

Participatory Research on

# COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN

in Surakarta (Central Java) and Indramayu (West Java)

**Team of Researchers:**

Arif Wahyunadi (LPPM - Unwir Indramayu)

Edi Suhandi (LPM - STKS Bandung)

Susiladiharti (LPM - STKS Bandung)

Ikka Kartika (LPA - West Java)

Nurlaela Diryat (LPA - Central Java)

Emmy L. Smith (Yayasan Kakak - Solo)

**Study Coordinator:**

Retno Setyowati (PPK - UNS)

**Technical Advisors:**

Judith Ennew

Harriot Beazley

Roxana Waterson

**Editor of the English Version**

Jasmina Byrne

## FOREWORD FROM UNICEF

During the Sixth East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children held in Bali in May 2003, During the Second World Congress Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children which was held in Yokohama in December 2001, the 136 countries attending, including Indonesia, recognized that commercial sexual exploitation and abuse of children could not be tolerated anymore and committed themselves to take urgent action under the Yokohama Global Commitment. While progress has been made since the First World Congress held in Stockholm in 1996, with an increasing awareness on the issue and actions taken to remove children from exploitation, still we have hardly begun to scratch the surface of the problem.

Every day millions of children around the world are exploited in the commercial sex trade. While other children are going to school, playing, sleeping and enjoying the innocence of childhood, at least over one million and a half child sex workers, including over 70,000 in Indonesia alone, are struggling to cope with the consequences of their exploitation.

According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which has been ratified by Indonesia in 1990, a child has the right to be protected against all forms of violence, sexual exploitation and harmful labour and is entitled to the right to have access to education and healthcare. Commercial sexual exploitation is one of the worse existing violations against the rights of children. It is hard to imagine a more difficult and shocking obstacle to the achievement of human rights than the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Children involved in sexual exploitation are and should always be considered as victims. Young victims of commercial sexual exploitation are abused physically and emotionally and more than often at home by their own relatives and friends; deprived of their right to education; discriminated; exploited economically and often trafficked and removed from their home area. Countries that have the best record in curbing sexual exploitation of children are generally those in which children's rights are most respected.

Therefore UNICEF promotes a human rights approach in its work at international and national level to combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children. At the global level, UNICEF advocates for ratification and law enforcement of international instruments that protect children such as the International Labour Organization's Convention 182 prohibiting the worst forms of child labour, the recently adopted protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography or the UN Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children. In this regard, UNICEF welcomes the recent signature last week of a memorandum of understanding between Australia and Indonesia to combat people smuggling and trafficking of women and children. At the state level, UNICEF works with governments to address the problem of sexual exploitation of children as it is essential that governments admit it is a problem and play an active role in proposing solutions.

UNICEF focuses its efforts in three areas: prevention, protection and recovery and reintegration, as stipulated in the Stockholm Agenda of Action. The actual work on the ground is done by local law enforcement and non-governmental organizations. UNICEF also partners with communities including children themselves, local leaders and the media.

A key effort in prevention is to ensure that children, especially girls, attend schools so that they can later on support themselves and become less vulnerable to pimps and other people who may try to coerce them into sex trade. UNICEF Indonesia is currently supporting community-based pilot initiatives on prevention of commercial sexual exploitation of children in two districts, Indramayu and Solo, where sexual exploitation of children is a major issue. Other activities include raising awareness in adults and children on the issue as well as providing information about HIV-AIDS and sexual education, and drawing attention to the demand side of sexual exploitation of children.

The AIDS' epidemic has had a huge impact on the commercial sexual exploitation of children. First because it has increased the number of orphans and push destitute children onto the labour market where they are vulnerable to sexual exploitation and also because a misunderstanding of the disease creates a demand for younger and younger sex partners.

UNICEF's approach on protection focuses on legal system, as in Indonesia with the support given to the drafting of the Child Protection Bill currently discussed in the Parliament, and on law enforcement. The easiest way to assess progress in curbing sexual exploitation of children is to look at the country-level legislation. Since the Stockholm Congress, a number of countries have adopted extra-territorial legislation, which allows them to punish their nationals for acts committed abroad. Although sex tourism is just one of many aspects of commercial sexual exploitation of children, it is one of the most visible. This has enabled government to legislate against it and since Stockholm several people have been prosecuted for organizing or participating in sex tours that included children. But more needs to be done on the revision of criminal laws and on their enforcement to ensure that child exploiters and abusers are sued for their acts.

Recovery and reintegration involves reaching children who have fallen victims of sexual exploitation and extracting them from that intolerable situation. UNICEF worldwide provides assistance to a number of non-governmental organizations that work in recovery and reintegration. Once a child has been prostituted, it is very difficult to get him or her out. Rescue operations are extremely risky and sometimes children are taken out of one brothel only to be returned to a different brothel after the police raid. Often victims do not come forward as it is a source of great shame to many of them. It is also hard for a child who has mainly-if not only- experienced abuse and exploitation from adults to trust the adult world again.

At country level, a National Agenda for Action against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children should be an important tool to make concrete progress in the elimination of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The Agenda needs to focus on how to protect each and every child from being involved in commercial sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as on the child victims, and at the same time reduce the demand for them and enforce the law against child abusers and exploiters. This would not be possible without the generous support of donors, and in particular of the Government of Italy, who shares our great concern on the issue of exploitation and abuse of children.

The more is known about the phenomenon, the better as the lack of data reinforces the risk for children and covers illegal activities of child exploiters. From examples developed in other countries, it clearly appears that the cooperation between police, judiciaries, social departments and NGOs is crucial to protect and rescue children from commercial sex trade.

We already know a great deal about what must be done to eliminate sexual exploitation, trafficking and abuse of children. But to succeed we still need to strengthen international and local cooperation at every level of the society.

Now it is to all of us- government, law enforcement, international and local organizations, civil society and children- to give priority and to take concrete action for the elimination of commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Jakarta, September 2004



Steven Allen

Representative for UNICEF Indonesia

## FOREWORD FROM THE RESEARCH TEAM

Through the grace and blessings of Almighty God, this research, titled A Participatory Research on Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Surakarta and Indramayu, has been successfully completed. The study was preceded by capacity-building training for the researchers, and involved sustained efforts to encourage active participation by the research subjects during the activities in the field. This is an action-orientated research, both during the research and subsequent to its completion, as it is intended to serve as the basis for follow-up action.

During the course of the study, which was undertaken between August 2002 and June 2003, a large number of people provided contributions, thus enabling the work to be fully completed on schedule. We would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to the Child in Need of Special Protection (CNSP) section of UNICEF, where Birgithe Lund-Henriksen, Julie Lebegue, and Yuki Iida were tireless in their efforts to assist us; to the UNICEF field officers for West Java and Central Java, respectively Bob Mangunwidjojo and Widodo Suhartoyo, who also provided us with invaluable assistance; to the UNICEF head in West Java, Ms. Hilda Winata and the UNICEF head in Central Java, Mr. Made Sutarna, who provided us with a great deal of constructive assistance and input, to Judith Ennew, who invigorated us with her spirit and dedication, and helped us consistently develop our capacity to honestly present the data as we found it in the field; to our child advisors, Mia, Siska, Heni, Ayu, Lilis, and Iroh for their patience and openness; to the governments of Surakarta municipality and Indramayu regency, and all their agencies; to the district and village heads in the study locations; to the following Non-governmental Organizations in Surakarta: Kakak, Bima Bakat, Yappi, SpokHam, and Sari, and the following Non-governmental Organizations in Indramayu: Yayasan SUAKA, HUMANID and Yayasan ABJADI.

To our computer experts, Arif Purnomo, Ratna Mintarsih, and Sapja Anantanyu, who furnished inestimable assistance with processing the field data and writing up this final report; to the members of the support group, who provided valuable support to all researchers during the course of the study, and, finally, to the researchers themselves, without whose hard work and dedication this report would never have been possible. A special word of thanks is also due to the husbands, wives, and children of the researchers, whose support and patience was essential to the entire undertaking.

As a result of the work that has been carried out, we now have a greater, more in-depth understanding of the problem of child prostitution in Surakarta and Indramayu. Based on the findings in the field, the authors have proposed a number of recommendations that are could form the basis of an action plan that could help to resolve, and ultimately eliminate, the problem of child prostitution in Surakarta and Indramayu.

In conclusion, it only remains for us to express our sincere hope that the work we have done in compiling this report will be of benefit in ensuring a brighter and more promising future for children everywhere.

Surakarta, September 2004  
The researchers

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| FOREWORDS   | iii       |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS   | vii       |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY   | xii       |
| KEY SUMMARY POINTS FROM THE RESEARCH                                | xxv       |
| <b>01 BACKGROUND</b>  | <b>1</b>  |
| 1.1 Background  | 2         |
| 1.1.1 Definitions   | 3         |
| 1.1.2 Rationale   | 4         |
| 1.2 Objectives  | 5         |
| 1.3 Time Frame  | 6         |
| 1.4 Research Locations  | 6         |
| 1.5 Research Methodology  | 7         |
| 1.5.1 Research Protocol   | 8         |
| 1.5.2 Data Sources  | 9         |
| 1.5.3 Participant Selection   | 10        |
| 1.5.4 Research Instruments  | 12        |
| 1.6 Ethical Statement   | 17        |
| 1.7 Data Analysis   | 18        |
| 1.8 Constraints   | 20        |
| <b>02 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS OF THE RESEARCH LOCATIONS</b> | <b>25</b> |
| 2.1 Socio-cultural Conditions                                       | 26        |
| 2.1.1 Views of women  | 27        |
| 2.1.2 Childcare Patterns  | 29        |
| 2.1.3 Traditions  | 31        |
| 2.1.4 Myths   | 32        |
| 2.1.5 Lifestyles  | 33        |
| 2.1.6 Rural-Urban Migration   | 34        |
| 2.2 Geographic Conditions   | 35        |
| 2.3 Demographic and Economic Conditions                             | 35        |
| 2.3.1 Demographic Conditions  | 35        |
| 2.3.2 Economic Conditions   | 38        |
| 2.4. Education  | 40        |
| 2.5. Existing Legal Framework                                       | 45        |
| 2.6. Religion and Sexuality   | 49        |
| <b>03 RESEARCH FINDINGS</b>   | <b>55</b> |
| 3.1 The Participants  | 56        |
| 3.1.1 Locations of Participants                                     | 56        |
| 3.1.2 Distribution of Participants by Gender and Age                | 59        |
| 3.1.3 Educational Attainments of Participants                       | 61        |
| 3.1.4 Places of Abode of Participants                               | 63        |
| 3.1.5 Profiles of Participants' Families                            | 64        |

|   |     |   |     |
|---|-----|---|-----|
| 3.1.6 Participants representing Institutions .....  | 66  | Data Acquisition and Instrument Inventory   | 19  |
| 3.2 Socio-economic and Socio-cultural Conditions of Families of Children Involved in Prostitution .....                         | 68  | Population Composition by Sources of Livelihood in Banjarsari District, Laweyan District and Surakarta Municipality, 2002 | 37  |
| 3.2.1 Socio-economic Conditions of Families of Children Involved in Prostitution .....  | 68  | Population Composition by Sources of Livelihood in Arahau District, Karangampel District and Indramayu Regency, 2002      | 37  |
| 3.2.2 Socio-cultural Conditions of Families of Children Involved in Prostitution .....  | 75  | Gross Domestic Product in Central Java and West Java by Economic Sector, 2000, in million rupiah                          | 39  |
| 3.3 Perceptions of Participants regarding the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children .....                                  | 83  | Family Welfare Distribution and Categorization in Surakarta, 2002   | 39  |
| 3.3.1 Perceptions of Participants regarding Children .....  | 83  | Family Welfare Distribution and Categorization in Indramayu, 2002   | 39  |
| 3.3.2 Perceptions of Participants regarding Children Involved in Prostitution .....   | 85  | Population by Educational Attainment in Indramayu Regency, 2002   | 43  |
| 3.3.3 Perceptions of Participants regarding the Factors that Lead to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children .....           | 88  | Population by Educational Attainment in Surakarta Regency, 2002   | 44  |
| 3.3.4 Perceptions of Participants regarding the Risks Faced by Children Involved in Prostitution .....                          | 90  | Locations of Participants   | 56  |
| 3.3.5 Perceptions of Participants regarding how the Problems Faced by Children Involved in Prostitution may be Resolved .....   | 92  | Distribution of Participants by Age   | 60  |
| 3.3.6 Perceptions of Participants regarding Attitudes of Parents to Prevent their Children Falling Victim to Prostitution ..... | 94  | Distribution of Participants by Educational Status  | 62  |
| 3.4 Perceptions of the Children regarding Places that are Considered Safe and those Considered Dangerous .....                  | 95  | Places of Abode of Participants   | 64  |
| 3.4.1 Perceptions of Children regarding Places that are Considered Safe .....   | 96  | Number of Family Members  | 65  |
| 3.4.2 Perceptions of Children regarding Places that are Considered Dangerous .....  | 98  | Participants Representing Institutions  | 67  |
| 3.5 How Children Become Involved in and Escape from Prostitution .....  | 101 | Places of Origin, Places of Abode and Sources of Livelihood of Parents of Children Involved in Prostitution in Surakarta  | 70  |
| 3.5.1 How children become involved in prostitution .....  | 101 | Physical Circumstances of Families of Children Involved in Prostitution in Surakarta                                      | 71  |
| 3.5.2 How Children Escape from Prostitution .....   | 110 | Physical Condition of the Family Members of Children involved in prostitution in Indramayu                                | 72  |
| 3.6 Lifestyles of Children Involved in Prostitution .....   | 111 | Description of Bamboo Cafes in Surakarta and Warung Remang in Indramayu   | 82  |
| 3.6.1 Places of Abode .....   | 111 | Warung Remang in Indramayu  | 84  |
| 3.6.2 Mobility .....  | 114 | Perceptions of Participants regarding Children  | 86  |
| 3.6.3 Susuk .....   | 115 | Perceptions of Children Involved in Prostitution by Participant Type  | 86  |
| 3.6.4 Appearance of the Children Involved in Prostitution .....   | 115 | Perceptions of Participants Regarding what Causes Children to Become Involved in Prostitution                             | 89  |
| 3.6.5 Social and Affective Networks among Children Involved in Prostitution .....   | 121 | Perceptions of Participants Regarding Risks Faced by Children Involved in Prostitution                                    | 91  |
| 3.7 Risks Faced by Children Involved in Prostitution .....  | 133 | Perceptions of Participants Regarding Measures to Combat the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children                   | 93  |
| 3.7.1 Violence .....  | 133 | Parents to Prevent their Children Falling Victim to Prostitution  | 95  |
| 3.7.2 Health Problems and Remedies .....  | 139 | Responses of Participants Regarding Places Considered Safe  | 97  |
| 3.7.3 Drug and Alcohol Abuse .....  | 151 | Responses of Participants Regarding Places Considered Dangerous   | 99  |
| 3.8 Profile of the Offspring of the Children Involved in Prostitution .....   | 155 | Participants Who Dye Their Hair   | 116 |
| 3.8.1 Characteristics of the Offspring of the Children Involved in Prostitution .....   | 156 | Participants Whose Ears are Pierced More than Once  | 117 |
| 3.8.2 Environments in which Offspring of Children Involved in Prostitution Live .....   | 157 | Participants with Tattoos   | 120 |
| 3.8.3 Care of the Offspring of the Children Involved in Prostitution .....  | 158 | Incidences of Violence Experienced by Participants in Surakarta   | 135 |
| 3.8.4 Health of Offspring of Children Involved in Prostitution .....  | 161 | Physical Violence to the Head Experienced by Participants   | 135 |
|   |     | Physical Violence to the Torso Experienced by Participants  | 135 |
|   |     | Cross-tabulation of Participant Type and Violence to Other Parts of the Body by Research Location                         | 137 |
| <b>04 CONCLUSIONS</b>   | 163 | Cross-tabulation by District between Research Location and Incidences of Violence to the Vagina                           | 137 |
| <b>05 RECOMMENDATIONS</b>   | 169 |   |     |
| <b>GLOSSARY AND LIST OF ACRONYMS</b>  | 175 |   |     |
| <b>APPENDICES</b>   | 187 |   |     |
| <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>   | 218 |   |     |

|            |   |     |   |     |
|------------|---|-----|---|-----|
| Table 3.27 | Cross-tabulation between Participant Type and Incidence of Sexually Transmitted Diseases by Research Location               | 139 | Appendix 17: Seasonal calendar by children involved in prostitution in Indramayu  | 205 |
| Table 3.28 | Cross-tabulation by Research Location between Participant Type and Remedies Employed to Treat Sexually Transmitted Diseases | 141 | Appendix 18: Mapping area by school drop-outs in Indramayu  | 206 |
| Table 3.29 | Cross-tabulation by Research Location between Participant Type and Reproductive Health Problems                             | 144 | Appendix 19: Social support networks for school children in Surakarta   | 207 |
| Table 3.30 | Cross-tabulation by Research Location between Participant Type and Non-skin Ailments  | 149 | Appendix 20: Social support networks for prostituted children in Surakarta  | 208 |
| Table 3.31 | Cross-tabulation by Research Location between Participant Type and Method of Dealing with Non-skin Ailments                 | 149 | Appendix 21: Child history of school children in Surakarta  | 209 |
| Table 3.32 | Cross-tabulation by Research Location between Participant Type and Alcohol Consumption.                                     | 153 | Appendix 22: The team of researchers  | 210 |
| Table 3.33 | Data on Children Involved in Prostitution who have given Birth, and on their Children                                       | 156 | Appendix 23: Participants in Indramayu filling out their consent forms  | 211 |
| Table 5.1  | Common Recommendations for Surakarta and Indramayu  | 172 | Appendix 24: A child involved in prostitution, who is 4 months pregnant, cradling her baby  | 212 |
| Table 5.2  | Recommendations for Surakarta   | 175 | Appendix 25: The researchers sharing a meal with children victims of prostitution in Surakarta  | 213 |
| Table 5.3  | Recommendations for Indramayu   | 176 | Appendix 26: Researchers and stakeholders in Indramayu formulating recommendations  | 214 |
|            |   |     | Appendix 27: Researchers and stakeholders in Surakarta formulating recommendations  | 215 |
|            |   |     | Appendix 28: Sharing the research's recommendations through the socialization of the Child Protection Law (Law number 23 of 2002) among teachers in Surakarta | 216 |
|            |   |     | Appendix 29: Lunch with the children during the visit of the Italian Government Delegation and UNICEF in Surakarta, in September 2003                         | 217 |

## List of Figures

|            |  |     |
|------------|--|-----|
| Figure 3.1 | Distribution of Participants by District   | 57  |
| Figure 3.2 | Distribution of Participants by Participant Type                                 | 57  |
| Figure 3.3 | Distribution of Participants by Gender   | 59  |
| Figure 3.4 | Role of Close Friends in Encouraging Children to become Involved in Prostitution | 103 |
| Figure 3.5 | Role of Friends in Involving Children in Prostitution                            | 103 |
| Figure 3.6 | Role of Procurers in Prostitution Networks                                       | 107 |

## List of Appendices

|              |  |     |
|--------------|--|-----|
| Appendix 1:  | Map of Surakarta municipality, 2003  | 189 |
| Appendix 2:  | Map of Indramayu regency, 2003   | 190 |
| Appendix 3:  | Consent form for participants  | 191 |
| Appendix 4:  | Monitoring form  | 192 |
| Appendix 5:  | Focus group discussion in Banjarsari district (Indramayu)                                    | 193 |
| Appendix 6:  | Semi-structured interview form completed by participants from the Surakarta Health Agency    | 194 |
| Appendix 7:  | Locations of children involved in prostitution in Surakarta                                  | 195 |
| Appendix 8:  | Observation Guidelines   | 196 |
| Appendix 9:  | Photo title by school pupil in Surakarta   | 197 |
| Appendix 10: | A body map drawn by a child victim of prostitution in Surakarta, showing body areas of abuse | 198 |
| Appendix 11: | Self-portrait by school children in Surakarta  | 199 |
| Appendix 12: | Visual stimulus interviews with children in Surakarta  | 200 |
| Appendix 13: | Daily schedules of school children in Indramayu  | 201 |
| Appendix 14: | Daily schedules of children involved in prostitution in Surakarta                            | 202 |
| Appendix 15: | Circle diagram drawn by children victims of prostitution on their daily life in Indramayu    | 203 |
| Appendix 16: | Seasonal calendar by children involved in prostitution in Indramayu                          | 204 |

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. Background

The expansion of the sex industry in many countries, including Indonesia, has resulted in a great number of children being forced to become commercial sex workers. Child prostitution is one of the worst forms of child labor and a fundamental violation of a child's rights. The physical and emotional stresses that a child victim of prostitution endures have a profound effect on the child's right to properly grow and develop. In addition, a child victim of prostitution is susceptible to various diseases, particularly sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and their consequences. Other risks borne by child victims of prostitution include social rejection and the possibility of being subjected to violence.

Previous studies have shown that the majority of children involved in prostitution become victims of prostitution as a result of family economic pressures. In such circumstances, child victims of prostitution frequently find themselves serving as the family's primary economic support. If they stop working in the sex industry, then their contributions to the economic well-being of their families dry up. In a number of villages in Indramayu, prostitution is regarded as a "normal" form of employment, and the children involved in prostitution are considered as the main supporters of their families. In the Regency of Pati, East Java Province, Indonesia, the local community does not ostracize commercial sex workers. On the contrary, those who find work in prostitution are regarded as individuals who have to work in this way to make ends meet. Life in the world of prostitution is characterized by the ability to quickly earn relatively large sums of money compared to other types of employment which do not require formal education. As a consequence, it is very difficult for those who become involved in prostitution to leave it behind and find other employment. This is primarily due to the absence of alternative forms of employment that accord with their educational background and skills or which can match their income as commercial sex workers.

This particular research on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Indramayu and Surakarta was based on concern for the risks these children face and for the threats to their proper development. The research may be termed "mixed" as it involved both quantitative and qualitative research.

## 2. Objectives and The Process of The Research

The general objective of the research was to conduct a situation analysis on child victims of prostitution and explore the reasons why they find themselves involved in prostitution, the problems they face, the health risks they run, the social stigma and violence they experience, and the factors leading to growth in their numbers. This research also involved analysis of the potential resources available for preventing and overcoming the problem of child prostitution. These resources included government agencies, the private sector, the community, and social organizations.

This research differs from others conducted previously in Indonesia as it had a strong emphasis on participation by researchers and children at every stage. The research was jointly conducted by a core team and a support group. The core team consisted of a research coordinator and six researchers. The researchers were drawn from academia, non-governmental organizations and child protection institutes. Two adult technical advisors from Britain and Australia and 2 child technical advisors, both of whom

were children in need of protection, also participated in the research. The support group consisted of various stakeholders, including government agencies/institutions, representatives of the private sector, and experts on children. The research was action-orientated, meaning that during the research process the children received counseling/mentoring and assistance in the form of special vocational training programs for children involved in prostitution and school drop-outs.

The research involved two categories of participants – children and adults. Child participants were grouped into four categories: (1) prostituted children<sup>1</sup>, (2) former prostituted children<sup>2</sup>, (3) school drop-outs and (4) school children. The adult participants consisted of representatives of government agencies/institutions and non-governmental organizations, clients, boyfriends and parents of prostituted children, pimps, religious figures, youth and community leaders. The involvement of school children and school drop-outs as participants was necessary to obtain data and information on how to prevent children from falling victims to prostitution, while the involvement of former prostituted children was intended to provide information on how children could be encouraged to escape the world of prostitution. The participants were selected using two sampling techniques – purposive sampling and snowball sampling.

A study of relevant documentation was undertaken to obtain secondary data, while primary data was obtained using the following seventeen research instruments - focus group discussion, semi-structured interview, transect, on-site observations, photo title, body mapping, self-description, visual stimulus interview, daily schedule, circle diagram, seasonal calendar, role play, area mapping, social support network, child history, research diary and harmony. Triangulation was also employed between research instruments, researchers and data and information sources. The data analysis process followed the rules of qualitative and quantitative research. Data was analyzed using the SPSS programme.

This research paid a great deal of attention to the processes and developments actually involved in the research. While the research was underway, five workshops were held in Jakarta, with assistance from two technical advisors of international repute. The objectives of these workshops were to select the researchers, to develop the research protocol, to develop research instruments, to analyze data and to write the report. In addition, a further two workshops were held by the research team in Surakarta during the recommendation-formulation stage.

A total of 844 data sheets were produced on the 17 research instruments. 156 participants, consisting of 109 school children, 21 prostituted children, 17 school drop-outs and 9 former prostituted children took part in the research. The various institutions and organizations involved consisted of 11 government institutions in Surakarta, 11 government institutions in Indramayu, 12 social organizations in Surakarta, 8 social organizations in Indramayu, 6 non-governmental organizations in Surakarta and 4 non-governmental organizations in Indramayu.

## 3. Key Findings

### 3.1. Definitions

The understanding of the concept and definition of the child varies greatly among all categories of

1 For the purposes of this study the term "prostituted children" (Anak yang dilacurkan or Anak in Bahasa Indonesia) refers to those children, both boys and girls, who are involved in prostitution, and was deliberately chosen to stress the legal situation where a child, as opposed to an adult, is regarded by the law as not being capable of making an informed choice about whether or not to work as a prostitute. Therefore the child is considered to be a victim of prostitution.

2 Former prostituted children were above 18 years of age at the time of the research. However, they are still included in the children categories as they were under 18 when they were involved in prostitution.

children and adult participants. The majority of child participants had difficulty understanding the concept of a “child” as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and defined a child as an offspring of his mother, a gift from God, and as a human being who must be looked after.

A “prostituted child” was defined by the children as follows: a person who works servicing men, a person who has been led astray by friends, a person who has fallen into bad company, an independent person who is capable of earning her own money and supporting herself, a person who lacks love and affection, a person who has been plunged into misery through the irresponsibility of her parents, a sinner, a person who has strayed onto the wrong path, or a person who seeks money in an unacceptable manner.

### 3.2. Causes of child prostitution

The causative factors that lead to children falling victim to prostitution are closely connected with the upbringing provided by the family, which molds the behavior/pattern of an individual. The inability of a family to perform the various functions expected of them, particularly the functions of providing protection and affection, as well as education and socialization of the child, may result in a child being forced into the world of prostitution. The socio-cultural systems adhered to by the majority of Indonesian people are intimately connected with gender inequality and various forms of injustice that affect women. Such injustice is manifested in the marginalization, subordination and stereotyping of women.

Other factors that contribute to and encourage the entry of children into prostitution include:

- a tradition of early marriage and easy divorce in Indramayu
- the persistence of beliefs in both Indramayu and Surakarta that having sex with virgins can rejuvenate men and improve their virility
- the phenomenon of rural-urban migration by unskilled labourers,
- consumerist urban lifestyles
- living life for the moment without any thought for the future

The principal cause of children falling victim to prostitution identified by children was economic problems. Other causes included disharmony in the home, desire to earn money quickly, influence of friends, problems with boyfriends, social factors, and biological/sexual needs.

### 3.3. Economic and social conditions of families of child victims of prostitution

#### Similarities

All the child victims of prostitution, whether they are from Surakarta or Indramayu, come from disadvantaged families. The physical conditions of their family homes, including the condition of the houses, access to ventilation and light, and access to clean water, varied between poor and worrying. Another characteristic shared by children involved in prostitution in both Surakarta and Indramayu was that their parents depended mainly on their economic support, making children pretty much responsible for everything, ranging from supplying daily necessities and paying for the education of other family members, up to repairing the family home, or even providing a new one.

#### Differences

However, there were a number of significant differences in the characteristics of the children's families in Surakarta and in Indramayu. In Surakarta, two different characteristics were found, namely, some of the families consisted of native Surakarta inhabitants while others were newcomers/migrants to the city. The majority of the migrant families obtained their livelihood from working in the informal sector, with family members working as pedicel drivers, roadside vendors, and casual laborers. They generally had highly consumptive lifestyles and had a short-term outlook on life. In Indramayu, the majority of the child victims

of prostitution were the offspring of native Indramayu families, who earned their living in the agricultural sector. These families were normally on the lowest rung of the ladder in the agricultural sector, meaning that their members mostly worked as landless laborers.

The parents of the child victims of prostitution in Indramayu viewed life based on the norms and traditions prevailing in the area. Some thought that the involvement of their children in prostitution was only a temporary phenomenon, something that was necessary in order to get together enough money to repair or renovate the family home, or to build a permanent (brick) house. However, some child victims of prostitution felt responsible for the economic circumstances of their parents and other members of the family. A number of parents “availed” of this feeling by allowing their children to work in the sex industry, and accepting monthly remittances from these children. The parents of the children involved in prostitution in Indramayu frequently had ambivalent attitudes regarding the kind of work their children were engaged in – on the one hand they accepted the benefits accruing from such employment, but at the same time they were aware that prostitution conflicted with generally accepted norms in society and the teachings of their religion. They also felt shame in their dealings with the community, but nevertheless permitted their children to continue working as commercial sex workers as the economic contributions made by these children was highly significant to the survival of the household. In their work as prostitutes, the children in Indramayu had generally set clear targets for themselves. They were determined to gather enough money to ensure material improvements for themselves and their families, e.g. to build a house, or open a hairdressing salon or small kiosk. Thus, their involvement in prostitution was only a stepping stone to a future better life. As an example, at the time of the research, many former prostituted children were married, had children and were living normal lives.

Children were often working in prostitution without the knowledge of their parents, often telling their parents they worked in stores or hairdressing salons. However, even when parents knew what their children worked at, they would not admit that their children were involved in prostitution. Only later on, once befriended by the researchers, did these parents admit the true nature of their children's work.

### 3.4. Networks

The networks involved in child prostitution involve many parties, including families, parents, friends, go-betweens/procurers, and pimps/madams. Pimps and procurers frequently have networks that include both formal and informal community figures. Each party has a specific role to play and receives a share of the money earned by the children involved in prostitution.

Family cycles of child prostitution were found in both Surakarta and Indramayu. These family cycles took various forms, including cases where child victims of prostitution came from families where their grandmothers, mothers, aunts or elder sisters had previously worked as commercial sex workers. In addition to familiarity with the world of prostitution, the economic dependency of parents on their prostituted children also resulted in cycles that encouraged children to become involved in prostitution.

The role of friends in encouraging children to get involved in the world of prostitution was found to be extremely significant. Many girls were persuaded to become prostitutes after seeing their friends earn quick money from prostitution, observing their “glamorous” lifestyles and seeing them take charge of their own destinies.

Procurers play a highly strategic role in prostitution networks. They find children to be prostituted and, clients for the children involved in prostitution. They exploit the children's vulnerability by offering them a safe haven – a place where they will be well looked after. A pimp normally manages a number of child victims of prostitution and adult commercial sex workers in a particular place, and provides them with

various things that they need, such as a place to sleep, food, health information, and protection when the children involved in prostitution find themselves having problems with clients or are arrested or detained by the authorities. The relationship between a pimp and a prostituted child does not only concern their working relationship, but also has an affective aspect. Whenever a prostituted child experiences money problems or finds herself experiencing psychological stress, her pimp will play a role in helping her to overcome her difficulties.

The role of boyfriends varied from one area to the other. In Surakarta boyfriends of child victims of prostitution played a major role in introducing, either directly or indirectly, the children to the sex business. In its direct manifestation, girls lost their virginity to their boyfriends, subsequently being duped and sold to clients in brothels or "salons". The indirect role of boyfriends involved the girls losing their virginity to their boyfriends and then being abandoned. In such circumstances, the girls felt worthless as they were no longer virgins, and subsequently resorted to prostitution. The boyfriends of the children involved in prostitution in Surakarta depended for their everyday needs on the girls. These needs included accommodation, food, drink, cigarettes, petrol and other daily necessities. Sometimes, the boyfriends also provided services to the children involved in prostitution such as bringing them to and from the places of work, and, resolving problems related to customers or other children involved in prostitution.

On the other hand, the boyfriends of the children involved in prostitution in Indramayu did not depend on the girls for their daily needs. On the contrary, they frequently assisted the girls and their families when they had financial problems.

### **3.5. Risks of prostitution**

#### **3.5.1. Definition of the risks**

According to the child participants, the risks arising from prostitution fall into ten categories, namely: risks to reproductive health (pregnancy, abortion, giving birth); infection with Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS; the risks associated with clients, including the risk of physical, psychological and sexual abuse and violence; stigmatization by the community; drug addiction; risks associated with the authorities (the police), families, and boyfriends; and risks concerning the child's future.

#### **3.5.2. Abuse and violence experienced by child victims of prostitution**

Abuse and violence, whether psychological, physical, sexual or a combination of these, was an intimate part of the lives of child victims of prostitution. All the children involved in prostitution are victims of abuse in their daily lives. Children involved in prostitution in Surakarta experienced violence on the following body parts: the head, torso, arms and legs, and vital parts of the body such as vagina and anus.

#### **3.5.3. Safe and dangerous places**

The lack of understanding from adult participants on the definition of a child, the world of children and the problems that children face leads to inadequate legal instruments, policies and regulations concerning children, and even the lack of prioritizing of funding allocations for children. For example, when growing up, children require places that are considered safe by the children themselves.

All the children (prostituted children, former prostituted children, school drop-outs and school children) considered safe places as follows - their own homes, the place where they received love and affection, could express happiness and sadness, and could obtain physical and psychological protection. Some of the prostituted children said that nowhere was safe for children, while some of them said that the places where they worked, such as pensions/small hotels, were safe places as they received love and affection

there, and were surrounded by their fellow prostituted children (which made them feel more secure). According to the school children, home and places of worship were safe places for children.

The responses on dangerous places varied significantly among the four categories of children. Some of the children involved in prostitution said they did not know of any places that were dangerous for children involved in prostitution, some said their workplaces were dangerous because of the nature of their work - the children could be subjected to violence from clients, including sexual violence against particular parts of the body, psychological violence such as not being paid as promised, being abandoned in an isolated area or outside the city, or being forced to have sex with a number of clients and not being paid. Some child victims of prostitution also considered the home to be a dangerous place as they ran the risk of being subjected to physical or psychological abuse there by their parents or other members of the family, or there were frequent fights and quarrels between their parents or between the parents and the children. These responses indicate that child victims of prostitution rarely feel safe and that their lives are marked by feelings of insecurity.

The school children responded to the question as to what places were dangerous differently, citing such places as graveyards, busy streets, empty (haunted) houses, and deep or fast-flowing rivers as dangerous places for school children.

#### **3.5.4. Use of alcohol and drugs**

Among the children involved in prostitution, drinking alcohol and smoking certain brands of cigarettes were the ways to show their social status. Frequently, their propensity for smoking, and consuming alcohol and drugs led to dependency. In Indramayu while the children involved in prostitution generally smoked, they normally only consumed alcohol if this was bought for them by guests, and they tended to avoid becoming intoxicated. These children did not consume drugs. By contrast, most of the children involved in prostitution in Surakarta were found to be suffering from alcohol dependency, and they normally resorted to drink when confronted by personal, family, boyfriend or girlfriend problems. Alcohol is also consumed to welcome a friend, particularly a friend from out of town, to celebrate a birthday or a stroke of good fortune.

During the time when the final research report was being drawn up in 2003, drug use among the children involved in prostitution was rarely encountered except when drugs were given free by the clients. This was due to a number of factors, including the difficulties involved in obtaining drugs and frequent raids by the authorities. The members of the research team were heartened to see a reduction in the level of drug abuse among the children involved in prostitution.

#### **3.5.5. Reproductive health risks**

With regard to reproductive health, almost all of the prostituted child participants had at one time or another suffered from sexually transmitted diseases. Various complaints regarding reproductive health were clearly recorded using the body map instrument, with the information being drawn, signed, written and recounted clearly by the prostituted children. Many of the children had also suffered at one time or another from various types of hygiene-associated skin ailments. The reproductive health of the children involved in prostitution in Indramayu, however, differed from that of the children in Surakarta. Many of the children involved in prostitution in Indramayu had never suffered from sexual health problems. They were aware of the need to look after their health, and for this reason they regularly visited their doctors or the village midwife to receive injections or antibiotics.

Various methods of treating sexually transmitted diseases were employed, and these were normally passed by word of mouth among the members of the prostituted child community. Thus, when one child

became sick, she would resort to the same course of action as a friend or boyfriend who had previously suffered from a sexually transmitted disease. Most of these medicines were available over the counter or were traditional medicines (ointments and tonics) sold by itinerant medicine hawkers.

Children involved in prostitution in both Surakarta and Indramayu knew little about the risks of HIV/AIDS, and the methods of HIV/AIDS prevention. They were unwilling to use condoms with customers because condoms allegedly prolonged intercourse and because customers preferred sex without condoms. The children involved in prostitution appeared to accept the disease as an occupational hazard, even though they generally feared that HIV/AIDS meant death.

### **3.5.6. The risks of pregnancies**

Nine of twenty-one children involved in prostitution that took part in the research already had children of their own. Some of the children involved in prostitution were as young as 15 when they gave birth, two of them already have two children and some are pregnant with their second child. Most of these babies are taken care of by maternal or paternal relatives in conditions that do not differ much from the condition in which other children from the same family are brought up. Two of the children involved in prostitution decided to keep their children and raise them in rented rooms of the pensions and hotels in which they are staying. When these girls go to work their babies are taken care of by their fellow sex workers.

In addition to the high level of pregnancies that result in birth there is an extremely high level of abortion or induced miscarriage rate among the children involved in prostitution. One of the main reasons for the high level of unwanted pregnancies is inadequate knowledge of reproductive health issues including the use of contraceptives.

### **3.6. Living conditions of children involved in prostitution**

In Indramayu the majority of the child victims of prostitution live with their parents (75 percent) while in Surakarta only 41.2 percent of the children involved in prostitution live at home with their parents, while 34.3 percent live in pensions or together with fellow prostituted children.

#### **3.6.1. Relationships with fellow prostituted children**

In Surakarta, many of the prostituted children lived in groups with other children involved in prostitution. Different groups were found within these communities of children involved in prostitution, with girls who had similar attitudes and outlooks tending to stick together. Groups also developed based on where the children worked, for example, the café gang, the Banjarsari gang, and the RRI gang. Their shared fate and the fact that they were often far away from home were variables that strengthened the feeling of unity and solidarity among the children involved in prostitution. As a result, if one of the girls, for some reason, found herself with no clients and no income, one of her friends who was still doing a good business would quite possibly pay for their room in the pension and buy their food. The favor would then be returned in the future. The close relationships and sense of solidarity among the children involved in prostitution is a positive phenomenon. Nevertheless, disputes between the children are common, and these are often accompanied by physical or psychological violence.

In Indramayu, relationships between the prostituted children were in general good - they frequently helped each other and understood each other well. However, conflicts and disputes sometimes occurred, usually the result of competition for clients.

The children involved in prostitution in Surakarta frequently changed the places where they lived and where they worked. During the course of the research, each child changed their address on average between 3 and 4 times. The children involved in prostitution in Surakarta have a high degree of autonomy

and independence in deciding where to live and work.

### **3.6.2. Appearance**

The appearance of the children involved in prostitution in Surakarta generally displayed the following characteristics: tattoos on various parts of the body, multiple piercing of the ears, nostrils and eyebrows, shaved eyebrows, and dyed hair, normally brown or blond, although there were also some who dyed their hair blue. The children involved in prostitution in Surakarta wore very noticeable dress - tight tops and jeans in bright and strong colours. Such an appearance is meant to attract the attention of potential customers and to show that girls are trendy and modern. These children believed that heavy makeup and provocative outfits would help their self esteem and self-confidence.

In Indramayu, however, only those children involved in prostitution who worked outside of Indramayu, for example, in Jakarta, dyed their hair, or pierced their eyebrows. The general appearance of prostituted children in Indramayu did not differ much from their peers. When working, however, these girls would put on more provocative outfits, high heels and make up. Those who worked outside of their home areas, however, would dress in a highly revealing fashion.

### **3.7. Education of children involved in prostitution**

In Surakarta, 5.9 percent of children involved in prostitution had only elementary school education, 41.2 percent had dropped out of junior high school, 35.3 percent had graduated from junior high school, while 11.8 percent had dropped out of senior high school. Meanwhile in Indramayu, 50 percent of the children involved in prostitution had only an elementary school education, 25 percent were junior high school drop-outs, and 25 percent were junior high school graduates. None of the children involved in prostitution in Indramayu had attended senior high school. Thus, the educational level of the children involved in prostitution in Surakarta was higher than that in Indramayu.

In Indramayu, there are few possibilities for education higher than primary school level. Impoverished parents would often find it hard to provide for transportation cost in addition to school fees which resulted in high drop out rate. By contrast, the accessibility to secondary school education is greater in Surakarta, and the primary reason for children involved in prostitution dropping out of school is break-up of the family.

### **3.8. Legal Regulations and sanctions**

The findings in the field revealed that child victims of prostitution were considered to be the same as adult commercial sex workers. Accordingly, local regulations on prostitution make no distinction between child victims of prostitution and adult commercial sex workers. The programs put in place to deal with the problem of (adult) prostitution to date by both government institutions/agencies and non-governmental organizations in Surakarta and Indramayu tended to focus on repressive measures such as conducting raids, and arresting and fining prostitutes. Normally such fines were relatively light, and those concerned were free to engage in prostitution again after the fine had been paid.

### **3.9. Prevention, recovery and rehabilitation**

From the children's perspective, in order to prevent a child becoming drawn into prostitution, the parents need to provide her with the care and attention she needs, and equip her with sufficient education.

With regard to the opinions of the prostituted children on how the problem of child prostitution could be overcome, the majority believed that the answer lay in rehabilitation (66.7 %), while 33.3 % said that the answer lay in marriage.

A number of former prostituted children stated that their decisions to escape the world of prostitution were motivated by inner feelings, for example, boredom with the lives they were leading, the conviction that they were not going to work in the sex industry indefinitely, frustration with the monotony and lack of variation in their lives, the wish to lead a normal life, and the desire to settle down, get married and have children.

One of the significant external influences that encouraged the children to abandon prostitution was advice from people they knew while working as commercial sex workers, including relatives and friends, especially those children who had long been involved in the sex industry. These people advised on the risks involved in working as a prostitute, while some children were helped to escape by men willing to marry them.

During the course of the research, the team of researchers participated in meetings and coordination of the KHPPA (Mother and Child Life and Development Sustainability Forum), which is organized in Surakarta by UNICEF Central Java and in Indramayu by UNICEF West Java. This forum undertakes various activities and work programs in connection with children who require special attention, and consists of representatives of government institutions/agencies, non-governmental organizations, academia and the research team. At the time this report was being written, training had been provided to six of the prostituted child participants. One of the Surakarta children opted to learn makeup for weddings, but dropped out after three months of the six-month course. The girls usually drop out of courses due to emotional instability, and the fact that they are unable to extricate themselves fully from prostitution due to economic pressures by their families, which they mostly support on their own. One of the participants chose a sewing course and had entered her fourth month at the time this report was being written. In addition, one of the children had been sent on a “Child Participation” course in India, which was paid for by UNICEF. The Indramayu participants chose sewing courses, which they have since completed and received certificates. The girls were provided with sewing machines and now receive orders from their neighbors.

## 4. Recommendations

### 4.1. Recommendations for Surakarta

- 1. Need for greater political will and heightened sensitivity on the part of the government as regards the problem of child prostitution.**

The political will and sensitivity of local government needs to be reflected in the vision and mission set out in the City of Surakarta’s Local Development Plan (Repetada) and Local Strategic Plan (Renstra). The commitment of local government needs to be demonstrated by allocation of increased funding for child protection.
- 2. Socialization of the Child Protection Law (Law number 23 of 2002)**

Law number 23 of 2002 needs to be properly socialized and explained to all the stakeholders, including the government (executive, legislative and judicial branches), as the formulator and executor of policy, and the non-governmental side (NGOs, academia, community and religious leaders, and political parties) as those who are responsible for supporting policy implementation. Socialization is required as an initial step towards capacity-building, and should be undertaken by means of public campaigns, workshops, and the provision of training. During the next stage of the process, socialization needs to be expanded to include all levels of society, including families, schools and children in general. This should involve public campaigns and the use of the print

and electronic media. During socialization in schools, material on child protection and the rights of children needs to be incorporated into the local-content element of the curriculum.

### 3. Issuance of local regulations on child protection.

Issuance of local regulations on child protection, including protection of children involved in prostitution, is essential. Putting these regulations in place should be accompanied by a commitment by the authorities to effective implementation.

### 4. Enforcement of local instruments

Local instruments need to be enforced and upheld through the imposition of penalties on clients and those involved in the networks that dominate the sex industry (pimps, procurers, etc.).

### 5. Establishment of child protection advocacy agencies

Integrated child protection campaigns need to be undertaken by the government, NGOs, academia, and community organizations through the establishment of operational networks.

### 6. Establishment of child protection data base

The initial step in establishing such a database is the collection of data and information on Children in Need of Special Protection, which includes child victims of prostitution. This database should be able to supply essential information required for policy formulation and the development of programs that affect children. The database will need to be continuously updated so that accurate information on the problems that children face is available at any time.

### 7. Increasing social resilience

Social resilience needs to be increased as a preventative effort in dealing with the problem of child prostitution. This may be achieved by strengthening the role and functions of the family, improving the performance of officials working with families and children, and increasing the role and concern of the community at large. Among the efforts that may be undertaken in this regard are providing psychological, medical and legal consultations and advice for children and teenagers, as well as optimizing the work of both government and non-governmental institutions that provide services in this field.

### 8. Establishment of Youth Centers specifically geared to help teenagers experiencing social problems

Such centers need to be established as part of the effort to improve the skills and capabilities of children as regards productive economic activities. The services that should be provided by these centers include education and provision of vocational training to school drop-outs. Such centers could be established by local government, NGOs and higher education institutes.

### 9. Preventing sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS

Both children involved in prostitution and teenagers in general need to be targeted in this regard. The leading actor needs to be the local health agency, supported by the other government agencies concerned, NGOs and academia. The activities to be undertaken should include counseling, the provision of health services, advocacy and mentoring.

### 10. Establishing a Children’s Forum

Children’s forums should be established to tackle the commercial sexual exploitation of children through education and lobbying of the government and local legislative assemblies. These forums should actively involve children, as well as the members of the public at large and NGOs.

#### 4.2. Recommendations for Indramayu

##### 1. Capacity building for stakeholders

The realities on the ground show that both the government agencies and Non-Governmental Organizations involved in dealing with the problems of children in general and children involved in prostitution in particular have failed to properly comprehend the concept of child protection. It is this concept that should form the basis of efforts to protect children in general, including those children who find themselves in need of special protection. In order to overcome this problem, a capacity-building program needs to be initiated for the relevant institutions and organizations, involving provision of training and workshops, followed up by preparation of action plans based on the programs being run by each of the relevant institutions and organizations. Greater understanding of the concept of child protection could be inculcated through holding regular discussions involving these institutions and organizations.

##### 2. Socialization of the Child Protection Law

It is essential that the Child Protection Law (Law number 23 of 2002) be properly socialized among all levels of society, families and children. This could be carried out through provision of training on the substance of the Child Protection Law, holding workshops, and conducting campaigns among government officials, the public at large, families and children. These activities need to be undertaken by the relevant local government agencies, NGOs and higher education institutes.

##### 3. Communication, Information and Education (CIE) Program

A Communication, Information and Education (CIE) program on child protection, particularly children involved in prostitution, targeted at the public at large, families and children needs to be instituted by the relevant local government agencies, NGOs and institutes of higher education.

##### 4. Socialization of the need for child protection

The rights of children who need special protection need to be socialized, especially in light of the fact that child victims of prostitution are often considered the same as adult commercial sex workers and are accorded the same treatment by the authorities and the community. The community sees children involved in prostitution as having entered the prostitution business voluntarily rather than as the result of external pressure. Many community members do not comprehend the damage caused by prostitution to the growth and development of children. In order to overcome these misperceptions, multimedia outreach education should be used through the print and electronic media, as well as traditional media like weekly village meetings and religious research meetings. Material on children involved in prostitution and the protection of children could also be integrated into the artistic performances that are highly popular in Indramayu, such as traditional plays. Multimedia outreach activities on the impact of prostitution on the growth and development of children which are targeted at the community at large, families and children should be undertaken by local government, NGOs and institutes of higher education.

##### 5. Rehabilitation Centers

Establishing rehabilitation centers is vital given that the number of rehabilitative programs is small compared to the number of preventative programs. In fact, rehabilitation is essential to restore the lives of children with problems, particularly children involved in prostitution, to normal conditions. In Indramayu, rehabilitation centers for child victims of prostitution and commercial sex workers are urgently needed if the problem of prostitution in general, and child prostitution in particular, is to be satisfactorily dealt with. Such centers could be run by NGOs working in collaboration with those local government agencies involved with the problem, and institutes of higher education.

##### 6. Training for children in need of special protection

Focus group discussions should be held involving school drop-outs, child beggars and street singers. These should be facilitated by the community health agency, NGOs and institutes of higher education, with the children concerned given the opportunity to upgrade their skills through vocational training or apprenticeships.

##### 7. Advocacy Institute

An advocacy institute is urgently required given that child victims of prostitution are frequently subjected to violence. They often feel they can only talk about the violence inflicted upon them with those to whom they are closest in their community. This, however, is not without risk as there is no guarantee that those whom they are close will not tell others about this violence. In addition, a Crisis Center for children with problems could be set up jointly by the relevant government agencies, NGOs and institutes of higher education.

##### 8. Youth Centers

Youth centers should be established for teenagers with social problems so that they can channel their artistic, entrepreneurial and other talents in a constructive manner. Such centers should be established by the relevant government agencies, NGOs and institutes of higher education.

##### 9. Providing counseling facilities for teenagers

Counseling services for teenagers are necessary given that the causative factors of child prostitution are not only economic, but also involve family and boyfriend problems, the influence of friends, etc. Children often resort to prostitution as there is no one around to listen to their problems and help them overcome these. The counseling services provided could consist of face-to-face, telephone or radio talk-show consultations. Vocational and entrepreneurial skills also need to be taught to the parents of child victims of prostitution and school drop-outs. These activities do not necessarily have to involve government agencies, but could also be undertaken by NGOs and institutes of higher education.

##### 10. Issuance of local regulations and law enforcement

Local regulations on child prostitution need to be issued, and subsequently upheld and enforced by all concerned. A special local regulation dealing with child protection, particularly the protection of children involved in prostitution, will be needed. This local regulation must be accompanied by a commitment on the part of the relevant institutions to its effective implementation. It must be upheld and enforced by all those involved at all levels of society.

##### 11. Establishment of community-based database on children involved in prostitution

A community-based database on children involved in prostitution targeted at the community at large, families and children needs to be established by the relevant government agencies, NGOs and institutes of higher education. This activity should start with collection of data and information on children in need of special protection, including children involved in prostitution. The database should supply essential information required for formulating policy and developing programs that affect children. The database will need to be continuously updated so that accurate information on the problems that children face is available at any time.

##### 12. Preventing sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS

Activities to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, and HIV/AIDS need to target teenagers in general and children involved in prostitution in particular. The leading actor needs to be the local health agency, supported by the other government agencies concerned, NGOs

and academia. The activities to be undertaken should include counseling, the provision of health services, advocacy and mentoring.

Some of the recommendations set out above are already being, or have been, put into effect in Surakarta. A meeting was held to socialize the Child Protection Law (Law number 23 of 2002) in the Library Conference Room at the Sebelas Maret University. This meeting was attended by elementary, junior and senior high school teachers, and Family Welfare Education executives from all over Surakarta. A meeting was held by the Surakarta Community Welfare and Women's Empowerment Agency in Tawangmangu to socialize the findings of the research on children involved in prostitution among members of Commissions A and E of the Surakarta Municipal Legislative Assembly and stakeholders from the government of Surakarta Municipality. Some of the children in need of special protection were sent to participate in courses in Surakarta, Indramayu and India. The other recommendations will be implemented in stages up to 2005.

## KEY SUMMARY POINTS FROM THE RESEARCH

### 1. Definition and Scope

Commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) is a widespread, but still hidden phenomenon and it constitutes one of the major violations of children's rights. It manifests itself in many forms with child prostitution, child pornography, and trafficking of children being the most common. In Indonesia, child prostitution seems to be on the rise and is often inter-linked with the other two forms of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The UN Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography defines child prostitution as "the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration."

Child victims of prostitution face various hazards to their health as well as to their physical and emotional development. These hazards include abuse, violence, discrimination, social stigmatisation, deprivation of their right to education and to family environment, economic exploitation, various diseases including sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS, and psychological trauma. The exact scope of the commercial sexual exploitation of children in Indonesia is difficult to determine. Some estimates are that the number of girls engaged in the prostitution industry is between 40 and 70 thousand<sup>1</sup>. Other sources state that 30 percent of all commercial sex workers in Indonesia are children below the age of 18<sup>2</sup>.

According to data from the Indonesian National Police and from various surveys on commercial sexual exploitation of children, all the Indonesian provinces are affected by child prostitution, while the most affected include Batam (Riau); North Sumatra; South Sumatra; Bali; NTB; Kalimantan; Jakarta; West and East Java; South Sulawesi; Maluku Islands; Irian Jaya and North Sulawesi. Even though these areas have different geographic, economic and socio-cultural conditions the lives of child victims of prostitution and the factors that drive them to prostitution are very similar. This study on CSEC in Surakarta and Indramayu conducted between August 2002 and June 2003 explores these similarities and differences, and provides an insight into the lives of child victims of prostitution, their family and economic circumstances, the role of various actors, as well as their thoughts, fears, worries and wishes for the future.

### 2. Background of the research

The research was qualitative, participatory and action-oriented. The qualitative nature

1 Surabaya Post, 5 April 2000 (Suryanto and Hamadi, 2002:55)

2 Mohammad Farid (2000)

of the research entailed in-depth analysis of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Surakarta and Indramayu. These two locations were selected for being well known suppliers of commercial sex workers including children, even though they have very different socio-economic and cultural conditions. Its participatory approach ensured active involvement by participants in every stage of the research process – development of the research protocol, data collection and formulation of the recommendations. The action-oriented nature of the research was reflected in the fact that the child victims of prostitution were assisted with provision of vocational training and mentoring.

The six researchers and the research co-ordinator that conducted the research were drawn from academia, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and child protection institutions. Two international technical advisors also took part in the research. The participants were divided in two categories – child participants and adult participants. Child participants included prostituted children<sup>3</sup>, former prostituted children<sup>4</sup>, school drop-outs and children still attending school. Adult participants included representatives of government agencies, NGOs, customers, pimps, parents and boyfriends of children involved in prostitution, religious leaders, youth leaders and community leaders.

### 3. Causes of child prostitution

Poverty is one of the major factors that drive children into prostitution. All the children who took part in the study came from disadvantaged families. The level of poverty varied; while in Surakarta, which is an urban area, parents of children involved in prostitution worked mainly in the informal sector, in Indramayu 80 percent of parents worked in the agricultural sector as landless labourers depending solely on the annual harvest. These parents grew to become dependent on their children for day to day survival, often turning a blind eye to the source of the income their children provided.

As the results of the study indicate, families often play a major role in the child's involvement in prostitution. The failure of the family to provide functions of protection and affection, education and socialisation, coupled with a disharmonious family environment are key factors in children falling victims to commercial sexual exploitation. Other factors include the low socio-cultural position of women in Indonesian society, inadequate access to education particularly for girls, widely tolerated goings-on in warung remang-remang and café bambu<sup>5</sup> and the tradition of arranged early marriages in Indramayu which often result in quick divorce, subsequently leaving the young girls destitute. In addition, various myths such as the ones that sex with young girls increases men's virility or that young girls cannot transmit HIV/AIDS are also causative factors.

3 This term was employed by the researchers; the term "prostituted children" (*Anak yang dilacukan or Ayla in Bahasa Indonesia*) refers to those children, both boys and girls, who are involved in prostitution, and was deliberately chosen to stress the legal situation that a child, as opposed to an adult, is regarded by the law as not being capable of making an informed

choice about whether or not to work as a prostitute. Therefore the child is considered to be a victim of prostitution.

4 Former prostituted children were above 18 years of age at the time of the research. However, they are still included in the children categories as they were under 18 when they were involved in prostitution.

5 These are night cafes frequented by Indonesian men for recreational purposes where solicitation of customers by sex workers is quite common

Another important reason for children's involvement in prostitution is direct or indirect pressure exercised by different parties including the children's parents, middlemen, procurers and pimps, friends and boyfriends. Some of the child victims of prostitution come from families where grandmothers, mothers, aunts or elder sisters used to or still work as commercial sex workers. Often the lifestyle of these relatives (quickly earned money, flashy clothes and gadgets, independence) entices young girls to turn to prostitution. Peer pressure is exercised in a similar fashion with young girls often being persuaded by their friends that the life of sex workers is "glamorous and exciting".

In addition to family and friends, boyfriends play an important role in children's involvement in prostitution. Some of the girls are directly introduced to places of prostitution by their boyfriends; some are drawn to prostitution after losing their virginity to, and then being abandoned by, their boyfriends. Pimps or procurers are a final link in the chain who exploit girls' vulnerability by claiming to offer them a safe haven – a place where they will be well looked after. Both boyfriends<sup>6</sup> and pimps tend to protect the girls when there is trouble with customers or other sex workers, which gives the girls a false sense of security.

### 4. Risks faced by child victims of prostitution

The research indicates that child victims of prostitution live either with their parents (75 percent in Indramayu and 41 percent in Surakarta) or in cheap hotels or pensions (43 percent in Surakarta). Children living in hotels frequently move from one place to another due to inability to pay for hotel bills. They work at night, sleep during the day, smoke and drink excessively. They tend to consume cigarettes and alcohol to show their social status, when they are undergoing problems with boyfriends, families or customers or when celebrating a stroke of good fortune. These children often suffer from alcohol dependency. The use of narcotics by the children involved in prostitution is mostly limited to prescription drugs, partly because psychotropic drugs are not so easily available.

For child victims of prostitution very few places are safe. Some consider home to be a safe place – a place where they can grow and develop and have emotional support and protection. Because such homes are hard to find for child victims of prostitution it is not surprising that most of these children consider their workplace a safe place. Being close to their friends and pimps offers them a feeling of comfort and security.

However, the same places that children involved in prostitution regard as safe they also acknowledge as dangerous. At their workplace there is a constant danger of police raids and harassment and abuse by customers. The bodies and souls of children involved in prostitution are scarred from the frequent violence they experience at the hands of customers or boyfriends. The types of violence inflicted on these children include injuries to the head, torso, arms and legs and other vital parts of the body, such as

6 Most boyfriends of the prostituted children in Surakarta depended on the children for their daily needs, which was not the case in Indramayu

vagina and anus. Psychological violence includes being deceived by customers and boyfriends, insulted by passers-by and shunned by their neighbours.

Child victims of prostitution suffer from various ailments including sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and hygiene associated skin diseases. They know little about the risks of HIV/AIDS and are not willing to use condoms when with customers because condoms allegedly prolong intercourse and are not popular with customers. They mostly avail of the services of medicine hawkers for their health problems and unwanted pregnancies. Even though still children themselves, nine out of twenty-one of these girls already have children of their own. Some of the children involved in prostitution were as young as 15 when they gave birth, two of them already have two children and some are pregnant with their second child. Most of these babies are taken care of by maternal or paternal relatives in conditions that do not differ much from the condition in which other children from the same family were brought up. Two of the children involved in prostitution decided to keep their children and raise them in the rented rooms of pensions and hotels where they stay. When these girls go to work their babies are taken care of by their fellow sex workers.

In addition to pregnancies that result in birth there is an extremely high level of abortion or induced miscarriage among children involved in prostitution. One of the main reasons for such a high level of unwanted pregnancies is inadequate knowledge of reproductive health issues including the use of contraceptives.

## 5. Prevention, protection and rehabilitation services

When asked what measures needed to be taken to overcome the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children, the majority of child victims of prostitution that took part in the research (66.7 percent) said that the answer lay in rehabilitation, while 33.3 percent saw the answer in marriage. As for the role of parents in prevention of child prostitution, most of the participants agreed that what a child needs is care, affection and education. Unfortunately preventive and rehabilitative measures are not readily available so the majority of children involved in prostitution have no-one to turn to.

According to the study findings local authorities and local regulations make no distinction between child victims of prostitution and adult commercial sex workers. The programs put in place to deal with the problem of (adult) prostitution to date by both government institutions/agencies and non-governmental organisations in Surakarta and Indramayu tend to focus on repressive measures such as raids, arrests and fining prostitutes. Some government agencies are involved in prevention such as the Health Agency in Surakarta which monitors the incidence of STDs among sex workers, and some in rehabilitation such as the Public Welfare and Women's Empowerment agency in Surakarta which provides vocational training for sex workers. The only non-governmental organisation in the two research locations directly involved with child victims of prostitution is the Kakak Foundation.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the study findings the researchers have come up with a number of general recommendations as well as specific recommendations for Surakarta and Indramayu. Some of the key recommendations are as follows:

### a) Prevention measures

- Socialisation of the Child Protection Law (Law number 23 of 2002)
- Establishment of a data base on children in need of special protection
- Establishment of Child Protection Advocacy Agencies/Institutions
- Prevention of spread of HIV/AIDS through the provision of medical, mentoring, counselling and advocacy services
- Awareness raising campaigns on reproductive health and drug abuse (life style education)
- Need for greater political will and heightened sensitivity on the part of the government as regards the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children
- Education and vocational training for children in need of special protection.

### b) Protection measures

- Increased budgetary funding for the protection of children
- Issuance of local regulations on the protection of children, particularly children involved in prostitution
- Enforcement of the Child Protection Law (Law number 23 of 2002) and local legal instruments

### c) Recovery and reintegration

- Establishment of youth centres specially geared to help teenagers experiencing social problems
- Establishment of rehabilitation centres for children victims of exploitation and sexual violence where education and counselling can be provided.

# 01 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Time Frame
- 1.4 Research Locations
- 1.5 Research Methodology
- 1.6 Ethical Statement
- 1.7 Data Analysis
- 1.8 Constraints

"A child is a blessed gift from God who should be taken care of and protected by his or her parents. But, a child also has to be dedicated to and help his or her parents to earn money for the family."  
(A school girl, 15 years old, Indramayu)



the mining industry, in foundries and similar workplaces, and in the commercial sex industry:

- where children become involved in the abuse of psychoactive substances;
- where children are vulnerable to various forms of discriminatory treatment on account of their a) physical circumstances (disabled since birth or disabled as the result of an accident); b) cultural background (for example, children from minorities); c) socio-economic circumstances (children who, for example, lack birth certificates, identity cards, disadvantaged children, etc.); or d) their parents' political affiliations;
- where children are vulnerable to discrimination on account of the marital status of their parents;
- where children find themselves having dealings with or in conflict with the law.

Irwanto (1998) predicted that an absolute figure of 17.5 million school-age children would be forced to drop out of school in order to assist their parents in seeking money, while 400 thousand school children would not be able to continue their education at the next level as a result of the crisis.

Children who have to work – or “child workers” – are classified as one of the groups of children in need of special protection (CNSP) according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The situations where children are deemed to be in need of special protection are as follows:

- where children find themselves in an environment where their relationships with those around them, particularly adults, are characterised by violence or a tendency toward neglect;
- where children find themselves in an environment characterised by armed conflict;
- where children have to work, whether in formal or informal employment, with the result that insufficient attention is paid to their development, growth and protection;
- where children are engaged in high-risk work, such as those employed in the construction industry, as deckhands on boats and ships, in

prostitution has come to be regarded as a normal form of employment, and children, who become victim to prostitution, are considered almost as heroes by their families. In fact, in Pati there is no longer any social stigma or sanctions attached to prostitution by the local community.

The fact that children are often involved in prostitution in Indonesia is common knowledge. Irwanto et al (1999) found that in one “rehabilitation” centre for prostitutes in North Jakarta, approximately 5% of the 2,750 sex workers housed there were under 15. According to the 5 April 2000 edition of the Surabaya Post (Suyanto and Hanadi, 2002:55), the number of girls engaged in the prostitution industry amounted to between 40 and 70 thousand. Mohammad Farid (2000) estimated that around 30% of all commercial sex workers in Indonesia were children under 18 years of age. Based on data from the Republic of Indonesia Police, the number of reported cases of child trafficking in 2000 amounted to more than 1,400.

This, of course, only represents the tip of the iceberg as most cases of child trafficking go entirely unreported. Every one of these cases involves between two and ten female victims, with the majority of them being underage girls (Kompas daily, 9 October 2001).

### 1.1.1 Definitions

**The term “prostituted children” (Anak yang dilacurkan or Ayla in Bahasa Indonesia) refers to those children, both boys and girls, who are involved in prostitution, and was deliberately chosen to stress the legal situation that a child, as opposed to an adult, is regarded by the law as not being capable of making an informed choice about whether or not to work as a prostitute.**

UNICEF (document A/50/456) defines the commercial sexual exploitation of a child as follows: The act of engaging or offering the services of a child to perform sexual acts for money or other consideration with a person or any other persons.

# 01 BACKGROUND

## 1.1 Background

Childhood is normally a time of play, joy, learning, growth and development. Is this really true, however, in the case of all Indonesian children?

Indonesia, a developing country, currently has a population of 216 million people. While a large population presents opportunities for development, the fact that 69.70 percent of Indonesia's population is only educated to elementary school level constitutes a major burden for Indonesia. Problems in this regard were further exacerbated by the economic crisis that erupted in July 1997, the effects of which are still being felt today. Indonesia's per capita income prior to the start of the economic crisis stood at around 1,000 US dollars, but it fell to only 400 US dollars in 1998. The crisis, which was initially confined to the economic and monetary areas, eventually evolved into a multidimensional crisis that profoundly affected, not just the government, but also the lives of ordinary Indonesians. For people in the middle and lower income brackets, the crisis resulted in a decline in the nutritional status of children and an increase in the number of children taken out of school.

In 1996, the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children which was held in Stockholm, declared that the prostitution of children was the most cruel of the various types of abuses that are perpetrated against children. The Congress defined the commercial sexual exploitation of children as follows: [The commercial sexual exploitation of children]... comprises sexual abuse by the adult and remuneration in cash or kind to the child or a third person or persons.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, which was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 25 May 2000, states that Child prostitution means the use of a child in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration.

From the three definitions quoted above, we may conclude that children offer sexual services due to the exploitative actions of other parties with benefit or profits accruing to these other parties as well as to the children themselves.

### 1.1.2 Rationale

ILO Convention number 182 states that prostitution is a hazardous form of employment for children. In the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is stressed that prostitution of children is a fundamental violation of human rights. This is because the treatment meted out to child victims of prostitution is of great detriment to both their physical and emotional development. Such treatment includes the following - abuse, deprivation of their rights to education, discrimination, economic exploitation, and, frequently, their buying and selling, and forcible removal from their home environments. In addition, child victims of prostitution also have to bear the brunt of widespread social stigmatisation. Children who become victim to commercial sexual exploitation are at great risk from various diseases, particularly sexually transmitted diseases, with all of their associated

consequences. They also frequently suffer from psychological stress and anguish as a result of their rejection, or even isolation, by the community, and due to the violence and cruelty that they are often subjected to at the hands of pimps or customers.

The phenomenon of child prostitution is not only found in Indonesia's major cities, but also in smaller towns such as Indramayu and Surakarta, where under-18s are frequently employed in the prostitution industry. Case studies on child victims of prostitution carried out by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Kusuma Buana Foundation, the Atmajaya Development Studies Centre and Airlangga University in 1998 found that prostitution in general, and child prostitution in particular, was part of everyday life in some parts of Indramayu such as Bongas District. A study carried out by the Kakak Foundation in 2000 investigated the lives led by 50 child victims of prostitution in five out of seven second level administrative districts in the former Surakarta Residency in Central Java.

Among the factors that have led to an increased demand for the services of children involved in prostitution is the belief that having sex with children will improve the vitality and youthfulness of customers. In addition, the fear of HIV/AIDS encourages customers to seek out those who are new to the sex trade, generally children, which is often facilitated by those organised criminal networks in the sex industry actively involved in the recruitment of children. The situation is further exacerbated by family problems, including abandonment and neglect, poverty, minimal access to social services, and premature sexual activity.

The increased demand for children to engage in commercial sexual activities has had a corresponding impact on those areas that have traditionally been regarded as suppliers of commercial sex workers. This means that increasing numbers of children in Indonesia are finding themselves at risk of becoming victim to the commercial sex industry.

In the light of the above description, it is clear that it is urgent to conduct in-depth research on the commercial sexual exploitation of children. This conclusion is primarily based on the following considerations:

- Child victims of prostitution are categorised as belonging to one of the groups of children in need of special protection. They need such special protection due to the highly vulnerable position in which they find themselves as a result of their economic, sexual, physical and psychological exploitation. Their rights to live, grow and develop, to participate fully in society in accordance with their inherent dignity as human beings, and to be protected from violence and discrimination, are not being fulfilled. This is despite the fact that these are inalienable human rights that must be guaranteed, protected and fulfilled by their parents, society, the government and the state. The provision of protection for children is meant to ensure that these rights of children are fulfilled. If all of Indonesia's children are to grow up in a proper, healthy manner the provision of such protection is absolutely essential.

- The number of child victims of prostitution in Indonesia has been increasing over time due to mushrooming demand for their services. The question of rehabilitating children who have become involved in the commercial sex industry is not something that is easy or straightforward, and contains within it many dilemmas that need to be addressed. In general, entry of children into the sex trade is due to the economic situation of their families, with the children regarded by their parents as economic resources. If they give up their involvement in prostitution, then their families' sources of income will dry up. Furthermore, the children grow used to earning relatively large amounts of money at a young age.
- Article 59 of Law Number 23 of 2002 on the Child Protection states that the government and institutions of state have an obligation and responsibility to provide special protection to children at risk, including

children at risk from economic and/or sexual exploitation. Article 66 of this Law states that such special protection may be afforded to children through the following activities - (a) monitoring, reporting and the imposition of sanctions, and (b) the involvement of the relevant government institutions, the private sector, labour unions, non-governmental organisations and the public in the effort to eradicate the economic and/or sexual exploitation of children.

To ensure that these objectives are achieved, accurate and in-depth information is required on the involvement of children in the world of prostitution, the conditions and communities that are found in the commercial sex industry, and the family and social backgrounds of the children. Such data is essential if effective intervention is to be undertaken to overcome the problem of child prostitution.

## 1.2 Objectives

The overall objectives of this research were as follows:

1. gaining a comprehensive, quantitative and qualitative understanding of the situation and position of child victims of prostitution, the problems that they face, the factors that have led them to become involved in the commercial sex industry, and the potential resources that could be employed to prevent and eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children
2. formulating and implementing appropriate intervention measures so as to eliminate the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Meanwhile, the specific objectives of the research were as follows:

- improving the capabilities of the researchers, applying creative methodology that is action-orientated, and which uses a participatory approach and qualitative methods;
- identifying and investigating the capacities of local partners (government institutions, non-governmental organisations, LPAs, religious

- organisations, community organisations, commercial sex workers, and children) and their involvement to date in dealing with the problem of child prostitution;
- identifying priorities and formulating strategic recommendations for handling the problem of child prostitution; and;
- preventing the entry of more children into the prostitution industry.

An in-depth understanding of the lives led and the risks faced by child victims of prostitution will be gained through the involvement in the research of the child victims themselves. Simultaneously, the capacities of researchers, various stakeholders, non-governmental organisations and government institutions, as well as networks existing between them, will be improved.

### 1.3 Time Frame

Research was conducted over a period of almost one year, between August 2002 and June 2003, with the international technical advisors providing assistance during the workshops. The following activities were undertaken:

- Workshop I: Recruitment of researchers
- Drafting of research protocol
- Testing of research instruments
- Stage I data collection
- Workshop II: Review of research protocol
- Stage II data collection
- Workshop III: Data analysis
- Workshop IV: Drafting of report
- Workshop on the formulation of recommendations

### 1.4 Research Locations

The research was focused on the city of Surakarta and Indramayu regency. The research in Surakarta involved Banjarsari and Laweyan districts, while in Indramayu the research was conducted in Arahon and Karangampel districts. These locations were selected purposively having regard to the objectives of the research and

the input provided by the Local Development Planning Boards in Surakarta municipality and Indramayu regency, as well as by UNICEF Indonesia.

The principal reason why Indramayu regency was selected was that it has long been known as a supplier of commercial sex workers, including children. Previous studies and reports carried by the media had pointed to the fact that prostitution in Indonesia's major cities, and even abroad, was frequently connected with Indramayu regency, particularly as regards to the place of origin of the sex workers. In addition, prostitution has become a normal part of life in a number of places in Indramayu, whether practised in warung remang-remang or on the sidewalk, particularly along the North Coast Highway. In fact, in some sections of the community, prostitution has come to be regarded as a normal occupation, on a par with other, more generally accepted forms of employment. As a result, many of those involved in prostitution do not hesitate to admit that they work as commercial sex workers. Given this reality, when many people in Indonesia think of Indramayu, they automatically think of prostitution. However, not everyone in Indramayu is willing to accept this situation, and many people there are upset at the labelling of their regency as a supplier of sex workers. Nevertheless, to date this disquiet has not resulted in any meaningful action being taken to address the situation.

The principal reason why Surakarta municipality was selected was that this city is home to the Silir red-light district, stories about which circulate in every corner of Indonesia. Surakarta is also frequently identified as a supplier of prostitutes to Indonesia's major cities, although it is not as closely identified with prostitution as Indramayu regency. In addition, open prostitution is an everyday sight in Surakarta, both on the sidewalks and in entertainment spots.

The main reason behind the selection of Banjarsari district was the fact that prostitution is engaged in openly in various prostitution centres throughout the regency, with prostitutes

offering their services and engaging in sexual transactions in public places, including on the sidewalks of major thoroughfares. This has both directly and indirectly led to disturbances to the local environment. Meanwhile, Laweyan district was selected based on the fact that prostitution in this regency is practised in a manner that is the direct opposite to the way in which it is practised in Banjarsari – prostitution exists but is hidden. Sexual transactions are conducted in hotels, cheap pensions, beauty salons and brothels.

These two districts (Laweyan and Banjarsari) are contiguous to one another, as can be seen from the Surakarta research location map shown in Appendix 1. Both of these districts also possess favourable environments for the emergence of a vibrant nightlife including the presence of many hotels, discotheques, cafes and the Sriwedari Public Gardens. Sex workers and children involved in prostitution are able to travel easily between the places where they stay or work and Banjarsari and Laweyan districts.

In Indramayu regency, the principal reasons underpinning the choice of Arahon district as a research location was the fact that this area has never been known for prostitution or for the supply of prostituted children. Nevertheless, as part of the effort to develop a preventative strategy for dealing with the problem of child prostitution, this area is considered ideal for research purposes as the socio-cultural environment and socio-economic condition of the people here are almost the same as in those districts known for rampant prostitution and the supply of prostituted children, i.e., widespread poverty accompanied by high school drop-out rates, poorly developed human resources, and a tradition of early marriage and a high divorce rate. Meanwhile, the reason for the choice of Karangampel was because this district has long been known for the presence of warung wedang (night coffee stalls) and warung remang-remang, in some of which customers are served by girls who have dropped out of school. These warung wedang are ideal places for sexual transactions bearing in mind that that they are normally open from 9 p.m. until 2 a.m., and that the majority of customers are male.

This research was conducted with participation of children in two second level administrative districts, namely, Indramayu regency in West Java provinces (specifically in Arahon and Karangampel districts), and Surakarta municipality (specifically in Laweyan and Banjarsari districts).

Surakarta is an urban area that is located at the centre of the former Residency of Surakarta, and is made up of seven second-level administrative districts. It also plays host to a red-light area in Banjarsari district where both adult commercial sex workers and children involved in prostitution are to be found. Indramayu is generally well-known in Indonesia as a supplier of children to the prostitution industry.

### 1.5 Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative, participatory and action-orientated approach. A qualitative approach was employed in order to obtain in-depth data and information on the problems experienced by the participants in connection with the situation of children involved in prostitution. The term "situation" as used here refers to the geographic, economic, social, cultural, and demographic positions in the research areas.

A participatory approach was applied so as to ensure active involvement by participants in the research process. While many studies have been carried out on the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the past, this research is unique in that it has attempted to involve children themselves so that their views and perspectives can be accommodated. The participation of the research subjects was not confined to participation in the conventional sense of the word, but also involved them in appraising and evaluating the problems faced and the potential that exists in their communities for overcoming these problems. The participation

recommendations will be put into effect between 2003 and 2005.

**This is a qualitative, participatory and action-orientated research. The qualitative approach contributes to in-depth analysis of the problem of commercial sexual exploitation of children. The participatory nature of the research is reflected in the active involvement of the research subjects at all stages. The action-oriented approach entails efforts to rehabilitate child victims of prostitution and to offer them guidance and advice.**

and involvement of both children and adults was encouraged at all stages of the research, starting with formulation of the research protocol and continuing through the data collection stage right up to formulation of recommendations.

This research employed a new method, which puts an emphasis on the research processes. Both child and adult participants were involved in all of the stages during the formulation of the research protocol, which covers the background to the research, its objectives, the researchers' ethical statement, the instruments employed and the analyses to be conducted. The involvement of the child participants during the formulation of the researchers' ethical statement and the research instruments took the form of their attendance at a workshop.

This research is also unique in that it employed the services of child technical advisors from both Indramayu and Surakarta. These child advisors came from the communities being studied, and their roles were as follows - providing technical advice to the researchers on the research instruments to be employed, including the material used, the formulation of questions (when, where, how and why?), and to whom the instruments should be applied. The child advisors also participated in approaching potential child participants, including children's communities, and the discussions involved in the application of the triangulation method (cross-checking data and information), the drafting of recommendations, the dissemination of the research processes and findings, and during the recommendation/implementation stage.

The action-orientated nature of this research is reflected by the efforts made to assist with the personal development of child victims of prostitution through vocational and needs training, and the provision of mentoring for them. The research does not stop at reporting its findings, but also contains recommendations that were jointly formulated by the researchers, stakeholders, adults and children who participated in the research. In collaboration with UNICEF Central Java and West Java, these

The research protocol was always carried and used by the researchers when conducting direct studies, as well as during the analysis and report-writing stages. The protocol was designed by the researchers, assisted by a technical advisor, having regard to the suggestions and input provided by the support group.

**The research protocol sets out comprehensive guidelines covering the objectives, methods, instruments, ethics, procedures, and logistical aspects involved in the research, including the informed consent aspect.**

- children still attending school.

The adult participants consisted of representatives of governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community organisations, women's organisations, academia, parents and boyfriends of children involved in prostitution, customers, pimps, religious, youth and community leaders.

The participants were further categorised as individual participants and participants representing organisations or institutions. The individual participants were made up of both child and adult participants, and consisted of prostituted children, former prostituted children, school dropouts, children still attending school, customers, pimps, and the boyfriends of prostituted children. The participants representing organisations or institutions were drawn from those organisations/institutions that are directly or indirectly involved in dealing with the commercial sexual exploitation of children in the research locations.

**A prostituted child** is defined for the purposes of this research as a male or female child of under eighteen years of age who engages in prostitution, whether with or without the consent of his/her family, in one of the research locations, or in some other place while residing in one of the research locations.

**A former prostituted child** is defined for the purposes of this research as a male or female who resides in one of the research locations and who has at one time been a prostituted child but who has not been working as a prostitute for at least six months.

**A school drop-out** is defined for the purposes of this research as a child under 18 years of age who has dropped out from school and is no longer attending school.

## 1.5.2 Data Sources

### 1.5.2.1 Primary Data Sources

Based on their sources, the data employed in this research consisted of primary data and secondary data. The primary data sources consisted of both principal data sources and ancillary data sources. The principal data sources consisted of children – both child victims of prostitution and other children.

The ancillary data sources consisted of the various stakeholders concerned with the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Subsequently in this report, the primary data sources, including both the sources of principal and ancillary data, shall be referred to as "the participants".

In other words, two major categories of participants were involved in this research, namely child participants and adult participants. The child participants were subdivided into four categories:

- prostituted children;
- former prostituted children;<sup>3</sup>
- school drop-outs; and

<sup>3</sup> Former prostituted children were above 18 at the time of the research, but are still included in the children category as they were under 18 when they were involved in prostitution.