# Measuring deterrence for CSEC in Maharashtra – Phase II

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# India remains the world's epicenter for commercial sexual exploitation of children, with the COVID pandemic only amplifying the challenge

## India remains a global epicentre for Commercial Sexual Exploitation…

**6.3M** **people** are in situations of **forced commercial sexual exploitation globally** at any point in time, while this includes 1.7 Million children, a quarter of the total[1]

**70k-3M** victims of sex trafficking in India; while **exact number is hard to gauge** because of concealed nature of the crime and lack of official data, reports suggest **significantly high prevalence**[2]

**40%** of **sex trafficking victims in India** are estimated to be **children**[3]

## …and the COVID-19 pandemic has led to several changes that could impact the CSEC landscape

**Growth in technology:** Covid-19 has led to a dramatic surge in the use of digital technologies, accelerating several avenues and channels for CSEC[4]

**Impact on children:** 1.5 billion children and young people were affected by school closures worldwide due to pandemic, which has led to a dramatic rise in children moving online, making them more vulnerable to online predators[5]

**Economic impacts:** Economic crises created by the COVID-19 pandemic have likely increased financial hardships for families, greater vulnerabilities for children and higher instances of exploitation or coercion into child labor and even child prostitution[6]

1. ILO 2021: Global estimates of modern slavery, forced labour and forced marriage, 2. Scroll Child trafficking: Lack of data is hindering the work of Indian agencies and NGOs, 3. IJM India: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Mumbai, 4. Impact of digital surge during Covid-19 pandemic: A viewpoint on research and practice, 5. UNICEF: Children at increased risk of harm online during global COVID-19 pandemic, 6. Children on the brink: Risks for child protection, sexual abuse, and related mental health problems in the COVID-19 pandemic

# In 2019, Dalberg and GFEMS worked together to develop a framework to measure deterrence and track it among CSEC stakeholders in Maharashtra

**Objective**

**GFEMS and Dalberg worked together to create a replicable framework to study deterrence and generate evidence on the levels of deterrence in Maharashtra in 2019.** The study was one of the first attempts to comprehensively define criminal deterrence and to measure it within the CSEC space, with potential applicability to other sectors and global contexts in the future.

**Key outcomes**

(i) **Created a definition and framework for understanding deterrence** in the context of CSEC, drawing upon existing deterrence literature and interviews with experts

(ii) Developed a **set of tools that can be used to identify what activities and interventions** can most effectively lead to increased trafficker and customer deterrence

(iii) Developed and implemented the **first research study on deterrence** using Maharashtra as a case study

(iv) Compiled lessons learned, with the intent to **inform future studies on measuring criminal deterrence** and develop targeted interventions to fight CSEC

**Research specifics**

**Location**
**7 locations** - Mumbai, Thane Rural, Thane City, Palghar and Navi Mumbai, Nagpur and Pune

**Sample**
**1678 respondents, including qualitative interviews** with – traffickers, potential customers, existing customers, general population, law enforcement officers and judiciary

**Timeline**
25th March, 2019 – 23rd May, 2019

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# Now, second phase of the study is a snapshot to assess the current state of deterrence for CSEC in Maharashtra and develop targeted solutions

In 2019, GFEMS and Dalberg worked on a study to develop a framework to measure and track deterrence among CSEC stakeholders in Maharashtra, with an aim to inform GFEMS' interventions in India that that can sustainably reduce the prevalence of CSEC. Recognizing that Covid-19 has significantly changed the landscape of CSEC in terms of vulnerability as well as types and channels of exploitation, the second phase of the study aims to assess the current state of deterrence, speaking to the learnings from the pre-pandemic assessment.

## There are several reasons why a second phase of the study would help strengthen our understanding of the CSEC landscape

**Assess the current state of deterrence for CSEC in Maharashtra**, and build a snapshot that speaks to the pre-pandemic assessment, **rather than being an evaluative comparison**

**Understand the changes in the CSEC landscape** caused by COVID, including any new or evolving trends such as shifts to private and online spaces, changes in usage of technology, etc.

**Develop an early understanding of deterrence in the context of OSEC**, that is likely to have grown due to technology induced changes over the time period

# Through this study, we aim to answer 5 critical questions in the context of deterrence for CSEC, including any changes to the landscape since 2019

The study is looking at similar overarching questions as the first phase of the study, with an added focus on understanding the changes to the CSEC landscape and conditions for deterrence since 2019

**1** *(Framing question)*

What is criminal deterrence in the context of CSEC?

**2** *(Research questions)*

How has the demand for CSEC changed in since 2019?

**3** To what extent do we see the relevant and necessary external conditions in place to serve as the basis for deterrence in the existing and evolving CSEC landscape?

**4** To what extent are criminals and potential criminals aware of these external conditions? What are their perceptions and attitudes related to these conditions?

**5** To what extent have these external conditions deterred criminals and potential criminals from CSEC? What evidence is available?

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# 'Deterrence' is defined as an outcome where the crime is prevented because the potential offender perceives the costs to exceed perceived benefits

*"Deterrence is when a crime, in this case commercial sexual exploitation of children, is **prevented** because an **offender or potential offender** perceives the **costs of committing the crime to exceed the perceived benefits**."*

| | |
|---|---|
| *'Offenders and potential offenders' includes general population (general deterrence) and existing criminals (specific deterrence)* | **'Traffickers'** refers to persons who spot, recruit, transport, harbor, sell or buy any persons, including minors, (these traffickers being the focus in our study) by means of threat or use of force, to force them into the commercial sex industry |
| | **'Customers'** refers to persons who purchase sex in a public or private or online space, in cash or in kind, from persons engaged in commercial sex industry, including willing and unwilling participants, namely victims of CSE/ CSEC. Customers involved in CSEC, i.e. purchasing sex from minors are considered criminals under the Indian Penal Code[1] |
| *Focus on prevention* | The definition focuses on the *prevention* of the criminal activity, rather than other potential objectives of punishment (i.e., incapacitation, retribution, and rehabilitation) |
| *Account for both economic and social costs/benefits from the perspective of the criminal (traffickers and customers)* | **'Perceived costs'** refers to monetary and non-monetary costs of engaging in CSEC for both, traffickers and existing/potential customers, apprehension and sanction costs arising out of legal and social punishments (including fines, job loss, reduced social standing), and re-entry barriers (such as increased in the cost of engaging in the business) |
| | **'Perceived benefits'** refers to the revenue generated through the CSEC business (for traffickers), and other non-monetary benefits such as pleasure, pride, power/ authority experienced by engaging in CSEC (for existing/potential customers) |

Note: Both sale and the purchase associated with CSEC and OSEC are criminal acts that violate the human trafficking laws in India and the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Palermo Protocol). For the sake of clarity and readability in this report, the terms Customer and Trafficker are used to differentiate between the roles of the criminals involved in this trafficking offense.

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# Deterrence varies by the role of the criminal involved in the CSEC pathway

## Indicative pathway of CSEC at three points of sale

| Source communities | Spotters, procurers, transporters |

| Establishment owners (public and private) | Pimps, facilitators | Online platform hosts |

Customers
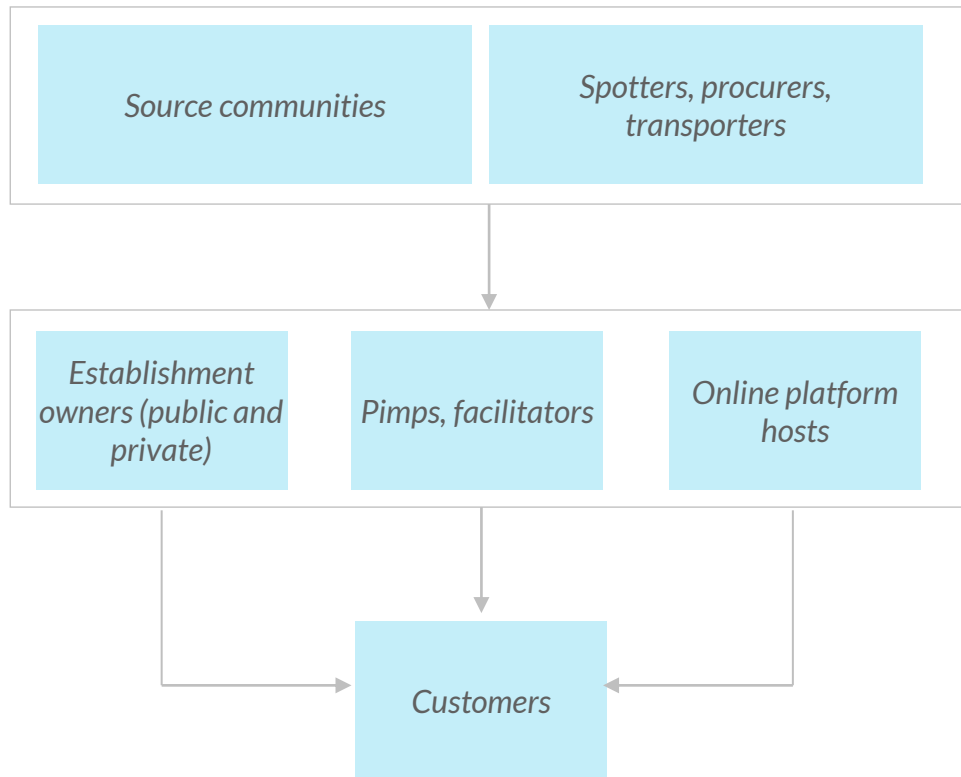
## What deterrence means for each criminal

- Spotters say no to trafficking minors for sex.
- Caregivers say no to selling minors to spotters.
- Transporters say no to transporting and selling minors to traffickers at the destination.

- Establishment owners/ hosts do not seek minors from spotter/ procurer.
- Establishment owners/ hosts say no to buying minors.
- Pimps do not offer minors for sex services.
- Online platforms ensure that accessing minors for sex/ facilitating sex with minors is not possible on their sites

- Customers do not seek minors to have paid sex.
- Customers say no to paid sex service with a minor.

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# As part of the 2019 study, we developed a framework that focuses on external conditions where criminals are not able to engage in CSEC with impunity

| EXTERNAL CONDITIONS | CURRENT OR POTENTIAL CRIMINAL PERCEPTIONS (OF CONDITIONS) | CRIMINAL DETERRENCE |
|---|---|---|
| **Economic**<br>• Low profitability of CSEC and high availability, accessibility to profitable alternative legal economic opportunities<br><br>**Legal**<br>• Stringent laws and policies<br>• Effective enforcement by police<br>• Effective judiciary<br><br>**Social**<br>• Low permissiveness of norms on CSEC<br>• High community policing<br><br>**Technological**<br>• Low availability, accessibility to online platforms for CSEC | • Increased awareness of the certainty, celerity, severity of CSEC punishment in general<br><br>• Improved perceptions of the risk of certainty, celerity, severity to the individual criminal<br><br>• Enhanced risk of being noticed<br><br>• Increased guilt/ shame related to CSEC<br><br>• Reduced ease of doing business<br><br>• Reduced individual criminal propensity and tolerance | **Traffickers**<br>• Existing traffickers stop engaging in CSEC<br>• Potential traffickers do not engage in CSEC<br><br>**Customers**<br>• Existing customers stop purchasing sex from minors<br>• Potential customers do not purchase sex from minors |

*External factors along with criminal perceptions of these factors determine deterrence. Increasing/ improving deterrence requires changes in criminal perceptions led by changes in key external conditions*

# These conditions influence the criminal's perception of the cost-benefit equation of engaging in CSEC, and ultimately determine levels of deterrence

**EXTERNAL CONDITIONS**

- Economic
- Legal
- Social
- Technological

*Increased arrest, charge-sheeting, conviction rates and the speed with which they happen* →

*Increased reporting of potential CSEC cases and community activated against impunity* →

*Reduced access to technology to operate the CSEC trade and purchase sex from minors* →

*Available and accessible attractive alternate legal opportunities* →

**CURRENT OR POTENTIAL CRIMINAL PERCEPTIONS**

- Increased awareness
- Improved perceptions
- Enhanced risk of being noticed
- Increased guilt/ shame
- Reduced ease of doing business
- Reduced individual criminal propensity and tolerance

*Increased perceived costs i.e., apprehension and sanction costs (which includes the cost of punishments, job loss, reduced social standing), and re-entry barriers (e.g. increase in cost of engaging in business)* →

*Reduced perceived benefits i.e., revenue, pleasure, pride, power/ authority* →

**CRIMINAL DETERRENCE**

- Existing traffickers stop engaging in CSEC
- Potential traffickers do not to engage in CSEC
- Existing buyers stop purchasing sex from minors
- Potential buyers do not purchase sex from minors

As external conditions necessary to deter CSEC are established over time…

…they drive key legal, societal, technological and economic barriers…

…that promote unfavorable perceptions among criminals and potential criminals…

…eventually leading them to perceive the costs of CSEC to be prohibitive relative to benefits…

…and deterring them from engaging in CSEC

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# We have modified research questions from 2019 to account for pandemic-induced additions to external conditions in the CSEC and OSEC deterrence landscape...

| Component of framework | Main question | What will we look for? | How will we look for it? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ECONOMIC CONDITIONS** | • What is the **change** in economic profitability of CSEC since 2019? | • Perceived profitability of CSEC and underlying drivers<br>• Perceived rate of re-victimization and potential gap between supply and demand | • In-depth qualitative interviews with ~10 traffickers and customers respectively<br>• Quantitative survey with ~300 potential customers |
| **LEGAL CONDITIONS** | • What is the existing extent and quality of the legal system, and its ability to combat CSEC in Maharashtra?<br><br>• **How have laws changed since 2019?** | • **Updates to laws and policies against CSEC since 2019**<br>• Awareness, access, attitudes and actions of law enforcement towards CSEC<br>• **Usage of tech in detection, prosecution and triaging criminals of CSEC** | • **Desk research to benchmark penal provisions that have changed in 2020-2022**<br>• Quantitative survey of 100 police officers and AHTU personnel<br>• In-depth qualitative interviews with ~5 prosecutors and judges and ~5 senior police officers/ AHTU personnel<br>• **Desk research on arrest, charge-sheeting, conviction and pendency rates in Maharashtra in 2020-2022** |
| **SOCIAL CONDITIONS** | • To what extent is the community **more/less** activated against impunity for CSEC criminals in Maharashtra? | • Awareness of CSEC and its legality<br>• Attitudes towards CSEC victims and criminals<br>• Inclination to police CSEC criminals | • Quantitative survey with 800 citizens to understand how society perceives CSEC |
| **TECHNOLOGICAL CONDITIONS** | • **How accessible is technology to find or pay for minor sex, or engage in acts of online minor sex in Maharashtra?** | • **Perceived ease of access to technology to find and pay for sex from minors**<br>• **Perceived ease of access to technology to engage in online sex acts with minors** | • In-depth qualitative interviews with ~10 traffickers and customers respectively<br>• Web analysis to analyse use of technology in marketing<br>• Web analysis to analyse demand patterns and volumes of online CSEC |

Note: Text in **'Green'** indicates the additions made to the research questions since 2019 (refer to annex).

# … and to explore how adoption of technology has changed criminal perceptions around CSEC and OSEC

| Component of framework | Main question | What will we look for? | How will we look for it? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **CURRENT OR POTENTIAL CRIMINALS' PERCEPTIONS** | • How do criminals and potential criminals perceive **changes in** costs and benefits of engaging in **CSEC and OSEC** and how closely do these perceptions reflect the pertaining external conditions in Maharashtra? | • Motivation for engaging with minors online and offline<br>• Awareness of penal provisions against CSEC **and OSEC**<br>• Perception of severity, certainty and celerity of legal and social punishments for CSEC **and OSEC** | • In-depth qualitative interviews with ~10 traffickers<br>• In-depth qualitative interviews with ~10 customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 300 potential customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 800 citizens to understand how individuals (both as community vigilantes and potential buyers) perceive CSEC **and OSEC** |
| **CRIMINAL DETERRENCE** | • To what extent do **newer** conditions and perceptions translate into behaviours related to CSEC **and OSEC** in Maharashtra? | • Actions/ behavior of law enforcement officials<br>• Actions/ behavior of criminals and potential criminals<br>• Actions/ behaviour of citizens | • In-depth qualitative interviews with ~10 traffickers<br>• In-depth qualitative interviews with ~10 customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 300 potential customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 800 citizens<br>• **Expert interviews (3-4) to understand changing behaviours related to CSEC and OSEC in Maharashtra** |

Note: Text in **'Green'** indicates the additions made to the research questions since 2019 (refer to annex).

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# As we designed additional hypotheses to test that have emerged in the last two years, we kept a few key principles in mind

### DESIGN TO MEASURE CHANGE OVER TIME

To make data from our study comparable, we aimed to survey the same areas and analogous populations, ask the same questions to record population-level changes, and where possible revisit the same secondary sources and experts

### ACCOUNT FOR CHANGES ACROSS EXTERNAL CONDITIONS

The pandemic brought about sudden shifts in economic, social, legal and technological conditions that affect deterrence; we have accounted for each condition as we test each hypothesis

### DRAW INFERENCES ON SHORT-TERM VS LONG-TERM CHANGES

We hope to differentiate between changes to external conditions and deterrence that are permanent shifts in the CSEC landscape and changes that we expect to revert to pre-pandemic norms

### ENSURE THE STUDY EXPLICITLY ACCOUNTS FOR OSEC

The pandemic created an increase in online forms of communication; the new study asked questions that explicitly address the use of mobile/internet-based technology for CSEC or Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC)

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# The study used a mixed-methods approach to leverage varied sources of information and triangulate insights

**Qualitative & quantitative surveys** *with customers, traffickers, law enforcement agencies and general population*

**Expert interviews** with CSEC and OSEC experts, on-ground NGOs, legal experts

**Secondary research to draw on existing CSEC data**

**Web-scraping to analyse demand via online ads for CSEC**

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# The study was conducted across 6 districts in Maharashtra, covering 1,260 respondents, along with 24 in-depth interviews and 6 expert conversations

## Mumbai (including Palghar and Thane), Pune and Nagpur were the main cities sampled



Nandurbar
Dhule
Jalgaon
Amaravati
Nagpur
Bhandara
Gondia
Buldhana
Akola
Nashik
Wardha
Palghar
Aurangabad
Washim
Chandrapur
Yavatmal
Thane[1]
Jalna
Hingoli
Mumbai
Ahmednagar
Gadchiroli
Pune
Parbhani
Raigad
Beed
Nanded
Latur
Satara
Osmanabad
Solapur
Ratnagiri
Sangli
Kolhapur
Sindhudurg

Districts sampled
Districts not sampled
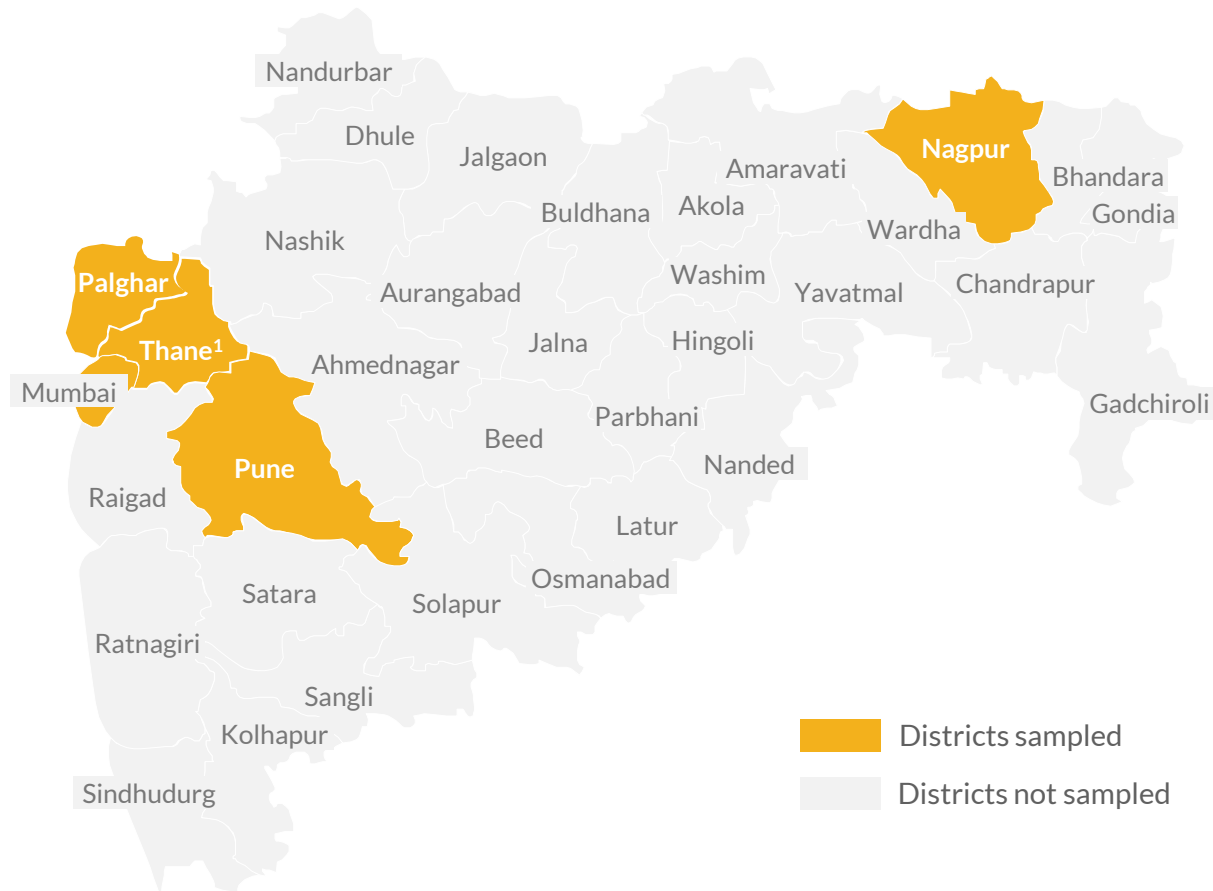
## Experts with varying areas of expertise were consulted to ensure robust insights

### Categories of experts consulted:

1. **On-ground NGOs**

2. **Child protection experts**

3. **CSEC researchers**

4. **Cyber security experts**

# We interviewed key respondent groups across the deterrence value-chain to develop a comprehensive and multi-dimensional view

| | Respondent type | Sample size | Sub-groups | Objective of the surveys/interviews |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Quantitative** | Law enforcement officers | 100 | Police officers (Inspector level and above) posted in the study cities | • To measure readiness and ability to tackle CSEC cases at an individual level<br>• To identify supporting systems that can lead to changes in external conditions at a systemic level |
| | General population | 800 | Adults between the ages of 18 to 60 years | • To understand attitudes towards CSEC<br>• To gauge the level of community vigilance towards CSEC traffickers/ customers |
| | Potential customers | 300 | Adult males between the ages of 18 to 60 years and in occupations where experts suggest the largest segments of customers come from in urban Maharashtra - migrant workers, taxi/auto/truck drivers, college students, businessmen, professionals | • To understand what motivates a niche cohort of respondents sampled based on the profile of customers suspected of purchasing sex from minors<br>• To gauge perceptions of severity, certainty and celerity of legal and social punishments |
| **Qualitative** | Traffickers | 10 | Adults who are brothel owners/ keepers, pimps | • To understand their motivations of engaging in trafficking of minors or purchasing of sex from minors<br>• To gauge perceptions of severity, certainty and celerity of legal and social punishments |
| | Existing customers | 10 | Adult males found in the red-light areas, observed entering/ exiting the brothels | |
| | Senior law enforcement and judiciary officers* | 5 | Senior officials from the police, AHTU, prosecutors and judges | • To gain a deeper understanding of the status-quo and challenges faced to combat CSEC at a systemic level |

Note: 1. We have ensured robust insights around law enforcement through a combination of in-depth qualitative interviews along with select expert interviews.2. Details on sampling, research methods and limitations are mentioned in the annexures, on slides 74-79, while details on ethical boundaries and consent are mentioned on slide 21, 3. We recognize that CSEC affects all genders. Although, in this study we have predominantly focused on girls to keep the questionnaire same for continuity and maintain comparability with 2019 study. 4. As far as possible, we have kept the methods same as 2019 to ensure comparability. In cases where it was not possible, we have called out changes separately in respective sections.

# In addition, we conducted a rapid web-scraping exercise to extract data from relevant ad websites and gauge trends and demand for services

**Apart from qualitative and quantitative surveys, we conducted a rapid web scraping exercise similar to 2019, with following changes in the methodology:**

| Steps | Current process | Difference from 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Shortlist websites | Leveraging data from two classified ad aggregators (Locanto and Skokka) to view trends on online solicitation | Individual supplier websites are not scrapped, unlike the previous study |
| Identify sections/ regions to focus on | • Within Skokka, we are looking at sections for "adult massages" and "call girls" across Maharashtra <br> • Within Locanto, we are looking at sections for "other personal services", "men seeking women" and "women seeking men" | For Locanto, section for "Escorts" is no longer available, including more regional ads tailored for one area / district (for example Pimpri in Pune) |
| Scrape data | We are collecting a couple of data points, including age (where advertised), location (GPS co-ordinates for those from Locanto) and content, city | Both Locanto and Skokka only contain data till the last 3 to 6 months. No historical data available for anymore |
| Classify ads as CSEC | Finally, we are using age and keywords to identify CSEC and those at potentially high risk <br> • CSEC: aged 19 years and younger, or includes the words –"school", "fresh", "virgin", "kid", "innocent", "adolescent", "children", "teen", "teenage", 'fresher', 'vergin', 'virginity', 'kids', 'child', 'teen', 'teena', 'young', 'yong', 'yung', 'yng' <br> • High risk: aged 20 years, or includes the words – "college", "collage", 'collega', 'colege', 'callege', 'student', 'students' | Following words are added to improve classification: <br> • CSEC: 'fresher', 'vergin', 'virginity', 'kids', 'child', 'teen', 'teena', 'young', 'yong', 'yung', 'yng' <br> • High risk: 'collega', 'colege', 'callege', 'student', 'students' |

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# Our study took certain measures to remain within ethical bounds

**Ethical considerations and risk mitigation**

1. **IRB certification ensured the study was within ethical and legal bounds.** The Convergent Institutional Review Board (IRB) has vetted the study design, tools, data collection techniques and plan for disseminating findings to ensure that the study does not harm the respondents in any way.

2. **Legal risks: We framed the questions such that respondents do not have to report any self-incriminating behavior**. We are interested in capturing the awareness, attitudes and actions of respondent groups, rather than capturing the behavior of specific individuals. To ensure that the study was ethically and legally sound, we designed our questionnaire and trained data collectors to only accumulate the stakeholder groups' awareness, attitudes and actions and not any individual's account and involvement. Thus, even though we interviewed pimps and brothel owners and refer to them as such in the report, we have not identified or verified their engagement in CSEC. Rather we spoke to respondents about their perceptions about the target group as a whole.

3. **Respondent privacy – We did not capture any personally identifiable information to protect the respondents' anonymity and increase the likelihood of truthful reporting**. We also sought either verbal or written consent through the research partners, who clearly explained the context of the study, highlighting that it is for research purposes, reiterated the fact that responses are anonymous, informed participants of their right to end the survey midway or skip questions, and  and ensured voluntary participation. In some instances, participants (specially brothel owners) were compensated a small amount for their time, given the difficulty in identifying participants and getting their consent to interview on such a sensitive topic.

4. **Researchers' safety – We designed safety protocols for all researchers to follow.** Researchers had to frequent red light areas which host criminals to gather data from traffickers, customers and potential customers. Safety therefore was of prime concern throughout the data collection period.

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# Executive summary

**India remains the world's epicentre for Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), and the fight to combat it has become significantly harder over the last few years.** Estimates suggest that 70k-3M[1] people in India are victims of sex trafficking, of which over 40%[2] are children. Maharashtra, in particular, is one of the largest hotspots for CSEC in the country, with over 29k sex workers in 2020, of which 27% were underage[3]. CSEC in India is also increasingly online-enabled and occurring in private spaces (while declining in brothels), making it more diffused, less visible and increasingly harder to combat. The pandemic has further worsened the situation across two dimensions – 1) increased financial hardships have created greater vulnerabilities among children and more instances of coercion into CSEC, and 2) the explosion of technology has accelerated the shift to private, decentralized and online spaces, that have made it even harder to track crimes.

**A ray of hope lies in the reduction of crimes in traditional spaces, however the overall situation remains grim, with private and online spaces posing challenges that are new, evolving and extremely difficult to solve.** In traditional spaces such as brothels, law enforcement has worked well and successfully deterred brothel owners and customers from committing crimes against children. However, instances of CSEC in private and online spaces are widespread and, on the rise, due to lower perceived risks for criminals and difficulties for law enforcement to identify and tackle crimes. Communities too, that could be champions of maintaining vigilance, are increasingly desensitized towards victims despite greater awareness of crimes, with limited accountability towards fighting such issues. This highlights worsening social sanctions that are a necessary lever in deterring CSEC.

**There have been several measures to deter such crimes with stringent policies in place, but the pace at which CSEC is evolving is much faster than the pace at which law enforcement is strengthening.** Enforcement in traditional spaces has worked well, and the police is adept at solving crimes once they have been identified. However, they fall short in terms of taking proactive measures to prevent crimes from happening in the first place and lack the appropriate tools and procedures to identify and investigate crimes in private and online spaces.

**To effectively deter crimes in the context of Maharashtra and across the country, it is critical to shift towards strategies that strengthen the fight against the evolving landscape of CSEC.** There is a need for a greater, and more intentional focus on prevention of crimes and on fighting technology-enabled CSEC, along with a continued push towards improving law enforcement. The broader ecosystem of CSEC players needs to come together and synergize its efforts, through collaboration among on-ground NGOs, local and national governments and police forces, technology players, community members, CSEC experts and other allies.

**A detailed summary of our findings from the study is provided in the subsequent slides.**

Scroll Child trafficking: Lack of data is hindering the work of Indian agencies and NGOs, 2. IJM India: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Mumbai, 3. . IST research: Estimating the prevalence of Child Sex Trafficking in Maharashtra, India.
Note: This slide includes synthesis of findings from this study, which we have further detailed out in subsequent sections

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# We found that deterrence of CSEC has worsened, with weakening external conditions and criminal perceptions, and growing demand in decentralized places

**Demand for CSEC has grown in private and online spaces**

**The demand for CSEC in traditional spaces like brothels has reduced due** to stricter law enforcement, however, there has been a **growth in private, decentralized locations as well as online spaces.** This has created greater access points to CSEC and **potentially multiplied demand**, a large chunk of which could remain unobservable given challenges in tracing such crimes.

| External conditions for CSEC have worsened | Perceptions of risk among criminals remain low | Deterrence has fallen |
|---|---|---|

**Economic conditions for deterrence have worsened;** the preference for and exploitation of minor girls has increased; higher price premiums for young girls mean that economic incentives for traffickers have increased

**Legal conditions have strengthened in some pockets but leave scope for improvement**; while strict law enforcement has reduced crimes in brothels, it has not kept pace with the rapid growth of private and online spaces where crimes are harder to track and trace

**Social conditions have significantly worsened**; while more people are aware of the illegality of the crimes, empathy for victims and community responsibility in fighting crimes have fallen drastically, suggesting greater desensitization

**Technology conditions have worsened,** as digital channels to access CSEC have grown in quantum and importance,  making it easier for criminals to engage anonymously and evade the laws

**Among traffickers**

Traffickers' perception of risk is driven by the threat and fear of legal ramifications, which they continue to see as limited; and perceive they technological, social and economic conditions to have made it easier for them to engage in CSEC

**Among potential customers**

Perceptions of risk have reduced, with a significant reduction in perceived risk of community and police repercussions (especially as crimes become anonymous and less visible  in private and online spaces)

**Across traffickers and potential customers**

Deterrence  is likely to have fallen in private and online spaces given greater anonymity. However, there is higher deterrence in traditional brothel spaces due to improvements in law enforcement

Note: This slide includes synthesis of findings from this study, while we have further detailed out in subsequent slides

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# Since 2019, most conditions except legal have significantly worsened, thus reducing deterrence for CSEC

⬆ *Increased deterrence*    ⬌ *Mixed impact on deterrence*    ⬇ *Reduced deterrence*

**Demand**
- ⬆ • 79% police respondents in 2022 indicated that **the number of brothels/places of exploitation for child prostitution have decreased** in the past 12 months, vs. 46% in 2019
- ⬇ • 40% increase in **average number of online solicitations** via ads posted by suppliers for paid sex services since 2019

**Economic conditions**
- ⬇ • 62% potential customers in 2022 indicated that **people have a greater preference for young girls** for paid sex given a choice, 14% in 2019
- ⬇ • 95% potential customer respondents in 2022, vs. 74% in 2019 said **people would be willing to pay 2 times & more to have sex with young girls**

**Legal conditions**
- ⬆ • 80% police respondents in 2022 vs. 54% in 2019 were **aware that a police officer can register a case of trafficking before rescue**
- ⬌ • 80% police respondents in 2022 vs. 74% in 2019 noted they had **received training on CSEC-related topics**; 67% received **training on OSEC** in 2022
- ⬌ • Though there is an improvement from 2019, police continue to face challenges in investigating CSEC cases. For instance, 1) lack of time to complete the case (36% in 2022, 61% in 2019) and 2) lack of resources like access to necessary technology to gather evidence (32% in 2022, 60% in 2019)

**Social conditions**
- ⬆ • 57% of general population respondents in 2022 **felt child prostitution is widespread or very widespread in their city,** 28% in 2019
- ⬇ • 73% general population respondents in 2022 **felt children engage in the commercial sex industry voluntarily vs.** 39% in 2019; and 65% in 2022 vs. 39% in 2019 **believe they cannot be rehabilitated and reintegrated in society**, even if they wanted to
- ⬇ • Across CSEC crimes, ~24% general population respondents said they would **report a CSEC crime** in 2022 vs. ~71% in 2019; sharpest change in Mumbai (7% in 2022 vs. 77% in 2019)

**Technological conditions**
- ⬇ • 43% potential customer respondents in 2022 vs. 26% in 2019 think people use technology to **communicate directly with girls**

**Criminal perceptions**
- ⬇ • 35% potential customer respondents in 2022 think **being caught by police is a risk** in purchasing sex with children vs. 62% in 2019
- ⬇ • 10% potential customers in 2022 think **being shamed by the local community** is a risk vs. 53% in 2019
- ⬇ • 35% potential customers **responded "no punishment"** when asked about the **punishment for purchasing sex with minors** in 2022 vs. 16% in 2019

Notes: 1. In legal conditions, while there is a mixed impact on deterrence, qualitative interviews and expert inputs suggest that there is significant room for improvement, especially while dealing with cases in private and online spaces.  2. Please refer to detailed slides for specific sources, methodologies and sample sizes for analysis conducted across sections.

**Dalberg**

# Based on the findings from this study, 3 key needs emerge as priority to fight CSEC, with a significant focus on prevention and fighting tech-enabled crime

**The evolving landscape of CSEC since 2019, especially in the context of the shift to private and online spaces, requires new strategies and a re-prioritization of efforts to successfully deter crimes. There is a need for a greater, and more intentional focus on prevention of crimes and on fighting technology-enabled CSEC, along with a continued push towards improving law enforcement.**

*Greater, more intentional focus than 2019*

## 1
### Prevention of CSEC in society

**As crimes are getting more hidden and pervasive, it is critical to strengthen proactive measures to prevent crimes from occurring in the first place.** Rebuilding empathy among caregivers; helping children and their immediate caregivers on understanding the signals of CSEC and the tools to combat it, and ensuring sensitization and vigilance among broader communities, even if not directly involved in CSEC work is the first port of prevention. Key interventions to rebuild empathy within community includes mass media campaigns, community awareness drives, and trainings for parents and children, on topics such as digital safety, identifying threats, and understanding reporting channels. Alongside, other measures, such as strengthening the polices' muscle towards better monitoring through CCTV coverage and face recognition, and improving visibility of crimes through media to raise the perceived cost of committing are also importance levers of prevention.

## 2
### Fighting tech-enabled CSEC

**The explosion of technology, further exacerbated by the pandemic, has created new channels for CSEC that are challenging to track, highlighting an urgency to develop comprehensive tools, processes and norms to fight tech-enabled CSEC.** Police forces, although strong at tackling traditional forms of CSEC, have not been able to keep pace with the evolving forms of technology that are used to perpetrate crimes and evade the law. This indicates the need to develop relevant technology tools for the police to actively identify, track and solve crimes. In parallel, regulatory bodies need to prioritize liaising with big-tech companies such as ad sites and social media platforms to tighten platform regulations, curtail CSEC on their platforms, and improve data sharing between platforms and law enforcement agencies.

*Continued focus to strengthen efforts*

## 3
### Improving law enforcement

**Law enforcement has improved since 2019, with greater success in tackling crimes in traditional brothel spaces, however there are opportunities for improvement, especially in the context of deterring newer forms of CSEC in private and online spaces.** While trainings have retained importance since 2019, dedicated trainings on OSEC and decentralized crimes have become critical, while also ensuring that they percolate down to level of the first responders, or 'thanas'*. With greater fragmentation of traffickers and customers, ensuring coordination between jurisdictions (across state and national borders) has also emerged as an important area of intervention. Finally, long-term efforts around setting up additional special courts, tightening laws around CSEC (such as making it a non-bailable offence, placing curbs on repeat offenders) must continue as ways of sustainably fighting CSEC in the long-run.

Note: * - Districts are divided into "thanas" , i.e., local police stations headed by an inspector/sub-inspector

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# CSEC is extremely prevalent in India, with Maharashtra being one of the largest hotspots for CSEC crimes in the country

Globally, **6.3 Million people are in situation of forced commercial sexual exploitation** on any given day, this includes **1.7 Million children**, which is about a quarter of the total. Nearly **4 out of every 5 persons** trapped in forced commercial sexual exploitation **are girls or women**.[1]

Maharashtra, the financial, commercial, and entertainment capital of India is **one of the largest hotspots** for CSEC in the country– serving as a source, destination and transit route for CSEC[4]

CSEC in India has reached alarming levels and continues to thrive. While **no definite estimate exists for CSEC,** secondary research suggests estimates of sex trafficking victims vary significantly from **70k to 3M**[2] in India of which **40%** are **children**[3]

In Maharashtra, roughly **30%** of adult sex workers enter **commercial sex industry** while underage. Estimates suggest that there were approx. **29k sex workers in state** in early 2020, and amongst this roughly **27%** were under the age of 18.[5]

1. ILO: Global estimates of modern slavery, forced labour and forced marriage, 2. Scroll Child trafficking: Lack of data is hindering the work of Indian agencies and NGOs, 3. IJM India: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Mumbai, 4. IJM: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in Mumbai, 5. IST research: Estimating the prevalence of Child Sex Trafficking in Maharashtra, India

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# The pandemic has created greater vulnerabilities and accelerated the adoption of technology, which has ripple effects on CSEC

## The pandemic has exacerbated some key social inequities...

- India is home to over **30% of almost 385 million children living in extreme poverty or adversity**.[1] COVID-19 has exacerbated some of the most pressing social problems and structural inequities, with a disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable youth[2]

- During the pandemic, **unemployment in India rose from 6.7% in mid-March to 26% on April** 19, 2020[3]. More than half of the nation's households reported a significant drop in income[4]

- Given these financial hardships, **primary caregivers who lost employment and families who suffered loss of income** and livelihoods may have pushed their children into child labour or exploitation as means of economic support[5]

- More than **90% of Indian schools were closed due to lockdowns in the pandemic**; children became increasingly dependent on the internet, and there was **a significant increase of screen time** for them[6]

## ... with a significant impact on children vulnerable to exploitation

- With these inequities, **the pandemic increased the vulnerability of already at-risk populations**, and the recession is expected to further increase the risk of trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation globally[7]

- **Increased stress, poverty and unemployment** faced by parents led to children taking up odd jobs, **potentially increasing vulnerability to trafficking** or being subjected to commercial sexual exploitation[5]

- Social and psychological vulnerabilities for children were exacerbated during the pandemic, placing them at **heightened risk of psychosocial problems**[5]

- **Spike in internet penetration across India from 21% in 2017 to 61% in 2021**[8], combined with the lockdown, has increased the risk of online trafficking of children during the pandemic[5]

Sources: 1. UNICEF, World Bank Group, Ending extreme poverty: A focus on children, 2. COVID-19 and Youth Who Have Experienced Commercial Sexual Exploitation: A Role for Child Mental Health Professionals During and in the Aftermath of a Pandemic 3. Vyas. M: The jobs bloodbath of 2020, 4. Mukherji B. Coronavirus Impact: Indian Industry Seeks Relief Measures to Aid Economy Livemint Published 2020, 5, Children on the brink: Risks for child protection, sexual abuse, and related mental health problems in the COVID-19 pandemic, 6. Economic times – Screen time up by 100% for children, 7. CHILD10 Global trends in Child trafficking and sexual exploitation of children, 8. Indian express article: 61% Indians use internet in 2021, up from just 21% in 2017

# Fewer brothels are involved in child prostitution, with experts noting an improvement in law enforcement…

## There is a decrease in the number of brothels[1] engaging in child prostitution over the last 12 months….

*Has the number of brothels/places of exploitation for child prostitution increased or decreased in the last 12 months in your city? (%, $N_{2022}$ = 101 and $N_{2019}$ = 116)[2]*

■ 2022  ■ 2019



| | Decreased | Increased | Remained the same | Don't know | Any other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 79% | 12% | 9% | | |
| 2019 | 46% | 24% | 8% | 19% | 2% |
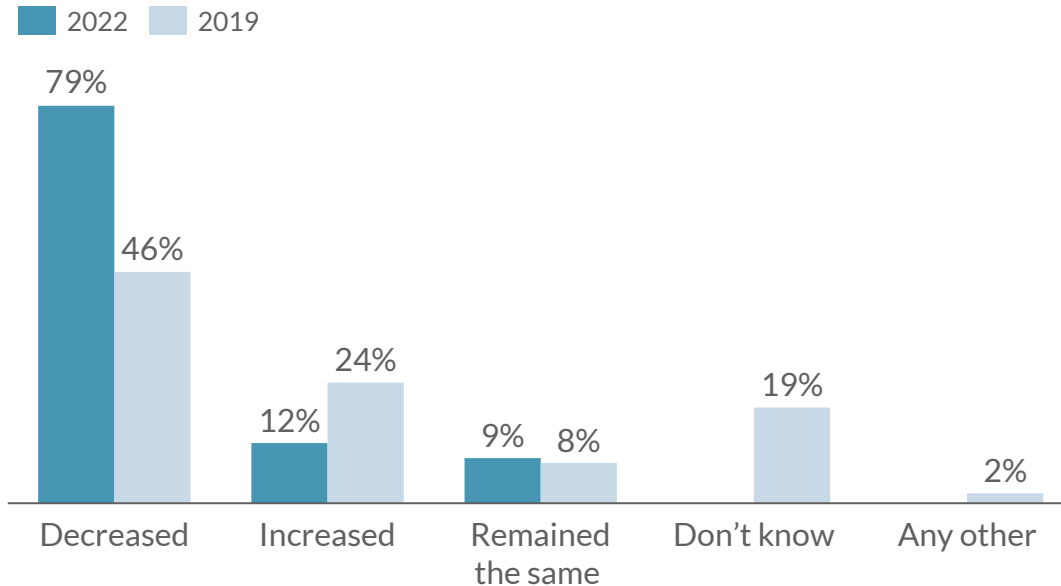
- Even though the number of children trafficked for sex in the red-light districts has dropped sharply, activity in underground private lodges and residences is increasing[3]

## …with experts crediting the improvement to better law enforcement

" **"Number and size of traditional brothels have decreased** as several of the original red-light areas were in prime locations that have now been bought by builders."

*-NGO Expert*

" "It is **highly unlikely to find minors in raids on brothels** because of high vigilance and stringent action taken by police against criminals involved in paid sex activities with minors."

*-Law enforcement official*

# ...however, there is greater penetration of CSEC into private spaces, providing more avenues for criminals to engage in exploitation that is harder to track

**CSEC activities has increasingly moved to private spaces, and the trend has further exacerbated due to the pandemic[1]**

*Where do you think people prefer to engage in paid sex with young girls?* (N$_{2022}$ = 309)[2]

| Location | Rank |
|---|---|
| Hotels/lodges | 1 |
| Brothels | 2 |
| Dance bars | 3 |
| Private properties like farmhouses | 4 |
| Massage parlours | 5 |
| Online, using mobile/ internet-based technologies | 6 |

- A considerable number of minors are engaged in commercial sexual exploitation through private networks, making it more challenging for social actors like law enforcement and NGOs to identify and locate vulnerable children[3]

"

"Almost **50% business have moved to private spaces** outside traditional brothels"

*- Interview with a trafficker*

"

"Paid sex activities with minors have drastically reduced in traditional brothels due to increased jurisdictions and strict actions taken by police. While more and more of these activities have spread out in private spaces like hotels/lodges etc.

*-Law enforcement official*

1. Expert interview with Child Protection Specialist 2. Potential customer survey, Dalberg 2022, 3. Comparison of 2022 data with 2019 data is not possible because of a variation in the type of question (multiple choice in 2019 vs ranking in 2022) asked in both surveys. 4. St. James Research Centre: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in India,

# Further, the boom in technology has created multiple access points for traffickers and customers through online ads and social media platforms...

## Online solicitation ads have increased by 40% as compared to 2019[1] levels

*Growth in estimated CSEC ads vs total ads[2]*

Legend: Others | High risk | CSEC

There is at least a **40% increase** in the average number of online solicitations compared to pre pandemic

Ø 2,794

Ø 3,776

2017 — 2018 — 2019 — 2022
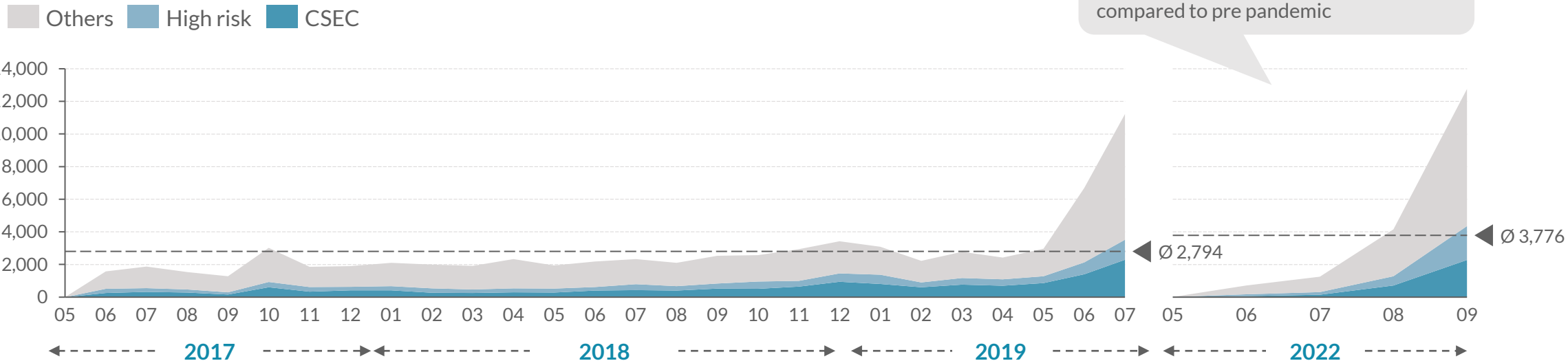
- Nearly 19,000 ads were scraped from two classified ad aggregators (Locanto and Skokka) between May to September 2022

- Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) accounts for nearly 50% of the online solicitations (on Locanto and Skokka), followed by Pune (37%) and Nagpur (15%)

Nature of child trafficking is changing due to the spike of online platforms, and this has led has been a significant rise in Child pornography, sex trafficking from neighboring countries, child sex exploitation in tourist hotspots through the internet (either websites or social media)[3]

1. 2017 to 2019 data on online solicitations has been referenced from phase 1 study on deterrence in Maharashtra 2. Web scraping analysis, Dalberg, 3. St. James Research Centre: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in India

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# ...while the supply has increasingly become more decentralized and hyperlocal as compared to 2019

### Volume distribution of online ads found in MMR has become more decentralized...



Volume distribution of online ads in MMR has diversified from 3-4 hotspots (such as Andheri) identified in 2019
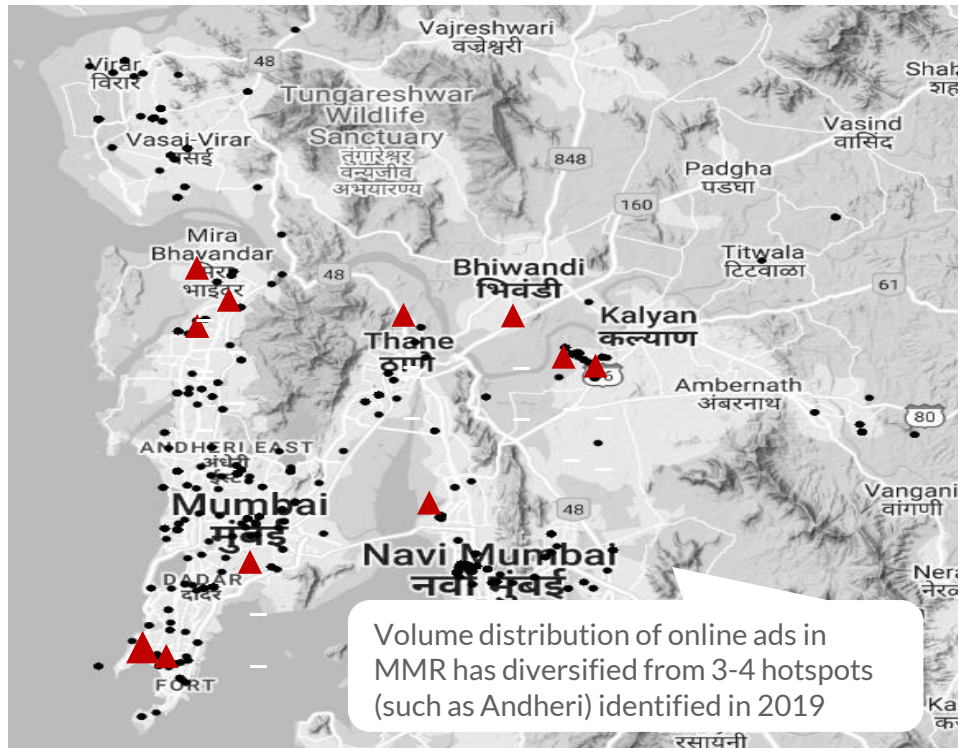
▲ Red light area

### ....whereas supply distribution of ads by location has become hyperlocal since 2019, especially Nagpur

*Supplier distribution as per number of cities they post ads in [2] (% of location sample size[2])[1]*

■ 1 out of 3 cities  ■ 2 out of 3 cities  ■ 3 out of 3 cities

**2022**

| | Mumbai | Pune | Nagpur |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 out of 3 cities | 86% | 82% | 79% |
| 2 out of 3 cities | 12% | 14% | 15% |
| 3 out of 3 cities | 3% | 3% | 5% |

**2019**

| | Mumbai | Pune | Nagpur |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 out of 3 cities | 82% | 71% | 47% |
| 2 out of 3 cities | 12% | 22% | 34% |
| 3 out of 3 cities | 6% | 8% | 19% |
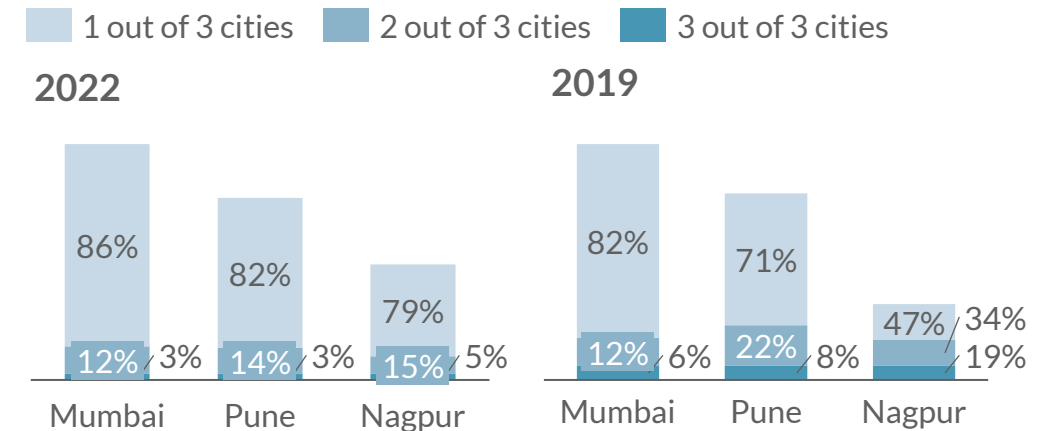
- As per the 2019 study, suppliers post ads in multiple cities to provide paid sex services to their customers

- However, the 2022 analysis shows that suppliers are increasingly becoming hyper-local, posting ads in just 1 city. For e.g., in 2019, 30% of ads in Pune and 50% of ads in Nagpur were from suppliers targeting multiple cities. Post May 2022, it has reduced to 17% and 20% respectively

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# Economic conditions for deterrence are worsening, with growth in exploitation of minor girls

**Access to minors for paid sex services has become slightly easier as compared to 2019, increasing the risk for higher exploitation**

*How easy/difficult do you think it is for people to find young girls for paid sex services across various cities ? (% of location sample size[2] who responded easy or very easy)[1]*

■ 2022   ■ 2019

> Significant drop in ease in Nagpur as compared to other locations

| | Pune | Thane | Mumbai | Nagpur | Palghar |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 82% | 44% | 51% | 1% | 33% |
| 2019 | 57% | 37% | 19% | 56% | 21% |

" "Increase in poverty and loss of livelihood have impacted minors across the country during pandemic and made them more vulnerable to CSEC"

*- Child protection expert*

" "COVID has increased economic hardships, which has increased chances of revictimization of young girls in CSEC activities "

*- CSEC research expert*

- Potential customers surveyed believe that overall ease of access to paid sex services across locations has slightly increased from 37% in 2019[2] to 42% in 2022

# Preference for child sex services is high, and even if customers do not have a preference, they usually do not refuse services if offered

## Preference for young girls has increased tremendously since 2019[2], indicating a risk of higher exploitation of young girls…

*Customers usually have a preference for the type of girls they want to engage in paid sex with. Given a choice who do you think people would prefer to have sex with ? (%, $N_{2022}$ = 309 and $N_{2019}$ = 322)[1]*

■ 2022   ■ 2019

> Preference for young girls was reported high (>62%) amongst respondents surveyed across locations, except Thane (37%) as per 2022 potential customer survey

| | |
|---|---|
| **Young girls** | 62% / 14% |
| **Matured woman** | 14% / 41% |
| **Age doesn't matter** | 20% / 20% |
| **Don't know** | 4% / 25% |
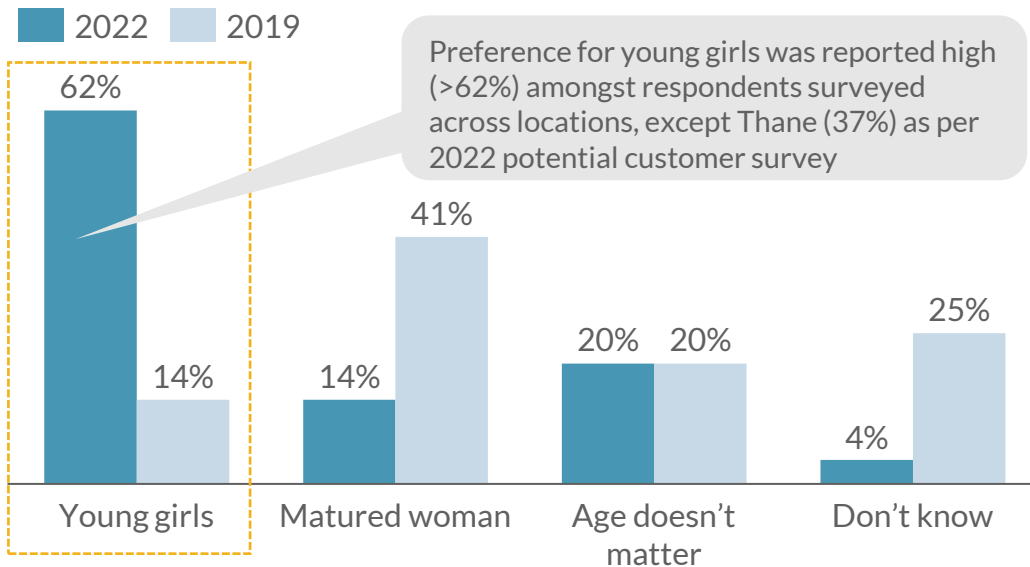
- Potential customers surveyed within age bracket of 18 to 45 years show significantly higher (>65%) preference for young girls, as compared to respondents above the age of 45 years (34%)

## …even if customers don't prefer minors, they usually do not refuse if a trafficker offers a minor

*In your opinion, if someone was offered a young girl for paid sex and they found out that she is under 18 years of age before having sex, how likely/unlikely is it that they would: Ask the pimp for someone older (%, $N_{2022}$ = 309 and $N_{2019}$ = 322)[1]*

■ Unlikely   ■ Likely   ■ Neither likely or unlikely   ■ Don't know   ■ NA

**2022**
- 3%
- 30%
- 34%
- 33%
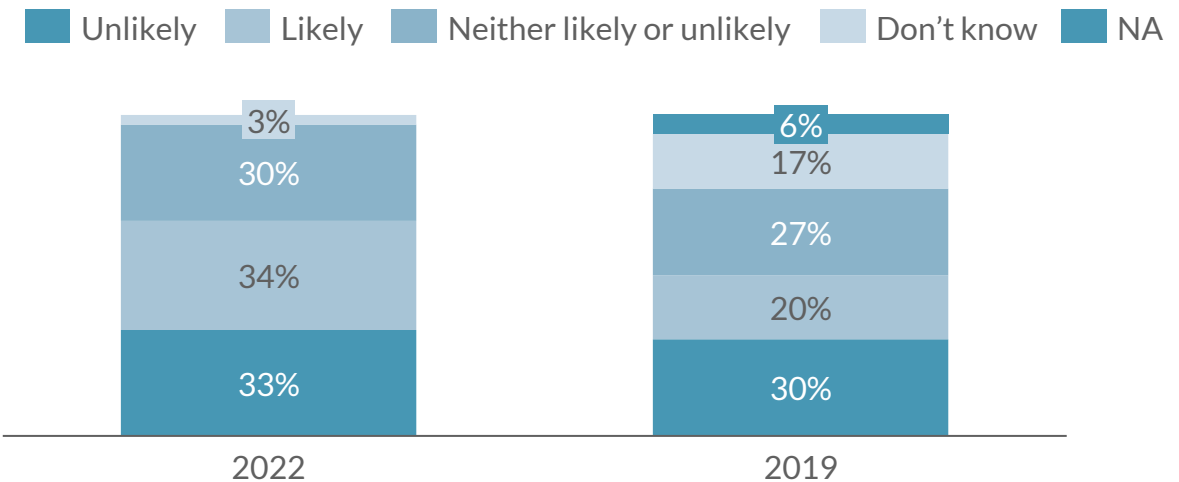
**2019**
- 6%
- 17%
- 27%
- 20%
- 30%

- Potential customers surveyed within the bracket of 31 to 45 years are more unlikely (55% in 2022 vs 32% in 2019) to ask a pimp/broker for someone older if offered a young girl, as compared to respondents from other age groups

1. Potential customers survey, Dalberg, 2. Remaining responses are 'Don't know' (5% and 32%) for 2022 and 2019 respectively
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 potential customer survey using occupation-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data (refer to annex)

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# There are greater price premiums for child sex services, with strong incentives for traffickers to engage young girls

## Willingness to pay a higher amount for young girls as compared to adult women is increasing...

*How much more would people be willing to pay to have paid sex with a young girls compared to a matured women? They would be willing to pay __ the price for having sex with young girl, compared to a matured women(%, $N_{2022}$ = 309 and $N_{2019}$ = 322)[1,2]*

Legend: ■ 2022  □ 2019

| Category | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| 2 times & more | 95% | 74% |
| 3 times & more | 56% | 41% |
| 4 times & more | 29% | 25% |
| 5 times & more | 11% | 15% |

- Willingness to pay a premium for young girls has increased from 2019 across locations, except Nagpur[1], however willingness to pay exorbitantly high premiums has declined

- Willingness to pay a price premium of 3 times & more has increased significantly (41% in 2019 to 56% in 2022) for potential customers surveyed within age bracket of 18 to 45 years, as compared to respondents above 45 years (39%)[1]

- Greater willingness to pay for minors is driven by a desire to have sex with girls who are prettier (88%), quieter (51%) virgins (38%), and less experienced in sex (31%)[1]
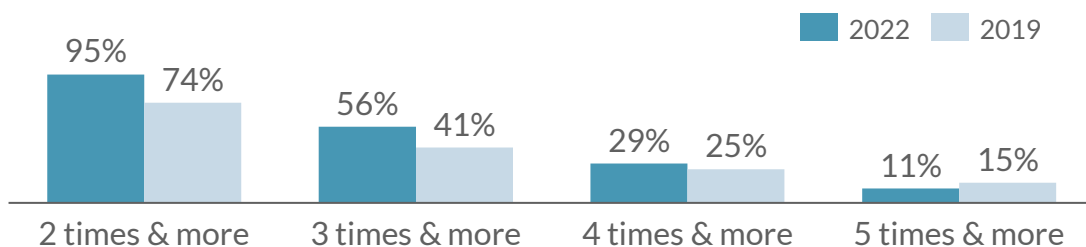
## ...and traffickers see strong incentives to engage young girls in prostitution, worsening economic deterrence

*If there are young girls in this business, why do you think that is? (Qualitative interview with brothel owner/pimps,$N_{2022}$ = 10)[3]*

| Reasons | Average Rank |
|---|---|
| They are demanded by the customers | 1 |
| They have a higher buying and selling price | 2 |
| They are easier to control | 3 |
| They can stay in business for a greater number of years | 4 |

Comparison with 2019 study indicates similar rankings on reasons for brothel owners/ pimps to engage in child prostitution with young girls, as 2022

- Almost all brothel owners/pimps agreed that they see strong economic incentives in engaging young girls in prostitution

" *"Commission received for paid sex with a young girl is much higher than an older woman, because of difference in rate cards"*

*- Interview with broker, Pune*

1. Potential customers survey, Dalberg 2022, 2. There were 3.2 % Don't know responses in 2022 against 19.5% in 2019, 3. Qualitative interview with Brothel owners/pimps, Dalberg 2022
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 potential customer survey using occupation-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data (refer to annex)

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2. Framework and approach

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   A. *Demand and supply of CSEC*

   B. *Economic conditions*

   C. **Legal conditions**

   D. *Social conditions*

   E. *Technological conditions*

   F. *Perceptions and criminal deterrence*

   G. *Recommendations*

6. Annexure

**Dalberg**

# There has been no change in laws on deterrence for CSEC from 2019, with laws remaining largely equipped to fight private and online trends in CSEC

## No significant change in laws and policies since 2019; CSEC is covered under ITPA, POCSO, and IPC[1,7]

Under ITPA, IPC and POCSO, **individuals involved in buying, selling, and soliciting sexual favors from minors are considered guilty;** victims themselves cannot be penalized if they have been trafficked

- **Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act, 1956**
  To combat trafficking for commercial sexual purposes. It protects women and children from forceful engagement in the commercial sex industry and prohibits running a brothel or living off the earnings of those engaged in the commercial sex industry. It also has provisions for providing rehabilitation and protection to survivors. It contains the legal procedure for conducting a raid in, or rescue form, a brothel.

- **Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POSCO), 2012**
  The Act addresses sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children under 18 and is gender-neutral. It defines different forms of sexual abuse, including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, sexual harassment, and pornography. It provides for child-friendly procedures, such as special courts which conduct the trial on-camera without revealing the identity of the child. They may have a parent or other trusted person present at the time of testifying and can call for assistance from an interpreter or special educator. It also provides for mandatory reporting of sexual offenses.

- **Indian Penal Code, Section 370**
  It criminalizes and penalizes the trafficking of human beings. The definition of human trafficking is similar to the Palermo Protocol here. It criminalizes recruiting, transporting, harboring and transferring persons by using threats, using force, or any form of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, or abuse of power or inducement for exploitation (sexual, labor, slavery, servitude, forced removal of organs). When a public servant or police officer is involved in trafficking, they will be punished with life imprisonment. The consent of the survivor is immaterial to the crime.

## Laws are largely equipped to deal with the changing CSEC landscape[2], and cover aspects in private and online spaces

- "**Brothel**" in the legal framework is defined as **any place where sexual exploitation may occur**, including private and public establishments
- **Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)** requires mandated reporting by internet service providers; the POCSO act prohibits using children for pornographic purposes and storage of CSAM; the **Information Technology (IT) Act, 2000** also provides punishment for publishing, browsing or transmitting child pornography.[3]

" The **current laws are 80-85% sufficient in addressing CSEC** but the implementation of these laws remains a challenge. The law needs to account for CSEC as organized crime.

*- Lawyer who works on CSEC*

### A new bill awaits discussion in parliament that further strengthens laws around trafficking and CSEC

The government is drafting a Trafficking in Persons (Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation) Bill, 2021[7] which is yet to be discussed in Parliament[4]:

- The new bill includes transgender people within the scope of 'victims', and covers offenses with cross-border implications, among other changes.[5]

- However, the bill does not provide relief measures beyond shelter homes.[6]

1. Free A Girl, Road to Justice, 2018. 2. Dalberg Analyses, 2019. 3.Press Information Bureau, Government of India, MWCD, "Digital Exploitation of Children", 2019. 4. Trafficking in Persons Report 2022; 5. The Leaflet, "India's comprehensive Anti-Trafficking Bill to get push from survivor groups", 2022; 6. Indian Express, "Human trafficking survivors identify gaps in draft Bill, seek community-based rehab", 2021; 7. ITPA, POCSO, IPC are central laws and Trafficking in Persons bill in discussion encompasses entire India and not just Maharashtra.

# Surprisingly, despite higher awareness of laws, perception of prevalence of CSEC remains low, particularly in brothel areas

## Police awareness of the nuances of most legal provisions has increased since 2019

*Based on your understanding, select whether the following statements are true or false or I'm not sure (% who responded true, $N_{2022}=101$ and $N_{2019}=116$)[1,2]*



| | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|

- **A police officer can register a case of trafficking before rescue**: 80% (2022), 54% (2019)
- **Arrest or rescue is possible without an FIR**: 74% (2022), 60% (2019)
- **In trafficking for prostitution brothel manager / madam is not the main accused**: 63% (2022), 68% (2019)
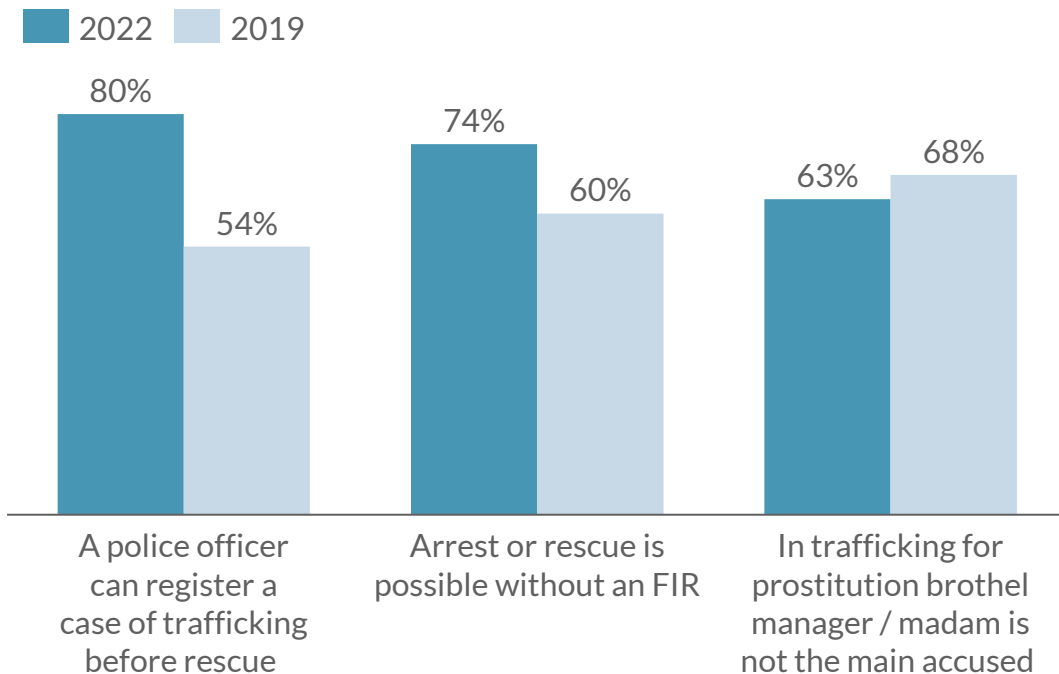
## Majority of police officers say CSEC is not very pervasive in their jurisdiction

*In your opinion, to what extent do you think child prostitution is prevalent in your city? (%, $N_{2022}=101$ and $N_{2019}=116$)[1]*

Legend:
- Not at all prevelant
- Not so prevelant
- Somewhat prevelant
- Very prevelant
- Extremely prevelant
- Don't know



**2022:** 28% (Not at all), 43% (Not so), 15% (Somewhat), 3% (Extremely), 12% (Very)

**2019:** 15% (Not at all), 20% (Not so), 52% (Somewhat), 9% (Very), 0% , 4% (Don't know)
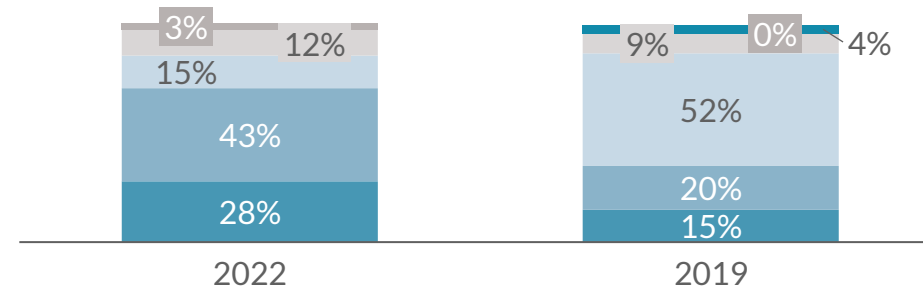
- In 2022, **71% police officers** were likely to say CSEC is **not so prevalent or not at all prevalent** in their jurisdiction
- Officers may have answered based on **perceptions of prevalence in brothel areas**

> "In the last two years, through police efforts, **brothels understand that having minors is a serious offence, so minor presence has reduced**. Even through raids, we have witnessed that there are lesser minors"
>
> *- Law enforcement official*

1. Police survey, Dalberg, 2. Other options for this question were 'False' and 'I am not sure'
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 police survey using experience (no. of years served)-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data (refer to annex)

# Awareness of CSEC in public and private spaces is somewhat higher than in online spaces; more officers perceive use of online CSEC to be widespread

## Awareness of online CSEC is somewhat less than awareness of CSEC in public or private spaces as per police officials

*How aware would you say you are with the crime of child prostitution that occurs in public spaces, private spaces, or is perpetuated through online means? (%, $N_{2022}$=101)[1]*



Legend:
- Extremely aware
- Moderately aware
- Somewhat aware
- Slightly aware
- Not at all aware

| | Public space | Private space | Online space |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 6% | 4% | 3% |
| | 6% | 8% | 0% |
| | 0% | 1% | |
| | 7% | 13% | 13% |
| | | | 24% |
| Extremely aware | 81% | 74% | 60% |
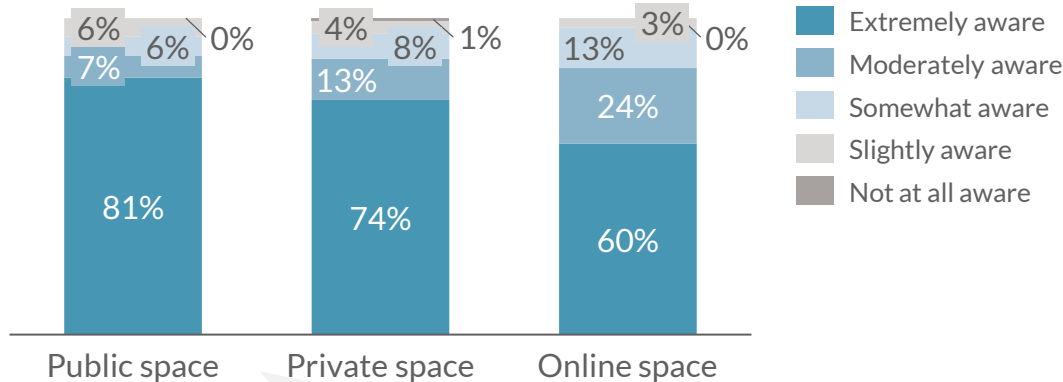
> In 2019, awareness ("extremely aware") of crimes in public and private spaces was around ~35%[2]

> " Changes have been brought in law enforcement to include raids and rescues in private premises. CSEC has significantly reduced in dance bars because police has investigated tips and legal is working here so offenders perceive risk to be high. Same level of risk needs to be created in other spaces as well.
>
> *- Law enforcement official*

## More law enforcement officials now perceive mobile / internet-based technology to be used widely for CSEC

*Based on your understanding, how widely do you think mobile/ internet-based technologies are used by traffickers and/or customers in cases related to child prostitution in your city? (%, $N_{2022}$=101 and $N_{2019}$=116 )[1]*



Legend: 2022, 2019

| | Extremely widely | Very widely | Somewhat widely | Not so widely | Not at all widely | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 28% | 34% | 34% | 3% | 1% | 1% |
| 2019 | 22% | 20% | 33% | 11% | 3% | 10% |
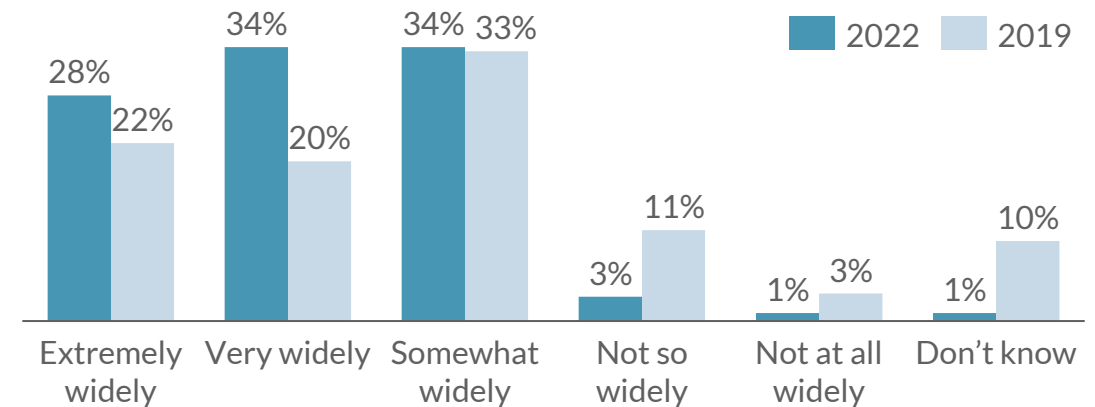
> " Cyber police is focusing on crimes which are more in news like drugs, terror etc. but not CSEC. A lot of change is required in mindset. Investing in technology tools, know-how of using the tools, increasing awareness about OSEC.
>
> *- Law enforcement official*

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# While 80% officers are trained in CSEC, trainings need to be more widespread on OSEC procedures and for on-ground lower ranking officers

## Slightly more respondents[1] noted that they had received training related to CSEC, including OSEC

- **80% of police official** respondents noted they had received training in CSEC-related matters in 2022; meanwhile, showing a slight increase from **74% of** respondents who noted they had received training in **2019**[2].
- **67%** of all respondents in 2022 have received training in **OSEC**
- **~18%** of AHTU respondents **have not received training in CSEC**
- **64%** of respondents **who have 5-10 years** of experience have **not received training** while only ~13% **of respondents with >10 years of experience have not received training**

## While some officers are aware of CSEC and OSEC, thana-level officers need more training

" Police's operational machinery is at "*thana*"[2] level, although I am not sure if they have updated knowledge to tackle cases coming in dance bars, even gaming parlors etc. Making sure thanas as first respondents have access to relevant resources and are able to identify warning signs for trafficking, CSEC cases is important

*- NGO expert*

## Respondents[1] who were trained on CSEC found modules on fundamentals more useful than modules on investigations

*Which information/sections of the training have been most helpful to deal with child prostitution cases? ($N_{2022}$=101)[1]*

| Average rank 2022 | Avgerage rank 2019 | CSEC training topic |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | Modus operandi of how the child prostitution business is run |
| 2 | 1 | Awareness and sensitization on the issue of child prostitution |
| 3 | 5 | How to conduct investigations/ collect evidence in child prostitution cases |
| 4 | 4 | How to conduct raids in places where child prostitution is practiced |
| 5 | 2 | Legal provisions that apply to criminals in child prostitution cases |
| 6 | 6 | How to coordinate with other units (police/ AHTUs, prosecutors, NGOs) |

- When asked which training topics are most useful, 'how to conduct investigations / collect evidence in CSEC cases' was a new addition to the top-3 topics; training on legal provisions is considered less useful since 2019
- Order of importance for OSEC modules as per law enforcement officers was also very similar
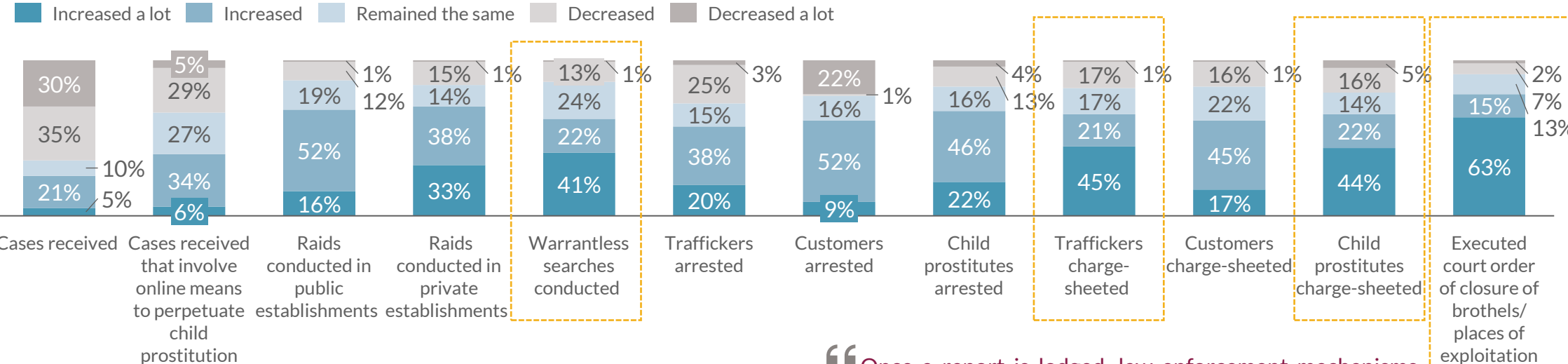
1. Police survey, Dalberg; 2. Districts are divided into "thanas" , i.e., local police stations headed by an inspector/sub-inspector
Note: i) We have weighted data from 2019 police survey using experience (no. of years served)-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data, ii) We have assumed that police officers surveyed spent their entire duration working from the same city

Dalberg

# Officials note increases in brothel closures, traffickers charge-sheeted and searches; there is an increase in AHTUs and funding allocated to CSEC

## Law enforcement respondents perceive an improvement in police effectiveness across police duties after a case is received

*How have the following numbers increased or decreased for your police station in the last 12 months (Please note all of these are for child prostitution specifically) (%, $N_{2022}$=101)[1,2]*

Legend: ■ Increased a lot ■ Increased ■ Remained the same ■ Decreased ■ Decreased a lot



Categories (left to right):
- **Cases received**: 30%, 35%, 10%, 21%, 5%
- **Cases received that involve online means to perpetuate child prostitution**: 5%, 29%, 27%, 34%, 6%
- **Raids conducted in public establishments**: 1%, 12%, 19%, 52%, 16%
- **Raids conducted in private establishments**: 15%, 1%, 14%, 38%, 33%
- **Warrantless searches conducted**: 13%, 1%, 24%, 22%, 41%
- **Traffickers arrested**: 25%, 3%, 15%, 38%, 20%
- **Customers arrested**: 22%, 1%, 16%, 52%, 9%
- **Child prostitutes arrested**: 16%, 4%, 13%, 46%, 22%
- **Traffickers charge-sheeted**: 17%, 17%, 1%, 21%, 45%
- **Customers charge-sheeted**: 16%, 22%, 1%, 45%, 17%
- **Child prostitutes charge-sheeted**: 16%, 14%, 5%, 22%, 44%
- **Executed court order of closure of brothels/ places of exploitation (only for Mumbai)**: 2%, 7%, 15%, 13%, 63%

### Experts also note an improvement in police resources

- **Maharashtra invested in 24 new Anti Human Trafficking Cells (AHTCs)** in 2021 and further added **nine new AHTCs in 2022**[3], thereby totaling **45 AHTCs operating currently in the state**.

- The Maharashtra government approved the **disbursement of approximately 50 million INR ($672,560)** in January 2022 **provided by the central government to establish and strengthen AHTCs** and appointed a special inspector general of police as the nodal officer to streamline intelligence gathering.[3]

> " Once a report is lodged, law enforcement mechanisms kick in very quickly; victim compensations are coming in faster than ever before
>
> *- NGO expert*

> " Even places like dance bars, have become more aware of seriousness. **Done 30-35 raids in last year or two – found out that there are minors – but we did successful raids – but never found any minors.** Dance bars and all also **know that they will be in deep trouble if found with minors.**
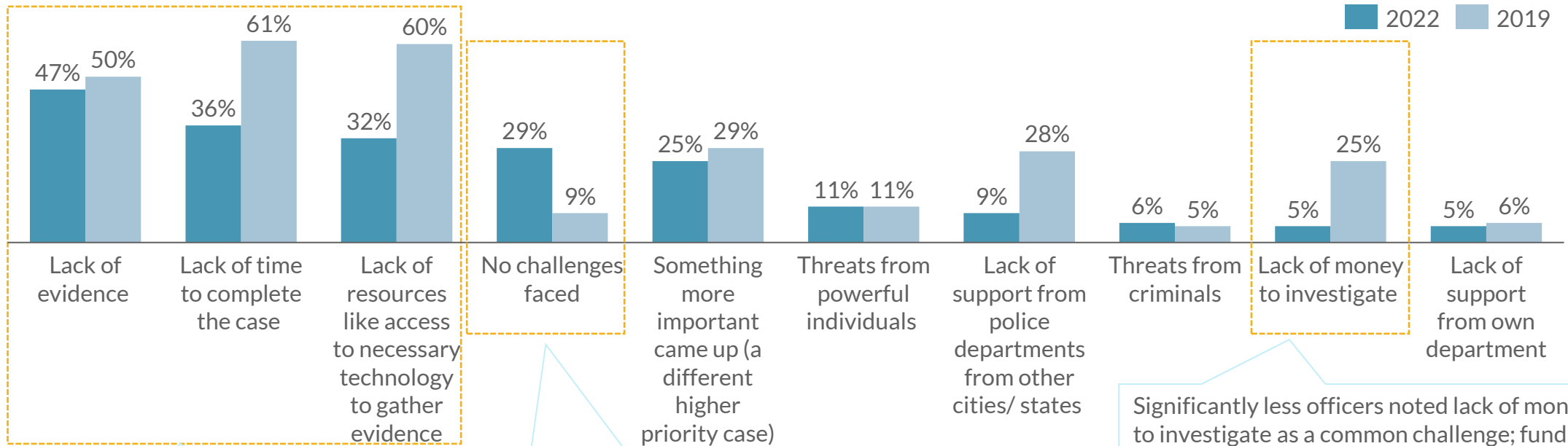>
> *– Law enforcement official in Mumbai*

1. Police survey, Dalberg; 2. While we asked this question in 2019, we have not represented the data since the question already accounts for a change, as perceived by police officers. 3. Trafficking in Persons Report 2022.

Dalberg

# However, a lack of fundamental resources and time makes it difficult to complete investigations

**Some challenges in investigating CSEC cases have shown a significant improvement since 2019**

*Based on your experience, what are the most common reasons for not being able to complete investigations in child prostitution cases? (%, $N_{2022}$=101 and $N_{2019}$=116)[1]*

Legend: ■ 2022  ■ 2019

| Category | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of evidence | 47% | 50% |
| Lack of time to complete the case | 36% | 61% |
| Lack of resources like access to necessary technology to gather evidence | 32% | 60% |
| No challenges faced | 29% | 9% |
| Something more important came up (a different higher priority case) | 25% | 29% |
| Threats from powerful individuals | 11% | 11% |
| Lack of support from police departments from other cities/ states | 9% | 28% |
| Threats from criminals | 6% | 5% |
| Lack of money to investigate | 5% | 25% |
| Lack of support from own department | 5% | 6% |

The most common challenges in investigating continue to be lack of evidence, time and resources to gather evidence.

While 29% of respondents note they faced no challenges investigating CSEC cases, national data shows 848 cases booked under "procuring, inducing children for the sake of prostitution" were pending investigation at the end of 2021.

Significantly less officers noted lack of money to investigate as a common challenge; funding to AHTUs has increased since 2019[2]

" Police departments have the technological prowess to tackle cases of online exploitation for e.g., Delhi police, although **not sure if the access is similar across states**. Technological capability of law enforcement is also developing over time. Even official in these departments exist who are sensitized to issues of CSEC/OSEC, but the **same does not exist at "thana" level, who are sort of first respondents for these cases at local level**

*- NGO expert*

1. Police survey, Dalberg, 2. Trafficking in Persons report 2019; 3, National Crimes Record Bureau, 2021.
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 police survey using experience (no. of years served)-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data

Dalberg

# Despite improvements since 2019, several challenges continue to hinder law enforcement from solving CSEC cases, especially around collecting evidence

*Based on your experience, what are the most common challenges in solving child prostitution cases? (%, $N_{2022}$=101 and $N_{2019}$=116)[1]*



Legend: ■ 2022 ■ 2019

| Challenge | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Collecting evidence to arrest brothel keepers, pimps | 51% | 84% |
| Getting leads on areas where it is happening | 46% | 97% |
| Collecting evidence to arrest established traffickers/ kingpins/ brothel owners | 43% | 85% |
| Identifying the age of the victim | 31% | 69% |
| Gathering evidence to arrest customer | 23% | 63% |
| No challenges | 19% | 2% |
| Involvement of influential individuals who ask to shut the case | 12% | 25% |
| It takes a very long time to solve the case | 8% | 21% |
| Lack of coordination among police from different cities/ states | 7% | 40% |
| It has a limited success rate | 5% | 28% |
| Support from your bosses | 3% | 21% |

- The most common challenges in solving crimes remain the same since 2019
- For **OSEC-related crimes**, ranking for **most common challenges are largely similar**, with 'gathering evidence to arrest customer' listed as the 3rd most common challenge

While **more law enforcement respondents noted there are no challenges in solving CSEC crimes**, national data[2] shows cases booked under "procuring, including children for the sake of prostitution" showed a **pendency rate of 75% in 2021**. The pendency rate was further exacerbated during the pandemic, with a **pendency rate of 93.2% in 2020**

Coordination has significantly improved among police from different cities. Police and NGO partners have **WhatsApp groups for quick communication** every time a missing persons report is filed. However, police departments **can increase inter-country communication to further increase efficiency**.

" Girls are trafficked from national border areas which fall under jurisdiction of Border Security Forces, then moved across different regions in India under respective state jurisdiction, which makes hand-offs between law enforcement authorities a challenge.
*- Law enforcement official*

Dalberg

# Poorly resourced judiciary continues to have low conviction rates for CSEC crimes (1/2)

## Pendency rates for CSEC crimes tend to be high and a large backlog of cases exists at the end of each year, largely driven by a lack of human resources

- Huge backlog of cases: A **high volume of cases are pending** at the end of each year creating a high backlog of cases, with 848 cases pending at the end of 2021, 572 cases at the end of 2020 and 766 cases at the end of 2019; while **absolute numbers of cases pending appeared to decrease in 2020, pendency rates tell us this is due to a lack of reporting and high acquittal rate** due to lack of necessary active procedures during months of national lockdowns

" Laws **especially related to raids need to be tweaked**, and **certain procedural steps must be removed as they act as an impedance** to the time-sensitive nature of raids and render them pointless exercises.

*- Lawyer who works on CSEC cases*

- Overburdened, underpaid public prosecutors (and police officials): Public prosecutors, who commonly represent victims are **often paid poorly, trained rarely, and are overworked** (like the local police station's officers). This causes the **case to be built poorly** and is an especially huge challenge since traffickers often hire private, experienced lawyers to defend. Police officers surveyed have similarly high case loads, and less than half (45%) perceive CSEC cases to be their top priority on a day-to-day basis

" When law enforcement has **1 officer tagged to investigating 20-30 cases per month**, it can become difficult to get effective results on CSEC cases.

*- Lawyer who works on CSEC cases*

### COVID-19 national lockdowns further led to a greater backlog and lower conviction rates

- **Pending cases / acquittals for SEC cases were a result of COVID-19 court closures during lockdown**; courts chose to do virtual trials for urgent criminal matters (e.g. murders, kidnapping); for sex trafficking cases victim testimonies were not recorded, which led to more challenges in prosecuting criminals[2]

- An NGO study reported **only 27 percent of AHTUs were fully operational and many still only existed on paper**. State governments and civil society nationwide agreed the majority of **AHTUs currently active were not sufficiently funded or trained, nor solely dedicated to trafficking**[3]

1. National Crime Records Bureau, 2019-21. 2. Trafficking in Persons Report 2022. 3. Trafficking in Persons Report 2021.

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# Poorly resourced judiciary continues to have low conviction rates for CSEC crimes (2/2)

## Pendency rates for CSEC crimes tend to be high and a large backlog of cases exists at the end of each year

- Lack of resources and child-friendly procedures: **Child counsellors** who can provide psycho-social support to victims and help them feel sufficiently comfortable to provide statements **are rare** (they are typically only present when there is an NGO involved). In addition, **traffickers often condition victims to believe that police will arrest and lock them up**, and that they are the ones committing a crime.

> " From what I have seen, most victims know their abusers. When trial processes are long, abusers can coerce victims to take back their complaints. If the victim gives consent, bail becomes very easy.
>
> *- Law enforcement official*

- Lack of coordination: **Coordination among agencies involved with CSEC cases (police, judiciary, civil society organisations, etc.) is crucial** as it can help build quality cases by ensuring police, judiciary, NGOs and other related parties are working in tandem to build a strong case. It also helps ensure that legal proceedings do not come in the way of effective rehabilitation of the victim.

> " There is lack of communication between trafficking and cybercrime department. AHTUs should develop their own infra for technology and minimize external dependency on cybercrime units to tackle OSEC.
>
> *- Lawyer who works on CSEC cases*

**Coordination can be improved within police departments as well**

**Too many case hand-offs between departments:** Procedures need to limit case hand-offs and build CSEC deterrence capacity among all police officials to help with better conviction rates; cases are often transferred between departments which increases processing time. NGO experts interviewed believe AHTUs should handle cases end-to-end, and officers in more ranks need to be trained and equipped to handle CSEC investigations.

1. National Crime Records Bureau, 2019-21. 2. Trafficking in Persons Report 2022. 3. Trafficking in Persons Report 2021.

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# Most people are aware that CSEC is illegal, and more are aware of the extent of its prevalence since 2019

## Most general population respondents were aware that trafficking minors and purchasing sex from minors is illegal

*Based on what you know, please state which of the following is legal or illegal in your city (% who said illegal, $N_{2022}$= 837)[1]*

■ Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
■ Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

| | CSEC | CSE |
|---|---|---|
| Trafficiking is illegal | 85% | 81% |
| Purchasing sex is illegal | 85% | 76% |
| Indulging in sexual activities using internet is illegal | 83% | 76% |
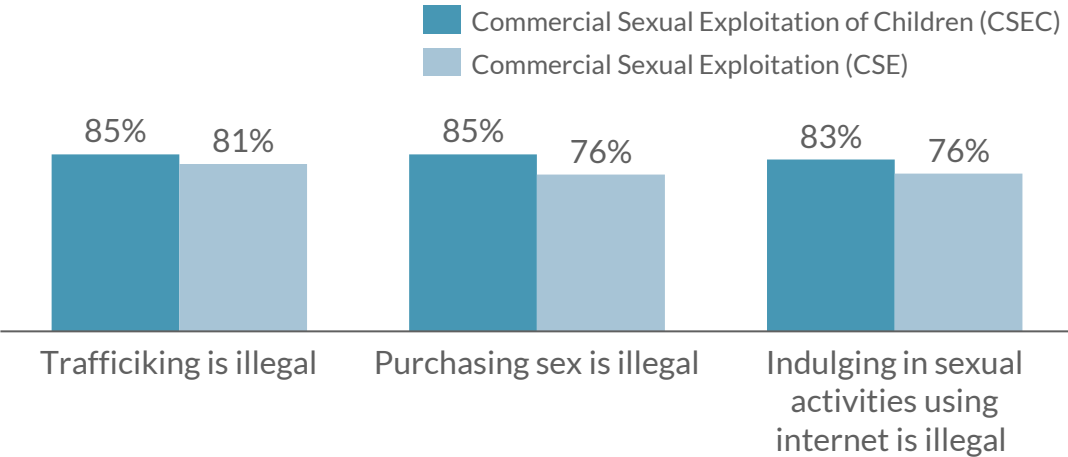
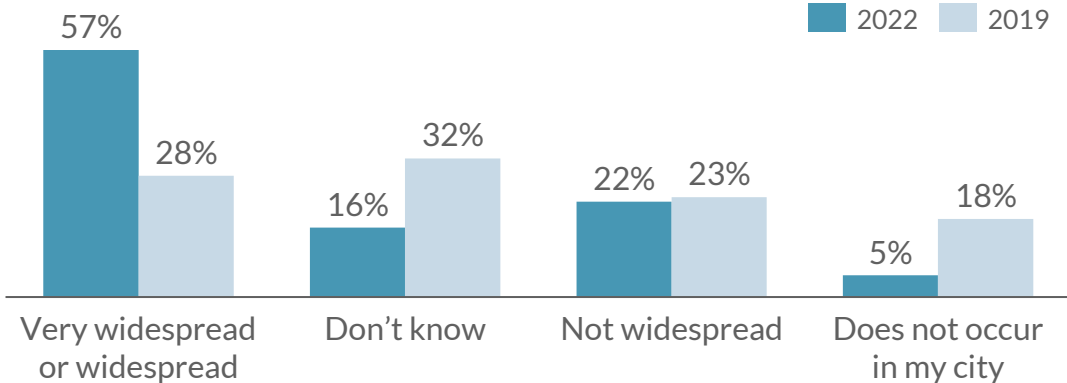- **Over 3 in 4 adults in Maharashtra are aware that it is illegal to engage in sexual activities with minors** in public spaces/on the internet, and that it is illegal to purchase sex from minors or traffic minors for sexual exploitation; there is no significant change since 2019[1]

- Awareness of the illegality of CSEC activities was **highest in Mumbai and Palghar** (~90%); awareness in Kalyan was significantly lower (~70%). These responses do not vary based on gender or education-level[1]

## While awareness of prevalence has increased since 2019, over a third of the population is not aware of its spread

*To what extent do you think child prostitution is prevalent in your city? (%, $N_{2022}$=837 and $N_{2019}$=1209)[1]*

■ 2022  ■ 2019

| | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Very widespread or widespread | 57% | 28% |
| Don't know | 16% | 32% |
| Not widespread | 22% | 23% |
| Does not occur in my city | 5% | 18% |

- **More people (57%)** across the three cities **believe that CSEC is widespread in their city**[1] compared to before the pandemic (28% in 2019); general awareness about CSEC prevalence has increased

- **More women (~66%) believe CSEC is widespread** than men (~48%)[1]

- In **Palghar and Thane** (~68%) more people felt CSEC is widespread than in Mumbai (~59%), Nagpur (~51%) or Pune (~43%)[1]

- Results varied by education level: those who were **literate but below primary were most aware** (~69%), ~60% of those graduate or higher and ~53% of those who have had some schooling between grade 1-12 felt CSEC is widespread[1]

1. General population survey, Dalberg 2022
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 general population survey using gender –wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data

Dalberg

# Despite increased awareness, overall empathy for CSEC victims has reduced since 2019, with large shifts in Mumbai and Thane

## People have low empathy for victims of CSEC and it has reduced further since the pandemic

*Based on what you know, please state if the following statements are true or false. Most child prostitutes: (% of people who said 'true' for the following statements, $N_{2022}= 837$ and $N_{2019}= 1209$)[1]*

Legend: ■ 2022  ■ 2019

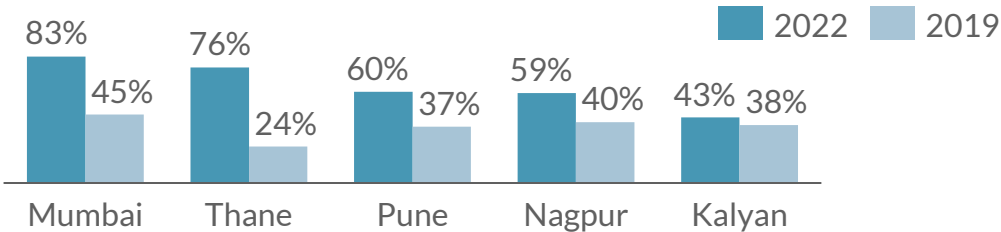| Statement | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Engage in the commercial sex industry voluntarily | 73% | 39% |
| Cannot be rehabilitated and reintegrated in the society, even if they wanted to | 65% | 39% |
| Can earn a lot by engaging in paid sex work | 51% | 35% |
| Enjoy engaging in sex associated with offering paid sex services | 50% | 18% |
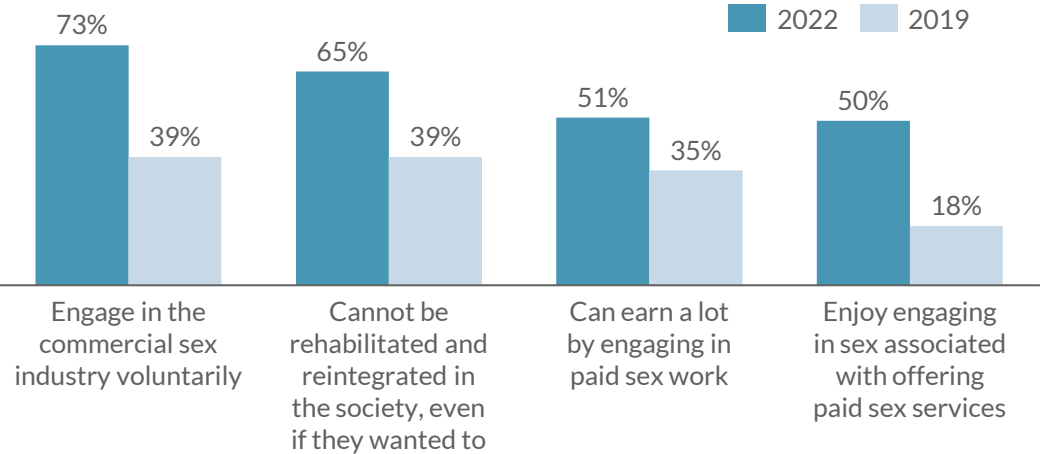
**In addition to these, there are a few other beliefs that related to empathy:**

- 58% of respondents[1] believe victims are **naïve and uneducated;** 76% **believe victims are tricked into paid sex work** through false promises of a good job or marriage

- Additionally, 73% respondents[1] believe children engage in sex services voluntarily to escape current hardships
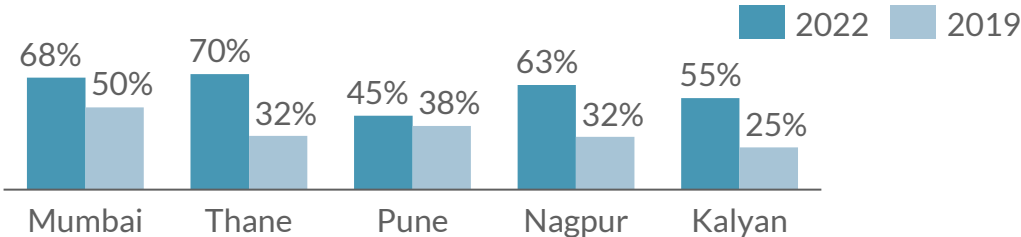
## Empathy has reduced across all locations, with large shifts in Mumbai and Thane

There was no significant differences in responses based on age, occupation, or education level. However, responses varied by location. All statements followed similar trends by city, for instance:

*Most child prostitutes: Engage in sex services voluntarily to escape current hardships (True or False) (% of location sample size[2] who said 'true')[1,3]*

Legend: ■ 2022  ■ 2019

| Location | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Mumbai | 83% | 45% |
| Thane | 76% | 24% |
| Pune | 60% | 37% |
| Nagpur | 59% | 40% |
| Kalyan | 43% | 38% |

*Most child prostitutes: Cannot be rehabilitated and reintegrated in the society, even if they wanted to (True or False) (% of location sample size[2] who said 'true')[1,3]*

Legend: ■ 2022  ■ 2019

| Location | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Mumbai | 68% | 50% |
| Thane | 70% | 32% |
| Pune | 45% | 38% |
| Nagpur | 63% | 32% |
| Kalyan | 55% | 25% |

1. General population survey, Dalberg 2022; 2. Sample size based on cities: Mumbai ($n_{2022}$=201 & $n_{2019}$=248), Nagpur ($n_{2022}$=160 & $n_{2019}$=400), Pune ($n_{2022}$=112 & $n_{2019}$=400), Palghar ($n_{2022}$=196 & $n_{2019}$=17), Thane ($n_{2022}$=106 & $n_{2019}$=47) , Kalyan ($n_{2022}$=47 & $n_{2019}$=49) , 3. Palghar has been removed due to small sample size in 2019 as compared to 2022.
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 general population survey using gender –wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data

Dalberg

# Reactions of community members to CSEC remain mixed, with majority of the respondents feeling that their communities would take a neutral stance
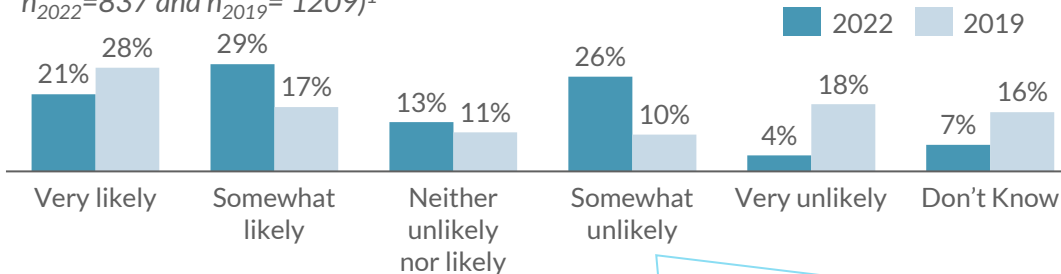
## Not a lot of people feel their community would react negatively to CSEC, whether in-person or online…

*How likely/unlikely do you think is it for your neighbours or the community you live in to react negatively to a person's involvement with forcing children into prostitution? These can be in the form of isolating them, rejecting them, looking down upon them, or even reporting them (%, $N_{2022}$=837 and $N_{2019}$= 1209)[1]*

■ 2022  ☐ 2019

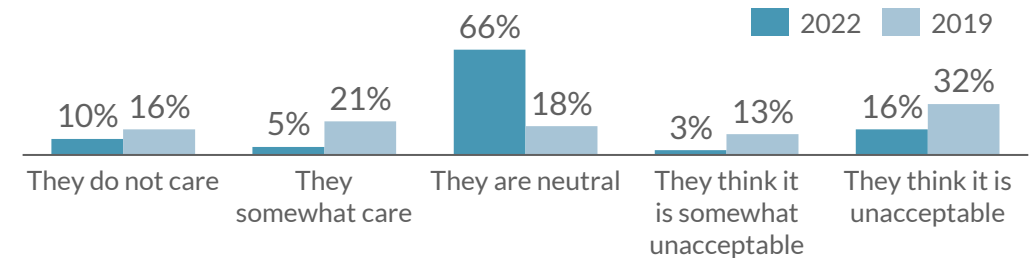| | Very likely | Somewhat likely | Neither unlikely nor likely | Somewhat unlikely | Very unlikely | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 17% | 31% | 16% | 24% | 5% | 7% |
| 2019 | 25% | 18% | 9% | 11% | 19% | 17% |
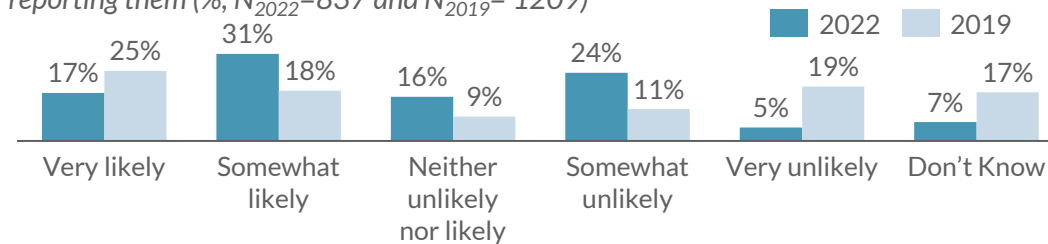
*How likely/ unlikely do you think is it for your neighbours or the community you live in to react negatively to anyone purchasing sex from children? These can be in the form of isolating them, rejecting them, looking down upon them, or even reporting them(%, $n_{2022}$=837 and $n_{2019}$= 1209)[1]*

■ 2022  ☐ 2019

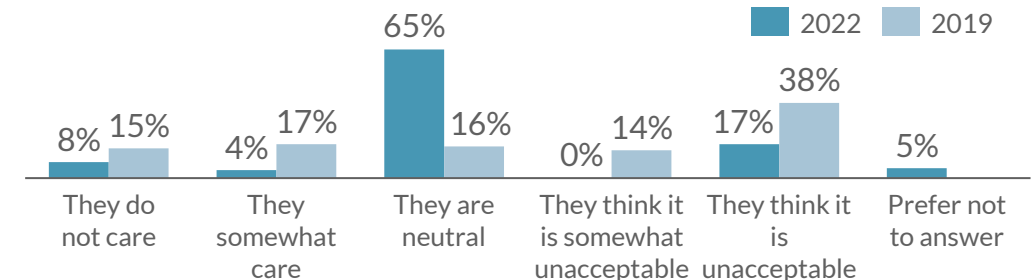| | Very likely | Somewhat likely | Neither unlikely nor likely | Somewhat unlikely | Very unlikely | Don't Know |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 21% | 29% | 13% | 26% | 4% | 7% |
| 2019 | 28% | 17% | 11% | 10% | 18% | 16% |

> *Perceptions among respondents were almost exactly the same when asked how likely they think their neighbours / community would be to react negatively to a person's involvement with forcing children into prostitution or purchasing sex from children using the internet*

## … and a majority of respondents feel their community would have a neutral stance

*What do you think the community you live in thinks about someone who forces children into prostitution (%, $N_{2022}$=837 and $N_{2019}$= 1209)[1]*

■ 2022  ☐ 2019

| | They do not care | They somewhat care | They are neutral | They think it is somewhat unacceptable | They think it is unacceptable |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 10% | 5% | 66% | 3% | 16% |
| 2019 | 16% | 21% | 18% | 13% | 32% |

*What do you think the community you live in thinks about someone who purchases sex from the children (%, $N_{2022}$=837 and $N_{2019}$= 1209)[1]*

■ 2022  ☐ 2019

| | They do not care | They somewhat care | They are neutral | They think it is somewhat unacceptable | They think it is unacceptable | Prefer not to answer |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 8% | 4% | 65% | 0% | 17% | 5% |
| 2019 | 15% | 17% | 16% | 14% | 38% | |

> " People are likely to turn their heads away when they find out about child abuse since it is so rampant within households and their own communities in India
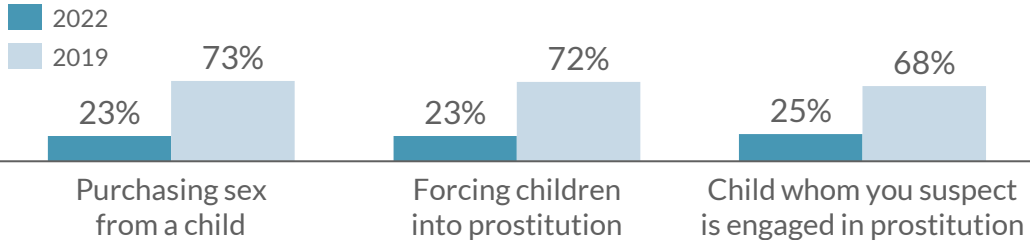>
> *- NGO expert*

**Dalberg**

# People are less willing to report crimes and believe it is not the community's responsibility to fight CSEC, further worsening social conditions to deterrence

## In line with the decrease in empathy, willingness to report has also decreased since 2019

*Imagine if you come across a person whom you suspect to be engaging __ ( related to child prostitution), what will you do? (% who said "I will report to the local authorities", $N_{2022}=837$ and $N_{2019}=1209$)[1]*

■ 2022
□ 2019

| | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Purchasing sex from a child | 23% | 73% |
| Forcing children into prostitution | 23% | 72% |
| Child whom you suspect is engaged in prostitution | 25% | 68% |

- Across the 3 crimes, a few top reasons[1] why someone would not report emerged: **fear of repercussions**, not knowing which **authority to report to**, perception that reporting takes **too much time or effort** and because they **do not think the concerned authority will take appropriate action**

- Across the 3 crimes, compared to the overall average, **fewer respondents in Mumbai (~7%), Palghar (~12%)** and **Thane (13%),** and **more in Nagpur (~51%) and Kalyan (~38%) and Pune (~34%)** said they would report to local authorities; willingness to report dropped across all cities since 2019, **with the sharpest drop for Mumbai (7% in 2022, 77% in 2019)**

- Respondents who are **women were slightly less likely to report** (~19%) than men (27%)

## In addition to an unwillingness to report, people do not think collective action is their responsibility

- **Only 32% of respondents in 2022 believe that citizens have a role in combatting CSEC[2]** in their city against 47% in 2019 and **only 27% believe that the community would be very effective in preventing[3]** or stopping persons who force children into CSEC.

- More respondents in Nagpur (43%) and Palghar (48%) believed citizens play a role in combatting CSEC than in Mumbai (27%), Pune (25%), Kalyan (23%) and Thane (11%)

- Police officers **have low confidence in societal vigilance and sanctions to be effective in combating CSEC[4,5]**. Only 26% in 2022 believe community vigilance is very effective in preventing or stopping persons who force children into prostitution compared to 32% in 2019

> " In earlier days, community as a whole was more vigilant on suspicious activities which are happening in their neighborhoods. But nowadays it is critical to have an active group of informants to trace CSEC activities to gather information and track such activities in private spaces
>
> *- NGO expert*

1 – General population survey, Dalberg 2022, 2. Q: Who do you think plays a role in combating child prostitution in your city, 3. Q: How effective do you think the following are in preventing or stopping persons who force children into prostitution in your city, 4. Q: How effective do you think the following are in preventing or stopping criminals who enable/ engage child prostitution in your city, 5. Police survey, Dalberg. Note:  We have weighted data from 2019 general population survey using gender-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data; We have weighted data from 2019 police survey using experience (no. of years served)-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data

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Dalberg

# Overall, technological conditions have worsened, with more opportunities to access CSEC through multiple online channels

## Use of online platforms for child prostitution has rocketed, creating more opportunities for anonymity…

*Based on your understanding, how widely do you think mobile/ internet-based technologies (e.g. social media sites like WhatsApp, Facebook, online websites like Locanto, calls, messaging etc.) are used by traffickers and/or customers in cases related to child prostitution in your city? (%, $N_{2022}$=101 & $N_{2019}$=116)[1]*

■ 2022  ■ 2019

| | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Extremely widely | 28% | 22% |
| Very widely | 34% | 22% |
| Somewhat widely | 34% | 28% |
| Not so widely | 3% | 14% |
| Not at all widely | 1% | 3% |
| Don't know | 1% | 10% |
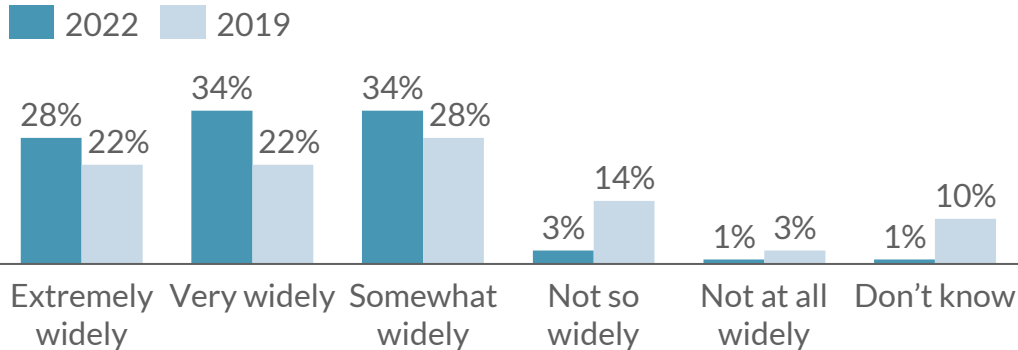
- **96%** of police official surveyed believe that **traffickers/customers** involved in cases of child prostitution widely **use WhatsApp, Facebook etc. to facilitate/access paid sex with minors**, as compared to **72% in 2019**[1]

- **84% (62% in 2019)** of the police officers surveyed **believe traffickers/ customers use online platforms to communicate with co-traffickers** (i.e., buyers and sellers of girls) and **74% (55% in 2019) believe that they use it to communicate with girls** to bring them into prostitution[1]

## … and growth in the usage of multiple channels has made it even more challenging to track such cases

*What channels do you think people use to find paid sex services with young girls? Rank the options listed from most commonly used to least commonly used ($N_{2022}$=309)[2]*

| Channels | Average Rank |
|---|---|
| Over a phone call | 1 |
| In-person | 2 |
| Through online website | 3 |
| Through Whatsapp/ Facebook | 4 |
| Customer does not reach out, sex worker reaches out to customers first | 5 |

> The 2019 study indicates similar rankings as 2022, except a switch in ranks of "Over the phone call" and "Through online website" channels to find paid sex services with young girls

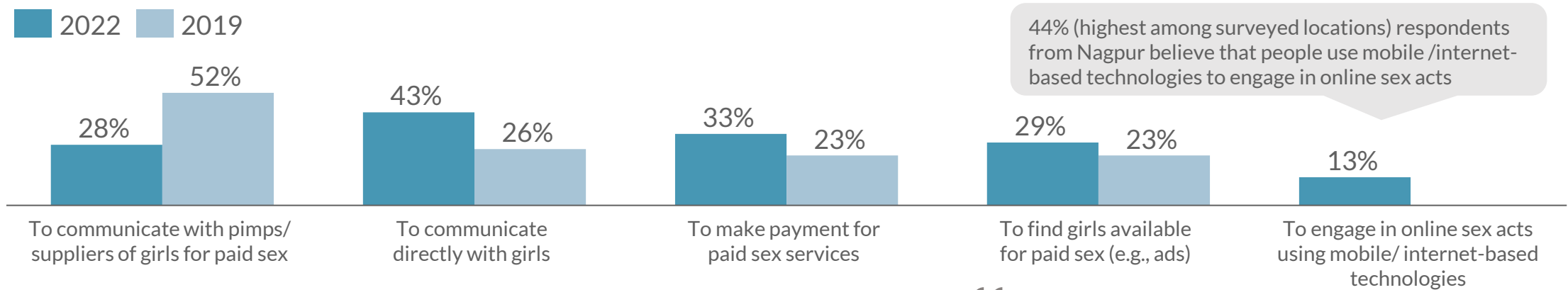- A wide range of channels continue to exist for accessing paid sex services with young girls, and the **frequency of usage of internet and mobile-based technologies has increased** from 43% in 2019 to 52% in 2022[2]

- Majority (8/10) of existing customers interviewed believe that access to paid sex with young girls has **increased significantly** due to availability of internet and mobile-based technologies[3]

Dalberg

# These channels are used for multiple activities including, finding in-person services, consuming content, and for other potential gateways to exploitation

**Online channels are used to access in-person services for directly communicating with young girls, making payments for sex, creating/sharing child pornography and online acts of grooming, which could create opportunities for further exploitation**

*If people use mobile/internet-based technologies to purchase sex from young girls, what do you think they use it for? (%, $N_{2022}$=309 and $N_{2022}$=322)[1]*

■ 2022   ■ 2019

44% (highest among surveyed locations) respondents from Nagpur believe that people use mobile /internet-based technologies to engage in online sex acts

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 28% / 52% | 43% / 26% | 33% / 23% | 29% / 23% | 13% |
| To communicate with pimps/ suppliers of girls for paid sex | To communicate directly with girls | To make payment for paid sex services | To find girls available for paid sex (e.g., ads) | To engage in online sex acts using mobile/ internet-based technologies |

- Usage of internet and mobile based technologies has **diversified** from just **communicating with pimps (52%)** in 2019 to **communicating with girls directly and making payment of paid sex services**, especially across potential customers surveyed in Mumbai and Thane, and respondents within the age bracket of 18 to 45 years

- Incidents of child grooming[2] **have increased with the advent of internet**, where such incidents are increasingly taking place online, through **public chatrooms and social media, including through the exchange of child sexual abuse material**[3]

- Secondary research also suggests a huge spike in demand for child pornography in India. Crimes against children **increased by 400%** in 2020 as compared to 2019 and nearly **90%** involved the **publication/ transmission of Child Sexual Abuse Materials (CSAM)**

"
*"During the pandemic, several cyber experts, police officers, lawyers and NGO workers have witnessed a **rise in cases of online grooming**"*

*- Child protection expert*

"
*"Online acts such as **'grooming' can be a gateway to CSEC** and may be less obvious to detect"*

*- NGO expert*

1. Potential customer survey, Dalberg 2022, 2. Cybertip - Child Abuse: Online grooming - Online grooming is used by offenders to sexualize an online encounter with a child. Offenders will use a multitude of techniques (like threatening, to manipulate perceptions of children, exchanging sexual pictures to make the victim more comfortable so they comply with their sexual requests),. Detailed definition is mentioned in the Glossary. 3. Firstpost: Child grooming. Note: We have weighted data from 2019 police survey using experience (no. of years served)-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data

# Online ads for paid sex have grown significantly since 2019, making it easier for customers to access minors and engage in exploitative activities

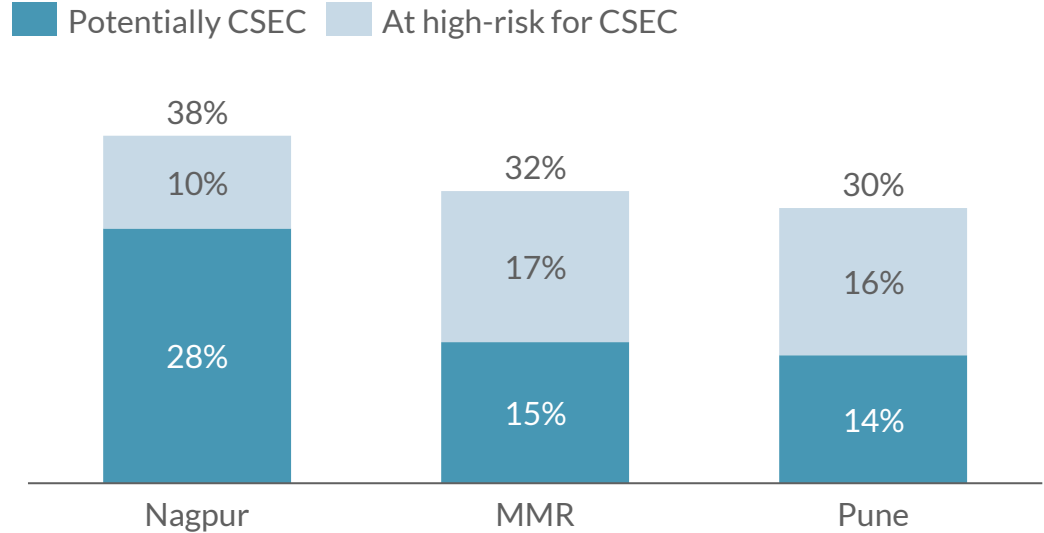## There has been steep growth in online solicitation for paid sex since 2019...

*Ads for online solicitations via web-scraping from Locanto and Skokka[1]*

Others | High risk | CSEC



2794

Ø 3,776

2019    2022
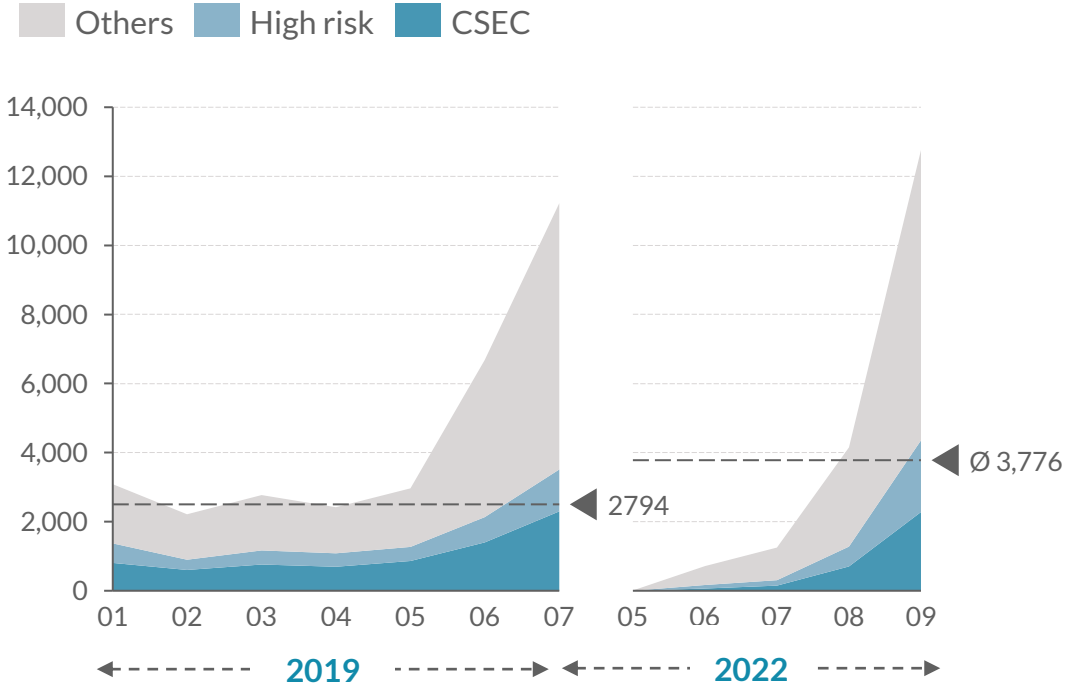
- Web-scraping analysis indicated an increase in online solicitations by at least 40% in average number of ads posted by suppliers for paid sex services as compared to 2019

## ...however, the distribution of CSEC ads remains unchanged and the risk of exploitation for minors continues to be high

*CSEC advertisements by city (%, $N_{2022}$=18,878)[1]*

Potentially CSEC | At high-risk for CSEC



Nagpur: 38% (10% / 28%)
MMR: 32% (17% / 15%)
Pune: 30% (16% / 14%)

- Nearly 1 in 3 solicitations are potentially CSEC or at high-risk of CSEC[2] across regions, nearly unchanged from 2019; risk for increased exploitation of minors remains high due to growth in overall online solicitations for minors

- We also observe more solicitations from Nagpur than the Mumbai metropolitan region (MMR) or Pune

1. Web scraping analysis, Dalberg, 2. Potentially CSEC ads include solicitation for children aged 19 years and younger, or includes the words like "school", "fresh", "virgin", "kid", "innocent", "adolescent' etc. , while High risk for CSEC ads are defined as solicitations for children aged 20 years, or include words like "college", "collage", 'callege', 'student', 'students' etc.

# Uptick in use of technology and increased access of services online has made it easier for criminals to engage anonymously, thereby reducing deterrence

*Based on your experience, what are the most common challenges in solving child prostitution cases that involve mobile / internet-based technologies? (Top 5 challenges, $N_{2022}= 101$)[1]*

| Challenges | Average Rank |
|---|---|
| Collecting evidence to arrest established traffickers/ kingpins/ brothel owners | 1 |
| Collecting evidence to arrest brothel keepers, pimps | 2 |
| Getting leads on areas where it is happening | 3 |
| Gathering evidence to arrest customer | 4 |
| Identifying the age of the victim | 5 |

- Interviews with law enforcement officers reflect that while police is aware of mechanisms being used for CSEC, they are unable to gather evidence or identify criminals when ads are posted across a multitude of online websites (including large tech giants like Instagram, Facebook, etc. but also smaller websites and aggregators)[2]

"

"**Technological prowess of the police varies by state**, however most of the tools lie with higher levels of the machinery to tackle OSEC, whereas **"thanas" or local police stations who are first respondents in most cases don't have relevant tools at their disposal**"

*- Child protection NGO expert*

"

"Perceived risk of engaging in online exploitative activities involving CSEC is low, because **criminals can easily hide their identity and location**, which makes it difficult to track"

*- Cyber security expert*

1. Police survey, Dalberg (2019 data for comparison is not available, as this question was added in 2022 quantitative police survey)  2. Law enforcement officer, Qualitative survey

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# Traffickers' perception of risk is driven by the threat and fear of legal ramifications, which they continue to see as limited

### Perceived certainty of getting arrested is moderately high, while perceived certainty of being convicted continues to be low

- All traffickers surveyed in MMR, Pune and Nagpur reported an **increase in raids in past 12 months**, while the **police continues to treat cases of CSEC with higher level of seriousness** as compared to Non-CSEC cases[1]

- According to traffickers, frequency of raids ranges from once every week to once every 2 to 3 months, similar to 2019, but **most times they are able to escape consequences** or get their way out by bribing police, or the public prosecutor to get bail, if they get arrested[1]

- Majority (7/10) traffickers reported that it **could take more than 2 years for a case to reach a decision** at court, comparable to 2019. Some traffickers also stated that **bigger syndicates can escape conviction** by paying off government lawyers[1]

### Overall awareness about punishments stays low, but relative perception of severity is higher when crimes involve minors

- None of the traffickers we spoke to were able to state the exact punishment for trafficking minors[1]

- Most traffickers (7/10) recognized that the **severity of punishments was higher for crimes against minors** compared to those against adults[1]

- Almost all (9/10) traffickers believed that **perceived risk of engaging in child prostitution using online channels** (like Facebook, WhatsApp, ads etc.) is less as compared to child prostitution in brothels[1]

- 6 out of 10 sex traffickers said that **severity of punishments doesn't matter** as they believe criminals will never get arrested or convicted[1]

> " *"Businesses usually get raided by police at least once a month. Though most people escape arrests by paying an amount regularly to the police as 'fees'"*
>
> *- Broker, sex trafficker qualitative survey*

# Risk of deterrence from technological, social and economic conditions continues to be low for traffickers to engage in CSEC

## Perceived risk among traffickers due to technological conditions is low

- **Ease of operations:** Traffickers contend that the use of technology has significantly eased and facilitated their operations[1]

- 6/10 traffickers stated that **technology is being increasingly used for sourcing girls**, advertising and communicating with customers[1]

- While most traffickers didn't respond on variations observed in use of technology between young girls and older sex workers, the ones who did respond stated that **young girls use technology more frequently than older women**[1]

" "Due to the lockdown, there has been a sudden surge in business as more and more customers come to avail services through Facebook or any other technology, it is quite easy to conduct business now.

*- Broker, sex trafficker qualitative survey*

## Perceived risk of community intervention has decreased

- **Risk of being noticed**: The likelihood of proactive community interventions and actions to combat CSEC, or sex trafficking more broadly, was rated to be low by traffickers[1]

- Some traffickers stated that their neighbors themselves were actively involved as suppliers or customers of such services, **further limiting the risk of social intervention** from the community[1]

- Decrease in perceived risk of community intervention is further substantiated by **decline in overall empathy of society towards CSEC** victims, as seen in the social conditions section earlier

## Perception of economic conditions continues to be low

- A deep study of economic factors is out-of-scope for this study. However, most sex traffickers did report that **trafficking minors is more profitable** than trafficking adults[1]

" "Business with young girls is very profitable because they can stay in the business for a greater number of years, they have a higher buying and selling price, they have high demanded in customers, and they are easier to control"
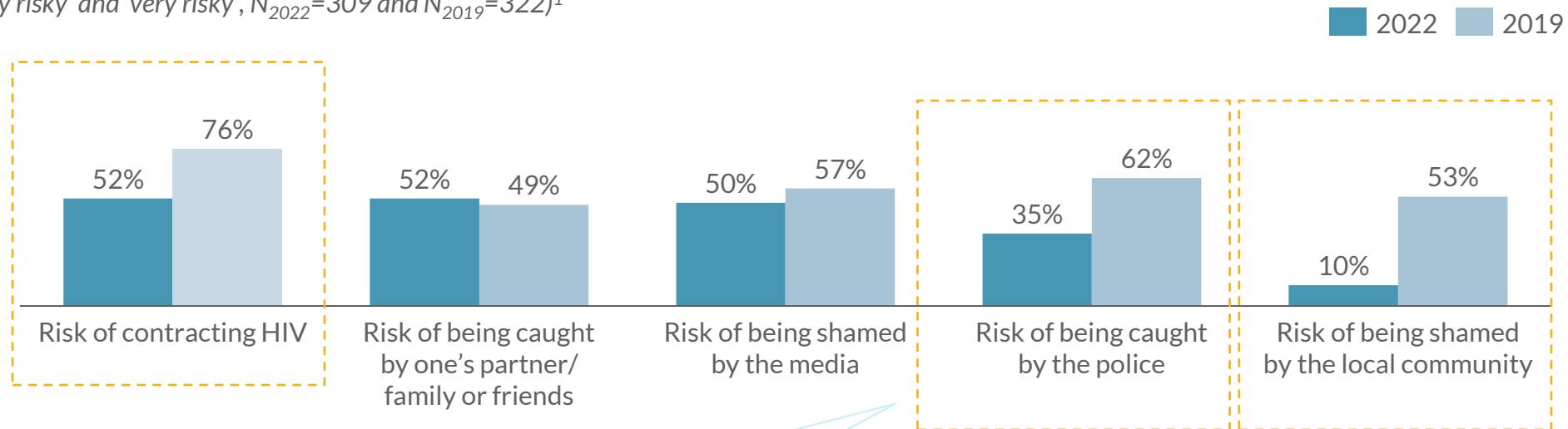
*- Broker, sex trafficker qualitative survey*

# Perception of risk among potential customers has reduced, with a significant reduction in perceived risk of community and police repercussions

## Potential customers perceive the risk of being shamed by local community or being caught by the police to be much less

*Listed here are some risks commonly associated with the activity of purchasing sex from young girls. Rate the options listed from most risky to least risky (% who responded 'extremely risky' and 'very risky', $N_{2022}$=309 and $N_{2019}$=322)[1]*

Legend: ■ 2022  ■ 2019



| | Risk of contracting HIV | Risk of being caught by one's partner/ family or friends | Risk of being shamed by the media | Risk of being caught by the police | Risk of being shamed by the local community |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 52% | 52% | 50% | 35% | 10% |
| 2019 | 76% | 49% | 57% | 62% | 53% |

Brothel owners believe NGOs have generated significantly more awareness about HIV and distribute condoms, which has significantly brought down incidences of HIV in red light areas

As detailed on the next page, **more customers think police raids never happen in brothels**. Some existing customers have noted less risk when engaging in paid sex services that occur in private spaces, massage parlours, etc. than in brothels

- While potential customers are worried about being caught by one's partner/family or friends, significantly less are worried about being shamed by the local community; **83% said they hear of paid sex services in their city through friends**

- 66% general population respondents also felt community members would have a neutral stance on people engaging in CSEC; only 20% said their community would be very likely to react negatively to CSEC

1. Dalberg Potential Customer Survey, 2022 and 2019.
Note:  We have weighted data from 2019 potential customer survey using occupation-wise weights  to make it comparable to 2022 data

# Both potential and existing customers expressed concerns related to legal repercussions of engaging in CSEC

## Frequency of raids and certainty of arrest has reduced, as per potential customers

- **Significantly more customers (49%)[1] believe locations offering paid sex services never get raided by the police** than in 2019 (10%)[1]. Respondents in Mumbai were slightly more likely to believe these locations never get raided (52% responded 'never').
- In 2022, **perceptions of the frequency of raids has reduced**: 20% potential customers said police raids happen at least once a month (28% in 2019)[1] and 11% said at least once in 3 months (25% in 2019)
- **Even more (46%) potential customer respondents** in 2022 **think they will not be arrested during a police raid** than in 2019 (28%)[1]
- Existing **customers said that brothel owners keep them safe** by paying police officers bribes 3-4 times a year, and inform customers when there is a raid and tell them not to come or tell them to run away[2]
- However, unlike customer perceptions', traffickers believe raids have increased in frequency in the past 12 months[3]

> "**Mostly [police raids] happen in brothels.** But again, people already know if something is going to happen. They get tips there; bribes also buy the police."
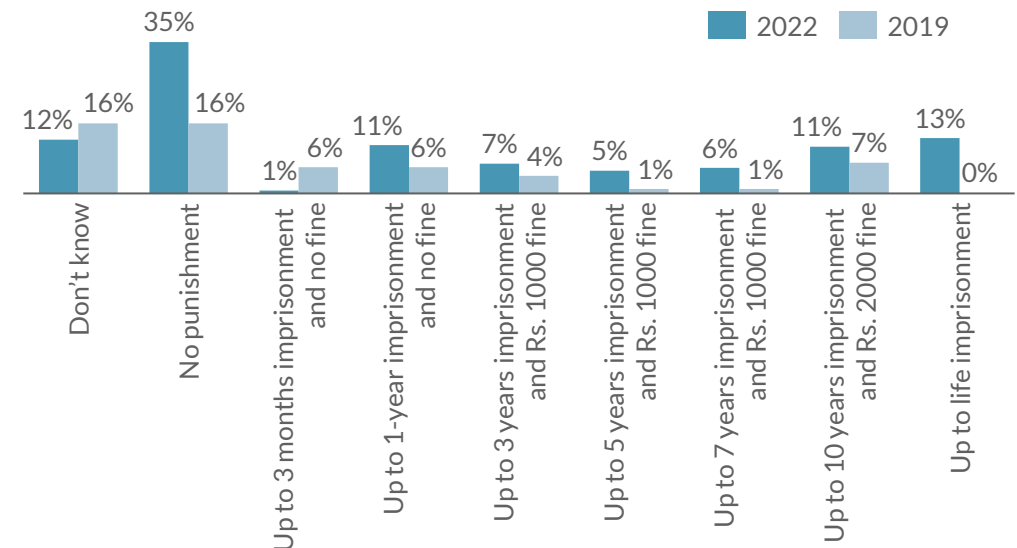>
> "**But if one does it** [i.e. purchases CSEC] **in a private home/farmhouse then it is safe,** no one will come there to ask"
>
> *- Existing customer qualitative survey*

## Awareness of severity of punishments has reduced among potential customers

- Significantly **more potential customer respondents (35%)[1] believe there is no punishment** for purchasing sex with minors than in 2019 (only 16%)[1]
- **Risk perception for online CSEC was nearly the same as for in-person CSEC**, with 34% of customers[1] believing there is no punishment

*Based on your understanding, what do you think is the punishment for purchasing sex from someone who is under 18 years of age? (%, $N_{2022}$=309 and $N_{2019}$= 322)[1,4]*



| | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
| Don't know | 12% | 16% |
| No punishment | 35% | 16% |
| Up to 3 months imprisonment and no fine | 1% | 6% |
| Up to 1-year imprisonment and no fine | 11% | 6% |
| Up to 3 years imprisonment and Rs. 1000 fine | 7% | 4% |
| Up to 5 years imprisonment and Rs. 1000 fine | 5% | 1% |
| Up to 7 years imprisonment and Rs. 1000 fine | 6% | 1% |
| Up to 10 years imprisonment and Rs. 2000 fine | 11% | 7% |
| Up to life imprisonment | 13% | 0% |

1. Potential customer survey, Dalberg, 2022 and 2019; 2. Existing customer qualitative interviews, Dalberg, 2022; 3. Trafficker qualitative interviews, Dalberg, 2022., 4. Other options in 2019 were distributed as following; Blank (20%), and Others, please specify (8%)
Note: We have weighted data from 2019 potential customer survey using occupation-wise weights to make it comparable to 2022 data

# Customers' perception of risk related to technological, social and economic conditions also remains low

## Potential customers feel technology has increased the usage of finding and purchasing paid sex from young girls

- All existing customers who we interviewed said the use of mobile / internet based technologies to find, purchase or engage in acts of sex with young girls **has increased a lot in the past 12 months;** 43% potential customer respondents said people use mobile/internet-based technologies to communicate directly with the girls, a significant rise from 2019 (23%)[1]

*"It is very easy to find contacts, download apps and find girls online now"*

*- Existing customer qualitative survey*

- Majority (52%) of potential customer respondents believe mobile / internet-based technologies are used more than 50% of the time to find or purchase sex from young girls, showing a slight increase from 2019 (43%); 15% think technology is used 100% of the time[2]
- Top reasons for increased use of technology included 'due to **higher adoption of technology**' (in general) and '**due to increased demand for paid girls**'[2]

*"Very easy to simply call or see on the mobile and decide the girl and price"*

*- Existing customer qualitative survey*

## While potential customers think the community doesn't care about CSEC, half feel there is shame associated with it

- Overall, **60%** potential customers think the **community does not care or is neutral towards persons who purchase sex from minors,** showing a slight decrease from 2019 (where 68% reported the community is neutral or does not care)[2]

- While potential customer respondents perceive community care for CSEC to be low, **shame around CSEC remains same**. **51% reported** in 2022 (46% in 2019) that **they would feel ashamed if the community found out**[3] that they purchase sex from minors; only 1% said they would be not ashamed at all[2]

- Perceptions of shame are also in line with risk perceptions of engaging in paid sex services – **60% potential customer respondents said it was 'extremely risky' or 'very risky' to get caught by one's partner, friends or family;** only a quarter (25%) believe it is 'not so risky' or 'not at all risky'[2]

1. Refer to slides under 'technological conditions' for a complete breakdown, 2. Potential customer survey, Dalberg, 3. Q: Listed here are some risks commonly associated with the activity of purchasing sex from young girls. Rate the options listed from most risky to least risky - Risk of being shamed by the local community

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# Based on the findings from this study, 3 key needs emerge as priority to fight CSEC, with a significant focus on prevention and fighting tech-enabled crime

The evolving landscape of CSEC since 2019, especially in the context of the shift to private and online spaces, requires new strategies and a re-prioritization of efforts to successfully deter crimes. There is a need for a greater, and more intentional focus on prevention of crimes and on fighting technology-enabled CSEC, along with a continued push towards improving law enforcement.

*Greater, more intentional focus than 2019* ⟶            ⟵ *Continued focus to strengthen efforts* ⟶

## 1
### Prevention of CSEC in society

*Strengthen proactive measures to prevent crimes from occurring in the first place, by rebuilding empathy amongst caregivers and sensitization in parents, law enforcement, allies in the value chain of a child, and broader community members*

## 2
### Fighting tech-enabled CSEC

*Develop comprehensive tools, processes and norms to fight newer forms and channels of CSEC that are harder to track, and work with technology players to ensure comprehensive action against CSEC on their platforms*

## 3
### Improving law enforcement

*Continue to bring efficiencies in implementing laws, to ensure higher convictions and meaningfully increase the cost of committing crimes, through robust trainings for first responders/local 'thanas', and judicial improvements*

Note: The recommendations in the subsequent slides are either additional to 2019, or are reiterated from 2019 in cases where they have gained higher importance. For the comprehensive list of recommendations shared in 2019, please refer to the annexure. Recommendations are based on expert interviews, inputs from primary conversations, as well as secondary research.

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# Preventive measures for CSEC focus on activating community vigilance, equipping police to take proactive action, and deterring customers (1/2)

🕐 *Medium-long term solutions*

| Recommendation | Key stakeholders |
|---|---|
| **Strengthening community empathy, sensitization and vigilance** – *as a first port of prevention* | |
| **Launch mass media campaigns:** Large-scale media campaigns can help build awareness around prevalence of CSEC and OSEC, the tools to fight it, dispel myths, and understand laws around it. It can help rebuild empathy and sensitize caregivers towards victims, currently a glaring gap as per our analysis. Additionally, spreading awareness about the common modus operandi of the traffickers can increase the safety of the victim. For example, in the Philippines, IJM pursued media coverage of anti-trafficking operations. Similarly, the GoI ran successful nationwide awareness drives around AIDS under the National AIDS Control Program. | Large-scale NGOs focused on child-rights (such as IJM), Ministry of WCD |
| **Targeted drives for community members and parents to identify CSEC or OSEC:** In pockets of high demand/sources of trafficking, there are opportunities to conduct targeted drives to train community members and caregivers in identifying signals of CSEC. For example, building fundamental digital literacy among parents (on privacy settings, content available online and its linkage to CSEC), sensitization for parents in identifying when children might be speaking to strangers or what the signs of "grooming" or other exploitative acts might look like. Here, there are opportunities for joint community and police efforts/NGO efforts, where the police NGOs can help in such sensitization drives. | On-ground NGOs, local police forces at the district level, CSR arms of large companies in vulnerable areas |
| **Foster digital safety among children:** Providing digital safety training especially to vulnerable children and their parents in schools or through NGO organized sessions could help equip them with the appropriate tools if they encounter any difficult situations online. This involves building knowledge of basic internet safety(e.g. not accepting friend requests from strangers), privacy rules (e.g. disappearing messages/screenshots), what messages might be potential threats, etc. | Large tech companies (e.g. Google Internet Saathi), on-ground NGOs focused on child rights and/or digital inclusion |
| **Enable schools to impart awareness on CSEC:** Today, there is limited importance given to spreading awareness about CSEC in schools. There are opportunities to support schools in developing enabling environments for children to seek help, spreading awareness on topics such as good-touch/bad-touch, and helping children be more aware of potential threats. For instance, the Missing Girls Foundation runs a safety awareness program leveraging digital pedagogy. | School boards/chains, CSEC experts (for creating relevant content), CSR arms, NGOs in child safety or digital inclusion |
| **Build awareness on channels for reporting CSEC across players in the value chain:** Allies in the value chain of a child – transport operators, medical officers, hotel staff, and even fellow users of social media applications etc., should be sensitized through targeted media/information sessions to recognize potential cases –and be informed of channels of reporting(e.g.,, the CSA helpline by Childline, now replaced by a broader emergency helpline, was a dedicated channel for CSA complaints[1]) | Childline India (the NGO that started the national helpline), local police forces, on-ground NGOs |

Sources: 1. The Hindu:  Childline 1098 to be merged with emergency number 112, Centre tells States

# Preventive measures for CSEC focus on activating community vigilance, equipping police to take proactive action, and deterring customers (2/2)

🕐 *Medium-long term solutions*

| Recommendation | Key stakeholders |
|---|---|
| **Equipping the police –** *to ensure proactive measures instead of just reactive measures* | |
| **Increase monitoring to proactively identify CSEC cases:** The police can monitor ports of entry like trains and bus stations where which might be used to move victims, especially in vulnerable areas with high instances of demand and sources of trafficking. In other areas and for efficient resource utilization, they could leverage CCTVs and facial recognition to identify potential cases or repeat offenders. However, the measures should be within the data protection/privacy framework defined by the Government of India. For instance, the Government of Telangana developed a facial recognition tool as part of Operation Smile - a periodic drive to tackle child labour and missing children, which helped them unite several missing children with their families[1]. Beyond this, the police can also station officers in schools and colleges (based on knowledge of high demand/supply locations) to identify potential victims / traffickers, and also create the forum for young people to come forward to report. | Local police forces, tech companies who can provide AI for monitoring |
| **Deterring customers**– *to increase the perceived cost of committing crimes* | |
| **Improve visibility of prosecution of customers as rapists:** While the laws make purchase of sex from minors illegal, there is significant scope to improve enforcement (as detailed out in the 'Legal Conditions' section), and then making it visible to the public. Actual punishment of customers—through even a handful of high-profile cases that are widely covered by media—could help drive greater customer caution to explicitly ask and check for age when purchasing sex. As described in the book The Locust Effect, "heightened awareness fed public demand for counter-trafficking action, and stories of trafficking convictions maximized the deterrent impact of law enforcement activity. According to experts, landmark cases such as the Nirbhaya case have played a critical role in increasing risk perception of similar crimes, thereby increasing deterrence among potential criminals. | Large media houses, newspapers, radio channels |

Sources: 1. News 18: Telangana Police Use Facial Recognition App to Reunite Families with Lost Children

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**2** **Fighting tech-enabled CSEC** involves equipping the police with relevant tech-enabled tools, and engaging with tech firms to tighten platform norms

🕐 *Medium-long term solutions*

| Recommendation | Key stakeholders |
| --- | --- |
| **Equipping the police with tech-enabled tools and SOPs** – *to actively track and fight CSEC* | |
| **Develop technology for the police to tackle tech-enabled crimes:** This involves creating new tools/processes to equip the police to fight OSEC. For example, developing automated web-scraping tools (on social media/ad sites such as Locanto or Skokka) to identify repeat offenders or high risk cases. This would also need norms on leveraging intel from such tools; for instance, how many online 'hits' from the same account warrant a police intervene. As an example, Thorn, an international anti-human trafficking organization developed a tool 'Spotlight' that turns data from escort sites into a resource for law enforcement seeking to identify children trafficked on those sites[1]. | Technology companies to develop tools, cyber crime unites, local police forces |
| **Increase internal use of technology to streamline processes:** This includes processes around timely evidence documentation, knowledge sharing across agencies., and creating channels for communication allow for coordination between states and jurisdictions. For instance, the Government, under the Digital India initiative, has laid down guidelines for reforming the government through technology, through initiatives such as form simplification, integration of platforms, etc. which could proactively be used to streamline police coordination. | Cyber crime units, local police forces |
| **Liaising with big-tech companies** – *to tighten norms and platform regulations* | |
| 🕐 **Liaise with ad sites on taking down CSEC ads:** This would involve efforts to get ad platforms such as Locanto and Skokka to remove ads that constitute CSEC, likely through clear regulations/improvements in laws, or regular data sharing between enforcement agencies (on what might potentially be CSEC) and these platforms. | Classified ad platforms, central government bodies (for liaising and enforcement) |
| 🕐 **Liaise with social media platforms to regulate activities:** Law enforcement will need to work with tech players like WhatsApp, Facebook to curtail CSEC on such platforms, through strict content norms, tight regulations (around age verification, reporting requirements, etc.) and transparent content moderation. For example, Facebook is already testing tools that warn potential offenders of legal consequences, but such measures could be strengthened to raise actual flags to law enforcers. This is likely challenging given trade-offs on privacy, but remains a key lever in fighting digitally-enabled CSEC. | Social media platforms, central government bodies (for liaising and enforcement) |

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# Improving law enforcement involves creating processes to accelerate police action, activating civil society, and select improvements in judicial policies (1/2)

🕐 *Medium-long term solutions*

| Recommendation | Key stakeholders |
|---|---|
| **Accelerating police action by creating actionable procedures** – *to increase efficiencies in implementation* | |
| **Ensure communication between jurisdictions:** There needs to be smooth coordination between jurisdictions and different police departments, especially when traffickers and victims are in fragmented areas, to ensure that evidence is robust and holds in court. The same wholes true for cross-border communication, especially in cases where victims are trafficked from different states or neighboring countries, to ensure clear channels for prosecution. The Border Security Forces (BSF) have, in select sensitive areas, deployed AHTU's to help bring down human trafficking. Along with strengthening these forces, there are also opportunities to consider synergizing data-sharing norms, to prevent sites/content emerging from foreign countries. | AHTUs, local police forces in different locations, Border Security Forces |
| **Create incentives to reduce bribes:** Simple incentives, even at a 'thana' level should be put in place to incentivize police officers to solve cases and avoid bribes. For example, the Delhi police has an incentive system in place based on the number of missing children found, which led to a significant increase in rescue of missing children[1]. | State and district level police forces |
| **Develop clear procedures to tackle a case from start to finish:** This involves clear SOPs for different police departments to follow, clear guidelines on ownership, admin related information, and standardized probing protocol to ensure that cases can be solved efficiently. Specifically, it is critical to continue updating such procedures as the CSEC landscape evolves. For example, laying out how the SOPs for raids in decentralized places might differ from those in traditional brothels. | Ministry of Home Affairs / Ministry of WCD/ other Central Government agencies, state level police forces, AHTUs |
| **Ensure compulsory training for officers, especially down the to the 'thana' level:** Compulsory training on CSEC is critical, especially on topics considered valuable to officers and are critical in solving crimes, such as sensitization on the issue of child prostitution, understanding the modus operandi of how a child prostitution business is run, and ways to conduct the investigation in such cases, and the usage of tech-tools to fight newer forms of CSEC. It cannot be limited to just AHTUs, and all first respondents, especially the local thana's must be trained regularly (especially given frequent department shifts and handovers, as well as continuously evolving CSEC challenges) and any case involving a child should be treated as a potential CSEC case. Such training could potentially integrated into existing interventions by organizations like STCI and IJM. | AHTUs (as trainers), CSEC experts |

Sources: 1. Hindustan Times: On back of incentive scheme, cops trace more missing kids

# **Improving law enforcement** involves creating processes to accelerate police action, activating civil society, and select improvements in judicial policies (2/2)

*Medium-long term solutions*

| Recommendation | Key stakeholders |
|---|---|
| **Improvements in judicial policies** – *to fast-track cases* | |
| **Make CSEC a non-bailable offence:** This could help increase the perception of risk among traffickers and shift power toward law enforcement, and ultimately help drive convictions, but would require significant advocacy and is likely difficult to pass. | Ministry of WCD, Relevant parliamentary committees, state assemblies, CSEC experts for consultation on the bills |
| **Place curbs on repeat offenders:** Placing curbs on repeat offenders is likely to act as a good deterrent and prevent repeat crimes. Curbs could include publicizing the name of the perpetrator, bans/thorough checks on trains/flights and social media, etc. However this is likely to take significant liaising around laws, heavy implementation, and trade offs with rights to privacy. | |
| **Offer better witness protection and economic protection for whistle blowers:** The current CSEC model makes it very challenging to identify or prosecute kingpins, or even lower level traffickers because of the protection that kingpins offer. The power dynamic needs to be broken and while likely challenging—and potentially dangerous—the government may want to consider offering immunity, witness protection and / or economic protection for whistle blowers. | |
| **Increase the number of special courts dealing with CSEC cases:** As per experts, significant backlog of cases leads not just to delayed justice, but also greater opportunities for coercing the victim in taking back the complaint. Thus it is critical clear the backlog of cases and ensure swift action, through a greater number of courts equipped to deal with CSEC cases. | State governments, high courts, Ministry of WCD |
| **Activating civil society** – *to support in law enforcement* | |
| **Enable civil society to support communities in accessing legal aid:** NGOs or civil service organizations are often the first respondents to CSEC crimes, could play an active role in improving law enforcement through support in filing FIRs, building awareness among victims/ vulnerable families around the legal tools at their disposal, etc. Here, training of NGOs to equip them with these tools could be beneficial. | Large-scale NGOs with prior expertise in supporting implementation (e.g. IJM, STCI), local police forces |

# A few open questions emerge from this study, that could warrant deeper probing and further research to accurately identify trends and causal relationships

**1** Why has there been a **marked increase in the preference for younger girls** among existing/potential customers, as compared to 2019?

**2** Despite higher awareness of the prevalence of CSEC, why is there a **sharp drop in empathy** in the communities? If majority believe that victims are tricked into engaging in commercial sex, why do majority also believe that they engage voluntarily?

**3** Why is there a **sharp fall in the likelihood of community members to report crimes**, especially in Mumbai?

**4** **Nagpur displays significant variation across multiple parameters**. Some parameters indicate higher deterrence - decline in ease of accessing paid sex as compared to an increase in other cities, lower willingness to pay a price premium for younger girls, much high willingness to report crimes as compared to other cities, while some indicate lower deterrence - for example, greater use of use of internet/mobile based technologies to engage in online acts of sex. What are the reasons for such variations? Are law enforcement players or other actors operating differently?

**5** Why do **customers believe that locations offering paid sex witness lower raids** than 2019, while **traffickers believe that raids have increased** in frequency in the last 12 months?

**6** What role does **corruption within law enforcement** play in **reducing the deterrence** around CSEC?

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6. **Annexure**

# Glossary (1/2)

| Terms | Definition |
|---|---|
| **Adult** | An individual (male or female) aged 18 years or older. |
| **AHTU** | Anti-human trafficking unit, a specialized law enforcement agency. |
| **Brothel keeper/ madam** | A person who manages a brothel, escort service or any other public or private establishment. (S)he may work alone or with other traffickers or pimps. (S)he has direct control over the persons engaged in the commercial sex industry. |
| **CSE** | Commercial sexual exploitation. |
| **CSEC** | Commercial sexual exploitation of Children (CSEC), i.e. the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation. The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the aforementioned means.  A "child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age |
| **OSEC** | Online sexual exploitation of Children; The UK National Crime Agency notes that the sexual exploitation of children online can include online grooming, live streaming, blackmail, indecent and prohibited images of children, the sharing of these images and more. |
| **Customers** | Persons who purchase sex in a public or private establishment, in cash or in kind, from persons (adults and minors) engaged in commercial sex industry (including willing and unwilling participants, namely victims of CSE/ CSEC). |
| **Potential customers** | Persons sampled based on the profile of customers of CSEC who have a higher potential of becoming active customers (and therefore are not "criminals"), and therefore vital from a deterrence perspective. |
| **Private establishment** | A covert place where access to sex service providers (including willing or unwilling participants, namely, victims of CSE) for purchase of sex is only available through a prearranged meeting or relationship. |
| **Public establishment** | Public place in which sex service providers (including willing or unwilling participants, namely, victims of CSE) are sold for sex. It is a specific location where customers go to negotiate and receive sexual services. |

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# Glossary (2/2)

| Terms | Definition |
|---|---|
| Technology | Use of digital tools like online classifieds websites, WhatsApp, Facebook, GooglePay by traffickers and customers for the purposes of communicating, advertising demand/supply of paid sex services, recruiting victims for CSE, receiving/making payment for purchase/sale of paid sex services or paid sex service providers. |
| Online spaces | Refers to the use of mobile/ internet-based technologies like social media sites (e.g.WhatsApp, Facebook), online websites like Locanto, sharing of images/ videos through smartphones etc. |
| Online grooming | Online grooming is a process used by offenders to sexualize an online encounter with a child. Offenders will use a multitude of techniques (like threatening, to manipulate perceptions of children, so they comply with their sexual requests or demand. This also includes activities such as exchange of sexual pictures to make victim more comfortable in sending sexual pictures/videos in return or take pictures with or without the child's knowledge while live-streaming which is often followed by the use of extortion to control the child and/or threatening to share the material unless the child produces additional sexual images/videos |
| Young girl | For the purpose of this study we treat young girls as girls of ages 13-18 years. We chose to use this term in our survey questions with existing and potential customers rather than the term minors, because customers could better relate to the concept of "young girls." |
| Trafficker | Persons who spot, recruit, transport, harbor, sell or buy persons, by means of threat or use of force, to force them into the commercial sex industry. |
| Law enforcement | Law enforcement in this study is defined to include police officers, AHTU officers and public prosecutors. |
| Thana | Districts are divided into "thanas" , i.e., local police stations headed by an inspector/sub-inspector |
| Minor/Child | An individual (male or female) aged under 18 years. |
| MMR | Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR) is a metropolitan area consisting of Mumbai city, Mumbai suburbs, Thane Rural, Thane City, Palghar and Navi Mumbai. |
| Pimp | Person who contracts individuals selling sex services, either directly or through a brothel madam. (S)he may or may not have direct control over persons engaged in the commercial sex industry. |

# General Population Survey: Demographics, methodology, and limitations

*Respondents by Gender*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 837 | N = 1209 |
| Male | 51% | 70% |
| Female | 49% | 29% |

*Respondents by Education*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 837 | N = 1209 |
| Literate but below primary | 2% | 3% |
| Completed standard between 1st and 12th | 32% | 10% |
| Graduate and higher | 65% | 78% |

*Respondents by Location*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 837 | N = 1209 |
| Mumbai (MMR) | 67% | 34% |
| Pune | 14% | 33% |
| Nagpur | 19% | 33% |

*Respondents by Age Groups*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 837 | N = 1209 |
| 18-25 years | 28% | 50% |
| 26-40 years | 53% | 44% |
| 41-60 years | 18% | 4% |
| > 60 years | 1% | 1% |

**Sampling methodology**
We sampled ~800 individuals in 2022 and ~1200 individuals in 2019 across five cities—Mumbai, Palghar, Thane, Nagpur, and Pune. In 2022, the survey partner adopted a hybrid approach to recruiting people – directly on the ground and using an existing panel of respondents. In 2019, the survey was sent only to the existing panel of individuals. However, both surveys (2019 & 2022) were self-administered and were conducted by sharing a hyperlink with the respondents to maintain similarity in the style of responses. Additionally, in 2022, to ensure equitable gender representation, we provided gender-based soft quotas.

**Weighting methodology**
For our analysis, we have used gender-wise weights on 2019 data to make earlier analyses more comparable to the current one. Additionally, we checked that weighing based on other demographic cuts like location, age, and education doesn't lead to a noticeable change in response.

**Limitations**
The survey excludes the perceptions on CSEC of non-smartphone and non-internet-using portions of the population. The set of respondents vary across the two surveys (given difference in survey partners and styles of recruiting), which might lead to a change in some perceptions related to CSEC. In order to ensure that the variations between the two surveys are significant, t-tests have been performed with a 95% confidence level.

Note: 1. While we have weighted 2019 data to make it more comparable to the 2022 data, it does not imply that 2022 data is more representative. Weighting is done only to increase comparability; 2. The samples in 2019 and 2022 were independent as we didn't return to the same respondents.

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# Potential Customer Survey: Demographics, methodology, and limitations

*Respondents by Occupation*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 309 | N = 322 |
| Commercial drivers | 28% | 20% |
| Student | 6% | 20% |
| Professional services | 16% | 19% |
| Skilled/ Unskilled labour | 36% | 19% |
| Business | 7% | 17% |
| Others | 7% | 5% |

*Respondents by Migrant Status*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 309 | N =322 |
| Migrant | 51% | 25% |
| Not migrant | 46% | 67% |

*Respondents by Location*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 309 | N =322 |
| Nagpur | 19% | 18% |
| Thane | 19% | 16% |
| Palghar | 19% | 17% |
| Mumbai | 23% | 23% |
| Pune | 20% | 17% |

*Respondents by Age Groups*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 309 | N = 322 |
| 18-30 years | 37% | 38% |
| 31-45 years | 42% | 38% |
| 46-60 years | 21% | 20% |

**Sampling methodology**
We sampled ~300 individuals (in 2022 & 2019) across major red-light areas in each of the five cities —Mumbai, Palghar, Thane, Nagpur, and Pune. Respondents were recruited through individual engagement on the ground for both surveys (2019 & 2022). Both surveys were conducted using PAPI (Pen and Paper Personal Interview)* method to ensure the anonymity of respondents.

**Weighting methodology**
For our analysis, we have used occupation-wise weights on 2019 data to make earlier analyses more comparable to the current one. Moreover, we checked that weighing based on other demographic cuts like location, age, and migrant status doesn't lead to a noticeable change in response. In our analysis, wherever we have drawn a comparison with 2019, we have considered only weighted values.

**Limitations**
The survey does not explicitly include the perceptions of individuals who potentially engage in OSEC (as recruitment was through individual engagement on ground). The set of respondents varies across the two surveys, which might lead to a significant jump in some perceptions related to CSEC. To ensure that the variations between the two surveys are significant, t-tests have been performed with a 95% confidence level.

Note:  While we have weighted 2019 data to make it more comparable to the 2022 data, it does not imply that 2022 data is more representative. Weighting is done only to increase comparability.

* The Pen-and-Paper Personal Interview (PAPI) method describes any survey where the initial dataset is collected using pen-and-paper rather than electronic devices.

# Police Survey: Demographics, methodology, and limitations

*Respondents by Experience*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 101 | N = 116 |
| < 2 years | 0% | 6% |
| 2- 5 years | 2% | 6% |
| 5-10 years | 14% | 24% |
| > 10 years | 84% | 64% |

*Respondents by Gender*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 101 | N =116 |
| Male | 95% | 81% |
| Female | 5% | 19% |

*Respondents by Location*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 101 | N =116 |
| Nagpur | 24% | 50% |
| Thane | 20% | 28% |
| Palghar | 19% | 18% |
| Navi Mumbai | 14% | 9% |
| Pune | 21% | 2% |

*Respondents by Age Groups*

|  | 2022 | 2019 |
|---|---|---|
|  | N = 101 | N = 116 |
| 18-25 years | 2% | 3% |
| 26-35 years | 0% | 24% |
| 36-40 years | 44% | 15% |
| 41-60 years | 51% | 59% |
| > 60 years | 3% | 0% |

## Sampling methodology

We sampled ~100 police officers (in 2022 & 2019) across five cities—Navi Mumbai, Palghar, Thane, Nagpur, and Pune. In 2022, the survey partner recruited police officers using their network. In 2019, police officers were recruited by accessing connections from the NGOs, police commissioners, and the Dalberg network. However, both surveys (2019 & 2022) were conducted in an interview format with the survey partner's interviewer present and recording the responses on their device. Additionally, in 2022, we pushed for responses from police officers who were relatively tenured.

## Weighting methodology

For our analysis, we have used experience (no. of years served)-wise weights on 2019 data to make the results from the earlier analysis comparable to the current one. Additionally, we checked that weighing based on other demographic cuts like location, age, and gender didn't lead to a noticeable change in response. In our analysis, wherever we have drawn a comparison with 2019, we have considered only weighted values.

## Limitations

The survey excludes the perceptions of police officers who have served for less than two years in the police force. To ensure that the variations between the two surveys are significant, t-tests have been performed with a 95% confidence level.

Note: While we have weighted 2019 data to make it more comparable to the 2022 data, it does not imply that 2022 data is more representative. Weighting is done only to increase comparability.

# Even with best practices, our study had some limitations (1/2)

1. **Limited time for data collection**: Since we were trying to survey hard-to-reach respondent groups, the time period for data collection was limiting. This is particularly true for surveying police officials in bigger cities. Police officers have multiple other competing priorities and require multiple rounds of check-in over long periods of time to seek approvals for research. Additionally, police officers in India are often transferred regularly (almost every 2-3 years) and work in a bureaucratic set-up where permissions must go through multiple levels and hence, take a lot of time.

2. **Difficulty in gaining representative views of law enforcement and judiciary:** Accessing judges, public prosecutors and police officers for qualitative surveys was extremely challenging. Individuals were/are unwilling to speak to researchers given the sensitive nature of the study and the questions, as well as lower inclination to get approvals to share opinions from their respective departments. We reached out to 45-50 individuals through researcher networks and internal Dalberg networks however the rate of response was low. Excluding non-responses, 27 individuals refused interviews, while 5 terminated them mid-way. In order to ensure robust insights, we leveraged expert interviews with domain-specific lawyers and on-ground NGOs with expertise in law enforcement. We also leveraged existing NGO relationships to identify law enforcement officers for our study and expect some inherent respondent bias and over representation in questions like percentage of officers trained on trafficking in persons cases. Thus, they may not be representative of law enforcement knowledge.

3. **Limited control over selection of certain respondent sub-groups (such as traffickers)**: Accessing criminals to survey was particularly challenging since they are difficult to identify, work underground and/ or are unwilling to talk to researchers. We relied on NGOs working in red light areas in Mumbai, Pune and Nagpur to access the destination-side traffickers (brothel keepers, pimps) we wanted to survey as a part of the study, along with direct on-ground efforts. We could not survey kingpins/ master traffickers (who operate large networks for trafficking victims) as they are almost impossible to track down for surveying purposes. In the case of traffickers, close to 70 individuals were approached, and excluding the non-responses, 44 refused interviews, and 11 terminated interviews mid-way.

# Even with best practices, our study had some limitations (2/2)

5. **Data collected is limited to destination areas:** The study areas, Mumbai, Nagpur and Pune, are all predominantly transit or destination areas (even though there is some level of intra-trafficking). Therefore, the responses do not include many source area perspectives, which are important to understand from a CSEC prevention and rehabilitation perspective as they can prevent re-trafficking and thus, help sustain deterrence.

6. **Difficulty for respondents to distinguish between adults and minors**: Most of the respondents we spoke with interact with both minors and adults. Therefore, even though the survey tools were designed, and data collectors were trained, in a way that respondents were given constant reminders that the study was restricted to minors, it may have been difficult for some of them to distinguish between the trends/ motivations for minors vs. adults while selecting responses. This was particularly true for criminals and potential criminals surveyed, given the lower levels of literacy and education, and especially a challenge for self-administered surveys since we intended for respondents to answer questions in isolation to increase the probability of truthful reporting.

7. **Restriction on posing as customers to verify technological conditions**: For the web analysis, we were not permitted to pose as customers by joining these CSEC-related groups (since it may skew perceived actual demand and supply). We therefore could not verify the legitimacy of the information quoted. As an illustration, we were unable to verify if the ads we came across were legitimate and actually for minors, check if there are more minors available than quoted, quantify customer demand etc.

8. **Limited time from this study to the endline** – Given that attitude and behavior take time to change and measure, it will be difficult to see a lot of variation in action-related metrics (like conviction rates, prevalence) within a year. We have used proxies to measure the behavior, but these are based on perceptions and may not reflect the ground reality entirely. Therefore, given the short timeframe of the study, we may not be able to record any significant shifts in behavior (which is the final metric to measure if deterrence has occurred).

9. **Difficulty in identifying the key perpetrators of CSEC –** Given that CSEC is a highly organized crime with a network of perpetrators (traffickers, middlemen, customers) spreading across states and sometimes national boundaries, it is difficult to ascertain through this study which links in this network are most responsible for CSEC related crimes.

# Impact on deterrence varies across locations due to mixed trends observed across indicators, underlining need for a deeper probe in future studies

| | **Indicator** | **Variation across three locations – MMR[4], Pune and Nagpur** |
|---|---|---|
| **Demand and Supply for CSEC** | Change in number of places for child prostitution in last 12 months | 100% of police respondents from MMR[4] region reported decrease in number of brothels/other places of child exploitation in last 12 months[1], while only 67% respondents from Nagpur and 38% respondents from Pune reported a decrease |
| **Economic conditions** | Ease of access to find young girls for paid sex services | Ease of accessing paid sex services with young girls has increased across all locations except Nagpur, where a decline was observed based on the quantitative survey with potential customers[2] |
| | Willingness to pay price premium for young girls, as compared to matured women | Willingness to pay price premium (3 times and more) for young girls was significantly high across locations like Pune (78%) and MMR[4] (53%), but was just 44% in case of Nagpur[2] |
| **Social conditions** | Willingness to report to local authorities, in case of finding a suspect engaged in CSEC activities | 51% of respondents in Nagpur against 34% of respondents in Pune and 11% of respondents in MMR[4] stated that they would be willing to report a suspect to local authorities, if found engaging in CSEC activities[3] |
| **Technological conditions** | Use of internet/mobile based technologies to engage in online acts of sex | 44% of respondents from Nagpur and 26% of respondents from Pune believed that people use mobile /internet-based technologies to engage in online sex acts, while this proportion was just 3% in MMR[2,4] |

1. Policy survey, Dalberg 2022 ($N_{Nagpur}$= 24, $N_{MMR}$= 56, $N_{Pune}$= 21); 2. Potential customer survey, Dalberg 2022 ($N_{Nagpur}$= 68, $N_{MMR}$= 190, $N_{Pune}$= 61); 3. General population survey, Dalberg 2022 ($N_{Nagpur}$= 160, $N_{MMR}$= 550, $N_{Pune}$= 112); 4. MMR – Mumbai Metropolitan Region which includes Mumbai, Thane and Palghar. We have grouped these three cities together because all the major indicators and trends across these three cities are similar.

# We developed a framework in 2019 to measure CSEC in Maharashtra (1/2)

| Component of framework | Main question | What did we look for? | How did we look for them? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **ECONOMIC CONDITIONS** | • How economically profitable is CSEC? *(source perspectives not included)* | • Perceived profitability of CSEC and underlying drivers | • Qualitative survey with ~10 traffickers and customers<br>• Quantitative survey with ~300 potential customers |
| **LEGAL CONDITIONS** | • To what extent/ quality does the legal system to combat CSEC exist in Maharashtra? | • Existence of laws and policies against CSEC<br>• Awareness, access, attitudes and actions of law enforcement towards CSEC | • Desk research to benchmark penal provisions<br>• Quantitative survey of 200 police officers and AHTU personnel<br>• Deep-dive interviews with ~5 prosecutors and judges and ~5 senior police officers/ AHTU personnel<br>• Desk research on arrest, charge-sheeting, conviction and pendency rates in Maharashtra |
| **SOCIAL CONDITIONS** | • To what extent is the community activated against impunity for CSEC criminals in Maharashtra? | • Awareness of CSEC and its legality<br>• Attitudes towards CSEC victims and criminals<br>• Inclination to police CSEC criminals | • Quantitative survey with 1200 citizens to understand how society perceives CSEC |
| **TECHNOLOGICAL CONDITIONS** | • How accessible is technology to operate CSEC and purchase minor sex in Maharashtra? | • Perceived ease of access to technology to recruit, groom and advertise CSEC online<br>• Perceived ease of access to technology to find and purchase sex from minors | • Qualitative survey with ~10 traffickers and customers<br>• Web analysis to analyse use of technology in marketing<br>• Web analysis to analyse demand patterns and volumes of online CSEC |

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# We developed a framework in 2019 to measure CSEC in Maharashtra (2/2)

| Component of framework | Main question | What did we look for? | How did we look for them? |
|---|---|---|---|
| **CURRENT OR POTENTIAL CRIMINALS' PERCEPTIONS** | • How do criminals' and potential criminals' perceive the costs and benefits of engaging in CSEC and how closely do these perceptions reflect the pertaining external conditions in Maharashtra? | • Motivation for engaging with minors online and offline<br>• Awareness of penal provisions against CSEC<br>• Perception of severity, certainty and celerity of legal and social punishments for CSEC | • Qualitative surveys with ~10 traffickers<br>• Qualitative surveys with ~10 customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 300 potential customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 1200 citizens to understand how individuals (both as community vigilantes and potential buyers) perceive CSEC |
| **CRIMINAL DETERRENCE** | • To what extent do the conditions and perceptions translate into behaviors related to CSEC in Maharashtra? | • Actions/ behavior of law enforcement officials<br>• Actions/ behavior of criminals and potential criminals<br>• Actions/ behaviour of citizens | • Qualitative surveys with ~10 traffickers<br>• Qualitative surveys with ~10 customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 300 potential customers<br>• Quantitative survey with 1200 citizens |

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