The Philippines: Multi-stakeholder collaboration for social change

Summary

The Impact good practice examples aim to demonstrate how different research teams from the Global Kids Online network planned their knowledge exchange and impact strategies in a way that matches the particular country contexts, responds to the challenges faced, and draws on the resources available to them. The examples introduce the key Global Kids Online findings and the challenges presented by the country context, outline the decisions made regarding impact priorities and the choice of impact strategy and actions, and discuss the outcomes and example activities. Some ways in which impact has been measured are also outlined mostly related to short- and medium-term impact.

The Philippines country example highlights UNICEF's strategy to create a multi-stakeholder collaboration to tackle child sexual exploitation online and aims to enhance the current child protection provisions. The main efforts are focused on improving child protection law and policy, developing children's digital skills and risk awareness, and improving parent mediation via parenting support interventions. The country example also showcases the benefits of multi-stakeholder collaboration and how this can be used to create a wide-ranging platform for change.

Global Kids Online research findings

The Global Kids Online Philippines team is taking a phased approach to generating the research evidence. After working on the research protocol (including getting its approval) and conducting a pilot study in the first phase, the second phase entails conducting a nationally representative study of 2,250 children aged 9-17 in collaboration with De La Salle University. The project will offer an in-depth understanding of children's online experiences, looking both at the risks and opportunities and their impact on child wellbeing. In addition, the project will be one of the first to explore in-depth how children in conflict zones use digital technology and how their online experiences interact with this challenging living environment. It is crucial to understand whether technology can be leveraged to create new opportunities for those who are more vulnerable, but also if children living in conflict zones may be exposed to new forms of online risk.

While the nationally representative study is under way, the findings from the pilot (which was conducted in tandem with the research protocol) suggest that the average age of first internet use is nine. Over three-quarters of surveyed children (76%) use free internet when they can, 41% use pay-as-you-go and 29% use prepaid internet (Byrne et al., 2016; Tan et al., 2016). The majority of children go online at home (62%) or at school (54%), and access the internet most often by a smart phone (61%) or a tablet (44%). More than half of the children learn something new by searching online (56%), and the most popular activities include visiting a social networking site

(68%), watching videos (61%) or playing games (51%). Less than a third of the children report being upset by something happening online (29%), and 32% say that they have seen sexual images on the internet. When something upsetting happens, children most often turn to friends (39%) or parents (32%).

Challenges presented by the Philippine context

In the Philippines country project particular emphasis is placed on the challenge of online violence, sexual exploitation and abuse of children, an area where UNICEF Philippines has already conducted high-quality research and advocacy. The Philippines is one of 17 countries in the UNICEF Global Programme to protect children from online sexual exploitation, and in a recent publication (UNICEF, 2016), the country was described as 'the global epicentre of the live-stream sexual abuse trade'. Driven by poverty, deprived areas in particular become 'hotspots' for this kind of international trade. Child sexual abuse materials were only made illegal in the Philippines in 2009 (i.e., with the Anti-Child Pornography Act), and the legal protection and prosecution framework remains insufficient. With the age of consent still 12, the country continues to face challenges in protecting vulnerable children and prosecuting their abusers.

Deciding on impact priorities

UNICEF plans to use the project and the findings as part of its campaign for a holistic approach to tackling child sexual exploitation online (Ardivilla, 2017). The priorities of the research team are to use the results to guide policy-makers in amending and enhancing current child protection laws and in effectively implementing child protection laws, as well as in developing or enhancing modules for the protection of children from online threats that will be part of the curriculum for grade school and high school students. To achieve this, the team has been trying to engage a wide range of stakeholders throughout the research process (Ardivilla, 2017).

Impact strategy and actions

- **Multi-stakeholder engagement:** Aiming to strengthen collaboration among industry, government and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for the protection of children against online sexual abuse and exploitation.

- **Expanding the protection focus:** Both policy and non-government initiatives currently focus exclusively on protection. The findings can be used to expand this focus and to highlight the importance of online opportunities, digital literacy and parental mediation.

- **Parenting support interventions:** The approach to parenting in the Philippines is fragmented, so parenting support interventions is an important aim of the project. The goal is to harmonise activities across the range of initiatives and approaches. Moreover, a behaviour change strategy based on community engagement in order to influence social norms is still in the works, as research demonstrates that parents and relatives are drivers of the sexual exploitation of children online.

- **Building awareness and skills:** Working with children via collaboration with partners to boost children's awareness of online risks, prevention strategies and digital skills.

Outcomes and impact activities

- Stakeholder and policy **context mapping** was conducted during the inception stage of the project.

- The creation of a **Research Advisory Board** with members from key groups and organisations, achieving strong multi-stakeholder engagement, including representatives of government bodies (Department of Social Welfare and Development – Inter-Agency Council Against Child Pornography, Council for the Welfare of Children, Department of Justice – Committee for the Special Protection of Children, National Youth Commission, Department of Information and Communications Technology, National Anti-Poverty Commission, Philippine National Police and Department of the Interior and Local Government); members from civil society organisations (Stairway Foundation and Love Yourself); education institutions (De La Salle University, Social Development Research Centre and De La Salle Zobel School); and youth representatives. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade is the project's development partner and sits on the Board.

- **Launching the project:** To launch the project, UNICEF Philippines convened a workshop in Manila to strengthen collaboration among industry, government and NGOs for the protection of children against online sexual abuse and exploitation. This was used to build a common understanding among key actors on global best practices, tools, resources and industry standards. A specific objective was also to form a loose coalition on child online protection in the Philippines, to strengthen cooperation and information sharing across sectors. Actors from several government ministries participated, as well as industry, law enforcement and NGOs. The workshop provided an opportunity for government and other stakeholders to engage directly with UNICEF and the research team, and to discuss what particular questions and topics would be of relevance to the government's policy priorities and how they could be included in the survey. This model of working is particularly helpful in achieving strong multi-stakeholder engagement, and could facilitate greater uptake of research results.

- **Building awareness and skills:** UNICEF is building collaboration with non-government and civil society organisations aiming to increase risk and prevention awareness and digital skills through online materials. The team also wants to partner with advocates and the media, and is currently working on a corresponding strategy.

- In terms of **shifting the paradigm away from a sole protection focus**, working with UNESCO and bringing in the Department of Education have proved helpful, but this requires a more purposive and animated approach to consolidate common efforts. Possible solutions for broad communication in different regions are cooperating with the Department of Welfare and Social Development and the Department of Health, by, for example, distributing the message with the help of health workers or using cash transfers as an entry point to connect with parents from rural areas.

Measuring impact

The evidence to be provided by the Global Kids Online survey aims to contribute to the mobilisation of the Filipino public to act to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against children.

The data and its analyses should also support efforts to strengthen the legislative and institutional

frameworks to better protect vulnerable children who are exposed to online violence, abuse and exploitation.

The Philippine Country Office is currently formulating its new country programme, including designing its results-based framework. The results and its impact will be formulated in accordance with the above vision for the data.

Future directions

UNICEF Philippines will be utilising data in policy, such as, but not limited to:

- Enhancing cooperation and collaboration between the Inter-Agency Councils Against Child Pornography and Trafficking and their attached agencies.

- Increasing investment for targeted advocacy to understand the harmful effects of online exploitation.

- Expanding competency development for front-line workers, especially social workers, to provide trauma-informed care for victims and families.

- Integrating parenting support interventions to understand both opportunities and risks in the digital environment.

Practical recommendations to help guide more effective policy-making and more responsible business practices to benefit children include:

- Providing all children with affordable access to high-quality online resources.

- Protecting children from online harm, including abuse, exploitation, trafficking, cyberbullying and exposure to unsuitable materials.

- Safeguarding children's privacy and identities online.

- Teaching digital literacy to keep children informed, engaged and safe online.

- Leveraging the power of the private sector to advance ethical standards and practices that protect and benefit children online.

- Putting children at the centre of digital policy.

Global Kids Online's areas of impact	Areas of impact demonstrated by the case study
✓ Academic impact	
✓ Conceptual impact	✓
✓ Capacity-building impact	✓
✓ Collective impact	✓
✓ Instrumental impact	
More about GKO's approach to impact and the five areas of impact : www.globalkidsonline.net/impact	

References

Ardivilla, M.M. (2017). Engaging with stakeholders: The experience of the Philippines. In S. Livingstone et al. *Global Kids Online: Knowledge exchange and impact meeting report.* London: London School of Economics and Political Science, http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/gko/working-on-knowledge-exchange-and-impact/

Byrne, J., Kardefelt-Winther, D., Livingstone, S., & Stoilova, M. (2016). *Global Kids Online research synthesis, 2015–2016.* London: UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti and London School of Economics and Political Science, www.globalkidsonline.net/synthesis

Tan, M., Estacio, L., & Ylade, M. (2016). *Global Kids Online in the Philippines. Country report.* Manila: University of the Philippines Manila, www.globalkidsonline/philippines

UNICEF (2016). *Safe from harm: Tackling online child sexual abuse in the Philippines,* www.unicef.org/infobycountry/philippines_91214.html

Appendix 1

Population (in 000s)[1]	100,699
GDP per capita[2]	2,951.1 PPS per inhabitant
Fixed-telephone subscriptions per 100 inhabitants[3]	3.2
Mobile-cellular subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	115.8
Fixed (wired)-broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	1.9
Mobile-broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants	41.6
Households with a computer (%)	34
Households with internet access at home (%)	32
Individuals using the internet (%)	47.8

Sources:
[1] UNESCO
[2] The World Bank, 2016

[3] ITU, 2016

Appendix 2

Survey sample size: 2,250 child respondents

National partner: UNICEF Philippines

Data collection: 2017

Data collected by: De La Salle University

Sampling design: Multi-stage cluster sampling design

Completed by: Qualitative workshop with children for results validation

Further details:
www.globalkidsonline.net/philippines

GLOBAL KIDS ONLINE