Theory of Change



created in 2022



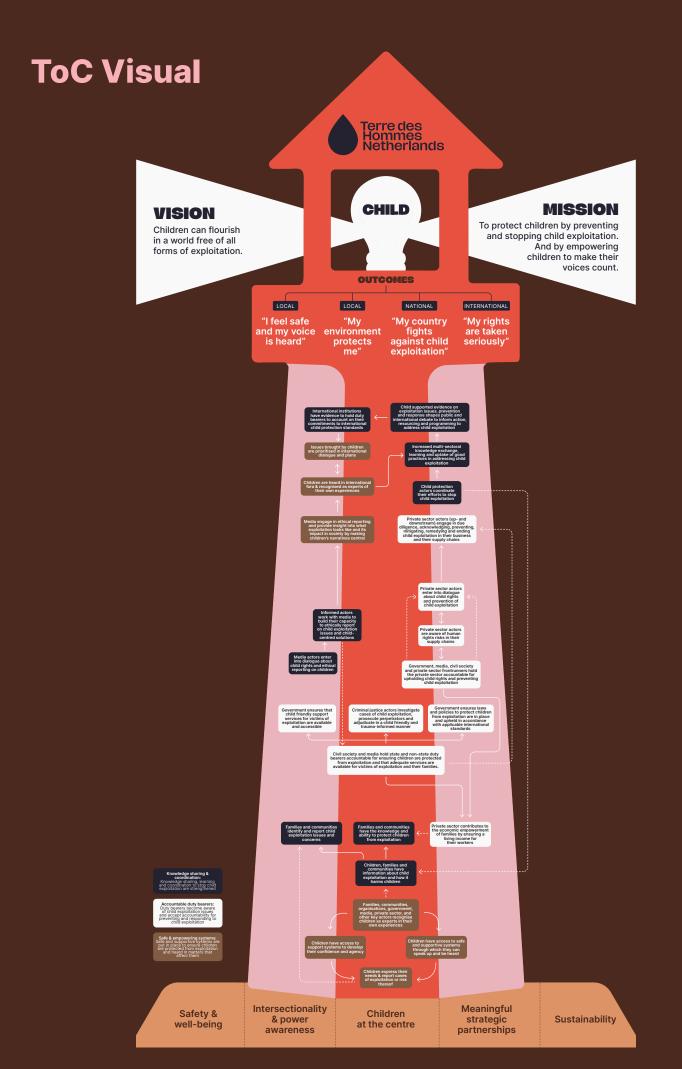


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Who are we?

Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdH NL) is an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) that works to stop child exploitation. We are a member of the Terre des Hommes International Federation, a network of nine organisations working for the rights of children and to promote equitable development. Since 1965, TdH NL has protected children from violence, harmful labour, trafficking, sexual exploitation, malnutrition and health issues, driving positive change in the lives of children through successful projects across the world.

WHAT IS A THEORY OF CHANGE?

A ToC is a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.¹ In other words, our ToC describes the main building blocks that we believe are required to bring about our ultimate desired change - our vision for the world. Each building block is in itself an intermediate outcome on the pathway to creating change. The ToC serves as a map that guides us on how change can be achieved.

Over time, we have evolved from a purely humanitarian organisation focused on immediate needs, to one focused on tackling the underlying causes of child exploitation in order to contribute to sustainable change. The evolution in the world around us and in child rights globally challenges us to keep adjusting our understanding of how change happens, and our approaches and strategies to realising it.

The TdH NL Theory of Change (ToC) is informed by our experience in Asia, Africa, Europe, South America and the Middle East. It has been developed with a global systems perspective of the change we want to see. It serves as a guide for our work towards ending child exploitation and can be contextualised to the different geographies where we work and the specific issues we choose to address.

"There are still many evils in the society that need to be changed"

(Indian teenage boy, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)

¹ Center for Theory of Change. (2011). What is Theory of Change? Theory of Change Community. https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/[Accessed 15 March 2022]

What are the problems we want to tackle?

"We need to make an important change in the world because children are exploited and have to work because of universal unfairness"

(Bangladesh teenage boy, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)



"Structural injustice is a kind of moral wrong distinct from the wrongful action of an individual agent or the repressive policies of a state. Structural injustice occurs as a consequence of many individuals and institutions acting to pursue their particular goals and interests, for the most part within the limits of accepted rules and norms." ⁵

Systemic injustice

The systems and structures that govern our societies in the 21st century have been created by (groups of) individuals at different points in time. The choices made in the construction of these societies have created systems and structures where some are unjustly disadvantaged. These choices were often made intentionally to maintain religious, political or economic power structures². At other times, imbalances of power have come about as an unintended consequence of the structures that were put in place. This has resulted in what is today a global society that is based on structural injustice and inequality - for instance gender and racial inequality.3 A small minority have power, while most live at the intersection of multiple factors (such as their age, gender, disability, where they were born, in which households, and whether they go to school). One of the ways in which this structural injustice is visible is through exploitation.4 Due to inherent vulnerabilities, children are at particular risk of exploitation.

At TdH Netherlands we consider four structural factors that are mutually reinforcing in causing and driving child exploitation:

- 1 Poverty⁶
- 2 Harmful social and cultural norms
- 3 Lack of access to education and information,
- Inadequate child protection and child friendly services

These factors are often linked, and change in one may influence change⁷ in another. We also recognise the role of climate change and humanitarian emergencies⁸ in creating and exacerbating existing risks and vulnerabilities among people, resulting in increased exploitation of children.

Child exploitation

Through the power imbalances that exist in the world, and in the context of rapid information and communication technology (ICT) developments, global displacements, and the quest for profitability, millions of children around the world today are at imminent risk of exploitation. Out of an estimated 160 million working children globally, over 79 million are involved in hazardous work, an increasing number of whom are young children aged 5 - 11 years.9 More than 10 million children are estimated¹⁰ to be victims of modern slavery every year, including one million children who are victims of commercial sexual exploitation (99% of whom are girls).¹¹ Meanwhile, 11.8 million of the world's refugees are children,12 many of whom will spend their entire childhoods away from home, at risk of abuse, neglect, violence, exploitation, trafficking or military recruitment.

¹ Center for Theory of Change. (2011). What is Theory of Change? Theory of Change Community. https://www.theoryofchange.org/what-is-theory-of-change/[Accessed 15 March 2022]

² Page. (2021). Contributing to Historical-Structural Injustice via Morally Wrong Acts, Ethical Theory and Moral Practice, pp.197–1211. https://philpapers.org/rec/PAGCTH-2 [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

³ McKeown. (2021). Structural injustice. https://compass.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/phc3.12757 [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

⁴ Young. (1990). Justice and the Politics of Difference. Princeton University Press. https://books.google.nl/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Q6keKguPrsAC&oi=fnd&pg=PP11&ots=F_4_5qtgyk&sig=80lWk500RVMfpjTorc_qmJiKrAU&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=exploitation&f=false [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

⁵ Young. (2011). Responsibility for Justice. New York: Oxford University Press.

⁶ International Labour Organisation. (2011). Causes of child labour. https://www.ilo.org/moscow/areas-of-work/child-labour/WCMS_248984/lang--en/index. htm#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20experts%2C%20the,provide%20them%20with%20adequate%20nutrition. [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

⁷ Nnah-Ogbonda. (2021). Exploring the link between climate change and violence against children. https://barnfonden.se/app/uploads/2021/03/Investigating-climate-change-and-violence-against-children_FINAL-1.pdf [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

⁸ Unicef. (2021). Protecting children in humanitarian action. https://www.unicef.org/protection/protecting-children-in-humanitarian-action [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

Child exploitation is a form of gender-based violence, rooted in global power structures. Gender norms shape the manifestation of the violence children experience and their risks of victimisation.¹³ Evidence shows that hegemonic gender norms of male heterosexual dominance over children play a crucial role in facilitating child exploitation. Boys and men are socialised to associate masculinity with power and control. It can take various forms, such as economic exploitation, whereby women's labour is not valued; political dominance with prevalence of men in decision-making roles; personal oppression; and gendered violence.¹⁴ Research shows that adherence to the mentality of justification of male dominance, justification of violence against women as conflict resolution, as well as masculine gender role stress is a strong predictor of sexual abuse.^{15 16} This affects

the risks that both girls and boys face, as well as their needs, in different ways. Girls are socialised to be submissive and accepting of the dominance of men and their violence, making them particularly vulnerable to child exploitation, particularly sexual exploitation. Gender norms also affect boys, where the expectation of male dominance is often perceived as incompatible with victimisation. As a result, boy victims can be shamed and emasculated for their experience with sexual exploitation.

Children constitute a diverse group. Therefore, all potential intersecting factors of vulnerability need to be accounted for as they compound the risk of child exploitation. Intersecting factors include age, sexuality, disability and religious beliefs in addition to gender.

"Protecting children is important because at times they feel that they are no longer safe. But in fact, every second of every day children should feel safe"

(Filipina teenage girl, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)

⁹ Unicef. (2021). Child Labour: Global estimates 2020, trends and the road forward. https://data.unicef.org/resources/child-labour-2020-global-estimates-trends-and-the-road-forward/#:~:text=63%20million%20girls%20and%2097 [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022]

¹⁰ Unicef. (2021). Ending online child sexual exploitation and abuse: Lessons learned and promising practices in low- and middle-income countries. https://www.end-violence.org/knowledge/ending-online-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse-lessons-learned-and-promising-practices [Accessed 18 April 2022]
11 Meurens, Notté. (2022). Child safety by design that works against online sexual exploitation of children. Down to Zero Alliance & TdH NL: https://www.academia.edu/84089223/Child_safety_by_design_that_works_against_online_sexual_exploitation_of_children [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022]

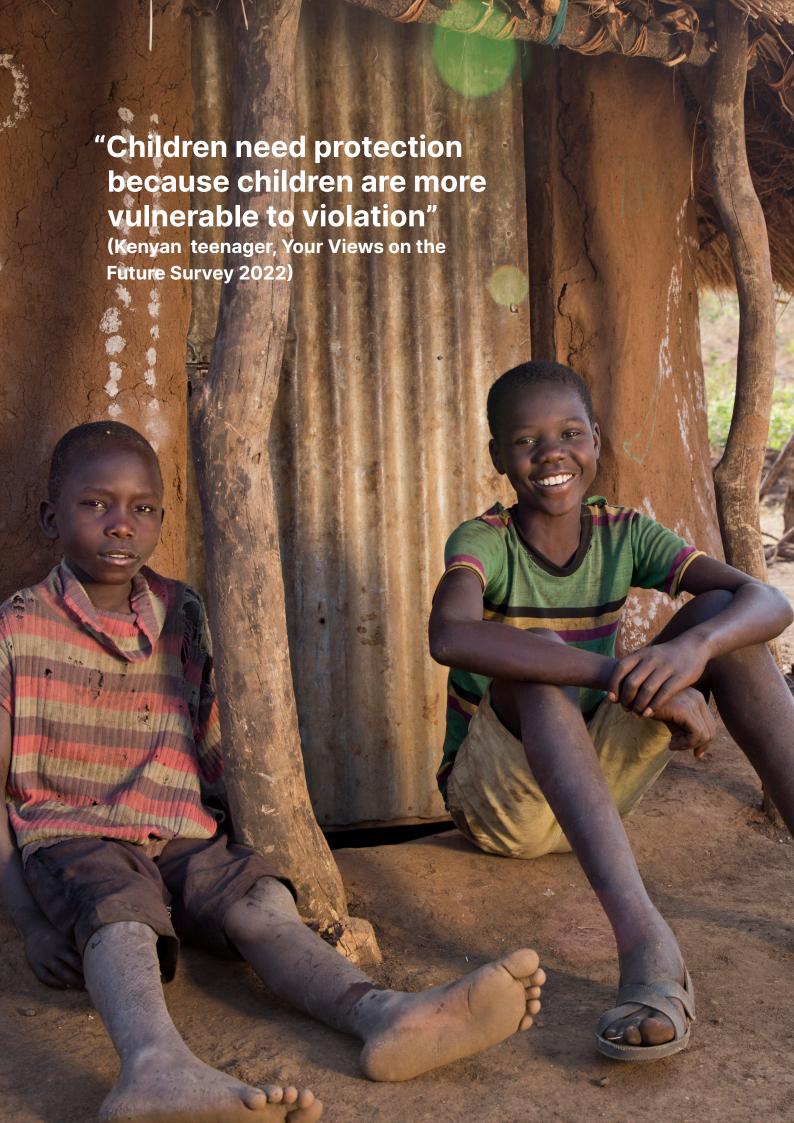
¹² Unicef. (2018). Child Displacement. https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-migration-and-displacement/displacement/#:~:text=Assuming%20that%20the%20 proportion%20of,at%20the%20end%20of%202021. [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022]

¹³ Bott. (2020). Gender Dimensions of Violence Against Children and Adolescents. https://www.unicef.org/documents/gender-dimensions-violence-against-children-and-adolescents [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

¹⁴ Hearn. (1999). The Violences of Men: Men Doing, Talking and Responding to Violence against Known Women. http://www.europrofem.org/contri/2_04_en/en-viol/Hearn_Jeff2.pdf [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

¹⁵ Díaz. (2022). Types of Male Adolescent Violence Against Women in Three Contexts: Dating Violence Offline, Dating Violence Online, and Sexual Harassment Online Outside a Relationship. https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.850897/full [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].

¹⁶ Namy. (2017). Towards a feminist understanding of intersecting violence against women and children in the family, pp.40–48. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih. gov/28501019/ [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022].



WHAT IS CHILD EXPLOITATION?

Although there are references to the term 'child exploitation' by the UN and the INGO community, there is no specific definition of the term in any international or regional standards. In the absence of an internationally agreed definition of the term 'child exploitation', different organisations have developed their own definitions.

TdH NL defines child exploitation as:

An individual, group or organisation taking advantage of an imbalance of power to get a child to engage in activities that are detrimental to the child's wellbeing and development, and from which the alleged perpetrator(s) and/or third party(ies) gain some advantage.

Child exploitation includes sexual exploitation, the recruitment and involvement of children in armed conflict, the use of children for criminal activities, the involvement of children in harmful or hazardous work, child marriage, child organ harvesting, sale of children and using children for radicalisation purposes.

Issues of child exploitation that TdH NL has worked on include child labour (including the involvement of children in harmful or hazardous work), sexual exploitation of children (SEC), online child sexual exploitation (OSEC), sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism (SECTT), trafficking of children (for the purpose of exploitation), and harmful practices such as child marriage for the benefit of some at the expense of children.

It is never a child's fault if they are targeted or exploited, and it is not the responsibility of children to stop (their or others') exploitation.

GUIDING INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORKS

TdH Netherlands fights for the rights of children and against child exploitation. Our vision and mission are inspired and guided by international human rights instruments and standards, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This ToC, the core principles and guiding values of our organisation are created in recognition of the four principles of the CRC; non-discrimination, acting in the best interest of the child, the child's right to survival and development, and children's right to express their views and have those views respected. The Council of Europe's Lanzarote Convention and the International Labour Organisation Conventions are also part of the legal foundation of our work.

Our work contributes to the achievement of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs), in particular Goals 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The targets we focus on are:

 5.2 eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.

- 5.3 eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation.
- 8.7 eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.
- 16.2 end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against, and torture of, children.
- 17.16 enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the SDGs.









What is our Theory of Change?

The structural causes of child exploitation, and the systems that drive child exploitation, are complex and multifaceted. The work to change these systems is also complex, and often requires change to happen in multiple places and among different actors. Creating such change is not a linear process. Our theory of how we can create real and lasting change for children facing exploitation is therefore also not linear. Our Theorie of Change details the different ways in which we believe change can be realised, which may follow many different pathways.

Our desired change: mission & vision



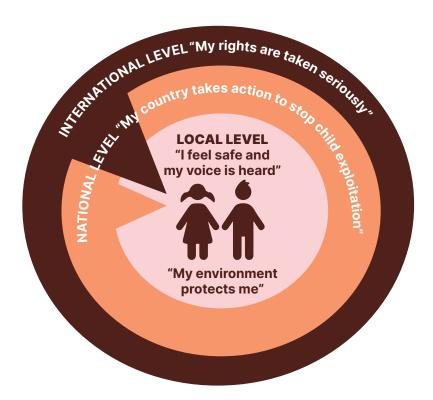
Children can flourish in a world free of all forms of exploitation.



To protect children by preventing and stopping child exploitation. And by empowering children to make their voices count.

FOUR OUTCOMES

We seek to realise four outcomes, which we believe together can create the world we envision. These outcomes take place at three levels that form the macro environment around a child - the local, national and international level:



1 LOCAL LEVEL

Children are empowered, have access to and utilise spaces where they feel safe and where their voices are heard.

2 LOCAL LEVEL

Communities address sociocultural norms and other factors leading to child exploitation, and put in place structures that support children to be heard and protected from exploitation.

3 NATIONAL LEVEL

Duty bearers actively create spaces where children can be heard and contribute to coordinated action that prevents and responds to exploitation of children.

4 INTERNATIONAL LEVEL¹⁷

Professional bodies, intergovernmental organisations and human rights accountability mechanisms ensure that duty bearers effectively fulfil their commitments and obligations to protect children from exploitation and take their voices into account in all matters affecting them.



INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES

In order to achieve the four outcomes, we have identified a number of intermediate outcomes that need to be achieved (see Annex 1 for full list). These intermediate outcomes are connected and build on each other in a non-linear way; meaning that our outcomes may be achieved in different ways, through different combinations of our intermediate outcomes.

PATHWAYS OF CHANGE

Pathways of change represent the change process as we believe it to happen. These are the connections between intermediate outcomes, based on key assumptions (described in Annex 2), that together form a pathway to one or more of our outcomes. As change is not straightforward and does not happen through the same process each time, our pathways of change are also not linear, and there are many different pathways to achieving our outcomes.

In order to describe the most likely pathways of change that we have identified, we have categorised each of our intermediate outcomes as belonging to one of three (interconnected) pathways:

1 SAFE & EMPOWERING SYSTEMS:

Safe and supportive systems are put in place to ensure children are protected from exploitation and heard in matters that affect them.

2 ACCOUNTABLE DUTY BEARERS:

Duty bearers become aware of child exploitation issues and accept accountability for preventing and responding to child exploitation.

3 KNOWLEDGE SHARING & COORDINATION:

Research, knowledge sharing, learning and coordination to stop child exploitation are strengthened.

For each pathway, the intermediate outcomes are outlined in **bold**. Each pathway contributes to achieving our four outcomes.



SAFE & EMPOWERING SYSTEMS:

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE SYSTEMS ARE PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE CHILDREN ARE PROTECTED FROM EXPLOITATION AND HEARD IN MATTERS THAT AFFECT THEM

If children are to be protected, it is first and foremost important that families, communities, civil society organisations, government, media, private sector, and other key actors recognise children as experts in their own experiences. Children need to be seen as meaningful actors and their voices must be heard if we want to identify the real issues that affect them and the appropriate solutions to them.

At the same time, children need to have access to support systems to develop their confidence and agency, as well as to safe and supportive systems through which they can speak up and be heard. These systems can take different forms depending on the context; they can be in place through family, schools, clubs, community groups, or any other structures that give room for children to be empowered and speak up. If these systems

are in place and are functional, they can support children to **express their needs**, to their families and to duty bearers alike, **and to report cases of exploitation or risk thereof.**

The media can play a key role in bringing out the voices of children through ethical reporting, and providing insight into what exploitation looks like and its impact in society by making children's narratives central. At the global level, bringing out the voices of children in a safe and meaningful way can contribute to children being recognised as experts of their own experiences, heard in international fora, and the issues brought by children being prioritised in international dialogue and action. This is also reliant on actors in the relevant fora creating space for children to speak up and be heard.



DUTY BEARERS BECOME AWARE OF CHILD EXPLOITATION ISSUES, AND ACCEPT ACCOUNTABILITY FOR PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD EXPLOITATION

One of the key roles of civil society is to hold state and non-state duty bearers accountable, including for ensuring children are protected from exploitation and that adequate services are available for victims of exploitation and their families. The media can also assume the same role. The principal duty bearer is the government, which signs international treaties committing to uphold human rights, thus assuming the responsibility to ensure laws and policies to protect children from exploitation are in place and upheld in accordance with applicable international standards. The government must also ensure that child friendly support services for victims of exploitation are available and accessible, informed by lived experiences of children. Where there are violations against children, the criminal justice actors must investigate cases of child exploitation, prosecute perpetrators and adjudicate in a child friendly and trauma-informed manner, in order to uphold the rule of law and ensure justice for victims of exploitation.

Together, government, media, civil society and private sector frontrunners should also hold the private sector accountable for upholding child rights and preventing child exploitation. Where the state has a duty to protect, the business has a duty to respect human rights. Poverty is one of the structural causes of child exploitation, often manifested by children being forced into labour to help provide for themselves and/or their families. The private sector therefore plays an important role in preventing exploitation by contributing to the economic empowerment of families by ensuring a living income for their workers, so that children do not have to supplement their parents' income.

Based on evidence that exploitation occurs in private sector supply chains¹⁹ and on digital platforms operated by private companies²⁰, inaction alone can put children at risk. However, companies do not always have the right knowledge to act, and sometimes lack the willingness to do so effectively and to respect children's rights by eliminating child exploitation in their supply chains. It is therefore important that private sector actors first become aware of human rights risks in their business and supply chains. This can happen via their own due diligence, by reports drafted on behalf of the civil society, by the government approaching them, or other ways. After becoming aware of human rights risks or violations, private sector actors should enter into dialogue about child rights and prevention of child exploitation, either with civil society, government or others who can provide the right information. They may do so either of their own volition, or through external pressure.

Ultimately, through initiative or pressure, **private** sector actors (up- and downstream) must engage in due diligence as set out by the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the OECD Guidelines for multinational enterprises. This means acknowledging, preventing, mitigating, remedying and ending child exploitation in their business and their supply chains, while communicating about it to be open about their accountability.

¹⁹ Jackson. (2019). Mapping Child Labour Risks in Global Supply Chains. https://www.unicef.nl/files/Child%20Labour%20in%20Global%20Supply%20Chains.pdf [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022]

²⁰ Meurens, Notté. (2022). Child safety by design that works against online sexual exploitation of children. Down to Zero Alliance & TdH NL: https://www.academia.edu/84089223/Child_safety_by_design_that_works_against_online_sexual_exploitation_of_children [Accessed 31 Aug. 2022]



KNOWLEDGE SHARING, LEARNING AND COORDINATION TO STOP CHILD EXPLOITATION ARE STRENGTHENED

In order to combat child exploitation effectively, it is essential that everyone - government, private sector, media, communities, children themselves and the general public - have information about what child exploitation is, how it is harmful, how it can be prevented and how it should be addressed. In some countries, a considerable amount of work still needs to be done in order to have all stakeholders identify certain situations for children as exploitative. At the same time, child exploitation and its many forms is often changing with new and emerging trends, calling for a constant review and new learning to ensure the knowledge we have is relevant and accurate.

Our first intermediate outcome along this pathway is therefore that children, families and communities have information about child exploitation and how it harms children. With this knowledge and understanding, they can identify and report child exploitation issues and concerns. At the same time, it is important that families and communities have the knowledge and ability to protect children from exploitation as far as is possible within their own sphere of power.

The knowledge may come from actors such as civil society or public institutions that help families learn how they can do so. This knowledge alone may in some cases be sufficient for families' and communities' ability to protect children; however, structural injustices such as poverty and harmful norms can also stand in the way. Families being able to access a living income, and efforts to transform harmful norms, are therefore key elements that often also need to be in place in order for families and communities to be able to protect children from exploitation.

Whereas the media as an actor can help bring out the voices of children to inform change, they can also do harm (often unintentionally), for instance by portraying children in a non-dignified way. To prevent this, it is important that **media actors** enter into dialogue about child rights and ethical reporting on children. Once a dialogue has been established and willingness is there, informed actors can work with media to build their capacity to ethically report on child exploitation issues and child-centred solutions. The media can learn how to portray children and the issues they face in an ethical way, and can be given the tools to help make children central actors in the story of addressing exploitation. This knowledge sharing role is one that informed media actors, civil society, government or others can take on.

While knowledge holds the key to change, adequate coordination must also be in place to ensure action against child exploitation is effective, efficient, safe, and reaching those most in need. Therefore, it is key that **child protection actors coordinate their efforts to stop child exploitation.** With strengthened coordination, there is also opportunity to increase multisectoral knowledge exchange, learning and uptake of good practices in addressing child exploitation.

Globally, if the voices of children are made central, and research, knowledge exchange and learning are supported, we can create an environment where **child supported evidence on exploitation** issues, prevention and response shapes public and international debate to inform action, resourcing and programming to address child **exploitation.** Once again, this requires those in positions of power to create the right spaces and opportunities for this. There are already existence that have mechanisms in place aimed at protecting human rights, including children's rights. Where child supported evidence is shared, these international institutions have evidence to hold duty bearers to account on their commitments to international child protection standards.

Who is involved in creating change?

Making change happen through the pathways we have identified requires the engagement of many different actors. We have identified seven primary groups of actors that need to be involved in creating change to stop child exploitation.

To bring about our desired change, the actors that have a role in this process need to be identified. TdH NL believes that the involvement of seven primary groups of actors is critical to stopping child exploitation.

- 1 First and foremost, it is our belief that **children** should be at the centre of change that affects them. Children have an important role in accessing and using their rights, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child. In an enabling environment, children can develop their confidence and leadership, speak up for themselves, and be central actors in creating change. Child victims of exploitation and those at imminent risk of exploitation have often experienced violence and therefore trauma as a result. In engaging with these children, it is important to embrace trauma-informed approaches.
- Families and communities are responsible for protecting the rights of their children and for creating a safe and enabling environment where children can access and apply their rights, and for directing and guiding the child so that, as they grow, they learn to use their rights appropriately. Within communities, extended families, places of worship, community/tribal elders, youth groups, women's groups, businesses, educators, and other key actors often play an important role in creating change.
- 3 **The government** is the principal duty bearer and is responsible for ensuring the protection of children's rights, not only at national but at all levels. Involvement of many government services is required for the establishment of an appropriate and operational child protection system. The government is also responsible for establishing and implementing an adequate legal framework for the protection of children's rights in accordance with the UNCRC,²¹ and for ensuring adequate social institutions are available (including schools, day care, health care, etc.).
- 4 In relation to the law, criminal justice actors have a role in dealing adequately and respectfully with child rights violations, including exploitation of children. Their roles include investigation,

- prosecution, adjudication, corrections and rehabilitation. The special vulnerability of children in meeting the law as victims or when in conflict with the law should always be carefully considered and procedures should be adapted to be appropriately based on the age, level of maturity, and specific needs of the child.
- (5) Where the government does not uphold its responsibility to its people for safeguarding the rights of children pursuant to the UNCRC, civil society plays an important role in holding the state to account. Civil society can also hold to account and/or influence other actors, and can play an important role in providing information, identifying issues, and proposing solutions.
- Media are communication channels that children engage with, and through which any information can be shared. They can take many forms, ranging from print papers to online streams. Media play a key role in bringing information to the public, and therefore has the power and ability to influence norms and opinions, and to disseminate knowledge. Media can at times be considered part of civil society, but can also be part of the private sector and be driven by commercial interests. The role that each medium chooses to take informs the role they have in the change process.
- **7** The private sector is the segment of the economy owned, managed and controlled by individuals and organisations seeking to generate profit. The private sector has an obligation to respect human rights.²² At the beginning of global supply chains the risk of human rights violations in general, and child exploitation in particular, is high. The private sector has the obligation to engage in a due diligence process for their whole supply chain in order to mitigate this risk. Private sector actors also need to address child exploitation within their business where this is within their control, for example within privately owned information and communication technology platforms and services. Engaging with the private sector and motivating the sector to change, is therefore essential in order to address and end child exploitation.

²¹ With the exception of the United States of America, all UN Member states - 196 countries - are parties to the UNCRC.

²² This is stated in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and should act according to the Children's Rights and Business Principles, respecting and supporting children's rights, to prevent harm and safeguard children's interests.

How will we catalyse change?

Systemic change is not a linear process. It is complex and context specific, and usually involves many different actors. TdH NL has identified six key strategies that we will engage in to initiate or accelerate the process of change along the pathways of change that we have identified, in order to protect children from exploitation and enable their empowerment - and influence others to do the same.

"Before doing something as an organisation, listen to the comments from younger people, especially children's words, because children's words are as valuable as adults"

(Cambodian teenage girl, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)

1 RESEARCH & LEARNING

Our core strategy is to engage in research and learning. This core strategy is essential for TdH to succeed in all our efforts to address child exploitation, and will produce an evidence base on which our remaining strategies will build.

As part of this strategy, we will:

- Conduct research to identify child exploitation issues, and generate and document evidence about where and how exploitation is happening.
- Research evidence-based solutions for stopping child exploitation.
- Create a learning hub for the collection, storage and sharing of knowledge and learning around child exploitation.

2 RAISE AWARENESS & PROVIDE INFORMATION

Prevention is key to ensuring no child experiences exploitation. Raising awareness about child exploitation and providing information on child exploitation issues can help to prevent exploitation from happening. In some countries, a considerable amount of work still needs to be done in order to have all stakeholders identify certain situations for children as exploitative, and harmful cultural attitudes that enable exploitation need to be challenged. Using the information and knowledge we will gather through research and learning, we will:

 Engage with media to disseminate information about child exploitation and its harms to the general public.

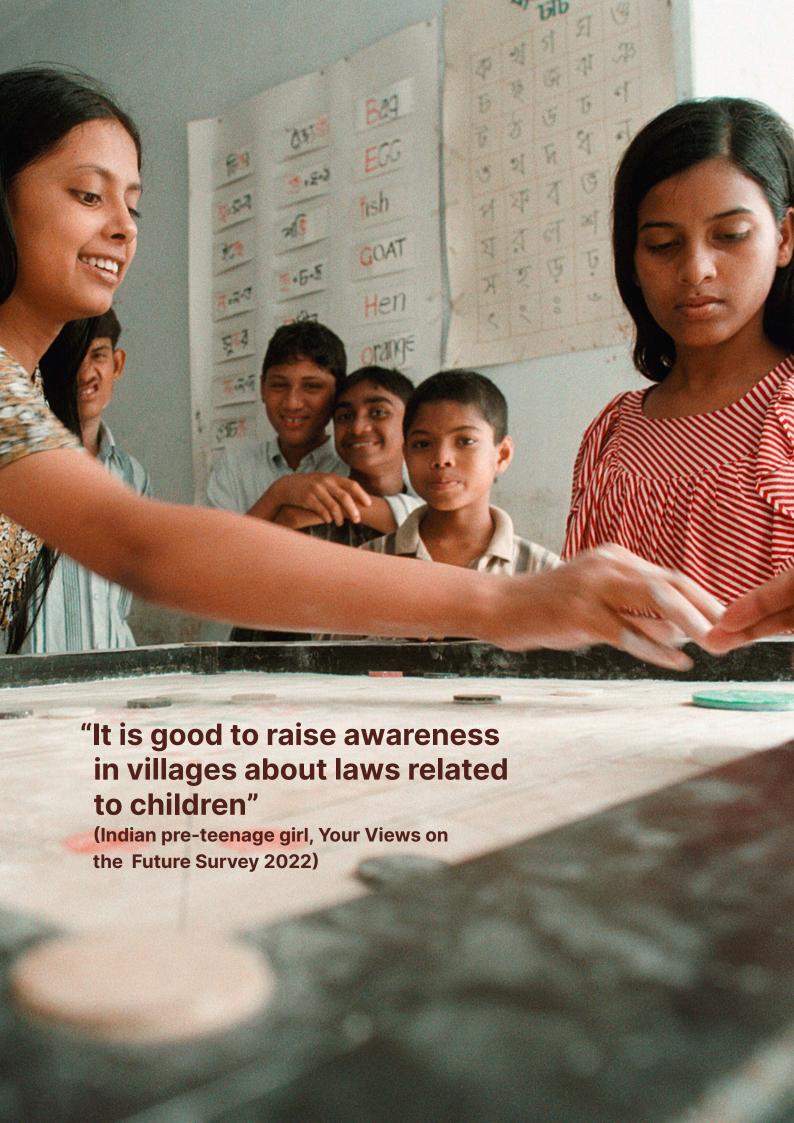
- Work with our partners to address harmful social and cultural norms by providing information and awareness about their detrimental impact on children.
- Raise awareness among children, families, communities and duty bearers about the harms of child exploitation.

3 LOBBY, ADVOCACE & INFLUENCE FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE

In order to eliminate child exploitation, it is essential that duty bearers are accountable, and that adequate action is taken to prevent and respond to issues of exploitation. Through lobby and advocacy we will put child exploitation on the agenda of those who have the power to create change, and influence them to take necessary action. This means we will:

- Organise targeted campaigns that share child-informed messaging on key topics of interest in order to influence decision-makers and other key stakeholders.
- Build movements through advocacy:
 - Join forces with like-minded actors.
 - Link local activism to global lobby and advocacy efforts.
 - Engage and utilise media to expand the reach of our advocacy work.
- Lobby with duty bearers and engage in dialogues with different actors to influence them, change attitudes and prompt action.
- Where necessary, litigate to force change in those who are reluctant to act.²³

23 In accordance with national laws.



"With the help of the organisations and its programs, more attention is given to the voice of the youth. Expert guides are also a great help to better express the voice of the youth"

(Filipina teenage girl, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)

4 BUILD PARTNERSHIPS AND STRENGTHEN COORDINATION

We recognise that realising our vision is not something we can do alone. Therefore, we will actively seek to partner with a wide range of actors that can contribute to or complement our work.

As part of this strategy we will:

- Seek local and global partnerships to foster capacity exchanges and catalyse systems change.
- Build strategic partnerships that contribute to increasing the visibility of child exploitation issues and advocating for more resources to stop child exploitation.
- Create or strengthen existing government-led and civil society-led child protection networks and platforms.
- Actively contribute to and participate in efforts to coordinate among actors working to stop child exploitation.

5 ENABLE CHILDREN'S EMPOWERMENT

Children's participation in the process of ending child exploitation is indispensable. They are the experts on matters that affect them, and it is their experiences that need to inform the solutions we seek. Therefore, we will:

 Work with partners in mobilising and organising children in spaces where they can develop their agency and at the same time learn about the risks of exploitation (in an age appropriate way); where existing child engagement structures are in place we will seek to collaborate with them and promote intergenerational dialogue.

- Work with partners to build resilience of children, families and communities.
- Support children's safe engagement with media.
- Support child-led advocacy.

6 CO-CREATE SOLUTIONS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED CHILD PROTECTION

Ultimately, exploitation happens within the direct environment of the child - in their home, their community, their situation of displacement, or through the (online) devices they have access to that connect them to others. We therefore need to seek community-based solutions to making children safe in their environment. In order to find such solutions, we need to join forces with those who know the community best, those who are invested in creating change, and those who will ultimately be the ones to experience change in their lives. Therefore, we seek to co-create solutions with children, communities and partner organisations. Under this strategy we will:

- Together with partners, civil society and other key stakeholders, develop and test models for effective community-based child protection (generating evidence from practice).
- Work with like-minded organisations to develop and test models for effectively protecting children from exploitation during humanitarian emergencies.
- Work to ensure victims of child exploitation in all contexts have access to sustainable services that meet their needs (education, shelter, livelihood, legal services, medical care including mental health, etc.).



What are our core principles?

In 2022, TdH NL identified five core principles that are at the foundation of our organisation. Every plan we make and action we take should uphold our core principles. The five core principles are equally important and interdependent.

"[Be fair and inclusive because] sometimes I feel like I do not belong, but I do not know if that is just me"

(Teenage boy, The Philippines, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)

1 CHILDREN AT THE CENTRE

Children have the right to be heard in all matters affecting them and are important change agents in the fight against exploitation. We uphold the principles of child participation and engage with children across the spectrum of our work and in the entire organisation, whilst also ensuring their well-being is prioritised.

Child safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone in our organisation. Above all else we abide by the principle of 'do no harm'. The best interests of children are at the heart of every decision we make.

2 SAFETY & WELLBEING

We take a trauma-informed approach to our work, recognising that many of those we work with may have experienced trauma that continues to impact their lives. Similarly, our own staff may have experienced trauma, or may be subject to secondary trauma through their work. In order to best serve the children we work for, the safety and wellbeing of our own staff and the people we work with and for, is important.

TdH NL attaches great importance to integrity. We set core values and behavioural codes, and have functioning integrity systems in case concerns arise from either children, staff, partners, or members of the public.

3 INTERSECTIONALITY & POWER AWARENESS

Intersectionality is a theoretical framework that helps us think about overlapping or intersecting factors that can be empowering or oppressive²⁴.

In a world of structural injustice and inequality, we proactively and continuously assess and analyse how our organisational processes and structures contribute to power imbalances. As part of this principle, we are especially aware of the compounding disempowerment of children because of their gender, disability and/or placement in alternative care. We pay special attention to implementing gender mainstreaming, inclusion of children with disabilities and minimum standards of alternative care.

4 MEANINGFUL AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

We recognise that realising our vision is not something we can achieve on our own. TdH NL takes a broad view on partnerships, remaining open to opportunities to engage with any actor that can add value to our work and goals while sharing our core principles. We emphasise 'meaningful' partnerships because we want to engage in partnerships where each partner brings their own unique value, and where that value is recognised by all.

5 SUSTAINABILITY

We strive to be an organisation that promotes and achieves sustainability - socially, environmentally and financially. Our work contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goals 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

24 Crenshaw. (1990). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. Stanford Law Review, 43, 1241. https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/stflr43&id=1257&div=&collection= (Accessed 10 Aug 2021).

How will we put our ToC into practice?

This Theory of Change serves as guidance to our organisation, and is the starting point for the design of all our programmes and projects. The ToC is designed to be able to be contextualised to any setting or child exploitation issue.



"Do the best you can to protect children and for what you are unable to do, influence others to accomplish"

(Kenyan teenage girl, Your Views on the Future Survey 2022)

WHEN	This ToC should be the reference point in the design phase of a programme/project, and during annual/strategic review or reporting moments during the programme/project.
WHO	Programme/project design team.
WHAT	Use the TdH Netherlands ToC as it is, or create a contextualised ToC to guide programme/project design. Incorporate ToC-led reflection sessions in annual planning and reporting cycles.
HOW	Ensure all projects and programmes contribute to the change as described in the ToC by adopting its core principles and strategies.

How will we know if our ToC works?

The monitoring, evaluation and learning plan for the ToC is under design.

How will we adapt the ToC?

Our Theory of Change is based on our current understanding of how change happens and how it can be brought about. Over time, our experiences and learning will lead our understanding of change processes to evolve. Our ToC must therefore also evolve over time, in order to accurately reflect our current understanding of how change happens.



WHEN	ToC reflections should take place annually as part of standard organisational processes. A full audit of the ToC should take place every 3 years, or in the case of significant context changes, operational problems, indications that a critical assumption might not be valid, or unexpected developments.a
WHO	Team responsible for monitoring, evaluation and learning.
WHAT	Revisit the ToC to determine what, if any, changes are needed.
HOW	Through a consultative process with key staff in the organisation, as well as key stakeholders outside the organisation (including children, partners and communities we work with).

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ANNEX 1: LIST OF INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES BY DOMAIN

LOCAL LEVEL

Outcome 1

"I feel safe and my voice is heard": Children are empowered, have access to and utilise spaces where they feel safe and where their voices are heard

Children have access to safe and supportive systems through which they can speak up and be heard

Children have access to support systems to develop their confidence and agency

Children express their needs and report cases of exploitation or risk thereof

Outcome 2

"My environment protects me": Communities address sociocultural norms and other factors leading to child exploitation, and put in place structures that support children to be heard and protected from exploitation

Families, communities, organisations, government, media, private sector, and other key actors recognise children as experts in their own experiences

Children, families and communities have information about child exploitation and how it harms children

Families and communities have the knowledge and ability to protect children from exploitation

Families and communities identify and report child exploitation issues and concerns

Private sector contributes to the economic empowerment of families by ensuring a living income for their workers

NATIONAL LEVEL

OUTCOME 3

"My country takes action to stop child exploitation": Duty bearers actively create spaces where children can be heard and contribute to coordinated action that prevents and responds to exploitation of children

Media actors enter into dialogue about child rights and ethical reporting on children

Informed actors work with media to build their capacity to ethically report on child exploitation issues and child-centred solutions

Civil society and media hold state and non-state duty bearers accountable for ensuring children are protected from exploitation and that adequate services are available for victims of exploitation and their families

Criminal justice actors investigate cases of child exploitation, prosecute perpetrators and adjudicate in a child friendly and trauma-informed manner

Government ensures that child friendly support services for victims of exploitation are available and accessible

Government ensures laws and policies to protect children from exploitation are in place and upheld in accordance with applicable international standards

Government, media, civil society and private sector frontrunners hold the private sector accountable for upholding child rights and preventing child exploitation

Private sector actors are aware of human rights risks in their supply chains

Private sector actors enter into dialogue about child rights and prevention of child exploitation

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Outcome 4

"My rights are taken seriously": Professional bodies, intergovernmental organisations and human rights accountability mechanisms ensure that duty bearers effectively fulfil their commitments and obligations to protect children from exploitation and take their voices into account in all matters affecting them

Private sector actors (up- and downstream) engage in due diligence, acknowledging, preventing, mitigating, remedying and ending child exploitation in their business and their supply chains

Media engage in ethical reporting and provide insight into what exploitation looks like and its impact in society by making children's narratives central

Children are heard in international fora and recognised as experts of their own experiences

Issues brought by children are prioritised in international dialogue and plans

Child protection actors coordinate their efforts to fight child exploitation

Increased multi-sectoral knowledge exchange, learning and uptake of good practices in addressing child exploitation

Child supported evidence on exploitation issues, prevention and response shapes public and international debate to inform action, resourcing and programming to address child exploitation

International institutions have evidence to hold duty bearers to account on their commitments to international child protection standards

ANNEX 2: KEY ASSUMPTIONS AND BELIEFS

About the structural causes of exploitation

- Child exploitation is a result of structural injustice.
- Structural injustices are perpetuated and realised through systems that children interact with; only by changing these systems can we truly stop child exploitation in a lasting way.
- Structural causes and drivers of child exploitation are linked. Change in one can influence change in another.
- While exploitation results from an imbalance of power created by structural injustice, those who perpetrate exploitative acts remain accountable for those acts.

About pathways of change

- Change is complex and nonlinear.
- Outcomes at the different levels of change (local, national or international) contribute to and strengthen change at the other levels.
- Children need to be empowered and recognised as key actors in order to eliminate child exploitation.
- Working with children as agents of change and promoting gender and intersectional equality is critical to achieving sustainable outcomes.
- Other sectors are better coordinated than the child protection sector, where improvement is needed.
- Support systems have access to mechanisms for reporting child exploitation concerns.
- Recognition of children's abilities and experiences will create spaces for their meaningful participation in countering exploitation.
- Addressing gaps and overlaps in efforts to stop child exploitation will lead to improved services.
- If children's experiences inform services, they will be more child friendly.

About actors in general

- Actor characterisation as described in section 4 is based on the general characteristics of the broad group of actors. •
- There are substantial contextual differences that must be recognised.
- All actors are susceptible to pressure from other actors.
- Actors are willing to engage with one another.
- Governments and international institutions have the power to drive change.
- If duty bearers make space for children to speak to/with them, they are willing to hear what children have to say.
- If children's views are heard by decision-makers, they will prioritise the issues children bring. This sometimes needs to be combined with pressure from other actors that hold decision-makers accountable for prioritising children's views.
- Child protection actors want to coordinate their work.

About children

- If children are recognised as experts in their own experiences they will feel more confident expressing their views and
- If children have access to supportive systems they will feel more confident expressing their views and needs.
- Children, especially child exploitation survivors, are willing to have their narratives/experiences shared.
- If children are empowered and have access to safe spaces to speak up, many will want to do so.
- If children are given space to speak to/with duty bearers in local, national or international fora, they will want to do so.

About families and communities

• If families and communities have the knowledge and ability to protect children, they will use their knowledge and ability to protect children.

About civil society

Civil society takes responsibility to hold duty bearers accountable, and has the resources to do so.

About governments and criminal justice actors

- Governments are signatories to the underlying treaties that they are held accountable to.
- Governments will be receptive to influence/pressure from CSOs.
- Prosecution and adjudication of perpetrators of child exploitation will lead to perpetrators being deterred from committing child exploitation, resulting in children being protected from exploitation.
- Laws and policies protecting children from exploitation are applied in practice.
- Law enforcement agencies have the skills and resources to investigate and prosecute perpetrators.

About the private sector

• Private sector is willing, or susceptible to pressure, to change their policies and ways of work to ensure the safety and protection of children.

About media

- Media actors will want to learn how to avoid doing harm to children.
- Media are willing to share children's stories.

About international institutions

• International institutions have the mandate and willingness to hold countries accountable

ANNEX 3: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

TERM	DEFINITION	SOURCE
ABUSE	The physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone.	The UN
ACTOR	A party that can play a role in the change process to create an environment in which children are protected (ToC). (see also: stakeholder)	TdH NL 2022 Theory of Change Narrative
ADVOCACY	Any action that speaks in favour of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others.	Alliance for Justice
AGILE ORGANISATION	Any action that speaks in favour of, recommends, argues for a cause, supports or defends, or pleads on behalf of others.	Betterteam.
ALTERNATIVE CARE	The formal and informal care of children outside of parental care. Children outside of parental care are children not in the overnight care of at least one of their parents.	OHCHR
CHILD	Any person under the age of 18 years.	UNCRC
CHILD EXPLOITATION	An individual, group or organisation taking advantage of an imbalance of power to get a child to engage in activities that are detrimental to the child's wellbeing and development, and from which the alleged perpetrator(s) and/or third party(ies) gain some advantage.	TdH NL
CHILD LABOUR	Work performed by children that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children, affecting their health and personal development, or that interferes with their schooling.	ILO
CHILD PARTICIPATION	An informed and willing involvement of all children (including those who are disadvantaged and marginalised) in decisions that affect their lives and to express their views in accordance with their evolving capacities (e.g. in a way that suits their age and maturity). It is every child's right to participate according to article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and child participation is one of the convention's four main principles.	UNCRC Article 12 and TdH NL own definition
CHILD SAFEGUARDING	The responsibility that organisations have to make sure their staff, operations, and programmes do no harm to children, that is that they do not expose children to the risk of harm and abuse, and that any concerns the organisation has about children's safety within the communities in which they work, are reported to the appropriate authorities.	The European Union

CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MATERIALS	A term used to describe a subset of 'child sexual exploitation material' where there is actual abuse or a concentration on the anal or genital region of the child. Both terms refer to material that depicts and/ or that documents acts that are sexually abusive and/or exploitative to a child. Today, most child sexual abuse/exploitation material is exchanged, bought, and sold online, making the online dimension of this crime almost omnipresent.	Luxemburg Guidelines
CIVIC SPACE	Space, physical or digital, where people (not governments or businesses) come together to exercise their human rights and core freedoms.	Global Human Rights
DECENTRALISED DECISION-MAKING	Empowering employees to make more strategic and operational decisions on their own without managerial hand-holding.	gocardless.
PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES	Those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis.	The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Article 1.
DISPLACEMENT	The act of forcing somebody/something away from their home or position.	Oxford dictionary
EMPOWERED	Having the knowledge, confidence, means, or ability to do things or make decisions for oneself.	Merriam Webster dictionary
GENDER MAINSTREAMING	A globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. Mainstreaming is not an end in itself but a strategy, an approach, a means to achieve the goal of gender equality.	The UN
GENDER NORMS	The accepted attributes and characteristics of male and female gendered identity at a particular point in time for a specific society or community.	UNICEF
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE	Any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.	The UNGA Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
GROOMING	The process of establishing/building a relationship with a child either in person or through the use of the Internet or other digital technologies to facilitate either online or offline sexual contact with that person.	European Online Grooming Project

HAZARDOUS WORK	Work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.	ILO
HUMANITARIAN CRISES	A singular event or a series of events that are threatening in terms of health, safety or well-being of a community or large group of people.	OHCHR
HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE	Emergency aid to a population affected by a crisis or conflict, that complies with the basic humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality and neutrality.	TdH NL
INFLUENCE	The power or capacity of causing an effect in indirect or intangible ways.	Merriam- Webster dictionary
INTERNATIONAL NON- GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION	A group that functions independently of any government. It is usually non-profit. NGOs are established on community, national, and international levels to serve a social or political goal such as a humanitarian cause or the protection of the environment.	Investope- dia.com
INTERSECTIONALITY	The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups.	Merriam- Webster dictionary
LOBBYING	Every activity carried out with the objective of directly or indirectly influencing the formulation or implementation of the policy and decision-making process regarding legislative or regulatory activities.	Lobb- yEurope
ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN	efers to the use of the Internet as a means to exploit children sexually.	Luxemburg Guidelines
RATIFIED	To approve or enact a legally binding act that would not otherwise be binding in the absence of such approval.	Cornell Law department
RESOURCE MOBILISATION	All activities involved in securing new and additional resources for an organisation. It also involves making better use of, and maximising, existing resources.	Healthcom- mcapacity.
ROOT CAUSES	The fundamental reason for the occurrence of a problem.	Collins dictionary
SECONDARY TRAUMA	A form of trauma that a person experiences not due to something that has happened to them directly but rather due to indirect connection (secondhand) to a traumatic experience.	Dictionary.
SEXTORTION	The blackmailing of a person with the help of self-generated images of that person in order to extort sexual favours, money, or other benefits from her/him under the threat of sharing the material beyond the consent of the depicted person (e.g. posting images on social media).	Luxemburg Guidelines

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN	Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.	Luxemburg Guidelines
SEXUAL EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM	The sexual exploitation of children by a person or persons who travel from their usual environment to a destination abroad where they have sexual contact with children.	OHCHR
STAKEHOLDERS	Actors that can play a role in the change process to create an environment in which children are protected (ToC). Key stakeholders for TdH NL programmes: children, families and communities, government, law enforcement, civil society organisations, private sector.	TdH NL own definition
SUSTAINABILITY	Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.	The UN
SYSTEMIC CHANGE	Addressing the causes, rather than the symptoms, of a societal issue by taking a holistic (or 'systemic') view. Systemic change is generally understood to require adjustments or transformations in the policies, practices, power dynamics, social norms or mindsets that underlie the societal issue at stake. It often involves the collaboration of a diverse set of players and can take place on a local, national or global level.	Catalyst 2030
THE UNITED NATIONS 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE	17 goals with 169 targets that all 191 UN Member States have agreed to try to achieve by the year 2030. They are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.	The United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable
DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS)		Develop- ment Goals
THEORY OF CHANGE	A comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context.	Theoryof- change.org
TRAFFICKING	The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring 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.	The EU
TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH	Recognising the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledging the role trauma may play in an individual's life.	Socialwork.

CHILDREN ARETHE FUTURE

