

Disrupting Harm

Evidence from 13 countries on the context, threats, and children's perspectives of online child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Detailed Analysis of the Frontline Service Providers Survey

Namibia

Last updated 27/4/21

Introduction.....	3
Basic Description of Survey Sample.....	4
Perpetrator Demographics	6
Scenarios	8
Scenario 1.....	8
Scenario 2.....	10
Scenario 3.....	12
Scenario 4.....	13
Summary	14
Vulnerabilities.....	16
Reporting	23
Availability of Support.....	25
Investigations and Convictions	29
Law Enforcement and Government Support.....	30
Public Awareness.....	33

This report is a summary of preliminary data collected for this research project. The perspectives contained herein represent the individuals interviewed and surveyed. Support from the Fund to End Violence Against Children does not constitute endorsement.

Introduction

The Disrupting Harm frontline workers survey aimed to explore the knowledge, attitudes and practices related to OCSEA that are presenting to those directly working to prevent and respond on the welfare frontline. Insights from frontline workers via this survey allowed us to more deeply explore findings from other research activities such as the national literature reviews and government interviews from the perspective of staff directly engaged in the response to this growing problem.

A convenience sample of 50 interviews were conducted with client-facing frontline child protection workers who were surveyed in each participating country. In order to participate in the survey respondents had to meet the following qualifying requirements:

- 1) Be an adult over 18 years of age;
- 2) Work the last 12 months (at least) in the field of social work, psychology or welfare;
- 3) Manage their own case load directly in the last 12 months;
- 4) Have caseloads that included children over the last 12 months.

The survey itself included a combination of 68 closed and open-ended questions. The data was collected via SurveyGizmo and administered by Disrupting Harm staff (either in person, or remotely via phone/Skype – due to COVID-19). Whilst the data collected is not statistically representative, it is still a vital snapshot in indicating scope, and broadening our perspectives on knowledge, attitudes and practices related to OCSEA.

NOTE:

In Namibia, the data collection for the survey was conducted during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic from June 22nd 2020 to July 31st 2020 where movement restrictions were in place.

Basic Description of Survey Sample

The frontline participants surveyed in Namibia (n=50) consisted of 42 (84%) females, 7 males (14%) and 1 respondent (2%) identifying themselves as “other”.

Participants were asked to select a single category that best describes their organisation. In reality, these categories are sometimes not mutually exclusive, however the indications of a category that ‘best’ describes their organisation does help to depict the range of organisations that participants represent (Figure 1).

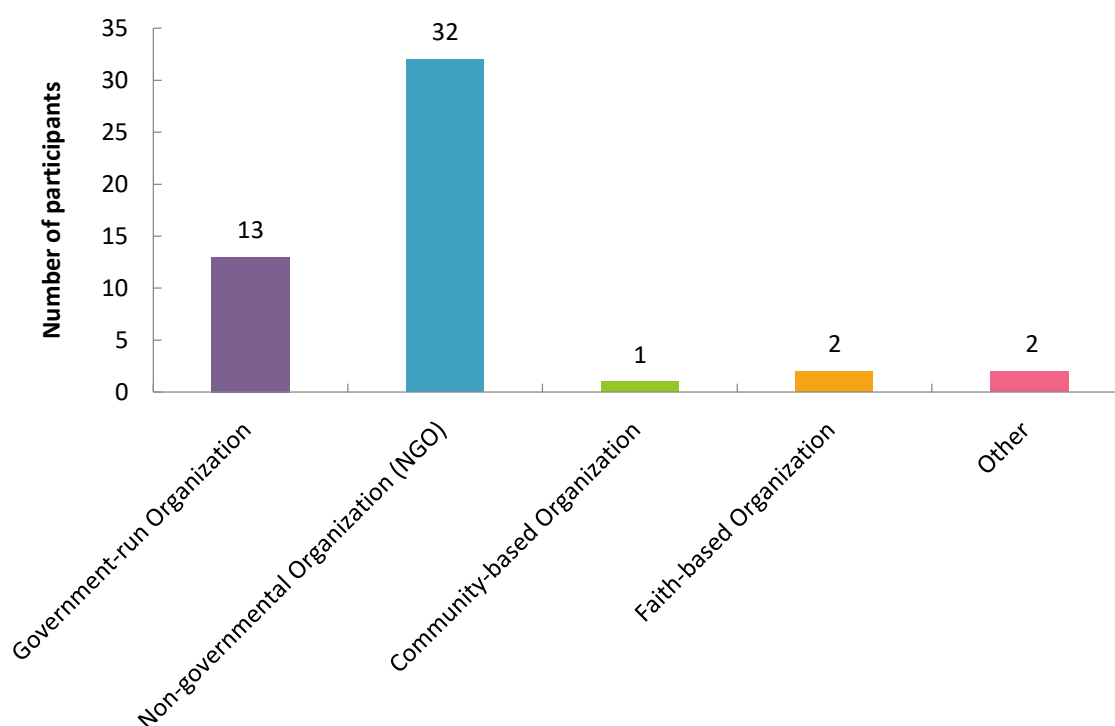


Figure 1. Types of participants’ organisations.

The vast majority of participants reported working for either government (n=13 - 26%) or non-government organisations (n=32 – 64%). Two participants reported working at a faith-based organisation, one in a community-based organisation and two in ‘other’ types of organisations, one of which was a non-affiliated consultant. The social services workforce in Namibia includes a higher proportion of government based staff than this breakdown. However, protocols for engaging government workers in research are complex and this impacted our ability to obtain sample from that group.

The frontline social support workers were asked to detail what type of services their organisations provided related to children. The results are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

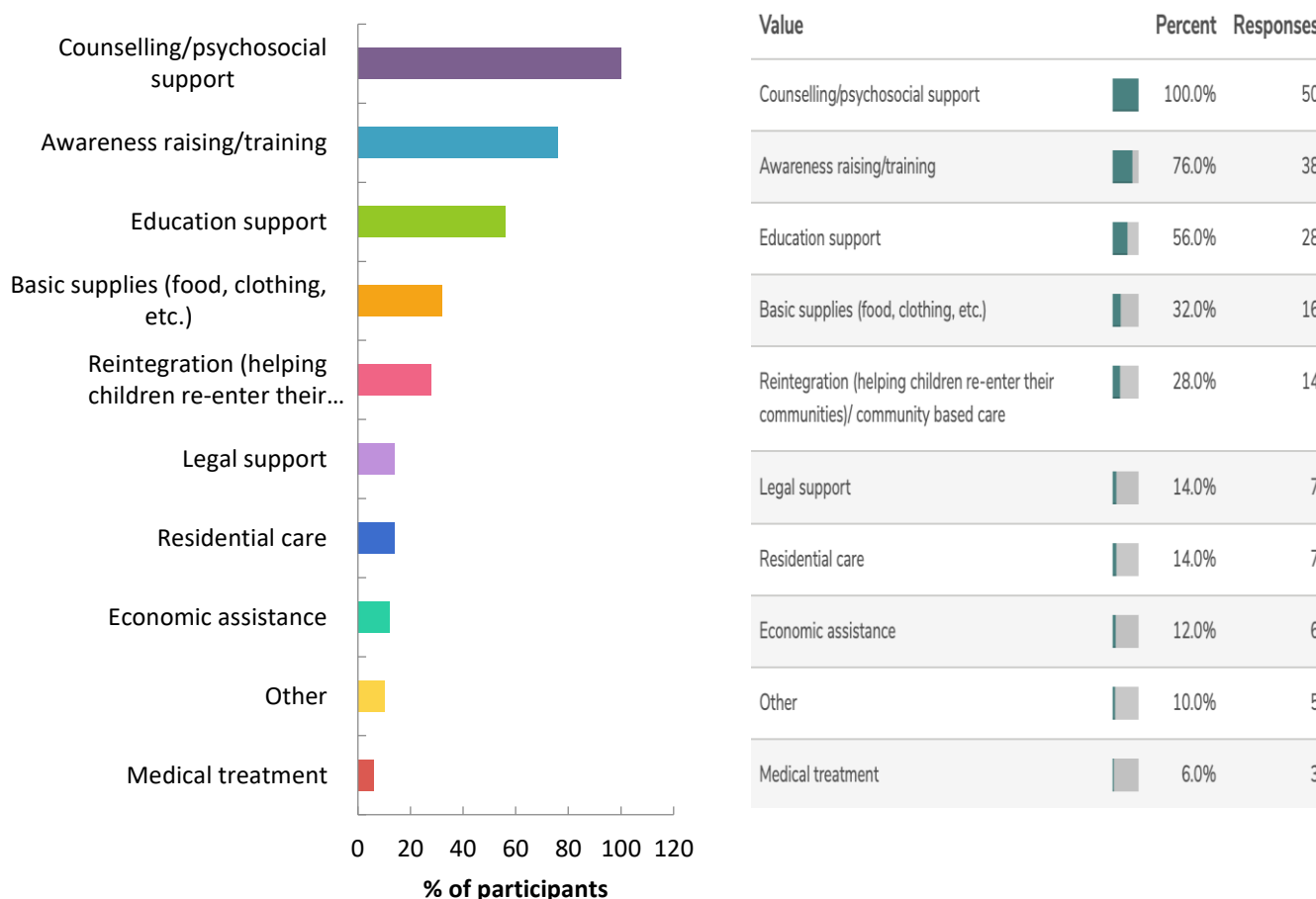


Figure 2. Types of services provided by participants' organisations. N=50

88% of participants worked in organisations providing more than one service to children (n=44). As Figure 2 indicates, the most frequently reported services were counselling/psychosocial support (n=50 – 100%) and awareness raising/training (n=38 – 76%). 28 respondents indicated their organisation provided education support services (56%), 16 (32%) provided basic supplies (food, clothing, etc.) and 14 reintegration services (28%). The least commonly provided services among participants were medical treatment (n=3 – 6%), economic assistance (n=6 – 12%) and residential care services (n=7 – 14%).

Other services mentioned by the frontline social support workers included:

- Running a reporting platform
- Providing substance use disorders treatment to adults
- Facilitating kinship care
- Providing recommendations for social grants
- *“The children I work with live in a refugee camp and services are provided to them based on the urgency of their needs” (RA3-NA-31-A).*

Perpetrator Demographics

To expand on the current understanding of the context in which OCSEA happens in Namibia, the survey sought to explore the typical relationships that were observed by social support workers between offenders and child survivors when they reported having worked on OCSEA cases.

From the 30 respondents who had worked with OCSEA cases, men were much more commonly identified as perpetrators and facilitators of OCSEA. Out of those who have managed OCSEA cases in the past 12 months, the most commonly referenced relationships between the victim and perpetrator were said to be that the perpetrator was a family friend, stranger or community member over 18. That was followed by: community members under 18; parents/stepparents; and other relatives under 18 and over 18. Notably, no one mentioned foreigners, which goes against the commonly held assumption that it is mostly foreigners committing the abuse.

Similarly, participants were asked about the most common relationships between facilitators and victims in the OCSEA cases they have managed. Of those who managed OCSEA cases in the past 12 months, almost a third indicated the cases did not involve a facilitator. When they did, the most commonly selected relationships between facilitators and victims were parents/stepparents, family friends and strangers. The least common relationships were found to be other relatives (over and under 18) and community members (over and under 18).

In additional comments, two frontline workers mentioned cases where parents were involved in the abuse, with one saying: *“In the last year, I have only encountered one such case, involving a facilitator, which was the mother”* (RA3-NA-34-A), while another commented: *“The other case, where online activity was involved, the perpetrator was a parent (male)”* (RA3-NA-36-A).

Below are a number of quotes from participants describing their insights into some of the child sexual exploitation and OCSEA cases they worked with:

Two participants working at NGOs providing counselling and awareness raising activities to children mentioned the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on cases of OCSEA, with one commenting: *“Generally, we have a high case load but due to COVID 19 there was a spike in cases”* (RA3-NA-03-A), with the other commenting: *“Just recently with the current global pandemic, the education system has had to shift from face to face learning to online learning, which has seen more children in Namibia spending more time online engaged in not only learning but other activities online, which poses a risk for their well-being”* (RA3-NA-21-A).

One frontline worker mentioned gender differences in assistance seeking and lack of attention paid to boys: *“women are open to approach various services compared to men, however in terms of physical strength women tend to be victims. More girls than boys report, boys are a little bit shy, needs of girls are more than boys, especially girls on menstruation and they need sanitary pads, so they will approach*

different services for assistance, and lately attention on boys lacking behind as most programmes focus on girls” (RA3-NA-30-A).

An NGO-worker talked about gender differences in experiencing OCSEA: *“Mostly girls are victims of OCSEA than boys although recently Namibia has had cases that involve boys” (RA3-NA-01-A).*

Two respondents described the ways of approaching victims by offenders: *“Girls are being groomed on social media by sugar daddies” (RA3-NA-08-A); “The victim’s mother found out about the text messages and calls via a cell phone the client was given by the parents to be able to communicate, especially after school for picks up with all the other siblings. Mother had reported the issue at the Gender Base Violence Protection Unit in [location]” (RA3-NA-50-A).*

One participant working in a government-run organisation mentioned that OCSEA is not prevalent in remote areas of Namibia: *“OCSEA is not common in the remote areas where I work” (RA3-NA-24-A).*

One frontline worker talked about online bullying: *“Online bullying is more prevalent in the presenting complaints related to technology use” (RA3-NA-34-A).*

Two respondents talked about children being exposed to sexual materials, indicating that it might be a risk factor leading to OCSEA: *“Again, it’s true that children have been exposed to sexual material online but I guess when we meet the child who has been assaulted, we have not been keen to find out if they had also been exposed to search material online. Remember a child does not open up easily unless a worker asks. So, I feel a percentage have been exposed but the data not been captured” (RA3-NA-23-A); “I have been a child social worker for a short period. Normally children come in with presenting problem like i.e. They have been forcing others to have sex at school. They learn such behaviours i.e., from adults who have sexually assaulted them or like in Namibia where we have so many homosexuals, they witness their older brothers having sex or watching pornography. I feel in our approach maybe we should also add and ask a child if they have been watching such materials. This is the Namibian experience. In Kenya, some cyber cafe put a lot of video games for children the whole day. There main customers are children and after they become addicts, they allow them to play games for free and then lure them into watching pornography and introducing them to sexual acts. In Mombasa, paedophiles give money to parents of children who seem not so aware of the intention of the person. They show children pornographic material and then sexually assault them. In the above statistics I cannot quite come up with figures of how many have been exposed but it’s obvious children are exposed” (RA3-NA-23-A).*

Scenarios

Participants were presented with four scenarios depicting situations in which at least one offender victimised a child through different modes of online sexual abuse and exploitation. After being provided with definitions of ‘OCSEA’, a ‘perpetrator’ and a ‘facilitator’ earlier in the survey, the participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed that the child was a victim and that the offender had committed an OCSEA-related offence.¹ These questions were designed to elicit insights about how participants assessed different forms and situations of OCSEA. It should be noted that responses are likely based on a combination of the participant’s knowledge on the issue, including how these issues may (or may not) be defined in law in a country, as well as influenced by social norms and beliefs. Irrespective of the basis for responses, the results indicate areas that are well understood (sometimes almost unanimously) and others where training and consistent messaging is needed to ensure consistent responses.

A four-point Likert scale was used to assess agreement with statements for the scenario questions. Where interesting indications in differences occurred we note them, but otherwise combined ‘slightly agree’ and ‘strongly agree’ together and ‘slightly disagree and strongly disagree’ together, resulting in binary agree/disagree categories for the analysis presented here.

Scenario 1

Palila pays a 16-year-old younger relative, Tamah, to undress while filming and later posts it online. Mamo, who does not know Palila, watches this interaction online from home 30 miles away.

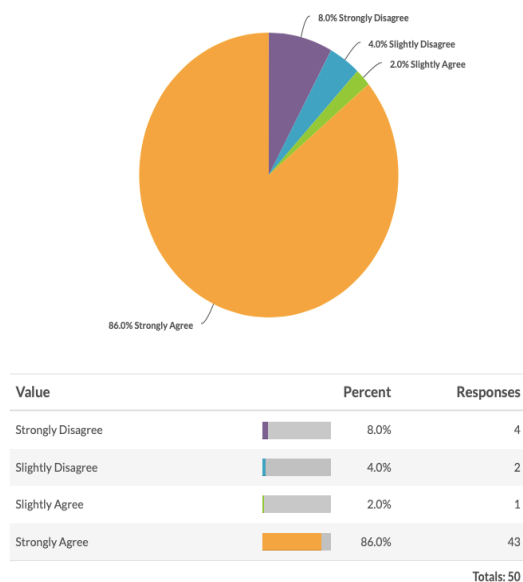


Figure 3. Do you think Tamah is a victim of an OCSEA related crime?

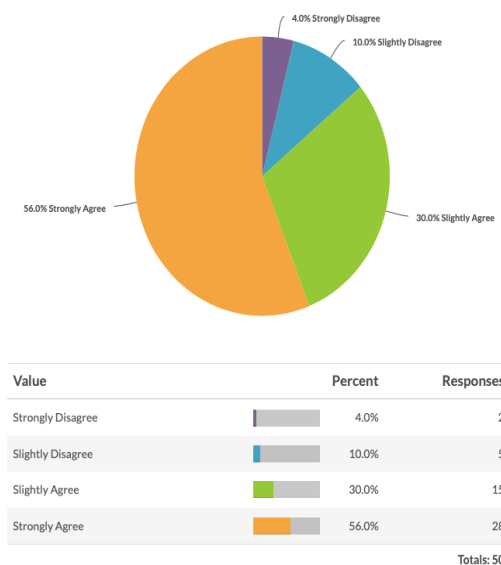


Figure 4. Do you think Mamo has committed an OCSEA-related crime?

¹ Names for the scenarios were changed to common names in each country for the translations but have been edited in the analysis to be consistent across all the DH reports.

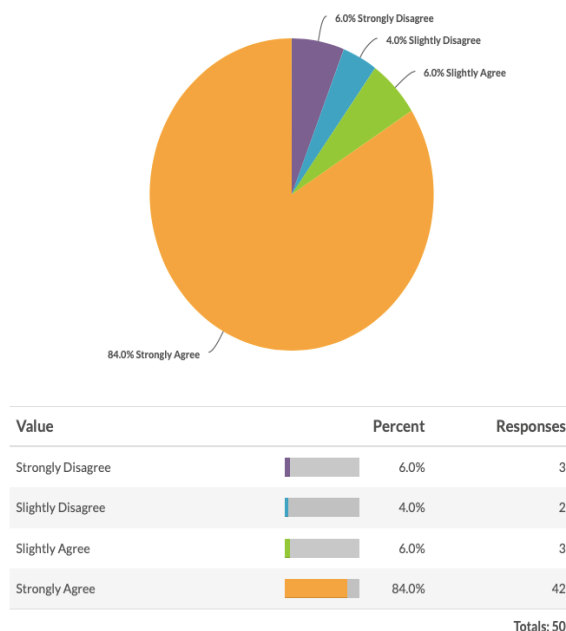


Figure 5. Do you think Palila has committed an OCSEA-related crime?

Nearly all of the participants strongly agreed that Tamah was a victim of sexual exploitation (n=43, or 86%). Four participants strongly disagreed (n=4, or 8%), two slightly disagreed (n=2, or 4%) and one only slightly agreed (n=1, or 2%).

The majority of the participants also strongly agreed that Palila has committed an OSCEA related crime (n=45, or 84%). As figure 5 shows, 5 participants (10%) disagreed, (3 strongly and 2 slightly).

Of the three circumstances in this scenario, participants seemed to struggle the most to identify if the remote third-party viewing the material had committed an OCSEA related crime– though this was still skewed towards agreement. 56% (n=28) of respondents felt strongly that Mamo had committed an OCSEA related crime, and 30% (n=15) only slightly agreed, which indicates that the level of certainty on this topic was lower. If we grouped these together as a binary question, we would see that 86% (n=43) agreed, while 14% (n=7) disagreed.

One participant who strongly disagreed that Mamo has committed an OCSEA-related crime commented: *“Mamo can unfortunately also be considered a victim if he is a child under the age of 16 and paid the website to watch the video online. That on its own is exploitation of a child and Palila can be charged under the Namibian Criminal Act”* (RA3-NA-21-A)

When given the opportunity to share additional comments on the scenario participants mentioned:

“The age of consent in Namibia is 16, however, pornography is not referred to. The Child Care Protection Act protects children against being used for pornography, whether paid or not, but it doesn't list an age, therefore, the age of majority would be assumed to apply, which is 18. I would therefore consider this to be the elicit production, dissemination and consumption of child pornography” (RA3-NA-34-A);

“The person downloading the images creates a market and thus is just as guilty as the person recording and distributing the image” (RA3-NA-36-A A);

“Mamo had a choice to report the content he has seen on the online reporting portal” (RA3-NA-06-A).

Scenario 2

Kaimi is a 17-year-old student. Kaimi has struggled to make good grades this year and is worried that Uli, a teacher who is a close family friend, will tell Kaimi's dad. Kaimi offers to send Uli naked pictures if he promises not to talk to the family. Uli accepts.

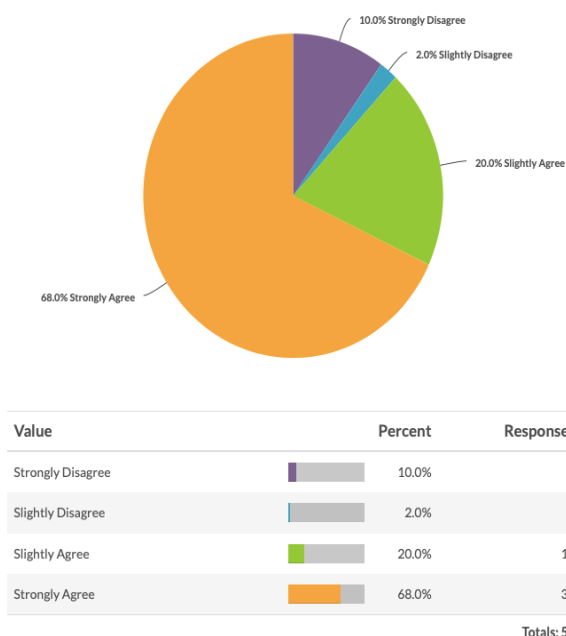


Figure 6. Do you think Kaimi is a victim of OCSEA?

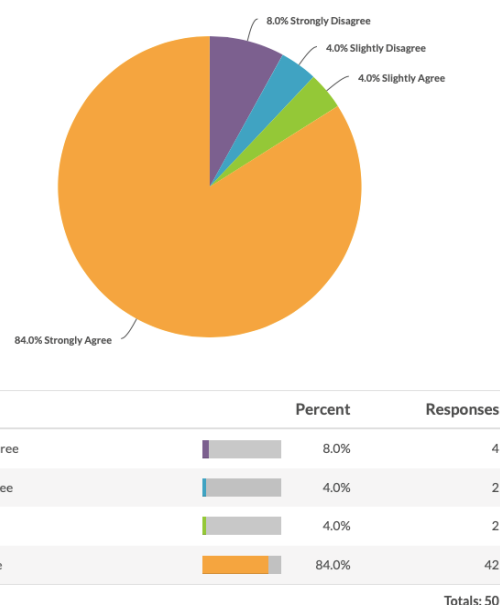


Figure 7. Do you think Uli has committed an OCSEA-related crime?

A vast majority of the participants either strongly (n=34 – 68%) or slightly (n=10 - 20%) agreed that the student (Kaimi) is a victim of OSCEA. 6 participants disagreed (n=5 - 10% strongly and n=1 – 2% slightly).

Nearly all of the participants agreed that the teacher (Uli) in a position of power has committed an OSCEA related crime (n=44, or 88%). Yet 6 participants still disagreed (n=4 - 8% strongly and n=2 – 4% slightly).

None of the participants who slightly/strongly disagreed with the statements provided an additional comment, however those who agreed mentioned:

“Teacher should have not accepted the offer and should have explained to Kaimi that it was wrong to do so as he is the adult and she is the child. Teacher should have spoken to her parents” (RA3-NA-06-A);

“Again, Kaimi is still considered to be a minor, therefore it would count as child pornography, whether Kaimi consents, initiates or not” (RA3-NA-34-A);

“By providing those pictures Kaimi has put herself in a situation that could result in her being trapped. The other party can use it to blackmail her and exploit her further, especially taking into consideration the power dynamics” (RA3-NA-36-A);

“Uli in this scenario is presumed an adult. He exploited Kaimi's vulnerability for his gain” (RA3-NA-21-A).

Scenario 3

Sam is a 10-year-old whose family struggles to make ends meet in their rural village. Sam's uncle, Alex, has a good government job and has always given money to help the family out. Recently, Uncle Alex wrote a message to Sam on Facebook asking to have a secret meeting at his house. When Sam arrives, Uncle Alex asked Sam to sit on his lap and began touching his private parts.

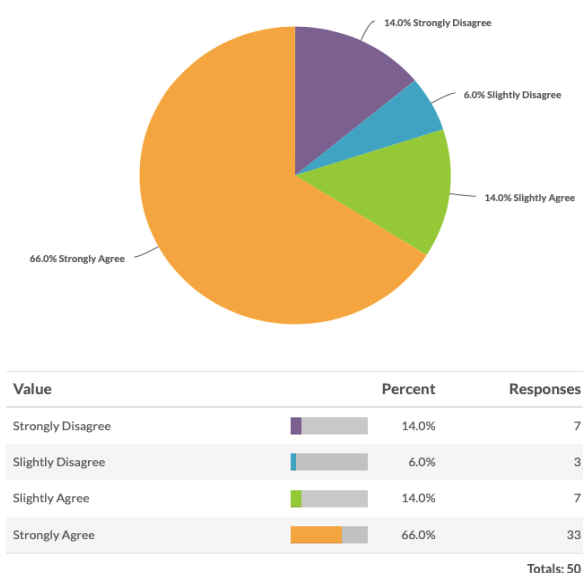


Figure 8. Do you think that Sam is a victim of OCSEA?

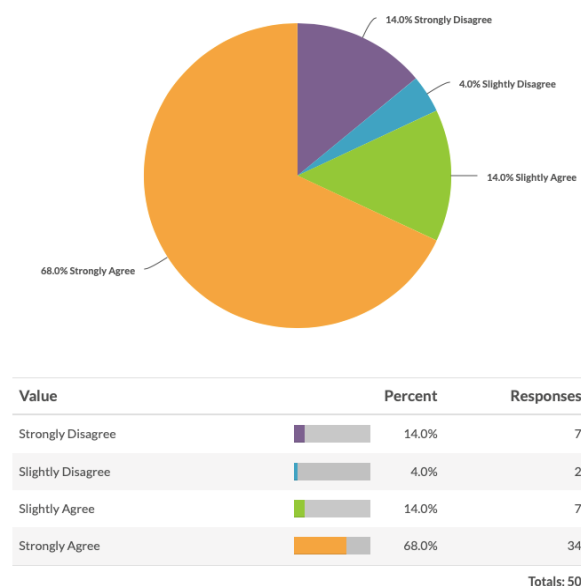


Figure 9. Do you think Alex has committed an OCSEA-related crime?

The majority of survey respondents either strongly (n=33, or 66%) or slightly (n=7, or 14%) agreed that 10-year-old Sam is a victim of OSCEA. 7 participants strongly disagreed (14%) and 3 slightly disagreed (6%). An equally vast majority of the participants agreed that the adult, Alex, has committed an OSCEA related crime - 34 strongly (68%) and 7 slightly (14%). 9 respondents disagreed – 7 strongly (14%) and 2 slightly (4%).

Two participants mentioned grooming when given the possibility to comment on the scenario: “*Sam was groomed by his uncle online and lured into meeting him offline*” (RA3-NA-06-A); “*In this case, Facebook has been used a medium of “grooming” to befriend and form a “special secret relationship” that facilitated the physical exploitation of the child*” (RA3-NA-34-A). For some respondents the perception of the crime seemed to relate to the offline physical abuse rather than the indication of online grooming (via messaging service). One participant who strongly disagreed with both statements claimed that: “*Uncle Alex was committing a criminal offence, however did not use any technological device to do so*” (RA3-NA-36-A). Another mentioned: “*It’s a serious sexual offence/crime, yet just the fact that the contact came through Facebook makes it a less direct OCSEA category crime*” (RA3-NA-33-A).

Scenario 4

Joe is 16, and his girlfriend Lucy is 15. They have been dating for a year and regularly have sex. Sometimes, when they can't be together, they send photos to each other of themselves naked. Joe's friend Matt knows about this and breaks into Joe's phone and forwards naked pictures of Lucy to a group of their friends.

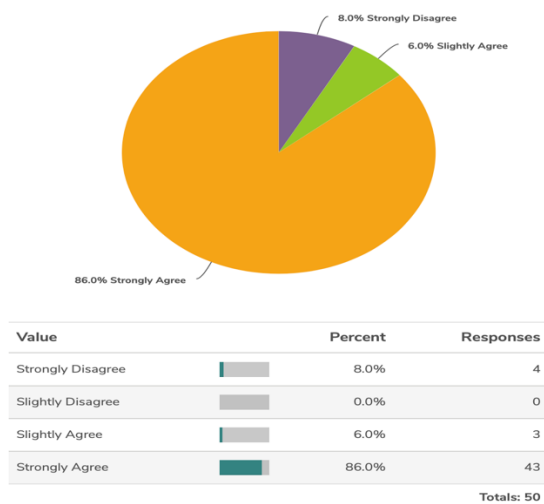


Figure 10. Do you think that Lucy is a victim of an OCSEA related crime?

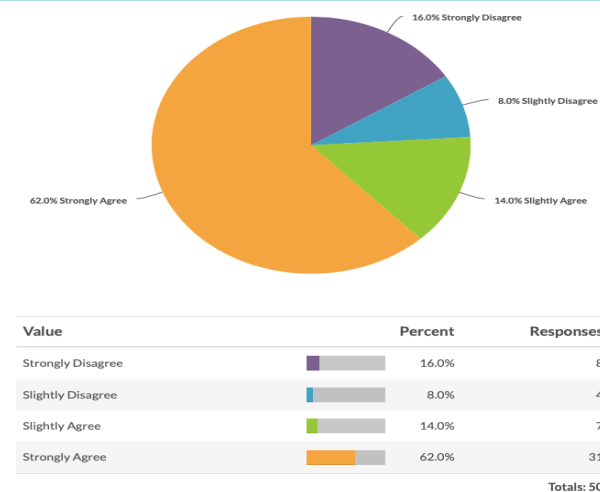


Figure 11. Do you think that Joe is a victim of an OCSEA related crime?

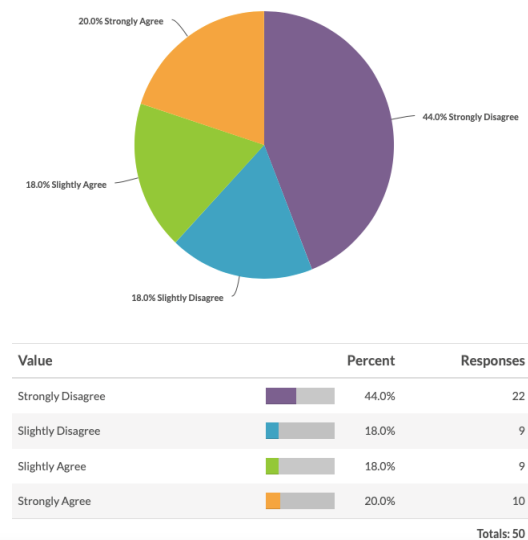


Figure 12. Do you think that Joe has committed an OCSEA related crime?

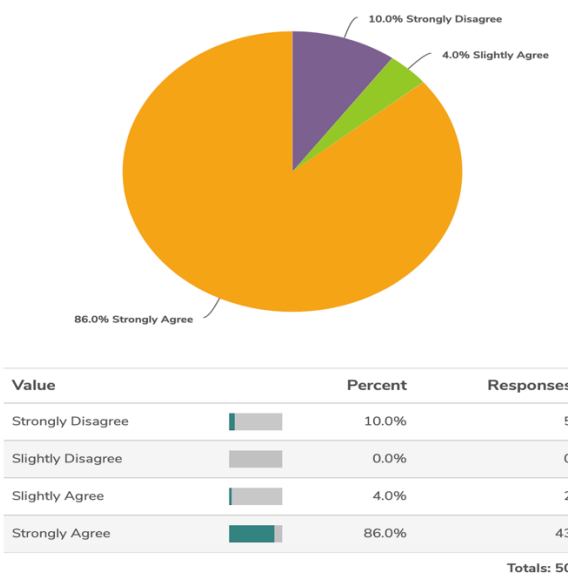


Figure 13. Do you think that Matt has committed an OCSEA related crime?

Nearly all of the participants strongly agreed that Lucy is a victim of OSCEA (n=46, or 92%). As we can see in Figure 10, 4 participants strongly disagreed (8%).

Although with less certainty, still the majority of participants agreed that Joe is a victim of an OCSEA related crime – 31 (62%) strongly and 7 slightly (14%). 8 participants strongly disagreed (16%) and 4 slightly disagreed (8%), which would equate to 24% in total having disagreed with this statement.

This next statement proved to be the least conclusive in terms of consensus. As Figure 12 shows, 22 (44%) of the frontline workers strongly disagreed that Joe has committed an OCSEA crime, 9 (18%) participants slightly disagreed, 9 (18%) slightly agreed and 10 participants reported that they strongly agreed (20%). When made into a binary, 62% disagreed and 38% agreed.

Nearly all of the participants (n=45 – 90%) agreed that Matt has committed an OCSEA related crime. 5 participants strongly disagreed (10%).

When given the opportunity to provide additional comments on the scenario, participants mentioned:

“Joe and Lucy have a consensual sexual relationship. The intention behind the sexting photos was not for the dissemination of the materials. It wasn't very clever on their part to do it, but it wouldn't constitute an illegal act. However, Matt's intention was the dissemination of sexual pictures without the consent of either Joe or Lucy, which is exploitative” (RA3-NA-34-A);

“They are both underage but seem to have agreed as “partners” to share naked pictures. None of them had to do it in exchange of money or anything else but still as minors they can't have consent to share nude pics” (RA3-NA-25-A);

“Joe and the girlfriend although agreed to put up the pictures they are still victims of OCSEA and are very vulnerable and can easily be stalked” (RA3-NA-23-A);

One participant who strongly agreed with all statements in the scenario mentioned: *“Joe was supposed to delete the pictures and not tell his friend about the naked pictures of the girlfriend, which makes him involved too in the case” (RA3-NA-09-A);*

An NGO worker who strongly disagreed with all statements in the scenario indicated: *“This act did not involve online activities” (RA3-NA-10-A)*

Summary

Participants overwhelmingly correctly identified the children as victims and the adults as offenders across the four scenarios. However, in two scenarios there were some divergences.

In Scenario 3, where 10-year-old Sam is asked via Facebook by his uncle for a meeting, during which he starts touching the boy's private parts, a fifth of frontline workers did not perceive Sam to be a victim and the adult's actions as OCSEA-related. Some explained it by the fact that the abuse did not happen online, which suggests that the definition of OCSEA was not well understood.

The last scenario (Scenario 4) seemed to cause the least agreement. In Scenario 4, where two minors, Joe and Lucy, are in a consensual sexual relationship, but Joe's friend Matt breaks into Joe's phone and shares naked photos of Lucy, we see the largest discrepancies amongst respondents. The majority of participants agreed that Lucy was a victim of OCSEA and that Matt has committed an OCSEA related crime. While 76% agreed that Joe is a victim in this scenario, 14% agreed only slightly, 16% strongly disagreed and 4 slightly disagreed. At the same time, 38% (20% strongly and 18% slightly) agreed that Joe has committed an OCSEA related crime. While technically two children consensually photographing themselves naked is the crime of 'creating child sexual abuse materials', there is ongoing debate about this characterisation. For example, if the images had remained between the two consenting parties, harm may not have been experienced. In a 2020 study on self-generated sexual content, it was found that children thought sharing such images could even provide advantages in their relationships and/or increase their self-esteem.² On the other hand, when the materials are forwarded without consent, they may end-up circulating the web and being acquired by offenders.³ Additionally, the normalisation of children sharing sexual images, videos and sexualised online conversations may lead to victims underreporting because they may fail to perceive what is happening to them as abusive or exploitative.⁴

² ECPAT Sweden. (2020, May). ["I början vart det lite läskigt men nu är det vardag" En rapport om yngre barn och egenproducerat material.](#) [Translated from Swedish].

³ Bracket Foundation. (2019). Artificial Intelligence: [Combating online sexual abuse of children.](#) 10.

⁴ Palmer, T. (2015). [Digital Dangers: the impact of technology on the sexual abuse and exploitation of children.](#) Barnado's. 35.

Vulnerabilities

Based on their knowledge and experience, participants indicated whether they believed a list of factors about the child and society increased children’s vulnerability to general sexual exploitation (i.e. all kinds) and more specifically to OCSEA.

- **Factors about the child identified as increasing vulnerability to general sexual abuse and exploitation**

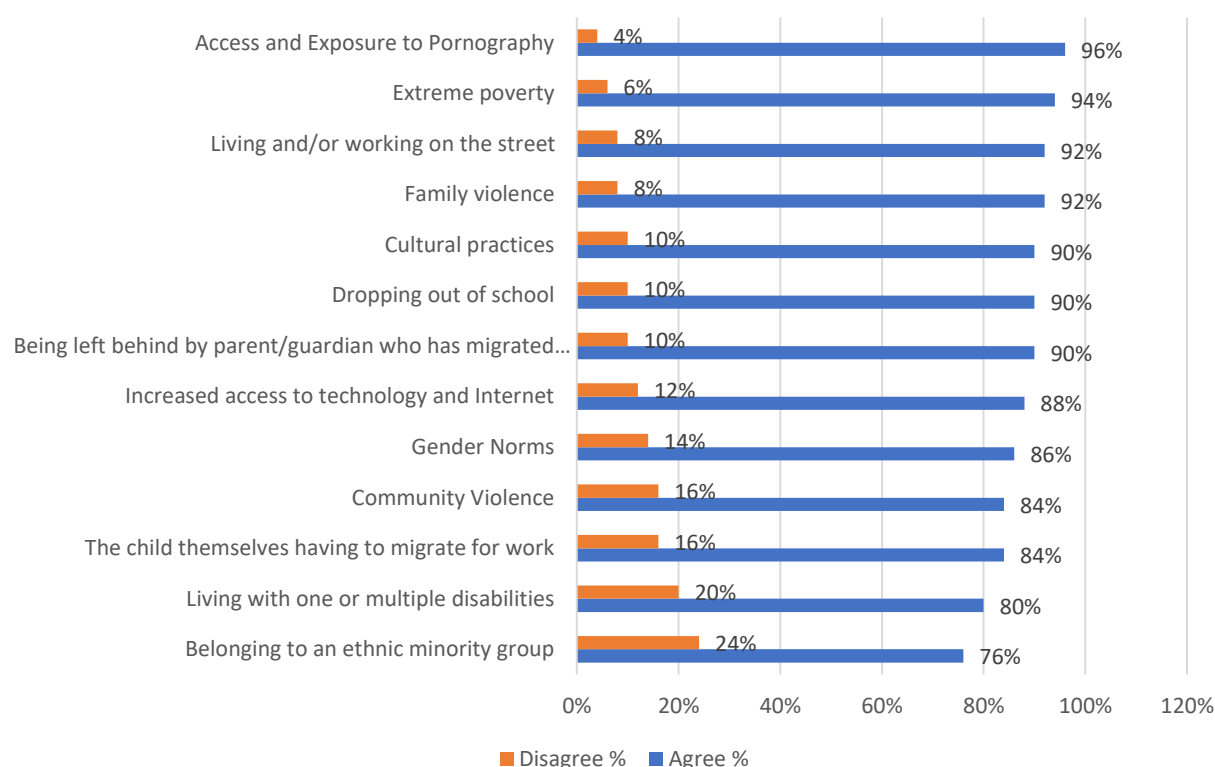


Figure 14. Participants’ perceptions of factors about the *child* impacting children’s vulnerability to general child sexual exploitation.

There was broad consensus among the respondents regarding their ideas about which of the possible factors about the child can increase vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation in general. In Namibia, access and exposure to pornography was ranked as the highest risk factor (96%). Extreme poverty, living and/or working on the street (92%), family violence (92%) cultural practices (90%), dropping out of school (90%) and being left behind by a parent/guardian (90%) were most consistently selected as factors that participants strongly or slightly agreed increased children’s vulnerability to a large degree. Interestingly, in Namibia, participants ranked belonging to an ethnic minority as the least likely source of vulnerability with 76% agreeing to this as a source.

Some of the factors additionally listed by participants that they believed strongly increased children's vulnerability to sexual exploitation were:

- Non-registered/regulated "religious" organisations with cult-like practices
 - Psychoactive substance abuse/Addictions
 - Peer pressure
 - Child having 'wrong' friends
- **Factors about the child identified as increasing vulnerability specifically to OCSEA**

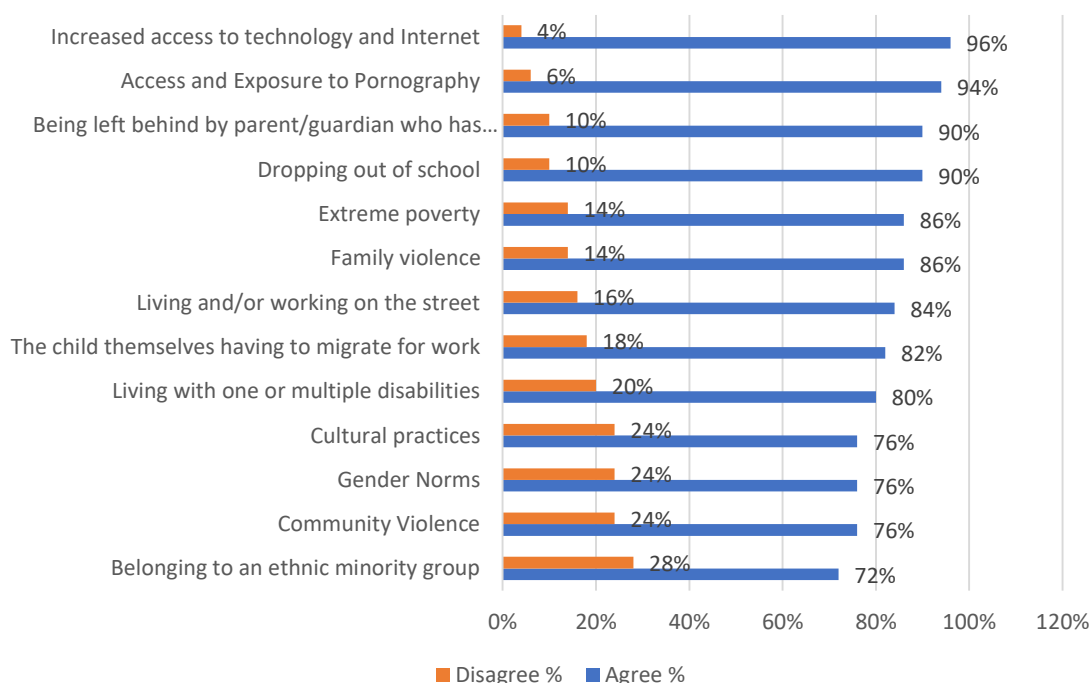


Figure 15. Participants' perceptions of factors about the *child* impacting children's vulnerability to OCSEA.

As we can see from the above, there was less consensus among the respondents regarding their ideas around which of above factors about the child can increase vulnerability to online sexual exploitation and abuse. In Namibia, participants ranked the following as the top sources of vulnerability to OCSEA: Increased access to technology (96%), access and exposure to pornography (94%), being left behind by parent/guardian who has migrated for work (90%) and dropping out of school (90%). Again, belonging to an ethnic minority was cited as the least likely source of vulnerability with 72% agreeing to this as a source. 'Community violence', 'cultural practices' and 'gender norms' were also ascribed notably less significance than the other options, all at 76%.

When respondents were given the option to comment on other sources of vulnerability in their country, which may not have been included in the survey options, they noted the following:

- Child headed households
- Blended families
- Alcohol and substance abuse environment
- Peer pressure

When respondents were given the option to comment on the **similarities and differences in children's vulnerability when considering online forms of sexual exploitation and abuse in comparison to general sexual exploitation**, some seemed to reason that online abuse does not involve physical touch, that the relationships between victims and perpetrators in OCSEA and general child sexual exploitation crimes are different, that viewing sexualised content might lead to OCSEA and interestingly, that vulnerabilities to OCSEA might not be as visible as vulnerabilities to general child sexual exploitation.

Similarities:

"Child abuse is evolving, and the vulnerability is widespread. Whether exploited online or face to face, sexual exploitation remains sexual exploitation regardless of the platform used" (RA3-NA-22-A);

"It is quite similar because it is exploitation involving the child" (RA3-NA-40-A);

"In my opinion, the factors are similar since they increase the vulnerability of the child concerned" (RA3-NA-36-A).

Differences:

"Sexual abuse is present either way and the only difference is that one involves physical touch and the other one is visual" (RA3-NA-48-A);

"OCSEA happens on an online platform while sexual exploitation happens physically" (RA3-NA-01-A);

"A digital footprint is there for everyone to remember forever whereas abuse in general will be remembered forever only by the victim" (RA3-NA-32-A);

"For OCSEA, the factors are slightly different in the sense that it is perpetrated by either an ex-partner or 'blesser', whereas sexual vulnerability is more common within the family or by a person known to the victim" (RA3-NA-29-A);

"Children's vulnerability to OCSEA is different in some areas due to poverty in our country from vulnerability to sexual exploitation generally. Not all have access to Internet and smartphones." (RA3-NA-10-A);

“It’s different because children will take time and sometimes not report at all to their caregivers of the material they have been exposed to because they are not aware that it’s wrong to watch such material. Children get exposed but don’t tell anyone and then with time it registers in their mind that what they watched is OK and allow perpetrators to misuse them”

(RA3-NA-23-A);

“Children’s vulnerability to OCSEA might not be as visible as sexual exploitation in general which can make it more harmful and detrimental” (RA3-NA-31-A);

“Children often do not have the rational capacity to distinguish right from wrong or understand the long-term psychological consequences of OCSEA” (RA3-NA-34-A)

“Targets are reached based on accessibility to technology and background” (RA3-NA-09-A).

- **Factors about the society identified as increasing vulnerability to general sexual abuse (any types).**

When asked, “in your country, indicate if you think the following factors about society can increase vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation in general” – survey respondents reported the following factors as sources of vulnerability to general sexual exploitation:

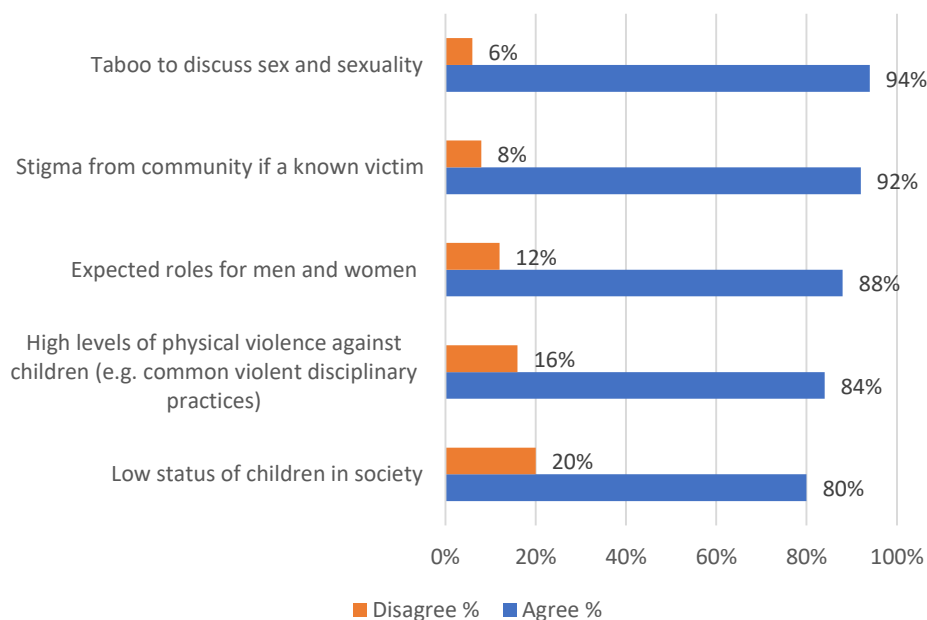


Figure 16. Participants’ perceptions of factors about *society* impacting children’s vulnerability to general sexual exploitation and abuse.

There was broad consensus among the respondents regarding their ideas around which of the above factors about society can increase vulnerability to sexual abuse and exploitation in general. 94% agreed that taboos around discussing sex and sexuality is the most substantial factor that increases a child’s risk to sexual abuse in general. That was followed by stigma from the community, expected roles for men and women (88%) and high levels of physical violence against children (84%). One in five frontline workers (20%) did not perceive low status of children in the society as a risk factor impacting children’s vulnerability to child sexual exploitation.

Additional factors about society mentioned by participants that they strongly agreed increased children’s vulnerability to sexual exploitation included:

- Poverty
 - Being an orphan
 - Child neglect/violence
 - Never talking about what happens in the house to outsiders
 - Unresolved transgenerational collective trauma from colonialization and apartheid
 - Social inclusion
 - Lack of healthy relationships between boys and girls
- **Factors about the society identified as increasing vulnerability specifically to online forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse**

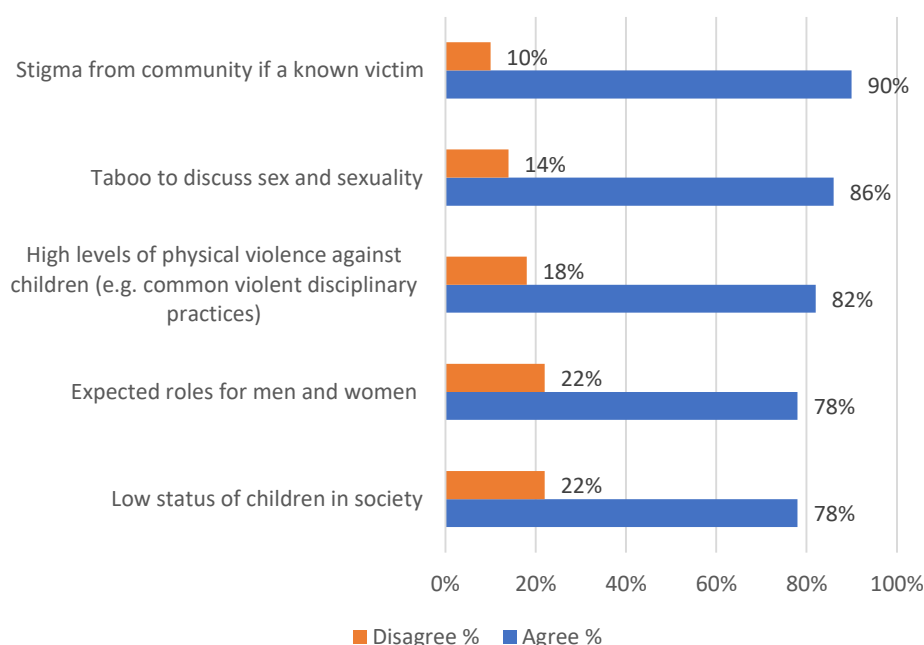


Figure 17. Participants’ perceptions of factors about the *society* impacting children’s vulnerability specific to OCSEA.

Slightly less consensus was observed when participants were asked to identify if the same factors are sources of increased vulnerability for online sexual abuse. Within the options given, respondents also identified stigma from the community (90% agreeing) and taboos around discussing sex and sexuality (86%) as the largest sources. That was followed by high levels of physical violence against children (82%). Both expected roles for women and men and high levels of physical violence against children were rated by 78% of frontline workers as impacting vulnerability to OCSEA.

When respondents were given the option to comment on other sources of vulnerability in their country, which may not have been included in the survey options, they noted the following:

- Poverty
- Child neglect/emotional violence
- Absent parents/parental guidance/parents involvement
- Lack of knowledge on the issue
- Lack of openness to discuss issues at a family level
- Unresolved transgenerational collective trauma from colonialization and apartheid

When participants were asked specifically **why societal factors increase vulnerability to OCSEA differently to sexual exploitation generally**, they focused on the fact that sex is not discussed in society which results in children being left without guidance on the issue and sometimes seeking information online. They mentioned that children not only fear stigmatisation which leads to underreporting but also do not have trustworthy adults to talk about sex-related issues:

“Because if this topic is not shared with or talked about with the children, they will try to find information online and at wrong sources that will not share the correct information and would rather exploit the children” (RA3-NA-09-A);

“Children fail to see the risks and harm on online platforms rather than in sexual exploitation in general, so they experiment more on online platforms hence the vulnerability becomes more with OCSEA” (RA3-NA-01-A);

“Children don't have anybody to talk to and the only option they have is to create conversation on the Internet, friends at schools and from the streets where they can be influenced to do anything, including sexual exploitation” (RA3-NA-48-A);

“Children brought up in families where children are not able to communicate matters of sex that concern them are vulnerable due to the fact that they are not taught to voice out. They often sit with uncertainties about their discomfort and a need to voice out but no trustworthy person to go to with whom they can share” (RA3-NA-16-A);

“Children might want to explore more on sex using the Internet and through that get caught on websites by potential perpetrators who can then take advantage. They are less likely to report out of fear of being stigmatised, which is the same with sexual exploitation. Low status of children makes them more vulnerable to sexual exploitation due to high numbers of people staying in one room, not separating girls from boys/men” (RA3-NA-29-A);

“A lot of people are influenced easily by society because of the rules that society has put up together with expectations” (RA3-NA-22-A);

“The environment of a child plays a major role in their development and can make them vulnerable in a sense of looking for an outlet” (RA3-NA-38-A);

“If it is an acceptable practice in society, it is more likely to occur and less likely to be prosecuted” (RA3-NA-34-A).

Reporting

In order to explore what influences decisions about reporting cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse, participants were asked to indicate whether they believed particular social and cultural factors influenced reporting both on general child sexual exploitation (all kinds) and specifically related to OCSEA in Namibia.

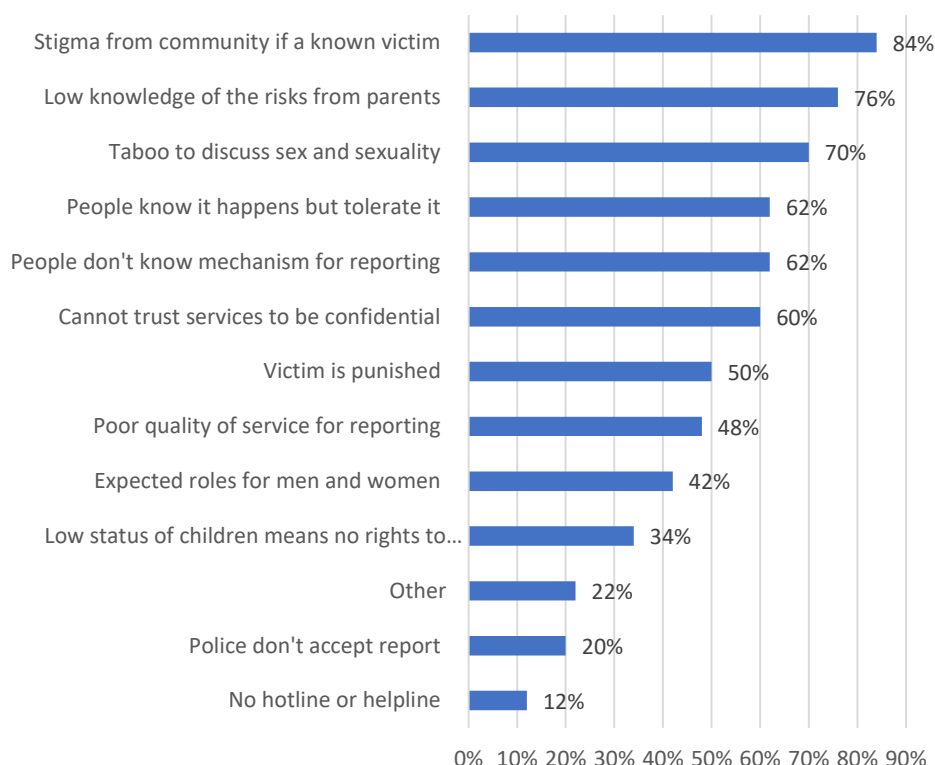


Figure 18. Social and cultural influences on reporting *child sexual exploitation in general*

Figure 18. shows that stigma from community (n=42 – 84%), low knowledge of the risks from parents (n=38 – 76%) and taboos around discussing sex and sexuality (n=35 – 70%) were perceived as main factors influencing reporting child sexual exploitation.

Outside of what was reported above, other factors mentioned by participants that influence reporting child sexual exploitation in general included:

- Cases being swept under the rug by family members
- People thinking children aren't affected and will just get over it
- Lack of proper understanding of the issue
- Pressure and manipulation from family members and friends

In the case of OCSEA, as we can see in Figure 19, respondents reported different values for what prevents reporting OCSEA in Namibia compared to factors influencing the reporting of child sexual exploitation in general.

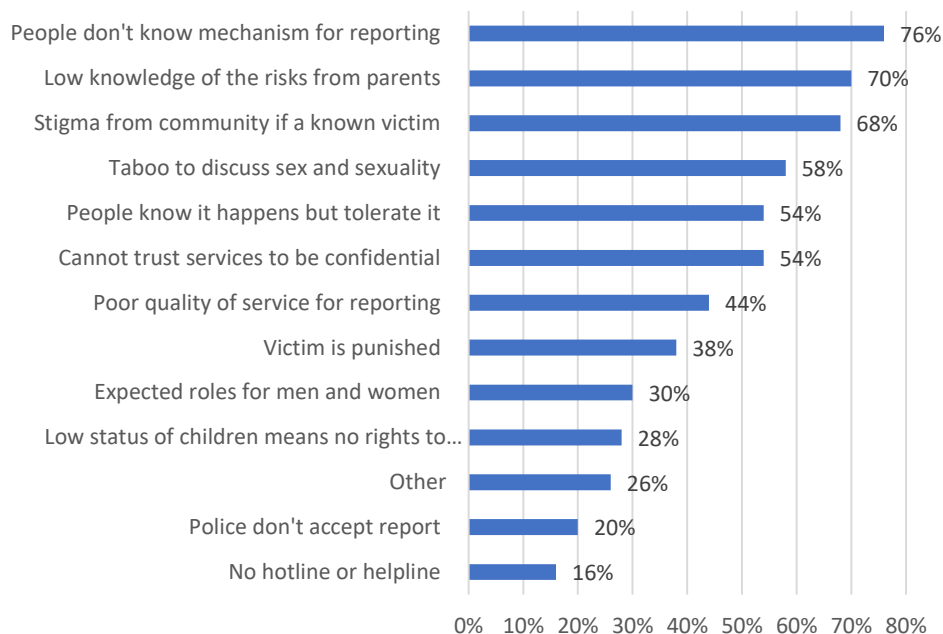


Figure 19. Social and cultural influences on reporting OCSEA

People not knowing the mechanisms for reporting was the most commonly referenced issue with regard to OCSEA (n=38 – 76% compared to n=31 - 62% in case of child sexual exploitation). Low knowledge of the risks from parents (n=35 – 70%), stigma from community if a known victim (n=34 - 68%) and taboos around discussing sex and sexuality (n=29 – 58%) were the other factors rated as having the biggest influence on the reporting of OCSEA in Namibia.

Other factors additionally named by participants as understood to influence reporting OCSEA included:

- Helpline not known enough
- Low risk perceptions - people never think it will happen to them or their children.
- *“Sometimes the police officers are not sensitized on these types of cases and do not see the essence of opening a case especially if there is not much evidence” (RA3-NA-06-A)*
- Lack of appropriate information and procedures or follow up when handling cases
- Lack of knowledge on the CyberCrime Act
- Victim blaming
- No clear laws
- Lack of understanding of OCSEA

Availability of Support

Respondents were asked to evaluate the overall availability and quality of medical, psychological, legal and reintegration services for child victims of OCSEA.

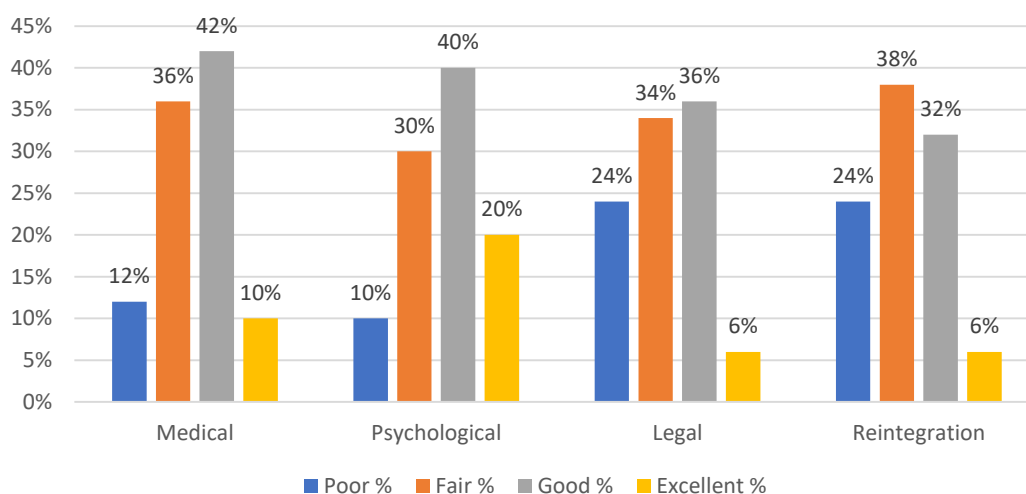


Figure 20. Perception of Availability of Services

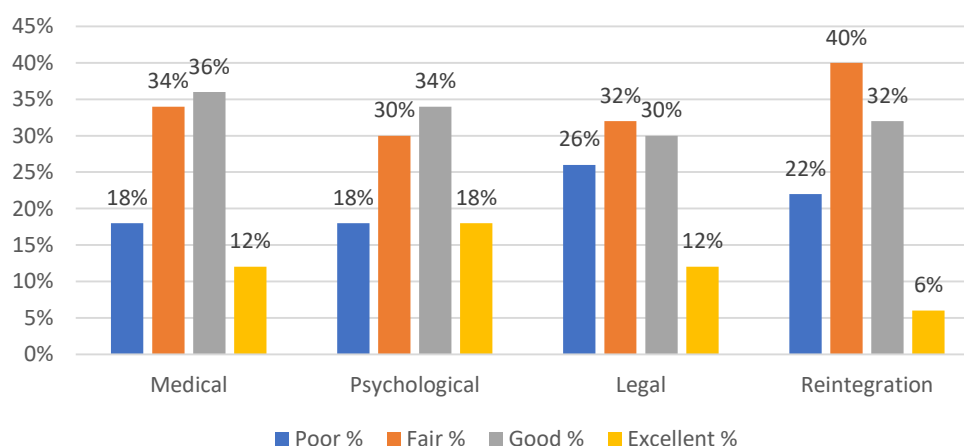


Figure 21. Perception of Quality of Services

Figures 20 and 21 show fairly consistent fair/good ratings between all services with regards to both the quality and availability of those services. The availability of psychological services was given the most favourable ranking, with 40% ranking them as good and another 20% as excellent. In terms of quality, psychological services were rated by approximately half of the respondents as poor (18%) or fair (30%) and by the second half as good (34%) or excellent (18%). Reintegration services received the lowest ratings – both in terms of availability and quality. 62% rated their availability and quality as either poor or fair,

32% as good and 6% as excellent. The availability of medical services received slightly better ratings comparing to their quality. Availability was rated as good by 42%, fair - 36%, poor – 12% and excellent – 6%. ‘Fair’ ratings were most common among government workers, while ‘good’ among NGO workers. The quality of medical services received slightly lower ratings with 36% seeing them as good, 34% fair, 18% poor and 12% excellent. Interestingly, the quality of medical services was rated by government workers predominantly as ‘fair’ and by none of them as ‘excellent’, while NGO-workers perceived their quality mainly as ‘good’. All the ‘excellent’ ratings also came from NGO-workers. The availability of legal services was also rated by the majority (70%) as either fair (34%) or good (36%). 62% also rated their quality as fair (32%) or good (30%), 26% as poor and 12% as excellent.

When respondents were given the option to explain their appraisals of the quality and availability of services above, they noted the following:

“Most of them that are there are expensive and not accessible” (RA3-NA-46-A);

“Support services are poor, overall, considering the distribution of the population and the availability of services” (RA3-NA-34-A)

An NGO worker who rated the availability and quality of all services as either good or excellent mentioned: *“Observations are based on the efforts of the Ministry of Gender's active response to cases involving children in Namibia”* (RA3-NA-21-A), however another participant commented: *“Unfortunately, I don't know any help”* (RA3-NA-45-A).

To better understand what affects the availability of support services for children, respondents were asked to indicate to what extent particular factors they believed had an influence on the availability of services for children.

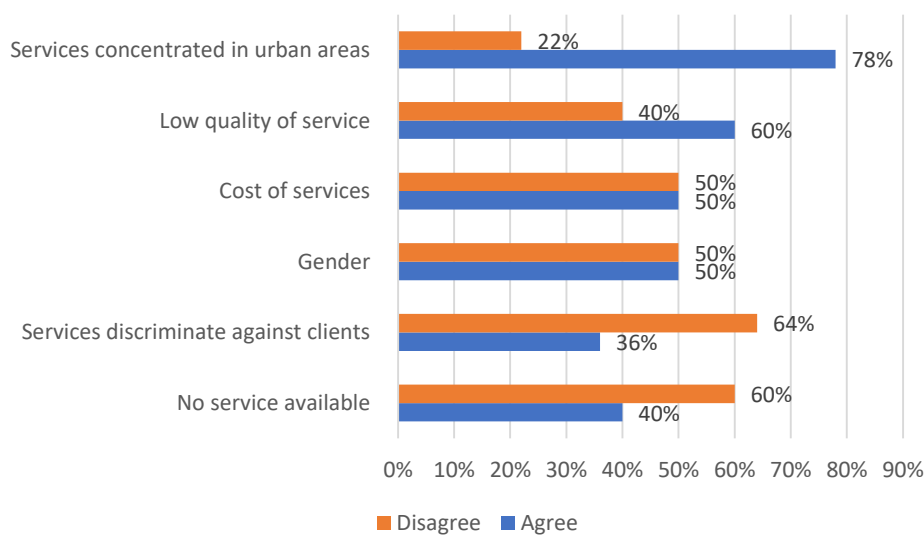


Figure 22. Factors affecting the availability of support services for child victims of child sexual exploitation

Figure 22 above indicates that factors perceived as having the biggest influence on the availability of support services for children recovering from child sexual exploitation was the location – services were concentrated in urban areas (78% agreed). 60% of respondents also agreed that low quality of services affects the availability. Half of the participants agreed that cost of services and gender have an influence. 64% disagreed that services discriminate against clients in Namibia and 60% that no services are available for child victims of child sexual exploitation.

When respondents were given the option to comment on what affects the availability of support for children recovering from general sexual exploitation, which may not have been included in the survey options, they noted the following:

- Very large caseloads for social workers
- Stigma
- Not enough trained service providers
- Not enough experts to address the issue

When participants were asked to indicate to what extent those same factors affect the availability of support services for child victims of OCSEA, the results were similar (Figure 23).

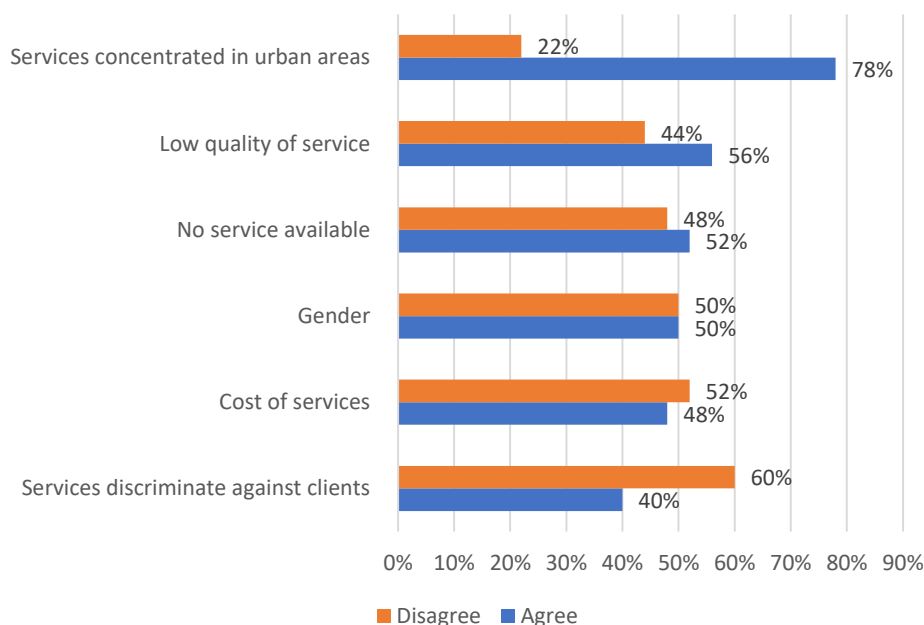


Figure 23. Factors affecting the availability of support services for child victims of OCSEA

Services being concentrated in urban areas was also deemed to be the factor most affecting the availability of support for children recovering from OCSEA, with 78% agreeing. As one participant mentioned: *“Services rarely reach remote and marginalised communities; whose members are*

sometimes ignorant of such existing services and do not know how to access due to several challenges such as the distance to travel before reaching the particular services” (RA3-NA-21-A).

Around half of the respondents disagreed that gender (50%), cost of services (52%) and low quality of services (44%) were factors attributing the the availability of support for children victims of OCSEA. 60% of respondents also disagreed that services discriminating againsts clients affects the availability of services. Interestingly, in the case of OCSEA, 48% agreed that no services are available compared to 60% in the case of general child sexual exploitation.

One frontline worker added: *“Most of the services are costly and those that are available can’t accommodate the total population. More services are needed that can respond to the need of our people directly, especially in rural areas” (RA3-NA-46-A).*

When respondents were given the option to comment on what affects the availability of support for children recovering from OCSEA which may not have been included in the survey options, they noted the following:

- Large case load for social workers
- No implementation of specific services for OCSEA
- Not enough experts to address the issue
- Lack of tailored approach: *“There are services available for sexual abuse related matters, however sexual abuse matters have different kinds of abuse i.e. physical, emotional and OCSEA. Each of these matters should be approached differently, which many of the care providers lack. More awareness needs to give an understanding of OCSEA and its impact because sexual abuse in general is all boxed up together and a lot of people are not aware of the different forms of abuse” (RA3-NA-31-A).*

Investigations and Convictions

Participants were asked to estimate the amount of OCSEA cases they managed in the last 12 months and determine approximately how many of those resulted in investigations and convictions. It should be noted that these indications are merely estimates, not reliable counts of official cases.

13 participants indicated that in the last 12 months, at least one case of OCSEA they managed directly resulted in a complaint filed to the local police/judicial authorities (total 85 cases estimated).

34 participants indicated that in the last 12 months, at least one of the cases they managed resulted in an investigation (total 96 estimated).

Three participants indicated that in the last 12 months, at least one of the cases they managed resulted in a conviction (total 28 estimated).

The numbers of reported cases represent only a fraction of the number of OCSEA incidents that we expect are occurring, the majority of which continue to never come to the attention of social workers or law enforcement.

Law Enforcement and Government Support

In order to understand frontline social support workers perceptions of responses by local law enforcement on the issue of OCSEA, respondents were asked to answer, “Based on your work which best describes local law enforcement’s: 1) awareness of OCSEA crimes; and 2) response to OCSEA crimes. Their responses to this question are depicted in Figure 24.

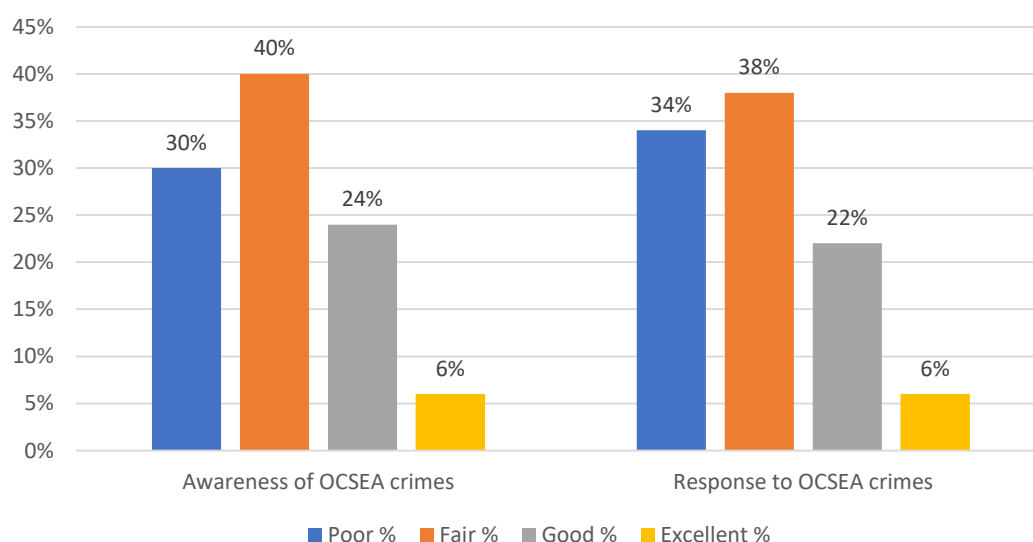


Figure 24. Participants’ perceptions of local law enforcement awareness and response to OCSEA

Both local law enforcement’s awareness and responses were rated quite poorly. Awareness was assessed to be slightly better than the response, however still 70% of respondents ranked local law enforcements awareness of OCSEA as poor (30%) or fair (40%) compared to 72% who ranked their responses to OCSEA crimes as poor (34%) or fair (38%). 24% gave the ‘good’ rating to awareness and 22% to response. 6% of respondents thought the awareness and response were excellent.

One frontline worker indicated: *“Local Law enforcement don’t know how to categorise cybercrimes, therefore being inconsistent in the way they deal with these crimes and they might not deal with it as an urgent crime”* (RA3-NA-11-A).

To better understand the ratings above, participants were next asked about their perceptions of the quality of efforts to address OCSEA (Figure 25).

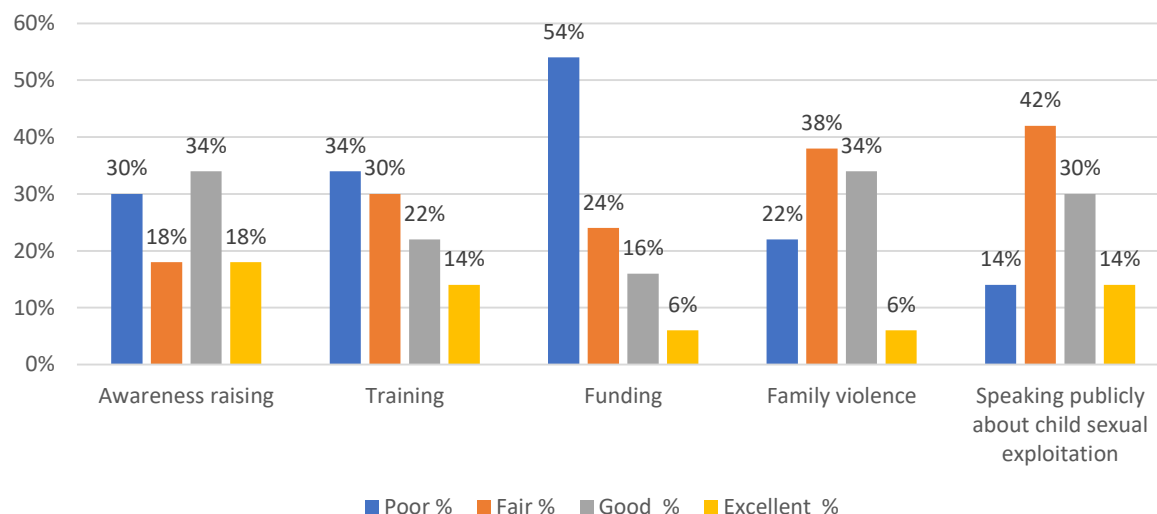


Figure 25. Participants' perceptions of quality of government efforts to address OCSEA

The government of Namibia was given quite consistently poor ratings across the board when respondents were asked to appraise the activities addressing OCSEA in the country. With regards to funding on the topic, 54% reported the government to be doing poorly, 24% fairly, 16% good and 6% excellent. 34% reported the governments trainings to be poor, 30% fair, 22% good and 14% excellent. Responding to family violence was rated by 60% as either poor (22%) or fair (38%) and by 40% as good (34%) or excellent (6%). Frontline social support workers noted that the government is doing best at awareness raising (34% rated it as good and 18% as excellent) and speaking publicly about child sexual exploitation (30% rated It as good and 14% as excellent). Even in the areas where the government has been assessed as doing better than in other areas, there are still large areas for improvements.

Respondents were given the option to provide additional comments to qualify their answers above. While some expressed that the response to OCSEA is only starting to be developed in Namibia: *"In Namibia OCSEA is kind of a new form of violence, thus the government is still trying to see how best to address the situation"* (RA3-NA-12-A); *"OCSEA is a "new" trend, I cannot with confidence say that everyone knows about it or that there are best practice principles for professionals who work with victims in terms of support. There are specific practices and guidelines for child abuse, but not specific to OCSEA"* (RA3-NA-40-A), others specifically talked about the need to address issues such as:

- The need for funding: *"Most of these cases could be managed if there was funding for community-based organisations to provide services, from counselling, awareness etc. This will relieve the government and other institutions"* (RA3-NA-46-A);
- The lack of OCSEA-related laws: *"The current law in our country does not directly address online child sexual abuse and exploitation"* (RA3-NA-40-A);

- The lack of law enforcement training: *“In my opinion, there is not enough trained law enforcement specially trained to address the offence in an efficient and timely manner”* (RA3-NA-36-A);
- The need for distinguishing different sexual offences by the police: *“Little has been done about OCSEA crimes. All cases of sexual assault are reported to police and investigations done. But we have not been clearly singling out OCSEA crimes, but it’s included in the data we have for those children who have been assaulted”* (RA3-NA-23-A).

Next, frontline social support workers were asked to assess the collaboration on OCSEA between non-government sectors such as NGOs, tourism companies, Internet companies etc. The results are illustrated in Figure 26.

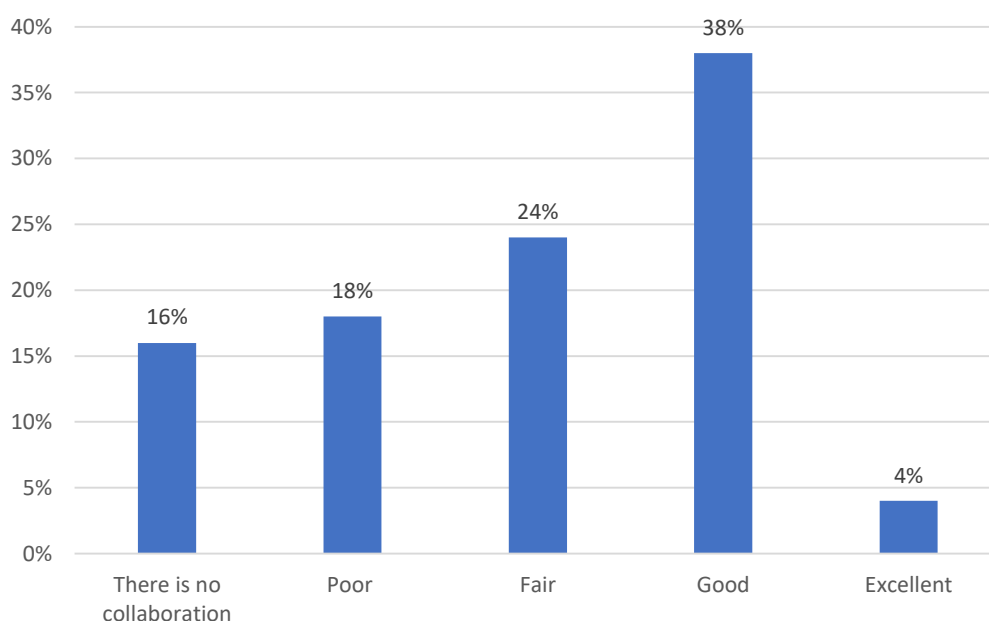


Figure 26. Participants perceptions of collaboration on OCSEA between non-government

As we can see above, 38% (n=19) reported that collaboration between non-government actors is ‘good’, 24% (n=12) reported these collaborations to be ‘fair’, 18% (n=9) rated them as poor and 16% (n=8) said there was no collaboration in this area. 4% described collaboration as excellent. One NGO-worker commented: *“Most programmes usually work in silos and there is a lack of effective collaboration or harmonisation”* (RA3-NA-21-A).

Public Awareness

Lastly, the survey attempted to ascertain the levels of public awareness around the issue of OCSEA in Namibia. In order to do so, frontline social support workers were asked to subjectively appraise young people's awareness, parent's awareness and the general public's awareness of OCSEA – their responses are illustrated in Figure 27.

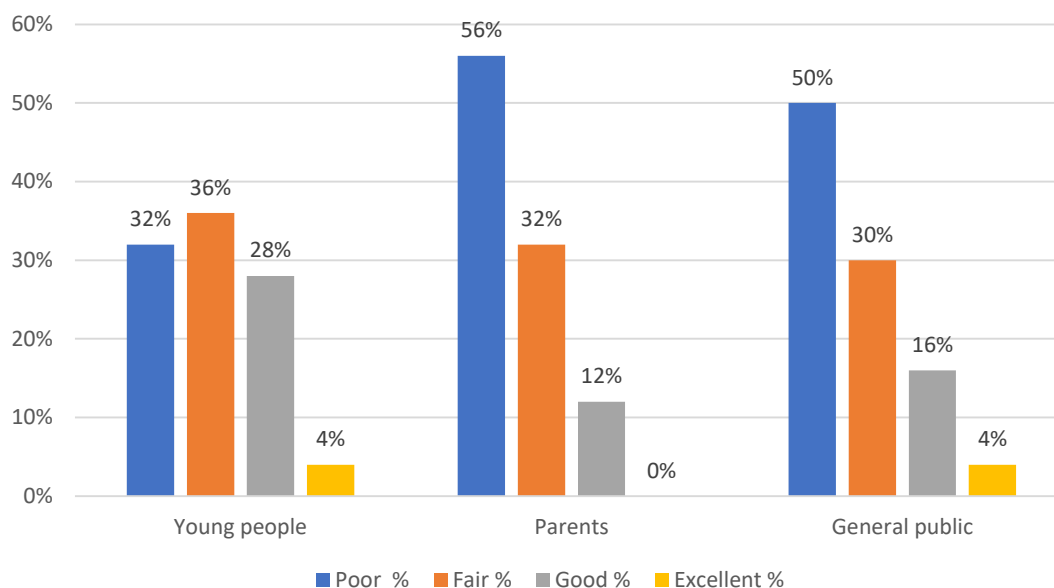


Figure 27. Awareness of OCSEA

As Figure 27 shows, frontline workers reported the levels of awareness in Namibia between parents and the general public to be fairly consistently rated as poor or fair. 56% of respondents rated parents' awareness as poor, 32% as fair and 12% as good. The general public's awareness was rated by 50% as poor, 30% as fair, 16% as good and 4% as excellent. Young people were ranked most favorably in terms of overall awareness (4% excellent, 28% good, 36% fair and 32% poor).

Respondents were given the option to provide additional comments to qualify their answers above. Some of the responses included:

"There is a fair knowledge on it, but less action being taken or spoken about publicly" (RA3-NA-09-A);

"More needs to be done for awareness raising in Namibia, as the shift to online exposure is now seemingly mandatory for some sectors to participate and survive. Children will always be at risk and their ignorance/curious nature will sometimes likely get the better of them to easily fall prey or become victims" (RA3-NA-21-A);

"Not enough awareness has been done on this area of abuse and parents & child view OCSEA as very low risk" (RA3-NA-36-A).