Call for input Report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material - *"Addressing the vulnerabilities of children to sale and sexual exploitation in the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals" – April 2022*

The International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children (ICMEC) is a non-governmental organization, headquartered in the United States, with offices representing Asia Pacific, Latin America & the Caribbean, and Australia. ICMEC works to make the world a safer place for children by defending against child sexual exploitation, abuse, and the risk of going missing.

Our mission is to advance child protection and safeguard vulnerable children by:
- powering the global search for children who are missing
- disrupting the economics and mechanics of commercial child exploitation
- training frontline professionals to prevent and respond to cases of child abuse and exploitation.

Over the last two decades, ICMEC has worked in more than 120 countries empowering the global community with the tools, training, and technology to create a safer world for children. ICMEC is committed to building comprehensive national prevention strategies and responses to cases of missing children, child sexual abuse and exploitation. We foster systemic change through thought leadership and research, capacity building, convening regional technology and financial coalitions, and acting as a partner in implementation efforts to keep children safe.

SDG 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking

Human trafficking of individuals at any age, whether for labor or sexual exploitation, may be facilitated both online and in-person. This section will focus on trafficking of children for sexual purposes occurring in-person in the migration context. Technology-facilitated sex trafficking of children will be addressed below under SDG 16.2.

Vulnerable population: Children on the Move

Migration occurs globally every day for a range of reasons pursuing better educational or financial opportunities, or in response to negative external forces like extreme poverty, armed conflict, or natural disasters. Individuals may migrate by choice or force leaving their place of residence to resettle elsewhere, either within their home country or across international borders. Children—accompanied and unaccompanied—are often among those migrating. Their lack of maturity, education, and experience and vulnerabilities related to their ongoing physical and psychological development, predispose them to increased risk of exploitation and to going missing prior to, during, and after their migratory journeys. Children in migration are at risk of physical, mental, and psychological harm as well as damage to their social and educational development.

Collected Data on Scope/Prevalence

While global data on the number of child migrants and refugees is available, there is a lack of data showing the prevalence of sexual exploitation of child migrants along the migration path. For example, the number of children trafficked for sexual purposes who crossed international borders is known, but it is unclear whether the child was migrating and fell victim to traffickers along the way or if the child was in a trafficking situation from the start and was transported across an international border. It seems that the logical leap between vulnerability to trafficking and sexual exploitation when migrating, especially when unaccompanied, is relied upon.

Some available statistics are presented below.

- In 2022, the IOM reported there were 281 million international migrants of which 41 million were child migrants, 26.4 million were refugees, and 55 million were internally displaced persons.[1]
- At the end of 2020, data showed that 42% of the 82.4 million people forcibly displaced around the world (approx. 33 million) are children under the age of 18. Additionally, some 12.6 million children are refugees.[2]
- The Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre found that at the end of 2020, 55 million people were internally displaced around the world (48 million due to conflict and violence and 7 million as a result of disasters)—and more than 23 million of these were under the age of 18.[3]
- In 2017, an IOM report showed that 77% of children moving along the Central Mediterranean Route reported experiencing exploitation (8 out of 10) and on the Eastern Mediterranean Route, 17% of children reported exploitation.[4]
- In 2016, UNICEF did a study of children attempting to migrate into Libya; the study found that nearly 75% of the child participants reported experiencing harassment, aggression, or violence by adults, and girls at a higher level than boys.[5]
- A study of unaccompanied children from the Horn of Africa, found that approximately 72% had experienced more than one incident of sexual violence upon their arrival in the United Kingdom.[6]

Information on how vulnerable children are at exacerbated threats to sale and sexual exploitation with links to the deprivation of other SDGs

In the context of migration, there are several SDGs that if unfulfilled can leave children at even greater risk of sexual exploitation.

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[1] IOM UN Migration, *World Migration Report 2022*, Dec. 1, 2021, *at* https://publications.iom.int/books/world-migration-report-2022 (last visited Feb. 3, 2022).

[2] UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2020* 3, 2021, *at* https://www.unhcr.org/60b638e37/unhcr-global-trends-2020 (last visited Feb. 3, 2022).

[3] Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, *Global Report on Internal Displacement 2021*, *at* https://www.internal-displacement.org/global-report/grid2021/ (last visited Feb. 20, 2022).

[4] UNICEF, *Harrowing Journeys: children and youth on the move across the Mediterranean Sea, at risk of trafficking and exploitation*, Sep. 2017, *at* https://www.unicef.org/reports/harrowing-journeys (last visited Feb. 3, 2022).

[5] UNICEF, *A Deadly Journey for Children: The Central Mediterranean Migration Route* 3, Feb. 2017, *at* https://www.unicef.org/reports/deadly-journey-children (last visited Feb. 3, 2022).

[6] *Alone and Unsafe: Children, migration, and sexual and gender-based violence* 17, The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, 2018, *at* https://www.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/181126-AloneUnsafe-Report-EN-web.pdf (last visited Feb. 3, 2022).

SDG 1 – Poverty; and SDG 8 - Decent Work and Economic Growth

Economics are both a push and pull factor of migration. Lack of sustainable and consistent economic opportunities push migrants out of their homes while flourishing economies pull migrants in. For many children, poverty, economic inequity, and the need to support their families back home, are major factors in the decision to migrate. Thus, a child's economic reality and potential opportunities significantly influence an individual's decision to migrate and subsequent associated dangers. Extreme poverty and the denial of basic services is also a significant push factor.

SDG 4- Education

A lack of educational opportunities is a motivating factor for migration. While some children lack access to education overall, others experience a disruption in their education because of external circumstances like war/conflict. For those able to attend school, the educational experience can still be severely limited by language barriers and a lack of resources.

The education level of a migrant child also plays an influencing role in the likelihood of exploitation, as children with higher education levels report experiencing less abuse during their migration journeys. Migrant children who have the ability to inform themselves about possible challenges, become with familiar with new environments, and navigate challenges and dangers can better avoid the risk of trafficking and sexual exploitation.

SDG 16 – Peace, justice, and strong institutions

A country's political system and the protections it provides its citizens also play a role in a child's decision to migrate. If a country lacks legislation providing healthcare, individuals may migrate to gain access to healthcare. Political systems may fail to protect specific groups like the LGBTQ+ community, making them more vulnerable to social, legal, and political persecution. A lack of protective legislation exposes children to sexual violence and abuse. Children may flee normalized violence, (e.g., interpersonal, intimate, gang violence). Internal conflicts also increase the likelihood of individuals fleeing and seeking refuge elsewhere. Some children also migrate over concerns about corruption in their country's government.

The manifestations of sale and sexual exploitation in relation to SDG 8.7

The primary manifestation of sale and sexual exploitation considered in this section is Children on the Move including child refugees no matter the reason they have fled their home country. For these children, the migration process exacerbates their vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation, especially adolescent girls around the world who are more vulnerable to sexual exploitation due to their age, gender, and economic status.

Once their journey begins, children are susceptible to additional risks heightening their vulnerability to sexual violence and exploitation, especially when traveling alone or if separated from their families. Unaccompanied youth often have insufficient resources to utilize legal and safe methods of migrating. A lack of opportunities to move legally and strict border enforcement may force child migrants to resort to using dangerous, irregular routes and engaging smugglers to help them cross borders. The dependent and transactional nature of the relationship between smugglers and children increases the possibility of sexual

exploitation. Europol estimated that 20% of suspected smugglers have ties to human trafficking and frequently move children across borders only to sell them into exploitation. In addition to debts owed to smugglers, children may also be forced to engage in criminal activity (e.g., theft, drug dealing, transactional sex) to sustain themselves during their migratory journeys.

Protection needs and contextual challenges amid efforts to combat sale and sexual exploitation of children such as COVID-19, climate change and disasters, safety in the digital space, and increasing conflict outbreaks

The COVID-19 Pandemic

During the pandemic, loss of employment and income and a worldwide economic downturn heightened risk factors such as poverty and food insecurity. Economic downturns often lead to more children working, becoming pregnant, getting married, and being trafficked or sexually exploited which further worsens the situation of migrant and displaced children. The disruption in education has been detrimental to the mental health and wellbeing of migrant children and exacerbated the risk of violence, abuse, and neglect by isolating children from peer and social support networks, and community and social support services.

Procedures like registration, age assessment, and asylum were suspended during the pandemic, limiting access to services for children including guardianship and access to appropriate shelters. With the suspension of asylum procedures and consular services, and limited travel options to facilitate transfers, significant delays in family reunification occurred. Imposing forced confinement to curb the spread of COVID-19 increased the risk of prolonged separation from parents, increased exploitation, and gender-based violence. Closed borders also created serious challenges with many humanitarian workers unable to reach child migrants due to physical distancing and confinement restrictions.

Lack of registration of child migrants at international borders

Immigration authorities should register all children, including migrant children, who cross an international border. Authorities should capture as much information about the child as possible, including a photo and description of the child, and details regarding all adults traveling with the child. This information should be maintained on a digital platform that can be shared across agencies and used to locate the child in the event they go missing or are separated from their families/guardians.

Lack of relevant training for border personnel, healthcare professionals, and others

Relevant immigration and border security authorities should be trained to recognize potential signs of trafficking in children. Training border personnel to recognize trafficking and related legal provisions and responsibilities can better equip them to identify children who may be at risk. Border security and immigration authorities should screen children arriving in their country for signs of trafficking, especially in circumstances where they are traveling with adults to whom a legal relationship cannot be determined, or it is determined that there is no legal relationship at all.

Professionals working with vulnerable populations should also receive regular training and mental health support. These professionals may suffer secondary traumatic stress (STS) due to exposure to the extensive trauma the children describe. Regular, targeted training is crucial to adequately equip them with protective practices to help prevent STS, burnout, and other consequences and to identify and address these symptoms in others.

Practical measures taken to address the vulnerabilities in institutional, family and online settings to ensure no child is left behind with respect to protection against sale and sexual exploitation. Include examples of good practices and a description of practical outcomes or results.
It is imperative for countries to adopt and enforce systems/laws that protect the best interests of migrating youth and mitigate the risks of exploitation.

Training for professionals working with migrant children
Professionals working with migrant children should be educated and trained on culturally sensitive, trauma-informed, rights-based, child-centered care, and the immediate, short-term, and long-term health consequences of mass and forced migration for children. Training should be required for educators, and health/mental health professionals working directly or indirectly with children, as well as for border officials, attorneys, judges, and others who encounter child migrants and their families. Those providing care must be trained to work with children, understand the impact of trauma and its intersectionality with culture, and be able to accommodate linguistic and other needs. Training should include identification and referral of, as well as appropriate assistance and counselling in a culturally sensitive way to, victims of trafficking in persons, migrants in situations of vulnerability.

Use of Validated Screening Tools and Toolkits
Validated evidence-based/evidence-informed screening tools to identify children who have experienced abuse or exploitation during migration, and comprehensive protocols for responding to suspected abuse/exploitation must be developed. Screening must be accompanied by access to resources for those who have experienced or are at risk for exploitation/abuse. Comprehensive healthcare protocols are also needed to assist professionals in the identification of and response to suspected abuse or exploitation. These protocols should be tailored to the health/mental health facility and include coordination with multidisciplinary teams (e.g., law enforcement and criminal justice professionals, healthcare providers, educators, and child protection professionals). *See attachments.*

The GMCNgine™
ICMEC encourages the use of its **GMCNgine™ technology** to aid in the location and recovery of missing children around the world, including those displaced due to or during the migration journey. In mass migration situations, it is very important to immediately begin to track the movement of children to ensure their safety and provide the best opportunities for them to be reunited with their families and communities. The GMCNgine™ is a web-based database and alerting system that can be used to alert the public of missing child cases, manage case information, and search for and locate missing children. As the largest missing child database and alerting system in the world, it can geo-target alerts to specific cities and regions. It can also be used proactively to register information about refugee children and the adults with

whom they are traveling as they cross the border. Registering children at international borders would make detailed information immediately available if at any point the child's whereabouts are unknown. Since 2019, the GMCNgine web platform and mobile applications have been deployed to missing child agencies and law enforcement entities in 30+ countries and has aided in the recovery of 3,400+ children.

SDG 16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children

Online child sexual exploitation (OCSE) involves grooming children for sexual abuse, producing and distributing CSAM, sextortion, and the buying/selling of children. We will focus here on CSAM, Online Grooming, Livestreaming, and Technology-Facilitated Trafficking.

Vulnerable Population: Children Online

The COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing risks to children of online abuse and exploitation like child sex abuse material (CSAM), online grooming, livestreaming, and technology-facilitated trafficking, with an increased push into the online space in their personal, social, and academic interactions. Any child under the age of 18 with access to technology/Internet is at risk of exploitation which is higher when there is a lack of supervision, an increased amount of time on various platforms, and a lack of education regarding safe Internet behaviors.

Offenders can range from close family members to complete strangers, be any gender, can participate in abuse from anywhere in the world due to the online nature of the abuse. The Internet, online payment systems, and digital technologies have made these exploits easy and inexpensive. Offenders are at low-risk and unhindered by borders or geographical boundaries. At any moment, countless abusers are making contact online with unsuspecting children with the purpose of exploiting them.

Collected Data on Scope/Prevalence

- In 2020, there were more than 21.7 million reports representing over 65 million images, videos, and other files of potential abuse and exploitation.[7]
- Over 99% of the online reports received by the CyberTipline in 2021 regarded incidents of suspected CSAM.[8]
    - CSAM - 29,309,106
    - Online Enticement of Children for Sexual Acts - 44,155
    - Child Sex Trafficking - 16,032
- In 2021, CyberTipline reports provided by ESPs included 39.9 million images, of which 16.9 million were unique, and 44.8 million videos, of which 5.1 million were unique.[9]

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[7] Brenna O'Donnell, *Rise in Online Enticement and Other Trends: NCMEC Releases 2020 Exploitation Stats*, NCMEC, Feb. 24, 2021, at https://www.missingkids.org/blog/2021/rise-in-online-enticement-and-other-trends--ncmec-releases-2020-#:~:text=2020%20was%20a%20record%2Dbreaking,were%20from%20electronic%20service%20providers (last visited Apr. 8, 2022).

[8] NCMEC, *Cybertipline Report 2021*, 2022, at https://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/cybertipline/cybertiplinedata (last visited Apr. 8, 2022).

[9] *Id.*

- Between April 2017 and March 2021, the NSPCC reported that there was a 60% increase in the number of "sexual communications with a child" offenses against girls, with 10,700 communications recorded by the police in England and Wales.[10]
- In 2018, the IWF found over 2,000 images and videos of livestreamed child sexual abuse created over a 3-month period; revealing that 98% of images found were of children aged 13 and under, 28% were 10 or under, and the youngest victim was 3 years old. New analysis conducted for 2020 showed in 80% of these cases, the victims were 11-13-year-old girls.[11]
- The U.S. Department of Justice found data that in the U.S. approximately 40% of sex trafficking victims are recruited online making the Internet the most common victim recruitment place.[12]

Information on how vulnerable children are at exacerbated threats to sale and sexual exploitation with links to the deprivation of other SDGs

In the context of OCSE, there are several SDGs that if unfulfilled can leave children at even greater risk of sexual exploitation.

SDG 1 – Poverty

Lack of sustainable and consistent economic opportunities may pressure families to facilitate OCSE to provide financial support. For many children, poverty can potentially mean more time left unsupervised or they seek alternative ways to support themselves. Research has shown that children whose family is impoverished are more likely to be exposed to or forced to participate in OCSE either as a means to support their family or due to the general lack of supervision that is often prevalent. Thus, a child's economic reality can drastically impact their risk level. Children in poverty may not attend school, depriving them not only of the protective elements school provides but also further putting them at greater risk at home, on the streets, or online.

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

Girls are often challenged to find work to support their families or be married at a young age both of which increases their risk of exploitation or trafficking due to their inability to find other forms of income within their community. Their own family members may facilitate the abuse to earn an income, and whether that abuse is CSAM, livestreaming, or technology-facilitated trafficking, the girls are at an extreme risk of increased harm, vulnerability, and repeat victimization. Moreover, the lack of oversight and legal protections within any given country or any given household, provide an environment that may foster OCSE. While gender inequality can, in part, address the disproportionate number of females to male victims, boys are also vulnerable to exploitation and experience these traumas.

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[10] *New figures reveal four in five victims of online grooming crimes are girls*, NSPCC, Oct. 6, 2021, at https://www.nspcc.org.uk/about-us/news-opinion/2021/online-grooming-crimes-girls/ (last visited Apr. 8, 2022).

[11] *IWF research on child sex abuse live-streaming reveals 98% of victims are 13 or under*, Internet Watch Foundation, May 14, 2018, at https://www.iwf.org.uk/news-media/news/iwf-research-on-child-sex-abuse-live-streaming-reveals-98-of-victims-are-13-or-under/ (last visited Apr. 8, 2022).

[12] *Traffickers abusing online technology, UN crime prevention agency warns*, UNODC, Oct. 30, 2021, at https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/10/1104392 (last visited Apr. 8, 2022).

SDG 16 – Peace and Justice

It is paramount that countries maintain relevant and comprehensive legislation to ensure the protection of children from OCSE. Legislation not only protects children, but also permits law enforcement to properly pursue investigations, and deters offenders from committing OCSE offenses. In countries where contact sexual offenses are criminalized, but there is no legislation specific to online exploitation, law enforcement may be unable to investigate, and offenders may circumvent the law while continuing to offend. A lack of national and international legislation not only puts the child at risk, but it can also be harmful to the development of society.

The manifestations of sale and sexual exploitation in relation to SDG 16.2

The primary manifestations considered in this section include CSAM, Online Grooming, Livestreaming, and Technology-Facilitated Trafficking. The common platforms remain the same across all four. Any technology that is equipped with photo and/or video capabilities can be used as a tool for OCSE. However, the production of the materials is only part of the abuse. The distribution, sale, and potential extortion typically requires a method of communication. Offenders often identify victims in public forums, such as chat rooms, social networks, or online gaming sites, later moving the communication to a private online setting at which time the grooming, exploitation, and or abuse will occur.

Types

- *Online grooming* – use of the Internet or other digital technologies to establish or build a relationship with a child under the age of 18 to facilitate *non-contact* (online) or *contact* (offline) sexual interaction.
- *CSAM* – "any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes," as well as the use of a child to create such a representation.
- *Livestreamed child sex abuse* – the broadcasting of CSA in real time via the Internet to viewers anywhere in the world.
- *Technology-Facilitated Trafficking* – a form of OCSE that includes any act of a sexually exploitative nature against a child that has a connection to or occurred through use of ICTs. Its three primary online components include recruitment via social media, advertisements for jobs and other exploitive practices via the Internet, and the use of video equipment to broadcast those services.

Platforms

Gaming systems with online access are a common platform that offenders can use to gain access to and connect with children. Recently, the functionality of online gaming platforms (computers, video game consoles, or hand-held gaming systems) has evolved and expanded to include Internet access, messaging platforms, and photo and video sharing, thus enabling people around the world to communicate and play games with each other in real-time.

Social media is another platform in which offenders often disguise their identity, particularly their age, in order to gain access to and communicate with children. Platforms have begun implementing age restrictions to prevent younger children from using them, however, this does not resolve the issues of the offender who still maintains access to hundreds if not

thousands of other children that do meet the age requirements, as well as the kids that circumvent those requirements.

Peer on peer abuse cannot be overlooked as children are often coerced or pressured into transmitting CSAM of themselves or others among their peers. Once that material has been distributed it is difficult to recover and it can lead to further revictimization.

Protection needs and contextual challenges amid efforts to combat sale and sexual exploitation of children such as COVID-19, climate change and disasters, safety in the digital space, and increasing conflict outbreaks

Lack of legislation; Need for International Agreement & Cooperation

A lack of consistency in legislation in relation to OCSE presents a major challenge. It is crucial for national legislation to:
- Clearly define the age of a child and the age of consent;
- Explicitly define the various crimes and elements of crimes against children;
- Provisions must address both online and offline abuse and include technology-specific terminology;
- Establish minimum penalties for initial offenses and additional measures for repeat or aggravated offenses; and
- Provide extraterritorial jurisdiction for sexual offenses against children.

Wide-scale agreement that non-contact abuse is a criminal offense is also needed. Online grooming regardless of the intent to meet the child must be considered an offense. Distribution of CSAM or capturing of livestreamed materials is still abuse and can cause irreparable harm to children. Cross-sector collaboration, particularly between industry and law enforcement, is also crucial in both preventative and reactionary efforts. Multisectoral, national action plans are needed to focus political will and investments toward closing critical gaps in a country's legislation and its response to crimes against children.

Legislation focused on investigations, arrests, prosecutions, and convictions should be continuously and diligently evaluated to improve the efficacy of these strategies and ensure successful prosecution of OCSE cases.

Privacy vs. Protection

Maintaining the balance between privacy and protection is key in combating OCSE. With a third of the world's Internet users being below age 18, companies must be able to deploy technology tools and mechanisms to protect children from OCSE without violating the public's right to privacy. Social media companies have recently adjusted privacy policies to address user privacy concerns while meeting both related legal requirements and child sexual abuse prevention aims. Their privacy agreements specify how to deal with law enforcement, and require legal documentation (e.g., subpoenas, court orders, arrest warrants) to release private user information. Only in extreme emergencies will the platform release user information, and each platform reserves the right to evaluate how an emergency is defined. This demonstrates that this balance is feasible, but the right processes are needed for an impact to be felt.

COVID-19 Pandemic

For two years, children shifted to remote virtual learning and grew more reliant on social media as their primary socialization tool. With so many more people online and in isolation, children also experience reduced access to resources and support normally available through teachers, at school, in extracurricular programs, and in the community. Travel restrictions and quarantine regulations also pushed many more offenders online and created an environment in which more children were online, for longer periods of time, and with decreased supervision, posing an even greater danger for children than before.

Practical measures taken to address the vulnerabilities in institutional, family and online settings to ensure no child is left behind with respect to protection against sale and sexual exploitation. Include examples of good practices and a description of practical outcomes or results.

Creation of Specialized Police Units

In ICMEC's continuing efforts to capacity worldwide by identifying threats and opportunities, and strengthening law enforcement's response to OCSE, the current challenge is that many countries do not have specialized units/departments to specifically investigate cases of OCSE. It is important that law enforcement officers who handle crimes against children are aware of the language that they use and the impact their words may have on a child who has suffered abuse or exploitation. Most importantly, a clear legal framework is necessary in the establishment of a specialized OCSE Unit as it articulates, defines, and delineates the various crimes and offenses against children, that the unit will regularly encounter. Arrests alone cannot resolve the problem; so, countries must also support dedicated training to law enforcement personnel, prosecutors, and other professionals working in the field. Specialized police units should be equipped with the resources to educate parents, youth, and the community about the potential dangers of online activity including online child sexual victimization. **See attachment.**

Training Initiatives

Law enforcement trained in proper investigation procedures and empowered to pursue investigations to the full extent of the law, deter more crimes against children. Regular, ongoing training is needed so that law enforcement has the tools necessary to keep up with the changing landscape of emerging technologies.

Educators and healthcare providers trained in trauma-informed care and how to identify abuse, knowledgeable of their reporting obligations, and advised where to report suspected cases play an important role in prevention. Private sector leaders working to raise public awareness influence advances in legislation to prevent OCSE. The impact of these actors working together for a comprehensive, coordinated national response is even more profound and sustainable.

Industry Involvement

Industry involvement is necessary for protection and prevention efforts. ESPs must be required to report suspected CSAM when brought to their attention and the non-content data must be retained and preserved for law enforcement. Companies with a prominent online

footprint must be mindful of the added responsibility to develop policies that create a safe, age-appropriate online environment. This is also applicable to the gaming industry which should participate in cross-industry collaboration through flagged user and information sharing. They should proactively monitor chats, implement age requirements, and allow the option for in-game restrictions on comments and chatrooms for minors. Those in the payment industry (e.g., banks, credit card companies, third-party payment companies) are also accountable and should be encouraged to collaborate across sectors and to report suspected CSAM and flag potential OCSE purchases (i.e., Financial Coalition Against Child Sexual Exploitation). Their involvement will continue to evolve with the rise in cryptocurrency use.

Country Assessment Process

Country assessments are needed to determine where the gaps in legislation, implementation, and other efforts lie. An unbiased, comprehensive review of national laws and policies, response programs, coordination systems, and institutional and professional capacity can highlight the areas most in need of improvement and lead to training/capacity building efforts. Country assessments, like ICMEC's Multisectoral Response & Capacity (MRC) Assessment, promote increased attention to the prevention and investigation of OCSE and provide various platforms for discussion and exchange of experiences. In developing a multisectoral approach to address OCSE, the increased use of technology should be considered. International and national legal instruments must be adapted and amended to consider the new and different ways OCSE can occur and permit the use of the emerging technology to combat it. **See attachment.**

Links & Attachments
- [Improving Healthcare Services for Trafficked Persons: The Complete Toolkit](#)
- [A "How-To" Guide to Develop a Healthcare Protocol for Responding to Child Trafficking and Exploitation](#)
- [ICMEC's GMCNgine Web App Promo](#)
- [ICMEC's Global Missing Children's Network](#)
- Model Framework for the Creation of Specialized Online Child Sexual Exploitation Unit
- Building National Response to Online Child Sexual Exploitation: Multisectoral Response & Capacity (MRC) Assessment & National Plans of Action - Case Statement