



PROTECTING CHILDREN IN INDONESIA FROM ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: THE WAY FORWARD

Children in Indonesia are facing harm from online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA). Two percent of internet-using children aged 12-17 in Indonesia were found to have been subjected to clear instances of online sexual exploitation and abuse in just the past year. There is considerable evidence of the manufacture, possession, and distribution of child sex abuse materials. Crimes of online child sexual exploitation and abuse often go unreported, prevention efforts are limited, investigation capacities fall well short of the needs, and few child victims are cared for adequately. The government, public institutions, and society can all do more to respond to OCSEA and disrupt the harm it is causing to children in Indonesia.

Recommended actions

Combating OCSEA and providing better support to victims requires comprehensive and sustained action from Indonesia's government, law enforcement agencies, justice and social support professionals, the tech industry, and communities. To support the implementation of a comprehensive and sustained response to OCSEA, *Disrupting Harm in Indonesia* lays out an actionable blueprint to protect children through a series of evidence-based recommendations spanning legislation, law enforcement, justice processes, social services, and public awareness. These recommendations call on the Government of Indonesia and its partners to act, educate and invest.

Act

- Amend Indonesian legislation to ensure that laws explicitly criminalise live-streaming of child sexual abuse, online sexual extortion, online grooming of children for sexual purposes, and knowingly attending pornographic performances involving children.
- Diversify and improve the mechanisms for formal reporting of OCSEA by children and adults by including community-level mechanisms and programmes which encourage dialogue, help-seeking, and formal reporting by peers.
- Increase awareness of helplines as sources of information both among children and adults.
- Equip and train law enforcement units to effectively investigate OCSEA and promote child-friendly approaches for interviewing.
- Improve the triaging of CyberTips passed on to Indonesian law enforcement and consider re-connecting to INTERPOL's International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database. The ICSE database is an intelligence and investigative tool that allows specialised investigators to share data on cases of child sexual abuse.
- Promote and enhance the use of child-friendly procedures during criminal proceedings and address all the factors contributing to prolonged investigations and trials in OCSEA cases.

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- Provide a standard information package to all victims and their caregivers in cases related to child sexual exploitation and abuse (including OCSEA), which informs them of their rights, for example, their right to compensation and of the court procedures.
- Increase the availability of services to OCSEA victims and enhance capacity and cooperation among child protection service providers.
- Consult with internet service providers, law enforcement, privacy experts, and the technology companies to develop realistic, mandatory regulations for filtering, removing, and blocking CSAM, addressing grooming and live-streaming of sexual abuse, and complying with legally approved requests for user information in OCSEA cases.
- Enhance data collection and monitoring of OCSEA cases within law enforcement.
- Ensure that awareness-raising and educational programmes reach all children, including younger children, those in rural areas, those not in school, children with disabilities, and children engaged in migration.
- Empower teachers and caregivers to guide children's internet use and integrate digital literacy and cyber safety into school curricula and positive parenting programmes. Support older caregivers, many of whom have never used the internet.
- Foster an environment in which children are more comfortable having conversations about sexuality, including asking adults for advice. This will help children feel safe enough to report and seek help when experiencing sexual harassment or abuse.
- Educate all law enforcement personnel, justice professionals, and social service frontline workers regarding OCSEA and appropriate handling of OCSEA cases with a focus on child-friendly approaches.

Educate

- Raise public awareness of child sexual exploitation and abuse, including explaining the roles that digital technology may play in creating risks of OCSEA.
- Teach caregivers about digital platforms/technologies and online safety, including the risks of OCSEA. Support caregivers to develop the skills to engage with the children in their care in age-appropriate and culturally-sensitive conversations around sex and sexuality, consent, and boundaries with a view to encouraging dialogue about recognising, disclosing, and responding to sexual abuse and exploitation both online and offline.
- Provide children with comprehensive digital literacy and safety training, including information about what they can do if they are being bothered online and how to change their privacy settings and block people from contacting them.

Invest

- Allocate sufficient financial and human resources to all relevant institutions and units for the actions and educational efforts outlined above. For example, appoint and train increased numbers of criminal justice professionals who can handle children's cases and ensure that a regular and recurring budget is allocated to support regular training.
- Invest in resources for the conduct of proactive investigations of OCSEA and the use of the latest technology in the triage and investigation of OCSEA.
- Increase access to, and the availability of, support services for victims of OCSEA by ensuring that Unit Pelaksana Teknis Daerah Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak (UPTD PPA) are established in every region and have sufficient human resources.

Key insights

Through various research activities, *Disrupting Harm in Indonesia* has identified six key insights:

1. In the past year, at least 2% of internet-using children aged 12–17 in Indonesia were subjected to clear examples of online sexual exploitation and abuse that included blackmailing children to engage in sexual activities, sharing their sexual images without permission, coercing them to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. This number likely reflects underreporting.
2. According to the household survey, OCSEA offenders are most often people already known to the child – often an adult friend, a peer or a family member. These crimes may occur either while children are spending time online, or in person but involving technology.
3. Children experienced online sexual exploitation and abuse mainly through major online services such as WhatsApp, Facebook and Facebook Messenger.
4. Children who were subjected to OCSEA tended to confide in people within their interpersonal networks, particularly their friends and siblings. Helplines and the police were avenues almost never used to seek help.
5. The mandated government agencies in Indonesia acknowledge that OCSEA is a threat, but government efforts to address it need to be more extensive. The capacities of law enforcement agencies, justice professionals and social support workers to provide victims of OCSEA with access to child-friendly justice and support services is limited by the low levels of awareness of OCSEA, insufficient human and budgetary resources, and inadequate technical knowledge and skills.
6. Although existing legislation, policies and standards in Indonesia include provisions relevant to OCSEA, further legislative action is needed to criminalise all OCSEA-related acts.

The full report and complete list of recommendations can be found at: www.end-violence.org/disrupting-harm

About Disrupting Harm

Disrupting Harm in Indonesia is part of an unprecedented, multi-country research project on OCSEA, focusing on 13 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa and Southeast Asia. This large-scale research project draws on the expertise of ECPAT, INTERPOL, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, and their global networks of partners. *Disrupting Harm* is supported by the [Fund to End Violence Against Children](#), through its Safe Online initiative.

In Indonesia, research took place from early 2020 to early 2021, including interviews with high-level representatives from the Government of Indonesia and a range of public bodies and organisations

active in the country. Research activities included a comprehensive analysis of the legislation, policy and systems addressing OCSEA in Indonesia, as well as interviews with justice actors and frontline service providers, and a nationally representative household survey with internet-using children and their caregivers.

Data from these multiple sources were compared and triangulated to produce the *Disrupting Harm in Indonesia* national report. Recommendations from the data were presented and discussed at a national consultation in an online event in March 2022.