**Interim report Promoting child online safety in Uganda**

**Organization:** Internet society Uganda Chapter

**Project Title:** Promoting Child Online Safety in Uganda

**Date:** May 11, 2014

**About the project:** The project aims at promoting online child safety in Uganda through adopting a multi-stakeholder approach. This is being done through comprehensive research on online safety in Uganda – especially in how primary schools are promoting online safety among their pupils; capacity building for both children and educators; and awareness creation for the young generation and advocating for stronger policies on online child safety in Uganda. Main project beneficiaries include young children in schools, teachers, parents, and policy makers and children activists in Uganda.

**Concrete actions (activities) and milestones achieved**

**Research:** We undertook research current literature on online safety and current policy and regulatory frameworks in Uganda. Most of the research has been done through desk research and holding focus group discussions is selected schools. A Policy analysis report on how current ICT policies promote child online safety in Uganda has been done. This wll be integrated in the final report from the survey to be undertaken between May – June.

A simple survey tool has been developed that is going to be disseminated in selected schools to establish the status of online safety in these schools. (Please see annex 2) data collected from this survey will feed into the user guide on how to stay safe online. This guide shall play a vital role in the capacity building and awareness creation activities.

**Capacity building:** to date, we have undertaken two capacity building sessions at Ambrosoli International School. The first engagement involved reaching out to teachers at the school. This activity was undertaken in partnership with the Ministry of ICT Uganda and the National Information Technology Authority Uganda (NITA-U). The meeting involved discussions on child online safety measure led by the Ministry of ICT. In these discussions, teachers were taken into the current ICT policies and how they address child online safety. Among the policies identified was the Computer Misuse Act, 2011, where key terms such as cyber bullying, cyber stalking and child pornography were addressed.

Further, teachers were taken through the Ambrosoli International school child online safety programme and how they can use the computer laboratory to learn more about child online safety measures. While discussing the question ‘How can we work together to promote a safer interne for our children?’ teachers called for a more robust approach to include repackaging information to suit different audiences that is children, educators and parents.

**Sensistisation campaign**: In celebration of the Safer Internet Day 2014, the Chapter conducted a reach out session at Ambrosoli International School on February 14, 2014.[[1]](#footnote-1) This followed our first engagement in November 2013, during the capacity building session with the teachers who recommended that we reach out to the parents as well. In order to make the event a success, we worked with the school IT officer to arrange for the day’s activities. Activities at the schoold included pupils presenting the projects on how to stay safe online followed by a dialogue with the parents. Parents were given tips on how to protect their children online as well as resources including the legal and regulatory measures available in the country on the subject.[[2]](#footnote-2)

Also on February 14, 2014, we released a press statement in commemoration of the Safer Internet Day 2014.[[3]](#footnote-3)

On April 03, 2014, we went to Gayaza High School to celebrate the Safer Internet Day 2014, with our partners at NITA-U and the Common Wealth Peoples Association of Uganda (CPAUG)[[4]](#footnote-4).

A key strategy in this project shall be working with multiple stakeholders, both state and non-state especially during the advocacy activities. We have developed strategic partnerships with the Ministry of ICT Uganda and NITA – U in conducting awareness exercises on the need for child online protection. We have participated in national cyber security awareness meetings and presented about the project, its objectives as well as the need for child online protection in Uganda.[[5]](#footnote-5) [[6]](#footnote-6)

In June 2013, we participate in a survey conducted by the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) on behalf of the ITU - ITU/IWF Country Readiness Assessment to establish Hotline provision for reporting online child sexual abuse content (CSAC) – Uganda. As a result of our work, the chapter was recommended as one of IWF’s preferred NGO to raise awareness of the issues of child sexual abuse content hosted globally but accessed by Ugandan citizens.

We have also been approach by the Terre des Hommes Netherlands[[7]](#footnote-7), an organization that works to stop child exploitation seeking partnership in promoting child online protection in Uganda. The organization provides small grants to support organisations working in this area. A new call will be launched this year and ISOC-Uganda was advised to apply.

**Lessons learned and challenges**

Delayed response from the targeted schools: - From the three schools initially identified, only 2 schools have officially come on board – that is Ambrosoli International School and Gayaza High School. The rest have not responded to our request. However, two new schools have been identified and we shall work with these in the last phase of the research and dissemination exercise. The identified two schools are currently participating in programmes carried out by one of our partners – the Common Wealth People’s Asscocitation of Uganda (CPAUG). These will be approached in their second term of this calendar year (June 2014)

Next steps

* Finalise research by distributing survey questionnaire to the targeted schools May – June 2014
* Finalise developing of the child online protection toolkit and distribute among the identified stakeholders in June 2014
1. ISOC – U (2014); Safer Internet Day 2014 Celebrations at Ambrosoli International School (Uganda) http://internetsociety.ug/safer-internet-day-2014/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See; ISOC- U member presenting to teachers at Ambrosoli International school, https://www.facebook.com/internetsocietyug/photos/a.563305230413002.1073741828.138553816221481/600497226693802/?type=1 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. ISOC – U (2014); Safer Internet Day 2014 Press Release (Uganda), http://internetsociety.ug/safer-internet-day-2014-press-release-uganda/ [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. CERT –U (2014); Organization: Safer Internet Day 2014, http://cert.ug/article/safer-internet-day-2014) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. CERT-U (2014; Child Online Protection, <http://cert.ug/publication/child-online-protection> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. NITA – U (2013); National Information Security Strategy Dissemination, http://www.nita.go.ug/index.php/features/327-nsecurity [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Terre des Hommes Netherlands; http://www.terredeshommesnl.org/en [↑](#footnote-ref-7)