



CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION

THE CASE OF UGANDA

Ibrahim Bbossa
Manager Consumer Affairs



ISOC Uganda- Report

1%

reported not
using internet

33%

reported
Being cyberstalking

20%

reported
Being cyberbullied

11%

reported
online harassment

In March 2015
ISOC - Uganda Chapter
reported on
Child Online Safety:
*An Insight into Legislation and Practices in
Uganda*

Focus:

- Reduction of risk
- Prevention of harms and
- Promotion of opportunities & digital citizenship

Report recommendations:

- Need for a Unified COP law
- Greater restrictions against accessing online pornography
- Education of children on responsible internet use



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Stakeholder Assessment

#WePROTECT
children Online



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“What happens in the online world is a reflection of society at large, as the dangers children face online are mirrored in the risks children face in their homes, schools and communities.

Protecting children online is part of a growing global movement to keep children safe from violence, abuse and exploitation in virtual and physical life-settings everywhere.”

Omar Abdi - Deputy Executive Director of the
United Nations Children’s Fund



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Don't Negate Online Opportunities

There is a growing emphasis on the promotion of opportunities, and a recognition that minimizing risk does not have to come at the expense of negating or minimizing opportunities

For example, Plan International identifies seven benefits of youth internet use:

- Interpersonal relationships (which can reduce isolation),
- Further education and skill development,
- Participation in governance and communities,
- Development of technical skills for the workplace,
- Increased knowledge on topics such as HIV and AIDS,
- Building of self-esteem



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The Legislative Environment (1/2)

Domestic legislative environment relating to child online abuse are:



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The Legislative Environment (2/2)

Other legislation governing the ICTs regulatory environment are:

G. The Uganda Communications Act

H. National Information Technology Authority Act

Other legislation applicable to child protection are:

I. The National Council for Children Act

J. The Domestic Violence Act

K. Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act



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Policy environment

NITA has developed the Uganda Cyber Security Strategy.

The National IT Policy (February 2014) recognizes the need for a national information security strategy which outlines mandatory minimum security controls for public and private organizations that use, own or operate protected computers, official communications and personal data



International and continental instruments relevant to online sexual exploitation of children that Uganda is party to,

- A. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- B. Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- C. ILO Convention No. 182
- D. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)
- E. Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- F. African Youth Charter



Tracking, Referral and Response (RTRR) Guidelines *on Violence Against Children in Schools*

The Ministry of Education and Sports in May 2014 released its RTRR guidelines. This policy outlines the ways in which different cases of violence against children (including sexual, physical and psychological or emotional violence) should be reported, tracked and responded to, and outlines the centres of responsibility (e.g. police units, educators) for each stage of the process. It's a useful tool for also reporting Online Child Abuse



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Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP) Handbook:

On April 27th 2016 the DPP released its handbook which serves to guide prosecutors and other actors in the criminal justice sphere on how to handle child-related cases in a way that promotes 'child-friendly justice' and a child-rights focused approach.

It aims to assist criminal justice actors to bring the handling of cases more into line with the requirements set out in the;

- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC),
- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and
- Children's Act.

The handbook was developed with support from UNICEF, the UK government and Justice.

The handbook covers children who come into contact with the law as victims of crime (including crimes related to online child abuse) and witnesses to crime; as well as those who are in conflict with the law as accused persons.



Future policy and legislation plans

- The Law Reform Commission reports that they plan is to developing new legislation this year on child online protection.
- Uganda has an Integrated Child Protection Policy in draft format (based on the country's Child Protection Action Plan).
- There is also a draft Information Security Strategy dealing with cyber security, although this does not address child online exploitation.
- The National Action Plan currently being developed deals with child online protection.



What the internet is used for by children in Uganda



According to the Internet Society- Uganda (2015) research study



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Social media sites most visited

According to the Internet Society- Uganda
(March 2015) research study



39%



25%



6%



15%




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Parental and teacher supervision and guidance *Of Children's internet use*

- There is a prevailing lack of care attitude towards children's internet use.
- There is a huge digital divide between children and adults, parents being described by children as 'stuck in analogue', not aware of what children are using the internet for, or the risks involved.
- For parents, 'the media is television'. This leads to a lack of supervision of their children's internet use, *with parents careless with their own phones, and neither parents nor teachers taking the time (or having the requisite knowledge) to supervise and guide children's internet use, or track what they are doing online.*
- Children also reported that in situations where there is some level of supervision, they will frequently hide their phones, and utilise passwords that parents cannot bypass.



The idea that teachers could be an appropriate avenue to report incidents was met with much derision. That because phones are banned in schools, students could not report to teachers when they saw something offensive or were sent hurtful messages.

Looking at Research and data on COP

In the study by the Internet Society, the biggest challenges on the internet reported by children were **cyberstalking** (33%), **cyberbullying** (20%), and **harassment** (11%), with no mention at all of issues such as **pornography, child pornography,** with only a small mention of '**online abusing**'



Driving factors behind COA

- **Fall in parental and family supervision**
 - Pressures of modern life and the need to make a living, do not have the time to supervise their children
 - Children are not relating information to their parents, or teachers, on what is occurring online
- **Reporting of issues**
 - Children are not relating information to their parents, or teachers, on what is occurring online



INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS & STAKEHOLDERS

Institutions/stakeholders in place working in the realm of Child Sexual Exploitation & Abuse and other forms of child abuse.

- a) Coordinating body;
- b) Government institutions;
- c) Industry; and
- d) Civil society

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs (MoIA)
- Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development (MoGLSD)
- Internal Security Organization (ISO)
- INTERPOL
- Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)
- Directorate of Public Prosecutions (DPP)
- Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs (MoJCA)
- Uganda Law Reform Commission (ULRC)
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA)
- Uganda Police Force (UPF)
- The Uganda Communications Commission (UCC)
- The National Information Technology Authority (NITA-U)
- Pornography Control Committee
- The National Council for Children
- Civil Society
- Child Protection Committees**
- Industry
- Working Group to Prevent and Respond to Online CSAE

Working Group to Prevent and Respond to Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation

A Working Group has been established to combat online child sexual abuse and exploitation, which acts to:

- Serve as focal points in the respective Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) on online child sexual abuse and exploitation to promote a coordinated response.
- Promote awareness-raising by the MDAs about the existence and dangers of the crime & prevention.
- Mobilize logistical support for countermeasure activities
- Support rescue and rehabilitation of victims, and any other counter measures against the crime by the respective MDAs duty bearers.



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PREVENTION & RESPONSE INTERVENTIONS (1/5)

Child Sexual Abuse Reporting Page (CSARP)

NITA-U in collaboration with the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) has established an online mechanism where citizens in Uganda can report online sexual abuse content

National Computer Emergency Response

Team/Coordination Centre

The National Computer Emergency Response Team/Coordination Centre (CERT) is an initiative of NITA and the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology

Police prevention activities

The Child and Family Protection Unit (CFPU) of the



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PREVENTION & RESPONSE INTERVENTIONS (2/5)

Child Helpline

The Child Helpline 116, established in 2013 works under the auspices of the MGLSD and forms part of the child protection service through provision of a hotline for children, parents, and other members of the public to report incidents of abuse.

U-Report System

UNICEF's U-Report system – a text-based social platform available for young people to voice their concerns about their lives – is said to currently have a network of 300 000 users, with approximately 100-150 new users joining every day through CSO, large



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PREVENTION & RESPONSE INTERVENTIONS (3/5)

Adolescent Girls' Programme/Initiative – Ministry of Gender

The Ministry of Gender has set up an adolescent girls initiative, which is being championed by the Office of the First Lady

UNICEF content portal

UNICEF is working with the Ministry of Education to support the use of mobile technology in the classroom. To date, computer labs have been installed in more than 1000 secondary schools in Uganda. UNICEF has a content portal and is responsible for providing useful content for learners on these computers.

UNICEF Gaming Initiative

UNICEF is developing a game with a "Choose your own adventure" type of approach – in order to raise awareness about child online safety. The game can be downloaded onto both feature and smart cell phones. The game will be designed to



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PREVENTION & RESPONSE INTERVENTIONS (4/5)

The Family and Children's Courts

Established under the Children's Act, Family and Children's Courts are in place to handle cases affecting/involving children. They are however currently only in place in Kampala with further establishment across all districts still to take place.

Witness protection

UNICEF supported the judiciary to install audio visual system to enhance protection of children in contact with the law.

Civil society responses

There are many CSOs working in the field of child protection, with some now working in the field of online child protection. Activities mostly involve education in



PREVENTION & RESPONSE INTERVENTIONS (5/5)

The Internet Society

The Internet Society-Uganda Chapter organizes the Internet Governance Forum (a forum for stakeholders to share internet governance best practices), and

The promotion of child online safety through the development of its Online Safety Education Kit, an educational resource to be used to “sensitise and prevent online victimisation of young children and youth by teaching them how to stay safer online and offline”



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Toll Free – 0800 133 911



ucc@ucc.co.ug



www.ucc.co.ug



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