



International Labour Organization
International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

Sri Lanka
The Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children:
A Rapid Assessment

By
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Preface

Unacceptable forms of exploitation of children at work exist and persist, but they are particularly difficult to research due to their hidden, sometimes illegal or even criminal nature. Slavery, debt bondage, trafficking, sexual exploitation, the use of children in the drug trade and in armed conflict, as well as hazardous work are all defined as Worst Forms of Child Labour. Promoting the Convention (No. 182) concerning the Prohibition and immediate action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999, is a high priority for the International Labour Organization (ILO). Recommendation (No. 190, Paragraph 5) accompanying the Convention states that “detailed information and statistical data on the nature and extent of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date to serve as a basis for determining priorities for national action for the abolition of child labour, in particular for the prohibition and elimination of its worst forms, as a matter of urgency.” Although there is a body of knowledge, data, and documentation on child labour, there are also still considerable gaps in understanding the variety of forms and conditions in which children work. This is especially true of the worst forms of child labour, which by their very nature are often hidden from public view and scrutiny.

Against this background the ILO, through IPEC/SIMPOC (International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour/Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour) has carried out 38 rapid assessments of the worst forms of child labour in 19 countries and one border area. The investigations have been made using a new rapid assessment methodology on child labour, elaborated jointly by the ILO and UNICEF¹. The programme was funded by the United States Department of Labor.

The investigations on the worst forms of child labour have explored very sensitive areas including illegal, criminal or immoral activities. The forms of child labour and research locations were carefully chosen by IPEC staff in consultation with IPEC partners. The rapid assessment investigations focused on the following categories of worst forms of child labour: children in bondage; child domestic workers; child soldiers; child trafficking; drug trafficking; hazardous work in commercial agriculture, fishing, garbage dumps, mining and the urban environment; sexual exploitation; and working street children.

To the partners and IPEC colleagues who contributed, through their individual and collective efforts, to the realisation of this report I should like to express our gratitude. The responsibility for opinions expressed in this publication rests solely with the authors and does not imply endorsement by the ILO.

I am sure that the wealth of information contained in this series of reports on the situation of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour around the world will contribute to a deeper understanding and allow us to more clearly focus on the challenges that lie ahead. Most importantly, we hope that the studies will guide policy makers, community leaders, and practitioners to tackle the problem on the ground.



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¹ Investigating Child Labour: Guidelines for Rapid Assessment - A Field Manual, January 2000, a draft to be finalized further to field tests, <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/standards/ipec/simpoc/guides/index.htm>

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This Rapid Assessment on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka has been a challenging venture for the research team. They had to implement specific techniques to reach the hidden population being investigated within a short period of time. In this context, the courage and endeavours of the research team are highly appreciated.

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Finally, I place on record my great appreciation of those scholars who have examined the draft report and suggested constructive comments that have helped to make this document more viable and meaningful than it otherwise would be.

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Executive Summary

Background

This study on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka, is one of several studies undertaken within the specific framework of the International Labour Organization's (ILO) commitment to the elimination of '*the worst forms of child labour.*' The ILO, through the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC), has drawn the attention of the world community to children who, through the exploitative activities of adults, have become victims of circumstances because of their vulnerability.

It was a remarkable achievement for IPEC when the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182), together with Recommendation 190, were unanimously adopted by the ILO Conference in June 1999. Over 115 countries had ratified the Convention by the end of January 2002, including Sri Lanka.

The mandate of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) has been clearly spelled out. It requires ratifying countries to "take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, as a matter of urgency." Recommendation No. 190 has given practical validity to the Convention in the sense that it states that "detailed information and statistical data on the nature and extent of child labour should be compiled and kept up to date, to serve as a basis for determining priorities for national action for the abolition of child labour, in particular for the prohibition and elimination of its worst forms, as a matter of urgency."

ILO Convention No. 182 and Recommendation No. 190 define worst forms of child labour with reference to four important aspects as follows:

- All forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- The use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the international treaties;
- Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

There is no doubt that the global community views the issue of worst forms of child labour as one that should receive the highest priority among nations. Towards this end the ILO, through IPEC-SIMPOC has undertaken 38 Rapid Assessments on the worst forms of child labour in nineteen countries and one border area. In order to accomplish this task, the ILO and UNICEF jointly prepared a Rapid Assessment methodology to be used in studies that investigate the different

types of worst forms of child labour. As such, the methodology has been prescribed for the present study of Sri Lanka.

The commercial sexual exploitation of children was recognized as a modern form of slavery at the World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in 1996. As the International Coordinator of ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism) pointed out, children have become casualties in the march towards a global society, and have been made into objects to meet sex demands from adults, both local and foreign. The Executive Director of UNICEF stated that commercial sexual exploitation of children is fast becoming a global, multi-billion dollar industry. She emphasized the fact that the adverse effects upon the child who is being exploited are often profound and permanent, while the self-esteem and dignity of such a child are seriously undermined. The ILO-IPEC commitment to researching this issue is therefore timely and significant.

Another noteworthy international convention that has provided an important basis for the present Study is the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)*, 1989 which was ratified by Sri Lanka in 1990. Sri Lanka then signed the *Global Plan of Action for Children* in 1991. Article 34 of the UN Convention makes it mandatory for state parties to undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, as well as to take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the following:

- Inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- Exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- Exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Furthermore, Articles 25 and 39 of the CRC require state parties to take appropriate steps towards the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children who may be victims of any form of sexual exploitation or abuse. The care and protection of children have been given utmost significance. Article 36 gives yet wider coverage when it states that protection should be afforded to the child against *all* other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspect of his or her welfare.

Sri Lanka's efforts to eliminate child labour

Sri Lanka has taken certain positive steps to give effect to the provisions of these conventions at the national level. One of the major decisions taken was to appoint a Technical Committee in 1992, to review the existing legal framework and to suggest new provisions that would be necessary to ensure the rights of children in Sri Lanka. The Committee was empowered to inquire into existing laws, particularly the *Penal Code (1883)*, with a view to protecting children from sexual abuse. Both substantive and procedural aspects of the law were reviewed by the Committee.

Recommendations made by the Committee resulted in the enactment of the *Penal Code (Amendment) Act No. 22 of 1995*. Prior to this there were no adequate provisions under the Penal Code to inquire into the offences of the sexual abuse of children, nor to deal with offenders.

Neither was there a clear legal provision to deal with activities of foreign pedophiles or any individual using children for producing pornographic films and publications. The Penal Code Amendment of 1995 broadened the definitions of sexual exploitation, through Sections 360B and 365B.

It is seen that Sri Lanka has shared the growing awareness of the global community about the criminal offences against children, and made attempts to protect the rights of children through the revision of various laws and the introduction of new laws. The Sri Lanka Constitution of 1978, in Article 27(13) states that “children shall be protected,” while in Article 12(4) it is affirmed that action shall be taken to guarantee this protection. For instance, a National Monitoring Committee was appointed in 1992 to report on the status of the protection of the rights of children.

Sri Lanka took another significant step in 1999, by ratifying the *ILO Minimum Age Convention (No. 138), 1973 concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment*, and in 2001 by ratifying the *ILO Convention on the Worst Form of Child Labour (No. 182)*. Although it is illegal to employ a child of less than fourteen years as a child worker, studies have reported a prevalence of child labour (Child Activity Survey 1999-2000). There have been instances of sexual abuse and assault targeting such children, and reports indicate that these victims are later drawn into child prostitution as a result of such exploitation. It is therefore important to ensure the existence of a legal framework to overcome such situations. Sri Lanka’s legal system, which is based on the Roman Dutch Law, accords special provisions to the courts of law to act as upper-guardians of a child.

Sri Lanka’s socioeconomic context and its impact on child labour

The Sri Lanka Census of Population and Housing, 1981 recorded a total population of 14.8 million. The estimated population for the year 2000 was 19.3 million. Data from the most recent Census of 2001 had not been published at the time of research, but the current rate of population growth is estimated at 1.5 percent.

Demographic projections show the under-19 population was nearly 6 million in 1990, whereas by 1999 it was expected to have increased to 8.8 million. These figures show there is a large percentage of young people and infants (nearly 46 percent) in the total population.

The profile of Sri Lanka’s population shows it mainly as agrarian and rural in character, with the urban population accounting for 21.5 percent of the total population in 1981. However, there is a definite movement of the rural population into urban areas in search of employment opportunities and ways of making “easy and quick money,” particularly through involvement in the tourist industry.

Even though Sri Lanka’s economy was fairly stable in the 1950s, it has changed drastically since then. Conflicting and inconsistent economic policies adopted by successive governments, lack of rational development planning, impact of external and internal market forces, and the civil war that has been going on for nearly two decades, have combined to adversely affect the socioeconomic progress of the country. Agricultural and industrial sectors both have experienced a tremendous slowdown, which has had negative impacts on the creation of employment

opportunities. In the meantime, political instability and the civil war continue to have adverse impacts, affecting almost all aspects of civilian life.

Sri Lanka has been a welfare state for more than five decades. Ever since Sri Lanka gained independence in 1948, governments gave subsidies to the poor in cash and kind. During the past decade steps were taken to alleviate poverty through programmes such as *Janasaviya* and *Samurdhi* (see section 1.3.4). Successive governments paid special attention towards improving the health and education of the people by giving specific subsidies for these sectors. The attainment of human development in Sri Lanka is at a higher level—relative to almost all countries in South Asia—when comparing indices such as life expectancy, school enrolment and adult literacy.

It was noted earlier that the economy of Sri Lanka was adversely affected by several factors. Governments that came into power looked for ways of improving foreign exchange earnings in order to stabilize the economy. Towards achieving this goal, the government gave high priority to the development of the tourist industry, based on Sri Lanka's natural scenic beauty and rich cultural heritage. The establishment of the Ceylon Tourist Board, under the Ceylon Tourist Board Act, No. 10 of 1966, and the Ceylon Hotels Corporation, together provided the institutional and legal framework for the development of tourism, as a high priority state-sponsored industry. With the liberalization of trade and the advent of the "open economy," there was an increasing flow of foreign businessmen and tourists in to the country. The government, in its desire to increase foreign exchange, encouraged the tourist industry by all means possible, given that tourism and associated activities provided a wide range of job opportunities to the local population.

The boom in the tourism industry, while accounting for some economic benefits, has also adversely affected the society. Tourism brought in "big money," but with that came a series of social problems, which can be particularly seen in the main tourist locations in the country. Studies conducted by scholars and NGOs point to the fact that the commercial sexual exploitation of children is evident, if not rampant, in such tourist locations. Law enforcement against such offenders is very weak, and the vulnerability of children has therefore increased unabated.

Study methodology and objectives

Investigations conducted for this study used the Rapid Assessment (RA) methodology jointly prepared by ILO-UNICEF and prescribed by ILO-IPEC. One of the expectations in prescribing its application in the present study is to evaluate its suitability as a technique for the investigation of 'worst forms of child labour.' The RA methodology attempts to combine both quantitative and qualitative analysis of research, quickly and inexpensively. Since the methodology requires the researcher to gather data within a short period of time, it aims at drawing out important insights into the magnitude and causes of the issue, in a way that will help policy makers make quick yet fairly accurate decisions, regarding the type of policies and programmes necessary to eliminate the worst forms of child labour. In this study, the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka is the worst form of child labour being investigated.

The study entailed three specific objectives:

- To find out reasons for and factors affecting the commercial sexual exploitation of children in selected locations in Sri Lanka;
- To sensitize the government, NGOs, citizens and other stakeholders about the criminality of the commercial sexual exploitation of children; and
- To test and evaluate the Rapid Assessment methodology as outlined in the ILO/UNICEF Field Manual: Investigating Child Labour, Guidelines For Rapid Assessment (draft 2002), specifically in terms of its appropriateness when studying sexual exploitation as a worst form of child labour.

To achieve the objectives above, the following research techniques were used:

- Face-to-face administration of a questionnaire to children who had been victims of commercial sexual exploitation;
- Informal interviews with parents and other key informants;
- Observation and Focus Group Discussions;
- Review of secondary data on the subject.

The combination of these different types of research techniques was useful in gathering both quantitative and qualitative data. Since the subject under investigation is both a sensitive and hidden one, researchers had to be cautious when studying this topic. It was necessary to build rapport with the children as well as with the informants, in order to elicit reliable information. Much emphasis was given to observation and informal discussions. Qualitative data supplement and help to understand the types of information that came out in the quantitative data analysis. However, the application of the RA methodology within the prescribed timeframe of three months set definite limits on the research process, particularly because the commercial sexual exploitation of children is illegal and its activities are covert.

Scope of the research and limitations to the study

Identification of specific locations for the research took into account the objectives of the study and the prescribed methodology, and followed the review of secondary data sources and discussions with key informants such as police officers, school principals, local administrative officials, hoteliers and local traders. Discussions with key informants and the review of literature led to the selection of a number of tourist areas in six districts along the south-western and southern coasts of Sri Lanka, and in two districts in the interior of the country. The study revealed that the nature, magnitude and factors contributing towards the commercial sexual exploitation of children, shared similarities for the most part in spite of the different locations. There were also occasional differences.

The study focused on children under 18 years of age who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation. The total sample was comprised of 120 children, 78 males and 42 females, of whom 14 children were chosen from two rehabilitation centers. The remainder of the children

were on-going victims of sexual exploitation. These children were approached through 'contacts' since their activities were carried out very secretly, and since their circumstances were a very sensitive issue. Demographic and socioeconomic profiles of the children when compiled revealed several interesting features.

Researchers and research assistants well known to respective districts were assigned to select respondents and conduct interviews. Since the operation of commercial sexual exploitation was concentrated in several pockets in each district, often where contributing conditions such as tourism or civil war exist, it was not difficult to trace children involved in commercial sex. Using existing contacts in these areas the researchers could develop a good rapport with key informants such as Probation and Child Care Officers, hotel owners and employees, three wheel drivers, tourist guides and so on. These persons were helpful in introducing children to the researchers. On some occasions the exploited children themselves were instrumental in connecting other such children to the researchers. In the case of border villages in Anuradhapura district where ethnic war is taking place, army soldiers on duty were assisted in contacting some girl children.

A questionnaire was given to the parents of the children in the sample, and informal discussions followed with respondents fulfilling the role of informants. Many children stated that their parents were unaware of their activities, while a few informed the interviewers that the parents did not mind their being exploited since it brought financial help to the family. Key informants, who were knowledgeable about the prevalence of activities related to sexual exploitation, and who were drawn from the communities, emphasized the weaknesses in the enforcement of laws to combat such activities.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were a very useful source of information. These provided many insights into the nature of the children's sexual activities, information about 'networking' that often existed, and suggested reasons as to why such criminal activities against children prevailed in society.

A few limitations were faced when conducting the study. These arose primarily through the time constraints of the RA methodology. As observed earlier, commercial sexual exploitation is not only a sensitive topic, but its activities lie hidden in society. While there is general agreement among the population that commercial sexual exploitation exists and is on the rise, only a few people are willing to talk about it openly. Both the victims and offenders on the one hand, and the parents and key informants on the other, seem to prefer to maintain secrecy.

In such a situation it took a minimum of 7-10 days to establish a rapport with the different categories of persons in the study, in order to prepare the background to elicit reliable information. At times interviews and discussions had to be conducted on several occasions. The research team too had to be sensitized and trained regarding the psychological and emotional nature of the issue under investigation prior to fieldwork, and they had to adopt a sensitive disposition during fieldwork.

The face-to-face questionnaire method adopted as one of the techniques also had certain limitations. It was not expected to give a representative sample of the population involved in

commercial sexual activity, or the children exploited. The qualitative methods of data collection that were used further explained certain trends that were seen in the quantitative analysis.

Findings and recommendations

The study identifies several socioeconomic and cultural factors as contributing towards “push-and-pull” factors in the commercial sexual exploitation of children, as delineated below.

- Social and economic poverty are the main factors that contribute to children’s frustration and their resulting involvement in commercial sex. However, children were subjected to sexual exploitation through the negligence of parents and also the parents’ ignorance of the involvement of their children in sex related activities.
- The impact of environmental factors on commercial sex is clearly evident in coastal locations where children are lured in to sex related activities by tourism in those areas.
- A factor that contributes towards pulling children into commercial sex is the existing demand in society for sex-with-children. This is substantiated by the study finding that paedophiles were not always foreign tourists, and included people from the local community.
- There is a gender difference in factors that push and pull children into commercial sex. For instance, the findings show that female children get involved in commercial sexual activities at a younger age than male children. Additionally, they usually belong to the “very poor” category of respondents, which suggests the influence of economic reasons as a strong “push” factor. Society’s attitude towards them is one of condemnation. The majority of girl respondents were involved with local clients, whereas in the case of boys their clients were mostly foreigners.
- As a result of the hidden nature of the issue, children in commercial sex hardly enter the rehabilitation process. The treatment they receive in many rehabilitation centres appears to be inadequate, as programmes in such centres are mostly limited to general services such as providing basic education and vocational training.

Since the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka is the result of the interplay of many factors, prevention and rehabilitation programmes need to be multi-dimensional in their approach and address the issue holistically. It is possible to identify some areas as given below, through which the multi-dimensional approach could be launched.

- Educate parents and children of potentially high risk families on health hazards related to sexual exploitation.

- Provide vocational training leading to employment opportunities for such children.
 - Revive feelings of social responsibilities of the community, so that the community would be vigilant about those practicing commercial sex.
 - Improve the quality of counseling services at schools in the at-risk areas.
 - Strengthen the effectiveness of law enforcement relating to commercial sex.
 - Mobilize the support of NGOs to implement community based programmes.
 - Work towards establishing community based organizations (CBOs) and government institutions in the areas at high risk of commercial sex.
-

Chapter 1: Background and Context

1.1 Introduction

The island-nation of Sri Lanka is a Democratic Socialist Republic situated in the Indian Ocean, off the southeastern tip of the subcontinent of India. It is located approximately between northern latitudes 6 and 10 degrees and between eastern longitudes 79 and 82. Sri Lanka is separated from India by a 22-mile stretch of shallow sea known as the Palk Strait. Sri Lanka's physical location and related features have had an important influence upon its political, social and economic history, which is still evident in various forms today.

Sri Lanka's land area is 25,332 square miles (65,610 square kilometres). The temperature ranges between 79 and 82 degrees Fahrenheit and, based on the pattern of rainfall, Sri Lanka is divided into two clearly identifiable zones known as the Wet Zone and the Dry Zone. The Wet Zone covers 23.2 percent of the island, and includes the western, southern and central parts of Sri Lanka. The average annual rainfall is between 250 and 500 centimetres, which are received mainly during the southwest monsoon. The Dry Zone constitutes 63.3 percent of the total land area, and includes the northern, north-central, eastern and southeastern parts of the country.

1.2 Population and human capital

1.2.1 Demographic background

Demographic data from the Population Census of 1981 is used in the present study since the data collected through the most recent census in 2001 was not published at the time of the research. According to the 1981 Census, the total population of Sri Lanka was 14.8 million; the Registrar General's Department estimated it to be around 19.4 million by the year 2000. Population projections suggest meanwhile that the population will be approximately 25 million by the year 2020.

Demographic structure

The total population of Sri Lanka at the different censuses, its percentage increase and the average annual rate of growth since the census immediately preceding Independence in 1948, are presented in the Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Population and its increase for Sri Lanka, 1946 to 1981

Census year	Total population	Pop. increase (%)	Pop. growth rate
1946	6,657,339	25.4	1.52
1953	8,097,895	21.6	2.84
1963	10,582,064	30.7	2.65
1971	12,689,897	19.9	2.20
1981	14,848,346	16.8	1.70

Source: *Population Census Reports, Department of Census and Statistics*

Several important features can be identified through the data given in Table 1.1. The most striking feature is the rapid increase in population since the mid-1940s. The population of the island almost doubled during the period 1946-1971, increasing from 6.6 to 12.7 million. This was brought about by the vast improvements in health care and medical services throughout the country, and the successful eradication of malaria. The net result of these programmes was the rapid decline of the mortality rate. However, fertility rates remained fairly high until around the mid-1970s when the Government strengthened programmes in family planning.

It has been estimated that the current average rate of population growth is about 1.5 percent. Although this rate is low, and compares well even with some developed countries of the world, demographic projections show that Sri Lanka should plan for a total population of around 25 million by the year 2020.

Table 1.2 Percentage distribution of total population by 5-year age groups for Sri Lanka, for selected years

Age group	1953	1963	1971	1981	1995 (projected)
0-4	14.9	15.2	13.1	12.9	12.8
5-9	13.4	13.7	13.2	11.3	11.8
10-14	11.4	12.6	12.7	11.4	11.7
15-19	8.7	9.7	10.7	10.8	10.8
20-24	9.5	8.4	10.0	10.2	10.2
25-29	8.8	7.0	7.5	8.6	8.6
30-34	6.4	6.3	5.8	7.6	7.6
35-39	6.6	6.2	5.7	5.5	5.1
40-44	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.2
45-49	4.6	4.3	4.3	4.1	4.1
50-54	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.6	3.4
55-59	2.3	2.6	2.8	2.8	2.6
60-64	1.9	2.4	2.1	2.3	2.6
65 over	3.5	3.6	4.2	4.3	4.5

Source: Population Census Reports and Demographic Projections

Fertility

A change in the fertility rate of Sri Lanka began towards the end of 1950s. Both the Crude Birth Rate (CBR) and the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) indicate a clear downward trend since the 1960s. The decline in fertility can be largely attributed to the expansion of the family planning programmes through Maternal and Child Health Services, and an increase in the age at marriage. For instance, the Crude Birth Rate declined from 34.4 per 1000 in 1963 to 27.6 per 1000 in 1980. Both the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) and the Marital Total Fertility Rate (MTFR) show a fairly steady downward trend. The TFR decreased from approximately five children to 2.3 children between the periods 1962-1964 and 1988-1993, while the MTFR declined from 6.5 to 5.9 during

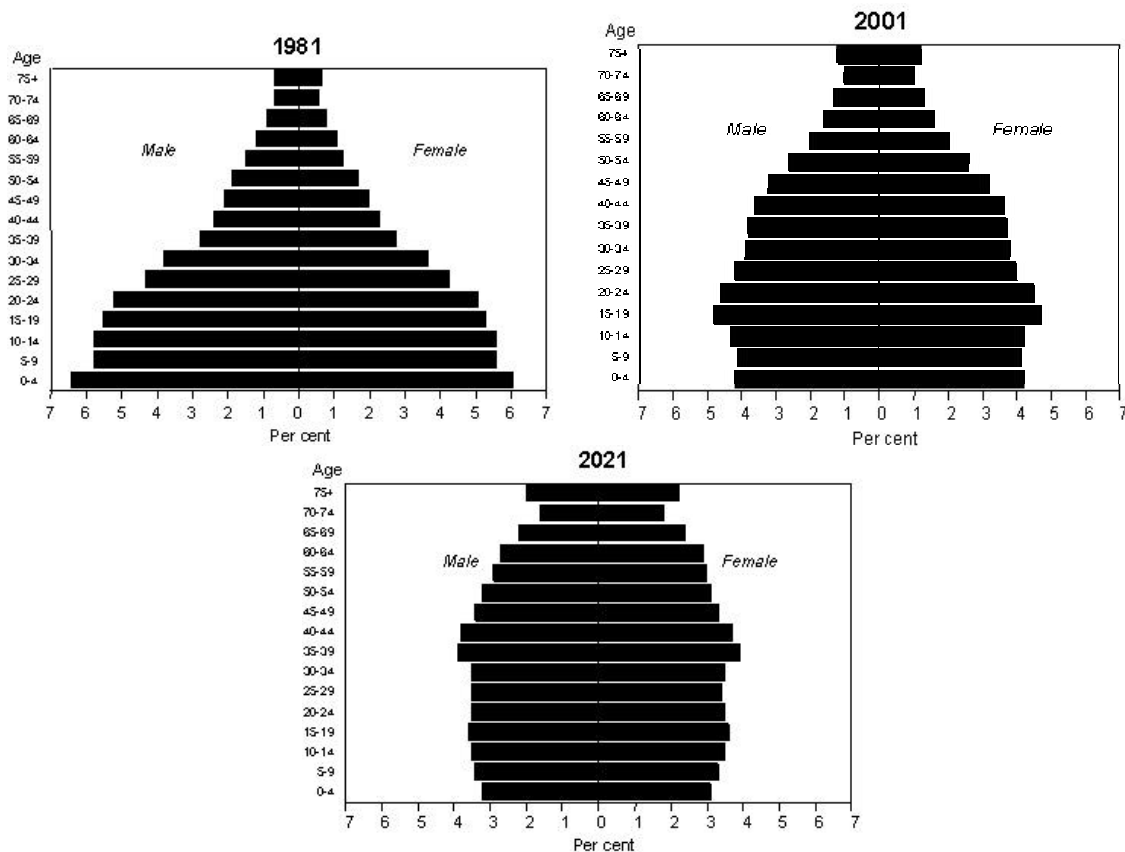
the same period. The fall in marital fertility was mainly the result of a rise in the use of contraceptives. For instance, the Contraceptive Prevalence Rate increased from 32 percent in 1975 to 66 percent in 1993. The age at marriage too increased over time, with both men and women postponing marriage to take advantage of educational and employment opportunities.

Age structure

The age structure of any population is a very important demographic variable because it presents the basis for any useful formulation of policies and programmes of a country. Table 1.2 shows the percentage distribution of the total population by five-year age groups, for selected years as census and projected data are available.

Demographic projections reveal that the population under 19 years was nearly 6 million in 1990, which by 1999 was estimated to increase to 8.8 million. While there is a projected increase in almost all age groups during the period 1990-1999, a very prominent feature is the *significant* increase in the older age groups, that is, those above 60 years. The Population Pyramids in Figure 1.1 present a graphic picture of Sri Lanka's population change with regard to the age structure, in 20-year intervals for 1981, 2001 and 2021. The shape of the pyramids change quite significantly as the proportion of children, youth and older populations change over the years.

Figure 1.1 Population distribution pyramids for Sri Lanka



1.2.2 Urbanization

The population of Sri Lanka is predominantly agrarian and rural in character. The Census of 1981 reported that the urban population accounted for nearly 3.2 million, which is only 21.5 percent of the total population of the country. Urbanization has been characterized by its extremely slow pace, in spite of the *apparent* movement of the rural population into urban areas in search of employment opportunities and city attractions. Table 1.3 gives the urban population, urban to total percentage, and the average annual growth rate, for selected census years.

Table 1.3 Total urban population, urban-to-total percentage and average annual growth rate for Sri Lanka, for selected census years

Census year	Total urban pop.	Urban-to-total %	Growth rate (%)
1901	414,025	11.6	2.5
1946	1,023,042	15.4	2.2
1963	2,016,285	19.1	4.8
1971	2,848,116	22.4	4.2
1981	3,192,489	21.5	1.2

The proportion of urban to rural population in all districts of Sri Lanka is below the national average of 21.5 percent with the exception of Colombo district, as recorded in the 1981 Census. According to Table 1.4, Colombo district shows a level of urbanization that far exceeds that of any other district.

Table 1.4 Percentage of urban-to-total population in selected districts in Sri Lanka, for 1971 and 1981

District	Urban-to-total pop. in 1971 (%)	Urban-to-total pop. in 1981 (%)
Colombo	55.2	74.4
Kalutara	21.9	21.5
Kandy	12.4	13.8
Galle	21.1	20.4
Matara	11.3	11.1
Hambantota	9.8	9.8
Anuradhapura	10.0	7.0

1.2.3 Human capital

The attainment of human development in Sri Lanka, relative to almost all other countries in South Asia, is at a higher level. However, the HDI (Human Development Index) value for Sri Lanka is considerably lower than that for industrialized countries. Sri Lanka has been successful

in providing adequate social services, comprised mostly of educational and health care needs of the people. Results of the government's social welfare programmes are clearly reflected in Table 1.5, which shows the level of human development achieved by Sri Lanka in relation to the international context.

Table 1.5 Human development achievement, in Sri Lanka and the World, 1976

Country/region	Life expectancy	Adult literacy rate	School enrolment	Real GDP per capita	HDI
Sri Lanka	72.2	90.1	66	3,277	0.731
Developing Countries	61.8	69.7	56	2,904	0.576
Industrial Countries	74.1	98.5	83	15,986	0.911
World	63.2	77.1	60	5,798	0.764

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1997

Table 1.5 shows that life expectancy in Sri Lanka is considerably higher than it is for the world and for developing countries. Since the 1950s, mortality levels in Sri Lanka comprising both maternal and infant mortality have exhibited a decreasing trend. The Infant Mortality Rate decreased from 100.6 per thousand live births to 17.1 between the 1950s and 1990s; while the Maternal Mortality Ratio decreased from 930 to 27 per 100,000 live births during the same period. Life Expectancy increased from 42.2 years in 1946 to 72.2 in 1995 as shown by Table 1.6. Among the main reasons for this have been the growth and spread of health care facilities, higher literacy and better educational opportunities for both men and women, improvements in the distribution of food, and the spread of media and communication. Table 1.6 presents life expectancy by sex, the Crude Death Rate, Infant Mortality Rate and Maternal Mortality Ratio, for selected years.

Table 1.6 Life expectancy by sex, Crude Death Rate (CDR), Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) for Sri Lanka, for selected years

Year	Life expectancy		CDR (per 1000)	IMR (per 1000)	MMR (per 100,000)
	Male	Female			
1946	43.9	41.6	14.4	100.6	930
1953	58.8	57.5	11.4	74.8	500
1971	64.2	66.7	8.2	46.6	140
1981	67.7	68.8	6.2	28.0	40
1995 (proj.*)	71.1	75.8	5.6	17.1	27

It is to be noted that certain demographic projections indicate that by the year 2050 life expectancy will rise to 75.4 years and 80.8 years for males and females respectively.

As pointed out earlier, successive governments since independence have initiated a number of welfare programmes to improve the quality of the human capital in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka's expenditure on health as a percentage of the Gross National Product (GNP), and the provision of some important health services are given in Table 1.7.

Table 1.7 Health expenditure, hospital beds, doctors and nurses for Sri Lanka, for selected years

Year	Health exp. (as a % of GNP)	Hospital beds	Doctors	Nurses
1988	Rs 3,931 m	45,406	3,416	8,317
1990	Rs 4,964 m	42,079	3,514	8,957
1995	Rs 10,952 m	52,528	5,310	13,310
1998	Rs 14,419 m	53,737	6,974	14,463

Source: Ministry of Health various reports

Educational attainment of the population of any country is an important indicator of the quality of human capital available for development. Sri Lanka enjoys a very high literacy rate among the nations of the world. An important feature is that in Sri Lanka both male and *female* literacy rates are very high. This shows that there is no discrimination in general between the sexes in relation to access to education and related social resources. However, in terms of employment there might exist discrimination or preference for either sex.

The HDI for Sri Lanka is considerably higher than the average for all developing countries, which was 56 percent in 1998. Table 1.8 compares the Adult Literacy Rates and School Enrolment ratios by sex, for Sri Lanka and regions of the world.

Table 1.8 Adult literacy rate and school enrolment ratio by sex for Sri Lanka and selected regions of the World, 1997

Country/region	Adult literacy rate		School enrolment ratio	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Sri Lanka	93.2	86.9	65.0	68.0
Developing Countries	78.4	60.3	60.3	51.6
Industrial Countries	98.5	98.5	81.5	83.9
World	83.5	70.8	63.9	57.1

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1998

According to Table 1.8 school enrolment rates for both sexes are clearly higher in Sri Lanka than in other developing countries. The relatively strong level of gender development attained by women in Sri Lanka reflects the policies of all governments to provide access to free general education throughout the island. It is interesting to note that in recent years the number of females entering the universities has exceeded that of males.

Table 1.9 presents data on the number of schools, pupil-teacher ratio, and total government expenditure on education. It is evident that there has been an increase in the number of schools

as well as an increase in the total investment on education by the government. This points to the fact that the Government of Sri Lanka gives high priority to the expansion of educational facilities and the improvement of access to greater social mobility through education. The population too has taken advantage of such facilities, without much gender discrimination.

Table 1.9 Total number of government & private schools, pupil-teacher ratio and expenditure on education for Sri Lanka, for selected years

Year	Government schools	Private schools	Pupil-teacher ratio	Government expenditure (in '000)
1988	9,771	490	27.7	4,165,848
1990	9,864	518	22.9	6,878,880
1995	10,283	605	22.3	N.A.
1999	10,394	637	21.7	N.A.

Source: Department of Census & Statistics, various reports

A recent development in the education sector has been the opening up of “*international schools*” in many major towns in the country. At present, there are over 100 such international schools that have been registered under the Companies’ Act that prepare students to sit for foreign examinations. The medium of instruction at international schools is English, whereas in government and semi-private schools the medium of instruction is either Sinhala or Tamil since students at these schools are prepared for *local* examinations.

1.3 Some highlights of the Sri Lankan economy

Although the economic performance was fairly stable in the early 1950s, conflicting economic policies adopted by successive governments had an adverse impact on the economy and hindered its progress. The economy reflected internal and external shocks, and therefore showed a very inconsistent pattern of growth. The growth of real GDP for instance, fluctuated considerably ranging between 6.9 percent in 1993 and 4.3 percent in 1999 (Table 1.10). These fluctuations were mainly due to the civil war, natural disasters like droughts, an increase in import prices particularly that of oil, and price fluctuations of local exports.

Table 1.10 Real GDP and GNP growth rates for Sri Lanka, 1990-1999

Year	GDP	GNP
1990	6.2	6.4
1991	4.6	4.6
1992	4.3	4.4
1993	6.9	7.7
1994	5.6	5.3
1995	5.5	6.0
1996	3.8	3.2
1997	6.3	6.8
1998	4.7	4.6
1999	4.3	3.8

Political instability and the protracted civil war have slowed down the economic growth. Expenditure on the war has increased exponentially over the recent years and the insecurity due to the war has discouraged local and foreign investment.

1.3.1 Sectoral profile

Sri Lanka is basically an agricultural country with a large rural sector, accounting for 72.2 percent of the total population. According to the 1981 Census, the urban sector accounted for only 21.5 percent. The share of the GDP of the agricultural sector dropped from 30.5 percent in 1979 to 20.7 percent in 1999. The share of the employment in this sector in 1990 was 46.8 percent, but by 1995 it declined to 36.7 percent, while its estimated share in 1999 was 36.3 percent. Many factors contributed to this, and among them were the scarcity of both land and irrigated water, increasing cost of agricultural production, and the lack of modernization and diversification of agriculture. In addition, the reluctance on the part of educated youth to take up employment in the agriculture sector was an important factor.

The manufacturing sector's contribution to the GDP was only about five percent at the time of national independence in 1948. The share of the manufacturing sector increased to 13.3 percent in 1990, and thereafter showed a marginal increase to 14.7 and 14.8 percent in 1995 and 1999 respectively. The poor response of the manufacturing sector could be due to conflicting and inconsistent economic policies adopted by successive governments. While some policies were inward-looking and emphasized import substitution, other policies encouraged outward-looking policies and export promotion. With the pursuing of liberal economic policies in recent times, more and more incentives have been given to the Private Sector. However, the required skills are in short supply in the private sector, particularly personnel with an adequate working knowledge of English.

The Service Sector is a leading contributor to the economy, and it showed a substantial growth in its share of the GDP from 44.4 percent in 1978 to 54.6 percent in the year 2000, with Banking and Insurance services showing significant development during this period. However, the Service Sector is highly sensitive to internal and external shocks.

1.3.2 Employment and unemployment

The estimated total population in Sri Lanka at the end of the year 2000 was 19.3 million. The estimated labour force for the same year was 6.7 million. The total labour force as a percentage of the population was 34.6 percent. This was only a one percent increase when compared with 1991 data. The labour force participation rate recorded a marginal increase from 49.8 percent in 1991 to 50.7 percent in the year 2000. During this time, the share of public sector employment was reduced from 22.9 percent to 13.6 percent. However, private sector employment and self-employment recorded a growth during the same period.

Data on unemployment as a percentage of the total labour force showed a continuous decline for both men and women. It should be noted that this reduction in the unemployment rate may not have been due to an increase in employment opportunities, but rather due to the result of changes

in the definition of the term 'employment'. The Report on Consumer Survey Finance and the Socioeconomic Survey of Sri Lanka 1996/97 defines the term 'employment' as referring to "a person who worked for pay, profit or family gain for at least one day during the reference period, for a minimum time-span of three hours."

1.3.4 Welfare and poverty

Sri Lanka has been a welfare state for more than five decades. There is a high incidence of poverty in the country, and successive governments have addressed this issue by implementing many welfare schemes. The Rice Subsidy Programme that was introduced during the Second World War covered the entire island and continued for over three decades. Later programmes targeted only the poor and the needy. The first such programme was the Food Stamp Scheme. This was followed by the *Janasaviya* Programme which was introduced in 1989, with its objectives being the provision of a cash subsidy and alleviation of poverty through participation. More recently in 1994 the *Samurdhi* Programme was introduced, with a view to alleviate poverty through community participation in development.

Recent surveys have shown that the pattern of income distribution has worsened, with the gap between the rich and the poor widening considerably. Socioeconomic and Household Income and Expenditure Surveys report that the share of income of the lowest ten percent of income earners has dropped from 2.8 percent in 1973 to 0.73 percent in 1993 with respect to total income. Correspondingly, the share of income of the highest ten percent of income earners has increased from 28 percent in 1973 to 41.4 percent in 1987. This widening of income disparity and increasing poverty are the causes largely responsible for social unrest and crime that have been evident in Sri Lanka in recent years.

1.4 A brief description of the political background

The Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka is a Parliamentary Democracy with an Executive President who in practice wields executive authority over many matters. However, the sovereignty of the people and legislative powers are vested in Parliament. Sri Lanka gained political independence in February 1948, after 153 years of British rule. In 1972 Sri Lanka was declared a Republic, and her position today is that of a free and sovereign State within the Commonwealth.

Until the beginning of the 1930s, the suffrage for the national legislature and local government municipalities was restricted to a small number of males based on educational and ownership of property qualifications. Universal suffrage came to Sri Lanka in 1931, however, the granting of universal suffrage alone did not result in any significant change in the status of women in the national political arena. With the expansion of educational and employment opportunities for women, and a greater ability to compete on an equal level with men, women of Sri Lanka have made their mark in the national political arena. Sri Lanka boasts of the first woman Prime Minister and the first woman Executive President in the world.

As some historians (Kiribamune, 1990) have rightly pointed out, the role of kinship ties and dynastic affiliations have played an important part in women's entry into national politics. Widows and daughters of deceased political leaders have had an advantage over other female

competitors, which is a factor that is clearly operative at the level of nominations by political parties.

The Gender Empowerment Index seeks to measure the extent to which women have been empowered relative to men in the political and economic spheres. The Gender Empowerment Performance of Sri Lanka for 1998 is given in Table 1.11.

Table 1.11 Gender empowerment performance for Sri Lanka and selected regions in the world, 1998 (given as % women from total)

Country/region	Seats in Parliament	Administrators & managers	Professional & technical workers	Gender empowerment index
Sri Lanka	5.3	16.9	24.5	0.307
Developing Countries	12.7	10.0	36.7	0.367
Industrial Countries	13.6	27.4	47.8	0.586
World	12.9	14.1	39.3	0.418

Source: UNDP Human Development Report, 1998

1.5 Other political, social and economic events

Sri Lanka has undergone many changes politically, socially and economically in the recent past. The preceding paragraphs indicate that Sri Lanka has been experiencing a period of transition ever since it gained independence from colonial rule. With political autonomy came serious responsibilities of building the economic base, which had an over-reliance on the three export commodities of tea, rubber and coconut. This resulted in the Sri Lankan economy being totally dependent on the fluctuations of the world market prices of these three commodities. Further, since the agricultural sector was thoroughly neglected during colonial rule, it could not support the predominantly rural population that was dependent on it. Successive governments recognized this anomaly and took several measures to strengthen the agricultural sector.

It is fair to assert that one of the main reasons for the upward trend in the commercial sexual exploitation of children was the government's unbridled support towards the development of the tourist industry. Promotion of tourism as an important foreign exchange earner complemented the government policy of trade liberalization and of opening the economy. The new face of tourism encouraged an influx of foreign businessmen and tourists in to the country. Scholars have shown there are three negative influences that could be directly attributed to tourism. These are the growth of prostitution among children and young women, the spread of the use of illegal drugs, and the destruction of the environment. Research shows that 'sex tourists' carried out their activities quite freely, making use of the new face of tourism. Tourism brought in 'big money', which in turn brought a series of social problems. The commercial sexual exploitation of children flourished as a trade, not only with the development of tourism but also because law enforcement against such criminal activities was very weak. As such, a large and effective network was established throughout the country linking all the tourist areas in order to supply children to cater to the demands of 'sex tourists' as well as local paedophiles.

Another main factor that has aggravated the commercial sexual exploitation of children is the ongoing civil war in Sri Lanka. The armed conflict that has adversely affected every area of civilian life for nearly two decades and continues to do so has been described as a “no mercy war”. The most basic principles of humanitarian law are violated, and within this context, women and children are the most affected. One prime example is the use of children for combat by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). According to reports, the LTTE continues to recruit child “soldiers” even at present, in spite of their engagement with *UN Secretary General’s Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict* in May 1998. The LTTE promised the UN representative that no child under 18 years would be used in combat, nor would children under 17 be recruited. There is evidence that violence against children by both the LTTE and Sri Lankan army personnel has increased over recent years.

It has been estimated that 900,000 children in the north and the east of Sri Lanka are directly affected by the civil war, while many more are affected indirectly. A factor that contributes directly to the sexual abuse of children is the displacement of entire families as a result of the war. In the Summary Report of 1999, it was stated that the armed conflict has displaced an estimated 380,000 children, and many of them repeatedly. Also, up to 250,000 are estimated to have been displaced since 1999. This has resulted in the breakdown of the family unit and many children are removed from their parents, and especially from their father - the economic provider of the home. The education of children is disrupted, health services and nutritional programmes have come almost to a standstill, and innocent children have been forced into becoming the unfortunate victims of circumstance.

One of the adverse results of this situation that has a serious psychological and social impact on children is the sexual abuse and exploitation they are submitted to, particularly by personnel actively engaged in the armed conflict. Children are continuously exposed to violence, prostitution and rape.

In one of the areas in the district of Anuradhapura included in the present study, secondary data revealed that commercial sexual exploitation was primarily taking place in what are known as “border villages.” (A number of border villages were included in the present study for primary investigations, and the *Map of the Study Locations* annexed to this report provides details of these villages.) The majority of people who have been displaced from their homes live in these villages, often in a state of abject poverty. The bread-winners have been either killed or maimed by the LTTE, resulting in many families losing their sole source of livelihood. Those who have escaped LTTE killings and thus been displaced are often unable to adjust to their new environments, and have failed to support their families. It is fair to conclude that the armed conflict has disrupted almost every aspect of civilian and family life, especially in the north and east of Sri Lanka.

Refugee camps have also been identified as locations where children are sexually exploited. Unexpected LTTE attacks force civilians out of their homes, and often they are given asylum in temples, churches and schools. In a study published in 1999, Goonesekera and Wanasundara report that children in refugee camps are at risk and are vulnerable to being picked up by agents for domestic service.

1.6 Legal framework

The sexual use, abuse and exploitation of children has emerged as a social issue that demands the immediate and urgent concern of the law and law-abiding citizens of the world. This issue is of particular importance to many developing countries, including Sri Lanka, where there is much evidence to suggest that the number of children engaged in prostitution is growing in serious proportions. It is clear that the sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka is largely tied up with the expansion of the tourist industry, involving not only the foreign tourists but also their local collaborators. The findings of this Rapid Assessment show that local paedophiles and child abusers together with their foreign clients, and sometimes independently, solicit children for commercial sexual exploitation. As the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the 'Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography' pointed out: "The multitude of clients coming from developing and developed countries exploiting children in developing countries, has emerged as part of the trans-nationalization of the demand syndrome in this respect." In a situation like this, it is very important to look into the legal controls, if any, that exist in Sri Lanka, which would ensure the safety and the development of the personality of the child. Many of these legal provisions are also closely related to, and are the outcome of, an international focus on the safety of children at different periods of recent history.

One of the most important events relating to this area of public concern took place in 1989, when the world community came together to protect the rights of the child. Thus, the promulgation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child took place on 20 November, 1989. This Convention came into force on September 2, 1990. Over 180 countries have ratified this UN document, including Sri Lanka in 1992. It is to be noted that Sri Lanka has taken certain positive steps to give effect to provisions of this Convention, thereby revising and formulating several laws to ensure the country's legal framework for protecting the rights of the child.

In 1992, the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Social Welfare appointed a Technical Committee to review the existing legal framework and to suggest any new provisions that would be necessary to ensure the preservation of the rights of the child in Sri Lanka. The Committee was empowered to look into the existing laws, particularly of the Penal Code (1883), with a view to protecting children from sexual abuse and making recommendations for better enforcement of the law. Also, it was expected that the Committee would advise the Government on all aspects of law, both substantive and procedural.

It is evident that many of the legal statutes relating to the rights of children in Sri Lanka were very old and, in a sense, out of date. The Technical Committee pointed out that the basis of any new legal approach should be the fact that a child is a person in his/her own right, and that the role of the State, in providing for the legal framework should be to ensure that the child's environment is one in which he/she can develop to his/her full potential as a citizen. It must be recognized that societies are in a state of change, and face new problems that are not only developed locally, but are the result of outside influences like those associated with the tourist industry. In any society, laws need to be amended, and new laws introduced.

As pointed out earlier, several legal statutes were identified as requiring change. Three such examples are The Penal Code of Sri Lanka, enacted as Ordinance No. 2 of 1883, the Vagrants'

Ordinance of 1841 and the Children and Young Persons' Ordinance No. 48 of 1939. In fact, these legal documents reflect the colonial jurisprudence of British times, and were inadequate in their scope for today. Also, these laws were scattered among numerous legislative enactments, and as such, much of these were unfamiliar not only to the laymen but also to the legal practitioners.

The Technical Committee showed the necessity for redefining certain offences, and revising definitions to make them appropriate for the present times. Additionally, it was the opinion of the Committee that most of the penalties prescribed in various laws for several offences, as for example rape, were not in keeping with the gravity of the offence and were not in line with the new concept of the status of the child as an individual in his own right.

Legal scholars and researchers in Sri Lanka have clearly stated the responsibility of the legal courts as the upper guardians of children. It is interesting that in our traditional societies, children were much loved, cared for and protected. While the main source of love was the family, the community also played an important role in protecting the child. The Kandyan laws of Sri Lanka, or "Desa Valame" states that an orphaned child, or a child in distress, will be provided for by the community. In the post-colonial period, the State was given the role as a 'super-parent', in recognizing the State as 'paren patriae'. This concept has been transmitted through our legal system, and the Roman Dutch Law, giving a special role to the courts of law as the upper-guardians of the child. The courts and the judiciary are thus entrusted with the serious responsibility of protecting the best interests of the child, making the legal framework very important.

As Gunasekere has stated, special concern must be given towards making the judicial process 'child-friendly' in order to safeguard the best interests of the child.

Before the enactment of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act No.22 of 1995, in September 1995, there were no adequate provisions in our Penal Law to inquire into offences and deal with those who guilty of sexually abusing children. The ordinary Criminal Law of the country, under the provisions of the Penal Code enacted in 1865, dealt with all the numerous sexual offences against children. This was an unfortunate situation because the law made no distinction between an adult and a child.

A few examples will make this situation clear. For instance, there was no clear provision to deal with foreign paedophile activity, since there were no clear definitions of any of these offences. It is startling that under the old Penal Code, it was not an offence for an adult woman to have sexual intercourse with a boy of 12 years. Also, under the Obscene Publications Ordinance No. 4 of 1927, any individual using children to make pornographic films and publications could not be dealt with. Until very recent times, no deterrent laws were enacted to deal with the increasing incidence of the sexual abuse of children in Sri Lanka. Police lost interest in prosecuting paedophiles as well because the legal framework was so weak.

Summary of legal steps taken to prevent the commercial sexual exploitation of children

Several attempts have been made in Sri Lanka to protect the rights of children through various local laws and association with international conventions. The Sri Lankan Constitution of 1978,

Article 27(13) states that children shall be protected, while in Article 12 (4) it is affirmed that action shall be taken to guarantee this protection.

In 1991, Sri Lanka ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Under this, By Articles 25, 34 and 59, the State is obligated to provide protection to children against sexual abuse, and also to rehabilitate them.

In 1992, Sri Lanka adopted the Children's Charter, under which a National Monitoring Committee was appointed to report on the status of the protection of the rights of children.

As reported earlier, the Penal Code was amended by the Penal Code (Amendment) Act No. 22 of 1995. This was a positive step since it broadened the definitions of sexual exploitation, through Sections 360B and 365B.

One of the recent steps taken has been the 1998 National Child Protection Authority Act. Under this, a body has been established to support the development of child protection legislation, and to monitor its enforcement.

In 1999, the Government of Sri Lanka identified the need to ratify the ILO Convention on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (No. 138), 1973. As a legal step, this was important because violence towards and sexual assaults of children employed as child workers, were increasingly reported. Also, such a policy for protecting the child was in keeping with the country's compulsory educational policy for children.

The 1999 Session of the ILO Conference adopted the ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182). Child labour in this "extreme form" includes engaging children in illegal activities, for prostitution, production of pornography or pornographic performances. As mentioned previously, this Convention was ratified by the Government of Sri Lanka in March 2001.

When critically analysing the evidence regarding the increasing commercial sexual exploitation of children, despite the formulation of local laws to prevent such activity, it is concluded that the commitment to the enforcement of such laws by the relevant law enforcement agencies are marginal and ineffective. Also, the political/bureaucratic will is presumed to be weak, if not completely lacking. As shown in this study, persons having direct political affiliations often act as abusers and intermediaries themselves. In such situations it is clear that the ineffectiveness of preventing commercial sexual exploitation is the result of weak linkages between the enactment of laws and the enforcement of these laws. This leaves the child as the helpless victim of circumstance once again. Following is an example of this failure.

The Children and Young Persons Ordinance (1939) mandated the establishment of Juvenile Courts throughout Sri Lanka. There is, however, only one such Juvenile Court in operation, and legal researchers have shown that even here, the atmosphere is not child-friendly, although it was originally intended to be so. There also appears to be an over-reliance on the "certified school" whenever a child is 'in need of care or protection', rather than the assignment of a guardian or a

Probation Officer to the child.

1.7 Child labour situation in Sri Lanka

Although there has been much social concern about eliminating child abuse and labour and ensuring the fundamental rights of the child in Sri Lanka, child abuse still exists in a variety of forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse and exploitation, severe child neglect and child labour. In 1996, the political commitment to address the issue of child labour was clearly expressed when Sri Lanka signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with IPEC.

According to the Child Activity Survey (1999-2000) conducted by the Department of Census and Statistics, the child population under 18 years was estimated at 4,344,770. This survey revealed that 2.9 per cent of the children in the age group 5-14 years and 29.3 per cent in the age group of 15-17 years are not engaged in education. It further pointed out that among children below 18 years of age, 5.3 per cent were involved in economic activities and another 7.1 per cent were involved in housekeeping and were not attending school.

The child population in Sri Lanka is estimated to be 27 per cent of the total population. Ninety per cent of the country's children attend Primary School, without gender discrimination in terms of enrolment. However, the rate of school drop-outs has been increasing in recent times, despite the fact that education is free in Sri Lanka. Rising levels of poverty and the resulting pressing need to gain some form of income have aggravated the situation of child labour. Studies have suggested that child labour appears to be the single most important source of child exploitation in the country. However, the magnitude of the problem cannot be fully assessed because much of it remains hidden.

Children who are exploited for sex activities and as child labourers belong to socially deprived communities, living in conditions of poverty. While the desire to earn "quick and easy" money, among other things, seems to be a positive 'push' factor in the area of commercial sexual exploitation, child labour in the form of conscription for war in the civil conflict is an act of force alone. The mean age of conscription, according to several researchers, is 14.5 years. These children are forced to perform a variety of tasks such as digging trenches, performing guard duty, or working in kitchens. In addition, they are called upon to face very dangerous situations like manufacturing bombs, setting up landmines, or even fighting in the front lines. Severe punishments are meted out to children who refuse to obey instructions.

1.8 The role of governmental organizations in combating child labour and commercial sexual exploitation

Consequent to the declaration of government policy on children rights, several departments and institutions took necessary steps to check on the wave of crimes committed against children by way of child labour, physical abuse and sexual exploitation. In this process some departments and institutions have played the advocacy role while some have acted as facilitators or implementers. But there are instances where the same department or institution has preformed all three roles i.e. advocacate, facilitator and implementator simultaneously.

The Department of Labour

The Department of Labour (DOL) which comes under the purview of the Ministry of Labour, is the main state agency responsible for the enforcement of legislation on child labour issues. The Women and Children's Affairs Division of the DOL headed by the commissioner of Labour is entrusted with the enforcement of labour legislation pertaining to child labour. An administrative network of 24 district labour offices and 17 sub-labour offices located all over the Island assist the Women and Children's Affairs Division in the enforcement.

The Women and Young Children's Division is in charge of the implementation of the following enactments:

1. Employment of Women and Young Persons Act (EWYCP) (1956). This act has been recently amended to increase the minimum age of employment to 14 years, keeping in line with ILO Convention 138.
2. Sections relevant to young persons, women and children in the Factories Ordinance.

In addition to the enforcement of legislation, The Women and Young Children's Division has implemented several projects to create awareness of the child labour situation. The Division also held training programmes for Labour Officers, Probation Officers and Police Officers on the topic of eliminating child labour.

Probation and Child Care Services Department

This department comes under the Ministry of Social Services to provide shelter and protection to sexually abused children and file action in courts to bring about justice to the victims. Thereafter it provides rehabilitation programmes under which the abused children are provided with job oriented training. The probation officers are expected to have a close rapport with the non-governmental organization (NGO) known as Childrens' Home.

Police Department

The police department has setup a frontline desk and a hotline telephone number (444444) for receiving complaints. All complaints are handled by the Bureau for Prevention of Abuse of Children, Young Persons and Women. The Bureau has 33 branches operating in the 33 A.S.P. divisions who attend to the child abuse cases in the respective police areas.

Tourist Bureau

The Tourist Bureau which comes under the Ministry of Tourism conducts grassroots level awareness creating programmes for the risk group living along the coastal belt of Sri Lanka. These programmes were specially designed for the "Beach Boys," tourist guides, hotel keepers and officers of the relevant authorities.

The National Child Protection Authority (NCPA)

The National Child Protection Authority was established as a government organization under the Presidential Task Force. The establishment of the NCPA has paved the way for coordination between the government law enforcing agencies and NGOs in child sex oriented matters of exploitation and abuse. The arm of the law enforcers has been strengthened by the establishment of this Authority which has been vested with wide powers including entering places where child sex offences are committed without a search warrant. The functions of the NCPA consist of four major areas, namely prevention, awareness creation and skill development, law enforcement and monitoring, and rehabilitation and re-integration. Among the many activities of the authority, those directly relevant to child abuse are listed below:

- Receiving complaints from the public regarding child abuse and forwarding them to the relevant authorities.
- Coordinating organizations involved in tourism in order to check up on child exploitation.
- Monitoring the database on child abuse and engaging in research.
- Communicating and exchanging information with foreign governments and organizations about the identification and prevention of child abuse.
- Conducting awareness programmes and training programmes on related subjects (several programmes for both the NGO sector and the government sector have been carried out).

1.9 Role of international organizations and NGOs in combating child labour and commercial sexual exploitation

1.9.1 UN Agencies

The following UN agencies are involved in the prevention of child labour in Sri Lanka. They mostly work through their local partner organizations and play the role of implementer and facilitator of programmes or advocacy of important issues.

- International Labour Organization (ILO)/International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

International Labour Organization (ILO)/International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

The International Labour Organization brings together governments, and workers' and employers' organizations to formulate international policies and programmes that promote basic human rights at work, and improve working and living conditions while enhancing employment opportunities and enterprise creations.

The elimination of child labour is a long standing major objective of the ILO since its inception in 1919. The most important conventions that the ILO has adopted in relation to child labour are

the Minimum Age Convention (No.138), 1973 and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182), 1999. In 1992 ILO launched the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC). This has given a new impetus for all parties concerned to intensify their struggle to combat child labour.

The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is the world's largest technical cooperation programme on child labour. IPEC's aim is the progressive elimination of child labour worldwide, emphasizing the eradication of the worst forms as a matter of urgency. IPEC approaches their mission in several ways: through country-based programmes which promote policy reform and put in place concrete measures to end child labour, and through international and national campaigning intended to change social attitudes and promote ratification and effective implementation of ILO child labour conventions. Completing these efforts are in-depth research, legal expertise, policy analysis and programme evaluation carried out in the field and at the regional and international levels.

The political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labour - in alliance with employers' and workers' organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other civil society actors - is the foundation for ILO/IPEC action. IPEC relies on a coalition of nearly 100 partners, comprising member countries that have invited IPEC to set up local programmes, donor governments and other contributing governmental and non-governmental organizations. Since its inception in 1992, IPEC programmes in more than 60 countries have had considerable impact in both removing hundreds of thousands of children from the work place and raising general awareness of the scourge of child labour.

IPEC activities in Sri Lanka commenced after the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 1997. The Ministry of Labour is the focal point for all its activities. Sri Lanka is also a partner in the IPEC funded South Asian Programme to combat trafficking of children for exploitative purposes.

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)

The UNHCR is engaged in inter-agency collaboration between relevant government agencies and local NGOs with regard to the protection of children and adolescents affected by the armed conflict in Sri Lanka. Among the steps taken in this regard, concern over children and adolescents subjected to sexual violence and exploitation during armed conflict has made a strong impact.

1.9.2 International Non Governmental Organizations

Redd Barna

Norwegian based Redd Barna works closely with Save the Children (UK). Its main objectives are to promote the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child through advocacy and twelve local partners. It serves as a facilitator.

Save the Children Fund (SCF) (UK)

The main objective of SCF (UK) is to foster and promote children's rights. It is working on a five-year work plan, from 2001–2005. The underlying objective of the five-year work plan is to strengthen Sri Lankan children to face new challenges.

Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA)

In Sri Lanka, SIDA plays mostly an advocacy role in addition to being a facilitator and an implementer with its local partner organizations such as PEACE, *Sarvodaya*, the Open University, Women in Need, UNICEF and the National Child Protection Authority.

1.9.3 NGOs working towards eradicating the sexual exploitation of children, child labour and child abuse

A recent study shows that by mid-2001, a large number of NGOs had engaged in a variety of activities related to the development of children and young persons. Except for a few, all of these NGOs have received the support of local and foreign donor agencies. However, only a handful of NGOs have taken up the specific task of prevention of child labour, child abuse, and child sexual exploitation as their main activities. Details of some of the NGOs are outlined below.

Sarvodaya Suwasetha Sangamaya (SSS)

SSS maintains Children's Homes and cares for nearly 400 orphaned, destitute and abandoned children who are referred by the Probation and Child Care Services and the Social Services Department. There are a few abused children who undergo rehabilitation in the Children's Homes. There is a programme for female children who are sexually abused. A special centre called *MaaSevana* provides facilities for pregnant girls to deliver their child safely. The homes go a step further in their care for rehabilitated girls, by helping them start a new life with a companion once they are matured adults. Unless SSS takes this initiative, the prospects for the futures of the girls tend to be very limited. All children are provided with food, lodging, education and job-oriented training.

Don Bosco Technical Training Centre

This institution, functioning since 1992, has as its mission to rehabilitate male children who have been sexually abused and exploited. There are 85 boys resident at Don Bosco, who also undergo job-oriented training in Negambo, and another 100 boys at the newly formed branch in Nochchiyagama. The Police, Probation and Child Care Services, the courts and members of the Clergy refer abused children to Don Bosco for rehabilitation.

Community Health Foundation

This is a social service institution, individually run by a qualified philanthropist, who does not solicit financial support to run the institution. It was started in 1993 and runs a rehabilitation centre for mentally, physically and emotionally affected people of all ages. Counseling and

rehabilitation of abused children are considered very important at the foundation, and at present there are 23 abused children resident there.

Social, Economic and Development Centre (SEDEC)

This NGO is affiliated with the international organization called CARITAS. Sedec's programmes in villages are organized and conducted by animators, with a greater emphasis on children's rights and human rights. Sedec implements an action plan to check on children's abuse and child labour and has recently completed a study on female trafficking and prostitution in the Anuradapura district. Sedec's national programme will be expanded in the near future, while at present they do not have rehabilitation centres or counseling centres. Their main focus is on the fishery and plantation sectors.

Eradicating Sexual Child Abuse, Prostitution and Exploitation (ESCAPE)

ESCAPE is a project of the Lanka Evangelical Alliance Development Service (LEADS). Established in 1984, their main objective is to eradicate sexual abuse of children, and allied problems including the commercial sexual exploitation of children all over the country. In keeping with this objective, ESCAPE has conducted awareness programmes in schools, in religious institutions and training programmes, for teachers, social workers and other persons working with children.

Protecting Environment And Children Everywhere (PEACE)

PEACE is a local NGO with collaborations by government institutions, local NGOs and INGOs. Their main objective is advocacy and awareness raising against the sexual exploitation of children. Conducting awareness raising programmes, rendering legal assistance to children who are sexually abused, educating and counseling women community leaders in the high risk areas, conducting research on child pornography and child trafficking and conducting rehabilitation programmes to sexually abused children are major activities presently carried out.

Chapter 2: Choice and Selection of Study Areas

2.1 Literature review

Research and investigations into the area of commercial sexual exploitation have been limited as it remains a hidden phenomenon the collection of information can be difficult. Additionally, the term “commercial sexual exploitation” is controversial and various scholars have used the term differently. According to the definition that has been used by the NGO PEACE, “sexual exploitation of children refers to the use of children (under 18 years) for the sexual satisfaction of adults. The basis of the exploitation is the unequal economic and power relationship between the child and the adult. The child is exploited for his or her youth and sexuality. Frequently this exploitation is organized by a third party for profit” (Ireland 1993).

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 34)* states that all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures should be taken to prevent:

- The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;
- The exploitative use of children in pornographic material and performances.

This indicates that the State is responsible for protecting children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

The ILO states that the exploitative use of children for sexual purposes is one of the worst forms of child labour, which includes the use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution, production of pornography or pornographic performances (ILO 1999).

Ratnapala (1999) makes a distinction between children in prostitution and the sexual exploitation of children, stating that a prostitute is a sex worker, who consciously and at times unconsciously adopts sex as a way of life, and prostitution invariably involves the exchange of money or material benefits for sex. In the case of sexual exploitation, a child may be sexually abused once or more but he or she does not adopt sex as a way of life.

Many scholars are of the opinion that the boom in the tourist industry in the 1980s in Sri Lanka has been the main cause of sexual exploitation of children for commercial purposes. This resulted in the country becoming known as a destination for child sex (Goonasekara and Wanasundara 1998). However, other studies have indicated that the commercial exploitation of children, which originated due to the influx of foreign tourists, is no longer confined to foreign paedophiles and that it also extends to Sri Lankans who are involved in paedophilic activities, while working together with foreigners (PEACE, 1996; de Silva 2001).

Studies have shown that the sexual abuse of boys by adults is common in Sri Lanka, although Sri

Lanka society has been slow in acknowledging this fact. Children are not considered as the victims, instead they are viewed as the accused. This kind of abuse takes place even in schools, but is not discussed openly and is unknown to many people (de Silva 2001).

PEACE Campaign research studies have highlighted the fact that the majority of children who are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation are boy children. During the period 1988-1990, their studies showed that there were approximately 10,000 children in prostitution under the age of 18 (PEACE, 1996). These studies identified two types of children who engage in commercial sexual activities: (a) the very visible "Beach Boys" aged 15-18 years who worked in closed gangs under the patronage of pimps (older boys who were in prostitution themselves), and (b) the loners. These studies basically found the focus to be on boys' involvement in commercial sex. As they further pointed out, the commercial sexual exploitation of boys is more common in Sri Lanka than the exploitation of young girl children and it is the sexual exploitation of boys that is meant by the term "child prostitution."

According to the same report, the ratio of boys to girls engaging in commercial sexual activities is 4:1 (ie, 80% boys and 20% girls). This may be because girl children are better protected and receive more attention from their families than boy children (PEACE, 1996, Ratnapala, 1999). The gender breakdown is confirmed by Weeramunda (1994) as well. In his sample of 87 students in three schools in Kalutara District, boys accounted for 63% of sexually exploited children. Children between the ages of 11-17 were found to be trapped in this trade.

Table 2.1 Estimation of children in commercial sexual exploitation

Institution/ Person	Estimation
Bond 1980	2000
Department of Police 1985	2000
Department of National Planning (1991)	30000
Liyanage	3000
PEACE (1999)	15000
Ratnapala (1999)	1459

Some studies show that male children are most vulnerable to this kind of sexual abuse and exploitation during their pre-adolescent period (10-14 years) while girls are at risk during the post-puberty period (Goonesekara and Wanasundara, 1998).

Since commercial sexual exploitation of children is concealed in society, it hinders the assessment of the magnitude of the issue. While different estimates are given by various researchers, Bond (1980) in his study titled "Boy Prostitutes in Sri Lanka" has estimated the number of boys involved in commercial sex to be around 2,000. According to Bond, almost half of these boys were concentrated in Colombo.

According to the Police Department, in 1985, 2,000 children were victims of commercial sexual exploitation, while the Department of National Planning estimates that figure to have increased exponentially to around 30,000 by 1991 (Goonewardana and Wanasundara 1998). PEACE

(1999) indicates that about 10,000 children in the age group of 6-14 years are at present sexually exploited for commercial purposes. The same report says another 5,000 in the 10-18 age group were found to work independently in places like beaches and tourist hotels.

Liyanage states that by 1991 there were 30,000 commercial sex workers, of whom 10 percent were children. Whereas Ratnapala asserts that the number of children who are sexually exploited for commercial purposes cannot exceed 2,000 or at most 2,500. He is of the view that this figure comprises 926 children under 16 years, and 533 under 18. He further notes that children who are victimized by this trade belong to the 5-18 age group (Ratnapala, 1999).

It is also necessary to investigate the reasons behind the widespread prevalence of commercial sexual exploitation of children. Following are some of the main reasons researchers point out for its widespread prevalence.

- The sudden growth of the tourist industry and widespread poverty, especially in rural areas, have been identified as two major reasons (Bond 1980). The majority of children who engage in commercial sexual activities come from poor families that are overburdened with too many children.
- Inadequate education is considered another significant factor. Poor parents who lack awareness are most likely to be manipulated by middle men to procure children for commercial sexual activities. Also, under these circumstances, parents may not pay sufficient attention to the educational needs of their children (Ratnapala 1999).
- Some studies reject the contention that poverty is a main cause for children to get lured into commercial sexual activities, saying there is no absolute poverty in the areas where there is a high rate of sexual exploitation of children. Instead, the lack of social control is seen as one of the main factors, whereby parents do not give proper care to their children (Weeramunda, 1994).
- Another contending thesis is that, child victims of commercial sexual exploitation come mostly from dysfunctional families. A child who is emotionally deprived and lacks parental support due to negligence, is considered to be more susceptible to commercial exploitation (Gunasekara and Wanasundara, 1998).
- To overcome poverty some parents send their children to work as domestic aides. In some instances, these children are subjected to violence and they may even run away from their employers and fall in to circumstances where they become vulnerable to being sexually exploited. Also, the ongoing conflict has resulted in the displacement of many children, who face the risk of being exposed to sexual exploitation in the refugee camps.
- Single parenthood is seen by some scholars as a causal factor for commercial sex, though Weeramunda rejects this claim. In families where violence, consumption of liquor, quarrels and child abuse are all too common, these same factors are considered to encourage children into commercial sexual activities. Incest is viewed as a high potential

factor able to lure a girl in to commercial sexual exploitation later on.

- Parents, older siblings, close relatives and peers who are already in the sex trade can provide children with an introduction to commercial sexual activities. There are reported occasions of pimps going to remote villages to “purchase” boys from impoverished or dysfunctional families (Goonesekara and Wanasundara, 1998).
- According to Weeramunda, inadequate facilities to study at home, substandard housing, lack of supervision from older siblings, and indifference on the part of parents, guardians and community leaders, are some of the factors that lead children to being entrapped in commercial sexual activities. Furthermore, some children are encouraged into this trade by older siblings, parents, etc. who are involved in some aspect of tourism. Weeramunda emphasizes that the lack of parental care is one of the main reasons that causes children to be sexually exploited for commercial purposes and then be lured into prostitution. He states that sweets, clothes, pens, food, money and even the opportunity to travel overseas are some of the factors that encourage children to enter this trade. He also believes that unemployment and resulting poverty can turn children who are already sexually exploited into engage in professional prostitution (Weeramunda, 1994).
- Urbanization is a significant factor affecting the sexual exploitation of children. Poverty in rural areas drives many peasant families to urban areas that are incapable of meeting their aspirations. In order to survive through economic hardships in the urban environment, parents may at times encourage their children to engage in the sex trade.

Besides the factors outlined above, there may be others that drive children into commercial sexual exploitation. Reports indicate that sometimes offenders lure children into the illicit trade by promising them fascinating opportunities such as acting in movies and overseas travel (Case studies are reported in PEACE 1996).

2.2 Profile of the survey area

The areas under investigation in this study are located in several districts, namely, Gampaha, Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Kandy and Anuradhapura. Locations and districts that were studied are given in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 The locations of Study and their Districts

Location	District
Negombo	Gampaha
Mount Lavinia	Colombo
Moratuwa	Colombo
Bentota, Induruwa	Kalutara
Hikkaduwa, Unawatuna	Galle
Matara	Matara
Tangalle	Hambantota
Anuradhapura	Anuradhapura
Kandy	Kandy

A brief description of some of the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics relating to each of the districts will help to provide the necessary background to this study. Differences within areas of the same district are generally not significant, and as such, the specific locations would reflect the general characteristics of the district. Table 2.3 shows the total population of these districts in 1981 (census year), as well as the population density and projected population for 1998 in the districts under study.

Table 2.3 Total population, population density and projected population by district, 1981

District	Total population ('000)	Pop. density (per sq. km.)	Projected pop. (in '000)
Gampaha	1,390.9	1,338	1,795
Colombo	1,699.2	3,374	2,281
Kalutara	829.7	629	992
Kandy	1,048.3	696	1,335
Galle	814.5	629	1,017
Matara	643.8	633	804
Hambantota	424.3	217	543
Anuradhapura	587.9	111	737

Source: Statistical Abstract, 1999

Table 2.4 shows the population by sex in the districts under study.

Table 2.4 Population by sex for 1981 and 1996 in districts selected for the study

District	1981 (in '000)		1996 (projected) (in '000)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Colombo	894	805	925	887
Gampaha	703	688	758	735
Kalutara	413	416	472	490
Kandy	519	529	578	591
Galle	397	418	422	448
Matara	312	382	363	438
Hambantota	217	208	275	261
Anuradhapura	314	274	388	328

Source: Census 1981 and Demographic Projections

It is relevant to examine the population of the principal towns that are within close proximity to the areas under study. Much of the activities relating to commercial sexual exploitation of children take place in the towns, to which rural folk are attracted in their search for jobs. Table 2.5 gives data pertaining to the towns.

Table 2.5 Population of the principal town located in close proximity to the study area

Principal town	Population
Negombo (Gampaha District)	60,762
Dehiwala-Mt. Lavinia (Colombo Dist.)	173,529
Moratuwa (Colombo District)	134,826
Kalutara	31,503
Kandy	97,827
Galle	76,863
Matara	38,843
Hambantota	8,577
Anuradhapura	35,981

Source: Statistical Abstract, 1999

The high level of literacy prevalent in Sri Lanka is reflected in the districts where the study areas are located. Data on dropout rates from schools in each district are found to be useful, since many of the commercially sexually exploited children have not studied up to the higher grades. Table 2.6 shows data on literacy and dropout rates, by sex and by district.

Table 2.6 Literacy rate and dropout rate up to Year Nine in Government schools, by sex and by district (1991/92)¹

District	Literacy rate		Dropout rate	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Gampaha	96.3	92.9	2.9	1.9
Colombo	95.8	92.3	2.5	2.7
Kalutara	93.2	87.5	3.9	2.8
Kandy	90.9	81.0	3.4	2.5
Galle	92.7	87.1	3.6	2.7
Matara	90.2	81.7	2.8	1.2
Hambantota	87.5	75.8	4.0	2.1
Anuradhapura	90.9	81.3	4.1	2.9

Source: Statistical Abstract, 1999

It is to be noted that the dropout rate for males is clearly higher than that for females where many of them have not completed their secondary education. The present study shows that children who are the targets of commercial sexual exploitation usually fall into this category. Compulsory education at the primary level and free education from kindergarten to university is the norm in Sri Lanka. However, there is a strong mismatch between person power requirements and the necessary person power output and skills. Education and training are not usually matched with job opportunities. This fact, together with the rising cost of living in the country, seems to drive children from the poor segments of society to seek financial and other benefits through undesirable means.

2.2.1 Poverty levels and variations in per-capita GDP

Even though Sri Lanka ranks fairly high in the Human Development Index when compared with other developing countries of the world, there is much to be done to alleviate rural poverty. Scholars point to increasing levels of poverty in many districts, while inter-district differences too are widening. Table 2.7 illustrates the disparity in growth rates in the study districts between 1990 and 1994.

¹ When a child reaches Year Nine at school, he or she would be about 14 to 15 years in age.

Table 2.7 Per-capita growth of GDP between 1990 & 1994, by districts

District	Per capita GDP in 1990	Per capita GDP in 1994	Per capita growth rate (1990-94)
Colombo	12,610	14,545	3.8
Gampaha	11,862	14,880	6.4
Kalutara	11,849	13,480	3.4
Kandy	5,692	6,664	4.3
Galle	5,747	7,125	6.0
Matara	4,812	6,780	10.2
Hambantota	6,244	7,119	3.5
Anuradhapura	6,757	10,832	15.1

Source: National Human Development Report 1998

The relatively strong position of the Western Province (consisting of Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara districts) is clearly evident from Table 2.6. For instance, the per-capita GDP of Kalutara is more than double that of Kandy during this period. The Western Province accounts for a substantial share of the country's economy, where the main sectors of growth are trade and commerce, construction, gas, electricity, and manufacturing, all associated with the development of the urban sector and the expansion of the port of Colombo. Income disparity is also in favour of Colombo, which is exemplified by the fact that the total income of Matara district accounts for only 38 percent of the total income of Colombo. However, Kandy and Matara districts perform fairly well in terms of the poverty index even though their per-capita income is rather low. According to the district ranking of the Human Poverty Index, Kandy and Matara rank fourth and seventh, whereas the first three positions are occupied by Gampaha, Colombo and Kalutara districts in that order. Table 2.8 presents the ranking of districts in the present study, according to the per-capita Human Development Index (HDI) and the Human Poverty Index (HPI).

Table 2.8 Ranking of study districts by per-capita HDI and HPI

District	Per-capita HDI	HPI
Colombo	6	2
Gampaha	5	1
Kalutara	1	3
Kandy	17	4
Galle	11	5
Matara	15	7
Hambantota	9	11
Anuradhapura	4	8

Source: Human Development Report, 1998

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Objectives of the study

This study aims to assess the status quo of children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation in Sri Lanka, with a view to make planning recommendations to overcome this problem. The specific objectives of the study are:

- a) to find out reasons for and factors affecting the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the selected locations;
- b) to sensitize citizens, the government, NGOs and other stakeholders in policy planning and implementation of programmes about the situation of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka;
- c) to test and evaluate the Rapid Assessment² methodology detailed in the ILO/UNICEF manual³ for organizing fieldwork and data collection, and to make the necessary adaptations pertaining to the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

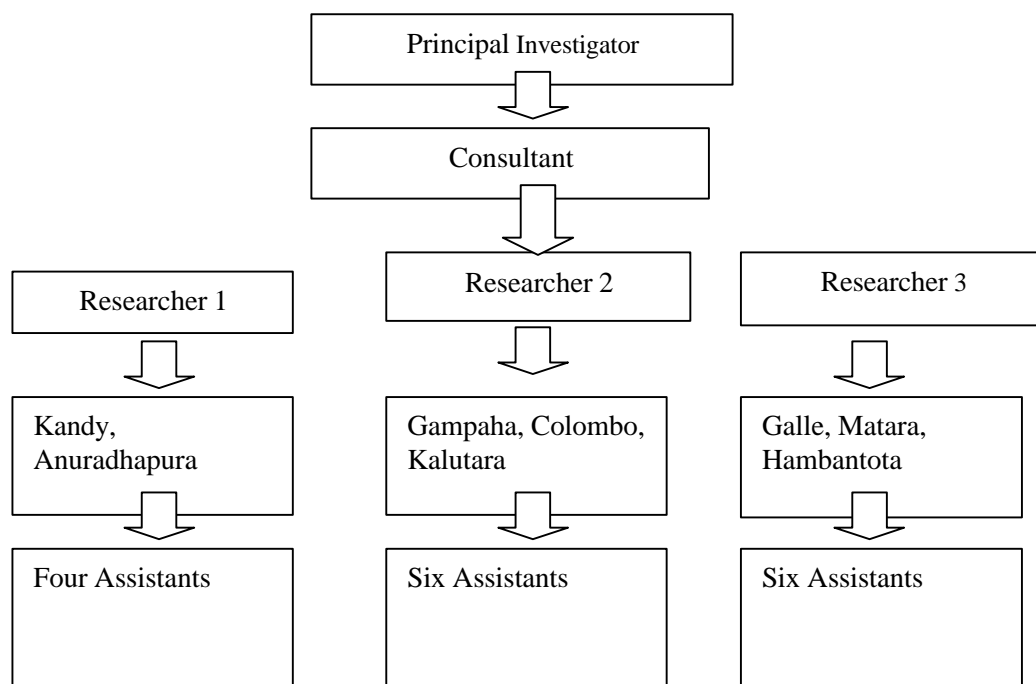
3.2 Selecting and training research personnel

The preliminary work commenced in June 2001. The first task of the preliminary activities was to identify a team of researchers to take responsibility for carrying out the study using the Rapid Assessment technique in selected districts. Three researchers were chosen. The first researcher was assigned the districts of Kandy and Anuradhapura; the second researcher was assigned the districts of Gampaha, Colombo and Kalutara; and the third was assigned Galle, Matara and Hambantota districts. A senior professor was recruited as the consultant at the beginning of the project to provide guidance overall guidance. The research team and the consultant together with the principal investigator carried out a series of discussions as to how to proceed with the study, with reference to the field manual.

The team members, in consultation with the Principal Investigator (PI) recruited sixteen research assistants (RAs), from the respective districts. Fifteen of them were graduates from disciplines of sociology, economics and demography. Among them five were females.

² A research methodology that uses several techniques, i.e. interviews, focus group discussions, observations, etc. to collect both qualitative and quantitative information to achieve an understanding of a specific social reality or situation. The method is called Rapid Assessment because it is expected to last no more than three months from beginning to end (ILO January 2000).

³ Investigating Child labour: Guidelines for Rapid Assessment A field manual. ILO 2000, Draft.



3.3 Methodological decision-making

The research team together with the PI and the consultant identified the methodological framework within the stipulated parameters of the rapid assessment procedure, as detailed in the manual. As the researchers were new to the subject, familiarization and first-hand exposure to the areas and information were necessary to begin with, thus the three researchers and the PI carried out a reconnaissance of the districts. During these visits they held meetings with some key persons, made observations, and collected basic information from the local offices as part of the sensitization activities of the team. The preliminary exposure was useful for localization of the information requirement of the study that is mentioned in the manual, and to decide on the specific study locations.

3.4 Preparation of questionnaires and guides

Immediately after the preliminary field investigation, the team worked out the methods for interviewing taking into account the guidelines provided in the manual, which were whetted according to the local situation and culture of the chosen locations. The team prepared the following:

- a) A questionnaire to interview the respondent children at the study locations and in certain rehabilitation centers;
- b) A guide for discussions with key informants.

The questionnaire for respondent children was comprised of ten sections, with varying numbers of individual questions under each section.

The sections were as follows:

1. Demographic data and family background
2. Household details
3. Socio-economic status
4. Educational background of the respondent
5. History of sexual abuse
6. Details on present commercial sexual activities
7. Income and benefits of sexual activities
8. Attitudes towards sexual activities of the respondent
9. Negative consequences of commercial sexual involvement
10. Rehabilitation

3.5 Training of Research Assistants

Prior to commencement of fieldwork, the Research Assistants were given a thorough training on all aspects of the fieldwork. The training programme was held in Colombo over a period of two days. The training included a field programme as well. A panel of experts that included a demographer, a lawyer and a sociologist provided the training. The programme included sessions on background information about commercial sexual exploitation within specific political, economic and social context of the districts, methodological aspects including interview skills, observation techniques, taking notes and documentation at the field level, and other required skills. As the Research Assistants were university graduates with an exposure to field methodologies, the team felt that a two-day programme of training would suffice.

The study was carried out in the districts of Colombo, Kalutara, Gampaha, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Anuradhapura and Kandy. The choice of the districts was made after discussion and consultation with the National Programme Manager of ILO/IPEC in Colombo. The districts that were selected were the high tourist concentration areas, and those affected by population displacement due to the current ethnic uprisings. The decision to select the districts was also influenced by the knowledge and experience of the investigators. The areas selected in the districts are given below.

District	Study location
Colombo	Dehiwala-Mt. Lavinia, Moratuwa
Gampaha	Negombo
Kalutara	Bentota
Galle	Hikkaduwa and Unawatuna
Matara	Weligama and Mirissa
Hambantota	Tangalle
Anuradhapura	Kebithigollewa and Padawiya
Kandy	Kandy town and Teldeniya

The study locations were selected after consulting key informants who were knowledgeable in

the sex trade in the areas, and after studying published research on incidents of children in prostitution. It has been reported that children are actively engaged in prostitution in the areas selected for the present study, particularly in Colombo, Mt Lavinia, Negombo, Kalutara, Hikkaduwa, Unawatuna, and Tangalle⁴. The researchers also collected observational data for certain variables on the locations prior to the final area selection.

The locations were then rank-ordered based on the observations made by the research team. The variables that were observed in the locations were the following:

1. High concentration of tourists;
2. Presence of a large number of sexually exploited children in an area within close proximity;
3. Concentration of street children;
4. Presence of brothels and commercial sex venues.

In addition, a convenient sample of 14 children was obtained from the centres where child convicts are being rehabilitated in order to find out information on the rehabilitation programmes available in Sri Lanka for convicted children engaged in prostitution. Permission was granted for interviewing the inmates at the rehabilitation centres of Galle and Kandy. This sample of 14 convicted children under-going rehabilitation and the 106 children interviewed in the eight districts constitute the total sample of 120 respondents.

Table 3.2 Distribution of respondent children in the study (n = 120)

LOCATION	Sex		Total
	male	female	
Colombo: Dehiwala-Mt Lavinia, Moratuw	8	7	15
Gampaha: Negombo	11		11
Kalutara: Bentota	7	3	10
Kandy: Kandy; Teldeniya	4	9	13
Galle: Hikkaduwa;	19	1	20
Unawatuna	11	5	16
Matara: Weligama; Mirissa	4	6	10
Hambantota: Tangalle	14	1	15
Anuradhapura: Padawiya; Kebithigollewa		10	10
Total	78	42	120

Gampaha, Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Matara and Hambantota are districts located in the south and southwestern coastal areas where tourism is present. These areas were selected with a view to identify the impact of tourism on children in commercial sex. Kandy and Anuradhapura represent two districts of the inner country, both with a prominence as ancient cities with religious value. Street children, and convicted children presently undergoing rehabilitation were mostly included in the sample from Kandy area. Anuradhapura respondents include children

⁴ Nandasena Ratnapala (1999) Sex Workers of Sri Lanka.

living in border villages close to the north and northeastern provinces where the current ethnic war is in operation.

3.6 The research focus

The research focus of the study is on children who are being commercially exploited for sexual purposes. Children who are commercially exploited for sex (CSE) are a hidden population. They are difficult to identify in public, and even if identified, they do not admit their association with such activities for fear of conviction. As described under section 2.3.5, this particular population is largely found in urban areas and in coastal areas where tourism is widely practiced. In the present study an attempt has been made to identify such populations in other socio-cultural settings too, such as in displaced communities and border villages, a phenomenon that has been introduced into the socio-cultural matrix of the country recently.

In the investigation the following particular aspects of this population were studied:

- Demographic characteristics of the study population;
- Activities of the respondents;
- Living conditions and socio-economic status of the children and their families;
- Education and schooling;
- Attitudes towards work and school.

3.7 Methods of data collection

The ‘hidden’ nature of this population did not allow us to use the conventional methodologies of data collection in this study. The capture-recapture method of estimation⁵ for example, is an inappropriate method when investigating this type of hidden population.

The data for the study were collected using a rapid assessment methodology as stipulated by the ILO. There were two stages of data collection and processing. In the first stage qualitative information on the locations, children exposed to commercial sexual exploitation, sex offenders, venues of sexual activity, intermediaries involved, types of sex acts to which the children are exposed, and possible push-pull factors that drew children into the sex trade were collected. In the second stage, data were analyzed and patterns identified.

Selection of children

There were certain limitations confronting the selection of children for the study. First, there was no sample frame available to incorporate in selecting respondent children as the commercial sexual exploitation of children operates as a hidden phenomenon, nor were there national surveys conducted on such children to draw on. Secondly, as per the work schedule, a limited time frame (three weeks) was allocated for the purpose of selecting and interviewing children.

⁵ Jensen, Robert T, et al (2001) A guide to reporting on rapid assessments Or what you should get from your rapid assessments (draft), ILO/IPEC - SIMPOC.

To overcome these limitations several techniques were used. First, researchers and research assistants - well known to respective districts - were assigned to select respondents and conduct interviews. Since the operation of commercial sexual exploitation was concentrated in several pockets in each district where conditions such as tourism or civil war exist, it was not too difficult to trace children involved in commercial sex. Secondly, the researchers, using existing contacts in these areas, could develop a good rapport with key informants such as Probation and Child Care officers, hotel owners and employees, three wheel drivers, tourist guides and so on. These persons were helpful in introducing children to researchers. On some occasions CSE children themselves were instrumental in connecting other such children to researchers. In the case of border villages in Anuradhapura district where ethnic war is taking place, army soldiers on duty were helpful in reaching some girl children.

Tools of data collection

Several methods were employed to collect information. A primary method used was the questionnaire. Pre-testing of the questionnaire was carried out and certain modifications were made.

Apart from gathering data through questionnaires, the other important techniques were observations, interviews and Focus Group Discussions.

Observations: The observation technique was used to observe how children were being exposed to commercial sexual offenders, activities of the intermediaries, meeting places, public behaviour of children in sexual exploits where they walk together with their partners, and, how people describe such acts. Observation data were collected on separate observation sheets, and detailed notes on observation were documented in the field books provided to the Research Assistants.

Interviews: The interviews were mainly carried out with the respondent children and the parents by administering a questionnaire. In addition, key informant interviews were also carried out to identifying specific locations of commercial sexual exploitation, to explore factors leading to sexual exploitation, and to seek details on how sexual exploitation is organized in the areas. There were 120 child interviews, and forty interviews administered to parents or key informants.

Those children interviewed represented four categories, namely children in coastal areas, street children, children in war affected areas, and those who were presently in rehabilitation centres. Even though there was information about children who engaged in sex activities at guest houses, hotels and brothels, the research team could not find children directly at such locations since they carry out the activities secretly. In the case of interviewing children undergoing rehabilitation, permission was granted by the Commissioner of Probationary and Child Care Services in the respective divisions.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Several FGDs were carried out in the respective areas. Discussions were also organized in the institutions and areas that were visited during the course of the research. The FGDs were useful in eliciting information on the course of action that each institution has taken, and will be taking in order to overcome this problem. In the communities,

these discussions were useful in identifying the locations, and specific characteristics of the commercial sexual exploits in particular locations. Participants at the focus group discussions were officers of government institutions and non-governmental institutions who are engaged in the rehabilitation work in respective areas. For example, the police officers, Probation and Child Care Services officers, and officers and workers at rehabilitation centres. The main questions posed were as follows:

- What are the reasons that "push" or "pull" children towards such activities?
- How are children affected by being involved in sex activities?
- Are there Governmental and non-governmental organizations that are actively working to prevent such activities?
- What steps have been taken by them to rehabilitate the victims?

FGDs were held by the Principal Investigator. In addition, field notes were maintained to document the qualitative aspects of the study. The data in the field notes were used to substantiate quantitative findings at the time of analysis and interpretation. They also provided important insights as to the organization and patterns of commercial sexual exploitation in the areas.

3.8 Operationalisation of variables

For the purpose of the research and collection of field data, the key variables have been operationalized in the following manner:

Children exploited in commercial sexual activities: Children commercially exploited for sexual purposes (CSE) in this study are defined as males and females who are below 18 years of age. The ILO has defined this worst form of child labour as the use, procurement or offering of a child for prostitution, production of pornography or pornographic performances.⁶

Family: The family is defined as the parents and siblings of the respondent or the guardian with whom the respondent lives. The family may be comprised of people other than the child's parents and siblings.

Living conditions: Living conditions inquire into two situations: the present living condition and the living condition of the previous place, taking into account past and present household type, parity, presence or absence of the guardian/father/mother.

Educational level: Completed grade in school

Marital status: Married, widowed, or separated

Household: The house at which the respondent lives. This may contain more than one family.

Household facilities: These comprised of movable and immovable property such as televisions, electricity, water, etc.

⁶ ILO Convention (No 182) on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999.

Socio-economic status: Whether a Samurdhi beneficiary, ownership of assets, ownership of land, total income of the family, father's occupation, mother's occupation.

Intermediary: person who mediates between the provider and the seeker, by providing the former to those who seek sexual gratification.

Offender: Locals and foreigners who sexually exploit and abuse children.

Paedophile: A paedophile is a person who has an exclusive interest in sexual contact with a child. This interest may be transitory or long lasting and enduring. Paedophilia is essentially a state in which an individual is predisposed to use children for his or her sexual gratification.⁷

Sexual abuse: Sexual contact between an adult and a child for purposes of the adult sexual gratification.

Child victim: A child subjected to sexual exploitation or abuse by a perpetrator with or without the child's own consent .

Negative consequences of sexual exploitation: mental and/or physical diseases caused by engaging in commercial sexual exploitation; social stigma, and marginalisation due to such associations; engagement in various anti-social, violent activities such as drug addiction, trafficking, crime, bad habits, and associating with bad friends.

⁷ Goonasekara, Savithri and Wanasundara, Leelangi, (1998) Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Sri Lanka, Paper prepared for the Commonwealth Secretariat, London.

Chapter 4: Findings of the Study

4.1 Profile of the children

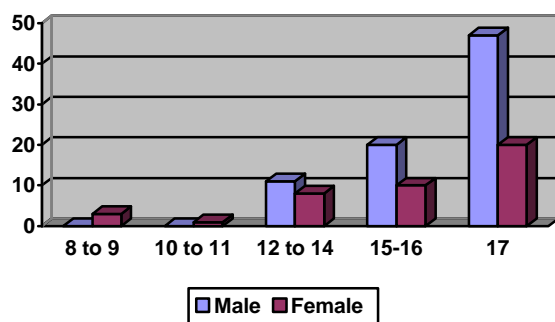
Table 4.2 and Figure 4.1 show the gender and age breakdown of the 120 child respondents, all of whom had been victims of commercial sexual exploitation. There were 42 female children and 78 male children in the sample. The figure shows that there were no male children below 11 years. The respondents are predominantly boys from the age of 12 years to 17 years, increasing with age. The girls also increase in number with the increase in age, but their degree of increase is not as steady as that of the boys.

Table 4.1 Distribution of respondent-children by gender and age group (n=120)

Sex	Age categories					Total
	8-9	10-11	12-14	15-16	17	
Male	--	--	11	20	47	78
Female	3	1	8	10	20	42
Total	3	1	19	30	67	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Figure 4.1 Distribution of respondents by age and sex



As seen in Table 3.1, male children were found largely in Hikkaduwa, (95 percent), Tangalle (93 percent), Negombo (100 percent), Unawatuna (69 percent) and Mt. Lavinia (67 percent). The high incidence of male commercial sexual exploitation in these locations is largely associated with the tourist industry in the areas. Studies undertaken by PEACE (1999) show that male children whose ages generally range from six to eight years are involved in the sex trade along the beach resorts of the southwest coast. They are usually school dropouts and they engage in such activities for small financial rewards. The prospect of quick and easy money is a great attraction. From the very inception of tourism in Sri Lanka, the areas such as Negombo, Mt.Lavinia, Hikkaduwa, Unawatuna, and Bentota have been regarded as popular holiday resorts in the western and southwestern coastal belt.

The wide, lonely beaches in these locations attract tourists and proved an environment conducive for the local people to be involved in activities such as the provision of male children to paedophiles coming from the West. “International Magazines such as ‘*Spartucus International Gay Guide*,’ produced in the Netherlands and Germany, achieved particular notoriety for promoting certain countries such as Sri Lanka...for homosexual tourism, and highlighting the availability of children at these destinations (*Spartucus International Gay Guide*, 1995-1996). Tour operators (including some airlines) openly promoted child sex tourism in Sri Lanka. Paedophiles flocked to these countries in response to the promotions” (de Silva 2001). In our study female children were largely found in the interior districts like Kandy and Anuradhapura. Both these districts are also popular tourist and pilgrimage areas for local tourists.

Data on the social and economic class position of the respondent children show that they are more or less equally distributed among the three classes: 30.8 percent in the ‘not so poor’ class, 37.5 percent in ‘the poor class’ and 31.7 percent in ‘the very poor class’. The class position was estimated using variables that described family and household situations, and ownership of assets such as house type (wall, floor, roof), availability of electricity and facilities such as televisions, and receipt of government assistance (Samurdhi). The class, an additive scale of the above variables, indicates that the reliability of the scale to measure the class position is quite high and accurate.

The ‘very poor’ class comprised 38 families, of which the majority lived in makeshift houses, made of temporary materials. Only five families of the 38 had electricity. The ‘poor class’ had 45 families, and the condition of their houses was fairly good - made of some permanent material. Twenty-three of the forty-five families had electricity. In the ‘not-so-poor’ class there were 37 families. Their houses were built with permanent materials and 24 out of 37 had electricity.

Table 4.2 Socioeconomic background of respondents by gender (%) (n=120)

Gender	Class			Total
	very poor	poor	not so-poor	
Male	23.1	38.5	38.5	100
Female	47.6	35.7	16.7	100
Total	31.7	37.5	30.8	100

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The analysis of gender in relation to the class position shows that more females than males have been sexually exploited commercially in the ‘very poor’ class, while in the ‘poor’ and ‘not so poor’ classes the tendency has been reversed. It also shows that with higher class position, male involvement in commercial sexual exploitation has increased. This is partly because, in the tourist areas, it is considered a prestige to be with a tourist. Male children of the ‘not so poor’ category may have, therefore, been targets of male sexual exploitation. Often these associations are established and forged with the boys thinking that their partners will help them in seeking

foreign employment, securing jobs in the tourist trade and so on. Such benefits are often positively weighted against the ‘bad’ consequences of these relationships. However, the fact that more female children from poor and very poor families have been involved in such activities, is a clear indication that the economic difficulties operated as a major push factor in sexual exploitation.

Box 4.1 Story of Nimalka

(Note: all names used throughout the report have been changed)

Nimalka is 11 years old. Her mother has deserted the family about a year ago and lives with a man. The father has no permanent job. He looked after Nimalka as well as her younger sister, by doing odd jobs and stealing coconuts from the nearby gardens. Nimalka was made to sell these coconuts to the boutiques in the neighbourhood. One of the shopkeepers used to fulfil his sexual desires through Nimalka. He offers Nimalka, money sweets and other eatables as gratification.

When the class position is analyzed against the age groups of respondents, it is seen that numbers have increased in all classes with the increase in age. The percentage distribution of these respondents is shown in the following table. The table also shows that respondents in the ‘very poor’ group are engaged in commercial sex activities at an earlier age relative to the other two classes.

Table 4.3 Socioeconomic background of respondents by age group (%) (n=120)

Class	Age Groups					Total
	8-9	10-11	12-14	15-16	17	
Very poor	5.3	2.6	21.1	34.2	36.8	100
Poor	2.2		15.6	20.0	62.2	100
Not so poor			10.8	21.6	67.6	100
Total	2.5	8	15.8	25.0	55.8	100

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The study showed that female respondents in the ‘very poor’ class entered into prostitution at a relatively younger age than females in the other classes. However, this phenomenon is not as acute in relation to the male respondents. Still, it is clear that poor children are a high-risk group. Parental negligence, poverty, and poor values attached to childhood may have contributed to the high prevalence of such incidence in the poorer classes.

The profile of children subject to commercial sexual exploitation in our sample shows that they were predominantly Sinhalese (97.5 percent). The representation of respondents from other ethnic groups, namely, Tamil and Muslims was relatively less, with only 1.7 percent and 0.8 percent respectively. The percentage distribution of children among religions in the sample was as follows: Buddhists (87.5 percent), Hindus (1.7 percent), Christians (10.0 percent) and Muslims (0.1 percent). One of the major reasons for the higher representation of the Sinhalese and the Buddhists in the sample was because these areas were mainly inhabited by the Sinhalese-Buddhists, the major ethnic and religious group in Sri Lanka.

4.2 Educational attainment of respondents

Among the respondents 82 percent are not enrolled in school. About 2.5 percent have not had any formal education. Twenty-five percent of the respondents have been educated only up to grade 5 or they have not gone beyond the primary school education. None of the respondents have education up to GCE (Advanced Level), while about 25 percent have reached the GCE (Ordinary Level) class. A child is admitted to grade one of the school system in Sri Lanka when he/she is five years of age. Generally the child is 16 to 17 years old when he sits the GCE (OL) examination. The average age of students sitting GCE (AL) examination is between 18-19 years. The following table shows the educational status of the respondents.

Table 4.4 Educational attainment of respondents (n=120)

Grades	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
No schooling	3	2.5	
1-2	3	2.5	2.5
3-5	26	21.7	5.0
6-8	35	29.2	26.7
9-11	31	25.8	55.8
Currently attending	22	18.3	81.7
Total	120	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

It is evident that a large percentage of the respondents did not reach a level of education that would enable them to find gainful employment in the government or private sector after leaving school. The percentage of respondents who received a ninth grade education or less is almost 66 percent. The mean age at which children under 15 left school 11.7 years. Overall the differences between boys and girls were not significant, however, 12 out of 20 girls (60 percent) left school before reaching grade 6, whereas for the boys it was a much lower 27 percent.

When the reasons for early school leaving in male and female students are analyzed, it is seen that poverty (lack of resources to cover required school-related costs such as bags, shoes, pens pencils, exercise books, etc.) is a major factor. The need to assist parents in their work, and desire to earn money for themselves have also emerged as prominent factors. Although examination failures were thought of as a predominant factor for early school leaving, it has not been an important factor in our sample. Personal humiliation at school, however, may have been a major factor in disliking school and dropping out. Also, the insecurity arising from a bad home situation can contribute to leaving school at an early age.

As stated by the Headmaster of a primary school in the Kebithigollewa Educational Division, Anuradhapura, the parent are not enthusiastic about sending their children to the school mainly due to the consequential economic difficulties that arise from the war environment. In many instances, the children stopped schooling during the period of harvesting so that they could work

as domestic helpers. Additionally, a lack of lighting in their homes after dark for security reasons in some locations, and in many instances having to spend the night in the jungle, has limited the interest of the children to study and stay in school.

It was also revealed from a discussion with the Principal of a secondary school in the District of Kalutara (Bentota), that the children of the poor families as well as the other families living closer to the sea coast have made it a practice to loiter and play on the beach after school. This environment has introduced children to the habit of getting money and various gifts, especially from the foreign tourists with whom they develop relationships.

Table 4.5 Reasons for respondents to leave school by gender (n=64)

Reason	Male	Female	Total
Failed exams	1	1	2
Did not like the school	13	1	14
Could not afford school-related costs	13	11	24
To help parents	6	2	8
To make a living	8	1	9
Expelled from school	3	4	7
Total	44	20	64

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The respondents were asked to mention one major reason for leaving school at an early age. Dislike of the school and inability of parents to provide school requirements ranked high. The higher percentage of female students leaving school at an earlier age might be linked to sexual exploitation, although this was not openly mentioned as a contributing factor. There is a high correlation between age at which respondents left school and age at which they were sexually abused (.67 r^2). The association is .71 for girls while it is .64 for boys. This suggests that sexual exploitation has had an impact on the decision of girls to leave school early.

Box 4.2 Reasons for leaving school - Kamala's story

Kamala is a 15-year old girl, who studied in a mixed secondary school in Matara District. She developed a love affair with a boy in the same class. At his request, she accompanied him to a house of a friend. There she was raped by the boyfriend. This news was spread to her friends by the boyfriend's friends and thereafter she was ill-treated at school. She could not face the humiliation anymore and finally decided to stop going to school.

Of the respondents who have both left school and who are currently attending school, 53 percent stated that they encountered negative experiences at school. These negative experiences as stated by the respondents can be summarized as follows.

Table 4.6 Incidence of unpleasant experiences at school (n=64)

Type of unpleasant experience	Frequency	Percent
Punishment by teachers	12	18.8
Humiliation by friends	13	20.3
Insufficient food	2	3.1
Inadequate requirements	29	45.3
Other	8	12.5
Total	64	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Punishment and humiliation by teachers and humiliation by friends at school affected 39 percent of respondents. The bitter experience encountered by respondents may have been one of the reasons that they stopped attending school. The fact that negative experiences affect the schooling of respondents can be further supported by the fact that a large proportion of school dropouts (80 percent) mentioned that they had such experiences in school. This percentage is much higher than the percentage of negative experiences reported (45 percent) by those who currently attend schools.

**Box 4.3 Reasons for leaving school –
Jayantha's story**

Jayantha is a 13-year old student who studied in a school in Tangalle, in Hambantota District. His father deserted the family and thereafter the maintenance of the family of six rested entirely on Jayantha's mother. She earned money by doing odd jobs, though hardly enough to spend on education for the children. As a result, Jayantha helped the fishermen on the beach and earned a living. In the process he became weak in school work. Adding to that, he also lacked clothes and other necessities required by the school. Teachers and friends humiliated him so much so that he was forced to leave the school forever.

4.3 Living conditions, family background and socio-economic status

4.3.1 Living conditions

This study reveals that 38 per cent of respondent children are presently living away from their nuclear family. This situation seems to be relatively worse (57 per cent) in the case of female children. The marginalization of children without proper attention and affection of parents may be an important factor pushing them into unlawful activities at their young age.

Table 4.7 Earlier and current residence of respondents (n=120)

Earlier residence		Current Residence				Earlier residence	Total
		With the family member	With relatives or friends	Alone	Rehabilitation Centre	Other	
Sex							
male	with both parents	56	5	4	4	1	70
	with mother	1	2	--	1	2	6
	with mother & siblings	1	--	--	--	--	1
	with father	--	--	1	--	--	1
	With others	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total		58	7	5	5	3	78
female	with both parents	16	6	3	6	3	34
	with mother	--	3	--	1	--	4
	with Father & siblings	--	--	--	2	--	2
	with others	2	--	--	--	--	2
Total		18	9	3	9	3	42

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The table indicates that of the 70 boys who lived initially with their families 14 persons have currently moved away from family. Four of them have been convicted and have moved to rehabilitation centers, while four are living alone and five have moved in with some of their relatives or friends. Of the six children who lived with the mother initially, one person was convicted and sent to a rehabilitation center, two have moved to a relatives' or friends' homes, and one continues to be with his mother. The only boy who was with the father initially is now living alone.

Half of the girl children who used to live with the family have moved away to other places of living now. Of the total, six are in rehabilitation centers, three are living alone, and six live with friends and relatives.

Box 4.4 Reasons for leaving home – Sheela's story

16-year old Sheela is the second daughter of a family of seven children in Kandy. Her father was a small-trader. Her father had a friend who used to visit their house often and then developed a relationship with her mother. One day, when no one was at home, this man raped Sheela and thereafter continued to have a sexual relationship with her. Sheela's mother encouraged this man to exploit Sheela and because of this, Sheela did not like her mother. Sheela moved out of her home and is now living with her grandmother.

The study’s inquiry into reasons for moving, revealed that the father’s anger, punishments given by parents, influence of others on the decision to move out, seeking employment, death of parents and broken homes all play a role. The study revealed that there may be many reasons that have contributed toward the decision to move out of the parental home (see Table 4.8).

Table 4.8 Reasons for respondents to move out of home by gender (n=35)

Gender	Father's anger and punishments	Influence of Others	Employment	Death or separation of parents
Male	4	9	2	3
Female	2	9	--	6
Total	6	18	2	9

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

In the Galle District, a focus group discussion with Probation and Child Welfare Officers reported that some children were pulled into anti-social activities because of their mother’s migration to the Middle East in search of employment opportunities. Often their fathers have then become addicted to liquor and involved in extra marital activities. The children have lost the security of their home. Their education has also been interrupted.

It is noteworthy that, of male children, 47 per cent reported that a parent has either died or deserted them while 64 per cent girl children reported the same. Another significant factor is that the sexually exploited children seem to come from large families. The average family size is 5.3. When desegregated by gender it is seen that 45 percent of boys and 38 percent of girls were the oldest in their families. Forty-eight percent of the boys and 64 percent of girls had both their parents. Sixty five percent of boys and 45 percent of girls had their father only, while 85 percent of boys and 69 percent of girls had their mother only. Not having a father in most of the cases is seen as an important issue.

Box 4.5 Reasons for leaving home - Kumara’s story

Kumara is a 14-year old boy living in Unawatuna in Galle District. He is the eldest of seven children. His father has no steady job, and as a result his mother went overseas for employment about a year ago. Kumara’s father wastes all the money his mother sends on liquor. The father comes home drunk and harasses all the children. Kumara does not like his father’s new behaviour. One day the father assaulted Kumara when he was drunk. Since that day, Kumara has lived at his uncle’s house.

In all cases the family size was fairly large, having a total number of five to six members per family. In the rural sector of Sri Lanka the average family size is 4.56. District level figures are not available (Consumer Finance Survey 1996/97, Central Bank of Colombo). There is little evidence of an extended family situation. The death of the father seems to be an important factor driving these children to become victims of commercial sexual exploitation. The authority of the father in the home plays an important role in family life, and this factor was absent in many cases. Most of the respondents came from single-parent families. Also, over 17 percent of children reported that their mothers had migrated abroad in search of employment because of economic hardships.

4.3.2 Socioeconomic background

Parents/guardian's education

Data on parental education presents in the tables given below and it is clear that, by comparison, the fathers' level of education is lower than that of the mothers'. For instance, nearly 48 percent of respondents reported that their fathers had an educational level of grade 5 or less. Only about 38 percent reported such a low level in respect to their mothers. Further more relatively a higher percentage of children (65 per cent) had expressed that they are not aware of the level of education of their fathers. This proportion has been 53 per cent for mothers'. The reason for this disparity of children's knowledge of parental education has a lot to do with not having a father in the family in most of the cases. However, none of the children stated that either their mother or father is illiterate.

Table 4.9 Respondents' father's level of education by gender (n=120)

Level of Education (Grades)	sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Freq.	Cum.
	Freq.	Cum	Freq.	Cum		
2	1	1		0	1	
3	5	6	3	3	8	1
4	2	8	1	4	3	9
5	5	13	3	7	8	12
6	1	14			1	20
7	3	17			3	21
8	6	23	1	8	7	24
10	2	25	1	9	3	31
11	6	31			6	34
13	1	32			1	40
do not know	46	78	33	42	79	41
Total	78		42		120	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Table 4.10 Respondents' mother's level of education by gender (n=120)

Mother's Education	sex				Total	
	Male		Female		Freq.	Cum.
	Freq.	Cum	Freq.	Cum		
2	4	04	1	01	5	05
3	2	06	-	01	2	07
4	3	09	1	02	4	11
5	9	18	2	04	11	22
6	7	25	1	05	8	30
7	1	26	1	06	2	32
8	5	31	4	10	9	41
9	1	32	-	10	1	42
10	1	33	-	10	1	43
11	13	46	1	11	14	80
Do not know	32	78	31	42	63	120
Total	78		42		120	

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Receipt of Government assistance

The majority of children (75 respondents) said that their families get Samurdhi (poverty alleviation) benefits from the government. This amounts to 65 percent of the total families. The amount that each family gets varies as shown in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11 No. of respondents receiving Samurdhi and assistance received (n=75)

Monthly allowance (Rs)	Samurdhi Beneficiaries	Total
200	2	2
250	11	11
300	1	1
350	2	2
500	40	40
700	8	8
750	4	4
1000	7	7
Total	75	75

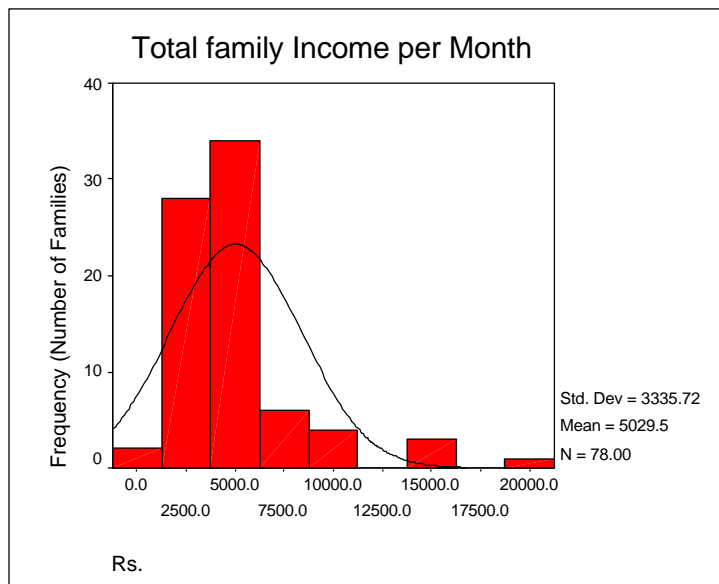
Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Samurdhi beneficiaries are selected from among the poor, whose monthly income is less than Rs.1500 (US \$17). Besides this, there are two respondents who receive ‘*pinpadi*’ which is a form of monetary assistance given to destitute persons by the government. They receive Samurdhi too. However, Samurdhi beneficiaries are chosen on the basis of reported income. If they were chosen on the basis of other indicators of poverty, such as lack of housing, non-availability of electricity or other household items they would have better represented the poor in the villages.

Earnings by parents/guardians

The mean family income as mentioned by the respondents is Rs.5029/= (approximately 56 US\$) a month. The median income is Rs.4250/-, which is a reported figure. These include Samurdhi payments as well. The per capita income is Rs. 610 per month (or 6.77 US\$). As such these families are well within the absolute poverty level, if poverty is defined as less than one US dollar per day (World Bank). It is seen from Table 4.11 that 75 of the respondents’ families receive Samurdhi benefits. The monthly earnings received by children by means of sexual exploitation do not constitute a major income to the family. As such, the children’s earnings are not a part of the family earnings.

Chart No. 1



Income Groups by Class Position

% within Class Position

		Class Position			Total
		very poor	poor	not so poor	
Income Groups	Less than Rs.3000	53.8%	35.3%	16.1%	30.8%
	3000-6000	38.5%	52.9%	54.8%	51.3%
	6000 or more	7.7%	11.8%	29.0%	17.9%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Although the reported incomes are often misleading, in the sample it shows that there is a correlation between poverty and reported monthly income. Half of the poor comprise families with an income of less than Rs. 3000 (US \$ 33) a month, while the not so poor class has 30 percent of families with a monthly income over Rs. 6000 (US \$ 67).

Other sources of income of parents/guardians

Often village families obtain their income from their land. If they own paddy land, they get a better income. The present group of families are so poor that only six families have paddy land, and the extent of paddy land that they own is relatively small. The other type of land, which is called "highland," (often where the house is built) is also used for cultivation of certain food crops. Ownership of land shows that the average amount of land that a family owns is 15 perches, which amounts to less than one eighth of an acre and therefore is very little. Once a house is built, there is hardly any space to cultivate any food crops on the land. Therefore, it can be assumed that no income is generated from the land among this group of people.

However, land ownership is important in the village. It can augment the class position. Even within this group of families living in poverty, a class gradation is seen according to land ownership, as witnessed in the following table.

Table 4.12 Land ownership and social class among the respondent families

Land ownership	Class			Total
	very poor	poor	not so poor	
Less than 10 perches	26	9	3	38
10-20 perches	5	18	19	42
More than 20 perches	7	18	15	40
Total	38	45	37	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Expenses in a typical month

The respondents were asked to make a self-assessment of their economic status, indicate a reasonable amount that they think would be spent on family expenses each month. The various answers given to this question were used to calculate the median monthly expenditure which is Rs. 4500.00 (US \$ 50). In other words, the median expenditure is more than the median income

of Rs 4250. 00 (47 US \$). Such families are described in the village as ‘families that find their day-to-day expenses by doing manual labour.’ What is earned in a day is spent on that same day. If there are no earnings on a particular day no food is found on these days, or they fall into debt at the village boutique buying basic food items such as rice and coconuts. The following table shows the categories of monthly expenditure (Table 4.13).

Table 4.13 Monthly expenditure of families as reported by respondents

Expenditure (Rs)	Frequency	Percent
Rs. 1500- 3500	22	18.3
Rs. 3500-5000	25	20.8
More than Rs. 5000	19	15.8
Total	66	55.0
Not aware	54	45.0
Total	120	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The respondents were asked to make a self-assessment of their economic status by considering whether they are in a position to meet their expenses, and live a life with minimum necessities within the amount of money and available means. As Table 4.14 shows, 58 percent of the children identified themselves as relatively poor compared to other families in the community, and unable to meet the monthly expenditure with the earnings of the family members, in spite assistance given by welfare programmes.

Table 4.14 Self-assessment of economic status by the respondents (n=120)

Respondent's view	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Relatively poor	70	58.3	58.3
Relatively equal	49	40.8	99.2
Relatively better	1	0.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

With the escalation of commodity prices due to the current economic crisis in the country, the impact of the situation is expected to be much worse than what is portrayed in these data.

4.4 Conditions of sexual exploitation

4.4.1 Initiation into commercial sex

This study reveals that many respondent children have initially been sexually exploited by an adult, not necessarily in the commercial sense for money, but by an outsider initiating the activity by force, or with the consent of the respondent, or in the pretext of providing certain benefits. The age at which the initial incident occurred varies from one individual to another. The youngest age at which such an incident happened was six years, while the oldest age was 17 years. The

average age at which such an incident had happened is 14 years. On average, most respondents reported a lapse of three years since this initial exposure to sex, during which time they were exposed to commercial sex. Thus, there is an indirect link between these two phases.

A large proportion of the respondents (67 percent) had been subjected to sexual exploitation during the compulsory school attending age of 6-14 years. The following charts offer a comparison between present age and the age of initial exposure to commercial sexual exploitation.

There is a noteworthy differences between male and female respondents, in reference to where the first exposure to sexual exploitation took place. In the case of the females, about half of the incidents took place at home or at a friend’s house. In the case of male respondents most incidents took place outside the home, at a hotel, on the beach, or in the house of the partner. This difference is extremely important to understand the nature of first exposure.

At a Focus Group Discussion conducted with Anuradhapura Police Officers, it was disclosed that generally about fifteen child abuse incidents pertaining to sex were reported per month in the district. A flagrant violation observed was that even fathers and non-relatives have engaged in sexual abuse of children due mainly to liquor and parental carelessness.

Table 4.15 Venue of first exposure by gender of subject (n=120)

Venue	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
At home	1	16	17
Home of a relative	1	4	5
At partner’s house	14	5	19
Friend’s house	5	1	6
House of a relative	--	--	--
House of a friend	3	1	4
Hotel / rest house	19	3	22
Beach	20	1	21
Dark street/lonely place	3	1	4
Other	12	10	22
Total	78	42	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Our data also revealed that the females had mainly local partners while the males had foreign partners at the first exposure to commercial sex. Of the partners that the boys had, 50 percent were foreigners: this was only seven percent in the case of girls. Twenty-three percent of girl children had been initiated in to sex through boyfriends.

In coastal areas, especially in tourist locations, it is commonly seen that male children frequent

the beaches after school hours, in order to play games or meet with foreign tourists, soliciting them for gifts in cash and kind. Such children often become targets for homosexual activities.

Table 4.16 Partner at first exposure into sexual exploitation by gender of respondents (n=120)

Partner	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
Foreigner	39	3	42
Father	1	4	5
Father's brother	1	4	5
Mother's brother	3	5	8
Mudalali (Shop keeper)	4	1	5
Friend	22	10	32
Driver	1	1	2
Husband of sister	2	4	6
Other	5	10	15
Total	78	42	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The fact that partners initiated the children into sex and sexually exploited them was a major reason for them to get into commercial sex at a later stage. Forty-five percent of boys were sexually exploited by those of the same sex. Age data could be obtained only for foreign partners whose ages ranged from 18 to 65 years of age. The girls, on the other hand, were not open about this issue and did not talk about the gender of the partner or their age. The available data for girls and boys suggest that the age gap between the respondent and the partner is much wider in the case of female respondents than in the case of male respondents. This fact is important and indicates that girl children are intimidated and forced into sex more than boys. The partners of girls were largely older persons such as the father, father's brother, sister's husband, mother's brother, driver and so on. Since the act often took place at home or at a relative's house, it is very likely that they had been forced into sexual acts.

Box 4.6 Death Threat

Suneetha is a 14 year old girl who lived at Padaviya in Anuradhapura. Her father works as a Night Watcher (Grama Araksaka). The mother and children, including Suneetha, went to the nearby home of the mother's brother (Uncle) to sleep at night. One night the uncle raped her and threatened her that if the incident was exposed, she would be killed.

Table 4.17 Nature of initial sexual act by gender of respondent (n=120)

Nature of the act	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
by force	23	22	45
with consent	47	18	65
with the influence of a relative	5	--	5
with the influence of a parent	3	1	4
with the influence of the guardian	--	1	1
Total	78	42	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Box 4.7 Initiation to Sex

A girl of 16 years from Dehiwela, who had been forcibly first sexually abused, stated: "I live at present with my Grandmother. She earns by selling betels. At the beginning she has lived as a prostitute. Because of her persuasion I fell into the hands of a man in the area and was raped. I believe that she has got money for all that."

Forty six percent of the total respondents stated that the partners had forced them into sex. This category includes all those who did not consent to the sexual act at their own will. The breakdown of the partners who forcibly carried out the sexual acts is as follows: four foreigners, six local persons including a father, a shop keeper (*Mudalali*) and four friends. All ten of the children were taken outside

their homes to hotels, beaches, other houses, and isolated places to perform the act. They were subject to anal sex, oral sex, hugging, kissing and touching by the partners. About 18 percent had been victims of sexual exploitation with the knowledge of the parents, relatives or guardians. Of the ten, two were females and eight were males. Also they were very young children, under 14 years of age.

It is to be noted that friends were an important category of intermediaries, particularly in the case of male respondents, who introduced the respondents to the partners. Although it is generally thought that tour guides and professional pimps who maintain close links with foreign tourists are the main category of intermediaries, friends and relatives supersede them in this role. This fact indicates that relationship patterns that are well groomed into the kinship and friendship webs of the families and communities where the children live, are the sources through which these children are exposed to sexual exploitation.

Table 4.18 Involvement of an intermediary in the first exposure by gender of respondents

Intermediary	Sex		Total
	Male	Female	
pimp	1	--	1
tourist guide	2	--	2
friend	19	1	20
father/mother	--	2	2
three-wheel driver	1	--	1
hotel employee	1	--	1
relative	3	3	6
other	1	3	4
n.a.	50	33	83
Total	78	42	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The following table shows the type of sexual offender by class position of the respondent.

Table 4.19 Type of sexual offender by class position of respondent (n=120)

Person	Class			Total
	very poor	poor	not so poor	
Foreigner	7	14	21	42
Father	2	2	1	5
Father's brother	3	1	1	5
Mother's brother	3	5	--	8
Mudalali (shop keeper)	2	2	1	5
Friend	16	11	5	32
Driver	1	1	--	2
Husband of sister	--	4	2	6
Other	4	5	6	15
Total	38	45	37	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

In the foregoing analysis it was seen that children often became the prey of sexual exploiters through friends and relatives. The male children are more prone to being exploited by tourists and foreigners than the female children. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is largely associated with paedophiles who are both foreigners and locals. Continuing commercial sexual involvement of female children is largely due to their disappointments in love affairs or because they have been sexually seduced by close friends and relatives within the circles of their relationships. Therefore, most of these experiences have surpassed their first sexual intimacies. They often fall prey to the hands of these sexual exploiters within their own homes and homes of

relatives. The family and mutual relationships forged in these cultures of poverty are the main source of intermediaries, who supply these children to sexual exploiters.

4.4.2 *Involvement in commercial sex*

The study showed that about 50 percent of children had consented to their initial sexual contacts, and later that they were lured into the activity. Also it became clear in the previous section on initiation into commercial sexual acts that relationship networks of communities, families and friends are the most important source of contact. Thus, whether the children are initiated into this type of sex by force or voluntary mechanisms, their retention in the activity depends largely on how the relationships around the child react to him/her and whether or not they take protective measures. Often in cultures of poverty where these abuses are rampant, children are treated as resources to assist in eking out an existence for the family and kinsmen.

Sexual orientation

It is shown in the study that less than four percent of male respondents are involved in heterosexual acts. Ninety six percent of the male respondents are involved with partners of the same sex. All female, respondents, however, reported practicing heterosexuality.

Table 4.20 Sexual orientation by gender and type of partner (n=120)

Gender		Type of partner		Total
		Foreign	Local	
Male	Sexual Orientation	same sex		
			55	20
	hetero sex		3	3
	Total		58	20
				78
Female	Sexual Orientation	hetero sex		
			10	32
	Total		10	32
				42

Source – Data from fieldwork for the study

While boys usually have had sex with male foreigners (74 percent), only 25 percent of females had associated sexually with foreigners in heterosexual acts. The females mainly cater to the local communities while the boys cater largely to the tourists or foreigners. It has been observed that very often male children were engaged in sexual exploitation by male foreigners in the coastal areas. It was also seen that female tourist sexual involvement with male children and male tourist sexual involvement with girls were relatively small.

Partners

In certain locations, female and male children are exploited by locals. These locations are found mainly in Matara, Kandy and Anuradhapura. The partners in the border villages and conflict zones in the Anuradhapura district are mainly security personnel such as army soldiers, officers and security guards, and the sexually exploited children are mainly girls.

Box 4.8 Story of X and Y in Tangalle

In an interview done in Tangalle, It was revealed that the foreign partner, a man named Y from Germany has spent about Rs. 60,000 (US \$ 667) to buy a boat for the local male partner in Tangalle. In addition he sends monthly installments of Rs. 10,000 (US \$ 111) to this local partner who is about 16 years of age. The local partner, named X was once taken to Germany, and according to X he got married to this foreign partner in Germany. Y comes to Sri Lanka at least once a year and lives with his partner X for about three months. During this period Y looks after all the expenses of X and they live together in one of the guest houses in Tangalle. This relationship has been ongoing for about three years.

The mean age of foreign partners is significantly higher than the mean age of the local partners. The overall mean age of a partner is 42.5 years, while the mean age for foreign and local partners are 47.2 and 32.6 years respectively - a 15-year age range. The fact that the local partners with a heterosexual orientation are comparatively young is an important fact to note because in areas such as Anuradhapura, casual sexual involvement of army personnel is well known. These young army soldiers do not make a permanent commitment with the girl children but indulge in sexual gratification incidentally. Their ages range roughly from 20-35 years, which matches with the mean ages mentioned for the local heterosexuals.

Sexual interest towards children, especially boys, exists not only among foreign tourists but is also visible among some Sri Lankans. It has been seen that in marginalised villages in the Anuradhapura District, soldiers on duty at the border villages are engaged in sex activities with girls. In the Kandy district, street children were exposed to these activities and become victims of pavement hawkers and beggars in the informal sector. Likewise in the Matara District in fishing villages, some male children who come to the coast to assist the fishermen in light work became victims in the hands of some fishermen.

Table 4.21 Mean ages of different categories of partners

	Foreign		Local	
	Same sex (n=53)	Heterosexual (n=10)	Same sex (n=10)	Heterosexual (n=20)
Mean Age (years)	47.23	47.20	37.40	30.15

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Also regarding sexual orientation, it is indicated that for every four foreign partners, three are homosexual, while for every five local partners, only two are homosexual.

The sample of respondents chosen for the study had in general been initiated into sexual activity about three years prior to their current age. The current average age of respondents was 15.78 years. The current average ages of females and males were 15.14 and 16.13 years respectively. The average duration of involvement in this type of sexual activity of the total sample was 2.43 years. When asked about how they contact their partners, both foreign and local, the respondents mentioned that 53 percent of them do it directly by themselves, while the rest (47 percent) meet

their partners through intermediaries.

Box 4.9 Intimidation

In the Anuradhapura District (Padawiya) a fifteen year old girl Sriya was seduced by a young man in the village. After sometime the love affair broke up and another young man who knew about it intervened and accosted her to have sex with him, threatening her that he would tell her parents of the other affair if she did not give in, thereby forcing her to have sex with him. Due to the economic situation in the family she had to accept the money and gifts presented to her. This illicit affair has been continuing for about a year.

The intermediaries were mainly friends (29 percent), guides (27 percent), relatives (18 percent), and three-wheel drivers (11 percent). In tourist locations friends were found to be operating a leading role in contacting partners for their peers. The habit of children idling on beaches in the evenings has encouraged the development of peer networks among them. The networks often were maintained for

their recreational activities and also to make contacts with tourists who visit the area. For instance, if a child does not meet the requirements of a tourist, he may contact one of his friends.

Tourist guides too were found to be involved in supplying children for tourists. Both three-wheel drivers and tourist guides have engaged in the activity to earn additional income. The role of three-wheel drivers as intermediary was visible not only in central tourist locations but also in inland areas as well. They maintained links with guesthouse keepers and earned money for bringing customers to these places. It was evident from the findings that relatives of some children have pushed them into commercial sex for economic reasons. These relatives in some cases include the child’s mother or father.

It is to be noted that 57 percent of the respondents reported that these sexual activities are mostly carried out in a friendly manner with persons known to them⁸, while 27 percent stated that they were not carried out through friendship. In both situations children have engaged in sex activity voluntarily. However, sixteen percent of these children reported that sex acts have been initiated through force by another person (see Table 4.22).

Table 4.22 Ways respondents meet clients (%)

Ways of meeting	male (n=36)	female (n=20)	Total
Through friendship	83.3	10.0	57.1
Not through friendship	11.1	55.0	26.8
Force by other person	5.6	35.0	16.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Those who carry out the acts through friendship often meet with customers, whom they know, and with whom they have had personal contacts, such as foreigners who visit them regularly

⁸ The children are reporting based on their perceptions of the encounters. Elements of manipulation and coercion may be present but not recognized as such by vulnerable children.

every year. There were many such cases reported in the interviews. The X/Y case reported earlier is one such incident. The not so friendly cases ('not through friendship') are the ones that are carried out because of intermediaries. In most of these cases the partner is not known before as shown in the J case above. In both cases children were involved in commercial sex willingly, seeking monetary or other gains. It can be argued, however, that they were forced by life circumstances, need for money, and lack of alternatives to "choose" this path.

Box 4.10 Broken promises – story of J

J is from Anuradhapura. She was acquainted with a boy and had sex with him, which was initiated by the boy on the pretext that he would marry her. Later however, she was introduced to other men known to the boy, who eventually had sex with her. She is given money by the boy for consenting to have sex with other men.

The third category is the forceful acts, where the sexually exploited child has to indulge in the act because of external persuasion. Such instances are reported in interviews. In one instance in Kandy, the mother who is a drug addict sends her son out with partners arranged by her, because she needs money to fund her heroin habit. This situation clearly shows that the child is being coerced to engage in commercial sex by the authority of another person related to him/her. The child is obligated to that authority and involved continuously in commercial sex due to his/her dependency on that particular person through kinship or other relationship. However, this does not mean that the child is physically kept in captivity for sexual exploitation. As all the children in the sample are living with their relatives/friends or alone they are physically free to move and to act independently. Their options, however, are generally limited.

Table 4.23 Where the partner is usually contacted

Place	Total
Beach	12
Guest house	27
Hotel	51
Brothel	1
Own house	5
Near by house	1
Friend's house	9
Lonely street/land	9
Other	5
Total	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

In both coastal areas and other locations sexual activities are found to be operating in small hotels, guesthouses, and massage clinics. In the Anuradhapura main town over three hundred such guesthouses are believed to be operating.

The tourist season was identified as the peak period for males. This does not apply to the case of girls, whose sexual activities are not influenced by the presence of tourists. The activities of girl children who are exploited are decided by situational factors rather than seasonal factors.

Demand for sex and financial requirements are more important factors. In the case of male children, demand for sex and need for money play important roles as well in deciding the frequency of sexual activities.

Table 4.24 Entry into commercial sex vs. gender of respondent

Entry	Male	Female	Total
On the advice of a friend	25	4	29
Idling on the shore/road	14	2	16
Ignorance	12	4	16
Need for money	16	9	25
Forced by a relative	3	10	13
Social labeling	3	7	10
Other	5	6	11
Total	78	42	120

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Box 4.11 Foreign Friend

In Hikkaduwa, it was found that a mother, a single parent who did not marry but gave birth to children out of wedlock, had forced her two daughters into the sex trade. The elder daughter however lost her virginity as a result of a forced sexual act, and the mother now hires her daughter to provide sexual acts to foreigners. This girl who is now 16 was expelled from school due to these incidents, but the foreign friend had arranged for her to enroll in another school in the area in order to get an education.

As shown in Table 4.24 males and females have different reasons for entering into sexual exploitation. Friendship, social environmental factors, poverty and ignorance are the prominent factors that led the boys into this situation, while force, social-labeling and poverty are important to explain why females were pushed into this situation. For instance, if a boyfriend deserts a girl, she gets labeled as a ‘bad’ girl. Loss of virginity is yet another reason for her to be "pushed" into this behaviour. If these conditions are there, and if the family is poor, it is likely that she is vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. Force by relatives is another factor mostly affecting the females entry into commercial sex. Psychological and physical dependency of females on others may contribute to this situation. The field information revealed that some abandoned female children under the shelter of poor relatives were pushed to engage in commercial sex to help those who shelter them. The story in Box 4.7, “Initiation to Sex,” illustrates these circumstances.

Sometimes family members influence the decision of the children. Twenty percent of the respondents stated that they had a family member already in the trade. Thirty-eight percent of female respondents reported that they have a woman in their family circle who is in the sex trade (only 13 percent of male respondents said that they had a brother in the sex trade). The extent to which a mother or other family member can influence the female respondents’ decision making is astonishing. Although there were eight male respondents who reported having a brother in the trade, this was not as influential as having a mother, sister, or a female relative in the sex trade. In such cases, female respondents have been drawn into such activities more often than not, as

shown in case studies and in the survey. The involvement of the family is a deciding factor for females, while friends more than family members are important factors for males.

When the respondents were asked whether they are involved in this trade willingly and with their consent, only 31 percent of females said that they were willingly involved in it. But the figures were much higher for the males where 74 percent said that they were voluntarily involved in commercial sex.

With regard to the reason for willing involvement in commercial sex, 54 percent of males said that it was necessary in order for them to be able to buy drugs. In the case of girls, however, 15 percent said that their involvement is for drugs, while another 15 percent stated that they needed money for themselves to support their family. Eight per cent of males and 13 per cent of females reported that they are involved in commercial sex owing to their addiction to sex (addiction is described as the pleasure and money it provides).

Nearly 29 percent of the female respondents take part in commercial sexual activities in their own village. In the case of boys, 62 percent operate within their own villages. The interesting fact is that although the boys operate within the village itself in most cases, their parents were not aware of their involvement. Only 17 percent of boys said that their parents are aware of their involvement. However, over 50 percent of the parents of female respondents are aware of what their daughters are doing. Thus, female commercial sex is largely seen as behaviour and a pattern of business that girls are engaged in with the consent and knowledge of the family for economic reasons. While in the case of boys, it is a pleasure seeking and drug related activity carried out together with friends, without informing the parents and family. The contrasting settings illustrate the gender differences surrounding commercial sexual exploitation in this study. Both types of sexual exploitation are extremely relevant and should be taken into account when planning programmes for prevention and rehabilitation.

Trafficking

Trafficking is a practice similar to slavery, which presupposes the existence of a “trafficker,” (i.e. a person other than the receiver of the sexual service such as a recruiter, parent, friend, legal guardian, transporter, keeper of a boarding house, etc.) who knowingly uses his or her position to engage the child in the flesh trade with a view to some form of gain. When analyzed to find indications of trafficking, the survey data show that of the 22 victims of sexual exploitation outside their residential area, 13 have stayed at the location of exploitation throughout their involvement, while nine persons commute there from their own residential area. Of these people who opted to stay outside the residential area only one female and three males could be considered as being engaged by a trafficker. The female had been brought in with a

Box 4.12 Story of K

A boy named K from Kuliyaipitiya said that one ‘ayya’ (meaning elder brother) brought him to Colombo on the pretext of providing him with facilities for training in Electronics. He was kept in this ayya’s room and could not get into the Electronics course, but had to give in to ayya’s sexual needs. Now, K is living at the same place and has sexual relationships with foreigners.

promise of marriage and money, while the boys had been told that they would be provided with job prospects. The Story of “K” in Box 4.12 provides an example of trafficking. Such children were found maintaining good relationship with their exploiters even though they were brought on the pretext of providing several benefits. In the case of “K” the exploiter provided a place to stay in his room, as well as food and other necessities. The child reported being happy with the treatment and continued to stay with his ‘ayya.’ He was allowed to visit his relatives and friends and through the freedom he enjoyed, he later could contact some foreigners to engage with in commercial sex and earn more money.

The main types of exploiters identified in the survey were tourists, strangers, and friends. Table 4.25 presents data relevant to this.

Table 4.25 Initial visit to an outside area by exploiter (n=22)

Sex	Exploiter	No. of children brought in	Total
Male	tourist	1	1
	friend	6	6
	stanger	3	3
	Total	10	10
Female	tourist	1	1
	friend	8	8
	stranger	3	3
Total		12	12

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Benefits / earnings

Respondent children were subjected to sexual exploitation for a variety of reasons as mentioned earlier. Among them, making an income was an important factor for children engaged in CSE. Earning an income from sexual activities is particularly important for the females. As shown in the following table, 67 percent of respondents said that they receive money and clothes as gifts and payments when they indulge in sexual activities with partners.

Table 4.26 Type of benefits mostly received by respondents (n=120)

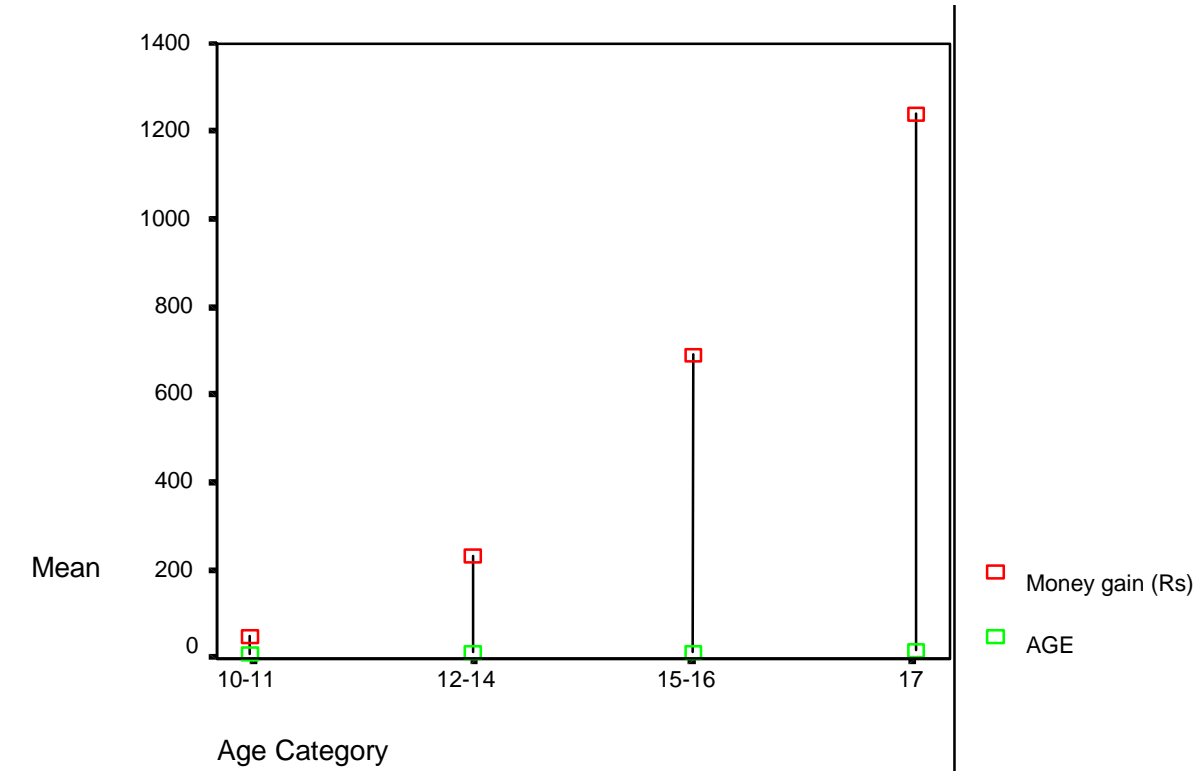
Benefits / earnings	Frequency	Percent
Money	42	35.0
Clothes	1	0.8
Money & clothes	38	31.7
Electronic goods	1	0.8
Money, clothes & elec. goods	28	23.3
Other	10	8.3
Total	120	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

All respondents in the sample receive these benefits irrespective of gender. However, it is noted that benefits increase in quantity and value with the increase in the respondents' age. This was confirmed at the interviews. Sometimes the gifts included houses and property, vehicles, trips abroad and so on. Some foreign clients send regular contributions of money from overseas, even after they have gone back to their home country. The impact of these gifts is so significant such that in some villages particularly in the southern province, to have contact with a foreign client is considered a fortune and an avenue to prosperity. Such benefits given by foreign partners are clearly visible in these villages.

Monetary gains are mentioned by 110 respondents who said they receive money from the clients each time they meet and engage in sexual activities. The money received ranges from Rs. 10 to Rs. 5000 (US\$ 0.10-55). The mean amount of money received was Rs. 967.00 (US\$ 10.50). These incomes, however, were not included in calculating family incomes. The average family income of the 110 families was around Rs. 5000 (for details see section on earnings by parents).

Chart 2 Monetary gains of the respondents by age



As far as monetary gains are concerned, there is a correlation between the age and the value of monetary gains available to the respondents. The increase of monetary gains with relation to age largely depended on the bargaining capacity of the respondent. The bargaining capacity means the respondent's experience in carrying out sexual relations with a client. However, it should be noted that there is a higher demand for boys in the 15-17 years age group.

Although monetary gains is the major benefit received by respondents, some of them have expressed that they were not receiving the total amount paid by the client. While the majority (71.7 percent) of respondents was receiving the total money offered, in some instances part of the money paid by the client was given either to the intermediary or the place such as the guesthouse where the activity took place. The amount requested by the intermediary and facilitators varied depending on the bargaining capacity of the two parties. The study's survey showed that the money earned by children is spent for various purposes (Table 4.27).

Table 4.27 Type of expenditure of the respondents

Type of expenditure	Frequency	Percentage
Own needs	36	30.0
Family needs	15	12.5
Entertainment with friends	35	29.2
Both family & own needs	22	18.3
Other	12	10.0
Total	120	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Nearly 60 percent of the respondents stated that the income received is mainly spent on their personal needs and on recreation and entertainment with friends. The income they derive meets their expenses for illegal drugs, alcohol and prostitution. Female children's expenses on their personal needs include clothes, jewelry and household goods such as sewing machines. It was common in every research locations that boys tend to spend their income mainly for recreation and enjoyment.

As discussed earlier, peer networking among male children was instrumental for them to find clients in respective areas. This explains in part why a group of respondents spent money on entertainment with friends, as it strengthens their peer network. Only about 12 percent of respondents contributed towards family needs and the majority that belonged to this group were girls. Many parents with whom interviews were conducted confirmed that boys contributed less than girls for family maintenance. Occasionally a few children contributed towards improving their house. For example, a boy in Mount Lavinia spent Rs 90,000 (US \$ 1000) to renovate his parents' house. Another boy in Negambo spent Rs 30,000 (US \$ 330) for jewelry on the occasion of his sister's marriage. These were savings received from foreigners with whom the boys had sexual relations.

The findings of the study revealed that only 13 children (19.2) had any savings, of whom two were boys. The amount of these savings varies from Rs. 1500 (US \$ 700- 833) to Rs. 75,000. The reasons they mentioned for establishing savings were mainly for future safety (10) and for starting a business (3).

Table 4.28 **Other sources of income of the respondents**

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Casual labour	06	5.0
Small-trading	01	0.8
Garment industry	04	3.3
Fishing	02	1.7
Construction work	04	3.3
Other	06	5.0
No other source of income	97	80.8
Total	120	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

While 80.8 percent of respondents reported that their involvement in commercial sexual activities was their sole source of income, 19.2 percent stated that they had other sources of income. Some of them were casual labourers, while others had minor jobs in the construction industry, garment industry and fishing. Also, a few engaged in small-trading activities on street pavements. However, such sources brought in very little income.

4.5 Impact of commercial sex on children and programmes for rehabilitation

This section is mainly concerned with the attitudes of children and parents regarding commercial sex, and consequences of such involvement on the life of children. It also looks into rehabilitation programmes available to them.

4.5.1 Respondents' attitude towards commercial sex

The analysis of attitudes towards future/further involvement in sexual activities are important for a fuller explanation on why these children continue to be in commercial sexual activities. Interviews with children indicate that the children who were sexually exploited have no clear vision as to what their future should be. Very few of them have positive attitudes towards life and future activities. Their indecisiveness towards the future may be a reflection of their parental culture, and the culture in which they are growing up. Since many children were brought up in a context where their parents were not present, or only one of the parents was present, it is arguable that thinking of and planning for the future were not groomed into their personalities. Many children mentioned that they are miserable, feel bad about their society, and are frustrated. The children as observed, were not responsive to the interviewers, inconsistent with what they said, and often did not like to discuss the past; all these are signs of a poor orientation towards the future.

When the children were asked whether they wish to continue in the present activities, 60 percent of boys and 31 percent of girls mentioned that they would continue in the present activities. As described earlier, the desire to continue may be due to many factors such as addiction to sex and the satisfaction they get from partners, emotionally and materially.

In this regard 40 parents were interviewed. In terms of the male children, overall, parents felt that they do not have a control over them. Many children have become drug users and, with or

without parental knowledge, they are involved in sexual relationships with older persons, particularly with foreigners. Some children have said that their parents are not aware of the fact that they are sexually active and are involved with older persons/foreigners. This shows that parents/guardians have been negligent of children and of their upbringing. The parents, in most cases, knew that their children were 'going with' foreigners, especially in the coastal areas and in Colombo, but it did not mean that they were 'doing bad things' with them. The attitude of the parents was such that 'going with foreigners' is good. It is not considered a negative act. The positive encouragement by parents towards such relationships is largely supported by benefits accrued by children, such as the provision of various gifts, foreign trips, and employment abroad.

In the case of female children, it was seen that often parental/guardian consent was given to them. Sexual activities of girls are apparent as their relationships are formed with older persons of the opposite sex. 'Sex' in ordinary parlance is an activity between the males and females, and therefore, the people and parents always describe the involvement of girls with older males/foreigners as 'sex.' In this context the parents' view of involvement in sex is that it is not a desirable behaviour, but interviews with parents showed that a large number of them supported their girl children's involvement in sexual acts for reasons associated with poverty. Forty-eight percent of female children pointed out that their parents knew about their sexual activities, while only 16.7 percent of male children admitted to their parents knowing. However, in certain cases as shown in the following box, some parents have said that they are not aware of the children's (girls) involvement in sex. As witnessed in some cases, the girl child involved in sex is the breadwinner of the family.

Box 4.13 Future Without Hope –

Story of Hema

Hema is a girl of 17 years of age who lived in Anuradhapura. Hema's mother said that Hema is an employee of a garment factory. Hema however, was involved in sexual activities with males, particularly with male factory workers and security personnel, for money. Three-wheel drivers also were aware of her involvement, and they often supply clients. When asked for her future attitudes she was ignorant, and did not seem to have any particular 'hope' in life, other than looking in to day-to-day affairs.

The attitudes of society towards these children are diverse. Parents and society in general dislike 'sex' as an activity between males and females. A large number of people felt that getting involved sexually with an outsider or an older person, particularly in the case of a female, is not an accepted behaviour. In the case of boys, this situation was different since many are involved with foreigners, and receive many benefits from them. This context has hidden the actual nature of the relationships. Nevertheless, when these boys are involved with local males, they are looked down upon. The local paedophiles are always looked down upon and often labelled with derogative terms such as 'kotiya', 'kolukaraya' and so on. When foreigners are in the picture, the aspects that come to the surface are the benefits and not the sexual side of their relationships.

Even the well known, convicted foreign paedophiles have a good image in these communities through their financial contributions. Same sex activities are viewed differently based on the gender of the person involved and on whether the partner is local or foreign.

Among the male children, 74 percent explained that they are voluntarily involved in sexual activities. The term voluntary involvement refers to the child’s interest to engage in commercial sex by his own consent looking for monetary and other benefits. However, this proportion is relatively low (31 percent) among the females. In the case of girls, 14.3 percent felt that they are heavily involved in (addicted to) these activities, which is a fact that needs to be taken seriously and addressed. About another 14.3 percent of girls felt that sexual involvement is a way in which they could earn a living and thereby support their families. These 14.3 percent seem to think that their sexual involvement is a kind of employment for them. In males however, 41 percent think that becoming addicted to drugs is a strategy for them to continue with sexual activities. Only about 12.8 percent of boys think that it is important for them to provide money for their families. These boys think that their involvement in sexual acts is a form of employment as in the case of 14.3 percent girls.

About 33 percent of the boys and 19 percent of the girls reported that they would like to get a job “with a good salary.” A large majority of males and females (around 40 percent in each case) do not have any idea as to what would they do if they quit their present activities and looked for alternatives.

The only instance where the children responded to questions of the future with a positive attitude and outlook was when they were asked to comment on their expectations regarding marriage. Although their childhood dreams are largely shattered, a large number of children mentioned that they would like to get married. As witnessed in the survey data, 67.5 percent of children said that they wish to get married. This is more so with male children where 74.4 percent said so. Only 55 percent of girls had such hopes, which may be a reflection of frustration over sexual abuse, and repulsion generated as a result of early introduction to sex.

Table 4.29 Respondents’ opinion on marriage (%)

Intention to marry	Male (n=78)	Female (n=42)	Total
Yes	74.4	54.8	67.5
No	15.4	2.4	10.8
No special desire	10.3	42.9	21.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Those who seek to describe their involvement in sexual acts as employment, around 14 percent, is a considerable proportion of the total respondents. When considering the willingness of children to get involved in these activities (voluntary involvement), it shows that about 75 percent of boys and 38 percent of girls think that they are willingly involved in the said activities. This finding shows that the children’s involvement in commercial sexual activities in Sri Lanka has reached a magnitude, which needs recognition as an important social problem.

Table 4.30 Factors that influence respondents' voluntary involvement in commercial sex (%)

Influencing factors	Male (n=78)	Female (n=42)	Total
Addiction	7.7	14.3	10.0
Receive special attention from foreigners	12.8	2.4	9.2
Earn money for drugs	41.0	7.1	29.2
Earn money for family needs	12.8	14.3	13.3
Other	1.3	--	0.8
Not voluntary	24.4	61.9	37.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Eighteen percent of males and 36 percent of females said that they have a fear of and concern about society, and are not willingly involved in these activities. Reasons for non-voluntary involvement are given in Table 4.31.

Table 4.31 Factors that influence respondents' involuntary involvement in commercial sex (%)

Influencing factors	Male	Female percent	Total percent
Fear of society	17.9	35.7	24.2
Fear of the law	1.3	2.4	1.7
Mental strain	6.4	23.8	12.5
Fear of disease	--	2.4	0.8
Voluntarily involved	74.4	35.7	60.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

As aforementioned, many of the children did not think of their future, particularly because they seemed to think what they are doing is right, and the best alternative given the social circumstances and poor living conditions of their families. The parents seem to be ignorant of the type of acts performed by the children, although some of them are aware of the fact that their children are associated with foreigners and older people. These associations are viewed as necessary steps for their children to get over the problems that they face, and they hope that such associations will pave the way for their children's success.

Box 4.14 Living conditions of the urban poor

Shanties on a beach along the narrow stretch between the railway tracks and the sea, are where most of the boys and girls interviewed for the study in one of the study locations lived. The houses, which are made of makeshift material and temporary structures, do not provide a large living space to the inhabitants. These houses do not have facilities such as separate toilets, running water, electricity or any other services available for most village communities. The houses are built extremely close to each other, and at times are separated by only a thin wall of cadjan or tin/wood. The families that are congested in this narrow space, give rise to brawls, extra sexual relationships and crime.

4.5.2 *Quality of life*

The fact that children are engaged in commercial sex has had only marginal effects on quality of life of families and individuals in terms of material benefits. A few cases were reported that the money earned/obtained, or the benefits accrued have had a positive effect on the quality of life of the families. For example, some foreigners have helped their local counterparts build houses, buy land, open a restaurant, or purchase fishing gear. These cases were few and far between. The overall impression obtained in the study, however, is that the children involved in commercial sexual activities have not gained much economically from their sexual involvement. What is earned is most often spent on their daily needs, and enjoying life.

On the whole, these children and adolescents continue to live in the poorer sectors of society. These children form part of very poor families, where often the father is not present and even when he is present, he works as a labourer or a petty trader. In families where the mother lives at home she is also a day labourer or, in a few cases, a commercial sex worker. As discussed earlier, the houses are of the poor type, with only 30 percent of households having access to televisions (not necessarily ownership), and the average landholding is about 15 perches per family. Under such circumstances, the children's quality of life is extremely low. A large percentage of children of school-going age do not attend schools for the very reason that they have no 'provisions' provided by their parents to attend schools. Of the 120 children, only 22 reported that they attend schools at present. Among them 13 were boys and nine were girls.

The involvement of children in commercial sexual activities has brought their families into problematic and risky situations as the relationships forged through sex are often in connection with drugs, alcohol, gambling, sex and various other crimes. These children, because of their connections that were established through sex, are used as drug peddlers in schools, in the community and among their peers. In Hikkaduwa it was reported that a boy attending school was selling phonographic material in the school. In another case at Dehiwala, a girl reported that the police had caught her when she was selling drugs. In certain locations such as Dehiwala, these families become the easy targets of the police, and in any crime, the first group of families/people to be questioned by the police are the families of these children. Also it was reported that when the children are not in demand for sex by foreigners and other clients, and do not have money for the survival of the family, some children have resorted to theft, crimes, and begging. Another negative aspect is that children who become involved in drug activities then become drug-dependent. Furthermore, as discussed in the section on physical problems, some children have reported that they have experienced different kinds of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) from their sexual activities.

Overall it can be said that the outcome of children's involvement in sexual activities with older people in terms of their families has provided a mixed bag of predominantly negative consequences. While a few have succeeded in material gain, most have not, and for those that have it is at the expense of the mental, physical and psychological well-being of the exploited children. Additionally, the social stigma attached to such activities often supersedes the material gain in village situations more than in urban settings.

4.5.3 Leisure time activities

As revealed in the interviews, about 83 percent of children of school-going age, but who do not attend schools, resort to various activities (other than indulging in sexual acts on the request of clients) such as loitering in the urban areas, beaches and streets. They spend most of their time outside the house with friends. Friends, as pointed out earlier, are a source of various 'bad' behaviour including drug related activities. As revealed in the interviews, friends who have established friendship through leisure activities have introduced many of the respondents to foreigners for sex.

The interviews conducted with the respondent children and parents indicate that these children sometimes play football, a popular game among the low-income communities in urban areas of Sri Lanka. Very few children expressed any concern about playing games. The playgrounds and beaches where these poor children play, as reported in qualitative data, are one of the hunting grounds of paedophiles who look for children and who eventually contact children. These children, as reported, do not have space in their houses or neighbourhoods to play, and often the environment in the household or neighbourhood is not conducive to such kind of activities. As most of them have left school and do not have playmates in the household, or a place to play games in the vicinity of the house, they join the friends in the larger community or other location to play games. These places are often the beach, the railway track, the roadside, open spaces and the jungles. These spaces where children play are places where the paedophiles establish links with children.

The leisure activities in the communities are not conducive to a good upbringing of children. Often children are away from home and the reign of control of the parents or the guardian. They take the liberty to wander around, go into dangerous places, and get exposed to new experiences. As a result they develop their own networks which take them further away from the home environment. The situation is made worse in cases where parents/guardians are out at work all day, and only come home in the evening. The girls at their young age are expected to be at home, looking after the small children and often preparing food for the rest of the household. They also get opportunities to wander about and are exposed to dangerous environments and experiences. As revealed in the study, the girls who are involved in the sex trade have been sexually harassed at a young age in their home environment by a relative or other person known to them in the majority of the cases.

4.5.4 Vision of family and society

Many children have indicated that the family and the neighbourhood are a source of contempt, hate, and poor living. This view stems from their experiences living with their family and in their neighbourhood. Many children have expressed that they had unpleasant experiences in recent years as children (about 70 percent of boys and 79 percent of girls). The female children have reported that they have been subject to sexual harassment and later on sexual exploitation while being with the family. Most cases of sexual harassments reported by females have occurred while in their household or in their neighbourhood. In some communities, exhibitionists are a problem for such girls.

Table 4.32 Unpleasant experiences of respondents (%)

Unpleasant experiences	Male (n=78)	Female (n=42)	Total
Yes	70.5	78.6	73.3
No	29.5	21.4	26.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

Many children (24 percent of boys) have mentioned that they feel guilty about their present activities. As most of the children have lost their childhoods, they are frustrated and feel that their community, family, and parents have maltreated them. Many children expressed this type of antagonism and revenge towards family, parents and the community at large.

Table 4.33 Unpleasant feelings affecting the respondents (%)

Unpleasant feelings	Male (n=78)	Female (n=42)	Total
Fear	15.4	23.8	18.3
Wrong/guilt	24.4	9.5	19.2
Frustration	6.4	14.3	9.2
Other	5.1	2.4	4.2
Fear, guilt & frustration	48.7	50.0	49.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

The survey intended to discover information on physical problems and fears of these children, although not much information on physical problems was reported. Only 13 percent of children mentioned problems relating to physical aspects, boys more readily offering the information.

The only physical problem reported by girls was unwanted pregnancy. Boys, on the other hand, reported problems such as pimples and blisters on their sexual organs and anus, rashes on their upper legs, and discharge from their penis (most likely gonorrhoea). The reported data indicate that between 15-20 percent of boys have been subject to some form of STDs.

Table 4.34 Health consequences faced by respondents (%)

Health consequences	Male (n=78)	Female (n=42)	Total
Pimples in testicles and anus	3.8	--	2.5
Discharge from sexual organ	1.3	--	.8
Skin rash	9.0	--	5.8
Pregnancy	--	7.1	2.5
Other	2.6	--	1.7
No health problems	83.3	92.9	86.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

During informal discussions many respondents expressed that they were not made aware of preventive measures regarding STDs, either by their families or by the communities in which they live. This situation was seen not only with regard to sex related problems but also concerning many other adverse consequences they may experience. Ignorance of sexuality and its consequences is a good indicator to show that these children were not provided with such knowledge by the society or that the children are not concerned important by the society. The children feel that the society is not concerned about their well-being.

The survey revealed that the children did not show much interest in using preventive measures, particularly for STDs. A majority of the respondents (66 percent) stated that they did not use preventive methods. Among the users of preventive methods, girls were more prominent than boys as they were keen on preventing pregnancies. In contrast, the boys who did not know about or believe in STDs, and who did not consider the issue of pregnancy, used preventive methods only sparingly. Among the preventive methods used by boys, condoms were prominent (26 percent), while injections (3 percent) and pills (2 percent) were the widely used methods by the girls. There have been various reasons given by non-users for not using preventive methods. Many children (58 percent) expressed that they were ignorant to these methods. One interesting factor revealed in the study was that some children (4.2 percent) viewed foreigners as safe and clean, and not carrying diseases. However, a large majority of the children (92 percent) had heard of STDs. Forty-seven percent had heard of Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and 29% knew about venereal diseases (VD). These were the most widely mentioned STDs by the children.

4.5.5 Deviant behaviour

As revealed in the survey, about 65 percent of the children mentioned that they were involved in drugs, smoking, sex and trafficking of drugs. As qualitative data indicate drugs is a lure to attract children into sex by older men. The girls also use alcohol and drugs as revealed in the qualitative data. However, smoking – an early step towards developing an addiction to drugs – is seen mostly in boys. Some girls have reported smoking and drinking alcohol - this behaviour occurs in girls when they are already heavily prone to misbehaving and deeper sexual activities.

Table 4.35 Anti-social habits of respondents (%)

Anti-social habits	Male (n=78)	Female (n=42)	Total
Drug use and trafficking	2.6	--	1.7
Alcohol use & trafficking	3.8	7.1	5.0
Smoking	15.0	--	10.0
Drugs, smoking & alcohol	47.4	--	30.8
Sell drugs	16.7	21.4	18.3
No anti-social habits	14.1	71.4	34.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

In conclusion, it can be said that the children in the study area are a marginalized group, in families experiencing abject poverty. The family culture and economic situations are not

conducive to healthy childhood development. The children often fall prey to sexual vices through their friends and neighbours. The fears that the children have expressed - the concern of being marginalized and being uncertain about their future - are signs of frustration. The level of frustration is high in these populations.

4.6 Rehabilitation of children exploited through commercial sex

4.6.1 Rehabilitation of children in government institutions

The main objective of the rehabilitation programme of sexually exploited children run by the government and non-government institutions and co-ordinated by the Department of Probation and Childcare Services (PCCSD), is to acculturate the children in acceptable social norms and values of society, prepare them as good citizens, and release them into the wider society with a strong sense of responsibility and an effective system of follow-up. These faculties are developed in children through positive stimulation, care and concerns in various aspects of life during their stay in the homes under close supervision and administration. The programmes that are used to achieve these objectives include educational programmes, skill development programmes, counselling, therapy, and employment training. The programme of rehabilitation is thus a measure that assures care and protection for children who need such protection over a limited period of time in an institutional setting.

After the 1995 Amendments to the Penal Code (Act 22 of 1995) the child victims of commercial sexual exploitation and sexually abuse are no longer considered accused, but recognized as victims. This change enunciated in the penal code has restored the identity of children as innocent persons and enabled them to be placed in society after rehabilitation, in a socially accepted manner.

Children with a history of sexual victimisation are admitted to the institutions for rehabilitation in three different ways. First, when such children are prosecuted in courts, usually a court order is issued stating that the child in question is sent to a particular institution for rehabilitation. Second, if individuals such as the parents, guardian or other (custodian) makes a request to the rehabilitation institutions or the probation office, such children are also sent to a rehabilitation institution decided upon by the probation office. Third, institutions that work in the area also send such children to the rehabilitation institutions. Thus the children in rehabilitation institutions comprise those who are convicted, produced through public/private institutions and handed over by individuals and parents/guardians.

The rehabilitation programme of sexually victimised children is a programme coordinated by the department of Probation and Childcare. Although some private organizations also maintain some of these institutions, they are registered under the PCCSD, and are monitored by the PCCSD. The PCCSD has under its purview several institutions in the country where such children are rehabilitated. Of these institutions, Certified Schools are the prominent type where children older than 12 are kept. The school at Ranmuthugala is exclusively for girls, while the rest are located in Makola, Hikkaduwa and Keppetipola and are exclusively for boys. There is a Training and Counselling Service Institution at Paraththa in Panadura, Kalutara district, especially for sexually victimised children, which was partially supported by ILO/IPEC funds and maintained by the

PCCSD. The victims are kept in this institution for over one and a half years, rehabilitated and placed back into society. At the moment there are 16 children in the age group of 12-16 years at Paraththa, from various parts of the country, who have been subject to different forms of sexual harassment. The institution benefits from the services of two child-psychiatrists, a medical doctor, and two trained instructors who offer occupational training. The institution provides an environment conducive to positive personality development of these students by providing libraries, recreation facilities, etc.

The other type of institution, set up under the Vagrants Ordinance, is known as the House of Detention at Halpathota in Baddegama, which also comes under the control of the PCCSD. The children staying in this institution are boys as well as girls. The girls are less than 18 years of age, while the boys are less than 16 years of age.

There are Remand Homes at Kitulampitiya, Anuradhapura, Pannipitiya and Ranmuthugala. Except for the one at Ranmuthugala, they are exclusively for male victims of 16 years or below. The Remand Homes keep the victims for up to 14 days, until they are presented at the Courts or handed over to their parents/caretakers/guardians. The children who are sent to Remand Homes comprise different types of victims including sexually exploited children. They are also provided with medical care and recreational facilities at the institutions.

In addition there are a large number of Children's Homes (165 in 1997 PEACE) run by private organizations. Sometimes, child victims are placed in these institutions, particularly when state-run organizations do not have facilities to house them.

The programmes for rehabilitation of sexually victimised children in these institutions include educational, recreational, and vocational training and social programmes. The educational programmes include basic teaching, and sending children to school. They provide facilities such as libraries to the children to improve their educational levels and learning skills. These programmes are widely found in almost all the institutions. The recreational programmes such as provision of facilities for children to play games within the premises of the institutes are also provided in most of the institutes. The vocational training programmes, such as those that provide for training in carpentry, masonry, welding and ironwork for boys, and sewing and food preparation for girls, are provided by some of the institutions where older children are found. A few institutions provide counseling to assist the psychological well-being and development of the children.

The data collected from the inhabitants in children's homes show how these various programmes are being implemented, how acceptable the programmes are for the children, and how the objectives are realized. The inmates of these institutions interviewed and observed during the survey were brought to the institutions after being convicted and ordered by the courts for institution-based rehabilitation. However, the homes are not exclusively for victims of sexual exploitation and there were other inmates brought in by individuals and other institutions, who were destitute children. The inmates who were interviewed for the survey had been brought to these homes for several offences. Among them sexual abuse, loitering, theft and selling drugs were prominent. Offences and the number of interviewed children brought to the rehabilitation

centers are given in Table 4. 36.

Table 4.36 Frequency of offences leading to respondents’ admittance to rehabilitation centres

Offence	Male	Female
Loitering	02	07
Theft	02	00
Sexual abuse	00	02
Selling drugs	01	00
Total	05	09

Source: Data from fieldwork for the study

It is also observed that there were gender differences in the offences committed by the inmates. In the case of boys, theft and drug related activities are the prominent offences, while sexual abuse and loitering are the main offences for which girls are institutionalised. It should be noted that these girls are often the victims of sexual abuse but the authorities see them as prostitutes, and therefore recommend their institutionalisation.

Box 4.15 Offences that lead children to Rehabilitation/Dentention Centres

Wasantha is a 12-year old Tamil boy, living in a shanty house in Unawatuna, Galle. He is the youngest of three children. Like many other children in his neighbourhood, Wasantha associated with foreign tourists to earn money. He gave up schooling in grade five after his father was imprisoned for selling marijuana. At present, his mother earns a living through business and Wasantha lends a helping hand. One day, he was caught by the police while selling marijuana near the common water-tap of his neighbourhood. After producing him at the Courts, Wasantha was sent to the Detention Home at Halpathota, Baddegama.

These children interviewed for the study were largely found through the courts (71.4 percent), while 20.3 percent were detected by non-governmental organizations working with children, and individuals comprising village elites and politicians identified 8.3 percent of the victimised children. The non-governmental organizations that produced these children include those that are involved in development programmes for marginalized children such as the PEACE (Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere) and ESCAPE (Eradication of Sexual Child Abuse, Prostitution and Exploitation).

There are several limitations in the rehabilitation programmes, of which the important ones are described as follows.

- **Mixing of child victims:** In these institutions, children convicted for various offences are put in one programme of rehabilitation, except in Paraththa where there is a special programme for sexual victims. The mixing of youth with

varying histories provides fertile ground for mutual learning of bad behaviour. For example, it has been reported that some victims have used other residents for similar sexual activities in some rehabilitation centres.

The mixing of child victims also has an effect on the younger children. Since the inmates are not well supervised in the homes, the older children often make use of the younger children for sexual abuses and bullying. It has been reported in FGDs (FGD with Probation Officers) that the mixing of children creates problems for the administration of discipline in the homes.

- **Common nature of programmes:** Providing a common programme of rehabilitation particularly in vocational training, without assessing a child's aptitude or interest has been mentioned as a problem for effective administration of the programmes (FGD with Probation Officers).
- **Lack of facilities, infrastructure and space:** Lack of facilities and infrastructure such as buildings, water supply, recreation and medical facilities is viewed as a problem faced by many institutions. The increase in the number of children who seek admission to these institutions has aggravated this problem.
- **Shortage of funds:** The total cost of maintaining a child, including the Rs.300 given for each child, and salaries for the staff, and overheads, comes to a total of about Rs.1000, which is borne by the state. This amount is seen as inadequate for proper maintenance of the homes, as revealed in FGDs. The shortage of funds does not provide for recruitment of trained personnel for the staff of these institutions. The funds have been a barrier for provision of other facilities and vocational training, as reported by most institutions.
- **Lack of understanding between personnel at Rehabilitation Centres and the community in general** was highlighted at FGDs. For instance, children attending schools in the community are looked down upon, and are often identified in derogative terms. Also, poor understanding between the staff and the children has also given rise to certain problems. The staff often applies stringent disciplinary procedures even for minor offences, and this course of action can negatively affect the personality development of the child.

4.6.2 Rehabilitation of children in private sector institutions and NGOs

The private institutions are often better off financially, and the programmes of rehabilitation run by these institutions have a better approach and content than the publicly run ones. Some of these institutions are devoted entirely to the rehabilitation of sexually exploited children, and some institutions have a limited focus and only take in girls.

The private institutions enjoy the benefit of being affiliated to similar foreign agencies, through which they get funds, programme assistance, staff exchanges, technology etc. Religious affiliations often play a key role. Table 4.36 provides information on these organizations.

It must be mentioned that the number of child victims of sexual exploitation rescued and handed over for institutional rehabilitation is only a small fraction of children who have been victimized. Commercial sexual exploitation of children as the study has shown, is a hidden phenomenon. As a result, it has been difficult to identify such children for rehabilitation. The community attitudes towards this phenomenon in some of the coastal areas also made it difficult to identify and rescue such children. For example, a sexual relationship between a child and a client is not seen as a serious offence in some areas, and hence the interest taken by responsible family members to produce the child at the rehabilitation centres is very low. A discussion held with a Probation Officer in Matara revealed that only a single incidence of sexual exploitation was reported even though a large number of other incidences of child abuse had been reported for this year. Another factor that may contribute to such a situation is the involvement of powerful and influential persons in the commercial sexual exploitation of children. A story of such an incidence was reported from Weligama area during fieldwork, where a wealthy man used his influence to bribe the police in order to prevent them from taking action against him.

Table 4.37 Private sector rehabilitation centres

Name and location	Child Focus	Activities
The Girl Child Centre Colombo	Sexually exploited/abused girls	Training & counselling Health & nutrition Awareness programmes
Don Bosco Institute Negambo	Sexually exploited boys	Training & counselling Vocational training
ESCAPE Colombo (Dehiwala)	Sexually exploited boys/girls for child drop-in	Counselling & training Drop-in facility Library Therapy
Nisala Diya Sevana Negombo	Destitute young adults	Education Vocational training
Sanhinda Street Children Rehabilitation Institute Colombo	Street children	Counselling Education Recreation Handicrafts
Sarvodaya Colombo	Street children	Counselling Education
PEACE Colombo	Sexually exploited and abused children	Networking Welfare Policy & planning Awareness Counselling Legal assistance

Source: Compiled from interviews

Chapter 5: Findings and Recommendations

This study points out certain factors that are crucial in order to understand the issues related to the sexual exploitation of children. Findings of the study suggest that:

- Sexual abuse of children is largely seen in poor segments of society where broken families, single parent families, and the loss of the father were evident features.
- Economic reasons, particularly poverty experienced by the vast majority of the children studied, have been a main “push” factor. The lack of capital assets and employment opportunities, irregular employment of parents, and low household income, are the causes of their poverty, leading to children being pulled into commercial sexual exploitation.
- Study findings reveal that poverty and dysfunction of families are important background factors resulting in children resorting to commercial sexual activities. Qualitative data meanwhile show that the culture that has evolved in these families and their communities is a factor that has a significant influence on children. The particular culture has several characteristics as has been analyzed in the study. The parental ‘push’ of children towards sex, the involvement of relatives and friends as intermediaries, and the notion that “sexual purity” is not an important social value, are the main characteristics of this particular culture.

5.1 Pathway analysis

The discussion so far shows that any pathway analysis leading to the identification of crucial causal factors must be based on an understanding of the culture of these communities and the meanings behind their behavioural practices. The following causal model sheds light on factors that need to be considered when formulating any corrective measures. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 are two sample models for pathway analysis.

Figure 5.1 Sample model for pathway analysis

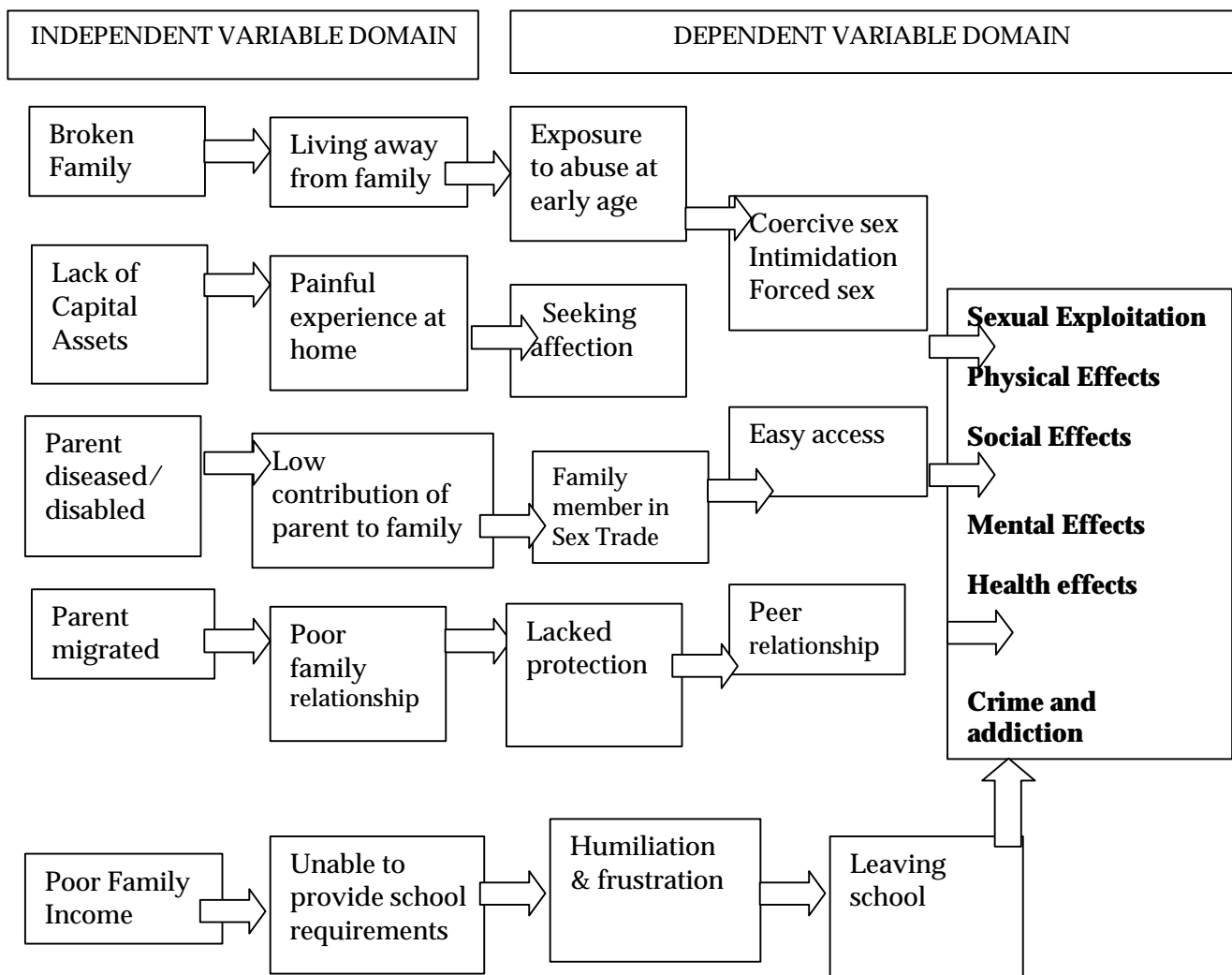
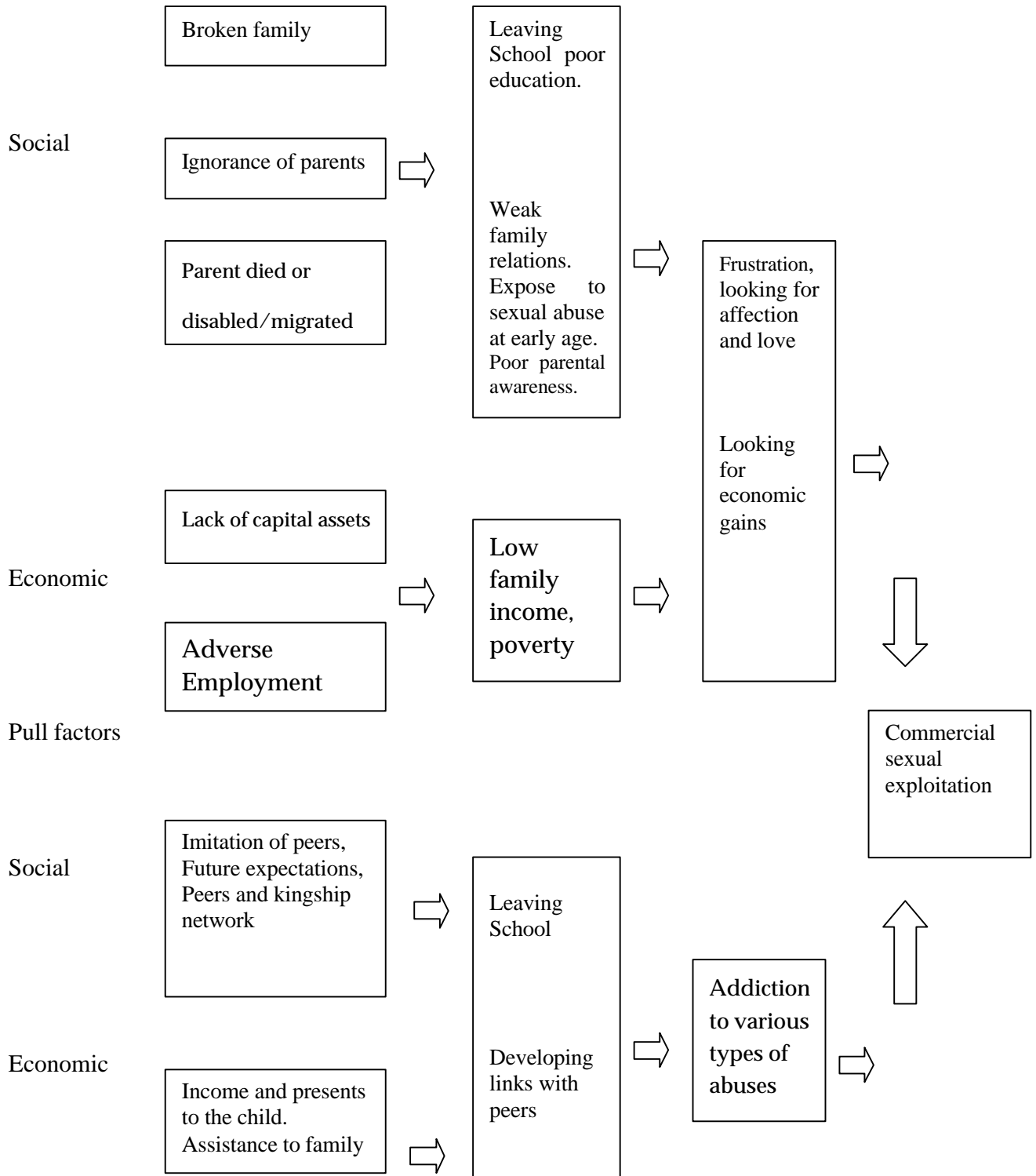


Figure 5.2 Sample model for pathway analysis 2

Push factors



5.2 Policy recommendations

The report highlights several economic, social and environmental factors that contribute to the commercial sexual exploitation of children. It is possible to categorize these factors in to causes as follows.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Low income. | Almost all children in the sample were affected by poverty to varying degrees. |
| 2. Unstable social conditions at home. | Many respondents came from dysfunctional families, at times as a result of a parent gone overseas for employment. Children from such homes are often neglected. |
| 3. Social displacement. | Street children and those in border villages in the conflict zones. |
| 4. Environment and neighbourhood. | Children living in close proximity to tourist areas, both coastal and inland. |
| 5. Presence of persons with deviant behaviours. | Children exploited sexually by foreign and local paedophiles. |
| 6. Ready availability of pornographic literature and films. | Peers and adults expose most children to pornographic material. |

Commercial sexual exploitation of children is, without a doubt, one of the most serious issues Sri Lanka is currently facing. The present study, which was carried out in eight districts where the sexual exploitation of children is acute, gives ample evidence to indicate the gravity of the issue. The causative factors behind sexual exploitation are many and complex, and these factors interact with each other to determine the degree and extent of the impact. The following example illustrates the interplay of causative factors.

Poverty is the cause for the inability of many parents to afford schooling for their children. Even though the government provides school-going children with textbooks and uniforms free of charge and subsidizes transport, these handouts lose significance when the school uniform is the only dress a child has to wear in and out of school, and in areas where public transport is decrepit. Furthermore, since school curricula require far more supplies in addition to the textbooks, poor children often undergo extreme humiliation by peers and at times by teachers due to inadequate supplies. These reasons have resulted in a dislike for schooling among children of poor families, who often dropout when other options are available.

Once poor children drop out of school, their future prospects become bleak since they lack assets for self-employment, and also lack skills and knowledge necessary for employment. These are the children who are targeted for sexual exploitation. Some parents times “push” their children into the sex trade, solely for financial benefits. The study found out that economic pressures were an important “push” factor, based on the view of both parents and children that the sex trade is not an unfair means for gains in cash or kind. Foreign and local tourists and paedophiles create the demand for commercial sexual activities.

According to the findings of the present study, the ongoing civil war has added another dimension to the issue of child exploitation. In this instance, those who create the demand for children are men from various walks of life, such as the armed forces and traders. The victims are mainly girls and young women, and their area of operation is localized in border villages in the conflict zones. The local offenders were found to be younger in age when compared with foreign offenders.

Since the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka is the result of the interplay of many factors, preventive and rehabilitation programmes should contain a multi-dimensional approach to address the whole issue. A single set of measures will not help to mitigate the problem, because it is comprised of many complex aspects. Active cooperation among concerned individuals, organizations and institutions at the government and community level is urgently needed to effectively initiate and implement programmes for prevention and rehabilitation.

The study suggests that the following important areas must be incorporated into any multi-dimensional approach, for its effective implementation. These areas are:

- Education
- Community awareness and participation in programme implementation
- Involvement of institutions and organizations both in the governmental and non-governmental sectors
- Favourable legal framework and its effective execution (since ample laws to protect children are there though not enforced)
- Tourism.

Figure 5.3 Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Sri Lanka

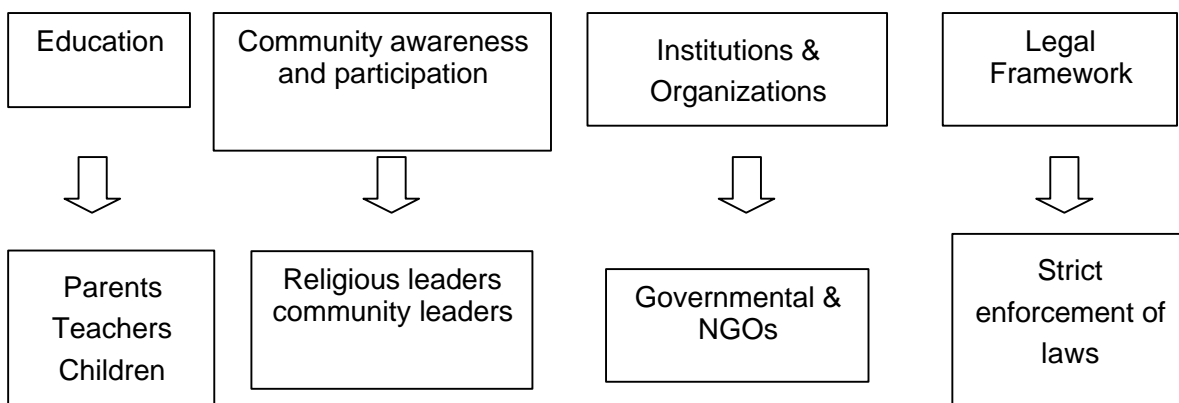


Figure 5.3 diagrammatically presents the areas that need to be incorporated in to multi-dimensional programmes and those who should play an active role in their implementation. The commercial sexual exploitation of children is an activity that remains largely hidden and invisible even though rapid assessment studies, such as the present study, are able to bring out some of the highlights of the issue. However, given the nature of this form of exploitation, most child victims are unable to have their voices heard, while the gross violation of their human rights continues. Mobilization of concerned individuals and organizations are necessary in order to bring back, at the least, the dignity of the victimized children. Public opinion too should be built up against child-sex offenders, while making use of all available legal instruments to deliver justice. The study has discovered that there is a tightly linked network that sustains commercial sex with children, and that these networks include persons of political, administrative and legal authority.

Table 5.1 Proposed recommendations for the prevention and rehabilitation of commercial sexual abuse of children

Recommendations	Activities	Agencies involved
Educate parents and children on health hazards, within families at risk as well as in families in general.	Conduct awareness programmes for high-risk families. Set up counselling services, and attempt to create healthy behavioural patterns. Introduce special counselling services in schools.	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Social Services and NGOs.
Provide protection for children in families at risk.	Find alternative residential placement in Children's Homes and similar institutions.	Ministry of Social Services, NGOs, religious institutions, National Child Protection Authority (NCPA).
Provide vocational training leading to gainful employment opportunities for sexually abused children.	Mobilize out-of-school youth for job oriented vocational training.	Vocational Training Authority, Dept. of Labour (Training Unit), NGOs.
Revive feelings of social responsibility in the community, so that the community would be vigilant about those engaged in commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC).	Social mobilization through grassroots level organizations.	NGOs working at the grassroots level in the village. The NCPA.
Improve the quality of counselling services in schools of the risk areas.	Educate children and teachers in schools.	Ministry of Education, NGOs, the NCPA.
Strengthen the effectiveness of law enforcement relating to CSEC.	Have refresher courses for Police Officers to update them on the current situation with regard to CSEC. Provide incentives to those strictly enforcing the law.	Ministry of Justice, the NCPA.
Mobilize the support of community based NGOs. Establish a combined programme between community based NGOs and government institutions in the areas at high risk to combat CSEC.	Carry out small-scale studies to gather information and monitor the networking involved in CSEC at the local level; enlist the cooperation of community and youth leaders to build up public opinion against CSEC. Set up a joint venture to combine the resources of participatory organizations	Government and community based organizations, the NCPA.
Sensitise owners and employees of hotels, guest houses, small tourist lodging places etc. about the legal implications of CSE and harmful effects arising from it.	Conduct awareness programmes, organising seminars and work shops.	Tourist Board and NGO's

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Annex I.

Questionnaire

Serial No:

District Code :

Location Code:

Name of the Interviewer:

Location of the Interview:

Date:

Sexual Exploitation of Children in Sri Lanka **Questionnaire for Interviewing Sexually exploited children**

1. General Information

1. Name :
2. Sex M/F:
3. Age:
4. Place of Birth:
5. Ethnicity:
6. Religion:

Living Conditions, Family Situation and Socio-economic Status

Living Conditions:

7. With whom do you live?
8. Have you always lived there? (If "yes" skip question 12)
9. If not where did you live earlier?
10. With whom did you live earlier?
11. Why did you move?

(Interviewers should repeat questions 9 – 11 as many times as necessary)

12. Who are the members of your family? (Including those who are not residing in the family)

12.1 Relationship To the child*	12.2 Age	12.3 Level of education*	12.4 Marital status	12.5 Occupation/ Source of Income
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

*Please note according to birth order

*Please tick children not attending school

13. Please tell me your relationship with them:

1. Good, they are nice to me
2. Bad, they are mean to me
3. Neutral

14. Where do you go when you are sick or hurt?

15. Who are the members of your household? (If different from child's family)

15.1 Relationship to the child*	15.2 Age	15.3 Level of Education*	15.4 Marital Status	15.5 Occupation/Sou rce of Income
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				

*Please note according to birth order

*Please tick children not attending school

16. If any of the child's parents or guardians have died, left or migrated, why and where did they leave? If not, move to question 18.
17. What were the negative impacts of this incident to you and your family?
18. Tell me about your home.
- 18.1 1. Walls
 2. Floor
 3. No. of Rooms
- 18.2 Ownership of the house 1. Privately owned 2. Leased 3. Unauthorized
 4. other
- 18.3 What are the facilities available?
- 18.3.1 Electricity Y/N
 18.3.2 Water Supply Y/N
 18.3.3 Telephone Y/N
19. Who is the primary care giver of your family?
- 19.1 If not the father, why?
 19.2 If not mother, why?
20. Have you had bitter experience of your father/mother/guardian? (ie. frequent quarrels, desertions/broken family, alcoholism/drug addiction, cruelties) Y/N
- 20.1 If yes, what are they?

III. Socio-economic Conditions

21. If your father, mother or guardian works, where is the place of work, what is the distance from home, and what is the status of work.

	21.1	21.2	21.3
Person	Distance from home	Kind of employment	Status of work
Father			
Mother			
Guardian			

22. Does your family receive Samurdhi or other government financial assistance?
 Y/N
23. If yes, what is the monthly remuneration? Rs.

24. Property ownership of the family:

24.1 Land:

24.1.1 Ownership	24.1.2 Highland (Perches)	24.1.3 Lowland (Perches)	24.1.4 Cultivation
Owned			
Leased			
Unauthorized			
Other specify			

24.2 Other properties:

1. Boat
2. Tractor 2w/4w
3. Lorry/Van/Cars
4. Other, specify

25. How much is your family income in a typical month (Including salaries ,wages, allowances and household earnings) Rs.

26. Is that income sufficient to meet the expenses of your family?

1. Yes sufficient
2. less them sufficient
3. Not at all

27. If not sufficient, why?

28. If it is not sufficient, how does your family manage the expenses?

29. Does your father spend his income to maintain the family?

1. Yes, totally
2. Yes, a little
3. Not at all
4. Not applicable

30. If not, why?

31. Does your mother spend her income to maintain the family?

1. Yes, totally
2. Yes, a little
3. Not at all
4. Not applicable

32. Does your guardian spend his income to maintain the family?
1. Yes, totally
 2. Yes, a little
 3. Not at all
 4. Not applicable
33. Are there any brothers/ sisters/others contributing to the family income? Y/N
34. If yes
- | | | |
|-------------|----------|-----------------------|
| 34.1 Person | 34.2 Age | 34.3 Source of income |
|-------------|----------|-----------------------|

Schooling

35. Are you currently enrolled in school?
36. If yes, what grade? (Move to question 41)
37. If not, have you ever been enrolled in school?
38. If yes, until what grade?
39. How old were you when you left school?
40. Why did you leave your school?
41. Can you read Sinhala, Tamil, English, or any other language? (Please specify)
42. Can you write in Sinhala, Tamil, English or any other language?
(Please specify)
43. What are the good/bad things about your school?
44. Distance to primary and secondary schools?

The History of the sexual abuse/exploitation

45. Nature of the first assault
1. Rape
 2. Thighs
 3. Anal
 4. Oral
 5. Outrage of modesty
 6. Other, please specify
46. What was your age then?

47. Venue:

1. Child's home
2. Child's relative's home
3. Abuser's home or abuser's friend's/ relative's home
4. Hotel/Rest house
5. Beach
6. Other, Please specify

48. The person/s involved in the sexual abuse/exploitation

1. Foreigner
2. Relative
3. Friend
4. Other, please specify

49. The nature of the sexual abuse/exploitation

1. Forcible assault
2. Repeated molestation

50. How old were you when you were first sexually assaulted/exploited?

51. If it was a repeated/continuous molestation, for how long have you been involved?

52. By whom were you got into the situation of sexual exploitation?

1. Pimp
2. Trafficker
3. Friend
4. Himself
5. Three wheeler driver
6. Taxi car owner
7. Hotel employer
8. Other, specify

53. How were you got into this situation?

54. If by a pimp/trafficker/friend/other, please explain who he was, your relation to him and how he got you into it.

55. What are the factors that pushed you to get involved in sexual activities of this nature/?

56. What are the pull factors/attractions that got you involved in sexual activities of this nature?

Nature of sexual abuse/exploitation

57. How often have you been sexually abused? 1. Frequently
2. Not so frequent
3. Rarely
58. Where do you mostly have sexual intercourse?
1. Beach
 2. Guest houses
 3. Hotels
 4. Houses nearby
 5. Cars, three wheelers
 6. Others, specify
59. When do you normally involve in sexual activities?
1. During tourist seasons
 2. Whenever there is a demand
 3. When there is a need for money
 4. After school hours
 5. Other, specify
60. Is there any member of your family/household subjected to sexual exploitation of this nature? Y/N
61. If not, what factors contributed to only you being involved in this activity?
62. Do your parents/guardians know that you are sexually abused? Y/N
63. If yes, what were their reactions?
64. Does your community/friends know hat you are sexually abused?
65. If yes, what were their reactions?

Remuneration/ Earnings

66. Typically for sexual relations what do you receive?
1. Money
 2. Gifts
 3. Other specify
67. If earn money, what do you do with that money?
68. What are the most valuable things you ever received?

69. What are the least valuable things you ever earned?

1. Cover own expenses
2. Support family
3. Other specify

70. Do you have any other source of income? Y/N

71. If yes, what and how much you earn?

Negative impacts of sexual abuse/exploitation

70. What emotional impact have you experienced with sexual exploitation:

1. Fear
2. Guilt
3. Depression
4. Other specify

71. Have you ever encountered any physical illness due to sexual exploitation? Y/N

72. Have you learnt about any diseases coming up through sexual relations of this nature? Y/N

73. If yes, what are they?

74. Have you been punished by police or any authority? Y/N

75. Have you been forced or beaten/punished for non cooperation? Y/N

76. Were you ever condemned by your family members? Why?

77. Were you ever condemned by your community? Why?

78. Have you been involved in any of the following activities:

1. Use or trafficking drugs
2. Use of liquor
3. Smoking

79. What other bad impacts have you experienced due to sexual exploitation?

Attitudes

80. Why do you engage in this particular activity?

81. Would you prefer not to be involved in sexual activities?

82. If yes what would you prefer to do?

83. Would you like to spend more/any time at school?

84. Do you feel that sexual behaviour for you is dangerous?
85. What do you want to do when you become a young adult?
86. Would you ever want your brothers/sisters to be involved in sexual activities of this nature? Y/N
87. What do you do when you have free times?
88. What do you fear most?
89. What do you wish for?
90. What are your goals in life?

Remarks

1. How did you select the child?
2. How did you know about him?
3. Who introduced you to the child?
4. How long did you take the interview?

Annex II.

Orientation Workshop

Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Sri Lanka

Date : 18st June 2001

Venue: Auditorium, Construction Equipment Training Centre, No. 17, Akuregoda Road,
Pelawatta, Battaramulla. Sri Lanka.

Programme

9.00 am -- 9.30 am	Welcome address and introduction Dr. Sarath Amarasinghe, Dept. of Sociology, Ruhuna University, Matara.
9.30 am – 10.00 am	Commercial sexual exploitation of children in Sri Lanka Mr. Kalyananda Tiranagama, Executive Director, Lawyers for Human Rights and Development
10.00 am – 10.30 am	Discussion
10.30 am – 11.00 am	Tea
11.00 am – 12.00 am	How to research on children in commercial sexual exploitation Prof. Kanthi Ratnayake, Dept. of Geography, Ruhuna University, Matara.
12.00 am – 12.30 pm	Discussion
12.30 pm – 01.00 pm	Lunch
01.30 pm – 02.30 pm	Rapid Assessment Methods and techniques Dr. R. M. Ranaweera Banda, Dept. of Sociology, Ruhuna University, Matara.
02.30 pm – 03.00 pm	Discussion
03.00 pm – 03.15 pm	Tea
03.15 pm – 04.15 pm	Organization of the study on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of children Dr. Sarath Amarasinghe
04.15 pm = 04.45 pm	Discussion and the end of the session.

Annex III.

International Conventions ratified by Sri Lanka

1. The Children's Charter 1992, a policy document based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989
2. United Nations Convention on Slavery (1926) and Supplementary Convention on Slavery (1956)
3. ILO Convention No. 5 fixing the Minimum Age Admission of Children to Industrial Employment (1919)
4. ILO Convention No. 7 fixing the Minimum age for Admission of Children to Employment at Sea (1920)
5. ILO Convention No. 15 fixing the Minimum Age for Admission of Young Persons to Employment as Trimmers or Stokers (1921)
6. ILO Convention No. 58 fixing the Minimum Age for the Admission of Children to Employment at Sea (Revised 1936)
7. ILO Convention No 6 concerning the Night Work of Young Persons Employed in Industry (1919)
8. ILO Convention No. 90 concerning the Night Work of Young Person Employed in Industry (Revised 1948)
9. ILO Convention No. 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour (1930)
10. ILO Convention on Occupational Safety and Health
11. UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women
12. SAARC Commitments – Rawalpindi Declaration on Trafficking (CEDAW)
13. ILO Convention (No. 182) concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999

District Map of Sri Lanka showing locations of the study

1. Gampaha District
2. Colombo ..
3. Kahala ..
4. Galle ..
5. Matara ..
6. Hambantota ..
7. Kandy ..
8. Anuradhapura ..

