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Background Paper

THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN ACTIONS TO PREVENT THE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

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GLOSSARY

CSEC	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
ECPAT	End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes
EU	European Union
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
ICT	Information, Communication Technologies
ILO	International Labor Organization
NGO	Non-government organisation
SEC	Sexual Exploitation of Children
SCM	Supply Chain Management
TOI	Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development
VGT	Virtual Global Taskforce
WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
WTO	World Tourism Organization

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

A report entitled 'The role and involvement of the private sector' was produced as a theme paper for the 2nd World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Yokohama, Japan on 17 –20 December 2001. In that report the author details good practice and lessons learned from initiatives launched with the private sector to promote children's rights and specifically to prevent the sexual exploitation of children. The purpose of this study, which forms part of the review process of the Yokohama 2nd World Congress, is to identify new areas of private sector involvement since 2001 and to provide recommendations based on this experience.

1.2 Corporate Social Responsibility

The convergence of corporate social responsibility and human rights activism has created new opportunities for NGOs to work internationally with the private sector on the prevention of child exploitation. Building on the Agenda for Action created in 1996 at the Stockholm *First World Congress Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*, and subsequent European and International agreements, including the Second World Congress in Yokohama, there are now numerous examples of private sector involvement in polices and programmes that focus attention on protection of children. Although perhaps seen more strongly in Europe because of common regional agreements and legal frameworks, the principles of corporate social responsibility provide a useful tool to introduce global child protection concepts to European business especially within the framework of supply chain management. There has been criticism from some commentators that promotion of CSR, where standards and compliance can influence economic activity, could potentially become a new form of protectionism by preventing access to those who do not have the resources to engage or compete on the same scale as large multi-nationals. The challenge for child protection organisations is to ensure that when working within a CSR framework that the private sector agenda remains focussed on child protection. This is not easy when there are competing priorities for resources. For example since 2001 the international travel and tourism industry has had to manage the crisis in tourism as a result of global terrorist acts and natural disasters. It is not surprising that in times of crisis it is also children who require most protection but without being anchored to core business practice, some CSR activities such as training and information dissemination were cancelled or delayed.

1.3 Private sector defined

As with the earlier theme paper produced for Yokohama 2nd World Congress the Private Sector is defined as 'for-profit' industries. These can cover a wide range of industries but their primary motivation is to provide goods or services for profit, and that they do not have public sector (government) ownership. For this paper we have prioritised the role of Travel and Tourism and the ICT (information, communication and technology) industries. However the role of the private sector is not limited to these industries and it is hoped that generic themes will emerge that can be applied across a wider cross-section of private sector involvement.

1.4 Corporate responsibility and accountability vs legal compliance

There have been two distinct pathways for private sector involvement in the prevention of sexual exploitation of children (SEC). The first involves compliance with regulations and legislation, particularly adherence to minimum standards and the identification and reporting of criminal acts, the other involves a more voluntary approach to corporate responsibility and

accountability. This paper will explore both although reference to corporate social responsibility often includes legal compliance processes. The next section identifies the main Europe wide advances in corporate social responsibility and draws conclusions from the examples of private sector involvement in prevention of SEC.

1.5   Global response and local impact

Although it is not part of the remit of this paper the author recommends further dialogue on the local impact of global responses. The trend towards the use of generic Codes of Conduct for multi-national business has the potential for great change in the way that business operates and supports the local community. However, when multi-national business develop a generic framework based on European standards of service provision it must also take into consideration the realities and impact at the local level if the business operation is in a location where support systems for children are not as highly developed. For example if good practice is to report crimes to NGOs and authorities then the direct and indirect impact of this must be explored including the capacity of different agencies to respond and what additional support is needed to facilitate better services for children.

1.6   Case examples

Information on case examples for this report has been drawn from a wide range of sources including the ECPAT (End child prostitution, child pornography and the trafficking of children for sexual purposes) network across Europe. Although several private sector representatives not listed in the body of this report were contacted to provide details on forthcoming initiatives, no information was provided. The author speculates that this was because they did not feel that it was appropriate to publicly report before the official launch of the activity. In one particular case the company specifically asked not to share information on their child protection policy with their competitors. Space limitations prevent detailing all case studies however where possible web sites have been listed to provide a source of more information.

2.   The role of the private sector

2.1   The World Summit on Sustainable Development

Perhaps the largest single global agreement on the role of the private sector since 2001 has been the inclusion of corporate responsibility and accountability in the World Summit on Sustainable Development, held in Johannesburg, South Africa between 26 August – 4 September 2002. The Johannesburg declaration agreed by the Heads of State in attendance agreed that *'in pursuit of its legitimate activities the private sector, including both large and small companies, has a duty to contribute to the evolution of equitable and sustainable communities and societies'.* The Plan of Implementation includes protecting the most vulnerable members of society, including children but also includes the following reference to corporate responsibility:

Section III (18)

Enhance corporate environmental and social responsibility and accountability. This would include actions at all levels to:

(a)   Encourage industry to improve social and environmental performance through voluntary initiatives, including …. Codes of conduct, certification and public reporting……

(b)   Encourage dialogue between enterprises and the communities in which they operate and other stakeholders;

(c) Encourage financial institutions to incorporate sustainable development in their decision making processes;

(d) Develop work-place based partnerships and programmes, including training and education programmes.

The two key issues that influenced the politics of the WSSD and contributed to the negotiation of commitments on CSR were:

- On the one hand, concerns about adverse impacts of globalisations and private sector activities to the detriment of sustainable development, particularly in the poorest countries, and

- On the other, a growing recognition that the private sector has a key role to play in enabling the international community to deliver its ambitious targets on sustainable developments such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the commitments of the Plan of Implementation itself. [1]

2.2 The concept of corporate responsibility and accountability

CSR (corporate social responsibility) is about the core business activities of a company, and while companies are there to make profits, an approach which integrates environmental and social considerations and is based on dialogue with stakeholders is likely to contribute to the long term sustainability of business in society. (European multi-stakeholder forum on CSR. Final results and recommendations. June, 2004)

Corporate social responsibility is a concept whereby companies decide voluntarily to contribute to a better society and cleaner environment. Although the prime responsibility of a company is generating profits, companies can at the same time contribute to social and environmental objectives, through integrating CSR as a strategic investment into their core business strategy, their management instruments and their operations.[2]

This approach underscores the principle that CSR should be treated as an investment, not as a cost, and integrated with concepts of quality management, throughout their business, including suppliers.

2.3 CSR in Europe and beyond

The 2001 European Commission *Green Paper on Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility* reinforces the principle that CSR goes beyond fulfilling legal compliance. It also states that CSR policies should not be seen as a substitute to regulation and legislation concerning social rights. It is from this position that CSR policies on the prevention of sexual exploitation of children must be seen as going beyond compliance with national laws. It increasingly involves becoming active in developing practical ways to implement international standards and laws on the protection of children's rights, including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Corporate social responsibility extends beyond the doors of the company into the local community and involves a wide range of stakeholders in addition to employees and shareholders. The nature of multi-national investment, global operations and the border-less world of child exploitation have created the need for CSR policies on child protection that are relevant, achievable and that reflect local realities, not just board-room rhetoric and marketing material. It has challenged companies to work together with partners from outside the business world and move beyond traditional ways of working.

Corporate social responsibility is about the integration of companies in their local setting, whether this is in Europe or world-wide. Companies depend on the health, stability and

prosperity of the communities in which they operate. The reputation of a company at its location, its image as an employer and producer, but also as an actor in the local scene, certainly influences its competitiveness.[3]

2.4   Critical Success Factors

It is important to reflect upon lessons learned and success factors in order to help strengthen and build new initiatives. The following list of critical success factors provides a useful checklist for companies and NGOs embarking on new initiatives.

(Taken from the European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on CSR - Final results and recommendations report, page 10. European Commission, June 2004).

a)   Commitment from key people – directors, owners, senior managers;

b)   Ensuring that the values and vision of the CSR approach are integrated into the business and its culture;

c)   Integrating the CSR approach and any associated practices and tools, with the corporate strategy, core business, mainstream management processes and policies, and everyday operational practice. This might mean adapting existing systems, or adopting and developing new ones;

d)   Setting appropriate goals or targets related to the core business, developing a staged plan for achieving them (including some quick wins), evaluating progress towards them, and communicating this strategy;

e)   Communicating about the approach, strategy, aims or activities in a transparent and meaningful way. Such communication is also a way of helping to magnify the benefits associated with drivers of CSR practice. For example building credibility and helping to improve relationships with stakeholders;

f)   Openness to learning, improvement and innovation;

g)   Engagement with external stakeholders – understanding their views and expectations, being open to learning from them, communication well with them about issues, goals and progress, being open about areas of agreement and disagreement and thus building a trusting relationship, where the company and its stakeholders are willing to co-operate in good faith in efforts to achieve its CSR goals, including to the extent of working in partnership together.

h)   Involving employees and their representatives in developing and implementing CSR programmes, activities and initiatives;

i)   Sharing experience, learning from and with peers, in sectoral and multi-stakeholder initiatives or through networks, good practice examples, initiatives and benchmarking and be willing to solve problems, innovate and improve as a result.

j)   The availability of easily accessible and specific advise, and appropriate, effective and credible tools and initiatives which the company can learn from when developing its own approach, use or join in with, which are suitable to its circumstances or are flexible enough to enable the company to learn over time, inn ovate and respond to circumstances;

k)   Particularly for developing countries, the existence of an appropriate legal environment which reinforces compliance with fundamental standards and the presence of strong civil society organisations such as trade unions and NGOs as stakeholders and potential partners;

l)   A high level of awareness among consumers and investors, of the issues and the companies options in responding to them.

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3.   Trends and Issues

    3.1   Indicators and New Tools

Since the First World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm in 1996 there has been a steady increase in the participation of the Private Sector in initiatives to combat the exploitation of children. This is most evident in the role of the Travel and Tourism sector and the Information, Communication and new Technologies (ICT) sector. However, what is lacking from the discourse on CSR and child protection so far is an analysis of how these activities are contributing to structural and behavioural change in society for the protection of children from sexual exploitation. In other words how do we measure activities and initiatives launched by, or in partnership with, the private sector in contributing to a safer world for children?

One way forward is to undertake a more long-term approach to measuring change and to link specific activities to performance indicators for monitoring and evaluation. By recognising that they must take the leap from increased awareness to increased action companies can set up monitoring mechanisms to enable them to report on a regular basis to staff, shareholders, clients and the wider community. Reporting can help to communicate change, improve company image, improve sales, increase transparency and accountability and benchmark performance.

- In 2004 The World Tourism Organisation released a publication entitled *Indicators of Sustainable Development*.[4] Within this publication the WTO have provided the travel and tourism sector with a significant range of issues and indicators to assist with the measurement of real and lasting change. Chapter 3.1.5 highlights the issue of child sex tourism and the use of indicators to identify trends and issues relating to children living or working in tourism destinations. While not exhaustive these Indicators provide tourism managers and policy makers with a framework for integrating child protection into mainstream business practice.

- The Tour Operators Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development (TOI)[5], is a network that brings together tour operators who have recognised the importance of incorporating sustainable development into their operations. The TOI, together with Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), has developed performance indicators to enable their membership to report on economic, environmental and social issues. Within the Tour Operators Sector Supplement of GRI, the indicators are clustered around five areas: Product Management and Development, Internal Management, Customer Relations, Co-operation with Destinations and Supply Chain Management. There are 15 Supply Chain Management (SCM) indicators with SCM 9 on Social Practices and Performance including:

    Community and staff development, indigenous and tribal peoples rights, formal employment contracts, social security, working conditions according to ILO Convention 172, equal treatment, non discrimination, recognition of independent trade unions and application of collective bargaining agreements, health and safety committees, policies excluding child labour as defined by ILO, programmes to combat commercial sexual exploitation of children, and to combat and mitigate the social impacts of HIV/AIDS

However, reporting against SCM 9 has been limited and although some companies, including TUI Nordic, have reported their achievements in relation to child protection, the performance

indicators are not conclusively linked to measuring a reduction in the number of crimes against children or an increase in the mechanisms available to protect children within the operating location of the business.

3. 2   Making the Business Case and Corporate Leadership

In 2002 the European Commission reported that 'The challenges to a further awareness, dissemination and adoption of CSR practices among Enterprises stem from insufficient knowledge about the relationship between CSR and business performance (the Business Case)'. [6]

NGOs' have often been frustrated by the resistance of companies to take up the issue of child protection even when there is ample evidence that the company may operationalise other CSR policies, for example on environmental sustainability. However, NGOs' often fail to recognise the importance placed on developing the Business Case by corporate managers and policy makers. This is especially so when reporting to owners or shareholders. Gaining information from clients and potential customers that supports new initiatives can help identify market support for allocating resources to areas of non-core business as has been proven over many years by the environmental or 'Green' lobby.

When individual companies are convinced that the benefits outweigh the costs of involvement there is the potential for them to become 'champions' of the cause and take on a leadership role within their sector.

- The French hotel and leisure group ACCOR have been at the forefront of developing and promoting child protection through training and community activities across their owned and managed hotels in Asia and through travel operation in France. ACCOR have made a large effort to promote their activities both within the business and to the wider community. By developing a working relationship with NGOs and tourism authorities in Thailand, ACCOR have championed the role of child protection in high risk destinations. At a conference on Corporate Social Responsibility organised by the Dutch Government during their EU Presidency in 2004[7], ECPAT Netherlands succeeded in lobbying the organisers for a presentation from ACCOR about their efforts to protect children in a workshop on sustainable tourism.

- In 2004 ECPAT UK, supported by UK government, travel media and travel industry conducted a market research project to identify how UK travellers would react to seeing brochures within travel agents and tour operators to report child sex tourism. The results showed that clients would overall look favourably on receiving this type of information. The results have now been used to gain support of individual companies to distribute reporting information in destinations.

3.3   Quality Standards

Many European led private sector initiatives to combat the sexual exploitation of children in tourism have focussed attention on individual enterprises such as tour operators, hotel chains and ICT providers. Where successful these initiatives have contributed to the development of quality standards both in Europe and, where applicable, in the countries where they operate. However, the potential exists for these large companies to operate in a 'bubble' without sharing the knowledge based resources and investment in training to smaller companies who could be seen as competition. If this happens then the standard of information across one sector may vary enormously and access to it may be limited. One way to overcome this is for opportunities to be created by companies or trade associations to share knowledge and

resources on preventing the sexual exploitation of children (see also section 3.4 on multi-stakeholder projects). Alternatively, action to protect children can be included within nationally accredited systems for the relevant sector.

- From November 2003 all ANVR[8] tour operators (95% of all Dutch Tour Operators) were expected to have an Environmental Care System Co-ordinator (or Sustainable Tourism Co-ordinator) who has completed a web based training course on environmental and social care issues, including the protection of children.

- The British Federation of Tour Operators (FTO)[9] has recently developed a Preferred Code of Practice for Managing Supplier Relations. The document will be available for all FTO Members and their suppliers, including accommodation providers. It was developed in co-operation with both FTO members and NGOs and includes guidelines on child protection policy and practice.

3.4   Multi-stakeholder projects and multi-sectoral projects

Although numerous multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral initiatives were launched before the Yokohama 2nd World Congress the practice has become more wide spread in design and development as well as in the implementation phase of activities and projects. This collaborative way of working, especially across borders, requires a high level of trust, co-ordination and communication between all partners.

- The Code of Conduct to Prevent the Sexual Exploitation of Children in Tourism[10] (The Code) was developed by ECPAT in Sweden in 1998. The Code now has over 60 signatories from 18 countries. Although The Code itself is not a recent development, there have been numerous local level initiatives that have explored the use of multi-stakeholder projects in the implementation of The Code. The Austrian NGO 'Respect' who represents ECPAT in Austria is working together with several travel and tourism sector partners in Kenya, Romania and Bulgaria. Working with them in Bulgaria and Romania is the UN agency OSCE, the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. In Kenya, the local partners include Kenya Tourism Board, Kenya Tourist Federation, and the Alliance Hotel group. The Swiss company HotelPlan is financially and logistically supporting the project and is showing leadership amongst the other tour operators in Kenya. The implementation strategy has been to encourage local ownership of The Code in popular tourist destinations. Lessons learned from this project include the need for capacity building of local partners and stakeholders from the beginning; that the establishment of national multi-stakeholder committees is helpful for creating local ownership; and that the focus should be developing a feasible implementation plan with private sector partners rather than relying on the formal signing of The Code to assume implementation will happen.

3.5   The new technologies

In general terms working with the private sector to protect children has meant lobbying for activities that fit within the scope of the existing business framework such as adopting new policies, training staff, distribution of information materials and legal compliance. However, the increased use of new mechanisms (including both Internet and mobile phone technology) to facilitate crimes against children has meant that lobbying for private sector involvement has also been to call on companies to improve or invent new technology to combat existing

problems. New issues emerging include addressing new ways to work with police, private sector and child protection organisations on Victim Identification and understanding that child pornography (or more correctly child abuse images) is a crime scene from an investigative point of view.

Also of increasing relevance are the linkages between other forms of SEC such as child sex tourism and child trafficking and the use of technology. Telephone or on-line reporting hotlines are not a new concept but new ideas are emerging in response to pressure being put on telecommunications, software and Internet companies including the use of local hotlines to report global crimes.

- In March 2005 ECPAT Sweden launched a Hotline to report child pornography, child trafficking and child sex tourism.[11] What is new about this Hotline is the use of new software called NetClean Analyze developed by NetClean Technologies Sweden AB to analyse child abuse images (child pornography). The software automatically identifies already reported images to the Hotline or the police. This means that images will be analysed only once and logged making the identification process much more efficient. The NetClean Software has been made free of charge to European and International hotlines.

- The Virtual Global Taskforce (VGT)[12] was created in 2003 as a response to lessons learned from investigations into on-line child abuse from around the world. The VGT is an on-line crime reduction initiative to prevent and deter on-line child abuse. Led by police investigation units from Australia, United Kingdom, USA, Canada and Interpol its private sector partners include MSN, AOL, British Telecom, and Vodaphone.

Other initiatives are emerging in response to the use of credit card payment facilities to access child abuse images on-line.

- Save the Children Denmark has been working in co-operation with credit card provider VISA Europe and VISA International. Information collected from the Save the Children Denmark hotline is sent to VISA regarding commercial web sites holding child abuse images where the users are able to pay by VISA card. VISA then suspends the payment option. The company policy of VISA International prohibits VISA playing any part in the transaction of funds in connection with child abuse images or child erotica. However, although these activities have seen a reduction in the use of VISA payments, there have been new methods of payment devised by criminals using anonymous pay-sites. There is also recent co-operation with E-Gold to suspend payment to sites offering options to pay with gold cards.

3.6 Working with the private sector to combat on-line child abuse in the United Kingdom

John Carr. Advisor to NCH Action for Children and representative of CHIS – the UK Children's Charities Coalition on Internet Safety

When problems of online child abuse, grooming, or dealing in child pornography online, first started to emerge in the UK, important elements of the Internet industry were extremely resistant to the idea that they had any direct responsibility for addressing any of the issues. They lobbied for and won "common carrier" status which, in effect, meant that they had no legal liability for any content or any activities over their networks unless and until such activities were specifically drawn to their attention. They also pointed out that, strictly-speaking, no one under the age of 18 could own or operate their own internet account and therefore the overwhelming responsibility for keeping children safe online rested with the parents, not with them.

This was not a good start to the relationship between child protection agencies and the Internet industry. There was no space or place where the private sector, including the ISPs, the major portals, the major software houses, hardware and software retailers and computer manufacturers, could sit down and discuss with those who have child protection interests how to move forward. Equally, the child protection interests needed to be sure they were not a lone voice. The police and different parts of central government had always been broadly supportive but there was no systematic way of showing that or organizing it.

The UK children's charities called for the creation of a new national forum, and lobbied intensely for it. What eventually emerged was the Home Secretary's Internet Task Force. The Task Force has completely changed the atmosphere within which policy discussions take place on Internet issues. Not only between child protection interests and the private sector, but also between child protection interests, the private sector, the different arms of the police and security services, and the many different parts of central government that have an interest. The Task Force has also, without a doubt, greatly speeded up many processes.

By having all the relevant players present, by sitting together on working parties and committees, a new sense of trust and confidence began to build up between the children's organisations and key parts of the private sector. From early 2002, the first fruits of this new era of collaboration were seen, with the industry contributing their technical knowledge and experience, and often their resources, and with the children's organisations doing likewise.

There have been three major public awareness campaigns on chat room abuse. The UK Government contributed £3.3 million in cash to developing campaign materials, with advice and guidance from children's organisations and industry. The launch of the materials was timed and co-ordinated in such a way, and with sufficient notice, to allow several different parts of industry to promote and amplify the effort. For example by giving free banner advertising on their home pages and site, providing links, distributing materials, or launching their own initiatives to coincide with the Government-funded ones.

Another major piece of work has been the development of a "Good Practice Guide" for the providers of web based services. This has been followed by extensive work developing a good practice guide to the providers of interactive online services, for example chat room providers, or providers of discussion forums or bulletin boards. Following consensual discussions with the industry a joint approach was made to allow chat room moderators to be made the subject of criminal records checks.

A guidance note has been published on the positive uses of, and limitations of, child protection software. This has led on to the creation of a project to develop public standards – a

kitemark –for safety software, which is being jointly financed by the Government and the UK's media regulator. The success of this project, again, depends critically on the continued co-operation and input of industry.

The search engine companies have recently joined the work of the Task Force, and following considerable negotiation, the credit card and payments industries have agreed to approach the Government to ask for a change in the law to allow them to remove the credit cards from people convicted of using them to commit crimes such as buying child pornography online. This has always been possible in terms of the law of contract, but some technical issues arose in relation to the data protection legislation. The UK Government has now indicated that they will enact the necessary legal changes.

One of the most significant examples of private sector co-operation with child protection interests occurred very recently in relation to the mobile phone industry. With most of the networks themselves providing access both to their own online materials and services, as well as to the internet, and with usage of mobile phones very high among young people, it was clear to us that several matters needed to be addressed. Unlike with the "old" fixed Internet world, the mobile companies were already large, mature businesses with a great deal of experience of the mass consumer market. It took very little effort on the part of the children's organizations to convince them in principle of the need to adopt a code of practice on content, although working out the detail took longer. The UK now has a new self-regulatory body which, essentially, supervises a new regime for classifying content on mobiles, linked to an age verification system which applies on every network.

The mobile phone companies have launched a new set of location based services which allow the possibility of physically locating the whereabouts of a child through their mobile. Clearly in the wrong hands, such technology can put children in great peril. The children's organizations raised the issue directly with the industry. Through joint discussions, a code of practice emerged which the police said satisfied their security concerns.

There are many other, concrete examples of how joint working has paid dividends. However, joint working is only possible if each side accepts the legitimacy of the other's contribution, and also accepts and acknowledges their expertise. None of that is possible unless there is also some degree of trust.

3.7   NGO - Private Sector Relationships

NGOs world-wide have taken on a new role to work with the private sector in order to develop policies and programmes to protect children. Although this is not a new development in itself, as the relationship matures and trust is built between partners the results become more visible and potentially more sustainable. It can also place additional demands on NGOs as they become suppliers to the private sector of technical support and training raising new questions about who provides funding for the extra work. This new way of working has presented new challenges. There has been resistance by some private sector partners to pay for what they see as the 'normal' day to day work of NGOs, on the other hand traditional donors of NGO work sometimes struggle to see why they should support activities of profit making businesses. Clearly there is room for dialogue on funding but this must be agreed as part of the cooperative framework and not assumed by either party.

Significantly, since 2001 there have been several examples of 'industry' recognition of the work being done by private sector and NGO partners in the campaign against child sex tourism. In 2003 the ECPAT led *Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children in Tourism* was awarded the prestigious British Airways Tourism for Tomorrow Award. Also in 2003 was the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Gold Award to ACCOR Hotels for the work they have done in partnership with ECPAT and others to protect children in Asia.

However, as relationships become more co-operative there must always be space for NGOs to continue their work on lobbying and campaigning for change without feeling compromised by their relationship with the private sector partners or by receiving funds from the private sector to support their work. The challenge is to ensure that all partners are able to share their views and expectations, be open to learning from them, communicate well about issues, goals and progress, be open about areas of agreement and disagreement and recognise that there will inevitably be differences.

4.   CONCLUSIONS

In the early years of campaigning against the sexual exploitation of children there was no obvious place within the business world to situate the protection of children. Even though there were some early 'champions' the activities were ad hoc and largely depended on committed individuals. However, over the past few years the movement towards corporate social responsibility has created a framework where NGOs and the private sector can more easily find a common language to discuss the protection of children.   The challenge for child protection organisations is to ensure that while working together that the private sector agenda remains focussed on child protection. To a large extent this depends on the way the activities are integrated into the operations and 'culture' of the business.

The *work-in-progress* examples used in this report variously reflect aspects of the 12 critical success factors reported by European Multi-Stakeholder Forum on CSR listed in Section 2.4. However it should be noted that there is no regional or global centralised collection of case studies and this paper is limited by the lack of time available to collect data. A recommendation for the future would be for The Council of Europe to develop and maintain a database of good practice models and lessons learned.

NGOs, most notably ECPAT groups, have been at the forefront of working with European tour operators, airlines and multi-national hotel chains to systematise their response to child protection through policy, training and information dissemination across their supply chain in order to combat the sexual exploitation of children in tourism destinations. These initiatives, together with the involvement of local partners in the destinations, are having a push and pull effect, ensuring that CSR policies developed in Europe can have relevance at the local destination, even if that is outside of Europe.

Over many years the ICT sector has been challenged to work with NGOs and governments on educational campaigns that target the growing evidence of child abuse images on the Internet and the use of technology for communication between offenders. Increasingly we are seeing a stronger role for NGOs in the managing of Hotlines and lobbying for new software to identify and raise alert to abusive images. As with the travel and tourism sector, there is an increasing trend toward multi-sectoral working groups amongst those working to prevent child abuse through new technologies. There is also the identification of and involvement of sub-sectors such as mobile phone companies, Internet 'back-bone' providers and credit card companies.

The challenge for all stakeholders is to develop mechanisms to ensure that the growing raft of activities and initiatives are ultimately measured against better protection of children. As projects mature so too should we be seeing structural and behavioural change leading to practical improvements and a reduction in the number of children being abused and exploited. However, what we are not seeing so far is innovation in monitoring mechanisms to understand the impact of all these new private sector activities and initiatives.

There is evidence that partnerships are providing opportunities to share, learn and develop initiatives such as training and information dissemination. The increase in co-operation between NGOs and private sector partners has seen a trend towards both partners working side by side to plan and implement policy and programmes and publicly present the results of these activities. However, there has been very little involvement of young people themselves in the design and development of new initiatives.

Although most evident when working with the travel and tourism industry or the ICT industries, private sector involvement does occur elsewhere. Sadly, it does not get recorded or promoted because it occurs in localised areas not related to national or multi-national business, or it is not seen as something that needs promoting. Many initiatives to prevent the sexual exploitation of children have targeted the education sector and although many education providers are private and do make profit, this paper has not covered this sector.

5.   Recommendations

These recommendations fall into two categories. The first (Section 5.1) calls upon Governments, International Organisations, Trade Unions and NGOs to identify opportunities to engage with the private sector in improving children's lives. The second (section 5.2 – 5.6) reflects the strategic and operational realities of implementing private sector initiatives to protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse.

    5.1   Reaffirming commitments to international conventions, declarations and agreements[1]

> **Recommendation: Redouble efforts on the eradication of poverty, especially child poverty.**

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[1] Including the Plan of Implementation for the World Summit on Social Development, the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, the protocol on the traffic of human beings related to the Convention on Transnational Organized Crime, Convention Concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour (International Labour Organization No. 182), and ratification of other ILO Conventions implicating children, particularly 138.

The Private Sector must be engaged in order to combat the long-term causes of sexual exploitation of children which are often linked to the inequalities between economically developed countries and those that are less developed. Special attention should be paid to improving the social status as well as the economic condition of women.

Governments and civil society can put pressure on the Private Sector to assume greater responsibility for the realization of children's rights, bringing the benefits of research and development in science and technology, education and mass communication to work for children and particularly those in greatest need. This would also include monitoring business practice to ensure adherence to minimum standards and to advocate for fair employment conditions. These include, but are not limited to, wages, hours, contracts, child care provisions, promotion opportunity, skills development and the freedom to join a trade union.

Recommendation: Ensure private sector participation in the implementation of National Plans of Action

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An audit of NPA's is essential to ensure that government agencies with an interface to the private sector are consulted (eg: Arts, Information, Communication, Education, Finance and Banking, Media, Trade, Transport, Tourism). Private-Public partnerships should be integrated into NPA's.

Recommendation: Seek out new private sector partners

The travel and tourism industry and the ICT industry have been used extensively as models of private sector involvement however there are numerous ways of engaging with business beyond these two industries. Mobilising the private sector could be as simple as seeking out opportunities to develop skills exchange programmes, mentoring, assist with fundraising, provide legal and financial advice, marketing and communications support. It could also involve developing sustainable employment opportunities for young people and more advanced skills training programmes. Ethical trading and ethical investment initiatives can be explored to ensure that a child rights focussed programme is included.

     5.2   Research and development

Recommendation:
Research the impacts of private sector policies on children's right to protection

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It is not clear from existing information how much of the work being done by the private sector comes from a *Problem Analysis* method of project design. It is often assumed that increased knowledge leads to a change in practice and whilst that may be the case in some situations, it is not always guaranteed especially if there are internal or external barriers. More research needs to be done on the relationship between the different actors and the nature and extent of child sexual exploitation. Specific targeted actions are more easily developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. Research and development needs to be undertaken on understanding barriers to successful implementation. One way to do this would be for companies to engage a child protection specialist to work with them for a limited period of time to undertake an audit of policies and processes to identify, within existing business practice, where there is room for improvement. Employees should be encouraged to create new ideas to fill these gaps and use in-house expertise to innovate.

5.3 Reflect and review

Recommendation: Monitoring and Evaluation of existing programmes and policies implemented by the Private Sector in order to ensure that they are working in accordance with the principles of the best interests of the child

Those companies who have already undertaken initiatives, either alone or in partnership with others, should be encouraged to reflect on what impact this has had on their company performance and within the community in which they operate. Stakeholder participation in the review process is essential to ensure that the activities undertaken are achieving the desired affect. The use of performance indicators and participatory processes can determine whether the project has sufficient impact to be continued, can encourage ownership throughout the business, to employees and to clients and can provide a benchmark against which others can be measured.

5.4 Relationships

Recommendation: All Private Sector initiatives should involve participation of beneficiaries and stakeholders. New methods of participation should be explored.

Challenges confronting children must be addressed through strategies that engage a broad range of actors, including civil society and children themselves. Businesses should be encouraged to explore relationships with employee groups, schools and colleges, young peoples groups and media outlets as a way of broadening their understanding on the impact of their business on children and young people. This will help to identify support systems for children in need of special protection.

5.5 Record and Report

Recommendation: Private Sector initiatives should prioritise transparency and accountability to the wider community beyond their employees and shareholders.

Companies and NGOs should be encouraged to document both process and outcomes to ensure that lessons learned are captured and can be shared across the sector. Many reports are now available to list the progress of private sector activities but very few of these reports are analytical about how the process has been undertaken or why one decision was better than another. If important practical information is not recorded it makes it difficult for others to learn from examples. Explaining issues such as managing multi-stakeholder decision-making, conflict resolution, and financial models can be useful for others.

5.6 Relevance

Recommendation: Private Sector initiatives should work with local child protection expertise.

Activities conducted by the private sector, whether alone or in partnership with Governments or NGOs, should reflect wherever possible the local context, respect local expertise, work towards national plans of action against the prevention of child abuse or sexual exploitation and report to national focal points to ensure relevance to the national agenda and contribute to the national child protection framework.

6. USEFUL WEBSITE LISTING

- Child Rights Information Network   www.crin.org
- ECPAT International   www.ecpat.net
- Ethical Trading Initiative   www.ethicaltrade.org
- Internet Watch Foundation   WWW.iwf.co.uk
- Interpol   www.interpol.int
- TdH Germany internet platform   www.child-hood.com
- The Code of Conduct   www.thecode.org
- The Tour Operators Initiative   www.toinitiative.org
- World Tourism Organisation   www.world-tourism.org/protect_children
- UNICEF   www.unicef.org
- Virtual Global Taskforce   www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com

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[7] www.csr2004.nl
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[9] www.fto.co.uk
[10] www.thecode.org
[11] www.ecpathotline.se
[12] www.virtualglobaltaskforce.com