to-17-year olds are considered to be not at grade level.²¹ In response, the Ministry of Public Education (MEP) has made attempts to improve access through various initiatives, including the establishment of alternative

¹⁷ Masis, Orietta Rojas, Psychologist, Albergue Barrio San Jose, interview.

¹⁸ Saravia, Ana Lucia Caldeon, "In-Depth Analysis of Child Labour and Education in Costa Rica," July 2004.

¹⁹ Lic. Paul Chaves, Special Investigation Unit, Ministry of Public Security.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid, 29-30.

education programs such as *Aula Abierta* (Open Classroom), and *Nuevas Oportunidades* (New Opportunities).²²

To better address the challenges of education and child welfare, the GoCR's goals over the long-term include:²³

- Reduced gaps between urban and rural territories in quality of education and achievement.
- Development of a decentralized social management system that increases quality and access of care for children. Priorities include protection against child exploitation and abuse and filling educational achievement gaps.
- Protection of the rights of child laborers between 15 and 17 years old.
- Increased focus on child rights and change of culturally-based attitudes on children.
- Promotion of social responsibility and active citizen participation.

Child Sex Tourism

A 23-year-old woman in Cahuita told researchers that she had had numerous relationships with tourists over the past 10 years and hoped one day to find an American or Canadian who would marry her. She commented: "A lot of old men come here looking for girls. Girls of 12 and 13 have Italian and American boyfriends... Girls my age and younger get married to men of 60. One girl married a man of 70.... No one cares about age in Costa Rica, if it's an old man with a very young girl, that's just normal. Age difference doesn't matter." (Davidson, and Sanchez Taylor, 1995)

Child sex tourism (CST)²⁴ is defined as the commercial sexual exploitation of children by a person or persons traveling outside their home country or region. It can be perpetrated by citizens of a foreign country or by domestic nationals. Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) involves the use of children for adult sexual gratification in return for money, food, or some other exchange, usually with a third party. CSEC can fall under a number of categories including child prostitution, child pornography, or the trafficking of children for sexual purposes.

CST is a well-recognized problem in Costa Rica and vigorously discussed in newspapers, political debates, editorials, and studies. The GoCR, national and international tourist organizations, donors, and NGOs are facing both the demand and supply side of this

²² Ibid, ix.

²³ "At a Glance: Costa Rica," (XIV Latin American Summit: Investing in Education, UNICEF), http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/costarica_24425.html

²⁴ CST is also labeled, "sexual exploitation of children in tourism" (SECT).

challenge with a coordinated response, noted by some as a model for Central and Latin America.²⁵ Nonetheless, CST (and associated trafficking in persons) is a relentless problem spurred by poverty, a high level of cultural tolerance, lack of information, tourism, the internet, and opportunism exercised by groups such as organized crime networks, child sex rings and related associations, and individuals such as pimps, pedophiles, and situational tourists. Globally, recent trends show that the numbers of prostituted children are increasing and are estimated to be as high as 10 million.²⁶

Tour Operators and Prevention

As international demand for CST rose over the years, many tour operators started coalescing around the need to take care of Costa Rican children through ads promoting “responsible and child friendly” tourism. Alejandro Villalobos, Vice President of the Association of Tour Operators (ICOT) and owner of a travel agency, noted that by not addressing CST directly, tour operators gave the “appearance of selling innocence” and of being complicit in the growth of CST. In cooperation with the National Chair of Tourism, the ICOT conducts campaigns on the importance of caring for children’s welfare while working with the police to track and arrest tour operators and middle-men pimps advertising CSEC. Over the last two years, the association worked with Costa Rica’s gay associations on the importance of protecting children and discouraging sex with minors.

The forty-five member ICOT proactively seeks ways in which to stem CST in Costa Rica. Many members take it upon themselves to look for websites, tour companies and crime networks that might promote CST. Such advertisements and other marketing tools are promptly shared among the ICOT members and police.

Child Sex Tourism and the Internet

Costa Rica’s increase in child sex tourism and child sex prostitution is fed, in part, by the massive internet promotion of Costa Rica as a CST destination.²⁷ One hundred and forty foreign-based websites have been documented as promoting Costa Rica as a sex tourism destination.²⁸ The increased access to technology, particularly the computer and the Internet, provides unlimited access to child pornography, ultimately fueling the global CST industry. Other elements of the information industry such as internet chat rooms and sites also facilitate CST with relative ease. There is enough reliable data that demonstrate that tourists seeking sex with children have found leads to CST markets through internet chat rooms, grooming children in tourist destinations through chat room connections before traveling to engage in the abuse²⁹.

²⁵ Bente Sorensen, International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor, Costa Rica, telephone interview.

²⁶ Nicholas D Kristof, “Slavery in Our Time,” *The New York Times*, Jan 22, 2006.

²⁷ “Regional Investigation on Trafficking, Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Sex Tourism with Children in Central America and Mexico,” (Casa Alianza, 2001), 122-123.

²⁸ Chaves, Paul, Director, Special Investigation Unit of Ministry of Public Safety, interview.

²⁹ Luc Ferran, “Child Protection in the Internet Age: South Asia’s Challenge,” *Oneworld.net*, October 13, 2005.

The internet can also be used by closed groups of pedophiles to exchange data on the availability of children in tourist destinations. Although sophisticated techniques to avoid detection from law enforcement agencies or NGOs monitoring the internet are usually needed, child pornographers and consumers are able to post and access images of children being abused with relative ease. Recently, *Rainbow Phone*, an Italy-based NGO, provided sobering data on the alarming proportion of the epidemic by calculating a 70 percent increase in the number of pedophilia websites worldwide from 2002-03, reaching a total of 17,016 sites.³⁰

The internet has played a crucial role in the attraction of sex tourists to San José, Costa Rica's capital.³¹ Most advertisements for Costa Rica as a CST destination are generated on websites in other countries and therefore are outside of the control of Costa Rica's jurisdiction.³² However, through the active network of Costa Rican tour operators who are members of the Code of Conduct, such advertisements are quickly spotted and checked. A recent exchange of communications between a Swiss touring company that spotted an advertisement and alerted the Costa Rican tour operator association is attached (Attachment 1). Many foreigners arrive in the country attracted by websites and illustrative publications that promote Costa Rica as a sex tourism destination.

Costa Rica as a Child Sex Tourism Destination

Sex tourism has a long history in Costa Rica, with recorded accounts reaching back to the colonial period. Today, the demand of children for sexual exploitation is, however, unprecedented. Americans, followed by Canadians and Germans, are noted to be the most common CST clients. It is estimated that approximately 10-15 percent of all tourism is specifically sex tourism.³³ Regionally, there is also an internal demand, which is only beginning to be tracked and documented through networks that regularly feed information to the NGO Paniamor for its mapping and reporting exercises.

Tourism and its impact on the local economy attract pimps, traffickers, and victims. As a country of origin, destination, and transit for victims of trafficking, Costa Rica is a transfer point between South and Central America, and North America. In addition to internal victims, others are reported to have been trafficked from around the world.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ "Regional Investigation on Trafficking, Prostitution, Child Pornography, and Sex Tourism with Children in Central America and Mexico," *Casa Alianza*, 2001, 122-123.

³² Chaves, Paul, Director, Special Investigation Unit of Ministry of Public Safety, interview.

³³ Ramirez, Luis Roberto, Senior Advisor, the Ministry of Tourism, interview.

Figure 1
Costa Rican Towns/Regions of Origin for Internal Trafficking

San José
Heredia
Guanacaste
Puntarenas ³⁴

Figure 2
Countries of Origin for Victims of Trafficking to Costa Rica

Region	Countries
Eastern Europe	Bulgaria, Romania, Russia
Asia	China, Philippines, Thailand
Latin America	Bolivia, Colombia, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama
Africa and the Middle East ³⁵	Countries not documented

In spite of concerted efforts to stem CST, it has increased in Costa Rica (as well as Brazil, Guatemala, and Honduras) over the last five years due to a variety of global factors including:

- The proliferation of sex tourism advertisements over the internet;
- HIV/AIDS and the belief of reduced risk of contamination with children; and
- A documented shift of sex tourists away from Asia towards Latin America as a result of recent internationally coordinated prevention and protection efforts in Asian countries.³⁶

Years of apparent GoCR denial about the incidence and gravity of CST has also contributed to the growth of CSEC in Costa Rica. Today, however, various fora, including inter-ministerial organized task forces, actively discuss and condemn the sexual exploitation of children.³⁷ At the local level, however, surveys and reports indicate a level of cultural acceptance, contributing to child exploitation and the regular abuse of children’s rights. Opinion polls have indicated that while large percentages of populations within key tourist towns either have witnessed child exploitation or know of places that exploit children, no response is taken.³⁸

³⁴ Viviana Retana, “Trafico, Prostitucion, Pornografía y Turismo Sexual Infantil en Centro América y México,” (Casa Alianza, ECPAT), 14.

³⁵ “U.S. Department of State , “Trafficking in Persons Report,” June 2005, 87.

³⁶ “Paper on Trafficking in Costa Rica,” Protection Project, 2003.

³⁷ Maria Marta Allen, Patronato Nacional de la Infancia, phone interview.

³⁸ Claramunt, Cecilia Maria, “Costa Rica: The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Minors: A Rapid Assessment,” ILO, 2002.

A cultural context of general acceptance and “machismo,” with its patriarchal societal barriers and cultural biases, significantly aggravates the problem of CST and CSEC in Costa Rica. A regional study carried out by the World Labor Organization interviewed 445 men in Central America³⁹ and concluded that in the countries of the region, the perception of traditional women’s roles allows for a more tolerant environment where commercial sexual exploitation occurs. The general view is that paying for sex is not sex exploitation. The study’s recommendations include the design of an education and advertising campaign specifically targeted to men.⁴⁰

Additionally, Paniamor case workers acknowledged that many witnesses to CST, perpetrators, victims, and police do not see adolescents as “children.”⁴¹ The tendency to view adolescents as adults contributes to the difficulty in stemming CST. This is particularly the case if adolescents dress up to look adult and materially well off in her or his attempts to be attractive to potential tourists.

Geographic Areas of High CST and CSE

Incidents of CST and CSE noted in various areas around the country are especially high in the region of Limón and the city of San José. As an international tourist attraction, sexual exploitation activities in Limón are often related to the sale of illegal drugs, where minors are often serving as “mules” or “watchers” for the police.⁴² Limón, a port city, is reported to have a child prostitution ring involving cruise ship crews and operators—intermediaries on the ship who contact tourists interested in the sex trade and sex with willing young people.⁴³ Taxi drivers are usually part of the network of intermediaries, driving people to places where minors congregate. In this area, there is also an element of internal trafficking in persons. Organized networks bring minors from other, neighboring regions of the country to Limón in order to take them to bars, restaurants, discos, and hotels when there is a special event or arrival of cruise ships. While incidents of internal trafficking often come from the poorer neighboring regions that border tourist sites, the majority of the people trafficked are from San José, Heredia, and Puntarenas.⁴⁴ Reports of CST have also begun to surface in Guanacaste where wealthier clients and pimps pay for girls to fly out of a small airport in San Jose to private resorts in Guanacaste.⁴⁵ The construction of a new international airport in Guanacaste might exacerbate this problem in the area.

³⁹ “Explotación sexual comercial y masculinidad: Un estudio regional cualitativo con hombres de la población general.” Resumen de resultados (2004).

⁴⁰ Other research explains machismo as a construction of male sexuality, which determines why males search for remunerated sexual activities. For especially older men, the use of young girls appears to counteract the psychological discomfort about aging and restores to them a sense of power over their own sexuality and over the external world, which is so critical to their masculine identity—ECPAT “Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism, Dr. Julia O’Connell Davidson and Jacqueline Sanchez Taylor, 1995.

⁴¹ Interview, Maria Teresa Guillen Corvera, Paniamor, March 14, 2006.

⁴² Tráfico, Prostitución, Pornografía y Turismo Sexual Infantil en Centro América y México, Viviana Retana, Casa Alianza, ECPAT, 11.

⁴³ “Human Rights Report – Protection Project- Costa Rica.”

⁴⁴ Viviana Retana, “Tráfico, Prostitución, Pornografía y Turismo Sexual Infantil en Centro América y México,” Casa Alianza, ECPAT, 14.

⁴⁵ Maria Teresa Guillen Corvera, Paniamor, March 14, 2006, interview.

A recent mapping exercise generated by Paniamor, the leading NGO in anti-trafficking, reveals areas of the country where trends for CST are increasing (Attachment 1) and where criminal networks are operating.⁴⁶ Internal trafficking of children has been reported between the towns of Jaco and Aluejela with a marked increase in demand for CSE. Increasingly, more victims are coming from the rural areas of Costa Rica and/or are teenagers 15 years and older who have dropped out of school.

Figure 3
Map of Costa Rica with Areas of High CST and High Areas of Poverty⁴⁷

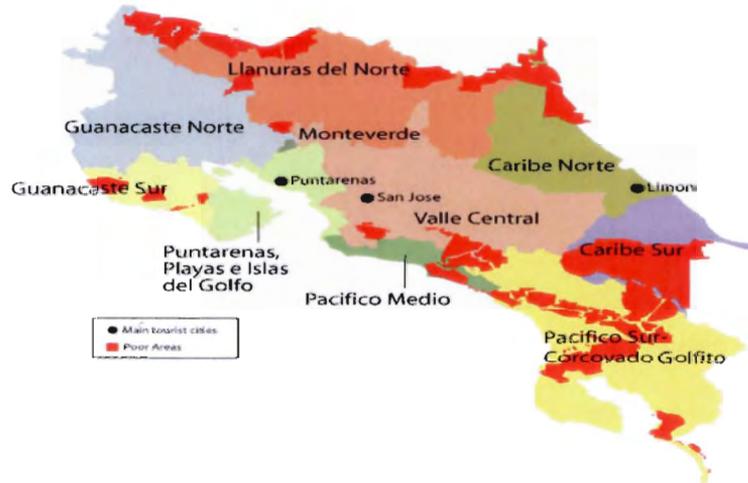


Figure 4
Characteristics of Towns/Regions in Costa Rica with High CST

Town/Region	Characteristics
San José	Metropolitan, urban area
Quepos and Jaco	Tourist resorts
Limón and Puntarenas	International ports
San Carlos ⁴⁸	Costa Rica border town

In San José, access to children is principally through shopping malls, video arcades, swimming pools, massage parlors, bars, hotels, and reportedly shopping malls where clients are seen buying clothes and jewelry for prostitutes. As in Limón, taxi drivers play a key role in the network of sexual exploitation of minors. This is particularly the case when tourists are looking for minors in open areas such as parks and selected streets.

⁴⁶ The map related to trafficking routes of criminal networks is confidential and therefore was not shared with the interviewers. Review of the data is limited to the Ministry of Public Protection.

⁴⁷ “Vida Nueva: Superación de la pobreza y desarrollo de las capacidades humanas,” OAS (2002-2006).

⁴⁸ “La Explotación Sexual Comercial de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes: Una mirada desde Costa Rica,” Fundación Paniamor – ECPAT International.

Profiles of Supply and Demand

“Dick rents out an apartment in San Jose, for which he pays US\$500 per month. A maid is included in the price, which, in his words, “does everything, I mean everything, for me.” She is 15 years old. Dick thinks that her “family is probably pretty damn poor” but knows nothing else about her since he speaks no Spanish and she speaks very little English.” (Davidson, and Sanchez Taylor, 1995)

As adult prostitution is legal in Costa Rica, the GoCR has some access to information about the conditions of prostitutes through the process of administering government sponsored health cards.⁴⁹ Statistics about CSE and CSEC, however, are much more elusive, since commercial and child sexual exploitation is illegal. Data on child victims, their international clients, and the money generated within the industry itself are often anecdotal or obtained through the police after raids and arrests. Only recently through Paniamor’s networks have reports on demands for CST begun to be documented (see Attachment 2). Individuals receiving financial gain from the child sex tourism industry in Costa Rica are known to include the children themselves (usually a negligible percentage of the entire transaction amount) and members of the travel and tourism sectors—from tour guides to rental car agency drivers, gardeners, concierges, waiters, and other hotel employees.⁵⁰

As noted, taxi drivers play a significant role in the network of child sex tourism. Some independent taxi drivers in need of the money are reported to take tourists on tours to find children on city streets and deliver them to client hotel rooms. Incentives for taxi drivers to abide by anti-CST laws are limited. In an interview, one taxi driver is quoted as saying, “If a tourist comes here looking for under-age sex and we say ‘no,’ but someone behind us says ‘yes,’ then they will get that service. That is why the service will always exist.”⁵¹

A “Report on the State of Child and Adolescent Rights” by UNICEF and the University of Costa Rica reports that 30 percent of poor Costa Rican citizens are children and youths.⁵² Many of Costa Rica’s children are at risk of being forced into prostitution by poverty and abuse. One study of 100 child victims from San José and Limón, two key tourist sites, note that the majority of child prostitutes are from poor households characterized by family violence. Interviews with victims indicate that victims’ rights

⁴⁹ DePaul University College of Law, International Human Rights Institute, “In Modern Bondage: Sex Trafficking in the Americas,” October 2002.

⁵⁰ Viviana Retana, “Trafico, Prostitucion, Pornografía y Turismo Sexual Infantil en Centro América y México,” Casa Alianza, ECPAT, 10.

⁵¹ Phillip Write, “Sex Tourism: Lessons Learned in Costa Rica,” June 18, 2004, BBC.

⁵² <http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/costarica.html>

had been violated in their early years, including those rights related to protections against all forms of abuse and protection against the use of drugs.⁵³

Another more recent profile of CST victims includes adolescents (mostly girls) who are difficult to identify as minors, have persisted through to high school, are comparatively better off financially than the traditional CST victim, and look like models. These girls are traditionally picked up in malls (often while skipping school) and are reportedly taken to wealthy clients in private hotel resorts. Security and a resort's private property status impede police from identifying CST and prosecuting clients and resort owners.

Occasionally foreign minors are identified as CST victims. Cases include a young Russian girl and two Nicaraguan girls kidnapped from their home country by a woman and two men and transported to Costa Rica in the trunk of a car.

“Bob, an American 60-year-old man, told researchers he moved to San Jose, because “he’s in love with Costa Rica.” It is paradise for men; he is constantly surrounded by beautiful women. Costa Rican girls “are crazy for sex, you wouldn’t believe it. Sex is the national pastime in Costa Rica... they want it all the time, even in the afternoon you go see a girl and she’s crazy for it. Of course, I’m not as young as I was, I can’t do it four times a day anymore, getting on you see, but it’s fantastic... I know I can have any woman I want, any time of day or night. Where else in the world could a guy like me say that? Bob told researchers he has two girlfriends, one Dominican woman in her 20s and another Costa Rican woman.” (Davidson. and Sanchez Tavior. 1995)

Data on perpetrators indicate that services are requested by both local and foreign men between the ages of 20 and 65. They have various social-economic backgrounds and professions and come mostly from the United States, Canada, Germany, Italy, China, and Nicaragua. Some of those who engage in child sex tourism are pedophiles who regularly travel abroad for the purpose of having sex with children. But many are situational tourists: men who travel for vacation or legitimate business purposes but decide to experiment with the local sex trade.

⁵³ DePaul University College of Law, International Human Rights Institute, “In Modern Bondage: Sex Trafficking in the Americas,” October 2002.

Figure 5
Contextual Factors of Child Sex Tourism in Costa Rica: Supply/Demand

Poverty and lack of income generation opportunities
Poor education attainment
Out of school during school hours
Lack of information
Poor social support mechanisms
History of family abuse
Cultural acceptance and ‘Machismo’
Opportunism of pimps and clients
Internet-based child pornography
Internet-based promotion of Costa Rica for CST
Irregular migration (or trafficking) and subsequent vulnerabilities
Drug abuse

Government of Costa Rica Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children

Until 2003, the GoCR and its Institute of Tourism (ICT) had been perceived by several civil society organizations as being in denial about CST for fear of the phenomenon tainting its image.⁵⁴ While the GoCR created some framework for addressing CST as early as 1997, efforts appeared to lack strong political will.⁵⁵ Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) and commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) are crimes in Costa Rica punishable by imprisonment. Costa Rica’s Criminal Code forbids “trafficking in women and minors,” affirming that “one who promotes or facilitates the entry or exit from the country of women or minors of either sex to practice prostitution shall be punished by imprisonment of 3 to 6 years.”⁵⁶ The code also prohibits promoting or facilitating the prostitution of individuals of either sex, or pimping as a means of livelihood.⁵⁷

In spite of such laws, Costa Rica’s efforts to combat CST are hampered by a lack of a dedicated budget across relevant ministries, adequate attention to victims and their contextual social conditions, as well as a comprehensive law enforcement approach that limits the GoCR’s ability to effectively investigate, arrest, and prosecute traffickers.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, to tackle CSE and CSEC, the government has stepped up efforts towards a multi-sector strategy for prevention, protection, and prosecution responses. Although coordination between the agencies remains poor, there are significant advances in the judicial and legislative responses. Through the relatively new Judicial Investigative Police (OIJ), which has the sole purpose of combating trafficking and smuggling, Costa Rica was able to secure ten convictions during 2004 with the help of various prosecutors’ offices. Raids on CST activity have increased from 6 in 1999 to 77 in 2005. Based on

⁵⁴ Interview, Maria Teresa Guillen Corvera, Paniamor, March 14, 2006.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Law Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Minors, Article No 172, 1999.

⁵⁷ Human Rights Report – Protection Project- Costa Rica.

⁵⁸ U.S. Department of State, “Trafficking in Persons Report,” June 2005, 87.

current raid numbers and data from various networks on criminal and CST activity, the Ministry of Public Security anticipates a total of 150 raids in 2006.⁵⁹

Additionally, over the past 3 to 5 years, the GoCR's Special Prosecutor of Sexual Crimes and Domestic Violence has dealt with an increasing number of prosecutions. Hundreds of other investigations of CST have started, but few have been successfully followed through because the lack of Costa Rica's capacity to effectively protect victims.⁶⁰

Efforts to coordinate amongst ministries and civil society organizations, however, have been fruitful. In 1997, under the umbrella of the Patronato Nacional de la Infancia (PANI), the GoCR created the National Commission against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Minors. Its mission was to develop a consensus around strategies and tools for the elimination of CSE and CST. Members of the Commission are currently promoting an amendment to the Anti Trafficking laws, upholding a law against commercial sexual exploitation within a broader criminal code.

The GoCR has sought to address CSE(C) and the larger issue of human rights through a variety of responses:

- *National Commission Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CONACOES) (1998)*⁶¹
 - A collaboration with public and private institutions, such as Fundación Paniamor, the Association of Tourism Professionals of Costa Rica, International Labour Organization, UNICEF, etc. The Commission functions as a place for the exchange of information and training, including an education component (public campaigns, community participation activities, etc.).
 - Products include a national report, which is presented to ECPAT (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes) and to the State Department (for inclusion of findings in the TIP report). The Commission is subdivided into Committees, which include Legislative Reform and Prevention Policies.
- *National Agenda for Children and Adolescents, 2000-2010*
 - Pledges to prevent and eliminate the worst forms of child labor and achieve 100 percent retention of children in basic education by the year 2010.

⁵⁹ Paul Chaves, Director, Special Investigation Unit, Ministry of Public Security, March 13, 2006, interview.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Milena Grillo, Director, Fundación Paniamor, telephone interview.

- Promotional materials developed and distributed on the problem of child labor.
- Awareness training to over 5,000 government officials, college students, and private sector employees in the banana industry; and educating 7,000 youths on worker rights. All labor inspectors will be trained in child labor enforcement and the prevention of child exploitation.
- *The National Plan against Sexual Exploitation of Boys, Girls, and Adolescents (2002)*⁶²
 - Plan defines actions in the areas of promotion and prevention, attention to victims and their families, legislative reform and repression, international protection, and monitoring and evaluation. This National Plan was elaborated with the collaboration of representatives of government officials and experts.
- *Ministry of Child and Infant (PANI)*—Keys goals include developing the National Plan on the Eradication of CSEC and forming the National Commission on Child Exploitation. PANI manages shelters for CSEC and drug-addicted victims, housing a total of 300 children in San Jose in two shelters, and leads a joint anti-CST campaign with the Institute of Tourism (ICT). PANI maintains a data system of children admitted into the shelter.
- *Ministry of Education*—Distribution of manuals for teachers in the most affected CST areas. Content includes guidance on identifying students who are being sexually exploited. In 2005, 103 events were organized, and more than 2,200 people were trained, including officials in the Judiciary, Ministry of Education, airport employees, family groups, and local government officials. More than 67,000 students were sensitized in 254 schools and 4,564 teachers were trained.⁶³
- *Ministry of Foreign Affairs*—Distribution of manuals to the Costa Rican consulates around the world to educate and prepare GoCR officials abroad on how to prevent sex tourism into Costa Rica.⁶⁴
- *Ministry of Transport*—With Costa Rican Taxi Associations Agreement, states that taxis found involved in the commercial sexual exploitation of children will have concessions withdrawn.⁶⁵

⁶² Plan Nacional contra la Explotación Sexual Comercial de Niñas, Niños y Adolescentes, Presidencia de la Republica, 2001.

⁶³ “Informe Inicial de Cumplimiento de Obligaciones del Protocolo Facultativo a la Convención sobre los derechos del niño relativo a la venta de niños, la prostitución infantil y la utilización de niños en la pornografía.” PANI, 2005, 52.

⁶⁴ Lic. Luis Roberto Ramirez, Advisor, Instituto Costarricense de Turismo, phone interview.

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Labor.

Current Civil Society and International Donor Activities Addressing Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Activities spearheaded by the GoCR are complemented by a host of important responses developed in concert with a variety of stakeholders. Participants include international donors, civil society organizations, and the private sector. Some of the more successful activities are described below:

- *Fundación Paniamor with the WTO and ECPAT International “Code of Conduct for the Protection of Girls, Boys, and Adolescents against Commercial Sexual Exploitation in Tourism.”*
 - Created in 1998 by the WTO and ECPAT International and adhered by the CoCR in 2003, this activity is run by the NGO *Fundación Paniamor*, a local non-governmental organization that specializes in children’s rights. The Code is signed by suppliers of tourism services such as hotel chains, car rental agencies, etc. in both the private and public sector.
 - Many members motivated by the belief that family-focused tourism as opposed to sex tourism is more profitable
 - Chambers first sign onto the code and then inform their members, who in turn encourage individual companies to sign. Chamber members include associations such as the National Chamber of Hotels, National Association of Car Rental Agencies, Tour Operators Association, and the Taxi Driver Association.
 - The signatories commit themselves to implement the following:
 - To establish an ethical policy regarding commercial sexual exploitation of children.
 - To train the personnel in the country of origin and travel destinations.
 - To introduce a clause in contracts with suppliers, stating a common repudiation of commercial sexual exploitation of children.
 - To provide information to travelers by means of catalogues, brochures, in-flight films, ticket-slips, home pages, etc.
 - To provide information to local "key persons" at the destinations.
 - To report annually.
 - *Training*: the *Code of Conduct* expects to train 3,000 people in 130 businesses (hotel personnel, tour operators, drivers, etc.), in four regions of the country that have the greatest concentration of tourism activity (San José, Limón, Puntarenas, and Guanacaste.) Focus is on targeting and educating the “middleman”. Since 2003, ten tourism operators, three rent-

a car companies, and two taxi companies (which combined mobilize more than 70,000 tourists) have committed to the Code of Conduct.⁶⁶

- On January 19, 2006 in Guanacaste, 80 hotels and other tourism-focused companies signed on to the code in support for the ending of CST.
- Mapping of CST demand helps Paniamor to target awareness raising in area schools
- Monitoring and Evaluation: All signatories submit annual reports with proof of various campaigns and contract clauses alerting tourist to the illegality of CST. Additional monitoring is very limited.
- *The Tourist Institute of Costa Rica (ICT) Advertising Campaign* (launched December 2004)⁶⁷
 - Ad campaigns: First stage included daily ads in all national publications for a month. The second stage entailed an ad campaign in public spaces, airports, bus stops, and tourism magazines. This campaign was launched in coordination with the Ministry of Public Security.
 - Awareness raising in universities that offer tourism studies to talk with students about the importance of combating sex tourism in Costa Rica.
 - In April of 2005, the ICT and the General Office of Migration (Dirección General de Migraciones) launched a campaign at the International Airport Juan Santa Maria in San José. The campaign consists of banners, brochures, coloring books, etc. that will be distributed at other ports of entry around the country. More than 2.5 million people per year come into Costa Rica through the airport and ports.
 - In 2006, the ICT and Fundación Paniamor will enter in an agreement to collaborate financially and logistically in the training program of the Code of Conduct.
- *Alliance of the Institute of Tourism of Costa Rica (ICT), the National Chamber of Tourism, the National Chamber of Hotels, and the National Commission (CONACOES)*⁶⁸
 - Promotes the monitoring and modification in Congress of the Law of Incentives for the Development of Tourism to sanction tourism businesses that use or tolerate the use of their installations for commercial sexual exploitation of minors.

⁶⁶ Milena Grillo, Director, Fundación Paniamor, telephone interview.

⁶⁷ Lic. Luis Roberto Ramirez, Advisor, Instituto Costarricense de Turismo, telephone interview.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

- *Regional Consultation for the Americas on the Protection of Minors against Sexual Exploitation in Tourism.*
 - In 2003, Costa Rica was the host of the conference where the creation of a regional group of awareness raising, prevention, and denunciation was recommended.

- *Child Sex Tourism Prevention Project, World Vision*
 - Funded in 2004 by the U.S. Department of State and the Department of Health and Human Services, and in cooperation with the GoCR, UNICEF and the World Tourism Organization, World Vision has a three-pillar approach to deter CST: 1) a targeted media campaign with billboards and pamphlets; 2) assistance to law enforcement agencies to identify and find child sex tourists; and 3) prevention campaigns focused on education and job creation.

- *ILO-IPEC specific prevention activities*
 - Monitoring and evaluation to collect national statistics on child labor
 - Prevention campaign to combat child labor in the coffee sector in the Turrialba and Guanacaste territories.
 - Regional project aimed at combating commercial sexual exploitation—a principal focus on awareness raising, institutional capacity building, international and domestic coordination. Activity targets 150 girls in Limón for direct services including education, social services, and health care (2002).
 - A time-bound project (started in 2003) aimed at creating a national level environment conducive to eliminating the worst forms of child labor as well as direct activities in the Brunca Region.
 - Awareness raising and data gathering on children involved in domestic work in homes of third parties.

Since 1998, Costa Rica has implemented numerous initiatives that seek to diminish the numbers of children being sexually exploited. Many of these programs have been replicated in the region, as countries in Central America and beyond have recognized the problems of sex tourism.

III. Challenges and Opportunities

Challenges

Costa Rica is indeed recognized as a regional model for its targeted approach towards CST offenders in its advertising campaigns and its watchdog efforts through Paniamor. However, in spite of significant efforts by the GoCR, the private sector through the “Code of Conduct,” and other stakeholders, a most pressing need for prevention and protection programming for vulnerable youth remains.

Additionally, while prevention campaigns and threats of prosecution may have decreased the frequency with which situational tourists engage in CSEC, for the single-minded tourist traveling to engage in sex with a minor, it does little but force the network to dig deeper underground. As a result, tackling CST is becoming more difficult for Costa Rica’s law enforcement.

Costa Rica’s challenges and/or gaps in response to the CST phenomena can be classified into three categories: government constraints, donor support, and victim assistance.

Government Constraints--Lack of Assigned Budgets and Programming for Victim Support, Poor Data Collection

During the last five years, the GoCR has begun to take a more proactive approach to CST due in large part to public pressure. Better coordination, however, is still needed. Current and former government representatives noted that the lack of a specific budget line item to tackle CSEC across appropriate ministries makes it difficult to coordinate efforts and to plan for substantive victim support. The GoCR through PANI has only three victim shelters for minors throughout the entire country, and the Ministry of Education’s responses in schools is limited to prevention messages taught in classrooms. Little is done to address vulnerability to CSEC through dropout prevention or school quality programs. Finally, outside of the data on criminal activity collected by the Ministry of Public Service, there is limited to no government sponsored, systematic collection of data on the incidence of CST or the identifying and tracking of victims through social support services. The GoCR relies heavily upon the data collected by the NGO Paniamor, which includes trend data on tourist demand, locations of demand, reported victims, and details about the method of force or coercion involved.

Donor Support—Few Traditional Development Projects Funded; US Limitation of Support to Costa Rica

Costa Rica is seen by many donors as having reached a level of economic viability and self sufficiency in comparison to other countries in the region. According to various interviewees, donors therefore offer limited funds for traditional development projects. The limited funds to address systemic problems ultimately places Costa Rica at risk of being overcome by social problems related to increasing trends in drug addiction and

CST and a consistently unresponsive education system. There is a shared perception of an increasingly shrinking window of opportunity to turn Costa Rica around without totally losing the historical gains made through an unusual history of democracy, a priority on social welfare, and an economy fueled by a vibrant tourism industry.

A further constraint to support is a current US Government policy to prohibit new funding for economic opportunities in Costa Rica as a result of the GoCR signing the International Criminal Court article that commits Costa Rica to reporting U.S. military personnel to The Hague if caught committing crimes against humanity. There are indications that the Department of State will seek to end this policy in the near future.

Victim Assistance—Perception of Victims and Lack of Programming to Support and Protect Victims

Painfully apparent is the lack of drug rehabilitation, educational, vocational, and psychological assistance to CSEC victims. Part of the problem lies in the cultural perception of the definition of a child and when someone can be categorized as a victim of CSEC. Program officers at the NGO Fundacion Paniamor noted that in their interactions with clients, pimps, and prostitutes, a teenager is often not seen as a child. To many, a “child” means someone below the age of 10. Furthermore, society in general (particularly men working in the tourist industry) may see girls as economically benefiting from the trade. As a result, it is difficult to address victim needs when a significant number of child prostitutes and witnesses do not see youth engaged in CST as victims.

The largest and most prominent gap is related to the attention to victims. Protection programs for victims, (including drug rehabilitation centers) or sufficient shelters are scarce. The PANI has under its jurisdiction two voluntary and transitory shelters in the country dedicated to rehabilitating victims. Combined, the two shelters serviced 300 victims in 2004. Minister Gil Fernandez acknowledged the need for more shelters and training of social workers in the support of drug abuse and CSEC victims.

A complete involvement of the private sector remains crucial; at this time it is mostly the tourism industry and associated transportation services that are participating in efforts to combat CST through awareness raising campaigns and training.⁶⁹ However, more attention is needed on providing income generating opportunities for the most vulnerable populations as a way to address poverty and stem CST. When asked, signatories of the Code of Conduct had not engaged in any programs that went beyond the occasional philanthropic activity in a community.

⁶⁹ “In Modern Bondage: Sex Trafficking in the Americas: Central America and the Caribbean,” International Human Rights Law Institute, DePaul University College of Law, 2002, 43.

Opportunities

In spite of the history of disjointed government coordination, limited donor funding, and poor programming for victims, the new political environment may jumpstart efforts at improving the prevention of CSEC and CST and the increased protection of victims. President Oscar Arias, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, took office in May 2006 and is reported to have a serious commitment on the eradication of CST. Whether this means a more concerted effort to address CST through dedicating budget line items or providing more victim support remains to be seen.

In the meantime, as signatories to the Code of Conduct increase in number, and as they work with Paniamor to refine their 'watchdog' practices for CST focused websites and businesses, opportunities to refine their training and engage more creatively with poor, local communities are potentially numerous.

Finally, according to the Minister of PANI, Costa Rica's shelters are too few in number and staffs need psycho-social support and drug rehabilitation training. The Ministry is just beginning to create psycho-social support training modules with the University of Costa Rica aimed at helping CST victims with the hope that they will be able to better service children throughout the country.

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Ramirez, Luis Roberto, Senior Advisor, the Ministry of Tourism

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Solis, Rocío Director of the Office of Children’s Rights, Ministry of Education

Sorensen, Bente, Coordinator, International Labour Organization, Costa Rica

Soto, Arturo, General Manager, Hotel Allegro Papagayo

Villalobos, Alejandro, Vice-President, Association of Tourism Operators (ICOT)

Attachments

Attachment 1: Communication on the Monitoring of a Sex Tourism Web Site.

**MINISTERIO DE SEGURIDAD PÚBLICA
UNIDAD DE INVESTIGACION ESPECIALIZADA
DELITOS CIBERNETICOS
(Relativos a Explotación Sexual)**

DC-382-05

Para: Stephen Madden Barrientos, Jefe Dop, Delitos Contra la Exp. Sexual
De: Javier Mata Trigueros, Jefe de Departamento
Asunto: Pagina Internet: <http://calle22.com/gente/posting.asp?p=117681&cat=1005>
Fecha: 16 noviembre de 2005
Cc: archivo

A continuación remito informe confeccionado por los oficiales David Cascante Salazar y Javier Mata Trigueros, referente a la pagina en Internet <http://calle22.com/gente/posting.asp?p=117681&cat=1005>, promueve el turismo sexual en Costa Rica

INTRODUCCION

Según denuncia recibida en esta unidad el viernes 04 de noviembre del presente año, por parte del señor Luis Roberto Ramírez, Asesor Gerencial del Instituto Costarricense de Turismo; se indica que la página Web www.calle22.com promueve el turismo sexual en Costa Rica por medio del siguiente aviso:

"Publicado el 13 de octubre de 2005
- san José (Costa Rica)"

"ofrezco los servicios de chicas y los míos nos gusta parejas maduras y mujeres GRUESITAS LLAMA A HERBERT M. 3780482 GEMA 3613579 STEF 8396070 CASTSWYSSTRAVEL TURISMO SEXUAL"

Dicha publicación ha generado que la empresa Swiss Travel Service, denuncia ante la Asociación de Operadores de Turismo Receptivo, la indebida utilización del nombre de la compañía por parte de terceros para promover el turismo sexual en el país.

DESARROLLO

El portal www.calle22.com es una página dedicada a abarcar gran variedad de temas tales como negocios, arte, literatura, deportes, sexo, entre otros. Dichos temas son incluidos por medio de "comunidades virtuales".

Una comunidad virtual es un espacio donde el usuario tiene la posibilidad de interactuar dinámica y continuamente con otras personas, a partir de un tema específico o general. Una comunidad virtual permite que un individuo o grupo de personas construya su propio medio interactivo de expresión, combinando de forma ideal la publicación de información en forma de artículos, noticias, fotos, videos.

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

CONCLUSIONES

Se concluye del presente trabajo:

1. La página www.calle22.com es utilizada entre otros fines, como un sitio en donde los usuarios por medio de comunidades virtuales relacionadas con el sexo; pueden acceder, contactar y promocionar todas aquellas actividades relacionadas con el sexo, incluyendo el turismo sexual.
2. El hecho de que en el aviso aparece publicado el lema "Castswysstravel turismo sexual", la responsabilidad recae en el usuario que realizó tal publicación, por lo cual la página www.calle22.com únicamente sirvió de facilitadora ya que brinda el servicio gratuitamente y no tiene control de lo que se publique.
3. Como el fin primordial de la página es la interacción dinámica entre los usuarios, es probable que exista la posibilidad del intercambio por medio de correos electrónicos de información relacionada con pornografía infantil.

RECOMENDACIONES

Es importante complementar la información anterior realizando labores de investigación de campo, específicamente hacia los supuestos responsables en publicar el anuncio. Por nuestra parte se le estará dando seguimiento a las actividades que realicen dichas personas, esto con el fin de verificar o descartar que los mismos se dediquen a la explotación sexual comercial y a la promoción del turismo sexual en el país.

Remitir el respectivo informe al señor Luis Roberto Ramírez, Asesor Gerencial del Instituto Costarricense de Turismo.

ANEXOS.

- Página Principal
- Dirección IP
- xxxxxx
- xxxxxx
- xxxxxxxx

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

Attachment 2: Paniamor Map of Reported Incidents of Local and Foreign Demand for Sex Tourism, 2005

Zonas de Mayor Incidencia de Turismo Sexual y Demanda Local

