

**15-20 November 2021**

*“Ensuring access to justice for all children: towards non-discriminatory and inclusive child justice systems”*

Workshop Programme

## **Right to Access Justice- Child Victims in Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Cases**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Wednesday, 17th November 2021</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	18:00 - 19:30 CET	17:00-18:30 London
<b>Organiser(s)</b>	Dr. Julie Crutchley	
<b>Institution</b>	ECPAT Norway	
<b>Type of Workshop</b>	Panel discussion	
<b>Topics</b>	Ensuring that the voice of the child is heard in Child Justice Systems Tackling violence within the Child Justice Systems and ensuring child friendly approaches for child victims, offenders and witnesses	
<b>Region</b>	Europe	
<b>Language</b>	English	

### **Abstract/background**

Over the last 20 years, as the world rapidly became inter-connected through technology, children have been increasingly exposed to evolving risks of online harm through the misuse of technologies. As has been widely reported, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in millions more children spending large amounts of time online for education and social interactions.<sup>1</sup> The presence of countless children active online, has made it easier for offenders to contact victims.<sup>2</sup> This has been part of the factors behind a spike in child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

Additionally, advances in technology enables perpetrators to use tools such as anonymous platforms, streaming services, encrypted communication systems and virtual currency,

<sup>1</sup> ECPAT International (2020). Summary Paper: Online Child Sexual Exploitation. Bangkok: ECPAT International. Annual Report 2020 (INHOPE, 2021) Accessed from: <https://inhope.org/media/pages/the-facts/download-our-whitepapers/c16bc4d839-1620144551/inhope-annual-report-2020.pdf> 06/05/2021

<sup>2</sup> Livingstone, S., Carr, J. and Byrne, J. (2016). One in three: Internet governance and children’s rights. Innocenti Discussion Paper, No.2016-01, UNICEF Office of Research, Florence. 7.

UNICEF Office of Research- Innocenti. (2019, November). Global kids online. Comparative report. UNICEF Office of Research, Innocenti: Florence, Italy. 8.

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allowing them to easily share materials and communicate with each other through online communities.<sup>3</sup> Besides increasing children’s vulnerability online, the rapid evolution of new technologies also poses a challenge for law enforcement, researchers and advocates who often find themselves outpaced as they try to combat the ever-changing criminal threats.<sup>4</sup> The WeProtect Global Threat Assessment 2021 highlights an alarming increase of child sexual exploitation and abuse online. This includes the fact that the US National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) processes on average 60,000 reports of child sexual abuse online every day. In addition, the Internet Watch Foundation saw a 77% rise in child ‘self-generated’ sexual material from 2019 to 2020.<sup>5</sup> The result of this will be enormous numbers of victims and survivors who are children or young adults.

Crucially, WeProtect reports that ‘many of the emerging trends threaten to further increase the volume and complexity of cases and exacerbate the challenges for those working to reduce risk and harm’.<sup>6</sup> This could lead to one of our times greatest societal threats in which justice systems appear ill-equipped to deal with the realities of this growing crime.

Unfortunately, research has detailed the challenges victims of online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OSCEA) cases have in accessing justice.<sup>7</sup> These limitations prevent their opportunity to receive effective remedy and reparations for the harm they have suffered. It is necessary that a wide range of reparations options are available to victims directly connected to the nature of this crime. This must include prompt removal of images, continual detection when images are reuploaded as well as long term therapeutic support

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<sup>3</sup> INTERPOL. (2018). Towards a global indicator on unidentified victims in child sexual exploitation material: Technical report. <https://www.ecpat.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Technical-Report-TOWARDS-A-GLOBAL-INDICATOR-ON-UNIDENTIFIED-VICTIMS-IN-CHILD-SEXUAL-EXPLOITATIONMATERIAL.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Europol, Exploiting isolation: Offenders and victims of online child sexual abuse during the COVID-19 pandemic, 19 June 2020.

4 arrested in takedown of dark web child abuse platform with some half a million users (Europol, 2021)

Accessed from:

<https://www.europol.europa.eu/newsroom/news/4-arrestedin-takedown-of-dark-web-child-abuse-platform-some-half-million-users-04/05/2021>

<sup>5</sup> We Protect Global Alliance GLOBAL THREAT ASSESSMENT 2021

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>7</sup> Sylwander, K.R., Vervik, A-K. & Greijer, S. (2021). Online child sexual exploitation and abuse: A review of Norwegian case law. Oslo: ECPAT Norway.

Annual Report 2020 (INHOPE, 2021) Accessed from:

<https://inhope.org/media/pages/the-facts/download-our-whitepapers/c16bc4d839-1620144551/inhope-annual-report-2020.pdf> 06/05/2021

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and reintegration activities.<sup>8</sup> In addition, victims who are based abroad in countries far removed from the offender face significant hurdles in their ability to access justice.<sup>9</sup>

This panel discussion will detail both the challenges faced by victims in accessing justice and the nature of effective remedies to adequately address the harm suffered in this complex and often reoccurring crime.

### Objectives

- Identify new challenges in providing access to justice for victims of child sexual exploitation and abuse online
- Share good examples of comprehensive and effective legislation and policy
- Identify models of effective remedy and reparations internationally.

### Participants

Representatives of governments, international and regional organizations, law enforcement agencies, academia and civil society organizations.

### Speakers

Welcome by Moderator, Julie Crutchley, Senior Adviser and Researcher, ECPAT Norway

#### Moderated debate

- Prevalence and New Trends in OCSEA, Jennifer Newman, Executive Director, Texas & ECD, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children
- Effective Remedies at National Level in the Philippines - Potential of the Barnehus Model for Long Term Recovery and Social (re)integration, Nadine Finch, Associate Member of Child Circle and trustee of Love 146.
- Best practice in Detection and Removal of OSCEA material, Thomas Andersson, Senior Advisor, ECPAT Sweden.

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<sup>8</sup> PROJECT ARACHNID: ONLINE AVAILABILITY OF CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIAL

An analysis of CSAM and harmful-abusive content linked to certain electronic service providers [https://protectchildren.ca/pdfs/C3P\\_ProjectArachnidReport\\_en.pdf](https://protectchildren.ca/pdfs/C3P_ProjectArachnidReport_en.pdf)

<sup>9</sup> ECPAT International and CRCA/ECPAT Albania. (2021). Child sexual exploitation and abuse online: Survivors' Perspectives in Albania. WeProtect Global Alliance.

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- Preventing Young Offenders Accessing Child Sexual Abuse Material, Nina Vaaranen-Valkonen, Executive Director and Psychotherapist, Protect Children Finland.
- Good practice and recommendations for child victims from Norwegian case law, Ann-Kristin Vervik, Executive Director, ECPAT Norway
- Conclusion and way forward, Julie Crutchley

Organized by ECPAT Norway

**The following targets of the SDGs are of direct relevance to ending online sexual exploitation and providing effective remedies:**

- SDG Target 5.2: “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation”
- SDG Target 8.7: “Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms”
- SDG Target 16.2: “End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children by 2030.”