



Request for Proposal

Consultancy for Baseline Measurement of the Response of the Criminal Justice System to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) in Four divisions of Bangladesh

1. Summary

Purpose: This baseline study aims to generate robust, reliable data to measure and assess in Bangladesh:

Measurement of the Response of the Criminal Justice System: Assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal justice system in protecting children from CSEC across four divisions: Dhaka, Khulna, Barishal, and Mymensingh, including collaboration among actors, impact of training, implementation of laws and policies on CSEC, investigations, impact of convictions, and social service support for victims.

Building on this analysis, the study will also examine how these factors influence the perceptions of key stakeholders regarding the effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness of the criminal justice system in addressing Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC).

Dates: July 2025 to July 2026 – Detailed timelines are provided in Section 6

Location: Bangladesh – focused in four divisions: Dhaka, Khulna, Barisal, and Mymensingh.

2. Background

International Justice Mission (IJM) is a global organization dedicated to protecting people living in poverty from violence. With offices in over 30 countries and a team of over 1,200 professionals, IJM works in partnership with local authorities to rescue victims, bring criminals to justice, restore victims, and strengthen justice systems to prevent future abuse. Together we are on a mission to rescue millions, protect half a billion, and make justice unstoppable.

In Bangladesh, IJM focuses on ending the commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC) by supporting justice system actors, training law enforcement, and advocating for victim-centered, trauma-informed interventions.

Bangladesh has been identified as a high-prevalence country for CSEC. Children are exploited in both formal and informal venues, including brothels, hotels, massage parlors, public parks, and bus stations. Girls are disproportionately affected, often trafficked from rural areas with false promises of jobs or marriage. However, boys are also vulnerable, particularly those from institutional care or street situations, although their exploitation is more hidden due to stigma. In all cases, children face significant physical and emotional abuse, and many are kept in exploitation through coercion, debt bondage, and threats. To develop effective interventions, it is critical to understand the scale, distribution, and forms of CSEC. This includes estimating the number of children involved, identifying high-risk areas, and analyzing how gender, technology, and trafficking patterns shape exploitation.

IJM's protection model aims to move governments from apathy to independent action to ownership (described as "phases") in protecting people in poverty from violence. Building from two decades of experience, we identified six key dimensions to be strengthened in Bangladesh:

- **Capacity Development:** Educating and mentoring public justice system (PJS) actors.
- **Casework:** Supporting the PJS with case management and effective legal application. (Performance in this dimension also informs capacity development initiatives.)
- **Advocacy:** Inputting into policy, providing implementation assistance, and assisting with government infrastructure updates.
- **Community Engagement:** Mobilizing community members to address CSEC through perception change and collective action.
- **Survivor Leadership:** Empowering people with lived experience to help solve the problem at scale and influence decision makers.
- **Data Management:** Enabling accessible and accurate data for improved monitoring, decision making, and resource allocation.

IJM implements its Justice System Strengthening (JSS) Projects using the Protection Model, which measures progress through four key domains:

- Prevalence of the crime
- Measurement of the Response of the justice system

- Key stakeholders' confidence in the justice system
- Vulnerable people's reliance on the justice system for protection

In this baseline study, IJM will focus on two domains:

- The response of the criminal justice system in identifying, investigating, prosecuting, and supporting Victims of CSEC.
- The confidence of key stakeholders in the system's effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness.

Over the past 25 years, IJM has pioneered justice system strengthening initiatives that have reduced slavery and violence by 50–85% in large populations living in poverty. These results are driven by IJM's Protection Model, which delivers protection through six core intervention areas—Casework, Capacity Development, Data Management, Victims Leadership, Community Engagement, and Advocacy—across five programmatic phases from Initial Engagement to Sustained Leadership. We are commissioning a comprehensive baseline study on CSEC in Bangladesh and invite proposals from consulting firms and research organizations with proven expertise in mixed-methods research on sensitive topics.

While IJM's CSEC program is projected to protect up to 6.5 million people living in poverty, current targets and timelines may evolve based on available funding and geographic prioritization.

This study will generate crucial evidence to support policy, programming, and advocacy efforts to combat CSEC in Bangladesh and strengthen community protection mechanisms across the country.

3. Study Objectives and Research Questions

3.1. Objectives

This baseline study seeks to measure the two of the four core domains of IJM's Protection Model: Measurement of the Response of the justice system and key stakeholders' confidence in the justice system in addressing commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC). The goal is to establish a data-driven understanding of how the justice system currently functions in responding to commercial sexual exploitation of children (CSEC), and how it is perceived by influential stakeholders across Dhaka, Khulna, Barishal, and Mymensingh.

Measurement of the Response of the Justice System

The Measurement of the Response domain measures the justice system's demonstrated capacity and will to protect people from CSEC. Specifically, it examines how cases move through the system and how justice system actors apply Victims - centered, trauma-informed practices. Data will be gathered through case file reviews, key informant interviews (with Law enforcement authority, Judges, prosecutors and victims), and observations.

Focus Areas Include:

- **Assess the efficiency of the justice system** in addressing CSEC in the four target divisions, with attention to how swiftly and consistently cases are processed.
- **Ascertain the extent of collaboration** among justice system actors (e.g., law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and social service providers).
- **Evaluate the effectiveness of existing training** for justice system actors in handling CSEC cases, especially those related to victim-centered practices.
- **Measure the justice system's response** —covering case identification, investigation, legal proceedings, enforcement, detention and examine how these actions shape perpetrators' behavior.
- **Explore, understand, and identify** any gaps in the procedures and processes followed by investigators, prosecutors, and the judiciary in delivering justice in cases of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC), including the role of collaboration and coordination among actors within the criminal justice system.
- **Assess the provision of Social Service support** for CSEC victims, including the availability and accessibility of restoration services.

Confidence in the Justice System

Equally important is understanding the level of reliance on the criminal justice system (CJS). A strong justice system cannot achieve meaningful impact if victims and communities do not trust or engage with it. Measuring reliance helps assess public confidence, uncover barriers to reporting (such as fear, stigma, or inaccessibility), and track whether reforms are resulting in real-world change.

The Confidence domain measures the perceptions of key stakeholders—those considered powerful and influential—regarding the justice system's effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness in responding to CSEC. These perceptions are critical, as they shape public trust, influence policy, and drive momentum for justice reform. Data for this domain will be collected through structured stakeholder interviews.

Key Measurement Areas Include:

- Stakeholders' (government – law enforcement officials, public prosecutors, judicial officers and rehabilitation officers, NGOs, victims' networks) confidence in the overall effectiveness of the justice system to protect children from CSEC.
- Stakeholders' (government – law enforcement officials, public prosecutors, judicial officers and rehabilitation officers, NGOs, victims' networks)

confidence in the efficiency of justice processes, including timely and coordinated case handling.

- Stakeholders' (government – law enforcement officials, public prosecutors, judicial officers and rehabilitation officers, NGOs, victims' networks) confidence in the fairness of justice mechanisms, particularly in relation to victim-centered approaches and equitable treatment.

3.2. Key Research Questions

A. Measurement of the Response of the Criminal Justice System

1. How effectively does the criminal justice system handle CSEC cases in the four divisions, and what do discrepancies between official statistics and frontline reports reveal about underreporting, misclassification, and data quality?
2. Is the justice system in these divisions efficient in processing, investigating, and prosecuting CSEC cases?
3. How effectively do justice system actors collaborate with key stakeholders (government, NGOs, Victims' networks) in addressing CSEC?
4. What training initiatives are currently in place to enhance the capacity of justice system actors regarding CSEC?
5. What external factors (e.g., political, resource-based, systemic) affect the Measurement of the Response of the justice system in addressing CSEC?

B. Confidence in the Criminal Justice System

1. Is the criminal justice system perceived as working effectively to deter CSEC?
2. Do key stakeholders view justice system agencies as efficient in rendering timely justice for CSEC crimes?
3. Do stakeholders believe the justice system operates fairly—ensuring non-discrimination and equal treatment—in addressing CSEC cases?

4. Research Study Methodology for the Confidence & Measurement of the Response Domains

Applicants should adopt a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative techniques to address both the Measurement of the Response and Confidence domains. The research design should use quantitative data alongside qualitative insights to capture both breadth and depth. This combined approach must be rigorous and context-appropriate, tailoring methods to the local justice system environment. By triangulating multiple data sources, the methodology can cross-

verify findings and provide a nuanced understanding of the justice system's effectiveness in addressing CSEC.

To assess Measurement of the Response of the CJS, applicants are requested to propose a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data may be drawn from court records, police databases, or case management systems to measure key Measurement of the Response indicators such as investigation quality, case progression, inter-agency coordination, and social services. Complementary qualitative methods are expected to provide context and deeper understanding of the systems and practices in place. Applicants should explain how they will integrate both data types to present a comprehensive view of the justice system's effectiveness, while ensuring adaptability to local and regional realities.

To assess stakeholder confidence, proposals should outline methods for capturing perceptions of the justice system's effectiveness, efficiency, and fairness in responding to CSEC. Structured surveys or questionnaires may be used to identify broad trends, while qualitative approaches should explore the reasons behind those perceptions. Applicants are encouraged to ensure diverse representation of, key and influential leaders, and to remain sensitive to local cultural and social dynamics that may influence confidence levels.

All data collection activities under this study must follow the highest ethical standards, with a strong emphasis on victim-informed and trauma-sensitive approaches. Applicants should clearly describe how they will protect participants—especially victims of CSEC—from harm, distress, or re-traumatization. This includes obtaining informed consent (and assent for minors with guardian approval) through clear, culturally appropriate procedures that ensure participants fully understand their rights.

Data collection tools should be developed or reviewed with input from victims advocates or trauma experts to ensure they are respectful and sensitive. Field teams must be trained in trauma-informed practices and child protection protocols, with safeguards in place allowing participants to skip questions, stop interviews, or access referral support if needed.

To ensure data quality, applicants should include plans for pilot testing all instruments in settings similar to the main study areas. Pilot testing will help refine tools for clarity, cultural sensitivity, and practical use. Applicants should also outline strategies for training field researchers, ensuring consistency and accuracy in data collection across sites. Quality control measures may include field supervision, spot checks, debriefing sessions, and cross-verification techniques such as double-entry of data.

Applicants must also describe a clear data management plan. All personal information must be de-identified, using coded IDs and anonymized reporting. Data should be securely stored — digitally in password-protected systems and physically in locked storage. The methodology must confirm that all participant data will remain confidential and that consent procedures will allow withdrawal at any time without consequence.

Finally, applicants are required to obtain ethical clearance from a recognized Institutional Review Board (IRB) in Bangladesh. Adherence to local and international ethical guidelines is essential to ensure participant safety, privacy, and the credibility of research findings.

The study must be replicable at the endline at which point baseline and endline will be compared to show change.

4.1. Practical Guidance for Applicants

Applicants are encouraged to propose a context-appropriate mixed-methods design that integrates both quantitative and qualitative approaches to assess the Measurement of the Response and Confidence Measurement of the Response domains.

Tool Design: Instruments should be adaptable and relevant to the study context. Proposals should indicate how tools will be co-developed or refined through a collaborative process with IJM and local stakeholders to ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness, including Bengali language use. Bidders should also anticipate incorporating data collection tools developed by IJM once shared—particularly for the IJM Global Standardized Indicators (SIs)— and reflect readiness to align their approach accordingly.

Sampling: Propose a sampling strategy that ensures diverse representation across all four divisions. Measurement of the Response-related data should cover key justice actors (e.g., law enforcement, courts, social services), while confidence-related data should reflect a broad range of stakeholders identified through mapping.

Data Quality: Applicants should outline plans for pilot testing, training of data collectors, and routine quality control. Ethical and trauma-informed practices must be embedded in all steps of data collection.

Reporting: Proposals should include a clear plan for producing actionable, well-structured outputs tailored to both technical and policy audiences.

5. Consultancy Scope and Responsibilities

The selected consultant(s)/firm will be responsible for:

1. Desk Review & Co-Creation:

- a. Reviewing IJM and external literature on CSEC and justice system Measurement of the Response.
- b. Participating in workshops to refine the methodological framework and tools.

2. Inception Report, Co-creation report and Protocol Development:

- a. Producing inception report, co-creation report and detailed protocol outlining the problem statement, detailed methodological approach, work plan, timeline, roles, responsibilities, and ethical considerations.

3. Tool Development and Ethical Approval:

- a. Designing and finalizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments (with Bengali language support where required).
- b. Coordinate and complete the ethical approval process with relevant national/institutional authorities

4. Pilot Testing, Field Data Collection and Supervision:

- a. Conducting pilot testing and incorporating stakeholder feedback for refinement.
- b. Recruiting, training, and deploying a local field team under a designated Team Leader/Principal Investigator (TL/PI).
- c. Supervising day-to-day field operations and ensuring data quality through regular checks.

5. Data Management and Analysis:

- a. Developing a comprehensive data analysis plan using both statistical and thematic methods.
- b. Analysing collected data to generate key insights on both Measurement of the Response and confidence domains.

6. Reporting and Dissemination:

- a. Preparing interim reports, including a desk review summary, preliminary findings, and in-depth analysis reports.
- b. Organizing validation workshops with key stakeholders including government representatives, CSOs, and victims networks.
- c. Finalizing the study report and preparing presentations and related dissemination materials.

7. Ethical Compliance:

- a. Demonstrating a clear plan for maintaining ethical standards, including confidentiality, informed consent, and participant safeguarding.
- b. Ensuring strict adherence to confidentiality and safeguarding protocols throughout the study.

6. Deliverables and Timeline

The project will be executed over a series of phases with key deliverables as follows:

Key Deliverable	Timeframe
Contract Signing	June/July 2025
Co-Creation Workshop and submission of inception Report and co-creation report	July/August 2025
Finalization of Protocol, Tools development and Ethical Review Approval	August - Dec 2025
Pilot Study	Dec 2025
Field Data Collection & Team Deployment	Jan 2026- April 2026
Data Tabulation & Preliminary Analysis	April/May 2026
Draft Report Submission & Validation Workshop with Stakeholders	May/June 2026
Final Report Submission	July 2026

Note: All data, reports, and materials will be the exclusive property of IJM Bangladesh.

7. Required Consultancy Skills and Experience

Applicants must demonstrate:

- **Research Expertise:** Proven experience in designing and implementing large-scale mixed-methods studies, particularly in sensitive contexts such as CSEC, trafficking, and child protection.
- **Sector-Specific Knowledge:** Deep understanding of the dynamics and legal frameworks surrounding CSEC, including vulnerability factors, exploitation modalities, and challenges related to justice system responsiveness. If an international organization requires a credible local research partner.
- **Technical Competence:** Expertise in survey design, robust data analysis (both statistical and qualitative), and clear, impactful report writing.
- **Local Context and Language:** Familiarity with the Bangladeshi socio-cultural context is essential. Proficiency in Bengali and existing relationships with local CSOs or government agencies will be highly preferred.
- **Ethical Rigor:** A demonstrable commitment to ethical research practices, including the management of sensitive information, informed consent processes, and strict confidentiality protocols.

- **Project Management:** Proven ability to lead multidisciplinary teams, manage complex fieldwork operations, and ensure adherence to agreed timelines and budgets.

8. Application Process and Submission Guidelines

8.1. Submission Requirements

Interested applicants should submit the following documents in PDF format:

- **Cover Letter:** Explaining qualifications, experience, and team composition.
- **Technical Proposal (Maximum 7 pages):** Include an overview of the proposed methodology, work plan, sampling strategy, and expected deliverables.
- **Resume:** Provide résumés for all team members involved (maximum 4 pages per resume).
- **Financial Proposal:** A detailed breakdown of costs covering consultancy fees, travel, per diems, and any other expenses.

8.2. Submission Process and Timeline

Applicants should adhere to the following submission details and timeline. Please note that all dates and times are provided as examples and must be finalized in consultation with IJM. This section also includes provisions for an online meeting to address any queries before proposal submission.

8.2.1. Submission Details

- **Questions Deadline:** Submit any queries regarding the RFP by **May 25, 2025**. All queries must be sent to the designated email contacts, mabir@ijm.org CC: mjoji@ijm.org
- **Response to Questions:** Consolidated answers to all queries will be provided by **May 28, 2025**.
- **Informational Call:** An online informational call will be held on **June 03, 2025, at 20:00 GMT+6** for interested candidates. This call will be an opportunity to clarify any remaining questions about the proposal requirements and the co-creation process. To attend this call, please express your interest through the [LINK](#) by **May 29th, 2025**.
- **Submission Deadline:** Complete proposals must be submitted in PDF format by **23:59 on June 8, 2025 (GMT+6)** to mjoji@ijm.org & mabir@ijm.org
- The email subject line should read: “Baseline Measurement of the Response of the Criminal Justice System for CSEC in Bangladesh – [Last Name/Firm Name]”.

8.2.2 Timeline Overview:

Milestone	Date/Time (Example)
Queries Submission Deadline	May 25, 2025
Response to Queries Posted	May 28, 2025
Informational Call (Online Meeting)	June 03, 2025
Submission Deadline for Complete Proposal	June 8, 2025, 23:59 (GMT+6)
Evaluation and Interview Scheduling	By 3 rd week of June 2025
Award Decision Notification	2 nd week of July 2025
Contract Signing	July 30, 2025

Applicants are encouraged to ensure that their proposals are comprehensive, clearly addressing the methodology for the Measurement of the Response and Confidence domains, and include all required documents as specified in the RFP. All proposals will be reviewed in accordance with the evaluation criteria provided by IJM.

We invite qualified agencies, organizations, or consortia to submit detailed proposals that address the criteria above. The insights generated from this study will be fundamental in driving IJM Bangladesh's data-driven strategy to protect vulnerable children, improve the efficiency of the Public Justice System, and ultimately reduce the incidence of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.

For additional information or clarifications regarding this RFP, please contact the IJM Bangladesh team via the provided email addresses.

Md. Mohiuddin Abir

Email: mabir@ijm.org

Phone: +8801717380996

IJM Bangladesh – Dhaka Office