

# **Report on Child Sexual Exploitation in the Tourism Industry**

*An analysis of ambiguous spaces in Bali*

Executive summary of the research and recommendations for practice

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The support and help of so many people made this challenging study feasible and I am very grateful for that. I would like to thank a couple of people in particular:

I would like to thank my research participants for the time and effort that they put into this study. I am inspired as well as touched by their work to protect children from harm. I hope the outcomes of this research contribute to developing pathways for more protection.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the results of a qualitative study on the persistence of child sex tourism (CST) in Bali, Indonesia. Based on fourteen semi-structured interviews and participant observation during a fieldwork period of four months as well as a year of analyzing secondary sources (academic literature, nonprofit organizations and institutional reports), this study aimed to create understanding of the mechanisms and processes that keep CST in its existence.

While previous research focused mainly on the implementation of child protection laws and explaining the persistence of CST through a resemblance of a market between demand and supply, this study took an alternative approach by focusing on the *ambiguous space*. The ambiguous space emphasizes CST as legally banned, but also socially protected and sanctioned by the CST-actors. The complexity of the ambiguous space is presented in an interplay between the enabling environment, the CST-actors and the strategies to access child sex and child sex offenders. Addressing the persistence of CST based on the understanding of the ambiguous space offered the opportunity to analyze a deviant set of rules that is valued by the CST-actors.

The group of CST-actors exists of children, child sex tourists and intermediaries (the facilitators). The complexity is illustrated by the various actors involved, driven by money, power and desire. In addition, this study found five aspects regarding the enabling environment and CST-strategies. These aspects focus on poverty, institutional plurality and bribing, contesting understanding of childhood, values and the child's role in the family, the use of technology and unrestricted mobility focusing on the lack of travel bans and the risk of participating in internships of Bali's tourism industry.

Based on the analysis of the interplay within the ambiguous space, this study identified four potential risk locations for CST in Bali: Private homes, (child) brothels, spa massage parlors and orphanages. This finding indicates that the issue of CST is much more differentiated than acknowledged in current studies, because these locations all contain specific aspects which enable the persistence of CST.

CST in Bali is part of a global problem which demands for all countries to take responsibility and protect children worldwide from sexual and commercial exploitation. Acknowledging and identifying the differentiation underlying the persistence of CST while stimulating collaboration between all (combat) parties involved is key to disrupt this issue.

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# CHAPTER 1

## Introduction

Worldwide, millions of children are sexually exploited for commercial purposes in the tourism industry (Newman et al. 2011). The issue of *child sex tourism* (CST) is however not a new phenomenon. Technological advances facilitate the scope of the problem by the increased mobility of its consumers (Andrews 2003, 419). Although CST is considered an illegal practice everywhere, the implementation of extraterritorial laws and strategies to combat this issue remains a challenge (Panko and George 2012, 67). Further legal action could move the issue further underground or shift to other destinations (UNICEF 2009). CST is embedded in a changing field leaving gaps in our knowledge on CST-operations (Davidson 2004). There is a risk that existing policies and laws overlook new and growing forms and patterns of CST. Therefore, it raises questions about how effective top-down approaches are to address CST and how these approaches encourage the protection of children in reality. Hence, this study aims to create understanding of the persistence of CST by taking an alternative approach in order to make implications for future efforts. This approach treats CST both as an illegal practice by law *and* as a tolerated and justified practice by the CST-actors.

While international crimes are considered illegal by law, it can also be socially protected by certain groups or individuals (Abraham and van Schendel 2005; Aspinall and van Klinken 2010). Addressing CST based on the understanding of Abraham and van Schendel (2005) and Aspinall and van Klinken (2010) provides the opportunity to put the emphasis on the ambiguity within the persistence of CST-practices. CST is treated both as an illegal practice, but it is often also tolerated by family members, hotel owners and law keepers which results in the creation of an *ambiguous space* where CST can persist. Each ambiguous space is shaped by inequality and power structures which is dominated by a set of informal rules valued and sanctioned by the CST-actors (Aspinall and van Klinken 2010, 2).

This research highlights the complexity of the ambiguous space presented in an interplay between the *enabling environment*, the *actors* and *their strategies to access child sex* in the Balinese society. Addressing CST, based on this interplay, provides the opportunity to analyze specific enabling factors in Bali, while it also contributes to using this framework in order to analyze the different CST-locations, such as private homes or child brothels. CST might be an international phenomenon (Davidson 2004, 43), but the interplay in the ambiguous space cannot be generalized to all parts of the world or to the various CST-locations. Advocating that creating understanding on how these ambiguous spaces are created might benefit future combat tactics.

This report is based on qualitative research derived from the fieldwork findings in Bali from September 2019 to December 2019. This research is based on semi-structured interviews, participant observation and secondary sources. I conducted interviews with various combat initiatives focused on non-profit organizations, global and Balinese child protection institutions, researchers and private sector companies.

This document is structured as follows: The next chapter provides the study results which focus on aspects of the persistence as well as identifying potential risk locations. This section is followed by a conclusion and recommendations for practice and research. In the appendix an analysis of CST-combat challenges is added. Hopefully this research can serve as a support to address complexities underlying the persistence of CST in order to combat this issue.

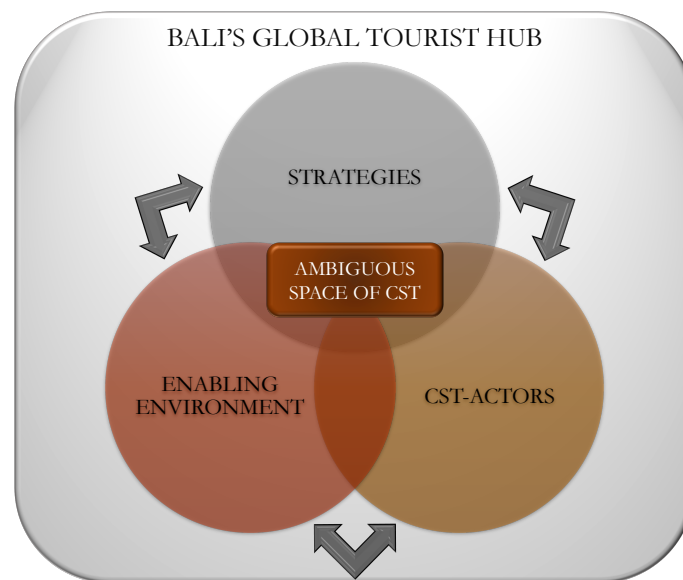
## CHAPTER 2

### Results

#### 2.1 The Persistence of Child Sex Tourism

The next section will provide a summary of the study results that focus on mechanisms and processes which affect the persistence of CST in the ambiguous space. Section 2.2 elaborates on potential risk locations for CST in Bali. Figure 1 presents an overview of the analytic model that has been used to analyze the interplay between the CST-actors, enabling environment and strategies within the ambiguous space.

*Figure 1: Analytic model of the ambiguous space*



This study identified five associations regarding the persistence of CST in Bali's ambiguous space. These associations contain aspects of the enabling environment, CST-actors as well as strategies to access child sex and child sex offenders. First, a general overview of CST-actors is given in the section below.

#### CST-ACTORS

The group of CST-actors exists of children, child sex tourists and intermediaries. The complexity to combat CST is portrayed in the variety of actors and their characteristics. It is not always clear who is involved. The complexity is illustrated in the combination between the various actors involved, driven by money, power and desire. Discussions on the child's involvement is focused on being portrayed as victims and the enactment of their agency. This study shows that both can be the case. The complexity underlying the network of child sex tourists focus on the various intentions of child sex tourists. For example, child sex tourists are coming to Bali with the intention to access child sex or are being tempted when offered on the streets. Intermediaries are seen as the facilitators of CST. To make it even more complex, this group varies from hotel staff and transport services to traffickers, government officials and family members. Intermediaries take an individualistic approach or operate in small and large criminal networks. Basically,

everyone could be a part in the persistence by turning a blind eye to CST-occurrences which makes CST in Bali such an international phenomenon and with that, global responsibility.

## **FIVE ASSOCIATIONS**

### **1. Poverty**

The first association focuses on poverty and CST in a tourism driven island economy. Poverty and the lack of jobs create vulnerability. Vulnerability of poor families creates the opportunity to be caught up in an exploitation network as a way to mitigate poverty. First, street children or children whose parents work in the tourism industry are vulnerable to CST when meeting a child sex tourist. Secondly, when the financial pressure is not covered by selling souvenirs the involvement in prostitution might become an option. Economic setbacks reinforce these pathways. While tourism has been encouraged as a development for economic growth, the sector is vulnerable to external shocks that damage the economy, such as natural disasters, the Bali bombings (Jennaway 2008; Baker and Coulter 2007) or the Asian economic crisis in the late 1990s (Manning 2000) and now Covid19, because of their high reliance on tourism income.

### ***Child Sex Trafficking***

In order to understand how CST persists, it is crucial to shed light on how most of these children end up in child prostitution. The lack of border patrol, coordination with law enforcements and the multiple islands within one nation resulted in a lack of monitoring these trafficking flows (UNCHR 2018). This lack gives the advantage for the trafficker to easily move children to Bali. Is it all about money then? The trafficker gets money from the transaction and the family receives money when selling their child. A child might act on a trafficker's job offer with the aim to support the family through work (Jennaway 2008, 49). With the consequence that the child is trafficked to Bali to work in the sex industry. ID's are taken away and the children are debt bonded. For many CST-children such control mechanisms start the circle of child sexual exploitation (Williamson and Prior 2009).

However, money is not the only driver. Corruption is also a driver for child sex trafficking in which the trafficker benefits from power. The depth of corruption means that even if they get caught, they get off. For example, powerful public officials often ignore, facilitate or engage in trafficking crimes in Indonesia (Moore 2020). The lack of severe sanctions resulted in traffickers who operate brazenly and have no fear of be prosecuted (UNCHR 2018). Even though a trafficker is put on trial, it does not implicate that he or she will be prosecuted.

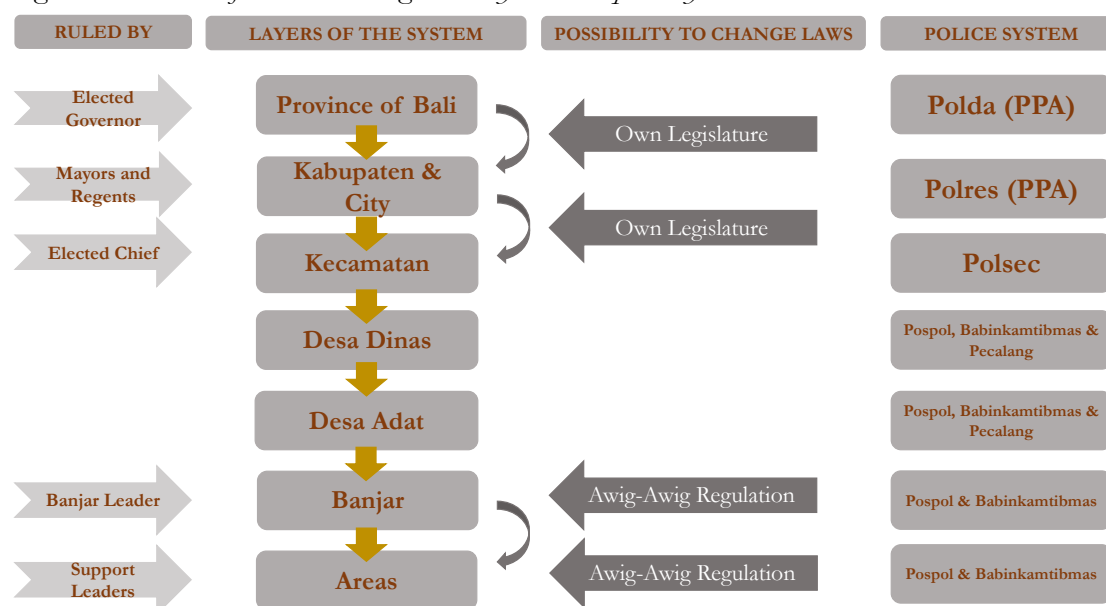
According to the Indonesian national law on Eradicating Human Trafficking of 2019, trafficking a person results in a maximum sentence of 15 years (USDOS 2019). The previous sections showed that this law is challenged by various factors such as corruption and the lack of border control, coordination and monitoring migration flows. In addition, individual actions as well as small and large trafficking networks are involved which challenges the disruption of the child trafficking circle. All these factors contribute to strengthening the trafficker's position to act brazenly and without fear to be prosecuted.

### **2. Institutional Plurality and Bribing**

Institutional plurality and a large regulation system might provide opportunities for new interpretations on illegalized practices. Corruption and the organizational structure of the regulation system within Bali's institutional plurality might enable an environment for CST by

neglecting an adequate implementation of child protection laws against CST. Figure 2 presents an overview of Bali's regulation system and police system<sup>1</sup>.

Figure 2: Overview of the Balinese regulation system and police system



The decentralization legislation of 2001 resulted in multiple layers of regulating authorities (Tan 2006, 96). These multiple layers within the regulation system show the possibility to change the laws and policies a couple times before it reaches the last group. Although, the variety in regulations across the island might be more effective for that particular area, this variety is accompanied by the risk that a state or local official might take advantage of this provincial system by engaging in illegal activities for their own profit (Aspinall and van Klinken 2010, 2), having either direct or indirect impact on the issue of child protection and CST. For example, indirect impact can be illustrated by the issue of corruption. Bribing of officials resulted in enforcing inadequate laws on child sexual exploitation and a political lack of child protection. Government officials might ignore CST-occurrences due to the need of foreign exchange (Panko and George 2012, 70) or due to their own financial interest to make a profit by protecting CST-locations from being discovered. Officials or politicians might have direct impact on CST when visiting spa massage parlors themselves and benefit from their own profession to enforce protection on these locations. These mechanisms show that state or local officials can use their own powerful position to keep CST in its persistence.

The act of bribing is influenced by money, the lack of trust and the fear of reporting crimes. Powerful public officials might ignore, facilitate or engage in CST-related practices, which complicates tackling the issue even further. For example, there was a case in the Klungkung regency that got stalled for ten years, because no one dared to report the abuse to the police (Arifin 2019). Aside from the fact that the perpetrator was a spiritual teacher, he was also known to be close to the officials. Such a CST-strategy might result in a political lack of child protection and inadequate laws regarding sexual exploitation of children (Mekinc and Mušič 2020).

<sup>1</sup> Extended description on the Balinese regulation system and police system can be found in appendix II.

### 3. Contested understandings of childhood, values and a child's role in the family

#### *Understandings of Childhood*

While Indonesia adopted the Convention of the Rights of a Child, the legal age to marry contradicts its understanding of childhood. Girls can be married at 16 and boys at 19 years old (Hermanto and Yusa 2018, 62). Although parents need to give their consent for this marriage until the boy and girl both reached the age of 21, when married, the person is considered to be an adult (Blackburn and Bessel 1997, 110). These understandings affect the meaning of a child. In contrast, the age of sexual consent is 15 for both girls and boys. "Some violations of the human rights of children in Indonesia were more or less related to the unclear limitation of the age of children" (Hermanto and Yusa 2018, 61). For example, it is illegal for a man to have sex with a girl under 15, regardless of her consent (Gunthorp 2017). However, there are exceptions, for instance, sex under 15 will not be considered to be an offence when the minor is married to the adult. Secondly, if the adult is not aware of the minor's age and the adult does not assume the minor is under 15, sex is not seen as an offense either. These ambiguous understandings result a grey area on what is considered a crime of sexual exploitation and what not.

Furthermore, another aspect that affects the understanding of a child is focused on cultural understandings. The Balinese understanding of reaching adulthood is linked to the teeth filling ceremony (Fischer and Andarawati 1998, 41). This ceremony is performed when a girl gets her first menstruation and when a boy's voice changes. The Balinese meaning of a child might vary and is not necessarily linked to age. These various understandings question the concept of a child within CST in Bali. When a minor of 16 years old is caught up in sexual exploitation, the case might not be treated as a CST-case, but as a case of adult prostitution or adult sexual abuse. These meanings also influence whether the minor is protected by the child protection laws which is accompanied by the risk of a child sex offender to take advantage of Balinese legal frameworks (Chemin and Mbiekop 2015).

#### *Shift of Norms and Values Among Youth*

Another aspect that creates an environment for the persistence of CST is a recent transformation of lifestyle among millennials. A shift in norms and values among the Balinese youth about working in the sex industry affected the way of thinking in which teenagers "choose" to work in prostitution in order to earn money and buy new clothes and gadgets. Sofian (2014) argues that there is an association to be made regarding the involvement in prostitution and the desire for luxury items. Sofian's research (2014, 154) shows that children are negatively impacted by television programs in which a child is exposed to consumerism and luxury lifestyles. Children from poor areas in Indonesia try to follow what they saw on television. The complexity lies in how the environment of the child is receiving the actions. If the environment considers it to be okay, deviant practices of the Balinese society will be tolerated by certain youth groups and provide the foundation to create an ambiguous space for CST.

#### *Luruh Duit*

Children in Bali are highly respected, because of the Balinese belief that infants are reincarnated ancestors (Grigorenko 2015, 112). Child abuse (whether it is sexually, physically or emotionally) is seen as an immoral practice. However, migrant families, Balinese families, trafficked children as well as street children might deviate from these cultural norms and values when dealing with poverty issues (Chung 2009). The presence of people from various ethnic backgrounds highlights the complexity in Bali. For example, children are taking on the role of family care takers. These rolls might result in pressuring children to support the family financially (Chung 2009, 87). In addition, patriarchal views contribute to valuing boys over girls. For example, the Indonesian harmful practice "Luruh duit" sees girls as family assets in which they are responsible for the

economic situation of the household (ECPAT 2016, 28). The pressure on these girls affects the risk to make sacrifices by ending up as sex workers, (Nurdin Saleh 2005). These girls are being treated as negotiation items which can be sold or traded (Chung 2009, 87). Although, this practice is not directly associated with Bali, when girls are being trafficked from (West) Java to Bali for the purpose of CST, Luruh duit becomes also in issue in Bali.

#### **4. The Use of Technology**

*The rise of technology* serves as a supportive tool for the communication between the actors involved. The anonymity of actors plays a large role in using technology for finding child sex, recruiting children and conducting CST-payments. Child sex tourists might use social platforms to find child victims. The internet became a cheap and easy tool to collect information on CST (Mekinc and Mušič 2020). In addition, WhatsApp or BlackBerry Messenger are used to communicate between perpetrators and children and/or the third party (Suwarnatha 2016, 70). Such a communication tool can be used between taxi drivers and the children who work as freelancers (ECPAT 2016), but also by offenders to manipulate the children. The offenders could use these phones to build a trust relationship with the children and manipulate and trick them into CST.

The second argument is focused on the non-traceable payment methods within the CST-facilitation process, such as paying for child sex through crypto payment platforms. Crypto markets are online market platforms that, among others, encompasses a large majority of criminal activities for the sale of illegal services and goods (Murray 2019, 23), such as the CST. The benefit of using crypto currency is that this type of payment is anonymous, untraceable and beneficial for bypassing exchange rates between international currencies (Murray 2019, 25).

Another aspect regarding this issue is focused on ATM's in Bali. Balinese ATM's provide pathways to wire money without having a bank account, which makes it harder to trace payments. This type of "smart cards" is valued in illegal practices, because this card functions as a cash payment method that is not linked to a personal bank account (The Bali Process 2018, 28). Money can be topped up without being registered to a bank. After topping up, the person can go to the ATM to withdraw the money.

#### **5. Unrestricted mobility**

The last association focuses on CST and unrestricted mobility. Global power differences are shown in the lack of international attention to combat CST. The importance of a travel ban is grounded in the prevention from reoffending abroad (Koning 2017). This legislation protects children from sexually abuse by a previously convicted perpetrator. Crossing borders is relatively easy for registered child sex offenders. The shocking news is that Australia is the first and only country which implemented this travel ban so far (Koning 2017). Travel warnings are a more common combat tactic worldwide. These warnings contain identifying markers in passports of registered child sex offenders in which the receiving country, like Indonesia, has the power to refuse the entrance (Lee 2017). Unfortunately, travel warnings might be not that effective as thought (Lee 2017). The high pressure on the Balinese immigration service resulted in the risk that offenders slip through the system and affect the safety of children in Bali.

In addition, vocational students (*Praktek Kerja Lapangan*) from other Indonesian islands present an increased risk to CST when participating in tourism internships in Bali. Enabling elements focus on a shortage of economic needs, the lack of supervision, not on the radar of combat initiatives yet, the change of lifestyle and lying about their age. These students do not have (parental or school) supervision, because most of these students come from East Java (Gandhi 2020). Javanese vocational students mostly interned as (street) vendors in Bali. Almost all

internships are unpaid which results in the need of money to survive (Gandhi 2020). A number of cases have been associated with the link between street vendor internships and the involvement in the sex industry (Ari 2020). Having contact with foreign costumers accompanied with the lack of money, institutional and parental supervision increase a student's vulnerability to CST.

## **INTERPLAY**

The persistence of CST is portrayed in the interplay between the enabling environment, the actors and their strategies. Based on this interplay, the complexity of CST is grounded in a combination of different factors in the ambiguous space which are constructed by social means. Even though the general morality of the Balinese society may have large impact on human's behavior, individuals may choose not to follow the code of conduct in the society (Rutten and Boekema 2007, 1841). This indicates that the ambiguous space has its own norms and values that guide actions. With the consequence that the political authority of the State is challenged by the social authority of the CST-actors. CST-actors act on a set of (informal) rules that is valued in the ambiguous space (Jack and Anderson 2002, 471). These rules shape the actions that support the facilitation of CST. What are these rules? How do CST-actors justify their actions? The next section will elaborate on these questions by analyzing potential risk locations for CST.

## **2.2 Potential Risk Locations**

Based on the previous analysis of the enabling environment, actors and their strategies, four CST-risk locations have been identified: Private homes, (child) brothels, spa massage parlors and orphanages.

### **FOUR IDENTIFIED RISK LOCATIONS**

#### **1. Private Homes**

CST in private homes or hotel rooms is protected by the hidden character of this particular space. The abuse occurs behind a closed door that complicates spotting the signs. The persistence of this ambiguous space is focused on various control mechanisms, such as grooming and the neutralization techniques by paying money or giving presents that result in the justification of the perpetrator's actions. The child is treated as inferior due to the unequal positioning of the child sex offenders in relation to the victim and its environment. The child did not oppose, or the offender adheres to the argument that the behavior was not intended to be hurtful. Additionally, having a foreign friend might stimulate the feeling of being special. Lastly, the fear of family shame, being treated as family asset and/or the fear of losing the sponsorship might also impact the persistence of CST on private territory in Bali.

#### **2. Child Brothels**

Although child brothels are identified as a CST-risk location, less attention has been paid to how these places operate. Emerging patterns show that children are often brought to costumers on request instead of operating within the brothel itself. The ambiguous space of child brothels persists through recruitment tactics and control mechanisms. Debt bondage and a mix between affection and emotional, physical and sexual deprivation are used to control the children. Other control measures, in the form of drugs and alcohol, might also be enforced. This section showed that the ambiguity of CST is presented by the interplay between the illegal and licit understandings in which the environment (families, the neighborhood or hotel staff) might be aware of the brothel existence, but financial benefits play a role within the don't ask – don't tell policy. The prosecution of intermediaries presents another ambiguity. Due to corruption, the lack

of understanding the laws, a lack of evidence or a mix of these factors, intermediaries have a low risk to be arrested and prosecuted. When a brothel is shut down, there is a risk that the brothel will be reopened in other areas by the same group of intermediaries. This encourages the persistence of CST.

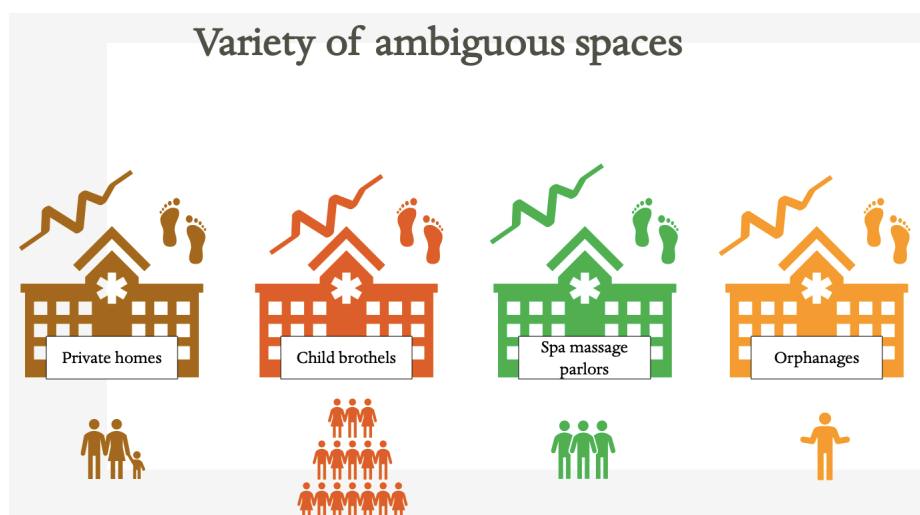
### 3. Spa Massage Parlors

The existence of spa massage therapy in Bali was originally intended as a tourist support facility and legal business. Nevertheless, a spa plus might have greater financial benefits compared to the usual spas. The children might know or might not know beforehand about the sex services. The latter often consists out of false job promises and the trafficking syndicate. The ambiguity of this location is presented in the relation between physical contact and sex, covert prostitution under the guise of a legal business and the prestige of working in Bali's tourism industry. Besides the security and debt bondage, the control mechanisms are strengthened by corruption in which people in powerful positions contribute to hiding the location. Moreover, the neighborhood might know about the location, but due to this powerful protection, this knowledge might not be shared. Lastly, the appearance of the sex parlor looks like a real spa and this might support the hidden identity and create a risk for tourists to run accidentally into a sex parlor.

### 4. Orphanages

The structure of orphanages as a marketing tool for the owners to become rich, is broadly discussed in the literature and in the news. However, less attention has been paid to what extent the enabling environment of orphanages might contribute to the CST-practices. The ambiguity of CST in orphanages does not only present the interplay of the illegal and licit understandings, but the ambiguity is also presented in the hidden identity of this space. Perpetrators act as benefactors by volunteering under the guise of helping children, while the lack of supervision and monitoring provide opportunity to invisibly abuse the children. This mechanism is controlled by threats and these threats affect fear among the children to be thrown out of the orphanage, a place that foresees these children into their daily needs. Another particular aspect concerning CST are non-registered orphanages in Bali. This type of orphanages originates organically but are not recognized as child serviced institutions with the consequence that Dinas Sosial is not allowed to check the circumstances of the child's environment in the orphanage.

## COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES



When zooming in on the four CST-risk locations, the analysis shows that these spaces might operate differently while presenting common aspects which result in a differentiation within the

issue of CST. These aspects are important to address, because it might imply that a common combat tactic for all four spaces might not work to the same extent. Studies only identified these places as risk-locations under the notion of CST instead of treating these CST-locations as separate entities.

Child sex tourists in orphanages and private homes might use both a technique of the “helper”, but offenders in private homes use neutralization techniques, while child sex tourists in orphanages take on a role of the benefactor. In contrast to child brothels and spa massage parlors which include various intentions of child sex tourists, both intentionally and unintentionally. Offenders of private homes and orphanages act often alone while CST in child brothels and spa massage parlors are facilitated by intermediaries.

Strategies to access child sex differ within the various ambiguous spaces. Offenders in private homes make use of grooming tactics. In contrast to offenders in orphanages, who use the legal umbrella to access child sex while orphanage owners benefit from the offender’s donations. Intermediaries of child brothels and spa massage parlors might use child trafficking syndicates and debt-bondage to control CST-practices. In addition, for both the spa massage parlors and child brothels, research shows that children might also “choose” for prostitution.

In addition to the different set of actors and strategies, there are different aspects affecting the enabling structures. For CST within orphanages this is focused on the lack of supervision and monitoring. The lack might be due to the difference between registered and unregistered foundations. Also, some orphanages are used as a marketing tool and lose the best intentions for children out of sight. Private homes present other aspects, such as the power of private territory and a family’s prestige of having a foreign friend. While child brothels put the emphasis on the enabling context of reopening brothels by other members after being shut down. Lastly, spa massage parlors highlight that working in Bali’s tourism industry presents prestige and that is an attractive factor for girls to engage in the sector.

On the other hand, these spaces have two themes in common: the hidden identity of the space and the lack of evidence. First, the characteristic of disguise is clearly presented in how a spa plus operates. This location is hidden under the guise of a real spa. Orphanages also illustrate that the ambiguous space exists under the legal umbrella, just like a spa massage parlor. The difference is presented in that orphanages aim to support children. In addition, CST in private homes hide behind a closed door of the perpetrator’s private territory. Based on the research findings, engaging in child brothels present a higher risk for child sex offenders to be arrested. However, due to an emerging pattern that involves bringing the children to the customer, influenced the brothel’s structure which makes it harder to track down the operations. This affected the hidden identity. Secondly, the lack of evidence as a consequence of the hidden characteristics, corruption and a don’t ask – don’t tell policy also influence the persistence of these ambiguous spaces.

Final remark, power structures and inequality are important elements for the persistence of CST. Various control mechanisms are in place to control the child’s (restrained) movements and actions. Firstly, the use of “love and affection” is described within all four locations as a control mechanism. This is accompanied with emotional, physical and/or sexual deprivation of the child sex tourists and/or pimps in order to control the child’s involvement in CST. Secondly, inequality is also visible in the relationship between child and adult in which the child is inferior to the adult. The analysis of the various ambiguous spaces show that this unequal relationship is based on different strategies. For example, child sex tourists of private homes act as heroes of the Third World while intermediaries of child brothels and spa massage parlors use threats and debt bondage to isolate the child from its environment. Unequal positioning within CST in

orphanages is portrayed by the child's fear of losing basic needs when being thrown out if he or she would report the abuse. The control mechanisms restrict and controls a child's movements and behavior in order to silence the sexual abuse and to persists the sexual intercourses with adults. The complexity of the unequal position might also be accompanied with the child's feeling to support the family financially and the feeling of shame.

## CHAPTER 3

### Conclusion

This study aimed to create understanding about the persistence of CST in Bali by focusing on an alternative approach of the ambiguous space. The ambiguous space exists of an interplay between the enabling environment, CST-actors and their strategies. The set of enabling aspects allows the actors to maneuver in the ambiguous space. In turn, these findings provided insights on the dialectal relationship between the enabling environment and the actors' strategies. The identified associations of this study focus on poverty, institutional plurality and bribing, contested understandings of childhood, values and the child's role within the family, the use of technology and unrestricted mobility regarding the lack of travel bans and the risk of participating in tourism internships in Bali.

In conclusion, the persistence of CST is constructed by social means which invented possibilities to act on a set of informal rules in the ambiguous space that is valued by CST-actors. The set of rules shapes actions, such as CST-related practices. These set of rules result in the ambiguity in which an illegalized practice can be tolerated and justified by its actors. The legitimacy of CST, also understood as the social authority of the ambiguous space, can be explained through neutralization techniques, viewing children as inferior or as family assets, contested understanding of childhood, the prestige of having a foreign friend as well as having a job in the tourism industry and adhering to a more luxury lifestyle that is valued by Balinese teenagers. By putting the emphasis on how and why CST is kept in its persistence, this study identified four potential risk locations for CST, namely private homes, (child) brothels, spa massage parlors and orphanages. The analysis of these locations showed that CST is differentiated which demands for treating various forms and locations of CST as distinct entities. Various tactics are needed to combat the complexity underlying the persistence and risk locations of CST.

Final remark, we need to keep in mind that every action produces an outcome and has the potential to change existing structures of the ambiguous spaces. While conducting field research in Bali, I have experienced how nonprofit organizations, local governments, private companies and researchers are working very hard to combat child sexual exploitation. Nevertheless, this study acknowledges that CST in Bali needs global support and awareness. Every country needs to take responsibility for its own citizens in order to protect children worldwide from child sexual exploitation. Implementing travel bans against already convicted child sex offenders is necessary to break the circle of CST.

## CHAPTER 4

### Recommendations

The outcomes of this research provide a foundation for recommendations for (global) policies, nonprofit organizations, private sector companies and future research. A recommendation that applies to all initiatives focuses on acknowledging that CST is more differentiated than acknowledged in current initiatives. Combat initiatives could take this study as starting point in order to develop combat projects and policies that address the persistence of the four CST-locations (private homes, child brothels, spa massage parlors and orphanages) as distinct entities in Bali.

#### 4.1 Policy Recommendations

- I. I advocate for *travel bans against registered child sex offenders* in every country. All countries need to take responsibility in order to protect children worldwide. The global lack of awareness resulted in turning a blind eye to the problem.
- II. The Balinese police work hard to combat corruption and CST. Nevertheless, budgeting remains an issue. *More resources for law enforcement* should be made available. These resources focus on education, investigation equipment and the enlargement of human resources.
- III. More attention should be paid to *monitoring migration flows and developing stronger policies on border control* to fight child sex trafficking and CST.
- IV. Bali does not have a *hotline* to report CST-related practices. It is important to establish a general (free) hotline in order to gain trust for reporting CST-occurrences.
- V. Corruption remains an issue in CST. Governments should *fight corruption* through improved coordination by monitoring actions and enforcing stricter consequences for corruptive actions.
- VI. *Clear and better policies on starting child-related organizations* are needed. It is relatively easy to start a non-registered orphanage. The non-registration results in the lack of supervision and child protection. New policies should address these types of organizations.

#### 4.2 Recommendations for Non-Profit Organizations

- I. Combat initiatives are challenged by their organizational structure which complicates tackling the problem. Therefore, it is important that these organizations form *coalitions and partnerships* to combat this issue.
- II. Not only shared databases could be beneficial, but also *share practice models* that have been proven beneficial and effective. Others can learn from these developments.
- III. Besides projects focusing on prevention, intervention, rehabilitation and lobbying, *educational programs and trainings regarding the development of skills* might support sustainable solutions. Having a skill increases the chance of finding a job and prevents relapse.
- IV. More *rehabilitation facilities* are needed. There is a lack of rehabilitation programs and trauma healing projects. Furthermore, there is no specific boy-care. The risk of ending up in an orphanage instead of a rehabilitation center is high.
- V. *Update awareness programs and projects with new information* for communities and schools, such as including the risks of taking internships.
- VI. It is important to develop appropriate combat tactics for the different forms of CST, such as private villa's or orphanages, in order to address the root causes underlying the persistence of that particular location.

### 4.3 Recommendations for Private Sector Companies

- I. *Tourism companies need to take more responsibility.* The sourcing tourism industry lacks in child protection. Staff need to be educated on CST-signs. Moreover, a manual regarding how to act in suspicious CST-situations need to be provided to the staff.
- II. Foreign employees on *business trips* and other travelers need to be informed about the consequences of engaging in CST and also recognizing the signs of CST.
- III. Flight companies and boat companies could *invest time and resources in developing campaigns* to increase awareness on the issue of CST. Initiatives are already focusing on the airport of Denpasar, but it could also be helpful to include the harbors in such campaigns.
- IV. *The online (social) platforms* are a major tool for finding children and pay anonymously for the child sex services. ICT-companies and big social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, need to create more awareness on this matter.

### 4.4 Implications for Future Research

- I. Due to research scope, the *agency of individuals* regarding intermediaries and children has not been addressed in this study. Future research could focus on their motives and experiences while considering the (negative) consequences that are accompanied with actively involving children in the research. The risk of (re)traumatizing is high. Children's wellbeing should always come first when researching such sensitive topics. Moreover, when zooming in on the experiences of intermediaries, it is crucial to keep in mind that it is dangerous. In my experience, researching CST directly and on your own is not safe.
- II. This study focused on four CST-locations. There are undoubtedly more. In order to *present a more holistic picture*, emerging CST-locations need to be studied. CST is embedded in a changing field to protect its nature. This hidden identity demands for new research that keeps up with changes and addresses emerging patterns quickly. This study could serve as a foundation to identify new emerging patterns and locations in Bali.
- III. *Researchers should collaborate with combat initiatives.* Combat initiatives might benefit from the research findings by developing and implementing appropriate measures and vice versa. For example, these appropriate measures could focus on informing teenagers and their family from other Indonesian islands about the risks of taking internships in Bali's tourism industry. If researchers have access to databases of nonprofit organizations, studies could focus on the interpretation of the raw data. The collaboration between researchers and combat initiatives could be beneficial when focusing on closing the gap of data and statistics.
- IV. This study lacks in giving an in-depth understanding on patriarchal structures underlying the persistence of CST in Bali. Future research could focus on the *association between gender and CST in Bali*. For example, researching the number of girls and boys who have been exploited within the four identified locations in Bali. The ECPAT research (2011) showed that there is a higher number of girls than boys who are exploited in brothels. This is however based on a study in 2011. New research is needed to identify recent developments regarding the risks for boys and girls to be caught up in specific locations of CST. These findings might result in more effective combat projects when prevention campaigns and rehabilitation programs target the right groups of children.
- V. Finally, I conducted research in the offline world of CST. CST presents a whole other character in the online world. Especially in times of crisis, such as COVID-19, online sexual exploitation of children becomes more of an issue. *The online form of CST* is also closely tied with the offline form of CST. It might be beneficial for future research to find the ties and mechanisms in order to disrupt the patterns.

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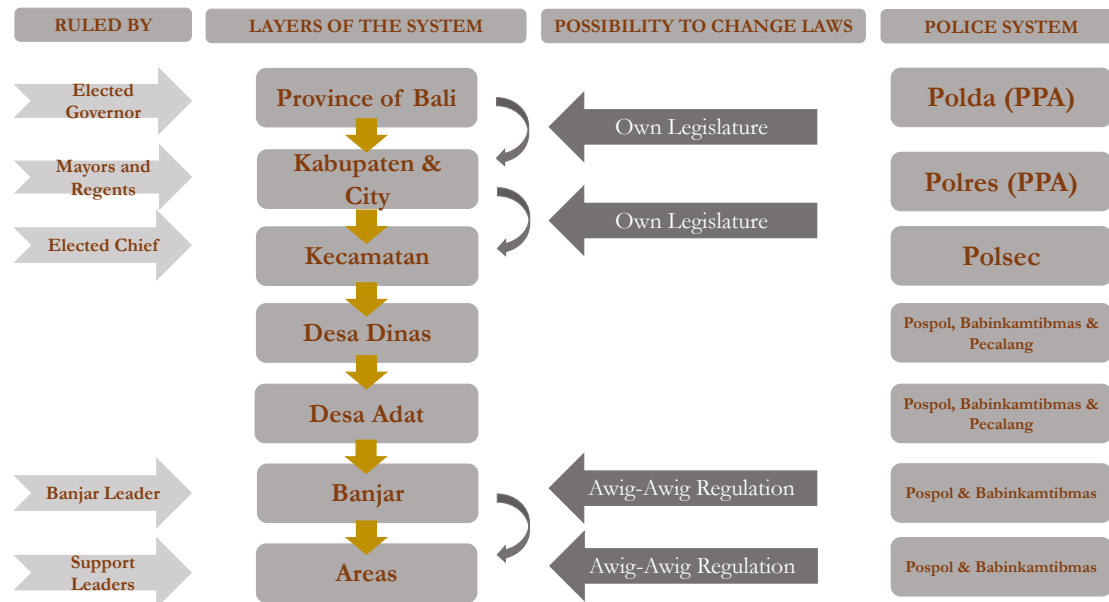
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# APPENDIX I

## BALINESE REGULATION SYSTEM AND POLICE SYSTEM

Figure 2: Overview of the Balinese regulation system and police system



Indonesia has 34 provinces with their own regional regulation system for each province (Kagami 2005, 57). The province of Bali has its own legislature and elected governor. This is subdivided in eight regencies (*Kabupaten*) and one city which are ruled by regents and mayors who also have their own legislations (Kagami 2005, 66). These regencies and the city consist of six sub-districts named *Kecamatan* (Pedersen 2007, 200). These sub-districts are divided in administrative villages (*Desa dinas*) with their own elected chief (Kagami 2005, 57). Under these administrative villages are traditional villages (*Desa adat*) which are then in turn divided into smaller community groups and neighborhood groups called the *Banjar* (Wardana and Darmanto 2017). Lastly, the *Banjar* is subdivided into areas with their own leaders who are supportive leaders to the *Banjar* leader.

Every level in the Balinese regulation system has its own police department. *Polda* is the police department at the province level (Baker 2015, 311). *Polres* is the police lead in the regencies and the city. Furthermore, *Polsec* is active in the sub-districts which are supervised by district police chiefs. The *Pospol* (police-posts) and the *Babinkamtibmas* (community relations officers) are present in the administrative and traditional villages and in the *Banjar* and areas. Lastly, there is the *Pecalang*. The *Pecalang* is the traditional security unit who is present in the *Desa*'s, the administrative and traditional villages (Pramana 2012). The *Pecalang* are the eyes and ears of the village who fulfill both a governmental role and a public role. The public role focuses on the interests of the indigenous communities to protect local costumes from the tourism influences.

In addition to the laws and policies of the provincial, sub-districts and city level, a traditional regulation, the *Awig-Awig*, is recognized as a Balinese traditional law instrument in the *Banjar* and areas (Yusa and Dharmawan 2018). These traditional regulations are focused on small crimes such as stealing or fighting, but also used as a tool to fight corruption by organizing public trials in front of the community (Yusa and Dharmawan 2018). Nevertheless, the larger criminal acts and foreign criminal acts are handled by the police, such as CST-cases.

# APPENDIX II

## CHALLENGES OF COMBAT INITIATIVES

The decentralized system in Indonesia has impact on how nonprofit organizations (NGO's) operate together with global and local (government) institutions and law enforcements. Many NGO's faced challenges dealing with the legislative framework (Tzvetkova 2002). For example, an NGO in Bali rescued a girl from a brothel and the trafficker got arrested by the police. Within a couple hours the trafficker was released due to a lack of evidence. However, the lack of prosecution cannot all be blamed to the police, institutions and the law system. This research also identified potential loopholes regarding the collaboration between NGO's.

I must make clear that I do not doubt the noble intentions and motivations behind the NGO-performances. These organizations do amazing, dangerous and inspiring work. Nevertheless, based on my research findings, these entities can improve their strategies in order to increase their impact. The lack of sharing information result in disunity. The document elaborates on the main obstacles faced by NGO's and how this challenged their combat tactics and objectives.

### The Importance of Collaboration

What came forward regularly in the conversations about effective combat tactics is the sentence "It is all about connections". Why are connections so important? An investigator stressed the urgency of stimulating NGO-ties and draws the comparison with criminal networks.

The police have changed and have done their things. Now, it is time to put the finger to the NGO's instead of the police. Criminal networks work better than that NGO's do.

This opinion is shared by an NGO-member who combats child trafficking.

We can do more as a networked group than any of us can do on our own. The traffickers are well-networked, and we need to be just as clever and well-networked.

The association between the lack of connections and the enabling environment of CST is illustrated by the concern of a researcher on child protection:

I had a couple of suspicions on child sexual abuse potential cases while conducting research on child protection. However, I do not have the resources and the connections to share this information with.

Not knowing who to trust or where to report is a common struggle among my respondents. However, the lack of sharing information about potential cases resulted in not reporting the matter at all.

To stimulate partnerships, MOU's (Memorandum of understanding) are very important. MOU's are used as a type of formal agreement between stakeholder parties when legally enforceable agreements cannot be created. A MOU is highly valuable in order to make arrestments or rescue CST-children. Curley (2014) showed in her research on Cambodia the benefits of a MOU. Sharing intelligence between the Cambodian police, the Australian Federal Police (AFP) and NGO's are crucial in order to conduct surveillance and collect evidence to proceed cases. Communication and partnerships have been addressed as valuable aspects in the rescue of children.

Based on the research findings, MOU's are of common value in Bali. An investigator and a criminologist argue the importance of this formal agreement:

When you have that recognition, you can do things and they can take you seriously. We are not allowed to make arrestments, only the law enforcements are. It is necessary to establish a good relationship with them through a MOU.

We turn over our casefile to them (the police) and then they will make the arrests if and when it fits. We can't do anything (...) make sure that it gets in the right police organization's hands who are involved with the women and children's unit I would say.

However, MOU's are also highly vulnerable, because an NGO does not have the legal authority to make arrests. Thus, if there is a friction between an NGO and an institution this might put the MOU at risk. NGO's are afraid that if somebody from another NGO is not respecting the local authorities that this friction might jeopardize the existing MOU.

Besides the collaboration between NGO's, institutions and law enforcement, ties between NGO's themselves are highly valuable as well when it comes to combatting CST. An example of the value of these NGO-partnerships becomes visible when talking to a data analyst working on disrupting child trafficking patterns. "Those NGO-partnerships are so crucial, because they are the ones who know exactly what to look for, what all the signs and trigger points are". The value of this type of collaboration lies in the interplay between the eyes and ears on the ground, the offline world, and the ones in the sky, the online world.

A predominant message in the research was that small grassroots organizations are keener to partner and to act in the local space than large initiatives.

The red tape surrounding operating large international NGO's means that big organizations can never operate in Indonesia. It will always and only be small grassroots organizations leading the way (...). Trying to make huge organizations work in Indonesia has proven time and again to be a waste of resources.

This argument of an NGO-member on child trafficking is also reflected in the story of a large international NGO who worked for several years in Indonesia. Targets were determined in advance and the NGO received funding based on those statistics. Once in the field, this target was unrealistic, and the funding did not cover local perpetrators. The investigation teams were only allowed to arrest foreign child sex offenders. After three years the project ran out of budget and got withdrawn. However, the organization left ongoing investigations behind and therefore, some of the ex-employees declared this project as unsuccessful.

However, other thoughts on large international NGO's are being mentioned as well. There is a large NGO that works worldwide on the protection of children against commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). When talking to this organization, they explained that they worked with small local combat initiatives who foresee them from information on a particular area. The power of this method is aligned with the formation of coalitions with various stakeholder organizations.

The biggest one (regarding effective initiatives), I believe, is coalitions of small grassroots organizations connected to local law enforcements and government.

This is once again, tied to the value of MOU's and sharing information. Good communication is linked to the importance of connections. Probably the most common statements made are focused on sharing data between the initiatives. "We need to share data and resources, advocate and lobby together, and identify and address needs as a community", mentioned by an NGO-member for child trafficking. This is supported by a data analyst "We believe that the data sharing piece is so powerful. That gives you the ability to kind of pivot what you are doing. This opinion is also shared by an investigator: "We need to share in order to combat this issue". Nevertheless, these shared opinions are challenged by the implementation of these ideologies. Why do NGO's advocate for collaboration while also showing reluctant signs to engage in partnerships?

### **Conflicting Messages and Difficulties Underlying Collaborations**

The value of collaboration and shared databases have been clearly expressed among my respondents but have not been accomplished yet. The lack of partnerships might be due to the dangerous character of CST and/or the lack of trust.

Especially in times of crisis, such as combat operations in which the child needs to be rescued, there is a critical need to share information (Phillips et.al 2002, 87). However, one of the consequences underlying the lack of trust between parties resulted in *not sharing information*. The fear of losing their own cases will affect their statistics and (indirect) impact their funding. Besides the lack of trust and the fear of losing sponsorships, (death) threats are also currently active and put stains on the existing initiatives. "We need to focus on the supply market. This is not being done a lot, because NGO's think this is too dangerous", explained an investigator.

Due to disagreements, threats, the lack of trust and the fear of losing cases and sponsorships affect to what extent information is exchanged. This is a problem. The lack definitely has impact on the persistence of CST. Cases might be resolved in an earlier stage when everybody can bring in their piece of the puzzle. Other aspects, such as the structure of NGO's and donations, small and large originations and short- and long-term initiatives have its influence on the enabling environment for CST as well.

### **The NGO-Structure and Donations**

In order to be able to implement projects, NGO's are mostly donor funded. These organizations are dependent on the source of funding. As studied in the research of Shivji on NGO's in Africa (2006, 39), donations might strew the NGO's outlook to the donor agendas. However, even if NGO's have a greater autonomy, the extent of their movement, projects and operations might be limited due to the boundaries of the donations. Much attention is paid to fundraising and developing social media campaigns for even more fundraising. Concerns have been expressed by an investigator and a data analyst regarding the importance of donations while fundraising campaigns are also highly time consuming.

Can you imagine what we can achieve if everybody is in their right roles? There are better qualified people to do that (fundraising) and then we work to the best of our own ability.

I think that is a big part of the problem. Especially in Bali that they have, you know, the actual coordination piece. Generally, people who run NGO's are not businesspeople, right?

The challenge that NGO's face is from a structural and organizational perspective that limits using resources to their fullest extent. The NGO-workers have different backgrounds, but not many have the experience in the financial world or as marketer. The various roles needed in an

NGO, demands for NGO-members to multi-task even if it is not their field of knowledge. As mentioned by an investigator, this might put stains on the effectiveness of the worker's ability. For example, if an investigator needs to pay half of his or her time to fundraising campaigns, this task will shorten the time that is available for conducting ongoing investigations. Therefore, investigations might take at least twice as long and this influence the persistence of CST. Perpetrators might have already left the country during that time.

*Sustainable initiatives versus short-time solutions in relation to donations*

Another concern underlying the donation driven organizations ties to the arguments on the lack of sharing information, namely the fear of losing sponsorships. To satisfy the sponsors, NGO's need to make rapid progress in order to maintain (or receive more) funding. The pressure to achieve objectives in a short period of time results in the mentality of 'act now and think later' (Shivji 2006, 42). Such a mentality might produce less sustainable initiatives.

NGO-projects can have both short-term and long-term objectives on the agenda (Nelson 2000, 486). Immediate interventions are crucial for CST-rescues on the one hand. On the other hand, long-term objectives are important to build resilience into communities, institutions and law enforcement and are, therefore, more sustainable. However, NGO's struggle with a balance between short-term and long-term objectives. This matter is illustrated by an investigator:

The existing models are not long-term solutions, but they are short term solutions. The overall problem with these kinds of issues is that the initiatives are mainly reactive. At the moment these issues are being resolved by catching the bad guys and releasing the children and put them in rehabilitation. Then releasing statistics in order to get more funding. And that goes in circles by catching more bad guys etcetera. But does that solve the problem? No, because it is not sustainable. We are running behind the facts instead of being ahead of it.

This citation ties to the pressure on finding quick ways to solving the problem. The question remains if that is really effective. Concerns on effectiveness have also been expressed by an NGO-member who combats child sexual exploitation in Java:

I hope that this interview will start a synergy of national and international movements, so it will be different than the previous decade where all NGO's together with their donor agencies are competing to quickly solve the problems as if they were the people who know how to solve the problems (...) this hampers the development of community groups on child protection.

This argument is tied to how the existing initiatives are partly established in Western values (Panko and George 2012, 75) in which the NGO-member stresses that international NGO's present projects and programs based on their "best knowledge". I stress that it is important to include local interpretations and cultural understandings in order to move away from the Western interpretation of CST-combat initiatives and engage with local forms that might be a more effective fit.

*The importance of sharing successes in relation to donations*

The fear that an organization runs out of funding when not showing enough progress is accompanied by the urge to share successes and achievements on a large scale in (social) media and in NGO-reports. Issues as 'who claimed what achievement?' and 'why is that so important?' overshadowed conversations. These conflicts might affect their credibility due to (false) accusations.

Sharing successes and accomplishments largely in the news might also send mixed messages to child sex offenders and intermediaries.

When publishing the work on social media, it might serve as a warning towards perpetrators. How smart is it actually to mention who got arrested? On the other side, I get that it is important for an organization to show their successes, because what are you without them? It is very difficult.

This statement shows the double-edged sword the NGO's are dealing with. The researcher on child protection stresses that when these messages reach the news, it also shows that child sexual exploitation is possible in Bali while it might also scare the perpetrators. These outgoing news messages might have effect on where issues may be rapidly concealed or brought underground.

### Conclusion

Although the importance of collaboration between NGO's has been addressed as a crucial aspect to combat CST, the challenge remains in the implementation of this idea. This evaluation report illustrated that conflicting objectives underlying each NGO are not the factor that influences the lack of collaboration between these organizations. Rather the lack of sharing information due to issues of trust and the fear of losing sponsorships might result in the lack of collaboration. Another obstacle underlying the lack of collaboration is focused on the dangerous field in which CST is embedded. NGO's might fear for their own safety and are sometimes scared and intimidated by (death) threats. These struggles contribute to slowing down investigations and the rescue of children. Therefore, the structure of the combat initiatives might also play a role in the persistence of CST by not operating to their fullest ability. The risk underlying the lack of collaboration is that children and perpetrators might go off the radar when an NGO does not meet the resources to combat the case on its own. Collaboration between all initiatives, and paying attention to data sharing in particular, is key to address these difficulties.

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