

# DISRUPTING HARM IN TANZANIA

Evidence on online child  
sexual exploitation and abuse



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**Warning:**

*Disrupting Harm* addresses the complex and sensitive topic of online child sexual exploitation and abuse. At times in the report, some distressing details are recounted, including using the direct words of survivors themselves. Some readers, especially those with lived experiences of sexual violence, may find parts of the report difficult to read. You are encouraged to monitor your responses and engage with the report in ways that are comfortable. Please seek psychological support for acute distress.

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**Our online lives are advancing constantly. The internet and rapidly evolving digital communication tools are bringing people everywhere closer together. Children are increasingly conversant with and dependent on these technologies, and the COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift online of many aspects of children’s lives.**

The internet can be a powerful tool for children to connect, explore, learn, and engage in creative and empowering ways. The importance of the digital environment to children’s lives and rights has been emphasised by the United Nations’ Committee on the Rights of the Child in [General Comment No. 25, adopted in 2021](#). The General Comment also stresses the fact that spending time online inevitably brings unacceptable risks and threats of harm, some of which children also encounter in other settings and some of which are unique to the online context.

One of the risks is the misuse of the internet and digital technologies for the purpose of child sexual exploitation and abuse. Online grooming, sharing of child sexual abuse material and live-streaming of child abuse are crimes against children that need an urgent, multi-sectoral and global response. These crimes are usually captured in permanent records in the form of digital images or videos, and are perpetually reshared online, victimising children over and over again. As risks of harm continue to evolve and grow exponentially, prevention and protection have become more difficult for governments, public officials, and providers of public services to children, but also for parents and caregivers trying to keep-up with their children’s use of technology.

With progress being made towards universal internet connectivity worldwide, it is ever-more pressing to invest in children’s safety and protection online. Governments around the world are increasingly acknowledging the threat of online child sexual exploitation and abuse, and some countries have taken steps to introduce the necessary legislation and put preventive measures in place. At the same time, the pressure is mounting on the technology industry to put the safety of children at the heart of design and development processes, rather than treating it as an afterthought. Such safety by design must be informed by evidence on the occurrence of online child sexual exploitation and abuse; *Disrupting Harm* makes a significant contribution to that evidence.

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The Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, through its Safe Online initiative, invested US\$ seven million in the *Disrupting Harm* project. *Disrupting Harm* uses a holistic and innovative methodology and approach to conducting comprehensive assessments of the context, threats and children's perspectives on online child sexual exploitation and abuse. This unprecedented project draws on the research expertise of ECPAT, INTERPOL, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, and their networks. The three global partners were supported by ECPAT member organisations, the INTERPOL National Central Bureaus and the UNICEF Country and Regional Offices. It is intended that the now developed and tested methodology is applied to additional countries around the world.

*Disrupting Harm* represents the most comprehensive and large-scale research project ever undertaken on online child sexual exploitation and abuse at a national level and has resulted in 13 country reports and two regional reports. It provides the comprehensive evidence of the risks children face online, how they develop, how they interlink with other forms of violence and what we can do to prevent them.

The findings will serve governments, industry, policy makers, and communities to take the right measures to ensure the internet is safe for children. This includes informing national prevention and response strategies, expanding the reach of *Disrupting Harm* to other countries and regions, and building new data and knowledge partnerships around it.

Disrupting harm to children is everyone's responsibility.



**Dr Howard Taylor**  
Executive Director  
End Violence Partnership

# MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, GENDER, WOMEN AND SPECIAL GROUPS

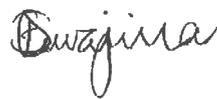
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With our increased reliance on the internet, digital technologies, and social media, the risk that our children may experience harms in the digital environment has become progressively more real. However, many of these technologies are relatively new, as are the ways that offenders misuse them to target and abuse children. Globally, there is a gap in our knowledge regarding these crimes; what children in different countries experience, how the crimes can be prevented or detected, and how best to protect children.

In light of this, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups is pleased that the United Republic of Tanzania has participated in the Disrupting Harm project to better understand the nature and scope of online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) in Tanzania.

The government of Tanzania has already taken important steps to combat OCSEA, such as establishing the National Child Online Safety Task Force in 2017, which has a yearly plan of action. Efforts are underway in the community by Women and Children Protection Committees as well as the Gender and Children Desks at police stations as part of the overall National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children in Tanzania. With the evidence in this report, these efforts can be further tailored to the needs of children. Through this extensive research effort, Tanzania will benefit from some of the highest quality evidence in the world on OCSEA, which in the long term will help keep our children safe. Data from children, caregivers, justice professionals, policy makers, frontline social support staff, and law enforcement represents a well-rounded picture. With this strong evidence base, Tanzania is in a better position to expand its programming and policy. The report offers clear recommended actions addressed to various stakeholder groups and it is the Ministry's hope that we work collaboratively to act on these recommendations.

The Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups would like to congratulate ECPAT International, INTERPOL and UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, and the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children on completing this project in Tanzania and looks forward to further accelerating our existing efforts to tackle this crime against children.



**Dr. Dorothy Gwajima**

Minister for Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The majority (67%) of children in Tanzania aged 12–17-years-old are internet users – i.e., they have used the internet within the past three months. In most cases, however, their use of the internet is currently infrequent. More than three-quarters of the 996 internet-using children in this age group who took part in the *Disrupting Harm Tanzania* household survey go online less than once a month. Overwhelmingly these children use smartphones, which they often share with someone else, to go online. The most common barrier to going online is that the device they want to use is being used by someone else. Besides device sharing, 26% of children – especially younger children aged 12–13-years-old and girls – cite parental restrictions as a barrier to going online.

According to the *Disrupting Harm* household survey, caregivers are highly concerned that their children will talk to people they do not know or will encounter sexual images online. However, caregivers' ability to guide their children may be limited. Online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) is regarded as a new and little-known issue and over half of the caregivers of the internet-using children have never used the internet. Internet-using children showed some awareness of online risks, but their digital safety skills appeared limited, and only three out of ten had received information on how to stay safe online.

Some of the adolescents surveyed had engaged in potentially risky behaviour in the last year. About 5% had met someone in person whom they had first got to know online (most children were happy with the interactions) and about 3% had shared naked images or videos of themselves with someone else. Such images are most frequently shared among peers and close friends because children are in love, flirting or having fun, though the risk of content being shared without permission remains. However, some children had shared naked images as a result of threats or pressure, including with people online that they had never met.

## Children's experiences of online sexual exploitation and abuse

Children were also asked whether they have been subjected to different forms of OCSEA. OCSEA refers to situations that involve digital or communication technologies at some point during the continuum of abuse or exploitation. Data from the *Disrupting Harm* household survey revealed that in the past year alone, 4% of internet-using children aged 12–17 in Tanzania were victims of grave instances of online sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, someone else sharing their sexual images without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts.

Most children who received unwanted requests for sexual acts refused to do as asked, but a small proportion complied. Meanwhile, 2% of children said sexual images of them had been shared without their permission in the past year.

All these experiences occurred online as well as offline, facilitated by digital technology. The persons responsible were sometimes people completely unknown to the child, but more frequently someone they already knew from before. Offenders were not only adults, but also other children. These instances could, on occasion, be evidence of grooming children with a view to sexually abusing or exploiting them.

The proportion of children who experience OCSEA may not seem high, but if scaled up to the total population of internet-using children in Tanzania, an estimated 200,000 children were subjected to OCSEA in the span of just one year. Moreover, it is likely that some children did not report instances of OCSEA because these are sensitive issues and hard to disclose. As internet use in Tanzania becomes more frequent in the future, a larger number of children will be exposed to the risk of OCSEA, which highlights a need for early prevention and strengthened response through appropriate policy and programmatic measures.

Law enforcement data suggests that OCSEA offences rose between 2017 and 2019 (although there are some data source issues noted in the report). In addition, in 2017–2019 the U.S. National Centre for

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Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) received 20,625 CyberTips related to Tanzania – mostly from Facebook, and overwhelmingly about suspected child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Data presented in the report on web searches may point to interest for CSAM within Tanzania, with the open web used to discover it.

### **Disclosure and reporting of online sexual exploitation and abuse**

Many incidents of OCSEA go undisclosed and formally unreported. Most of the children surveyed who had been subjected to OCSEA or related, unwanted experiences either told nobody or confided only in their friends. A minority told their caregivers or other adults but hardly any children went to the police, a social support worker or a helpline. Reasons for not disclosing included a lack of awareness about where to go or whom to tell, feelings of embarrassment or shame or that it would be emotionally too difficult to talk about it, not thinking the incident was serious enough to report, and concern about getting into trouble.

Factors underlying children's reluctance to disclose instances of OCSEA included being unaware that an offence was committed, lack of familiarity with reporting mechanisms, stigma, and discomfort to talk about sex. The risk of legal self-incrimination may also deter victims from coming forward in the face of the criminalisation of pornography and same sex relations.

Most caregivers said they would tell somebody if their children were sexually harassed or abused, and 45% said they would report to the police. However, the interviews conducted with government officials, justice professionals and frontline social support workers suggest that caregivers or other adults may not report instances of child abuse, particularly of OCSEA, to the police for a number of reasons. These include lack of awareness of what constitutes OCSEA, privacy concerns, the discomfort of openly discussing sex, fear of stigma from the community, and perceptions that crimes against children are not taken seriously or that services are not effective. Interviews with caregivers whose children had been through the justice process revealed that some families preferred informal out-of-court settlements for financial reasons and/or where the offender is close to the family.

### **Responding to reported instances of child exploitation and abuse**

Tanzania has a number of institutions that can, and do, play a role in responding to cases of child exploitation and abuse, potentially including OCSEA. These range from the Women and Children Protection Committees at village/community level to the 14 multi-agency One Stop Centres, which make it possible to provide medical, psychosocial and criminal justice support in a single child-friendly setting. However, the quality of these services was not explored in this study.

There are 420 police stations in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar that have Gender and Children Desks with two to eight police officers on each Desk. Cases of child abuse can be reported in order to begin investigations. When interviewing child victims of exploitation and abuse, officers at the Gender and Children Desks – at least in Dar es Salaam – make efforts to use child-friendly interview techniques, dress in non-formal clothes and allow a person familiar to the child to be present during the interview process. Nevertheless, some Gender and Children Desks, in rural settings, might face challenges in terms of insufficient staffing and infrastructure, thus affecting their capacity to manage children's cases. Additionally, even though officers working on the Police Gender and Children Desks take a course on Gender-Based violence and violence against children, this does not include OCSEA-specific topics. The frontline workers survey indicated that police officers may sometimes lack awareness about OCSEA and the harm it causes, suggesting the courses offered to officers are not sufficient.

The Tanzania Law Enforcement authorities also include a Cybercrime Department and a national unit handling human trafficking and child exploitation. However, investigations of OCSEA are hampered by an array of factors. These include insufficient technical competence and equipment for investigating online phenomena; lack of personnel for online monitoring to identify CSAM; lack of a national CSAM database; and limited cooperation with foreign law enforcement authorities; budgetary constraints among other factors.

With respect to the legal duty of (domestic) internet service providers to notify law enforcement authorities of any illegal activity or provide them with information on OCSEA when requested, this research was not able to establish how compliant and responsive (domestic) internet service providers are.

### **Children, the law, justice and social services**

There are gaps in the legislation related to OCSEA in Tanzania. The Cybercrime Act (2015), the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act (2008), the Law of the Child Act R.E 2019, the Zanzibar's Children's Act (2011), the Penal Code of Mainland Tanzania (1998) and the Penal Code of Zanzibar (2018) all contain proscriptions relevant to OCSEA. However, many aspects of OCSEA, including live-streaming of child sexual abuse, online grooming for sexual purposes and sexual extortion committed in the online environment are not explicitly criminalised. Moreover, possessing and accessing CSAM without intent to redistribute is only illegal in Zanzibar.

Due to non-reporting, insufficient awareness and investigative capacity, and gaps in the legal framework, OCSEA is not commonly prosecuted in the criminal justice system. Those OCSEA cases that make it to the courts are cases where abuse has both online and offline elements. In such cases, the contact abuse is what is prosecuted, while the online component of the offence is disregarded. Interviews with criminal justice professionals indicate that OCSEA offences with no offline component, and hence no contact abuse, appear not to be prosecuted according to justice professionals who took part in the *Disrupting Harm* research.

According to the information and opinions gathered through the research conducted on legal processes for victims of child exploitation and abuse in general, magistrates in juvenile and regular courts seek to employ child-friendly procedures – for example; by dressing informally, allowing social welfare officers to be present and screening of the alleged offender. However, these procedures may not always be followed. Trials may be prolonged, and caregivers may be unable to attend sessions as free transport is not provided for them. Furthermore, social welfare officers and legal aid providers are not always available, particularly in more remote areas. Victims are legally entitled to compensation from offenders, but this is not sought as standard practice. Conviction rates appear to be low.

In addition to their involvement in the legal proceedings, social welfare officers cooperate with law enforcement authorities and the justice system in the provision of such services as shelter, counselling and legal aid. In the *Disrupting Harm* survey of frontline workers, support services for child victims were rated 'fair' or 'good'. Counselling services may not be available in all locations, either from official bodies or NGOs, and frontline workers questioned their quality. And while initial medical services for victims are provided free of charge, the public may not be aware of these services.

### **Current initiatives for children**

Interviews with government representatives demonstrate that the Government of Tanzania is aware of the threat of OCSEA and the need for cooperation and collaboration to counter it.

A National Child Online Safety Task Force was established in 2017, bringing together the main public institutions with mandates relevant to OCSEA. It is chaired by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups. The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority and C-SEMA, a national NGO, sit on the secretariat and UNICEF plays an advisory role. The Task Force finalised its plan of action and started activities in 2019. It should however be noted that the Plan of Action is revised annually. Since its implementation, the taskforce has conducted training at local government level and developed materials for awareness creation on OCSEA for use in schools and society.

OCSEA interventions by the government are implemented as part of the ongoing child protection system strengthening, and as such, there are no financial resources earmarked specifically for combating OCSEA. Beyond the Tanzanian Communication Regulatory Authority and the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups, technical know-how for addressing OCSEA is said to be limited. Only a few frontline workers have received training about OCSEA. In addition, policies on OCSEA remain undeveloped, partly due to shortage of evidence on OCSEA in Tanzania.

There are some civil society organisations (e.g., C-SEMA, which runs the child helpline, and Kiota Women's Health and Development – KIWOHEDE) which play a part in responding to OCSEA by

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providing services to victims. They are often also involved in awareness-raising activities and in training the child protection workforce. However, their geographical reach and resources tend to be limited, and they are not working solely on OCSEA.

### Key insights

The report concludes by highlighting five key insights from the research:

1. In the past year alone, 4% of internet-users aged 12–17 in Tanzania were victims of grave instances of online sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, someone else sharing their sexual images without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. Scaled to the population, this represents an estimated 200,000 children who were subjected to any of these harms in the span of just one year.
2. According to the household survey, offenders of OCSEA are most often people already known to the child. These are friends or acquaintances of the child (both peers and adults) but also romantic partners and family members. However, OCSEA is also committed by people unknown to the child. These crimes happen while children spend time online or in person but involving technology.
3. Among children who experienced OCSEA through social media, Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp were the most common platforms where this occurred.
4. Children who are subjected to OCSEA are most likely to disclose this to people they know in person, especially their friends. Children are very unlikely to rely on formal reporting mechanisms like helplines or the police.
5. While good building blocks are already in place – an interagency working group and a fledgling child protection system that can be harnessed to address OCSEA – there remain gaps in the awareness, capacity and resources of the law enforcement, justice and social support systems that should be addressed.
6. Though existing legislation, policies and standards in Tanzania include provisions relevant to OCSEA, further legislative action is needed to criminalise all OCSEA-related acts.



**In the past year alone, 4% of internet-users aged 12–17 in Tanzania were victims of grave instances of online sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, someone else sharing their sexual images without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts.**



The report ends with a detailed road map that is actionable and relevant for stakeholders with a duty to protect children from OCSEA: government; law enforcement; justice and social services sectors; communities, teachers and caregivers; and digital platforms and service providers. These recommended actions are driven by data to ensure that Tanzania's response to OCSEA is strategic and informed by evidence from a wide range of stakeholders. These are too detailed to be recounted in the Executive Summary but can be found in full on [page 85](#) of this report.

# DISRUPTING HARM METHODS

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**As with all the settings in which children live and grow, the online environment may expose them to risks of sexual exploitation and abuse. Yet the scarcity of the available evidence makes it difficult to grasp the nature of the harm caused or to advise governments' approaches to prevention and response. Informed by the 2018 WeProtect Global Alliance Threat Assessment,<sup>1</sup> and a desire to understand and deepen the impact of its existing investments, the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children<sup>2</sup> through its Safe Online initiative, decided to invest in research to strengthen the evidence base on OCSEA – with a particular focus on 13 countries across Eastern and Southern Africa and Southeast Asia.**

The countries of focus in the Eastern and Southern Africa region are: Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda. The countries of focus in the Southeast Asian region are: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Extensive data collection for nine unique research activities took place in Tanzania from early 2020 through to early 2021. During an extensive analysis phase, the data from all the research activities were triangulated and a series of 13 country reports were developed. Analysis for Tanzania was finalised in October 2021. Using the same methods in all 13 countries also allows for cross-country comparisons, which will be presented in the two regional reports in the series. The desired outcome of this report is to provide a baseline and evidence for Tanzanian policy makers to tackle OCSEA and strengthen victim support. In addition, findings and recommended actions are expected to have relevance for a broader global audience. Recommendations made in the report are aligned with the WeProtect Model National Response<sup>3</sup> and contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.<sup>4</sup>

## Summary of methods used by ECPAT in Tanzania

### Government duty-bearer interviews

Nine semi-structured interviews were conducted between August and October 2020 with nine senior national government representatives<sup>5</sup> with mandates that include OCSEA. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted virtually. Only one respondent from Zanzibar participated in the interviews,<sup>6</sup> the remainder were from Mainland Tanzania. More information on the methods can be found [here](#) while the preliminary report on the data can be found [here](#). Attributions to data from these respondents have ID numbers beginning with RA1.<sup>7</sup>

### Analysis of non-law enforcement data and consultations

A range of non-law enforcement entities have data and insight on the nature and scale of OCSEA. Data for Tanzania was obtained from the International Association of Internet Hotlines, the Internet Watch Foundation and Child Helpline International. Qualitative insight was provided by a number of global technology platforms. Where relevant, this information supplements the analysis contributed by INTERPOL (see below).

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1. WeProtect Global Alliance. (2018). [Global Threat Assessment 2018: Working together to end the sexual exploitation of children online](#). London: WeProtect Global Alliance.

2. Global Partnership to End Violence against Children. (n.d.) [End Violence against Children](#).

3. WeProtect Global Alliance. (2016). [Preventing and Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: A model national response](#). London: WeProtect Global Alliance.

4. United Nations. (n.d.) [Sustainable Development Goals](#). See: Goals 5.2, 8.7 and 16.2.

5. Participants represented: President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government, Department of Community Development under the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups; Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs; Tanzania Police Force; University of Dar es Salaam; Anti Human Trafficking Secretariat; UNICEF Tanzania country office; and Ministry of Labour, Empowerment, Elders, Women and Children, Zanzibar.

6. The participant represented the Ministry of Labour, Empowerment, Elders, Women and Children, Zanzibar.

7. The format RA1-TZ-01-A is used for IDs. 'RA1' indicates the research activity, 'TZ' denotes Tanzania, '01' is the participant number and 'A' indicates the participant when interviews included more than one person.

### Frontline social service providers' survey

A non-probability convenience sample of 50 client-facing frontline workers in Tanzania includes outreach youth workers, social workers, case managers, psychologists, and some health and legal professionals directly working with children's cases participated in a survey administered online between July and September 2020. This research activity aimed to explore the scope and context of OCSEA as observed by those working on the social support front line. All participants were from Mainland Tanzania. More information on the methods can be found [here](#) while the preliminary report on the data can be found [here](#). Attributions to data from these respondents have ID numbers beginning with RA3 throughout the report.

### Access to justice interviews with OCSEA victims and their caregivers

The attempts of the *Disrupting Harm* research team to identify child victims<sup>8</sup> of OCSEA who had instituted criminal proceedings against the offenders were unsuccessful. The research team made contact with approximately 35 government officials and 20 frontline workers from civil society organisations in a bid to identify victims of OCSEA. All individuals contacted worked in close contact with victims of child sexual abuse and exploitation within the criminal justice system. Government officers included district prosecutors, government social welfare officers, officers from the police and gender desks, a representative from the Cybercrime unit, a juvenile court magistrate and a manager of a Children's Remand Home. However, no sample was able to be identified and this activity was not proceeded with. The perspectives of OCSEA victims and their caregivers are therefore unfortunately not represented in the Tanzania report. Access to a larger number of officials who may have helped identify OCSEA victims was curtailed by concerns around COVID-19 at the time (even though there was no lockdown), and the presidential elections that were held in late October 2020. More information on the methods of this research activity (conducted in countries where a sample was identified) can be found [here](#).

### Access to justice interviews with justice professionals

Ten semi-structured interviews were conducted with ten criminal justice professionals between July and September 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all interviews were conducted virtually.<sup>9</sup> More information on the methods for these interviews can be found [here](#), while the preliminary report of the data can be found [here](#). Attributions to data from this activity have ID numbers beginning with RA4 throughout the report. The suffix 'justice' is also included in the ID numbers to indicate the interviews with justice professionals.

### Literature review and legal analysis

A literature review was undertaken to inform the research teams prior to primary data collection. Comprehensive analysis of the legislation, policy and systems addressing OCSEA in Tanzania was conducted and finalised in July 2020. More information on the methods can be found [here](#), while the full report on the legal analysis can be found [here](#).

### Conversations with OCSEA survivors

Unstructured, one-on-one conversations led by trauma-informed expert practitioners were arranged with 33 young survivors of OCSEA in five selected *Disrupting Harm* countries (nine girls in Kenya, five boys and seven girls in Cambodia, seven girls in Namibia, four girls in Malaysia and one boy in South Africa). Although not held in all countries, these conversations are meant to underline common themes and issues in all 13 *Disrupting Harm* countries. Participants were aged between 16 and 24 but had all been subjected to OCSEA as children. The survivor conversations were analysed collectively for all countries. Quotes from different countries are inserted in all the national reports, including the Tanzania report, as examples of common experiences. More information on the methods can be found [here](#). The report summarising the project-wide survivor conversations will be released separately in early 2022. Attributions to data from these respondents have ID numbers beginning with RA5 throughout the report and are presented in inset boxes.

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8. The term 'victim' was used because of the context of the research (within the justice system), but for the rest of the report alternative terms are preferred.

9. The interview sample included one lawyer, two government social welfare officers, three police officers (two representing the Police Gender and Children Desks and one representing the Cybercrime Department), and three representatives of civil society organisations (two national non-governmental organisations and one community-based organisation). Efforts to interview representatives of the judiciary and the prosecutor's office failed. Eight of the ten interviews were with respondents based in Dar es Salaam and only two with respondents implementing programmes elsewhere – namely, in Mwanza and Dodoma. This was mostly because professionals with experience of OCSEA were difficult to find outside the capital, and because it was logistically easier for the local ECPAT member, which is based in Dar es Salaam, to identify respondents there. Persuading professionals to participate in the interviews required face-to-face meetings and further communications to explain the sampling criteria.

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## Summary of methods used in Tanzania by INTERPOL

### Quantitative case data analysis

Data was sought on cases related to OCSEA from law enforcement authorities via the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in each country. Data were also obtained from the mandated reports of U.S.-based technology companies to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) and from a number of other partner organisations with a view to deepening the understanding of relevant offences committed in the country, offender and victim behaviour, crime enablers and vulnerabilities. Crime data was analysed for the three years from 2017 to 2019.

### Qualitative capacity assessments

In addition to seeking data on OCSEA cases, INTERPOL requested data on the capacity of the national law enforcement authorities to respond to this type of crime, and interviewed serving officers. Particular emphasis was placed on human resources, access to specialist equipment and training, investigative procedures, the use of tools for international cooperation, achievements and challenges. Through the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in Dodoma, the INTERPOL Crimes Against Children team conducted five semi-structured interviews with law enforcement officers with responsibility for investigating OCSEA. The officers were drawn from three specialised units: the Police Gender and Children Desks, the Criminal Investigation Department and the Cybercrime Unit. These interviews were focused on investigation and criminal justice processes achieved or carried out in the years 2017, 2018 and 2019.

Attributions to data from this activity have ID numbers beginning with RA8 throughout the report. More information on INTERPOL's methodologies can be found [here](#).

## Summary of methods used in Tanzania by UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti

### Household survey of internet-using children and their caregivers

In order to understand children's use of the internet and the risks and opportunities they face online, particularly OCSEA, a nationally representative

household survey was conducted with 996 internet-using children. The target population for the survey was children aged 12-17 in Tanzania who had used the internet in the three months before the interview. Additionally, one caregiver of each child was interviewed.

To achieve a nationally representative random sample, the survey used random probability sampling with national coverage. In Tanzania, fieldwork coverage was 99% and took place in both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. Coverage is defined as the proportion of the total population that had a chance of being included in the survey sample – meaning that the fieldwork would cover the area where they live if sampled. Some areas were not covered due to security and accessibility issues – namely, Tanga (Pangani), Pemba (Kisiwa Panzi, Kojani, Makohongo, Fundo, Shamiani), Unguja (Tumbatu, Uzi), Kigoma (Mwamgongo, Kagunga), Kagera (Goziba), Ngorongoro (Pinyinyi, Naiyobi, Endureni), Longido (Geraimeurogoi, Geraibomba).

The sampling followed a three-stage random probability clustered sample design. At the first stage, 100 primary sampling units were selected. These were provided by the National Bureau of Statistics. At the second stage, interviewers randomly selected addresses in the field using random walk procedures and attempted contact at the selected addresses to screen for members of the survey population using a screening question developed for this purpose. At the third stage, individuals (children and caregivers) were selected within each eligible household using random methods.

In every household visited, an attempt was made to collect data on the number of 12-17-year-old children in the household, their gender, and whether they had used the internet in the past three months. This allowed the researchers to estimate internet penetration rates for all 12-17-year-old children in Tanzania.

The fieldwork took place between 21 December 2020 and 19 January 2021. Data collection was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

A more detailed explanation of the methodological approach and the specific methods used for analysis of the household survey data can be found [here](#).

### Ethical Approval

The ECPAT and UNICEF Innocenti research components received approvals from the National Institute for Medical Research, the National Bureau of Statistics, and the President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government. Both organisations also received permits from the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology. As UNICEF Innocenti conducted its household survey in Zanzibar as well as in Mainland Tanzania, additional approvals were sought from the Zanzibar Health Research Institute. The protocols of ECPAT and UNICEF were also reviewed and approved by the Health Media Lab (HML) Institutional Review Board.

Both the INTERPOL research activities entailed interviews with law enforcement officials in relevant units and national agencies dealing with OCSEA. The team of interviewers took an online course on Responsible Conduct of Research from the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative and followed the INTERPOL Code of Conduct.

### National Consultation

In a national consultation on 15 October 2021, representatives of the government, law enforcement authorities and civil society in Tanzania were asked to provide input on the *Disrupting Harm* findings and recommendations, to enhance their relevance for the Tanzanian context.

Figure 1: *Disrupting Harm* methods in Tanzania.



# ABOUT ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

**Child sexual abuse refers to various sexual activities perpetrated on children (persons under 18), regardless of whether or not the children are aware that what is happening to them is neither normal nor acceptable. It can be committed by adults or peers and usually involves an individual or group taking advantage of an imbalance of power. It can be committed without explicit force, with offenders frequently using authority, power, manipulation or deception.<sup>10</sup>**

*Child sexual exploitation* involves the same abusive actions. However, an additional element of a threat or of exchange for something (e.g., money, shelter, material goods, immaterial things like protection, a relationship) or even the mere promise of such, must also be present.<sup>11</sup>

**Online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA)** refers to situations involving *digital, internet and communication technologies* at some point during the continuum of abuse or exploitation. OCSEA can occur fully online or through a mix of online and in-person interactions between offenders and children.

Disrupting Harm focuses on how technology can be mis-used to facilitate child sexual exploitation and abuse. Its use of the term OCSEA does not refer to abuse or exploitation that occurs exclusively online, nor is it the intention of Disrupting Harm to create an artificial divide between online and offline child sexual exploitation and abuse. Children can be abused or exploited while they spend time in the digital environment, but equally, offenders can use digital technology to facilitate their actions, e.g., to document and share images of in-person abuse and exploitation or to groom children to meet them in person.

*Disrupting Harm* also focuses on how technology facilitates child sexual exploitation and abuse and contributes much-needed evidence to understand

the role digital technology plays in perpetrating sexual violence against children.

Any characterisation of OCSEA must recognise that the boundaries between online and offline behaviour and actions are increasingly blurred<sup>12</sup> and that responses need to consider the whole spectrum of activities in which digital technologies can play a part. This characterisation is particularly important to keep in mind as children increasingly see their online and offline worlds as entwined and simultaneous.<sup>13</sup>

For *Disrupting Harm*, OCSEA was defined specifically to include child sexual exploitation and abuse that involves:

- Production, possession or sharing of **child sexual abuse material (CSAM)**: Photos, videos, audios or other recordings, or any other representation of real or digitally generated child sexual abuse or sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes.<sup>14</sup>
- **Live-streaming of child sexual abuse**: Child sexual abuse that is perpetrated and viewed simultaneously in real-time via communication tools, video conferencing tools and/or chat applications. In most cases, the offender requesting the abuse in exchange for payment or other material benefits is physically in a different location from the child(ren) and the facilitators of the abuse.
- **Online grooming of children for sexual purposes**: Engagement with a child via technology with the intent of sexually abusing or exploiting the child. While international legal instruments<sup>15</sup>

10. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). [Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Bangkok: ECPAT International. 18.

11. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). [Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Bangkok: ECPAT International. 24.

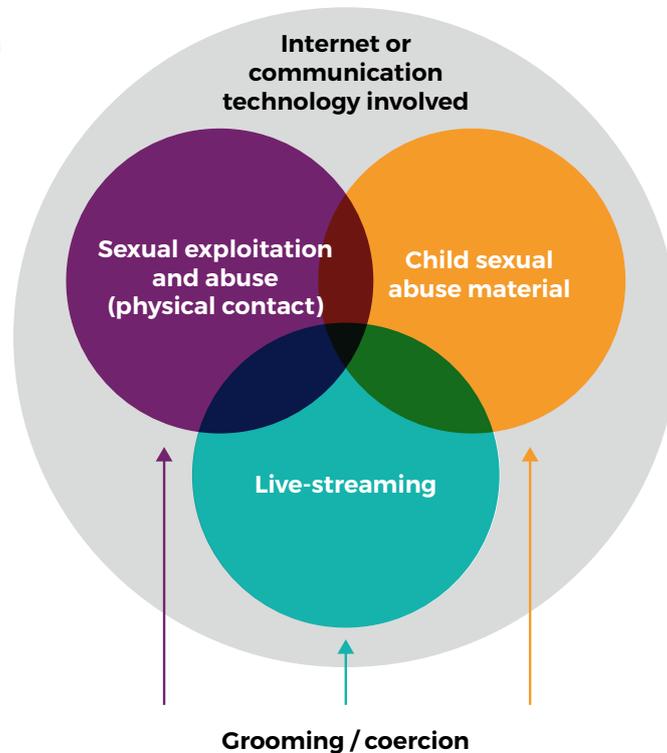
12. May-Chahal, C., & Palmer, C. (2018). [Rapid Evidence Assessment: Characteristics and vulnerabilities of victims of online-facilitated child sexual abuse and exploitation](#). Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse. UK: Lancaster University.

13. Stoilova, M., Livingstone, S., Khazbak, R. (2021). [Investigating Risks and Opportunities for Children in a Digital World: A rapid review of the evidence on children's internet use and outcomes](#). *Innocenti Discussion Papers* no. 2021-01, Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

14. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). [Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Bangkok: ECPAT International. 40.

15. The only two legally binding international instruments containing an obligation to criminalise the grooming of children for sexual purposes are: Council of Europe. (2007). [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Council of Europe Treaty Series – No. 201. Section 23; and European Parliament and Council. (2011). [Directive 2011/92/EU on combating the sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and replacing Council Framework Decision 2004/68/JHA](#). Section 6.

Figure 2: Framing the main forms of online child sexual exploitation and abuse explored by *Disrupting Harm*.



criminalising grooming indicate that this must take place with intent to meet the child in person, it has become increasingly common for offenders to sexually abuse children online by, for example, manipulating them into self-generating and sharing CSAM through digital technologies, without necessarily having the intention of meeting them and abusing them in person.

The *Disrupting Harm* reports also address other phenomena that contribute to understanding the contexts and socio-cultural environments in which OCSEA occurs.

- **The sharing of self-generated sexual content involving children<sup>16</sup>** can lead to or be part of OCSEA, even if this content is initially produced and shared voluntarily between peers, as it can be passed on without permission or obtained by deception or coercion.

- **Sexual extortion of children<sup>17</sup>** refers to the use of blackmail or threats to extract sexual content or other benefits (e.g., money, shelter, material goods, immaterial things like protection or even the mere promise of such) from the child, often using sexual content of the child that has previously been obtained as leverage.
- **Sexual harassment of a child<sup>18</sup> and unwanted exposure of a child to sexual content<sup>19</sup>** are other phenomena which *can* represent or enable OCSEA. For example, offenders can deliberately expose children to sexual content as part of grooming to desensitise them to sexual acts. However, for the purposes of evidence-based policy and programme development, it is important to acknowledge that there are differences between voluntary viewing of sexual content by children and viewing that is forced or coerced. The former is not included in the definition of OCSEA used in the *Disrupting Harm* study.

16. Cooper, K., Quayle, E., Jonsson, L. & Svedin, C.G. (2016). [Adolescents and self-taken sexual images: A review of the literature](#). *Computers in Human Behavior*, vol. 55, 706-716.

17. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). [Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Bangkok: ECPAT International. 52.

18. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). [Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Bangkok: ECPAT International. 21.

19. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). [Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#). Bangkok: ECPAT International. 44.

# ABOUT TANZANIA – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

Despite increasing connectivity around the world, few countries regularly update their formal internet use statistics or disaggregate them for their child populations. This presents a challenge in understanding how young people's lives are impacted by digital technologies, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The infographic below summarises the latest data on internet access and social media use in Tanzania, some of which was gathered directly through the *Disrupting Harm* nationally representative household survey of internet-using 12-17-year-olds.

The data presented here provide an important backdrop for understanding the various facets of children's internet use. However, methodological limitations can affect the quality of data from some secondary sources. Reliance on purposive or other non-probability sampling techniques means that the data cannot be considered representative of the population in question. In addition, variations in data collection methods and definitions of internet use pose a challenge for cross-country comparisons.



## POPULATION TOTAL 2020

UN data:

**59,734,000**<sup>20</sup>  
(2019: 58,005,000)<sup>21</sup>  
(2018: 56,313,000)<sup>22</sup>

Country data:

2020: **57,638,000**<sup>23,24</sup>



## FEMALE POPULATION 2019

UN data:

**29,025,000**<sup>25</sup>  
(2018: 28,185,000)<sup>26</sup>



## MALE POPULATION 2019

UN data:

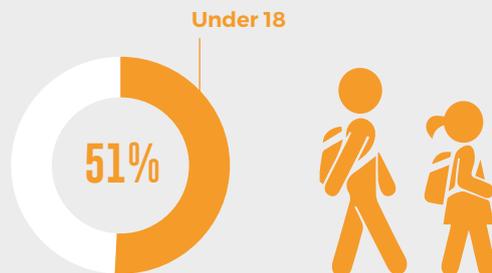
**28,981,000**<sup>27</sup>  
(2018: 28,128,000)<sup>28</sup>

## POPULATION UNDER 18 2018

UN data:

**28,558,000**<sup>29</sup>

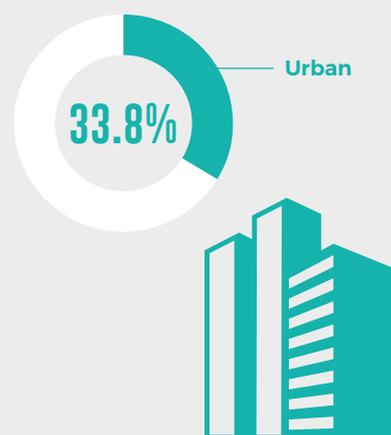
The last Population and Housing Census of Tanzania conducted in 2012, showed the population of children under 15 to be 43.9%.<sup>30</sup>



## URBAN POPULATION

2018: 33.8%<sup>31</sup>

2030 prospective: 42.4%<sup>32</sup>



## MEDIAN AGE 2020<sup>33</sup>

**18**



## GDP PER CAPITA 2019 (US\$)

**\$1,076.5**<sup>34</sup>



20. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

21. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

22. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

23. National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance and Planning. (2021). [2020 Tanzania in Figures](#).

24. Projected figure based on 2012 Population and Housing Census.

25. United Nations Population Division. [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

26. United Nations Population Division. [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

27. United Nations Population Division. [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

28. United Nations Population Division. [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

29. UNICEF. (2019). [The State of the World's Children 2019](#). UNICEF, New York.

30. National Bureau of Statistics. (June 2021). [2020 Tanzania in Figures](#). 24.

31. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). [World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision](#).

32. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

33. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). [World Population Prospects 2019](#).

34. World Bank. (2020). [GDP per capita \(current US\\$\) – Tanzania](#).

## ABOUT TANZANIA – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

### POVERTY RATES 2017: 26.4%<sup>35</sup>

Poverty headcount ratio at national poverty lines (% of population)



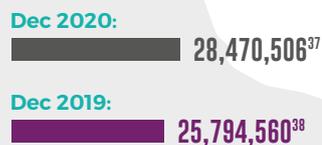
### LANGUAGES

**KISWAHILI  
ENGLISH**

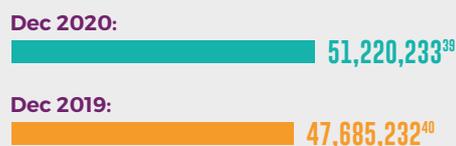
THE NATIONAL LANGUAGE IS KISWAHILI; ENGLISH IS WIDELY USED IN OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION.<sup>36</sup>

### INTERNET PENETRATION

#### Estimated number of internet users

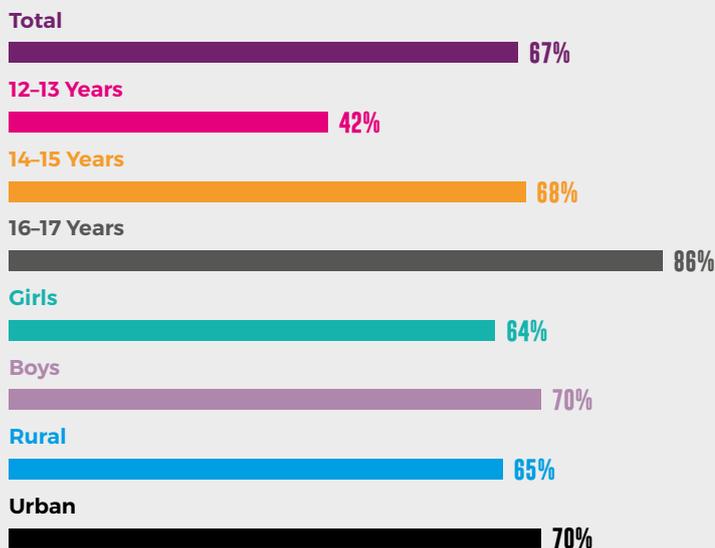


#### Subscriptions to mobile network



Source: Disrupting Harm data

### 2020 INTERNET PENETRATION RATES AMONG 12–17-YEAR-OLDS



n = 1,857 households.

Source: Disrupting Harm data

### INTERNET USE AMONG CAREGIVERS OF INTERNET-USING CHILDREN

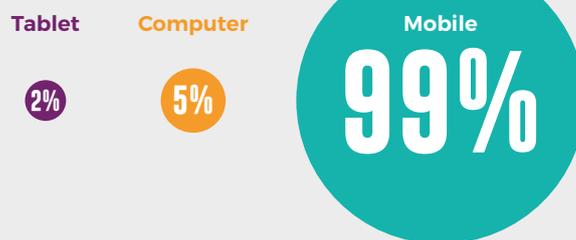
**42%**



n = 996 caregivers of internet-using children.

Source: Disrupting Harm data

### MOST POPULAR DEVICE TO ACCESS THE INTERNET AMONG 12–17-YEAR-OLDS\*



n = 996 internet-using children.

\*Multiple choice question

35. World Bank. (n.d.). [Poverty & Equity Data Portal](#).

36. United Republic of Tanzania Government Portal. (n.d). [Tanzania profile](#).

37. Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority. (2020). [Quarterly Communications Statistics October-December 2020](#).

38. Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority. (2019). [Quarterly Communications Statistics October-December 2019](#).

39. Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority. (2020). [Quarterly Communications Statistics October-December 2020](#).

40. Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority. (2019). [Quarterly Communications Statistics October-December 2019](#).

# ABOUT TANZANIA – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

## MOST POPULAR PLACE TO ACCESS THE INTERNET AMONG 12–17-YEAR-OLDS\*

Source: Disrupting Harm data

Mall

4%

Internet café

9%

School

18%

Other

36%

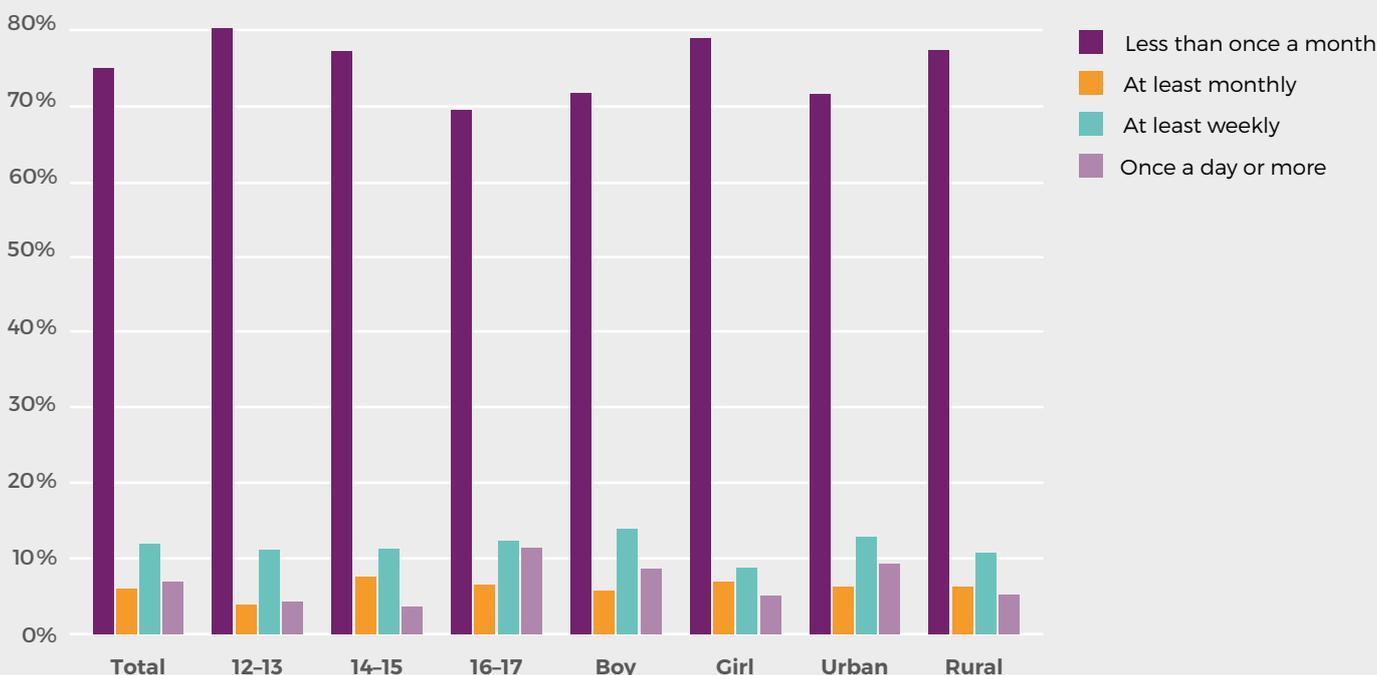
Home

97%

n = 996 internet-using children. \*Multiple choice question

## FREQUENCY OF INTERNET USE AMONG 12–17-YEAR-OLDS

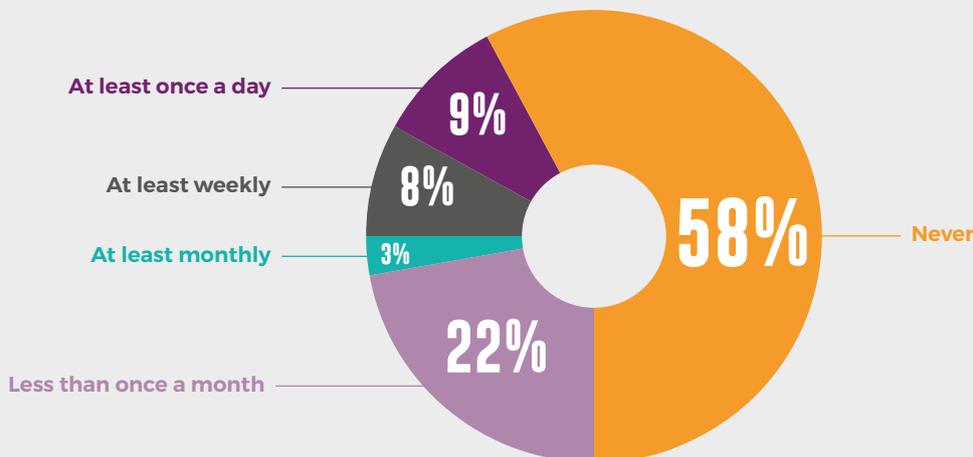
Source: Disrupting Harm data



Base: 12-17-year-old internet-using children in Tanzania. n = 996 children.

Source: Disrupting Harm data

## FREQUENCY OF INTERNET USE AMONG CAREGIVERS OF INTERNET-USING CHILDREN



n = 996 caregivers of internet-using children.

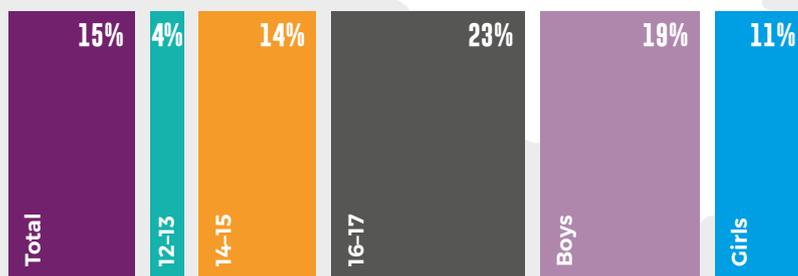
# ABOUT TANZANIA – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

## MARKET SHARES IN MOBILE SUBSCRIPTIONS (DECEMBER 2020)



## CHILDREN WHO USE SOCIAL MEDIA ON A WEEKLY BASIS

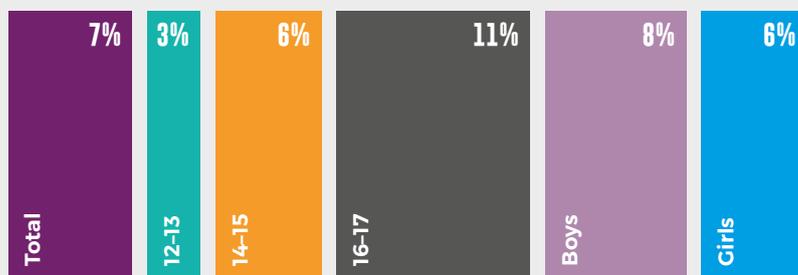
Source: Disrupting Harm data



n = 996 internet-using children.

## CHILDREN WHO USE INSTANT MESSAGING APPS ON A WEEKLY BASIS

Source: Disrupting Harm data

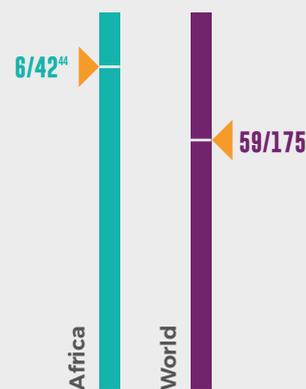


n = 996 internet-using children.

## ICT DEVELOPMENT INDEX RANKING (ITU) 2017



## GLOBAL CYBERSECURITY INDEX RANKING<sup>43</sup> 2018



41. Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority. (2020). [Quarterly Communications Statistics October-December 2020](#).

42. International Telecommunication Union. (2017). [ICT Development Index 2017](#).

43. The Global Cybersecurity Index measures the commitment of countries to cybersecurity based on the implementation of legal instruments and the level of technical and organisational measures taken to reinforce international cooperation and cybersecurity.

44. International Telecommunication Union. (2019). [Global Cybersecurity Index \(GCI\) 2018](#).

# OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY

## Laws

In Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, offences related to OCSEA have been addressed mainly through the **Cybercrime Act**.<sup>45</sup> Other relevant pieces of legislation on sexual offences in general, which are also relevant for OCSEA related crimes, are the **Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act**,<sup>46</sup> which applies to both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, the **Law of the Child Act R.E 2019**,<sup>47</sup> Zanzibar's **Children's Act**,<sup>48</sup> the **Penal Code**<sup>49</sup> and the **Penal Code** of Zanzibar.<sup>50</sup>

The Cybercrime Act provides a quite comprehensive definition of child sexual abuse material (CSAM)<sup>51</sup> and explicitly criminalises acts of distribution associated with it,<sup>52</sup> as well as the attempt to commit these crimes.<sup>53</sup> It also makes cyberbullying an offence.<sup>54</sup> At the same time, the Cybercrime Act prohibits publishing online pornography in general, including material depicting adults.<sup>55</sup>

According to an official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG): *"Although at the moment we have the Cybercrimes Act, it is still not well known [by the public]."*<sup>56</sup> This respondent further added that *'there is still a need to create awareness on laws and on regulations so that people are scared to abuse children online. Because at the moment people may think, 'Ok, so I cannot beat or rape a child, but I can use another way [online] and not get caught.' But when people realise that the law is strict on both sides, then these acts [of online abuse] may decrease.'* (RAI-TZ-01-A) The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act criminalises a range of trafficking-related conduct aimed at exploiting a person in pornography.<sup>57</sup>

The **Law of the Child Act R.E 2019**, applicable in Mainland Tanzania, and the Children's Act, applicable in Zanzibar, contain important provisions regarding CSAM and the use of children in pornographic performances.<sup>58,59</sup> It is noteworthy that Zanzibar's Children's Act is the only law in Tanzania that criminalises the mere possession of CSAM and gaining access to it.

Although it is possible that the legal provisions relating to CSAM could be applied to cases of live-streaming of child sexual abuse, this is not explicitly stated in the legislation, and there is no specific provision criminalising the live-streaming of child sexual abuse. Further loopholes result from the absence of provisions prohibiting online grooming for sexual purposes and sexual extortion committed in the online environment.

The provisions of the penal codes of Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar concerning the sexual exploitation of children in general resemble one another. Both codes set the age of sexual consent for girls at 18,<sup>60</sup> thus, ensuring a high level of protection for girls from sexual exploitation and abuse. However, men are exempt from criminal liability for raping children if they are married to them.<sup>61</sup> With the Court of Appeal's 2019 judgment regarding required amendment of the Law of Marriage Act to raise the age of marriage for girls to eighteen years, without exception, this exemption will no longer exist. The offence of "rape" can only be committed by male persons against women and female children<sup>62</sup> and the age of sexual consent has not been explicitly identified for males. Nevertheless, the Penal Code of Mainland Tanzania does criminalise certain sexual

45. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 2.

46. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#).

47. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2019). [Law of the Child Act Revised Edition of 2019](#).

48. Government of Zanzibar. (2011). [The Children's Act No. 6 of 2011](#).

49. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (1998). [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#).

50. Government of Zanzibar. (2018). [The New Penal Code \(as introduced by Act No. 6 of 2018\)](#).

51. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

52. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 13(1).

53. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 26(1).

54. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 23.

55. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 14.

56. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 14.

57. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 4.

58. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2019). [Law of the Child Act Revised Edition of 2019](#), Sections 158(1) and 83(1)(c).

59. Government of Zanzibar. (2011). [Children's Act No. 6 of 2011](#), Section 110(3).

60. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (1998). [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#), Section 130(2)(e); Government of Zanzibar. (2018). [The New Penal Code \(as introduced by Act No. 6 of 2018\)](#), Sections 108(2)(e) and 115.

61. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (1998). [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#), Section 130(2)(e); Government of Zanzibar. (2018). [The New Penal Code \(as introduced by Act No. 6 of 2018\)](#), Sections 108(2)(e) and 115.

62. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (1998). [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#), Section 130(2)(e); Government of Zanzibar. (2018). [The New Penal Code \(as introduced by Act No. 6 of 2018\)](#), Sections 108(2)(e) and 115.

## OVERVIEW OF LEGISLATION AND POLICY

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acts with boys, such as sexual assault<sup>63</sup> and grave sexual abuse which does not amount to rape,<sup>64</sup> while the Penal Code of Zanzibar creates the offence of “defilement” of a boy.<sup>65</sup>

In the absence of a close-in-age exemption, consensual sexual activities between peers below 18 are not recognised under the laws of Tanzania. As boys below 12 years in Mainland Tanzania<sup>66</sup> and below 14 years in Zanzibar<sup>67</sup> are presumed to be incapable of having sexual intercourse, boys aged 12 – 18 and 14 – 18, respectively, can be charged with the offence of rape for having consensual sexual intercourse with girls under 18 years.

With respect to the applicability of the provisions of law criminalising OCSEA, the Cybercrimes Act extends the jurisdiction of the courts to offences punishable under the Act committed by nationals of Tanzania outside the territory of Tanzania.<sup>68</sup> However, this extraterritorial jurisdiction is applicable only if the act in question constitutes an offence both in Tanzania and in the country where it was committed (principle of double criminality).

### Policies

Two current policies that touch on child online safety in Tanzania are the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children<sup>69</sup> and the Electronic and Postal Communications (online content) regulations of 2020.<sup>70</sup> One of the priority

interventions in the thematic area of “parenting” under the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children is to “develop women and children online protection programmes.”

<sup>71</sup> A child protection specialist from UNICEF Tanzania explained that “Everything *that is done by the National Child Online Safety Task Force is contributing to the outcome of this parenting thematic area of the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children.*” (RA1-TZ-11-A)

Despite these two policies, more than half of the nine-government representatives interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* indicated that the current child protection policies do not comprehensively cover OCSEA. In the words of a member of the National Child Online Safety Task Force, “*There are no clear policies so far [on OCSEA]. We have the child protection policy of 2009 but when that policy was formulated, those issues to do with online were not yet in.*” (RA1-TZ-09-A) An official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government argued: “*You know when you have a policy, it becomes easier to enact laws and regulations on how to hold perpetrators of online child abuse accountable. We are not there yet. (...) We need to develop a policy that addresses these issues. When there is a policy, a law can then be enacted.*” (RA1-TZ-01-A)

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63. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (1998). [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#), Section 135.

64. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Written Laws Miscellaneous Amendments Act No. 1 of 2020\)](#), Section 138C.

65. Government of Zanzibar. (2018). [The New Penal Code \(as introduced by Act No. 6 of 2018\)](#), Section 115.

66. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (1998). [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#), Section 15(3).

67. Government of Zanzibar. (2018). [The New Penal Code \(as introduced by Act No. 6 of 2018\)](#), Section 13(3).

68. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 30(1)(d).

69. Government of United Republic of Tanzania. (2016). [National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children 2017/18 – 2021/22](#).

70. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2020). [The Electronic and Postal Communications \(Online Content\) Regulations](#), Regulation 9.

71. Government of United Republic of Tanzania. (2016). [National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children 2017/18 – 2021/22](#).

# 1. CHILDREN ONLINE IN TANZANIA

The main focus of this report is to present the perspectives of young people and duty-bearers around the sexual exploitation and abuse of children facilitated or committed through digital technologies. However, it is important to situate these offences within the wider context of children's internet use in Tanzania. This first chapter therefore, presents a brief overview of children's internet access and the activities enjoyed by most children online before going on to describe the occurrence of riskier online activities and the ways in which these are perceived by children and their caregivers.

# 1.1 INTERNET ACCESS AND BARRIERS

## Internet access

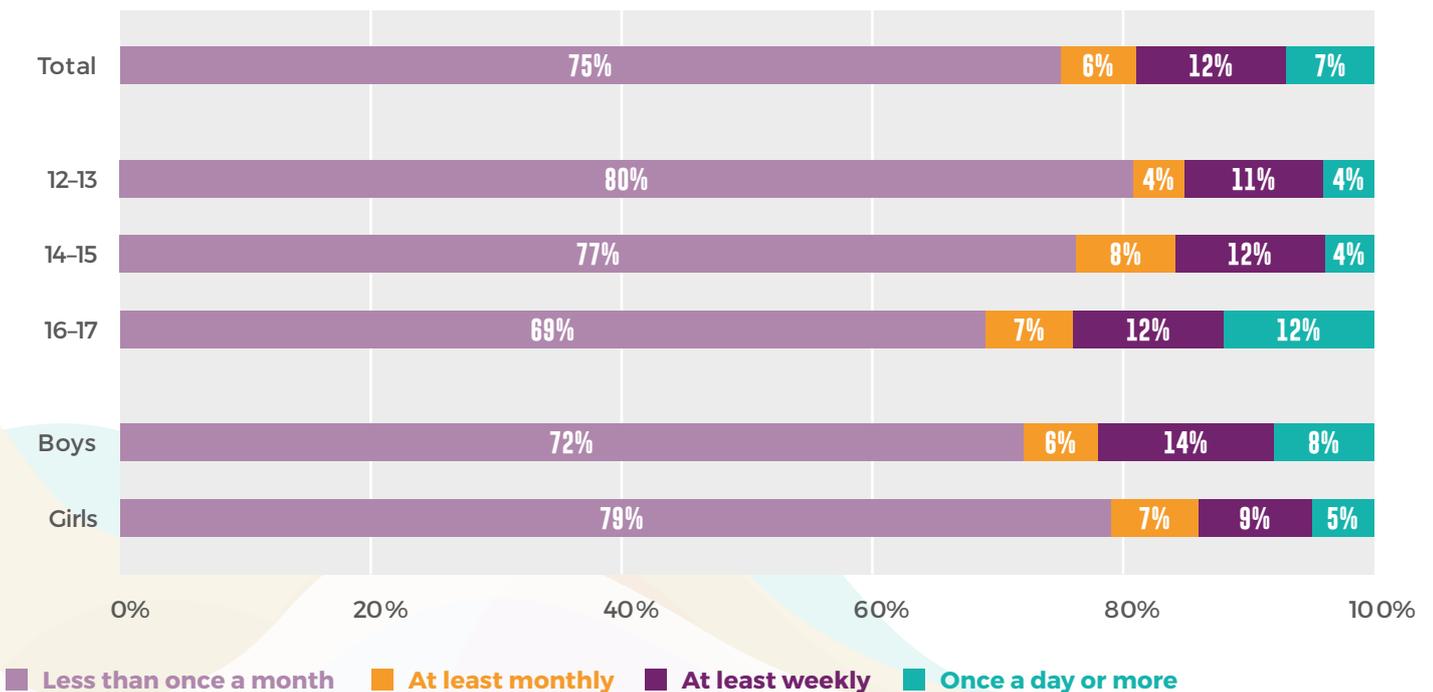
Sampling data from the *Disrupting Harm* household survey suggest that 67% of 12-17-year-olds in Tanzania are internet users – i.e., they have used the internet within the past three months.<sup>72,73</sup> This percentage is 86% for 16-17-year-olds, 68% for 14-15-year-olds and just 42% for 12-13-year-olds. A slightly higher proportion of boys than girls use the internet (70% and 64%, respectively). More children living in urban areas were internet users (70%) compared to those in rural areas (65%), though these differences are not considerable.

While most children in Tanzania use the internet, they do not do so frequently. In the survey sample of 996 internet-using children, 75% said they go online less frequently than one a month. Only 7% go online

at least once a day. Boys go online somewhat more frequently than girls, while children living in urban areas use the internet slightly more frequently than children in rural areas.

Over half of the caregivers surveyed whose children were internet users have never used the internet themselves (see Figure 4). Respondents aged 29 and younger are more than twice as likely to be internet users than respondents aged 50 and above. There were no major differences between men and women. Given that many caregivers have limited online experience, it is important to consider the support and knowledge they might need, as well as the role that can be played by schools, in guiding children’s use of the internet.

Figure 3: Frequency of children’s internet use.

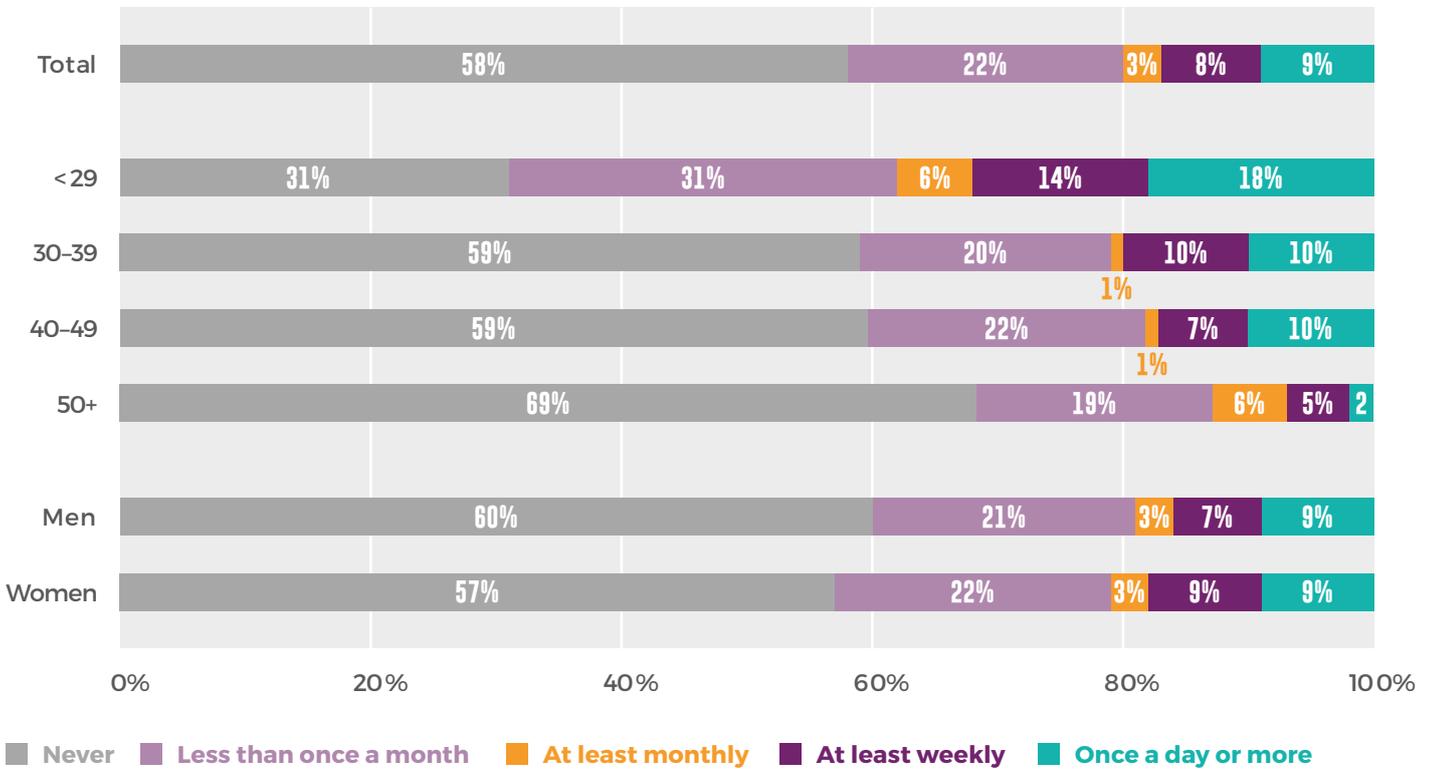


Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

72. While conducting the random walk to identify eligible children to partake in the main survey (see the ‘*Disrupting Harm Methods*’ chapter, above), data was also collected from every household visited about the number of 12-17-year-old children living there, their age and gender and whether they had used the internet in the past three months. This allowed the researchers to estimate internet penetration rates for all 12-17-year-old children in Tanzania. n = 1,857 households.

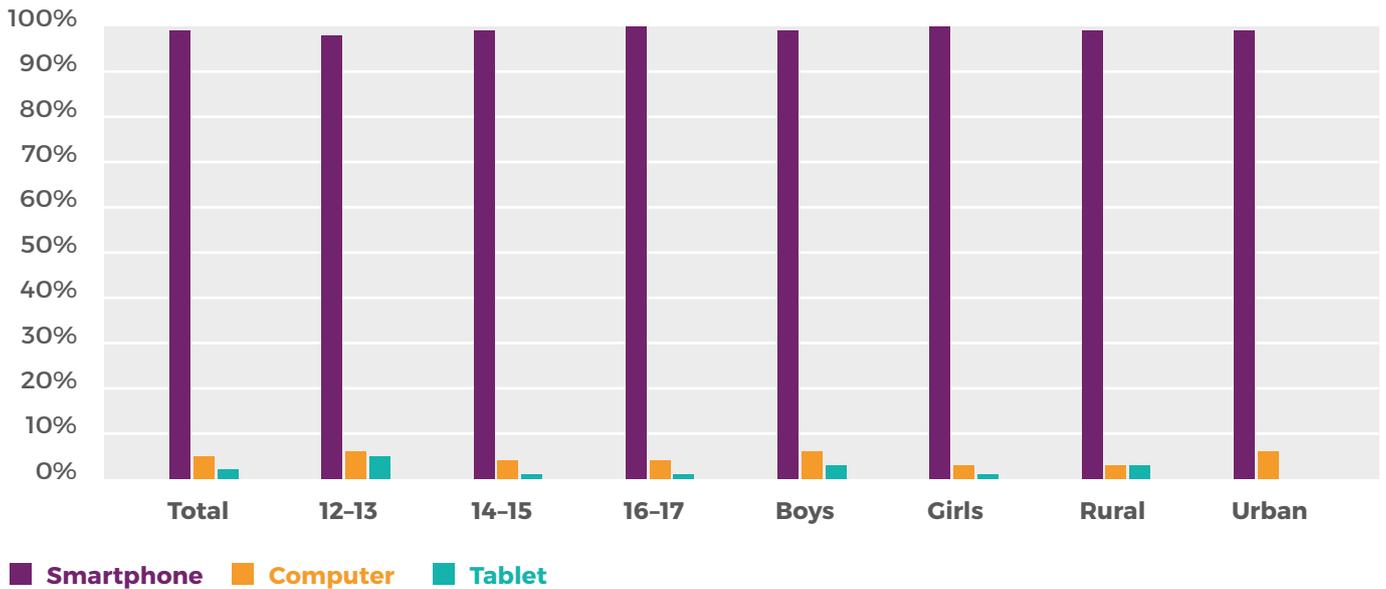
73. The question used to determine whether a 12-17-year-old was an internet user was: “Has [PERSON] used the internet in the last three months? This could include using a mobile phone, tablet or computer to send or receive messages, use apps like Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram, send emails, browse, chat with friends and family, upload or download files, or anything else that you usually do on the internet.”

Figure 4: Frequency of caregivers' internet use.



Caregivers of internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Figure 5: Devices used by children to go online.



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

## 1.1 INTERNET ACCESS AND BARRIERS

### Devices for internet use

As in most other countries, smartphones are by far the most common device used by 12-17-year-old internet users to go online, probably due to their relatively low cost and portability.<sup>74</sup> As many as 99% use smartphones, while 5% also use computers and 2% tablets. There are no notable differences by age, gender or urban-rural location for any of these devices (see Figure 5).

The great majority of internet-using children in Tanzania – especially the youngest children in the household survey sample aged 12-13 – share the devices which they use to go online. Boys are twice as likely to have their own, unshared smartphones (16%) as girls (8%). Children tend to share their smartphones with their caregivers (33%), siblings (32%), and friends (28%). The youngest children are more likely to share their smartphones with their caregivers and the oldest children with friends.

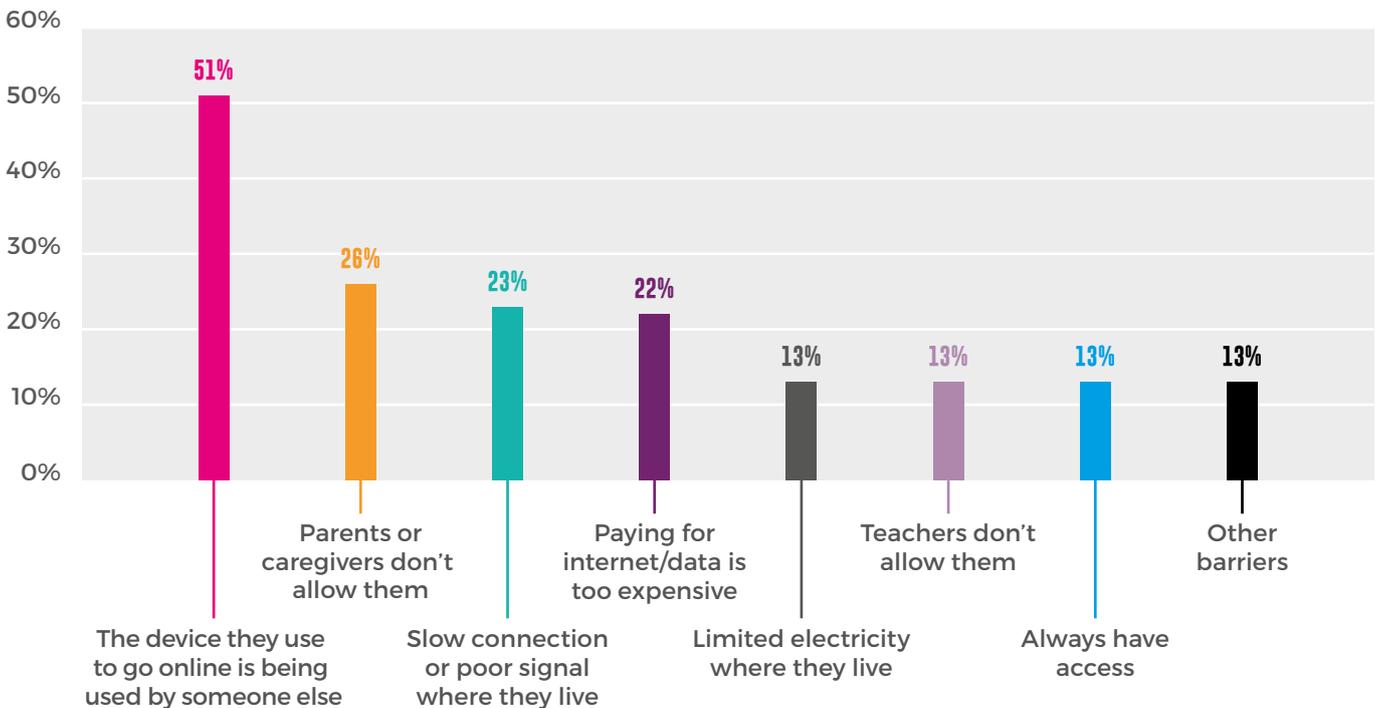
Almost all the 12-17-year-old internet users in Tanzania (97%) said they went online at home. In addition, 18% said they go online at school. There were no notable gender differences and only small

age differences, where younger children were slightly less likely to access the internet from school compared to older children (12-13: 13%; 14-15: 18%; 16-17: 21%). Internet access from public places like malls and internet cafes was uncommon, at 4% and 9% respectively. Just over a third (36%) of children said they go online from some other place. This figure could reflect places not captured in the household survey (e.g., the street, a friend's house) where children who shared devices with someone else would be likely to go online, which represents a knowledge-gap not covered here.

### Barriers to access and use of the internet

Almost all internet-using 12-17-year-olds (97%) in Tanzania faced barriers in accessing the internet (see Figure 6). Across all age-groups, the most commonly-cited barrier was that the device they wanted to use was being used by someone else. This prevented 51% of children from going online whenever they want or need to. Children living in rural areas were more likely to cite this as a barrier (56%) compared to children in urban areas (44%).

Figure 6: Barriers to access for internet-using children.



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

74. Livingstone, S., Kardefelt Winther, D., & Saeed, M. (2019). *Global Kids Online Comparative Report*. Innocenti Research Report. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

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Children are also prevented from going online by restrictions imposed by their caregivers and, to a lesser extent, teachers. This particularly affects 12-13-year-olds and girls. Thirty-one percent of girls said that parental controls prevented them from accessing the internet compared to 21% of boys, suggesting that girls' online activities are more restricted. Caregivers' restrictions were cited as a barrier to internet access by 36% of internet-using children living in urban areas compared to 17% in rural areas.

High internet and data costs are another common obstacle, particularly in the older age groups. This may reflect the fact that older children in the household survey sample use the internet more frequently than younger children and engage in more activities online, therefore requiring more data (see [chapter 1.2](#)). More children living in urban areas cited this as a barrier (25%) compared to rural areas (19%).

Infrastructural barriers were especially prevalent for children living in rural areas. Thirty-five percent said they cannot go online when they want or need to due to slow connections or poor signal where they live, compared to only 8% of children in urban centres. Limited electricity was also a barrier for more children in rural areas (17%) than urban (8%).

**“ 97% of internet-using 12-17-year-olds in Tanzania faced barriers in accessing the internet. Across all age-groups, the most commonly cited barrier was that the device they wanted to use was being used by someone else. ”**

# 1.2 CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES ONLINE

The most popular online activities among the children surveyed are watching videos, using social media, and online gaming, followed by going online for school work and to look up new information. As shown in Figure 7, older children generally engaged in a wider range of online activities than younger children, including using social media. Among 12-13-year-olds, playing online games and watching videos were the most popular activities.

It is worth considering that these categories are not intended to be mutually exclusive – for example, a child could go online to watch a video as part of their school work. Nonetheless, Figure 7 below provides a better understanding of how 12-17-year-olds in Tanzania use the internet and the activities they enjoy.

Gender differences in online activities are noticeable for some activities, which is unusual compared to other countries.<sup>75</sup> Boys are more likely than girls to engage in a number of activities, such as watching videos, using social media, playing online games, searching for new information and news. Even though

there were only small differences in how often boys and girls go online, there are noticeable differences in terms of the activities they engage in. This could partly be explained by the fact that more girls than boys share their devices with someone else.

In general, the proportion of children who engage in these activities on a weekly basis is fairly low compared to other countries. This could indicate that children face a number of barriers to accessing the internet in Tanzania, such as cost of connectivity, lack of electricity, or poor connection, more so than in other countries.

Figure 7: Activities children engage in online at least once a week.

Online activities	Total	12-13	14-15	16-17	Boy	Girl
Watching videos	17%	11%	17%	20%	20%	13%
Using social media	15%	4%	14%	23%	18%	11%
Playing online games	14%	14%	13%	16%	18%	9%
School work	11%	9%	10%	12%	12%	9%
Searching for new information	9%	2%	7%	14%	11%	5%
Searching for news	8%	4%	6%	12%	11%	4%
Watching a live-stream	8%	7%	6%	11%	9%	7%
Using instant messaging	7%	3%	6%	11%	8%	6%
Participating in a site where people share their interests	6%	1%	5%	9%	7%	4%
Following celebrities and public figures on social media	5%	1%	5%	6%	5%	4%
Searching for information about work or study opportunities	5%	3%	5%	7%	7%	4%
Looking for information on local events	5%	3%	6%	5%	4%	2%
Talking to family or friends who live further away	4%	5%	3%	5%	4%	4%
Creating their own video or music	3%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Searching for health information	3%	2%	2%	4%	4%	2%
Seeking emotional support	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Discussing political or social problems	1%	0%	1%	3%	2%	1%
Creating a blog or website	0.4%	0%	1%	1%	0.2%	1%

Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

75. Livingstone, S., Kardefelt Winther, D., & Saeed, M. (2019). *Global Kids Online Comparative Report*. Innocenti Research Report. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

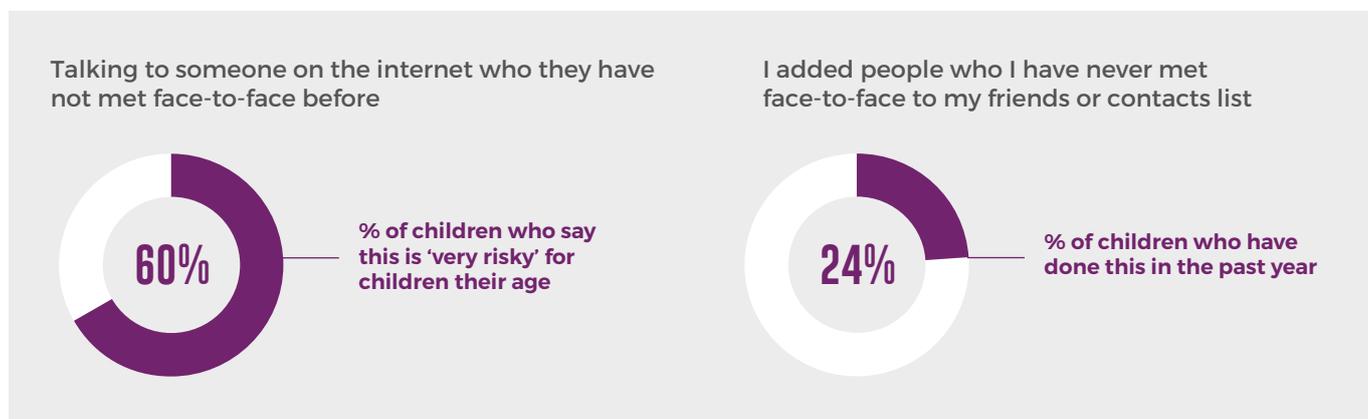
# 1.3 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF RISKY ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Discussion of online risks often hinges solely upon adult-centric perceptions. To help us understand children's perceptions, they and their caregivers were asked about their engagement in, and perceptions of, various online risky activities.

In general, both children and caregivers considered a number of online activities to be risky, but the caregivers' perceptions of risk were higher. Most of the internet-using children surveyed had not engaged in behaviour widely perceived as risky, but some had done so.

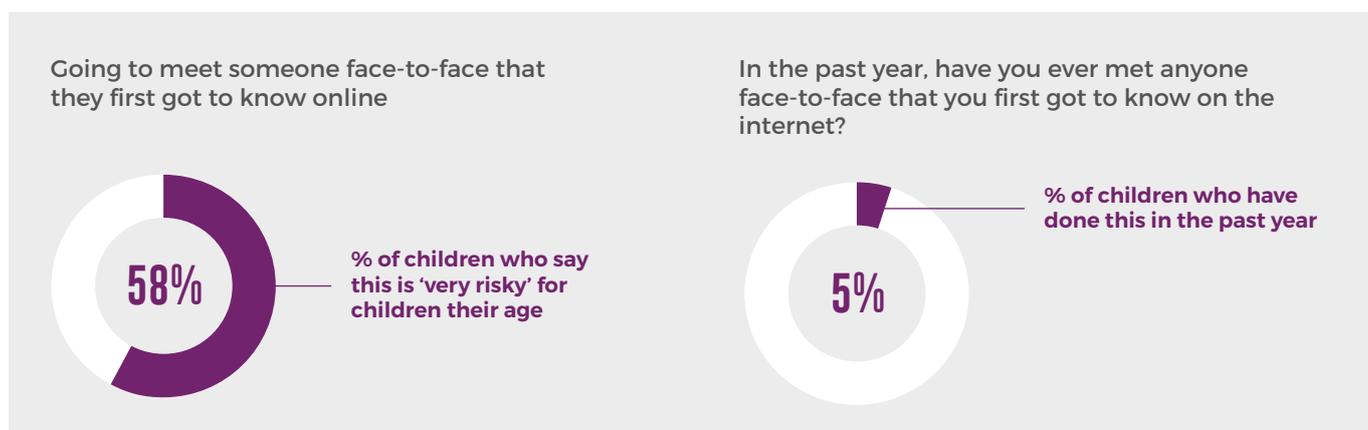
For example, 60% of the children considered it 'very risky' to share personal information with someone they had never met face-to-face, compared to 84% of their caregivers. In practice, around 15% of children had sent personal details to someone they had never met face-to-face.

Figure 8: Level of risk attributed by children to speaking to someone unknown online.



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

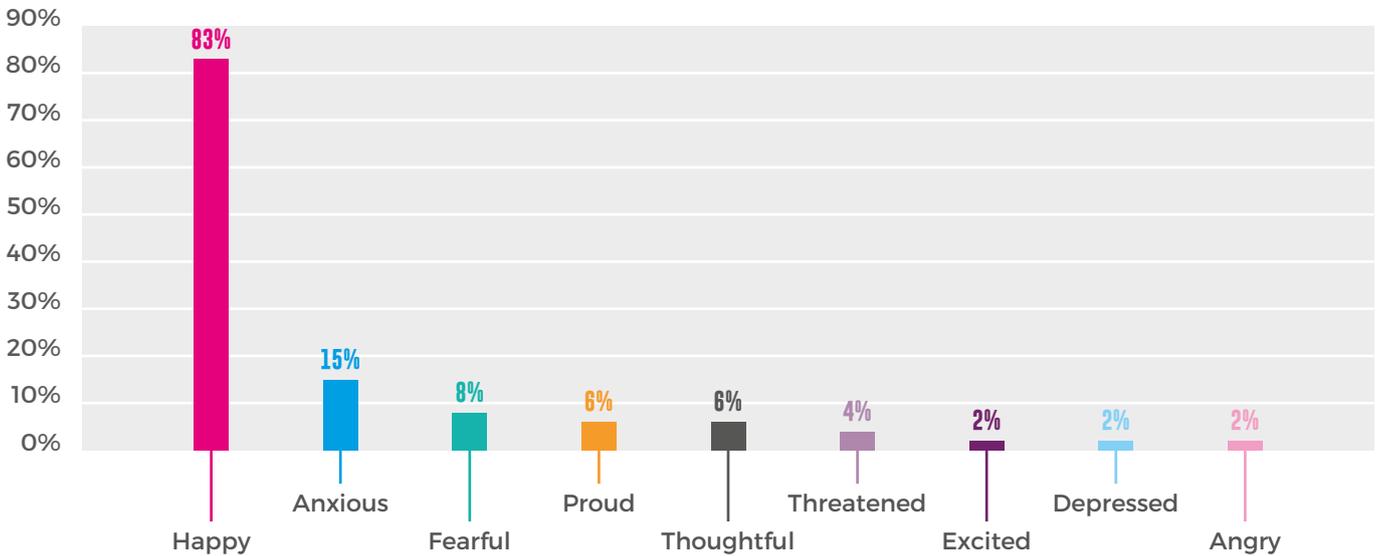
Figure 9: Level of risk attributed by children to meeting people in person, whom they first met online.



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Thailand. n = 996.

## 1.3 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF RISKY ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Figure 10: How children felt the last time they met someone face-to-face who they had first got to know on the internet.



Base: Children, who, within the past year, have met someone face-to-face whom they first got to know on the internet. n = 50.

### 1.3.1 Contact with strangers online and in person

Interacting with unknown people online is considered ‘very risky’ by 60% of internet-using children and by 80% of their caregivers. However, 9% of the children found talking online to someone unknown as ‘not risky at all’.

Of the internet-using children surveyed, 24% had added people they had never met face-to-face to their contact list. This percentage was 34% among 16–17-year-olds. It was also higher among boys than girls.

Meanwhile, 58% of the children and as many as 80% of their caregivers thought that meeting someone unknown that they first met online in person is ‘very risky’ for children. Girls were slightly more likely than boys to regard this as high-risk behaviour (62% vs. 55%).

In actual practice, less than 5% of the children surveyed had met someone in person whom they had first got to know online. Out of these children, the great majority were happy about the experience (see Figure 10). Research done across more than 30 countries around the world has produced similar findings.<sup>76,77</sup>

**The interviews with survivors of OCSEA illustrated that children were often naive to online risks. A survivor from Namibia explained:**

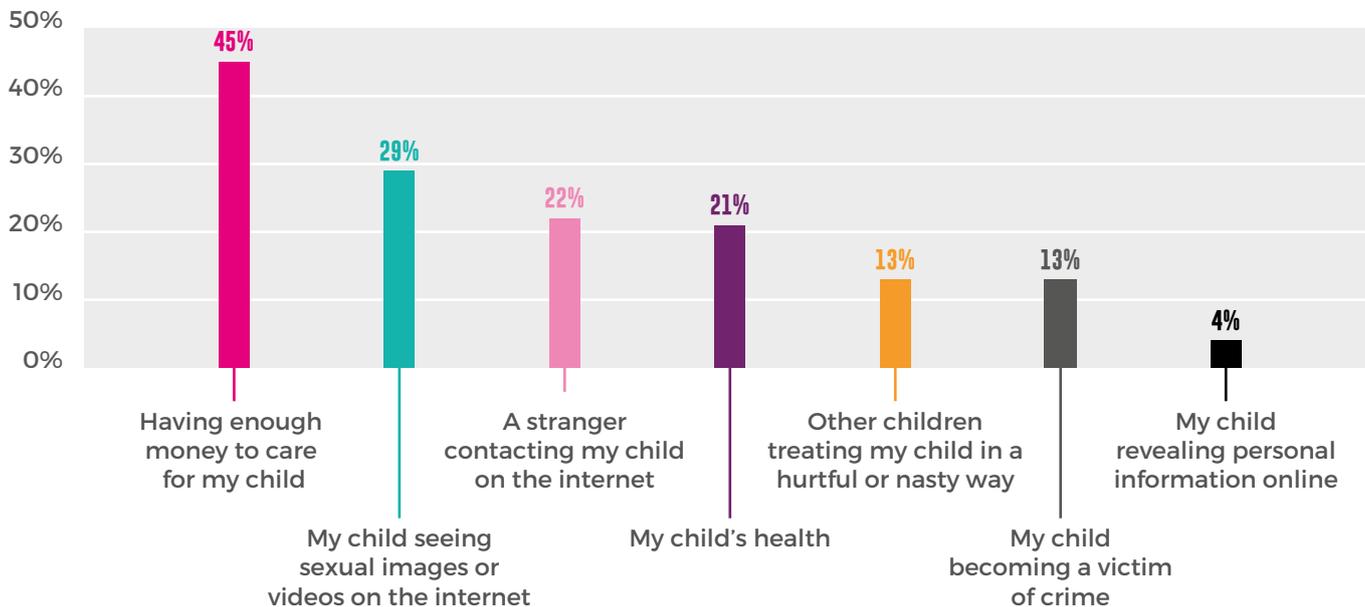
*“It all started when I first got a new phone. I started to experiment on, or I started to open new accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok and so on, and when I got for me a Facebook account, that is where a guy, a very good-looking guy, started to follow me and then soon after he started to follow me on Facebook, he sent me a message on Facebook and then we started to chat and chat.”*

RA5-NA-03-A

76. Livingstone, S., Kardefelt Winther, D., & Saeed, M. (2019). *Global Kids Online Comparative Report*. Innocenti Research Report. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti.

77. Smahel, D., Machackova, H., et al. (2020). *EU Kids Online 2020: Survey results from 19 countries*. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti.

Figure 11: Caregivers' top concerns regarding their children.



Base: Caregivers of internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

The experiences of most internet-using children in Tanzania and other countries around the world seem to indicate that the risk of harm from meeting 'online strangers' is relatively low for children in general. This could in most cases simply be a way for young people to make new friends. However, it is clear that the harm might be severe if something goes wrong (see 'Continuum of Online and Offline Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse'). While many children in Tanzania seem to understand that engaging with unknown people online carries a level of risk, there is a need to ensure all children are informed and taught how to engage with new people online in a safe and responsible manner.

### 1.3.2. Seeing sexual images online

Data from caregivers did reveal concerns about children seeing sexual images online. When caregivers surveyed were asked to select their three greatest concerns for their children, seeing sexual images was the second most common option chosen by 29% of respondents, and surpassing concerns over their child's health or their child becoming the victim of a crime (see Figure 11).

In the household survey, 91% of caregivers considered it 'very risky' for children to see sexual images or videos online, and 76% of children agreed. This

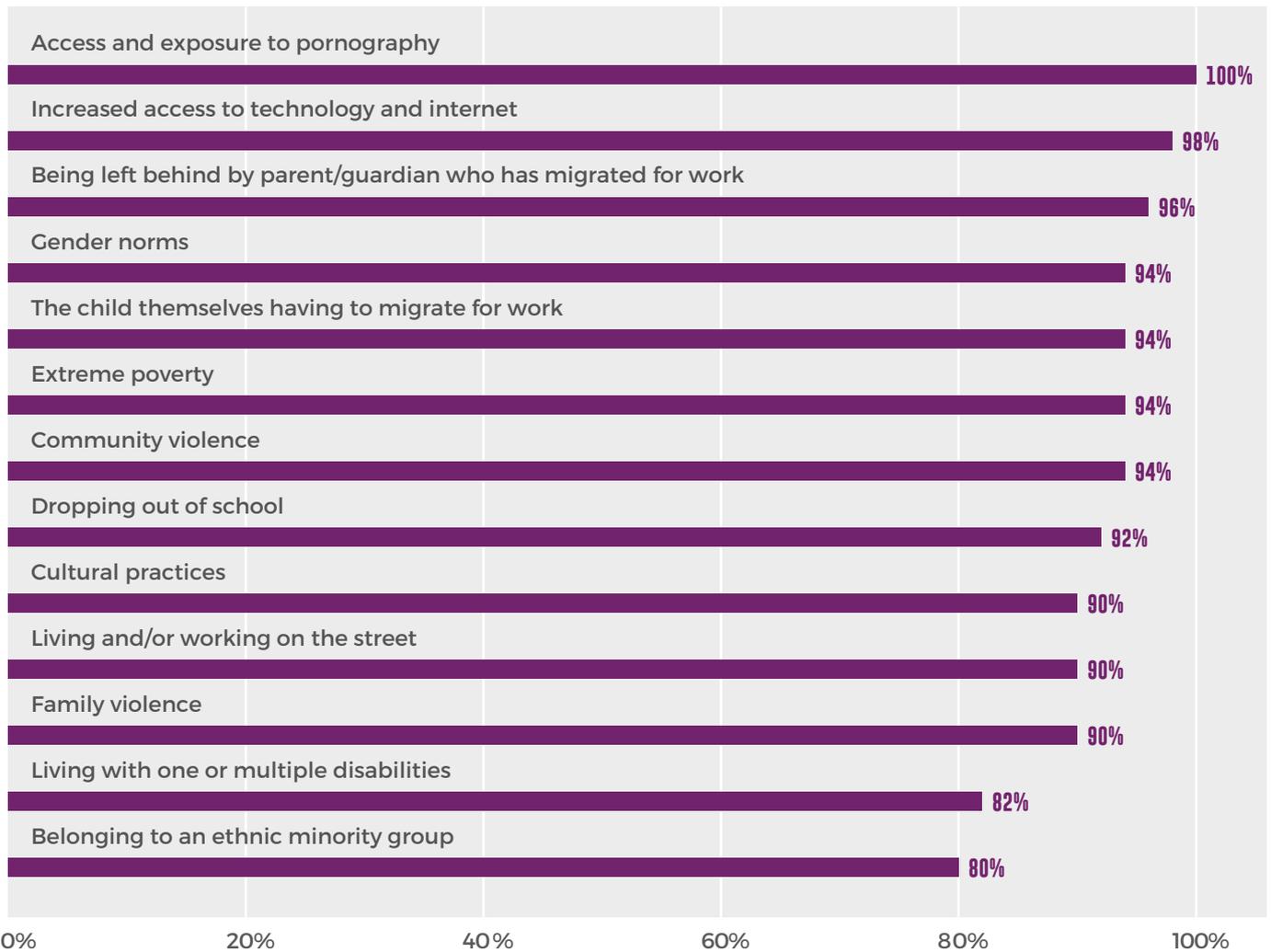
concern around children seeing sexual images or videos may reflect general discomfort in discussing sex and sexuality (see more on discomfort and stigma around sex in [chapter 2.5](#)). All of the 50 respondents in the *Disrupting Harm* survey of frontline workers in Tanzania regarded 'access and exposure to pornography' as the most important factor increasing children's vulnerability to OCSEA, ahead of issues like experiences of family and community violence or living on the street (see Figure 12).

In practice, 25% of the internet-using children in the household survey in Tanzania reported they had seen sexual images or videos online at least once in the past year *unexpectedly*, while 17% had actively searched out such material online.

A higher proportion of older children aged 16-17 years have seen sexual images or videos intentionally or accidentally, in comparison to younger children (12-13 years). There were no major differences by gender. Among the 246 children who said they had seen sexual images or videos online by accident at least once in the past year, more than half had encountered such material via social media feeds. Children also came across sexual images or videos on direct messaging apps (particularly for older children), in advertisements such as pop-ups (particularly for girls) and while conducting web searches.

### 1.3 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF RISKY ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Figure 12: Frontline workers’ perceptions of factors affecting children’s vulnerability to OCSEA.



Base: Frontline social support workers. n = 50.

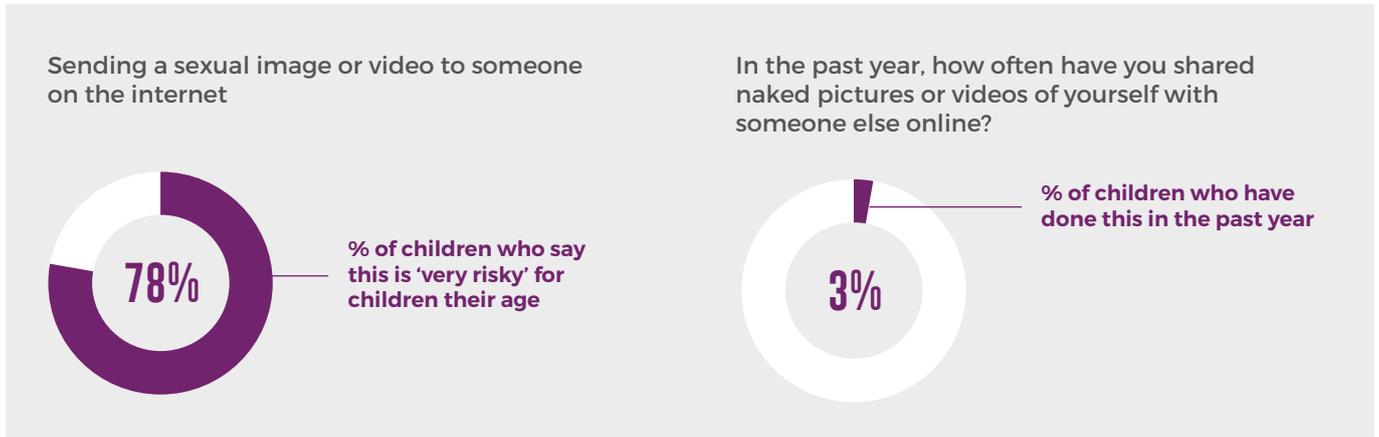
The different ways children may see sexual content online can have different implications. Accidental or intentional glimpses of sexual content are one thing; being exposed to sexual images as part of a grooming process intended to desensitise the child and pave the way for subsequent requests for images or sexual acts is another. While viewing violent or degrading sexual content can serve to normalise harmful gender norms and sexual behaviour, seeing pornography online appears to be an increasingly present experience for young people.<sup>78</sup> There is a need to address both phenomena.

Online activities relating to taking or sharing sexual images or videos are the activities most often perceived as very risky for children, by both internet-using children surveyed and their caregivers.

Among the children surveyed, 74% agreed that it is ‘wrong’ to take naked images or videos and 69% believe that, should a self-generated image or video be shared further, it is the victim’s fault. Caregivers also agreed with these statements; 91% of caregivers considered it ‘wrong’ to take naked images or videos and 83% said it was a victim’s fault if their naked images or videos are shared with others. Such victim-blaming may explain the low levels of reporting seen throughout the data from children who have been subjected to OCSEA.

78. See for example: Crabbe, M. & Flood, M. (2021). School based Education to Address Pornography’s Influence in Young People: A Proposed practice framework. *American Journal of Sexuality Education* 16(1).

**Figure 13: Level of risk attributed by children to sending a sexual image or video to someone on the internet.**



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Children’s actions seem to reflect the perception that producing self-generated sexual content is risky for people their age. In the past year, 2% of children said they took naked pictures or videos of themselves. The same proportion of children said they allowed someone else to take a naked image of them. It is unclear whether these were consensual activities or if these are instances of sexual abuse.

Sending a sexual image or video to someone online was considered ‘very risky’ by 78% of children and 93% of caregivers in the household survey. Fewer than 3% of the children (25 children) said they had shared naked pictures or videos of themselves in the past year. There were no clear differences by age or gender.

“ .....  
**In the past year, 2% of children said they took naked pictures or videos of themselves. The same proportion of children said they allowed someone else to take a naked image of them. It is unclear whether these were consensual activities or if these are instances of sexual abuse.**  
 .....”

Among this small subsample of 25 children who shared their naked images or videos online in the past year, the main reasons were that they were in love, flirting or having fun and that they found nothing wrong with sharing such content. These were each selected by five children. Nevertheless, four children shared naked pictures or videos of themselves because they were being pressured by their friends. The same number of children said they shared due to concerns that they would lose the person if they did not share. Additionally, three children said that they had shared self-generated sexual content because they were threatened. Other reasons for sharing included wanting the attention of the other person and trusting the other person enough to share this content – each of these reasons was selected by two children. Finally, one child shared self-generated content after being offered gifts or money. Conversely, more children – 2% (19 children) in the full household survey sample – had *pressured someone else* their age to send them sexual pictures or videos.

Of the 25 children who had shared sexual images or videos of themselves, eight had shared them with a friend or someone else they knew in person and seven with a romantic partner. Three had shared them with an online friend who was a contact of a friend or family member. Finally, two children had shared this kind of content with someone completely unknown. The other children gave no answer, perhaps because they felt uncomfortable about the topic.

## 1.3 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF RISKY ONLINE ACTIVITIES

### The Global Rise in Self-generated Sexual Content involving Children

The increasing use of technology is leading to shifts in notions of privacy and sexuality among children in some parts of the world, particularly among adolescents as they mature.<sup>79</sup> Forms of behaviour that are increasingly normative to young people can be bewildering for adults who grew up in a different time. For example, chatting and video live-streaming is frequent, whether among small private groups of friends or large, anonymous public audiences. While much of this is harmless, producing and sharing self-generated sexual content using these tools is increasingly common, and bringing significant risks.<sup>80</sup>

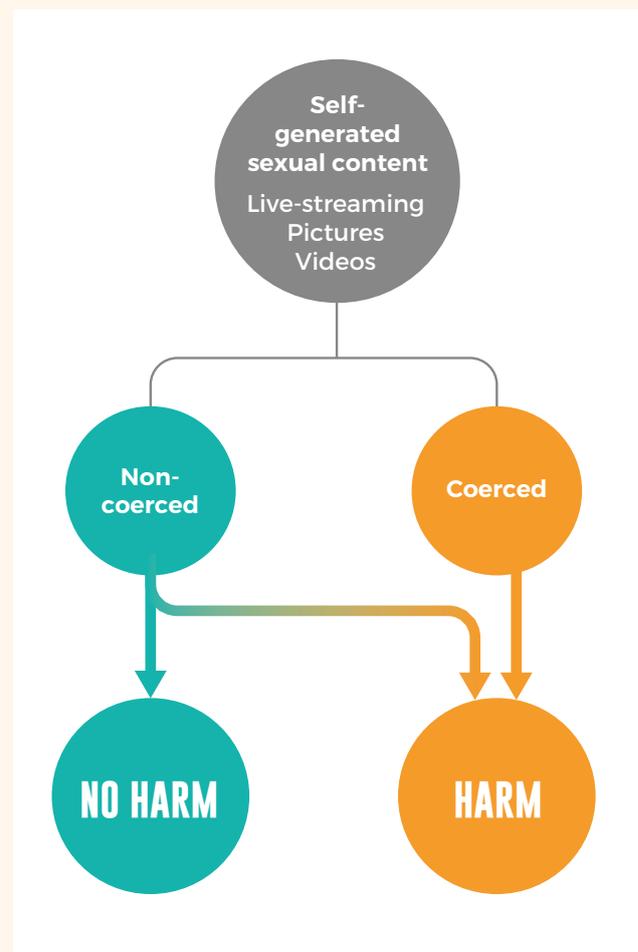
The sharing of self-generated sexual content by children is complex and includes a range of different experiences, risks and harms. As the data shows across all *Disrupting Harm* countries, some self-generated content is created and shared by adolescents willingly. Such exchanges are increasingly becoming part of young people's sexual experiences. However, the *Disrupting Harm* data also shows that the creation and sharing of self-generated sexual content can be *coerced*, for example through grooming, threats or peer-pressure (See [chapter 2.2](#)).

In the household survey in Tanzania, three children (all of them aged 14 or 15) reported having shared self-generated sexual content because they were threatened. Four children (all aged under 15) had shared such materials under peer pressure.

While coercion can clearly be seen as a crime and lead to harm, children who share *any* sexual content, even without coercion, can also face negative consequences. Material shared voluntarily may not cause harm at first, but there remains a risk if it is later shared beyond the control of the person who created it. Once it exists, such content can also be obtained deceptively or using coercion and be circulated by offenders perpetually.<sup>81,82</sup> (see Figure 14).

When self-generated sexual content is shared further without their permission, children may find it difficult to seek help due to shame, fear of victim-blaming and reprisals, and/or concerns about legal self-incrimination. The household survey shows that a large majority of children (69%) and caregivers (83%) in Tanzania believe that it is the victim's fault if a self-generated image or video is shared further. In addition, children may risk criminal liability under legislation on pornography. Reluctance or inability to seek help may further compound the harm done to children.

Figure 14: Mapping the consequences of sharing self-generated sexual content involving children.



79. Livingstone, S. & Mason, J. (2015). *Sexual Rights and Sexual Risks among Youth Online: A review of existing knowledge regarding children and young people's developing sexuality in relation to new media environments*. London: European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online.

80. Thorn & Benson Strategy Group. (2020). *Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material: Attitudes and experiences*. U.S.: Thorn.

81. Bracket Foundation. (2019). *Artificial Intelligence: Combating Online Sexual Abuse of Children*. 10.

82. EUROPOL. (2019). *Internet Organized Crime Threat Assessment 2019*. Netherlands: EUROPOL.

In Tanzania, a majority of 12–17-year-olds seem to be aware that producing and sharing sexual content carries risks and a relatively small proportion of children appear to engage in this activity. Nevertheless, based on the findings of the *Disrupting Harm* household survey the numbers of children sharing sexual images for one reason or another every year, could be substantial if scaled-up to the total population of internet-using children in the country.

To ensure that children are empowered to stay safe online, discussion of the risks involved in this kind of behaviour should be central to our conversations with children about their internet use, while avoiding a victim-blaming attitude that might make it harder for children to seek help when something goes wrong.

### 1.3.3 Knowledge of online safety

As seen above, children in Tanzania show a level of awareness about online risks. According to the household survey, moreover, 44% (particularly older children) are confident in their ability to judge which images of themselves or their friends to share online and 50% feel confident to know when to remove people from their contact lists. Nevertheless, the survey also showed that 66% of internet-using children have never received any information on how to stay safe online. It is possible that children have simply absorbed the risk perceptions of the community around them without fully understanding those risks or how to mitigate them.

In fact, only 27% of children in the survey sample said that they knew how to change their privacy settings and 21% knew how to report harmful content on social media. The figures were lowest for the 12–13-year-olds. Girls seemed less confident about how to change privacy settings or report harmful content on social media than boys. While most children may be aware of certain risks, many of them appear not to have some skills that could keep them safe online.

However, teaching children about online safety goes beyond digital skills. According to one frontline worker interviewed for *Disrupting Harm*, it is important to teach children how to be responsible

when engaging with others online: *“Education is needed that you cannot trust people online. People have to be educated on how to use technologies effectively without committing crimes and being suspects. They need to be protective [sic] physically and socially.”* (RA3-TZ-46-A)

Schools can be a good channel for educating children about staying safe online, if teachers receive the necessary training. As a medical doctor from a government One Stop Centre explained, *“One main thing would be first to continue or increase awareness of sexual abuse online and the government can do this maybe in school, include that as part of the education right now.”* (RA4-TZ-11-A-justice) Yet according to one government duty-bearer interviewed, the Ministry of Education is still to develop a child online protection strategy.

A child protection specialist from UNICEF Tanzania echoed responses from other interviewees, explaining that *“The Ministry of Education has an information communication technology policy, but it’s not rich in terms of OCSEA, [...] it does not address online grooming and online exploitation.”* (RA1-TZ-11-A) While it is difficult to discuss such sensitive topics with children, caregivers and the community at large, a lack of knowledge about the risks that exist online makes it more difficult to protect children from OCSEA.

# 2. ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

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Following on from children's perceptions of, and participation in, various risky online practices, this chapter will turn to the threat of online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA) in Tanzania. The chapter draws on a range of sources. These include law enforcement data, mandated reports from U.S.-based technology companies to NCMEC related to Tanzania, surveys with frontline workers and conversations with children themselves, as well as the household survey - in order to create a well-rounded presentation of the nature of these crimes against children.

## 2. ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

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**This chapter presents national law enforcement data related to OCSEA (chapter 2.1), followed by estimates of the occurrence of certain instances of OCSEA based on children’s self-reported experiences (chapter 2.2 and 2.3). The purpose of these estimates is not to provide a conclusive picture of the prevalence of OCSEA. There are several reasons for this. Firstly, the existing administrative data accessed, such as that kept by law enforcement authorities, rarely delineates or classifies OCSEA elements. Secondly, with respect to the household survey, one would expect a degree of under-reporting due to privacy concerns, hesitation to discuss sex and sexuality as well as fear of legal self-incrimination as some practices are criminalised. Furthermore, in households where sexual abuse occurs, it is less likely that researchers would be given permission to talk to children. Finally, many estimates are based on analysis of sub-samples of the household survey data, which are small because OCSEA is still a rarely reported phenomenon. These smaller sub-samples result in a larger margin of error and more uncertainty around the final estimate.**

While the *Disrupting Harm* team is confident in the data and the quality of the sample obtained, the challenges of researching these specific and sensitive phenomena, particularly with children, means the loss of some precision in the final estimate. For these reasons, it is suggested that

the reader interprets the findings in this chapter as a *good approximation* of the incidence of certain crimes against children related to OCSEA in Tanzania, and the extent to which internet-using 12-17-year-old children in Tanzania were subjected to OCSEA in the past year.

# 2.1 LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

The analysis here draws on qualitative and quantitative data from law enforcement authorities and several partner organisations, with a view to understanding OCSEA-related offences, offender and victim behaviour, crime enablers and vulnerabilities.

## 2.1.1 Reported CSEA and OCSEA offences

### Total offences

Although data on CSEA and OCSEA offences in Tanzania are collected regularly, there remains some uncertainty about the total numbers. Figure 15 shows the total numbers of reported CSEA and OCSEA offences in 2017-2019, based on data reported to the Statistics Unit in the Criminal Investigation Directorate of the Tanzania Police Force. The Unit receives its numbers from law enforcement sources that include the Cybercrime unit, the Forensic

Bureau, the 116 National Child Helpline Tanzania and NCMEC CyberTips, as received by the INTERPOL National Central Bureau Dodoma, along with police gender and children desks located across Tanzania.

However, the total number of OCSEA offences (and indeed CSEA offences) shown in the above figure is high when compared to the numbers reported by INTERPOL National Central Bureau Dodoma for similar (though not identical) categories of investigations (see Figure 16).

Figure 15: Number of recorded CSEA/OCSEA cases in Tanzania.

Type of offence	2017	2018	2019	Total	Percent Change 2017-2019
Total number of offences of Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA)	13,457	14,491	15,680	43,628	17%
Total number of offences of Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (OCSEA)	2,076	3,938	4,399	10,413	112%

Base: Data supplied by the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

“ The Tanzania law enforcement authorities called for recommendations on improving reporting mechanisms and the provision of training for standardised recognition and categorisation of online elements in CSEA.

Figure 16: Number of CSEA/OCSEA investigations in Tanzania.

Investigations opened	2017	2018	2019
CSEA	4,689	6,404	8,333
OCSEA	90	34	44

Base: INTERPOL National Central Bureau Dodoma.

Figure 17: CSEA/OCSEA cases in Tanzania by type of offence.<sup>83</sup>

Offence	2017	2018	2019	Total	% of Total CSEA-related Offences <sup>84</sup>	% Change 2017-2019
Offline sexual abuse of girls	6,507	5,813	6,450	18,770	43%	-1%
Offline sexual abuse of boys	1,216	1,681	1,853	4,750	11%	52%
Live-streaming of CSEA	113	145	178	436	1%	58%
Unregulated exposure to sexual/pornographic content	315	325	341	981	2%	8%
CSAM Production and Distribution	148	159	135	442	1%	-9%
Online Solicitation/Grooming	125	132	147	404	1%	18%
Technology-facilitated travelling sex offences	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other sexual offences, e.g., online sexual harassment/bullying of a child by a peer <sup>85</sup>	152	148	162	462	1%	7%

Base: Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

Furthermore, the figures for the various types of online offences listed in Figure 17 above are far more modest than those given in the first figure above, and more compatible with other data sources.

The law enforcement authorities in Tanzania recognise that the total numbers reported by the Statistics Unit are probably excessive. In this context, they supplied the following information:

- The number of OCSEA cases include some (but not necessarily all) CyberTips received by National Central Bureau Dodoma that have been passed on to the Cybercrime Unit. The authorities were not sure how many CyberTips were included.<sup>86</sup>
- The various units on the ground, offices and desks will have different understandings of online elements in a crime. When combined with a genuine (but perhaps over-eager) desire not to under-report, this may lead to inflated figures.
- Cases might be handled by different units at various stages, resulting in duplication in reports to the Statistics Unit.

- The numbers reflect reported offences – not necessarily cases that have been concluded or confirmed. A case handled by a law enforcement unit may involve more than one type of offence, so the larger number of total reported offences may correspond to a smaller number of cases.

The Tanzanian law enforcement authorities acknowledged the difficulty in reconciling the reported numbers, and called for recommendations on improving reporting mechanisms and the provision of training for standardised recognition and categorisation of online elements in CSEA. The OCSEA cases in the statistics then probably refer to CSEA cases with both offline and online elements and/or CyberTips from NCMEC, since other research (see [chapter 3](#)) found little evidence that cases of OCSEA that occur solely online are prosecuted.

#### Trends in CSEA and OCSEA-related offences

Despite the uncertainties regarding the data, some tentative conclusions can be drawn – for example, about the trend in reported OCSEA-related offences

83. While these numbers do not appear to correspond with the total case numbers supplied above, this data nevertheless provides important detail on the offences committed.

84. A discrepancy has been identified between the total number of offences reported in Figure 17 above (n= 43,628) and the total number of offences counted by offence detail here (n = 26,245). It is possible that cases may involve more than one type of offence. For these reasons, the percentage of total CSEA cases presented here is the proportion of all CSEA cases (base = 43,628) in which these types of offence feature, as reported by the Statistics Unit.

85. Row headings reflect offence categories as supplied by law enforcement authorities. Online sexual harassment/bullying of a child by a peer is retained here as an indicative feature of recorded OCSEA-related offences, and because it is not possible in the data to isolate predatory or aggressive sexual behaviour by young people.

86. The Tanzania law enforcement contact described a colleague from the Cybercrime Unit who used to work on NCMEC CyberTips somewhat regularly, but had since moved to another unit and was no longer able to continue in this role.

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across the project time frame. Assuming a consistent level of duplication, the data points to a marked increase in the number of OCSEA-related offences between 2017 and 2019 (See Figure 17). This may indicate either a genuine increase in OCSEA-related offences or increased awareness of, and reporting on, the issue on the part of law enforcement authorities.

Offline abuse of girls seems to have dominated the caseload in the reporting period. In addition, while keeping the statistical issues noted above in mind, there appear to have been notable increases in cases involving offline abuse of boys and live-streaming of CSEA.

Streaming of sexual audio featured in 24% (n = 2,452) of all the OCSEA-related offences. This is a category of offence that appears to be unique in Tanzania compared to other *Disrupting Harm* countries. The law enforcement authorities in Tanzania clarified that this “audio-only” phenomenon relates to songs sung during traditional ceremonies around marriage (including child marriage), coming of age, or even

female genital mutilation. The authorities described the songs as having highly sexualised and illicit lyrics, frequently describing perceived or desired female virginity. Regardless of the accuracy of the data, the category provides an interesting reflection on the “online” or electronic element of child marriage and female genital mutilation, which are usually considered “offline” or traditional issues.

### Settings of CSEA and OCSEA-related offences

More than half of the cases recorded by the Statistics Unit in 2017–2019 involved offences committed in a domestic setting (see Figure 18). The proportion of offences in which the offenders and victims previously had only an online relationship was 17%. This proportion increased over the reporting period.

Figure 19 shows the data supplied by the Statistics Unit concerning the online location of OCSEA-related offences, where an online location has been recorded. Once again, the figures are subject to the statistical issues outlined above.

Figure 18: CSEA offences by situation and setting.

Setting of offence	2017	2018	2019	Total	% of Total CSEA-related Offences <sup>87</sup>	% Change 2017-2019
Offender and victim previously known to each other offline	164	172	184	520	1%	12%
Contact purely online	2,076	2,538	2,899	7,513	17%	40%
Offline offences committed in home setting	7,796	7,142	7,425	22,363	51%	-5%
Offline offences committed in school setting	2,486	1,838	2,186	6,510	15%	-12%
Offline offences committed in other settings	1,099	1,573	1,670	4,342	10%	52%

Base: Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

Figure 19: OCSEA-related offences by setting.

Online location	2017	2018	2019	Total
WhatsApp, Facebook and Instagram	50	48	62	160
Emails	48	38	42	128
Dark webs, VPNs	25	28	32	85
YouTube	10	12	15	37
Telecommunication services (calls, SMS, etc)	23	31	38	92

Base: Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

87. Base = 43,628 as above.

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In terms of technical sophistication, a total of 85 OCSEA-related offences that either involved offending on the Dark Net or the use of anonymisers and virtual private networks were reported, representing 17% of offences for which locations were identified (see Figure 19 'OCSEA -related offences by setting').

Tanzanian law enforcement reported a total of 251 OCSEA-related offences in which a commercial element was recorded (subject to the same statistical issues noted above). Methods of payment used included bank transfers, mobile phone money services, cryptocurrencies and payment-in-kind with items like clothes and drugs.

### 2.1.2 International OCSEA detections and referrals

#### Trends in CyberTips

On behalf of the Tanzanian law enforcement authorities, data were requested from NCMEC about CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Tanzania.

United States federal law requires that 'electronic service providers' (i.e., technology companies) based in the United States report instances of suspected child exploitation on their platforms to NCMEC's CyberTipline. NCMEC triages these reports and passes the CyberTips on to the national law enforcement units of the relevant countries for action. However, for providers not based in the United States, this reporting is voluntary. As not all platforms notify suspected child exploitation to NCMEC, the data below does not encompass a number of platforms popular in the *Disrupting Harm* focus countries.

Tanzania returns a consistently low proportion of all incidents of suspected child sexual exploitation globally, as reported to NCMEC. In 2017–2019, this proportion averaged 0.05% (see Figure 20).

CyberTips for Tanzania also increased much more slowly than the global average between 2017 and 2019, with a rise of only 3%. More specifically, the increase in CyberTips between 2017 and 2018 was less steep than the global increase, while the fall in CyberTips between 2018 and 2019 was more marked than the global decline. Although not part of the *Disrupting Harm* reporting period, the data for 2020 are also given in the figure. These show a further decrease for Tanzania in contrast to a global increase.

Analysis of CyberTips reveal that the possession, manufacture and distribution of CSAM (referred to in U.S. legislation as 'child pornography') account for almost all of the CyberTips for Tanzania. None were tagged as Priority 1, indicating a child in imminent danger.

#### Platforms submitting CyberTips

All but three of the CyberTips for Tanzania in the period 2017 to 2019 had electronic service providers as their source. A total of 17 electronic service providers submitted at least one CyberTip of suspected child exploitation for Tanzania in the reporting period (see Figure 21).

Facebook submitted 82% of the CyberTips for Tanzania in 2017–2019 and Instagram submitted 16%. The number of Facebook reports increased by 18% between 2017 and 2019, while reports from Instagram rose by 37%. Although the numbers are small, the emergence of cases on YouTube, WhatsApp and Snapchat demonstrates at least some diversity in the platforms reporting suspected child exploitation in Tanzania, while the appearance of Skout.com and Tagged.com provides limited evidence of the misuse of adult dating apps for OCSEA. Data supplied by the Statistics Unit, albeit for a smaller set of offences, also points to the misuse of Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube in the commission of OCSEA.

#### Number of IP addresses reported

CyberTips also permit analysis of headline statistics for unique internet protocol (IP) addresses used to engage in suspected child exploitation (see Figure 22). An IP address is assigned to each individual device on a specific network at a specific time. Multiple CyberTips per IP address can indicate that suspects (or at least their devices) are engaged in multiple offences of CSAM distribution during the same online session, which itself is perhaps indicative of a more deliberate style of offending that is less likely to be committed through lack of knowledge. By the same token, Tanzania's relatively low average number of CyberTips per IP address may be suggestive of a tendency towards lower volume CSAM offending within individual online sessions.

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Figure 20: CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Tanzania.

	2017	2018	2019	Total	% Change 2017-2018	% Change 2018-2019	% Change 2017-2019
Tanzania	5,721	8,119	6,785	5,752	42%	-16%	3%
Global Total	10,214,753	18,462,424	16,987,361	21,751,085	81%	-8%	66%
Tanzania % of Global Total	0.06%	0.04%	0.04%	0.03%			

Base: Data provided by NCMEC.

Figure 21: CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Tanzania, by reporting electronic service providers.

Reporting Electronic Service Provider	2017	2018	2019	% of 2019 Total
Facebook	4,570	6,969	5,394	79.5%
Instagram, Inc.	768	849	1,050	15.5%
Google	352	279	308	4.5%
WhatsApp Inc.	3	9	18	
Snapchat	-	1	7	
Tagged.com	1	-	4	
MeetMe.com (formerly known as myYearbook.com)	1	-	2	
Omegle.com LLC	-	-	1	
Twitter, Inc. / Vine.co	1	3	1	
Chatstep	1	-	-	
Microsoft - other products	6	-	-	
Microsoft - Online Operations	1	1	-	
Photobucket.com	1	-	-	
Skout.com	3	-	-	
Tumblr	1	1	-	
Yahoo! Inc	3	-	-	
YouTube, Inc.	7	6	-	

Source: NCMEC CyberTips sorted by 2019 counts, null results removed.

Figure 22: CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Tanzania, number of unique upload IP addresses by year.<sup>88</sup>

	2017	2018	2019	% change 2017-2019	% change 2018-2019
Tanzania Unique Upload IP Addresses	3,167	4,226	3,775	19%	-11%
Total Tanzania Reports	5,721	8,119	6,785	19%	-16%
Reports per Unique IP Address	1.81	1.92	1.80	-1%	-6%

Base: Data provided by NCMEC.

88. Please note: the same IP address may be counted in more than one year, and a report can contain more than one unique IP address. Technical measures by internet service providers including the dynamic assignment of IP addresses and the sharing of IP version 4 addresses across a large number of devices can also have an impact on the number of unique IP addresses logged.

An IP address is assigned to each individual device on a specific network at a specific time. Multiple CyberTips per IP address can indicate that suspects (or at least their devices) are engaged in multiple offences of CSAM distribution during the same online session, which itself is perhaps indicative of a more deliberate style of offending that is less likely to be committed through lack of knowledge. By the same token, Tanzania's relatively low average number of CyberTips per IP address may be suggestive of a tendency towards lower volume CSAM offending within individual online sessions.

### Foreign law enforcement agency data

One foreign law enforcement agency – which requested anonymity – consulted for *Disrupting Harm* reported sending six referrals to Tanzania related to OCSEA-related offences in the period 2017–2019. Referrals from foreign law enforcement agencies are most often made when an ongoing investigation is found to involve an offender or victim in the second country, or when a domestic service provider makes a report to the national law enforcement authority that is indicative of OCSEA in the second country. Since the data requirement for this project did not include systematic collection of data concerning OCSEA referrals from all law enforcement agencies outside Tanzania, it is likely that there have been additional international referrals in the reporting period, over and above the reports to NCMEC discussed above.

### 2.1.3 Evidence of CSAM from other sources

#### CSAM distribution on peer-to-peer networks

Data from the Child Rescue Coalition, which operates the Child Protection System for detecting distribution of CSAM on peer-to-peer file-sharing networks, reveals that 47 Tanzanian IP addresses were engaged in distribution or downloading CSAM between 9 June 2019 and 8 June 2020. Since the system does not monitor all file-sharing networks, this figure should be treated with caution. That said, CSAM distribution on the peer-to-peer networks monitored would appear to be less popular in Tanzania than in Southern Africa, but more popular than in some other East African focus countries (see Figure 23).

**Figure 23: CSAM distribution and downloading from *Disrupting Harm* focus countries in Africa, observed on peer-to-peer file-sharing networks by the Child Rescue Coalition.**

	IP Addresses	Globally Unique Identifiers (GUIDs) <sup>89</sup>
Ethiopia	7	4
Kenya	76	24
Mozambique	6	10
Namibia	94	117
South Africa	2,413	842
<b>Tanzania</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>5</b>
Uganda	4	4

Source: Data supplied by Child Rescue Coalition for the period 9 June 2019 to 8 June 2020.

As CyberTip data supplied by NCMEC indicate several thousand instances of suspected CSAM possession, manufacture and distribution in Tanzania in 2017, 2018 and 2019, it would appear that Tanzanian CSAM offenders may prefer to use globally popular U.S.-based platforms rather than peer-to-peer file-sharing networks.

#### CSAM Web Hosting

Tanzania has not been identified as a hosting country for images and videos assessed as illegal by International Association of Internet Hotlines member hotlines contributing to the ICCAM platform.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, the Internet Watch Foundation actioned zero reports concerning confirmed CSAM hosting in Tanzania in the calendar years 2017, 2018 and 2019. Since data pertaining to the ICCAM project is limited to submissions from International Association of Internet Hotlines member hotlines, and since the Internet Watch Foundation operates primarily as the United Kingdom's CSAM hotline, this should not be taken as proof of an absence of CSAM hosting in the country.

89. A GUID number is generated by the version of the peer-to-peer software program being used by a computer located at the suspect IP address. A GUID number is automatically created when a user installs or updates the software.

90. For more information on the ICCAM project, see: International Association of Internet Hotlines: [What is ICCAM and Why is it Important?](#).

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### Web Searches for CSAM

Research was conducted on Google Trends with a view to identifying levels of interest in CSAM in Tanzania.<sup>91</sup> In the first instance, a sample of 20 terms selected by the INTERPOL Crimes Against Children team served as keywords and phrases for specialist interest in CSAM. The terms were selected based on specialist knowledge of CSAM-related file names, offender queries and slang or jargon in use within the offender community. Queries on searches in Tanzania for the period from 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019 returned a result of 'not enough data' for each of these 20 terms.

Returns of 'not enough data' equate with a relative popularity score of zero, indicating a comparatively low level of interest in that term (rather than no search results at all) within the geographical and time limits set.<sup>92</sup> When compared to the results of global searches for the same terms and to searches made in other countries in the same time frame, this suggests that specialist CSAM search terms may be used less in Tanzania than they are in some other countries. While it may also be argued that more sophisticated CSAM searchers are less likely to search on the open web, the relative popularity of some of the terms in the INTERPOL sample in other countries would suggest that open web searches are still used for CSAM discovery.

Although individuals in Tanzania looking for CSAM may search in languages other than English, there is no information on the use of search terms in local languages or slang. Law enforcement authorities could fill this gap by reviewing OCSEA investigations in Tanzania with a view to identifying additional terms and search strings used by offenders.

### 2.1.4 Links to travel and tourism

Data on travelling child sex offenders can also serve as an indication of OCSEA, as these offenders often record the abuse for their own use or for further distribution. They may also use communications technology to groom or procure children for offline abuse, or to maintain relations with children they have already abused offline.

In some countries, convicted sex offenders are required to notify a central authority of overseas travel. Analysis of data supplied by one foreign law enforcement agency – which requested anonymity – reveals that four notifications to their national sex offender registry concerned travel to Tanzania between 2015 and 2020, representing just 0.06% of total notifications in that period, and 6.3% of notifications concerning the *Disrupting Harm* focus countries in Southern and Eastern Africa. An agency from another country – also requesting anonymity – reported that out of 283 notifications of convicted sex offender travel from May 2017 to June 2020, less than 1% were destined for Tanzania.

In addition, the Angel Watch Center of U.S. Homeland Security Investigations provides referrals to officials in destination countries on convicted U.S. child sex offenders who have confirmed scheduled travel. In the years 2017 to 2020, the Angel Watch Centre made six referrals concerning travellers to Tanzania, representing 4.2% of the total number of referrals to *Disrupting Harm* focus countries in Africa. The agency did not receive confirmation that any of these individuals were denied entry to the country.

Further discussion on the challenges faced by law enforcement in regards to traveling child sex offenders and working with foreign law enforcement can be found in [chapter 3.2.3](#).

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91. Google Trends ([trends.google.com](https://trends.google.com)) is a publicly available tool that returns results on the popularity of search terms and strings relative to others within set parameters. Rather than displaying total search volumes, the tool calculates a score (on a range of 1 to 100) based on a search term or string's proportion to all searches on all terms/strings. Data points are divided by total searches in the geographical and time parameters set, to achieve relative popularity. While Google Trends draws on only a sample of Google searches, the dataset is deemed by the company to be representative given the billions of searches processed per day. For more information on data and scoring, see: [FAQ about Google Trends data](#).

92. Ramadanti, D. (2020). [Telling stories with Google Trends using Pytrends in Python](#).

## 2.2 CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

**Under the *Disrupting Harm* project, OCSEA was defined specifically to include CSAM, live-streaming of child sexual abuse and online grooming of children for sexual purposes. These concepts are used here to organise and present the results of the research. At the same time, it has to be recognised that the ways in which children are subjected to OCSEA are far more complex and nuanced. The experiences or offences in question often occur in combination or in sequence. Moreover, as explored in the box on 'The Continuum of Online and Offline Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse' OCSEA does not only occur in the digital environment; digital technology can also be used as a tool to facilitate or record in-person sexual exploitation and abuse.**

The Disrupting Harm household survey of 12-17-year-old internet users measured children's exposure to various manifestations of OCSEA, which will be presented individually below. When taken together, the data reveal that in the past year alone, an estimated 4% of internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania were victims of grave instances of online sexual exploitation and abuse. This aggregate statistic encompassed four indicators including children being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, someone else sharing their sexual images without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts in the past year prior to data collection.

1. Someone offered you money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos

2. Someone offered you money or gifts to meet them in person to do something sexual

3. Someone shared sexual images of you without your consent

4. Someone threatened or blackmailed you to engage in sexual activities

According to Disrupting Harm estimates, when scaled to the population of internet-using children in this age group this represents an estimated 200,000 children in Tanzania who were subjected to at least one of these harms in the span of just one year. It is worth considering that the survey only included internet users and those who live at home, meaning that more vulnerable child populations – such as children engaged in migration or children in street situations – may not be represented in these figures.

### 2.2.1 Online grooming

*Disrupting Harm* defines online grooming as engaging a child via technology with the intent of sexually abusing or exploiting the child. This may happen either completely online or a combination of online and in person.

Online grooming is a complex process which is often fluid and difficult to detect, especially where it involves a gradual building of trust between the offender and the child over an extended period of time. The child is often 'prepared' for sexual abuse and made to engage in sexual acts online or in person by means of coercion, threats or deceit. One of the frontline social support workers interviewed who had experience handling OCSEA cases stressed that *"Most of the time they [offenders] are recording*

*because they made victims trust them."* (RA3-TZ-38-A) However, in certain cases online grooming can also be abrupt, with an offender suddenly requesting or pressuring a child to share sexual content of themselves or to engage in sexual acts, including via extortion.

The law enforcement data in [chapter 2.1](#) suggest that offences categorised as "online grooming/solicitation" have increased by 18% between 2017 and 2019. The following section focuses primarily on children's experiences of various facets of online grooming as captured in the household survey of internet-using 12-17-year-olds. Recognising that sexual exploitation and abuse of children can happen in many different ways and places, most data points below allowed for multiple responses and may add up to over 100%.

## 2.2 CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

### Legislation on grooming

At the time of writing, Tanzanian law does not criminalise the grooming of children for sexual purposes. As the Assistant Inspector of Police and Commissioner of the Police Gender and Children Desks put it: *"The laws do not go into the specific manifestations of OCSEA like grooming. In my opinion, it would be good if they focused on more specific manifestations like grooming or other sexual abuse. Issues [of OCSEA] should be clearly stipulated."* (RA1-TZ-07-A)

### Potential grooming – children asked to talk about sex

IN THE PAST YEAR  
I HAVE BEEN ASKED TO  
TALK ABOUT SEX WHEN  
I DID NOT WANT TO



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

In the household survey of internet-using children in Tanzania, children were asked if they were subjected to certain behaviours in the past year that could be an indication of grooming. Those children who had experienced possible instances of grooming were then asked follow-up questions about *the last time* this happened to them: how they felt, whether it occurred online or offline (or both), who did it to them, and whether they told anyone about it. Because relatively few children said they were subjected to possible grooming, many of these follow-up questions involve small subsamples. In such cases, when the sample is smaller than 50, absolute numbers are presented instead of percentages to avoid misinterpretation of the data.

Talking about sex or sexual acts with someone online was considered to be 'very risky' by 69% of the 996 internet-using children who participated in the household survey in Tanzania, compared to 89% of their caregivers.

In practice, 6% of the children (56 children) said they had been asked to talk about sex or sexual acts when they did not want to within the past year. There were no major differences by age or gender or between

children living in urban and rural areas. Sixty children chose not to answer, which is quite a high number, perhaps due to discomfort discussing sex and the sensitive nature of this question.

Depending on the context, these experiences could indicate that the child has been exposed to harm or the risk of harm. For example, a child being asked to talk about sex by a peer but not wanting to engage at that moment might not face serious harm from this interaction. On the other hand, these experiences could also indicate malicious instances of attempted grooming – this is why it is described in this report as instances of potential (versus actual) grooming.

**Online or offline?** The 56 children who had received unwanted requests to talk about sex within the past year were asked questions about the last time it happened.

Asked how the request had been made, 31% said that they had been made in person. Seventeen children were targeted on social media and three in an online game. Eleven of those 17 children who were asked to talk about sex via social media said that this most recently occurred on Facebook or Facebook Messenger (n = 11). Twitter, Instagram and Snapchat were also mentioned.

Asking a child to talk about sex can happen entirely in-person, without any involvement of technology. As such, children who received these unwanted requests in the past year were asked if this most recently happened in-person, on social media, in an online game, or in some other way. Children could pick multiple responses. Only children who included social media or online games (n = 20) in their response were included in the subsequent analysis, as they represent instances of potential OCSEA.

The 20 children who said they received these unwanted requests via online – via social media or an online game – in the past year were asked several follow up questions about the *last time* this happened to them. By doing so greater insights are gained into the experiences of this small subgroup of children.

**How children felt:** Questioned on how they felt the last time they were asked to talk about sex when they did not want to, 19 of the 20 children reported negative feelings. Most commonly, they said they felt distressed, afraid and/or annoyed.

**How children respond:** None of the 20 children complied with the unwanted requests to talk about sex. A majority refused outright. Some children also used other tactics like blocking the other person or asking to be left alone.

**Who makes the requests:** The people who most commonly asked children to talk about sex via online channels were people known to the child – primarily friends aged 18 or older, followed by friends who were under 18 years of age. Seven of the 20 children said the request (or most recent request) came from someone they did not know who it was.

**Whom children tell about it – if anyone:** Seven of the children who received unwanted requests to talk about sex online did not tell anyone at all about this. Those who did talk to someone about it were most likely to speak to friends, followed by siblings. None of the respondents turned to a formal reporting mechanism such as a hotline or the police.

### Potential grooming – children asked to share sexual images or videos

**IN THE PAST YEAR I WAS ASKED FOR A PHOTO OR VIDEO SHOWING MY PRIVATE PARTS WHEN I DID NOT WANT TO**



Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Within the past year, 3% of the internet-using children surveyed in Tanzania (26 children) had received unwelcome requests for a photo or video showing their private parts, either online or offline. There were no observable differences by gender or age group. This is another *potential* indication of grooming: some OCSEA offenders have the intention of manipulating children into self-generating and sharing sexual images or videos through digital technologies, whether or not they also intend to meet the child in person.

While nine of the 26 children said they were not affected the last time they received such a request, 17 felt negatively about it. Ten of these said they felt scared.

The numbers of children asked to share sexual images may be under-reported as the topic is sensitive; 50 children did not answer this question.

**Online or offline?** Nine of the 26 children who were subjected to unwanted requests for sexual content said the requests were made in person. Seven said the requests were made via social media (WhatsApp, Tango, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Skype) and three through online games. Although Tango – a U.S.-based electronic service provider – appears in the household survey data as a platform where child

sexual exploitation might take place, they are not listed as a reporting platform in the country specific CyberTipline data ([chapter 2.1.2](#)), nor in the global numbers for 2019 and 2020 as provided by NCMEC<sup>93</sup>. This could be due, in part, to the complexity in identifying possible grooming attempts, compared to processes that platforms have established to identify CSAM (for example, automated checking for hashed images).

**How children respond:** Of the 26 children who received unwanted requests to share images of their private parts, 12 refused. Other common responses included ignoring the problem and hoping it would go away by itself, avoiding using the internet for some time, and deleting any messages from the other person. One child did as the person asked.

**Who makes the requests?** Eight of the 26 children said that the unwanted request for sexual images came from a friend or acquaintance aged over 18. Fewer requests came from friends or acquaintances under 18, family members and romantic partners. Seven children said the offender was an unknown individual.

Overall, more children received unwanted requests to share sexual content from people they already know, rather than from people unknown to them. These findings were corroborated by some of the frontline workers, who claimed that *“Most children face sexual exploitation by the people they trust most in their lives.”* (RA3-TZ-36-A)

The fact that at least one in every three requests came from an adult makes it plausible that some of these experiences constituted grooming.

93. see also: <https://www.missingkids.org/gethelpnow/cybertipline>

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**Whom did children tell about it – if anyone:** Of the 26 children who had received unwanted requests for images or videos showing their private parts in the past year, nine did not tell anyone about it. The children who did tell someone were most likely to turn to a friend (8 children), a female caregiver (4 children) or a sibling (1 child). Very few survey respondents reported what happened to them formally: none reported through an online reporting system and only one went to the police.

### Offering children money or gifts for sexual images or videos



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Two percent of the internet-using children surveyed in Tanzania (19 children) said that someone had offered them money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos within the past year. This could constitute evidence of grooming with the aim of obtaining CSAM.

**Online or offline?** Nine of the 19 children said they received these offers on social media. Five said they received them in person and two through an online game.

Of the nine children who last received such an offer via social media, six mentioned Facebook or Facebook Messenger. Others cited Snapchat or Instagram. Two children received the offer via Imo. The alleged use of Imo in OCSEA is yet to be reflected in electronic service providers' reports to NCMEC.

**Who makes the offers?** When asked about the last time they were offered money or gifts in exchange for sexual images or videos, most of the 19 children said they received the offer from someone they already knew. Five children were offered money or gifts by a friend or acquaintance under 18 years old. Children were equally likely to receive these offers from a romantic partner as from someone unknown to them (n = 4). Three children were made these offers by family members and three by an adult friend.



Of the 19 children who were offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos, none formally reported the incident to a helpline, the police or a social worker.



### Whom did children tell about it – if anyone:

Eight out of the 19 children offered money or gifts in return for sexual images told a friend about their experience. Family members – a male or female caregiver or a sibling – were also common confidants. None of the children spoke to a helpline, reported to the police or spoke to a social worker. Four children did not tell anyone at all.

### Offering children money or gifts for sexual acts in person



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Three percent of the children in the *Disrupting Harm* household survey in Tanzania (32 children) said they had been offered money or gifts to meet someone in person to do something sexual within the past year. Like other findings, these numbers may be under-reported as children may not feel comfortable or safe enough to reveal their experiences of abuse and exploitation, even in an anonymised survey.

**Online or offline?** Of the 32 children in this subsample, 15 said that they had received the offers of money or gifts in exchange for sex in person. Eleven confirmed that they had received the offers online – via social media and/or in an online game. The remaining children said they had received offers in some other way or did not answer the question.

Seven of the ten children who were most recently targeted through social media named Facebook or Facebook Messenger as the platform (or one of the platforms) used. Other platforms mentioned included Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube and WeChat.

The following presents findings for the subsample of 11 children who confirmed that that there was an online element (i.e., via social media or an online game) involved the last time they received offers of money or gifts to engage in sexual acts in-person.

**Who makes the offers?** The responses of this group of 11 children to follow-up questions revealed that the offers of money or gifts online to meet in person for sexual acts came from a range of sources, including peers younger than 18, adult friends or acquaintances, and people unknown to them.

**Whom did children tell about it - if anyone:**

Children were most likely to tell a friend the last time they were offered money or gifts via an online channel in return for sexual acts. Others disclosed to caregivers, siblings or teachers. Once again, children turned to interpersonal networks rather than formal reporting mechanisms. None of the children who received offers of money or gifts in return for sex via an online channel called a helpline or reported the incident to the police. One out of 11 children did not disclose to anyone.

**Sexual extortion**



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Sexual extortion is sometimes used in the grooming process. Offenders may have already obtained sexual images of children and threaten to publicly publish them, or share them with their friends or members of their families, as a way of coercing them into sharing more images or engaging in other kinds of sexual activities.<sup>94</sup> Such threats can also be used to extort money. In Tanzania, sexual extortion committed online is not specifically criminalised by law.

Two percent of the internet-using children surveyed in Tanzania (20 children) stated that someone had threatened or blackmailed them to engage in sexual activities within the past year. It is unclear what kind of threats were used. The true number could be under-reported as some children might not feel very comfortable answering the question (44 children chose not to answer this question).

**Interviews conducted in other *Disrupting Harm* countries with survivors of online sexual extortion detailed how the extortion process unfolded. The threat to share images was mentioned repeatedly across survivor accounts:**

*“He started threatening me – saying, ‘If you not going to, I will post those nude pictures you sent me; I will post them all on Instagram and on Facebook and on Tik Tok, and I will also share them on my WhatsApp.’ I begged him, I said ‘Please don’t do that to me, don’t do it, don’t put my photos on social media.’ Then he was like, ‘No, it’s too late.’”*

RA5-NA-03-A

**Online or offline?** Among the 20 children, six were blackmailed or threatened to engage in sexual acts in person, six via an online game and five on social media. The five children who were blackmailed or threatened to engage in sexual activities on social media said that the most recent threats they received were through Facebook or Facebook Messenger and TikTok. One child said this happened to them most recently via Tinder.

The 11 children who said that they were threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual acts in person *through an online channel* – i.e., via social media or in an online game – are victims of OCSEA.

**Who makes the threats?** In response to follow-up questions, three of the 11 children said they were threatened by a (former or current) romantic partner. Family members, adult friends and friends or acquaintances younger than 18 accounted for two cases each.

94. International Center for Missing and Exploited Children. (2018). [Studies in Child Protection: Sexual Extortion and Nonconsensual Pornography](#).

## 2.2 CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

Not one of the children said they were threatened by an individual unknown to them. All forms of OCSEA explored in this chapter were more commonly committed by individuals known to the child. According to one of the frontline workers interviewed, *“Tanzanian children are undergoing harms and abuses through people nearby who take care of them and what they need to get is education.”* (RA3-TZ-46-A)

### Whom did children tell about it – if anyone:

Two of the 11 children did not tell anyone the last time they were blackmailed online to engage in sexual activities in person. Most of the other children disclosed what happened to a friend or family member. None reported what happened through a formal mechanism such as a helpline or the police.

### 2.2.2 CSAM and live-streaming of child sexual abuse

#### Legislation on CSAM and live-streaming of child sexual abuse

Pursuant to the Cybercrimes Act, the definition of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) encompasses “pornographic material that depicts, presents or represents: (a) a child engaged in a sexually explicit conduct; (b) a person appearing to be a child engaged in a sexually explicit conduct; or (c) an image representing a child engaged in a sexually explicit conduct.”<sup>95</sup> This definition does not explicitly cover audio and written forms of child sexual abuse material, although the inclusion of the generic term “material” might widen the scope of the definition. This provision fails to include depictions of the sexual parts of a child’s body for primarily sexual purposes and does not explicitly cover digitally generated CSAM including realistic images of non-existent children.

Persons who publish, make available or facilitate access to CSAM through a computer system are liable to substantial penalties under the Cybercrime Act.<sup>96</sup> The term “publish” comprehensively covers all acts of *distribution* of CSAM.<sup>97</sup> The Cybercrime Act does not, however, criminalise acts related to the *production* of CSAM. Nor does it make it an offence to *possess* CSAM for any purpose or *knowingly obtain access* to CSAM.

Although not specific to CSAM, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act defines ‘pornography’ as “any representation, through publication, exhibition, cinematography, indecent show, information technology or by whatever means, of a person engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of the sexual parts of a person for primarily sexual purposes.”<sup>98</sup> The Act criminalises those who commit a range of conduct related to trafficking (e.g., recruitment, transportation, adoption, contracting marriage, etc.) for the purpose of pornography.<sup>99</sup>

The Cybercrimes Act and the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act apply in both jurisdictions of Tanzania – namely, Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. In addition, Mainland Tanzania has the Law of the Child Act R.E 2019 while Zanzibar has a Children’s Act. The two jurisdictions also have their own penal codes.

In Mainland Tanzania, the Law of the Child Act makes it an offence to publish, produce or display a photograph or picture of a child or dead child containing brutal violence or in a “pornographic posture.”<sup>100</sup> The Act also protects a child from being engaged in any work or trade that is of a sexual nature, including pornographic performances or materials.<sup>101</sup> Meanwhile, the Penal Code of Mainland Tanzania criminalises sexual exploitation of children, imposing criminal liability on all persons who procure children for participating in any form of sexual abuse or indecent exhibition or show.<sup>102</sup>

95. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

96. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 13(1).

97. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

98. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 3.

99. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 4.

100. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2019). [Law of the Child Act Revised Edition of 2019](#), Section 158(1).

101. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2019). [Law of the Child Act Revised Edition of 2019](#), Section 83(1)(c).

102. [The Penal Code \(as amended by the Sexual Offences Special Provisions Act No. 4 of 1998\)](#), Section 138B.

In Zanzibar, the Children's Act defines CSAM to include "any representation, by whatever means, of a child engaged in real or simulated explicit sexual activities or any representation of sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes."<sup>103</sup> The inclusion of "by whatever means" appears to imply that the definition covers all types of CSAM including written and audio forms. Further, the notion "representation of a child" could cover digitally/computer generated CSAM including realistic images of non-existent children as well as images of real children. The Children's Act makes it an offence to produce, disseminate, sell, import or export CSAM, possess it for any purpose or access it through the internet or other communications technology.<sup>104</sup>

This is the only law in Tanzania that criminalises possession of and access to CSAM.

Although it is possible that the legal provisions relating to CSAM could be applied to cases of live-streaming of child sexual abuse, this is not explicitly stated in the legislation, and there is no specific provision criminalising the live-streaming of child sexual abuse. More generally, in fact, since none of the existing laws criminalise live streaming of child sexual abuse, online grooming of children for sexual purposes or sexual extortion, such incidents of online abuse cannot be charged as per these definitions. Thus, they are being treated by law as per the offline elements of the incidents (i.e., as assault/rape).

### How Technological Development has Influenced OCSEA

The wide availability of faster and cheaper internet access has led to the increasing use of video tools in communications. Video chat and live-streaming tools have rapidly gained in popularity and are changing the ways people engage with each other, particularly for young people. Live-streaming is increasingly used both among small private groups and for 'broadcasts' to large, public, unknown audiences. While this is often harmless and has many benefits, the misuse of such tools can facilitate OCSEA.

#### Offenders broadcasting child sexual abuse.

Live-streaming tools can be used to transmit sexual abuse of children instantaneously to one or more viewers, so that they can watch it while it is taking place. Remote viewers may even be able to request and direct the abuse, and financial transactions can occur alongside it or even within the same platforms. This form of CSEA already constitutes a threat for children in Tanzania, where live-streaming offences were occurring, according to law enforcement data.

Streaming platforms do not create any records, because video is not downloaded or retained by default, although metadata is. This means that when the streaming stops the CSAM vanishes, unless the offender deliberately records it. This creates specific challenges for investigators, prosecutors and courts especially as the existing legal definitions of CSAM and methods of investigation and prosecution are not always up to date.

#### Self-generated sexual content involving children.

As noted in [chapter 1.3.2](#), the rise in self-generated sexual content, both coerced and non-coerced, also includes content transmitted via live-streaming. This content poses complex challenges. Even if initially produced without any coercion, this content may still make its way into circulation, whether through on-sharing without permission or nefarious means, such as hacking. Governments and support services everywhere are grappling with how to address these issues.

103. Government of Zanzibar. (2011). [Children's Act No. 6 of 2011](#), Section 2.

104. Government of Zanzibar. (2011). [Children's Act No. 6 of 2011](#), Section 110(3).

## 2.2 CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

### Children's experiences of non-consensual sharing of sexual images

**IN THE PAST YEAR  
SOMEONE SHARED  
SEXUAL IMAGES OF ME  
WITHOUT MY CONSENT**



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Two percent of the internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania who took part in the *Disrupting Harm* household survey (15 children) stated that someone had shared sexual images of them without their consent within the past year. The figure may be under-reported, particularly as children may not be aware that images of them have been shared without their permission.

Once sexual images of children have been shared – especially online – they can be circulated widely and viewed repeatedly anywhere and at any time. When these images or videos are recordings of severe sexual abuse, the trauma associated with those in-person experiences can also be repeatedly reactivated by the sharing of the content.

During interviews with government representatives, an Assistant Inspector of Police drew attention to another aspect of the non-consensual sharing of images: *“Sometimes when a parent finds out that their child has been sexually abused or if they think that there is something wrong with their child's private parts, they take pictures of their child's private parts and then share these pictures, especially on WhatsApp, asking for advice. So, in essence the parent is unaware that he/she is actually abusing their child online”*. (RA4-TZ-02-A -justice) Whether or not this example is indicative of a wider pattern of behaviour, the quote above illustrates how lack of awareness of OCSEA can bring otherwise preventable harm to children.

**Online or offline?** Seven of the 15 children who had experienced non-consensual sharing of their sexual images stated that this took place via social media – particularly Facebook or Facebook Messenger (mentioned by five of the seven children) but also Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp and YouTube. Three of the 15 children said the images were shared via an online game, three in person and three in some other way.

**Who shares the images?** According to the children concerned, the persons most commonly responsible for sharing their sexual images without consent included romantic partners, adult friends or acquaintances, family members and individuals unknown to them. Peers under 18 years did not account for any cases.

#### **Whom did children tell about it – if anyone:**

Six out of the 15 children did not tell anyone that sexual images of them had been shared without their consent. Among the children who did confide in someone, five spoke to a male caregiver, three to friends, one to a female caregiver and one to a sibling.

#### **Accepting money or gifts in exchange for sexual images or videos**

As explored in the context of grooming, children are sometimes offered money or gifts in return for sexual content. The following section considers the *acceptance* of money or gifts by children in return for sexual content, regardless of how the process was initiated.

While the practice of accepting money or gifts in exchange for sexual activities is not new,<sup>105</sup> the use of digital technologies – including by children and young people – to self-produce and send images or videos of oneself in return for money or other material incentives is an emerging trend. This practice could increase the risk of non-consensual sharing: 90% of ‘youth-generated’ sexual images and videos assessed in a study by the Internet Watch Foundation and Microsoft were ‘harvested’ from the original upload location and redistributed on third party websites.<sup>106</sup>

105. Bryceson, D. F., Jónsson, J. B., & Verbrugge, H. (2013). *Prostitution or partnership? Wifetypes in Tanzanian artisanal gold-mining settlements*. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 51(1), 33-56.

106. Internet Watch Foundation & Microsoft. (2015). *Emerging Patterns and Trends Report #1 Online-Produced Sexual Content*.

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Data from law enforcement authorities explored in [chapter 2.1](#) highlighted OCSEA with a commercial element as an existing issue in Tanzania. This is further corroborated by the household survey of internet-using children. Given the sensitivity of the topic, only the 15–17-year-old respondents were asked whether they had accepted money or gifts in exchange for sexual images or videos of themselves. Twelve of the 595 respondents in this age group said they had done so in the past year. Law enforcement data (see [chapter 2.1](#)) showed that a total of 251 reported OCSEA offences involved a commercial element.

A participant in the survey of frontline workers who had dealt with OCSEA cases in the past year, commented that *“Most of the children are finding it hard to refuse when perpetrators have a lot of money and this highly depends on the environment and economic status of a victim’s family. Most are likely tempted due to poverty.”* (RA3-TZ-21-A) Gaps still remain concerning this form of OCSEA. Understanding the intricacies around children’s motivations to engage in this practice, their understanding of the risks involved, and how they are first introduced to this practice, are important questions that require further study.

“**Most of the children are finding it hard to refuse when perpetrators have a lot of money and this highly depends on the environment and economic status of a victim’s family. Most are likely tempted due to poverty.**”

By making financial micro-transactions easy and instant, the growing use of digital and mobile payments may facilitate this form of OCSEA. As noted in [chapter 2.1](#), a number of OCSEA offences recorded by the Statistics Unit in Tanzania involved the use of mobile wallets. Tanzania is one of the world leaders in mobile money transfers, with 35% of households having at least one mobile money account while only 2% have an active traditional bank account.<sup>107</sup>

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107. Economides, N., & Jeziorski, P. (2017). [Mobile Money in Tanzania](#). *Marketing Science*, 36(6), 815–837.

## 2.3 OTHER EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN THAT MAY BE LINKED TO OCSEA

**Additional to the examples of OCSEA already presented, children may be subject to other experiences online which can be harmful, such as sexual harassment or unwanted exposure to sexualised content. Moreover, these experiences could, in some instances, contribute to the desensitisation of children so that they become more likely to engage in sexual talk or sexual acts – for example, during a grooming process.**

### 2.3.1 Sexual Harassment



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Under the Cybercrimes Act, any person who initiates or sends any electronic communication using a computer system to another person to coerce, intimidate, harass or cause emotional distress is guilty of “cyberbullying.”<sup>108</sup> While this provision does not specifically mention children, it could potentially be applied to cases involving online sexual harassment of a child.

Among the internet-using children in the household survey, 5% (50 children) said they had been exposed to sexual comments about them that made them feel uncomfortable within the past year, including jokes, stories or comments about their bodies, appearance or sexual activities. Children aged 14-15 were most likely to be subjected to these comments. There was no difference by gender or between children living in urban and rural locations.

Eleven of the 50 children said they were not affected at all by these comments. However, the rest reported feeling negatively about what happened.

The 50 children who had been harassed in this way were equally likely to have been harassed online – via social media and/or an online game – as in person.

Among the 22 children who said they were last harassed on social media, the most common platforms cited were Facebook or Facebook Messenger (n = 16). Other platforms mentioned included WhatsApp, YouTube, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and Line.

The persons most commonly responsible were adult friends or acquaintances (n = 18), followed by friends or acquaintances under 18 (n = 13), current or former romantic partners and/or family members. Nine children said the harasser was someone they did not know.

As with more severe forms of sexual violence, most children either told a friend (n = 16) or did not tell anyone at all (n = 15) the last time they were sexually harassed. Some children told female or male caregivers or siblings. Once again, very few children reported to helplines, social workers or the police.

### 2.3.2 Receiving unwanted sexual images



Base: Internet-using children aged 12-17 in Tanzania. n = 996.

Five percent of the children in the survey (49 children) said that someone had sent them unwanted sexual images or videos in the past year. This experience too was somewhat more common among 14-15-year-olds. Thirty-seven of the 49 children said they felt negatively about receiving these images, nine were not affected at all, and three did not answer the question.

108. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 23.

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When these 49 children were asked about the last time they were sent unwanted sexual images or videos, most said it occurred online rather than in person. Twenty-eight children said they received these images on social media platforms – headed by Facebook or Facebook Messenger, followed by YouTube, Instagram and WhatsApp – and 11 through an online game. Ten said they saw the unwanted images in person.

Children were most likely to receive unwanted sexual content from a someone unknown to them (22 out of 49 children), followed by an adult friend or acquaintance older than 18, a friend or acquaintance

younger than 18, a romantic partner and a family member. The easily-abused anonymity provided by the internet probably helps to explain why unwanted sexual images are generally sent via social media and why the offender is someone unknown to the child in 44% of cases.

Twenty one of the 49 who received unwanted sexual images did not tell anyone the last time they received unwanted sexual content. As seen throughout, they were most likely to talk to friends about it (n = 14) and less likely to disclose to family members. None of the children surveyed reported this through any formal reporting channels.

# 2.4 INSIGHTS ABOUT VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS FROM KNOWN OCSEA AND CSEA CASES

## 2.4.1 Victims

### Gender

Data supplied to INTERPOL by the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force (See [Figure 17](#). CSEA/OCSEA cases in Tanzania by type of offence) revealed that there was over a 3:1 ratio of female victims to male victims in their caseload in 2017–2019. All victims in this data set were Tanzanian nationals.

In contrast to the law enforcement data, the findings of the household survey of 12–17-year-old internet users suggested that the likelihood of girls and boys being subjected to most forms of actual and potential OCSEA are roughly equal. However, there are differences in the range of offences/behaviour covered by the survey data and the law enforcement data. It also seems likely that instances of OCSEA against boys are less frequently disclosed, reported and investigated (See [chapter 2.5](#)). Finally, gender differences may have been disguised by the small size of the sub-samples in the survey.

One of the frontline workers surveyed similarly articulated the perception that girls are more at risk of OCSEA in Tanzania than boys: *“Societal factors put women at risk and treats them like objects leading to sexual exploitation.”* (RA3-TZ-27-A) However, other frontline workers noted that boys also experience OCSEA and that they do not receive adequate attention: *“Parents are seeing girls as more vulnerable than boys who believe that they can easily solve problems themselves”* (RA3-TZ-09-A); *“Boys are mostly affected children because their cases are not given priority.”* (RA3-TZ-47-A)

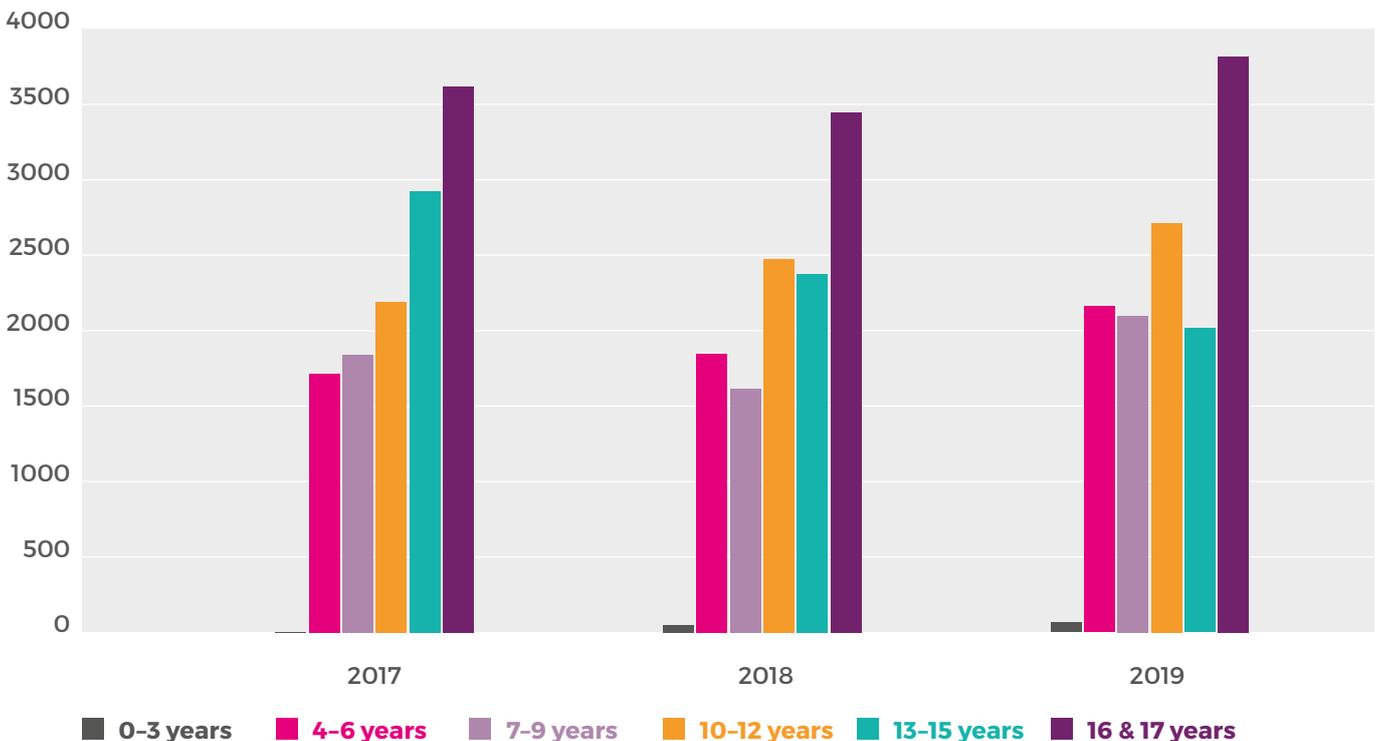
### Age group

According to the data supplied by the Statistics Unit, 16–17-year-olds accounted for 29% of the CSEA victims in 2017–2019.

### Factors affecting vulnerability

**Geographical hotspots:** According to the Statistics Unit, 24% of the CSEA victims in the reporting period came from three geographical hotspots: the cities of Mbeya and Tanga, and the Temeke district in Dar es Salaam. (RA7-TZ)

Figure 24: Victims of CSEA in Tanzania, by age group and year.



Base: Data supplied by the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

**Not living at home:** While 51% of the CSEA victims recorded by the Statistics Unit were living at home, 26% were identified as vulnerable for reasons such as living on the street or being under the control of criminal groups. A further 23% were living in an educational, correctional or care institution. (RA7-TZ)

Given that the *Disrupting Harm* survey with internet-using children only targeted children living in households, these statistics could explain the low estimates of the incidence of actual and potential OCSEA. Future research in Tanzania should focus on how best to capture the experiences of children not living in households.

**Poverty:** Some of the frontline workers interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* regarded poverty as a key source of vulnerability to CSEA. One of them said: *“Most children that are abused, especially sexually exploited, it is due to poverty. For instance, a child can be convinced with little gifts because her/his parents can’t afford to provide to him/her.”* (RA3-TZ-37-A)

**Domestic conflict:** Another frontline worker identified conflicts between caregivers as a factor that makes children vulnerable to sexual exploitation:

*“Marriage conflict is the factor contributing to online sexual exploitation due to parents’ poor relationship. Parents are living with grudges and using sarcastic words, parenting children without love and affection leads to [parental] conflict, shifting their discontent and anger to children who run away from home and seek love and attention from other people such as neighbours or turn to the streets that leads to exploitation.”* (RA3-TZ-29-A)

## 2.4.2 Offenders

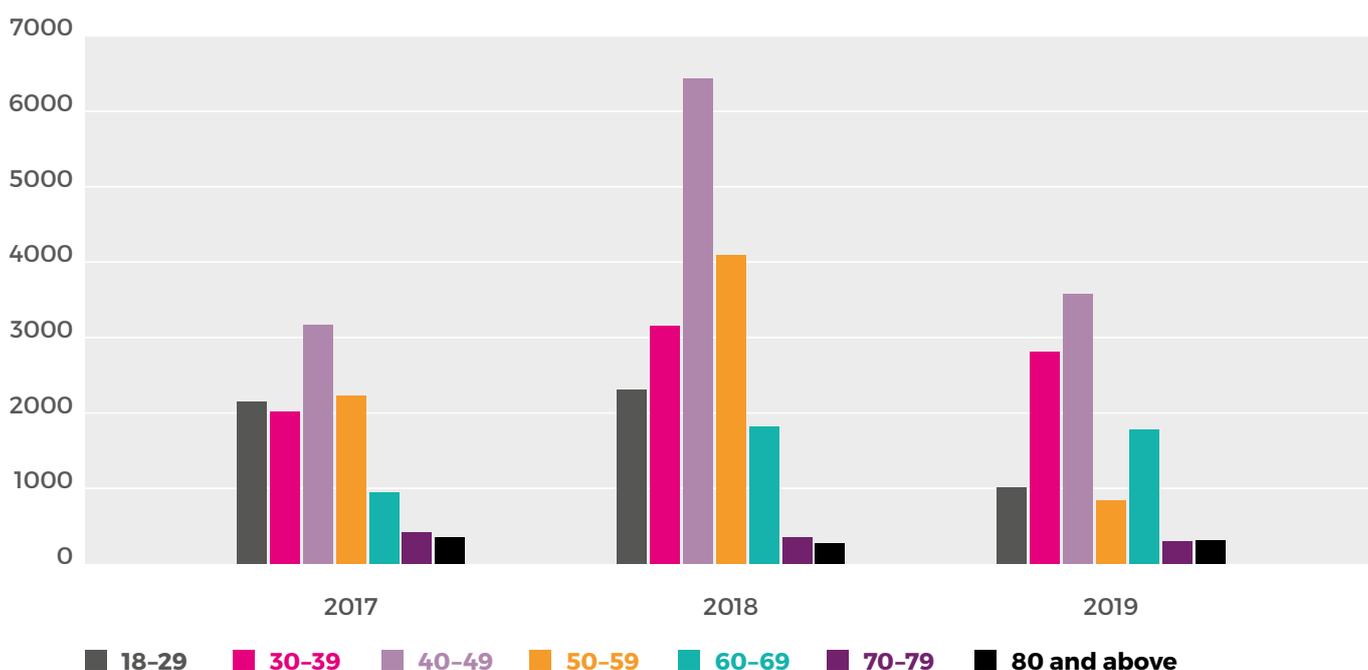
### Gender

The data supplied to INTERPOL by the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force revealed that 78% of CSEA offenders (31,386 out of 40,315) in 2017–2019 were male. The proportion of female CSEA offenders in the reporting period seems unusually high, bearing in mind the statistical issues noted earlier. The available data does not permit further scrutiny of the offences of which they were suspected to have committed.

### Age group

A third of the CSEA offenders in 2017–2019 were aged 18–29, and 70% were aged 30–59 (see Figure 25).

Figure 25: CSEA offenders in Tanzania, by age group and year.



Base: Data supplied by the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

## 2.4 INSIGHTS ABOUT VICTIMS AND OFFENDERS FROM KNOWN OCSEA AND CSEA CASES

The Statistics Unit data do not include any offenders aged under 18. This does not necessarily mean no OCSEA offences were committed by children but it might also indicate that Tanzania is rightly treating problematic sexual behaviour by children as a child protection issue, rather than a criminal issue.

### Relationship to the child

In the frontline workers' survey, respondents were asked about the observed relationships of offenders to children in the OCSEA cases which they had worked on. The most common offenders turned out to be community members over 18, followed by caregivers, family friends, strangers (nationals) or other relatives over 18. *"Child exploitation cases are happening within a community,"* one frontline worker observed. (RA3-TZ-38-A) In the words of another, *"Most sexual exploitation of children is done by the closest people they believe and have power over them, especially closest relatives such as uncle, brother, sister. The perpetrators use their power to intimidate and manipulate children to reach their evil intentions."* (RA3-TZ-37-A)

These observations are in line with the findings from the household survey of internet-using children given in [chapter 2.2](#), which show that most forms of OCSEA are more often perpetrated by a person the child already knows than by unknown individuals.

Facilitators<sup>109</sup> of OCSEA were most often said to be caregivers or community members over 18. One frontline worker commented: *"[...] the child abuse facilitators are not mentioned in most cases, you find only perpetrators are put behind bars while the facilitator remains free on streets."* (RA3-TZ-37-A).



**Most sexual exploitation of children is done by the closest people they believe and have power over them, especially closest relatives such as uncle, brother, sister.**



### Nationality

Nearly all of the CSEA offenders investigated by the law enforcement units reporting to the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force in 2017–2019 were Tanzanian nationals. Only 45 were foreign nationals.

### Previous convictions

For the period 2017–2019, only 1.2% of CSEA offenders recorded by the Statistics Unit had previous convictions. According to the Secretary of the Anti-Human Trafficking Secretariat in Dodoma, *"When you observe offenders who commit online crimes, they change their techniques daily. If they commit crimes that have not been covered in the law, it becomes hard to convict them in court."* (RA1-TZ-10-A)

In some cases, the offenders' previous convictions were for sexual crimes, usually against children, but in a majority of cases the previous convictions were for other offences – specifically, domestic violence and drugs offences.

109. 'Facilitator' was explicitly defined for the survey participants to answer this question as: "individuals or entities whose conduct (behaviour) facilitates or aids and abets the commission of sexual offence against the child (sometimes referred to as 'intermediaries')."

## 2.5 BARRIERS TO DISCLOSURE

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**As many as 92% of the internet-using children aged 12-17 who took part in the household survey agreed or strongly agreed that a member of their family would help them if they have a problem. Yet as seen in chapter 2.2, most of the children who were subjected to sexual exploitation and abuse, or faced other related unwanted experiences online, either did not tell anyone or only disclosed the incident to a friend. Few spoke to teachers and only one child who had experienced OCSEA reported what happened through a formal reporting mechanism like a helpline or the police.**

### 2.5.1 Reasons for not telling

In the household survey in Tanzania, encouragingly the proportion of children who did not disclose at all was generally low (between one and nine children, depending on the type of OCSEA in question). Those children who did not tell anyone that they had been subjected to OCSEA or other related unwanted incidents online were asked why they had not told anyone about it. The most common response among this small group of children was that the child did not know where to go or whom to tell. This points to insufficient familiarity with reporting mechanisms including helplines, the police, and the social media platforms they use. For example, none of the 20 children who received unwanted requests to talk about sex or sexual acts reported what had happened to them through an online reporting function. This could be because children do not know where to find these mechanisms: 82% of the children surveyed did not know how to report harmful content on social media, while 67% said they did not know where to get help if they or a friend were subjected to sexual harassment or abuse. "Not knowing where to go or whom to tell" may also reflect the children's hesitation to tell the people around them for other reasons.

One frontline worker expressed the view that *"Most victims of online and offline sexual exploitation are not aware that they were abused. Therefore, more knowledge and information about sexual abuse is required."* (RA3-TZ-37-A) Children need to know the boundaries of behaviour that is and is not acceptable. Yet according to the *Disrupting Harm* household survey findings, only 30% of internet-using children have received any sex education. The most commonly covered topics in these classes were sexually transmitted diseases (86%), how to be assertive and say no if a child does not wish to engage in sexual acts (82%), and morality – what is right and wrong in relation to sex – (76%).

Parental attitudes towards online harms may also impact children's willingness to disclose cases of OCSEA. As one of the frontline workers in the survey put it, *"The society needs to give rights to children, the right to be listened to, because when the parent or guardian is harsh the children are afraid to express their concerns and challenges they face and his/her presence doesn't matter. In order to prevent sexual exploitation, the community needs to learn to listen to children."* (RA3-TZ-48-A) Of the caregivers surveyed, 30% stated that if anything bothered their children online, they would restrict their internet use. Moreover, data from the household survey showed that 69% of children and 83% of caregivers believed that it is the victim's fault when a self-generated image or video is shared further. It is important to focus on educational efforts which convey that experiencing abuse is never the child's fault, and that they should not be punished for it.

### 2.5.2 Underlying factors

The fact that some children did not talk to anyone about their online abuse and the reasons given by children and social support workers for not doing so, point to some sociocultural realities which facilitate OCSEA by hindering not only the disclosure of cases but also their reporting and investigation, which prevent victims from receiving support.

**Lack of awareness of OCSEA:** In the survey of frontline workers, the majority described the level of awareness of OCSEA among caregivers, young people and the general public as either 'poor' or 'fair'. This suggests that the lack of awareness of many children about OCSEA mirrors a wider lack of awareness in society. The government representatives interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* agreed that the public is not yet aware of online offences and the particular online actions that amount to an offence under the law.

## 2.5 BARRIERS TO DISCLOSURE

According to an official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government: *"When it comes to online child abuse, awareness is still low compared to other types of abuse. People have a better awareness of the other types of abuse, that's why they are reporting; they use radio<sup>110</sup> and they use WhatsApp to report. But online abuse is not yet well understood (...) People are not aware that certain acts are online sexual abuse and are still not able to identify [these acts]. Sometimes people think it is a normal part of life while in fact, it is abuse. (...) So not everyone has this awareness because if everyone had this awareness, then there would be a lot of reporting of such incidences of abuse [OCSEA]."* (RA1-TZ-01-A)

As one front-line worker put it, *"Individuals practice OCSEA consciously or unconsciously."* (RA3-TZ-40-A) In the words of another, *"There is no clear understanding of online sexual exploitation, therefore it is not considered as a problem."* (RA3-TZ-23-A)

**Stigma and discomfort discussing sex:** Children's reluctance to report might be related to discomfort of discussing sex in general. Among the 50 frontline workers surveyed, 44 agreed that taboos around discussing sex and sexuality and 49 that stigma from the community influence children's vulnerability to OCSEA. One frontline worker shared: *"Some tribes' traditions and customs are affecting the process, for example they are using leaves (Lisale) to apologise to hide family shame/secrets instead of reporting cases. They keep it within a family by paying traditional penalties such as alcohol, without considering the negative impact of the abuse to a child."* (RA3-TZ-29-A)

Women in East and Central Africa have stated that disclosure could reduce their marriage prospects and result in stigmatisation by family and community members.<sup>111</sup> On the other hand, a child abused by an offender of the same sex may have difficulty disclosing the offence due to the legal status and sensitivity around same sex relationships in Tanzania.<sup>112</sup>

### The Continuum of Online and Offline Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

*"I once received a case of a schoolgirl who made a friend on Facebook. They became good friends and planned to meet with this friend and agreed on a place they could meet. Unfortunately, it turned out that the meeting point was a room in a guest house and she was raped. So, a case may start online but, in the end, the child ends up being sexually abused [in person]."* (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice)

*"It was a case of a boy who met someone on Facebook, it was a same-sex case. So, they started chatting online and [the offender] would seduce him and they eventually met. [The offender] started giving the boy drugs and would then have sex with the boy while recording him. When this case reached us, we provided the boy with counselling and also took him to rehab. The case was taken to the Gender Desk and [assigned] a lawyer and it was eventually taken to court."* (RA4-TZ-05-A-justice)

The types of sexual exploitation and abuse of children presented throughout this report illustrate some of the ways that digital technologies can be used to harm children. However, the research findings – including the case studies presented above – also reveal that creating a distinction between online and offline OCSEA does not always reflect the reality of children's experiences.

For example, children can be asked or coerced to share self-generated sexual images, and this can happen online, offline, or both. In addition, digital technologies can also be used as a *facilitator* of sexual exploitation and abuse. For example, social media or instant messaging can be used to convince or coerce children to meet offenders in person, leading to 'offline' child sexual exploitation

110. Although not a formal reporting mechanism, radio call-in shows are a popular mechanism for voicing complaints, either general or specific, and the authorities sometimes take action as a result.

111. Boudreau, C. L., Kress, H., Roach, R. W., & Yount, K. M. (2018). [Correlates of disclosure of sexual violence among Kenyan youth](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 79, 164–172.

112. Josenhans, V., Kavenagh, M., Smith, S., & Wekerle, C. (2020). [Gender, rights and responsibilities: The need for a global analysis of the sexual exploitation of boys](#). *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 110 (1), 6.

and abuse, which is then recorded and shared online. The data in this report include sexual exploitation and abuse of children that takes place directly in the online environment, that takes place offline but is facilitated by digital technology, and that is committed 'offline' and then shared online.

Interviews with various stakeholders show that the protection systems are not fully adjusted to this reality, and that OCSEA is sometimes perceived as a 'new kind of abuse' that requires an entirely different response to abuse that takes place in-person only.

The UNICEF Tanzania Country Office indicated that responses to OCSEA are and should continue to be embedded within the broader child protection framework. This means enabling OCSEA victims to benefit from the same services that exist for other child victims of violence. The existing child protection system provides ready structures for incorporating OCSEA interventions: *"The good thing in Tanzania is we already have a child protection system, through which we can incorporate the online element. (...) I think this is a huge advantage which Tanzania has (...)*

*We have the National Plan of Action to End Violence against Women and Children which has created what are called protection committees at the regional level, district level, ward level and village level. That means we have structures (...) so in all of these structures, you can channel whatever you have. What is needed is to just pave the way with evidence and then incorporate child online protection into maybe the parenting guidelines and every other child protection document that is critical in terms of the child protection system, strengthening implementation."* (RA1-TZ-11-A)

At the same time, there are cases where online abuse requires a specialised response – for example in investigations requiring the use of digital forensics or an understanding of financial transactions. An Assistant Inspector of Police from the Cybercrime Department remarked: *"I think the prosecutors don't have enough knowledge of OCSEA because they established a new unit for prosecuting cybercrime cases that is too general."* (RA4-TZ-08-A-justice) In other instances, a lack of clear laws around OCSEA make it difficult for law enforcement to act and for children to obtain justice through the courts.

# 3. RESPONDING TO ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN TANZANIA

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This chapter presents evidence about current Tanzanian response mechanisms. This includes formal reporting options, and responses by police and the court system. Finally, it considers the contributions which government, civil society and the internet and technology industry make to combating OCSEA in Tanzania.

Much of the data is drawn from qualitative interviews with government, law enforcement, court professionals and children and caregivers who accessed the formal justice system. Responses may not reflect the full range of experiences of those accessing the Tanzanian response system to OCSEA.

# 3.1 FORMAL REPORTING MECHANISMS

## 3.1.1 Police Gender and Children Desks

The Police Gender and Children Desks are regarded as one of the main channels for reporting OCSEA and all other forms of abuse involving children. Introduced in 2008 following the establishment of the Tanzania Police Female Network, police working at these desks are required to involve social welfare officers and refer child victims to relevant service providers for support services e.g., medical care. Desk officers are charged with ensuring that cases of child abuse and violence against women are processed quickly, and that victims receive appropriate medical and psychosocial support. They also conduct awareness raising sessions in schools, during community meetings, and in places where people gather for leisure, such as restaurants and bars. (RA8-TZ)

Law enforcement authorities reported that there were 420 Police Gender and Children Desks in all class A, B and C police stations in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. Each of the Police Gender and Children Desk has 2–8 police officers.

According to an Assistant Inspector of Police from the Gender and Children Desks who took part in the Access to Justice interviews, *“Mostly, close relatives who live with the child are the ones who report [cases of CSEA and OCSEA to the Gender and Children Desks] because sexual abuse is often committed by people who are close to the child. (...) Sometimes children themselves report cases (...) We also have cases reported by teachers,<sup>113</sup> if a child tells their teacher (...) Doctors also bring us abuse cases.”* (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice) Besides caregivers, the other representative of the Gender and Children Desks interviewed (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice) named concerned neighbours, social welfare officers, teachers and staff of non-government organisations among the persons who report child abuse cases. This respondent said it was rare for children to report directly by themselves.

The research findings suggest that children in Tanzania lack awareness about what to do if they become victims of violence. For example, data from the *Disrupting Harm* household survey shows that only 32% of the children said they know what to do if they or a friend are subjected to sexual assault or sexual harassment.

INTERPOL data indicate that while most cases are reported to the desks by community members, some are referred to them by members of the Women and Children Protection Committees who work at community level (see below) (RA8-TZ). Overall, data supplied by the law enforcement authorities reveals that a total of 43,628 CSEA offences in the period 2017–2019 were reported by members of the public, with 887 reported by civil society organisations and 126 by foreign law enforcement authorities. (RA7-TZ)

## 3.1.2 Community case workers

At the village level, where there may be no Gender and Children Desks, an official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government explained that there are Women and Children protection Committees composed of community members who are trained to report cases either to the National Child Helpline Tanzania (see below) or to volunteer community caseworkers: *“Right now, there are committees who have trained community members and when a child has been abused, there are those who call [the helpline] but there are those that go to community volunteers that we call CCWs – Community Case Workers – that are at the village level. These Community Case Workers have already been trained that whenever they receive abuse cases, they report them to the social workers. (...) The social worker then goes to do the initial investigation, the social investigation and to refer the child to the hospital and going to the police to fill in a PF3 (Police Form number 3). So, they collaborate on handling these cases.”* (RA1-TZ-01-A)

113. Under the Tanzanian Education Act (Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2009). [The Education Act \(as amended by the Law of the Child Act No. 21 of 2009\)](#), Section 59A.), as amended by the Law of the Child Act, all teachers, craftsmen and trainers in Mainland Tanzania are under the general obligation to report concerns or evidence of child abuse committed by any person to the appropriate social support officer. The respondents from the Police Gender and Children Desks both confirmed that teachers report abuse cases as per the provision of the Education Act.

## 3.1 FORMAL REPORTING MECHANISMS

### Distinguishing CSEA and OCSEA

While the Statistical Unit of the Tanzania Police Force at the national level produces some separate data for CSEA and OCSEA offences, based on information received from the Gender and Children Desks as well as other units (see [chapter 2.1](#)), this distinction does not appear to be made by the desks themselves.

Both of the respondents from the Gender and Children Desks indicated that cases of OCSEA are not reported as such: “I cannot say that anyone comes to our police station to specifically report that they have been abused online. Instead, they simply report that they have been abused but when you trace the source of the abuse, you may find that it started on social media sites like Facebook, WhatsApp and over the phone” (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice); “In some cases, a parent may bring us a case of a child who has been raped and when we do our investigation, we learn that the source is actually online.” (RA4-TZ-02-A -justice)

According to a representative from the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups, “When we collect data from the police through the Gender and Children Desk, there really isn’t information on online abuse. They

have information on abuse in general, but they do not specify if it is online abuse.” (RA1-TZ-04-A)

Similarly, few cases of OCSEA appear to be reported with the help of community caseworkers. An official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government noted that: “The Women and Child Protection Committees at regional, council, ward and village level (...) meet at least once every quarter but most cases that are reported in these forums are on issues like a father has sodomised his child, a mother has beaten or burned her child, but it is not exactly online child abuse.” (RA1-TZ-01-A)

All the respondents acknowledge that OCSEA is occurring in Tanzania. For example, the Assistant Inspector from the Police Gender and Children Desks noted that: “Even though there haven’t been any formal reports made, from what we hear, [OCSEA] is increasingly becoming a problem in the rural areas where young children may be photographed without understanding the dangers.” (RA1-TZ-07-A) However, there appears to be a lack of knowledge and/or tools for the recording and categorisation of OCSEA related crimes, except within the Statistics Unit of the Tanzania Police Force.

### 3.1.3 Hotlines and helplines

#### Hotlines and Helplines

There are several channels through which children and adults can report cases of OCSEA. These include child hotlines and child helplines. **OCSEA hotlines** focus on working with industry and law enforcement agencies to take down content. Nowadays they often use a web-only format rather than phone numbers to lodge concerns. **Child helplines** usually respond to a broad range of child protection issues, although some may specifically focus on online child sexual exploitation and abuse. Child helplines might provide immediate crisis support; referrals services and/or ongoing counselling and case management services.

#### National Child Helpline Tanzania

The national helpline which is run by C-SEMA in collaboration with the Government of Tanzania using the number 116, is available in both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar. The helpline’s website states that it is mostly contacted by caregivers and community members. When a case of violence or abuse is received, the helpline links the caller to the relevant frontline service providers (social welfare officers, Police Gender and Children Desks, community-based organisations). The helpline then follows up on the case to document successes or challenges in accessing services.<sup>114</sup> However, Child Helpline International indicated that it received zero contacts specifically concerning OCSEA during 2017–2019.<sup>115</sup>

114. C-SEMA Tanzania. (n.d.). [National Child Helpline](#).

115. Data submissions confirmed by Child Helpline International, November 2020.

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### CSAM reporting portal

In October 2017, the Internet Watch Foundation, which operates globally to remove CSAM online, cooperated with the National Child Online Safety Task Force (see 3.4.1) to set up a reporting portal in Tanzania.<sup>116</sup> Accessible in two languages, Kiswahili and English, the portal allows internet users in Tanzania to anonymously report images or videos of children being sexually abused. Reports are sent directly to Internet Watch Foundation expert analysts in the UK who assess them and share details of the CSAM identified with hotlines in other countries, which can then issue their own take-down notices to domestic providers.

Internet Watch Foundation data indicate that as of 31 December 2019, only 18 reports had been received from Tanzania, one of which was identified as actionable (confirmed CSAM). This is in line with the information which a UNICEF respondent shared during an interview with *Disrupting Harm* in August 2020: “*Since 2017, when the reporting portal was launched, we have had around 25 cases of people reporting content, like abuse imagery of children online. So those are the cases that have been registered by C-SEMA through the online reporting portal.*” (RA1-TZ-11-A)

The portal and its function may have remained little-known to the public – and to children, as shown in chapter 2 – due to limited funding for wider awareness creation. This could explain why the portal receives so few reports.

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116. UNCRC. (2019). UNCRC General Comment on Children’s Rights in the Digital Environment Notes from Tanzania.

## 3.2 LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY

### 3.2.1 The law enforcers

The law enforcement agencies considered most relevant for addressing OCSEA are the Police Gender and Children Desks, the Cybercrime Department, the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority and the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

In addition to the Police Gender and Children Desks (see [chapter 3.1](#)), six officers are assigned to the national police unit handling human trafficking and child exploitation. In cases involving OCSEA, support is provided by the Cybercrime Department, the Family Protection Unit, and the Government Chemist Laboratory Authority. In all these units, the same staff and equipment are used in investigations involving child and adult victims. (RA8-TZ)

An Assistant Inspector of Police from the Cybercrime Department explained that the Department collaborates with the Gender and Children Desks in any child protection case involving digital evidence: *“When they [the police] have cases that need expertise from us and they meet some challenges, they usually contact us (...) So we have that kind of relationship with our police stations and the Cybercrime Department. We work together to achieve a common goal.”* (RA4-TZ-08-A-justice) According to a representative of the Gender and Children Desks, *“When we come across [CSAM], we inform the Cyber Unit which deals with online crimes. The Cyber Unit then collaborates with the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority to take down these images and ensure they don’t spread further.”* (RA1-TZ-07-A)

The Forensics Bureau of the Cybercrime Department is responsible for extracting, analysing and reporting on digital evidence in relation to CSAM cases. Since forensic resources are shared across several types of crime, this can lead to delays in the investigation process. (RA8-TZ)

The selection of officers wishing to join the Gender and Children Desks, the Cybercrime Department or the Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Unit differs from normal police transfer procedures and is subject to selection criteria including academic qualifications. (RA8-TZ)

Law enforcement OCSEA investigations are conducted under a standard operating procedure common to all desks across the country.

### 3.2.2 Promising practices

**Categories of OCSEA elements:** Tanzania law enforcement contributed data on a number of categories, such as live-streaming of CSEA, and unregulated exposure to sexual/pornographic content in addition to streaming of sexual audio. This level of specificity among the different activities is notable, and already indicates a growing ability in Tanzania law enforcement to recognise OCSEA-related elements.

**Criminal records bureau:** Tanzania has a criminal records bureau from which law enforcement investigators can request data following established procedures. While there is a national register of convicted sex offenders, convicted sex offenders are not subject to monitoring. Under the Law of the Child Act R.E 2019 of Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar’s Children’s Act, convicted sex offenders are prohibited from holding certain positions or responsibilities related to children.<sup>117,118</sup>

**Training initiatives:** According to the government, training on child rights is offered in all Tanzania’s police academies. A training manual created for Police Gender and Children Desk officers’ sets standards on gender-based violence and child abuse.<sup>119</sup> Government training on OCSEA is most often funded through civil society organisations and development partners. In 2016, the Global System for Mobile Communications Association held a training session on child online protection for policy makers, the Cybercrime Department and civil society organisations. Between 2018 and 2020, C-SEMA which runs the National Child Helpline Tanzania, Child Helpline International and the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children jointly implemented the ‘Advocate, Collaborate and Train to End Violence Against Children’ programme in Tanzania. This included training of law enforcement officers on OCSEA. They also facilitated a round-table discussion with national child protection stakeholders and produced a Technical Guidance Resource on OCSEA.<sup>120</sup> (RA8-TZ)

117. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2019). [Law of the Child Act Revised Edition of 2019.](#), Section 148(1).

118. Government of Zanzibar. (2011). [The Children’s Act No. 6 of 2011](#), Section 132.

119. International Bureau for Children’s Rights. (2012). [Fourth Workshop on the Integration of the Six Core Competencies on Child-Friendly Policing into the Training and Practices of Police Officers and Gendarmes in Africa, the Middle-East and Haiti.](#)

120. See: Child Helpline International: [Advocate, Collaborate, and Train to End Violence against Children Project.](#)

“For the police, there have been training sessions involving police officers from all regions in Tanzania, both Tanzania Mainland and Zanzibar, on issues of OCSEA and how the police force can handle such cases.” noted the Assistant Inspector of Police and Commissioner of Police Gender and Children Desks. “The training sessions [organised by C-SEMA] involved two representatives per region: one representative from the Gender Desk and one representative of the Cybercrime unit (...) so even when we have internal meetings OCSEA is something we discuss as an agenda.” (RA1-TZ-07-A)

Another respondent in the interviews with government representatives indicated that OCSEA is sometimes integrated into training on human trafficking for police, immigration officers, prosecutors, judges and social welfare officers conducted by organisations like Research Triangle Institute and Lawyers Without Borders: “Now in this training, there are parts on how to fight OCSEA. (...) These training started in 2017, 2018, 2019 (...) There are a few regions like Rukwa that we didn’t reach but Lawyers Without Borders has trained approximately over 800 people.” (RA1-TZ-10-A) The same respondent added, “But still, I think we need more training on that because this is a new crime and the offenders always keep changing their style or the techniques of committing these offences.” (RA1-TZ-10-A).

### 3.2.3 Challenges

A 2019 study conducted by the Tanzania Police Force and the Open University Tanzania identified several challenges to the effectiveness of the Police Gender and Children Desks in local police stations. These included an insufficient number of police officers, the allocation of desk officers to other police duties and lack of a dedicated budget. The study highlighted the need for dedicated financial resources, specialist training for officers, means of transport and modern equipment.<sup>121</sup>

Challenges in the capacities of law enforcement authorities to respond to OCSEA identified during research for *Disrupting Harm* included the following:

**Insufficient awareness:** During the interviews, OCSEA was often referred to as a “new” issue for the law enforcement authorities. According to a social

worker, “OCSEA is still a very new issue for most of us. Even when you tell the police about online child exploitation and abuse, it will take a long time for them to understand.” (RA4-TZ-03-A-justice) One frontline worker said that “Some in law enforcement don’t know the concept of OCSEA” (RA3-TZ-19-A) and another that “There is little knowledge about online sexual exploitation against children.” (RA3-TZ-35-A)

The frontline workers surveyed typically considered the level of awareness of OCSEA within the law enforcement authorities to be ‘fair’ (see Figure 26).

**Figure 26: Frontline workers’ perceptions of local law enforcement awareness and response to OCSEA.**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Awareness of OCSEA crimes	22%	44%	26%	8%
Response to OCSEA crimes	24%	48%	26%	2%

Base: Frontline social welfare workers. n = 50.

The Tanzanian law enforcement authorities recognise that officers in local stations sometimes fail to record the age of the victim when recording a sexual offence (RA8-TZ), which also has implications for statistical data.

Officers working on the Police Gender and Children Desks are required to take a course on gender-based violence and violence against children, but this does not include OCSEA-specific topics. (RA8-TZ)

**Insufficient technical capacity:** According to one government duty-bearer, “Investigating such cases requires a certain amount of expertise. At the end of the day we have to take these cases to court and if there isn’t enough evidence, the person may not be convicted when they go to court.” (RA1-TZ-10-A) Additionally, a police officer pointed out that even though it is the police that conduct investigations, the charge sheet has to be filled in by the state attorney’s office before a case can be taken to court. (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice) State attorneys should, therefore, also be included in capacity building on OCSEA as this could ensure that OCSEA offenders are correctly charged.

121. Mussa, M. A., & Mohamed, F. (2019). Challenges Facing Police Gender and Children’s Desks in Reduction of Gender-Based Violence and Violence against Children: A Case of Kinondoni District, Dar Es Salaam Region, Tanzania. *The International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies*, 7(8), 1-11.

## 3.2 LAW ENFORCEMENT CAPACITY

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Officers from the Police Gender and Children Desks lack training on how to conduct undercover operations, for which they must request support from the Intelligence Unit. There is a similar shortage of training in open-source investigation and intelligence gathering. (RA8-TZ)

**Limited training:** Eight of the ten government representatives interviewed referred to limited training for criminal justice actors, both about OCSEA and about child-friendly procedures. As a result, they said, various provisions of law are not always followed.

Many respondents recommended regular training for police and justice actors on child-friendly approaches. A respondent in the justice interviews recommended *“that actors like the Gender and Children Desk police officers, lawyers or judges that attend these cases get frequent training – at least every year – on how to handle these cases as well as to create a conducive environment in courts where these hearings are held.”* (RA4-TZ-05-A-justice) *“At the moment [the police, prosecutors, magistrates and judges] try to make the environment child-friendly,”* argued an official from the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs, *“but even then, not everyone has specialised in how to handle children’s cases. So if the environment was child-friendly it would help the child be more comfortable.”* (RA4-TZ-01-A-justice)

**Lack of equipment:** Hardware such as computers, laptops, mobile phones, printers, scanners and photocopying machines is currently shared among a large number of officers, reducing capacity overall. Regarding software, law enforcement officers report that the expense of tools used to investigate OCSEA is often prohibitive even for specialist units. Where tools have been acquired to conduct computer and mobile forensic examinations and make online investigations, there is a need for further training on their use. The police also lack ‘live’ forensic tools that perform analysis on active systems, and tools to detect, triage and analyse CSAM. (RA8-TZ)

**Low connectivity:** Unreliable and insufficient internet connectivity also impedes OCSEA investigations. Internet access for national specialist units is shared with other police departments, speeds are slow, and hours of service are limited. (RA8-TZ)

**Budgetary limitations:** One of the government interviewees talked about the need for more funding to strengthen the investigative capacity of law enforcement, adding: *“I think the government can allocate funds to the police department and civil society to address online child sexual exploitation.”* (RA4-TZ-06-A-justice) An Assistant Inspector of Police from the Cybercrime Department explained: *“Collecting information online you may need some tools, which are a bit expensive, you need some license. So, increasing our budget is also very important. And the handling of digital evidence, we have some cases which are reported in remote areas, collecting evidence and processing them is also very expensive when it comes to digital evidence. You need money to buy the gadgets, which will be used for the examination of evidence from mobile phones and the license for these gadgets are also very expensive. So, the budget of the cyber departments should be taken into consideration in addressing online child exploitation materials.”* (RA4-TZ-08-A-justice)

**Lack of a national CSAM database:** Tanzania does not have a national CSAM database, and is not connected to INTERPOL’s International Child Sexual Exploitation image and video database. Additionally, the law enforcement case management system is paper-based. Despite the good cooperation with other police units, frequent exchanges of information, and some collection of statistics the absence of an electronic case management system hinders the law enforcement authorities’ ability to connect data and monitor trends in offending. Data extraction and analysis is done manually by the police Statistics Unit. (RA8-TZ)

**Lack of personnel to engage in online monitoring to identify child sexual abuse materials:** According to the Assistant Inspector of Police from the Cybercrime Department, *“We have a limited number of individuals who are doing online patrol. When we have a limited number of people that means you’ll get less information, and there is some information you may need. So, increasing the number of personnel is very important.”* (RA4-TZ-08-A-justice)

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**Lack of psychological support:** OCSEA investigators in Tanzania are not provided with psychosocial support. Such services are considered a matter of personal choice. (RA8-TZ)

**Limited cooperation with foreign law enforcement authorities:** Most operational contact with foreign law enforcement authorities is through the INTERPOL National Central Bureau in Dar Es Salaam, which receives foreign requests and refers them to the relevant units, and is deemed to play a pivotal role in maintaining liaison with other countries' law enforcement agencies regarding OCSEA offences. According to an Assistant Inspector of Police from the Cybercrime Department: *"Usually, we work with INTERPOL – international police – because they have a network where they share information. So, when we inform them and they communicate with [for example] INTERPOL in Kenya, then investigations start there. They gather and share information. So, we collaborate in that way [...] if that person is not within the country, then we have contact with INTERPOL through the i247 system so that they can contact other police departments in that particular country for the arresting procedures, so this is what we are doing in this area."* (RA4-TZ-08-A-justice)

At the same time, the interviews with law enforcers indicate that there is little contact with foreign law enforcement authorities other than during training courses and seminars. Law enforcement sources also report that translation and interpretation is neither available nor budgeted for. This poses an operational challenge, not least in relation to international law enforcement cooperation. Some Police Gender and Children Desks had found innovative ways of developing networks with translators who could assist them.

“ .....  
**OCSEA investigators in Tanzania are not provided with psychosocial support. Such services are considered a matter of personal choice.**  
” .....

# 3.3 STEP BY STEP: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD GOES TO THE POLICE?

## 3.3.1 To report or not to report?

Asked what they would do if their child was subjected to sexual harassment, abuse or exploitation, the majority of caregivers of internet-using children in the household survey said they would report the case or inform someone close to them such as their spouse. In response to this hypothetical question, only 4% (41 caregivers) said they would keep it to themselves for fear of reprisals or because they assumed nothing would be done or would not want to create trouble. Forty-five percent of the caregivers said that they would tell the police, 21% a social worker and 16% a teacher.

In the words of one of the justice professionals interviewed, *“The adolescent victim needs a lot of support from these parents and if they don’t get that support, then it’s hard for even them to initiate [the case].”* (RA4-TZ-11-A-justice)

In actual practice, interviews conducted with government officials, justice professionals and frontline social support workers suggest that caregivers or other adults may fail to report instances of child abuse, particularly of OCSEA, to the police for a number of reasons.

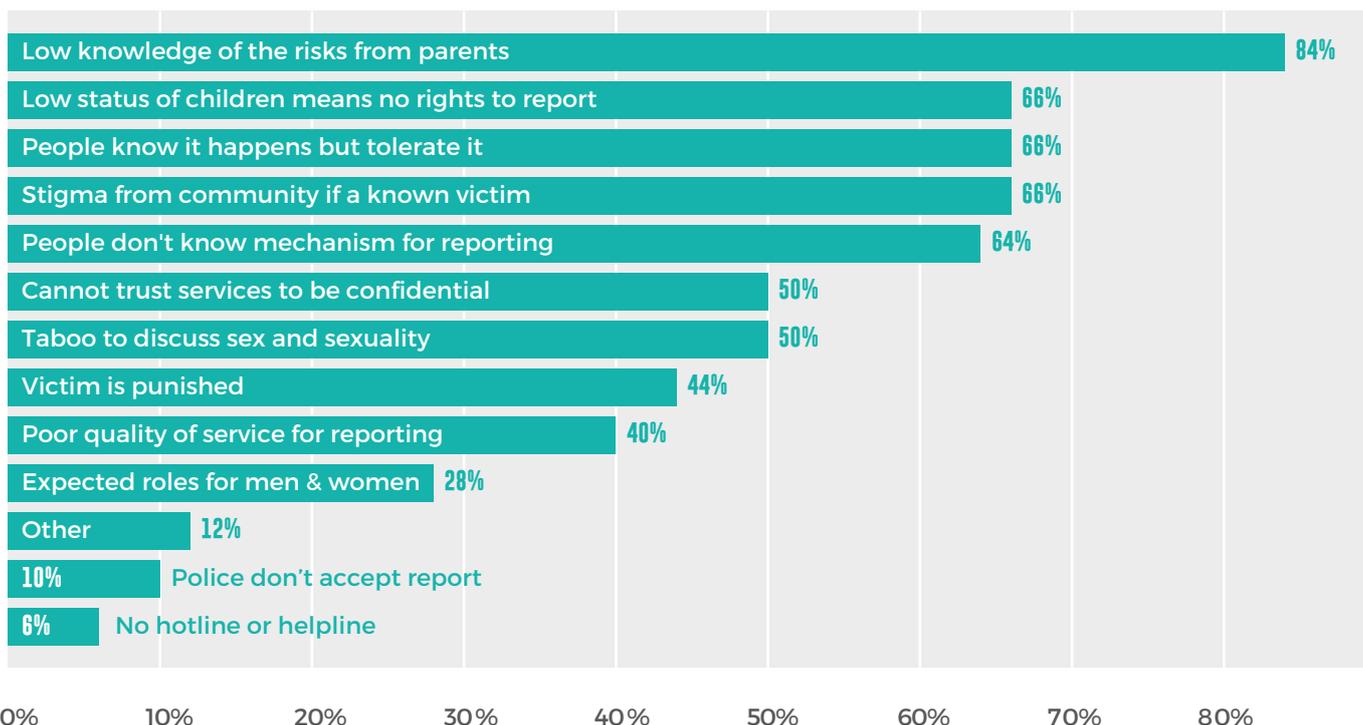
**Lack of knowledge and awareness:** In the survey of 50 frontline workers, as many as 84% thought that ‘low knowledge of the risks from caregivers’ influences the reporting of OCSEA (see Figure 27). Among the other interviewees, at least three policy-makers and at least two criminal justice actors shared the perception that limited reporting of OCSEA results from the lack of understanding and awareness of acts that constitute online offences as contained in the law.

This lack of awareness of what constitutes OCSEA, the fact that it is a crime and the harm which it causes is also discussed in [chapter 2.5.2](#). Reporting, especially by close family members, might improve if there was greater awareness of the long-lasting impact which child sexual abuse and exploitation, both offline and online, can have on children.

Moreover, of the 50 frontline workers surveyed, two thirds selected ‘not knowing the mechanisms for reporting’ as a factor affecting reporting.

**Stigma:** Two-thirds of the 50 frontline workers in the survey believed that stigma from the community influences the reporting of OCSEA in Tanzania. Half of them felt that taboos around discussing sex and sexuality influence the reporting of OCSEA.

Figure 27: Frontline workers’ perceptions of factors influencing reporting OCSEA.



Source: Frontline welfare workers, n = 50.

In this context, one of the frontline workers commented that *“Key informants are afraid to report such cases for them to be known in their community, so they choose to stay quiet and tolerate the exploitation that happens within their community. The victims are also afraid that the perpetrators will take legal action towards them so they deciding to tolerate the exploitation. More education is required on these issues.”* (RA3-TZ-37-A) Two of the government representatives interviewed (RA4-TZ-11-A-justice, RA4-TZ-12-A-justice) also indicated that stigma deters caregivers from

reporting cases of OCSEA. As one of them put it, *“Most parents feel ashamed to admit that their child has been sexually exploited. They don’t want to expose [themselves or their child]. That is the biggest challenge.”* (RA4-TZ-12-A-justice)

Law enforcement officers also spoke about the stigmatisation of victims, their fear of abusers, who may be family members, and the impact of cultural practices such as female genital mutilation on reporting and levels of acceptance of abusive behaviour. (RA8-TZ) Other aspects of stigma are referred to in [chapter 2.5.2](#).

### Settling out of Court

Three of the justice actors interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice, RA4-TZ-11-A-justice, RA4-TZ-12-A-justice) mentioned that sexual abuse cases are sometimes settled out of court instead of being reported to the criminal justice system.

According to one justice professional (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice), some caregivers seek such settlements for financial gain, which they feel will not be provided in the formal system – even though both the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and the Cybercrimes Act entitle child victims of OCSEA to compensation from offenders.<sup>122,123</sup> Likewise, a police officer from the Police Gender and Children Desk indicated that *“In some cases, parents who know that their child has been abused hide it and try to negotiate with the perpetrator without resorting to the authorities because they feel that even if they report the case and the perpetrator is imprisoned, they don’t [financially] benefit in any way. So that is also a challenge.”* (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice)

Two other justice professionals (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice, RA4-TZ-09-A-justice) suggested that out-of-court settlements are most common in sexual abuse cases in which the offender is someone close to the victim’s family: *“A lot of people would prefer [to settle out of court] if it’s a relative. They will say, ‘We just cannot break our relationship like this’. So they look for elders, sit down, slaughter a goat or cow and then say, ‘Everything is fine; let’s forget about this.’ That happens.”* (RA4-TZ-11-A-justice) This practice was most likely in abuse cases where the victim is an older girl, as the community does not perceive the abuse as very damaging. (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice)

From the observations of these criminal justice professionals, the welfare of the child is not a primary consideration in out-of-court settlements and hence not the best approach to use in achieving justice for the victims.

122. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 15.

123. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 13(3); Section 48(2).

### 3.3 STEP BY STEP: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHILD GOES TO THE POLICE?

**Complex process:** Where One Stop Centres (see [chapter 3.2.2](#)) are not available, child abuse victims have to go back and forth from one institution to another. As an official from the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs explained: “When a victim is abused, if they are injured, they have to go to a hospital but once they get there, they are told they need to have a PF3 (Police Form number 3) so they have to first return to the police [before they can get treatment]. So that back-and-forth experience by victims is a challenge in reporting abuse incidences. So, in my opinion, if we could start One Stop Centres in almost every district or region, people can go there and get their PF3s, they will be able to receive counselling because there will be social support officers [at the One Stop Centre]. They will be able to get medical services and there will also be lawyers so they will be able to get legal advice. So, all of these services being together will reduce the challenges.” (RA4-TZ-01-A-justice)

#### 3.3.2 Children’s encounters with the police

As explained in the [Methods chapter](#) at the beginning of this report, it was not possible to identify any children in Tanzania who had accessed the formal justice system after being subjected to OCSEA. This points to the challenges that occur in reporting OCSEA.

In these circumstances, the following description of what a child might experience when encountering the police is based on interviews with government and law enforcement representatives. The perspectives below may apply to CSEA cases in general, rather than cases of OCSEA in particular.

**First encounters:** The justice professionals interviewed stated that officers at the Gender and Children Desks make an effort to use child-friendly interview techniques (RA4-TZ-03-A-justice, RA4-TZ-04-A-justice), dress in non-formal clothes,<sup>124</sup> (RA4-TZ-03-A-justice, RA4-TZ-04-A-justice, RA4-TZ-07-A-justice) and allow a person familiar to the child to be present during the interview process. (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice)

However, one inspector from the Police Gender and Children Desk cautioned that some of these operating procedures were specific to Dar es Salaam.

Elsewhere, experience in working with child sexual exploitation issues and support from civil society organisations is likely to be lower: “There are still a lot [of actors] that do not have the knowledge nor do they have adequate skills. As I said, I’ve shared the experience in Dar es Salaam where at least people have started to work [on these issues] and as you know, most NGOs are in Dar es Salaam. But when you go to other regions and more remote areas there is still a challenge and sometimes these incidents are not even reported to police stations.” (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice)

**The interview process:** An Assistant Inspector of Police from the Police Gender and Children Desks affirmed that child-friendly procedures are followed during the interview process: “So once a case like this [case of sexual abuse] is reported at the Gender and Children Desk, we ensure confidentiality. So, we take the child to a private place and we interview him/her there because it is important to build a good rapport with the child so he/she can explain what happened properly.” (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice)

Nevertheless, one criminal justice professional representing a community-based organisation based outside of Dar es Salaam commented that, “When we report a case of a child who has been abused online, the challenge they face especially at the police station is secondary victimisation. I think police officers do not have adequate training on how to interview these children and instead what happens is as they interview the child, they traumatise them all over again. The police are very harsh, they blame the children as if they understood exactly what was happening. I think that is the biggest challenge they face. (...) Yes, it is at these Gender and Children Desks.” (RA4-TZ-06-A-justice)

A social welfare officer from Ilala Municipality said that she also records a statement of the victim in cases of child sexual abuse or exploitation, in addition to the statement taken by the police. “I also take personal statements from the child who has been sexually abused and I write this down and take it to the police. The police are the ones who now take the case forward for further investigation.” (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice)

124. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2016). [Law of the Child \(Juvenile Court Procedures\) Rules 2016](#), Rule 7(5).

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**Passing the case on to the court:** From the interviews with criminal justice professionals, it emerged that OCSEA as such is not commonly prosecuted in the criminal justice system. Those OCSEA cases which do make it to the courts are cases where abuse involves both online and offline elements. As explained by justice professionals, in these cases, the contact abuse is what is reported and thus prosecuted. The online component of the offence only becomes apparent to criminal justice actors during investigations of the offline offence. OCSEA offences with no offline component, and hence no contact abuse, appear not to be reported and prosecuted according to the *Disrupting Harm* interviews. (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice, RA4-J-TZ-02-A-justice)

Aside from legal loopholes or lack of awareness of OCSEA, criminal justice actors suggested various reasons why other OCSEA cases do not reach the courts:

- Offenders who groom children online can be hard to identify. “You may find that a child met their perpetrator on Messenger and they communicated and the child was groomed online. (..) When we talk to the child trying to determine who and where the perpetrator is, it is hard to find out,” pointed out one criminal justice professional working for a community-based organisation that promotes the identification and reporting of OCSEA. (RA4-TZ-06-A-justice)
- According to an Assistant Inspector of Police, the use of other people’s devices by children to communicate with offenders is an obstacle because it “*makes it hard to trace [the online interaction] from how it started to how it ended.*” (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice)

## 3.4 OBTAINING JUSTICE AND ACCESS TO REMEDIES

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Since it was not possible to identify any children in Tanzania who had accessed the formal justice system after being subjected to OCSEA, the following description of what a child might experience in the legal system is based on interviews with government representatives and justice professionals. Considering also that the criminal justice professionals interviewed shared their experiences based on OCSEA cases that were charged in court as CSEA, the perspectives below may apply to CSEA cases in general, rather than cases of OCSEA in particular.

### 3.4.1 Court proceedings

**Child-friendly courts:** Criminal justice professionals explained that CSEA – regardless of whether offline or online elements were involved – can be processed either in regular courts, where an adult offender is involved, or in juvenile courts, in cases involving a child offender. The justice professionals interviewed said that cases processed in juvenile courts are better handled in terms of implementing child friendly procedures than cases processed in regular courts. Nevertheless, most cases of OCSEA are committed by adults and would therefore go through regular courts.

While it was noted that child friendly measures are implemented by regular courts in instances where the magistrate presiding over a case has received relevant training, the criminal justice professionals interviewed made it clear that regular courts do not always have the same level of training as the juvenile courts. In the words of a social welfare officer, “Not everyone understands how children’s cases should be handled.” (RA4-TZ-12-A-justice) This social welfare officer described the environment in regular courts as “not child-friendly”. (RA4-J-TZ-12-A). Criminal justice professionals pointed out that in some instances within the regular courts, hearings involving child victims of sexual abuse are conducted in front of many people (RA4-TZ-12-A-justice); the child victim has to face the offender in court – which was described as one of the hardest experiences for the victim (RA4-TZ-03-A -justice); police and judges dress formally (RA4-TZ-05-A-justice); the judicial process is not explained to the child victim (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice), and the court set-up is intimidating to the child victim. (RA4-TZ-12-A-justice)

Despite the above challenges, *Disrupting Harm* takes note of the recent amendment to the Law of the Child Act R.E 2019 which now allows District and Resident magistrate’s Courts to act as Juvenile courts. These courts will implement child friendly procedures when hearing children’s cases as outlined in the Juvenile Court Rules. This will result in more child friendly courts and some of the challenges mentioned above may hence be addressed.

The importance of training magistrates on child-friendly procedures was highlighted by a social welfare officer, “Police do not wear uniform, the judge is also dressed casually; the social worker is also dressed casually. So, they sit around a table as they would at home, face-to-face. (...) The court is closed. There are only a few people present.” (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice) The social welfare officer said that the courts also allow caregivers and social welfare officers to attend court hearings to support the children. (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice) An Assistant Inspector of police added that, “Sometimes we place the perpetrator behind a window so the child cannot see him/her directly, which helps the child feel less scared.” (RA4-TZ-04-A-justice)

Indications of the adoption of child-friendly procedures such as these, at least by some magistrates, are a positive sign.

A majority of the criminal justice professionals interviewed recommended the continuous training of criminal justice actors on child-friendly measures. (See also the remarks on “limited training” of police and justice professionals in [chapter 3.2.3](#)).

**Duration of process and trial:** Several criminal justice professionals spoke of delays in the conclusion of cases involving child sexual abuse. A social support officer said that this was because “the process of gathering evidence can sometimes take a long time”. (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice)

According to an Assistant Inspector of Police representing the Police Gender and Children Desks, one consequence of delays in the judicial process is that children forget the details of their cases. (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice) A social welfare officer also said that these delays can also cause children to lose interest in their cases. (RA4-TZ-12-A-justice)

**Transport to court:** The Assistant Inspector of Police noted that the government reimburses witnesses, including victims of child abuse and exploitation, for their travel expenses on the day they are summoned to court to testify. However, any court attendance for which a court summons is not issued is not compensated. (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice) A social worker from a civil society organisation added that where a child is not in a home setting but is placed in a shelter, the Social Welfare Department provides transport to court for this child. (RA4-TZ-03-A-justice)

Courts do not, however, reimburse the transport costs of caregivers, and this may prevent them from accompanying the child from home to court. Another social welfare officer explained that the Social Welfare Department may provide caregivers with transport support on such occasions (RA4-TZ-07-A-justice) but this was not described as a standard practice.

**Social support to victims in court:** The Law of the Child (Juvenile Court Procedures) Rules (2016) allow a child victim to be assisted by a *guardian ad litem*.<sup>125</sup> In July 2019, the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups developed a National guide for the *guardian ad litem* scheme. The guide states that 'Guardian ad Litem are going to be volunteers.'<sup>126</sup> However, these have only been piloted in three districts – Mbeya City Council, Kisaraw and Ilala.

**Legal aid:** Twenty-four of the 50 frontline workers surveyed evaluated the overall availability of legal aid as 'fair' and 16 described it as 'good'. According to a government official representing the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs, legal aid is available to child victims of CSEA if it is requested by a magistrate or a judge.<sup>127</sup> Upon receipt of such requests, the official confirmed that the Ministry refers the child victim to the legal aid centre nearest to them. (RA4-TZ-01-A-justice) Nevertheless, out of the ten justice professionals interviewed, only one other justice professional (apart from the official from the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs) mentioned referral to legal aid services as one of the support services his organisation provides to children subjected to CSEA. (RA4-TZ-03-A-justice) The rest did not mention legal aid as a support service that is available.

### Judicial Outcomes – Law Enforcement Data

While there is no data on the outcome of OCSEA cases specifically (or disaggregated for cases of CSEA with an online element), INTERPOL data provided by Tanzanian law enforcement authorities on the outcomes of CSEA investigations in the period 2017–2019 reveals that:

- 56% (n = 26,301) of all persons arrested for CSEA offences faced prosecution.
- Just 8% of those arrested and 14% of those prosecuted were convicted.

These rates remained relatively stable throughout the reporting period, indicating that there are persistent obstacles to successful CSEA prosecution in Tanzania. The evidence presented in this report

suggests that these obstacles could stem from the challenges faced by the law enforcement authorities, hindering effective investigation and evidence gathering, or from court procedures and/or the influence of social and cultural factors.

A total of 73 offenders, representing 0.2% of all those arrested, received non-custodial sentences. The precise character of these disposals is not clear from the data supplied. (RA7-TZ)

In the survey with frontline workers, one respondent commented that *"It's normal for the legal system to take its time. However, it's discouraging when the perpetrators are bailed out and allowed to spend time with their family while the case is still ongoing. This freedom makes the perpetrators escape/run away from the law."* (RA3-TZ-29-A)

125. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2016). *Law of the Child (Juvenile Court Procedures) Rules 2016*, Rule 15(4).

126. Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups. (2019). *A guide for the guardian ad litem scheme*, 2.

127. No magistrate or judge participated in the interviews to confirm the practice in regard to requesting legal aid on behalf of child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation.

## 3.4 OBTAINING JUSTICE AND ACCESS TO REMEDIES

One shortcoming mentioned by the official from the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs was that, *“The difficulty depends on where the victim is and where the [legal aid service] centre is. Sometimes the victim will tell us that the centre is too far away and they cannot afford to go there because of financial constraints or some other barrier.”* (RA4-TZ-01-A-justice)

### 3.4.2 Compensation

Both the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act and Cybercrimes Act entitle victims of OCSEA to receive compensation from offenders.<sup>128,129</sup> None of the justice professionals interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* were aware of a case in which a victim of OCSEA had received compensation from a convicted offender. This could be due to the low number of OCSEA cases or cases considered OCSEA. Fifty percent of the respondents knew of compensation orders being awarded against a convicted offender during sentencing for other forms of child sexual abuse and exploitation. However, the interviews suggested that it was not standard practice to formally seek compensation.

### 3.4.3 Social Support Services

All child protection cases pass through a government social welfare officer. In addition to their involvement in the legal proceedings, these officers cooperate with the law enforcement authorities and the justice system in the provision of services like shelter, counselling and legal aid.

In the survey, frontline workers were asked to evaluate the overall availability and quality of medical, psychological, legal and reintegration services for children subjected to OCSEA. As figures 29 and 30 show, out of 50 respondents, 37-40 rated the availability of the services as either ‘fair’ or ‘good’ and 33-36 rated the quality as ‘fair’ or ‘good’. The quality and availability of psychological services were rated as ‘poor’ by 14 and 10 of the respondents respectively.

This is an interesting finding, since 48 out of the 50 frontline workers reported that their own organisations provide such services.

**Figure 28: Frontline workers’ perceptions of service availability.**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Medical	18%	44%	36%	2%
Psychological	20%	36%	40%	4%
Legal	16%	48%	32%	4%
Reintegration	22%	44%	30%	4%

Base: Frontline social support workers. n = 50.

**Figure 29: Frontline workers’ perceptions of service quality.**

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Medical	24%	42%	30%	4%
Psychological	28%	34%	32%	6%
Legal	24%	38%	30%	8%
Reintegration	22%	40%	32%	6%

Base: Frontline social support workers. n = 50.

Most of the additional comments made by the frontline workers concerning the availability of services focused on poor public awareness of the services available: *“Community is unaware about where to access such services. It takes long time to access service”* (RA3-TZ-37-A); *“(…) ignorance of their right to access various services.”* (RA3-TZ-35-A) Some respondents stressed that existing services are often inadequate: *“Especially in Tanzania, we need more accurate services from the service providers so as to help children”* (RA3-TZ-46-A); *“There is a lack of enough child support professionals and community ignorance on child protection.”* (RA3-TZ-36-A)

128. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). *The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008*, Section 15.

129. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). *The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015*, Section 13(3); Section 48(2).

Most of the frontline workers agreed that low quality of services, their concentration in urban areas, and the high costs affected access to these support services for children subjected to OCSEA (see Figure 30).

**Figure 30: Frontline workers' perceptions of factors affecting the availability of support services for children subjected to OCSEA.**

	Agree
Low quality of service	70%
Services concentrated in urban areas	64%
Cost of services	61%
Gender	53%
Services discriminate against clients	40%
No service available	38%

Base: Frontline social welfare workers, n = 50\*. Note that *The 'cost of services' score is based on 49 responses.*

**Placement in a place of safety:** While children are best protected in a home environment, temporary crisis shelter is sometimes needed if the situation at home is unsafe or alternative family-based care is not immediately available. Under the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, victims of trafficking, including child victims of CSAM-related offences, are entitled to receive temporary safe housing and other protection measures.<sup>130</sup> However, the justice professionals interviewed said that the government does not have enough shelters for children who need a place of safety during criminal justice processes. An Assistant Inspector of Police representing the Cybercrime Department indicated that when a child needs temporary shelter away from the family setting because the offender is a family member, *"this service is not standard – not all children are placed in temporary shelters – but it is very important to do that."* (RA4-TZ-08-A-justice) An official working for the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs explained that *"There are very few safe houses for children who are awaiting trial or waiting for judgments to be passed, so it's hard for them to find a [safe] place to stay during the course of the trial as they await justice."* (RA4-TZ-01-A-justice)

Besides placement of child victims in temporary shelters, there is also the alternative of placing them in the care of 'fit persons' under the 'Fit Persons Programme'. This is a programme developed by the Tanzanian government in 2013 with the support of UNICEF. The programme is currently operational in 58 of 185 districts in Tanzania and relies on community volunteers to provide temporary care for children with protection concerns.<sup>131</sup>

### Less 'rescuing' children, more removing offenders

While some emergency circumstances require children living in particular harmful circumstances to be 'rescued', the removal of a child from their family and community for protective reasons bears its own risks. Fear of removal can also discourage children from disclosing abuse and seeking help, since they may view residential care negatively or even as a punishment. Where possible, removing the offender instead can protect the child while maintaining their attachment to their organic support systems.

**Psychosocial support:** The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act provides that a police officer who comes across a victim of trafficking, including child victims of CSAM-related offences under the Act, must ensure that the victim receives medical and psychological treatment,<sup>132</sup> while the Commissioner for Social Welfare must ensure that the victims are provided with counselling services.<sup>133</sup>

According to the interviews with justice professionals, counselling is provided to victims of sexual abuse and exploitation by social welfare officers, by the police at the Gender and Children Desks in collaboration with social welfare officers, and by civil society organisations (CSOs) in cases where the child victim is in their care; however, the availability of qualified professionals at all levels is limited.

130. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 18.

131. UNICEF Tanzania (July 2019) <https://www.unicef.org/tanzania/stories/real-home-first-time>

132. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 17(2).

133. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2008). [The Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act No. 6 of 2008](#), Section 17(3).

### 3.4 OBTAINING JUSTICE AND ACCESS TO REMEDIES

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A 2015 government report stated that government officers (including social welfare officers) rely on volunteers at the ward and village levels as there are fewer government officers at these levels.<sup>134</sup> A social worker from a civil society organisation also noted that *“the Police Gender and Children’s Desks are only found at district level.”* (RA4-TZ-03-A-justice) The justice professionals interviewed did not indicate who provides counselling at the ward and village levels, so it is possible that child victims in these locations receive no psychosocial support, or have to go to government institutions at the district level to access this support.

**Medical services:** The majority of the justice professionals interviewed stated that medical care was readily available for victims of OCSEA. An Assistant Inspector of Police from the Gender and Children Desks explained that *“The government provides free health services [in government hospitals] to all children under the age of 5”* and that free medical services are available for older victims if they have the Police Form number 3 (PF3), which is provided after reporting the case. (RA4-TZ-02-A-justice) However, the Assistant Inspector noted, only the initial treatment to the victim is free as any follow-up visits and the related expenses must be paid for by the families. The health sector could play a bigger role. Besides from medical treatment, victims could be referred to other support services.

“ Justice professionals interviewed did not indicate who provides counselling at the ward and village levels, so it is possible that child victims in these locations receive no psychosocial support. ”

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134. Tanzania Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children, UNICEF, & Global Affairs Canada. (2015). [Building a holistic child protection system, step by step, in the United Republic of Tanzania](#), 14.

## 3.5 COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

### 3.5.1 Policy and government

The main government agencies with a mandate to address OCSEA, according to government representatives, are as follows:

- the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government,
- the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups,
- the Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs,
- the Ministry of Home Affairs, which oversees – *inter alia* – the Police, Gender and Children Desks and the Cybercrime Department,
- the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
- the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority and
- the National Prosecutions Service.

The respondents were aware of the roles of these agencies in addressing OCSEA.

- The Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups has core responsibility for child protection, including child online protection. (RA1-TZ-04-A, RA1-TZ-11-A)
- The respondent from the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government described the ministry's main duty as implementing any OCSEA and child online protection guidelines developed by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups at regional and council levels.
- The Tanzanian Communications Regulatory Authority was described as the agency responsible for regulating all communication including online communication in Tanzania. (RA1-TZ-09-A)
- The Ministry of Constitutional and Legal Affairs is the main body concerned with the development of laws including laws on OCSEA. The Tanzania Law Reform Commission, the Judiciary of Tanzania and the Attorney General's office fall under this ministry. (RA1-TZ-07-A)

### Promising developments and initiatives

**Existing child protection system:** According to a UNICEF child protection specialist, the Tanzanian child protection system provides ready structures which could be used to address OCSEA if training and resources are provided.

Similarly, in 2015, a report of the Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children indicated that there were functional child protection teams at the district level as well as structures to coordinate child protection work at subdistrict levels. With the help of the district child protection teams, Most Vulnerable Children Committees had been set up in wards and villages to engage communities on child protection.<sup>135</sup>

### National Child Online Safety Task Force:

Established in 2017, the National Child Online Safety Task Force brings key government stakeholders together to coordinate intervention strategies on OCSEA at policy level. It is chaired by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups. The Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority and C-SEMA, a national NGO, sit on the secretariat and UNICEF plays an advisory role. The Task Force's main mission is to advocate for safer internet use for children and to ensure that any content which violates the safety of children is reported and, whenever possible, removed from the internet.<sup>136</sup> The Task Force brings together policy- and decision-makers, the law enforcement authorities and the judiciary, mobile network operators, academics and civil society. It works to view the digital world with the child's best interest at heart by reducing the risks, tackling the challenges and maximising the opportunities which digital growth and development presents.<sup>137</sup>

An official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government recalls: *"With the growth of technology [in Tanzania], let's say 2012 to mid-2014, that's when issues of [online abuse] were on the rise. That is why the National Child Online Safety Task Force was formed as we have seen that these things are happening and we wanted to find ways of addressing them as a country."* (RA1-TZ-01-A)

135. Tanzania Ministry of Community Development, Gender and Children, UNICEF, & Global Affairs Canada. (2015). [Building a holistic child protection system, step by step, in the United Republic of Tanzania](#), 14.

136. UNCR. (2019). UNCR General Comment on Children's Rights in the Digital Environment Notes from Tanzania.

137. UNCR. (2019). UNCR General Comment on Children's Rights in the Digital Environment Notes from Tanzania.

## 3.5 COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

The UNICEF respondent explained that the Task Force only recently finalised its plan of action and that activities only commenced in 2019: *“We have done training at local government level and developed materials for awareness creation on OCSEA meant for schools and society. That is what we [as a Task Force] have done so far.”* (RA1-TZ-11-A) Three government interviewees said that members of the Task Force have jointly developed key messages on OCSEA, which are to be disseminated to communities, including rural areas, and that training materials have been developed and distributed to the Task Force and to community and faith leaders, who in turn are expected to disseminate the messages to the public. One respondent (RA1-TZ-09-A) pointed out that the progress and impact of these activities have not been assessed.

A representative of the Ministry of Labour, Empowerment, Elders, Women and Children in Zanzibar informed Disrupting Harm that *“We collaborate [with the Task Force], but not so much. If there is a meeting, they invite us to attend. I’ve personally attended meetings on this Task Force but they just shared findings on research that had been done – a pilot in two regions, I think. So, we still don’t have a strong connection where if we encounter a challenge, we can share with them to see how they can help us. That still isn’t there. (...) We do not have policies that guide us on how to collaborate with them and what we should do to address this issue that has happened online, we don’t have that kind of collaboration.”* (RA1-TZ-13-A)

**Emerging capacity building initiatives:** Training on OCSEA has started for some frontline workers, although the numbers are very small. The official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President’s Office, Regional Administration and Local Government stated that *“Last year [2019] or early this year [2020], we had training with local government officials who work at council level to teach them on the different types of online abuse and how to help. We’ve started at least in three regions only and we have 26 regions and 184 councils. The training was for those councils that are supported by UNICEF.”* (RA1-TZ-01-A) In addition, a representative of the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups

confirmed that some officers in the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups have received training on OCSEA. (For training of law enforcement officers, see [chapter 3.2.3](#)).

**Cross-border cooperation:** Tanzania is working towards mutual legal assistance agreements with other countries, according to the Secretary of the Anti-Human Trafficking Secretariat in Dodoma, *“because these [online] crimes are (...) spreading so quickly, the government through its defence and security agencies is working to see where the problem occurs most frequently so that we can have these extradition agreements.”* (RA1-TZ-10-A) This is important in regard to OCSEA as the Cybercrimes Act extends the jurisdiction of the courts to offences punishable under the Act committed by nationals of Tanzania outside the territory of Tanzania.<sup>138</sup>

**Membership of the WePROTECT Global Alliance:** In March 2019, Tanzania officially became a member of the WePROTECT Global Alliance to End Online Child Sexual Exploitation.

### Challenges

**Lack of policies on OCSEA:** A university lecturer and member of the National Child Online Safety Task Force argued that the government has not yet formulated child online protection policies that guide different agencies on how to address emerging risks: *“Though children are already in the online world, the government is not yet prepared on how to handle it. There are no clear policies [on addressing child online protection] so far. Where there is no clear policy, it becomes a challenge for the government to work together.”* (RA1-TZ-09-A)

**Lack of evidence on OCSEA:** At least half of the government representatives interviewed emphasised the need for evidence on OCSEA that will support the government in formulating evidence-based interventions for Tanzania. *“So far the biggest challenge I would say is evidence,”* said one interviewee. *“We know there is tons of information about online child sexual exploitation and abuse already, but what we have is from other countries. So, for us to develop programmes, the government looks at what [evidence] is in Tanzania, and that’s where we fall short of information. It becomes very difficult to know what to plan for.”* (RA1-TZ-11-A)

138. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 30(1)(d).

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The issue of data has been discussed within the Task Force, according to the official from the Health, Social Welfare and Nutrition Department, President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government: *"We have seen that these things are happening and wanted to find ways of addressing them as a country. It was [however], understood that there is a need to have something that would provide us with data. Right now, we don't have baseline data."* (RA1-TZ-01-A)

It is hoped that *Disrupting Harm* can go a long way in filling this gap. At the same time, law enforcement data on CSEA already exists, although it needs to be disaggregated, which may depend on improving the knowledge of police officers and court professionals about OCSEA. The existing district level case management system, which is managed by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups, can also be used to generate data on OCSEA by adding indicators for types of abuse: As the Coordinator explained: *"In this system, we report violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation cases and cases of children in contact with the law. There are several indicators that we analyse on the different types of abuse, however, online child abuse still hasn't been included."* (RA1-TZ-01-A)

**Limited technical capacity:** At least seven of the nine government representatives interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* considered the limited technical knowledge of mandated government agencies on OCSEA a major challenge.

Although the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority provided a few sessions of capacity building for government agencies when the National Child Online Safety Task Force on OCSEA was being formed, most capacity building has been done with UNICEF support. A child protection specialist from UNICEF Tanzania said that progress was limited by frequent transfers of Task Force representatives from the mandated government agencies: *"in almost all ministries, you receive one or two people, and then you start building their capacity on online child sexual exploitation and they are active in the Task Force and then once you have reached a certain level with that individual, they are moved to another ministry or department. So, you get a new person... and you have to start [training] from scratch."* (RA1-TZ-11-A)

**Financial resources:** There was a consensus among the government representatives interviewed that those financial limitations are a challenge in addressing OCSEA in Tanzania: *"I would say the main challenge is the budget. Usually, there is a limited budget allocated to this issue [OCSEA] so even when there are training opportunities, only a few people can participate. It would be better if there was a specific budget set aside because at the moment even that little budget comes from [external to government] stakeholders,"* explained one respondent. (RA1-TZ-07-A)

So far, government agencies have had to heavily rely on the limited funding of non-government partners to undertake OCSEA-related programmes. The only ministry that confirmed having a budget for OCSEA in the financial year running from July 2020 to June 2021 was the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups. The amount of the budget was not stated.

A representative of the Ministry commented: *"There are stakeholders that we work with who help us in things like preparing messages, to hold training of trainers and various initiatives that are being done. So, we work closely with stakeholders like UNICEF and C-SEMA. When it comes to having a budget, maybe the budget for the coming year, 2020/21. That's the one that at least has activities that address online child abuse. There are different activities including the National Child Online Safety Task Force meetings. There are many [activities] because we have a national action plan to address OCSEA so there are several activities that we are supposed to implement in collaboration with different stakeholders."* (RA1-TZ-04-A)

**Gaps in legislation:** As detailed in the '[Overview of legislation and policy](#)' chapter at the beginning of the report, and in [chapter 2.2.2](#) with respect to CSAM and live-streaming of child sexual abuse, not all OCSEA are captured in the law in either Mainland Tanzania or Zanzibar.

Together with legislative amendments, the Child Protection Officer from the Ministry of Labour, Empowerment, Elders, Women and Children in Zanzibar argued that: *"There should also be regulations that guide us on what we should do when we get such cases; what actions do we take against people who post these children online or*

## 3.5 COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

*what can we do about children who post. So, they may record anything and post it and therefore these regulations need to guide us on how to handle a case when it is a child that has committed the offence and when it is an adult. I think this would help.*" (RA1-TZ-13-A)

**Lack of OCSEA-related initiatives in Zanzibar:** The Child Protection Officer from the Ministry of Labour, who was the only government representative in Zanzibar who was interviewed, stated that there are no initiatives to create awareness on OCSEA or child online protection in Zanzibar. In her opinion, the government of Zanzibar has not yet realised that OCSEA is a problem that needs to be addressed: *"We have focused on violence and abuse of children in general. We don't have programmes that specifically address online abuse. It's like we have forgotten this aspect. (...) If we at least realised that this is a problem that is already affecting many children, we would start deliberating on how to tackle this issue. (...) And it's not that OCSEA doesn't happen; it does."* (RA1-TZ-13-A)

### 3.5.2 Civil society

Civil society organisations play a part in responding to OCSEA. *"We collaborate with NGOs in different ways to provide services to children who are victims [of sexual exploitation and abuse],"* explained a government social support worker, *"The government does not have enough homes so if a child needs to be removed from one place and needs to be given a place to stay, NGOs help us give [these children] a place to stay."* (RA4-TZ-12-A-justice)

Civil society organisations are also involved in awareness-raising activities and training the child protection workforce. In the words of a police officer, *"There are awareness-raising initiatives on OCSEA in some regions. It is usually a collaboration between actors like the police, from the Ministry of Health [now the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups] and different NGOs."* (RA1-TZ-07-A)

The local and international civil society organisations and UN agencies working specifically to address OCSEA issues in Tanzania include the UNICEF Tanzania Country Office, C-SEMA (which runs the

child helpline) and Kiota Women's Health and Development – KIWOHEDE.

One of the justice professionals interviewed noted that the coverage of civil society activities is limited as *"Most NGOs are in Dar es Salaam."* (RA4-J-TZ-04-A) In addition, these organisations may not be focused solely or mainly on OCSEA. In Zanzibar, for example, the Child Protection Officer from the Ministry of Labour explained that *"NGOs exist and we work in collaboration with them, and when they create awareness, they create awareness in general on the types of abuse, how children are abused, reasons for abuse including online abuse through phones – that children may see things on the phone that they want to try and sometimes they record themselves. So, they are mentioned as a by-the-way but it is not the main focus."* (RA1-TZ-13-A)

According to one frontline worker, the efforts and resources of NGOs alone are not enough: *"There are more areas to working against sexual exploitation. Government should cooperate with private industry and NGOs to combat online sexual exploitation against children in Tanzania."* (RA3-TZ-36-A)

When asked to assess the collaboration on OCSEA among non-government organisations, 34% of frontline workers said it was 'good', 30% 'fair' and 20% 'excellent'

### 3.5.3 Internet service providers and platforms

#### Domestic internet service providers

**Evidence gathering:** When law enforcement authorities need evidence from a domestic internet service provider – for example, to identify who was using a particular IP address or phone number at the time an offence was committed – they may issue an order to any person in possession of such data compelling him/her to disclose such data. If the data is not forthcoming, law enforcement authorities may apply to the court for an order compelling the service provider to "submit subscriber information in relation to such services in that service provider's possession or control."<sup>139</sup> They can then use the subscriber information to locate and apprehend the suspect and to submit as evidence in court.<sup>140</sup>

139. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). *The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015*, Sections 31– 35.

140. This approach however ignores challenges posed by carrier grade Network Address Translation, a process by which rapidly exhausted IPv4 addresses have been assigned by ISPs to multiple users at the same time, thereby precluding definitive identification of the device and user behind an IP address in certain cases.

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The Cybercrimes Act lays down the procedures for the retention and preservation of digital evidence, including disclosure and collection of content and traffic data when there is a reasonable ground to suspect such content is required for the purposes of an investigation.<sup>141</sup> As there is no specific provision for the handling of CSAM, the onus is on the law enforcement authorities to ensure that their processing and retention of CSAM conforms with the principle of the best interests of the child. (RA8-TZ)

None of the respondents interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* commented on the efficacy of laws and procedures in gathering evidence from domestic service providers.

**Removing/reporting CSAM:** The Cybercrimes Act imposes legal duties on internet service providers to remove illegal information/activity from their systems, suspend or terminate services related to the illegal information/activity and report to law enforcement sharing relevant facts including the identity of the person/s who have conducted the illegal activity or shared the illegal information.<sup>142</sup> The term “service provider” includes persons or parties who provide information system services to third parties.<sup>143</sup> Similar duties are imposed on hosting providers,<sup>144</sup> caching providers<sup>145</sup> and hyperlink providers.<sup>146,147</sup> The legal duties imposed on the different types of providers also apply in relation to CSAM.

Furthermore, the Cybercrimes Act creates an obligation for internet service providers to act on a take-down notification submitted by any person.<sup>148</sup> Failure to do so would make the service provider guilty of the offence that forms the basis of such notification (e.g., the distribution of CSAM).<sup>149</sup>

The Electronic and Postal Communications (Online Content) Regulations of 2020 impose further obligations on online content service providers in relation to prohibited online content,<sup>150</sup> including pornography in general and CSAM specifically.<sup>151</sup> *Inter alia*, the Regulations require online content service providers to filter and remove prohibited content at the request of the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority.<sup>152</sup> The Regulations also impose similar obligations on cyber cafes by establishing that those operating the cafes should put in place mechanisms to filter access to prohibited content.<sup>153,154</sup> However, cyber cafe owners or operators are not obliged to report OCSEA.

When the data for *Disrupting Harm* was collected, no representative from the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority was available for interview with the research team, so it was not possible to establish how effective the take-down procedure is in Tanzania, or how far internet service providers comply with the law.

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141. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Sections 31– 35.

142. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 39(4).

143. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

144. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 41;

A hosting provider is “a person who provides an electronic data transmission service by storing information provided by a user of the service”

Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

145. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 42;

A caching provider is “a person who provides an electronic data transmission service by automatic, intermediate or temporary storing information, for the purpose of making more efficient the information’s onward transmission to other users of the service upon their request”. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

146. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 43; The Cybercrime Act does not define who a hyperlink provider is. However, it defines the term ‘hyperlink’ as “a symbol, word, phrase, sentence or image that contains path to another source that points to and causes to display another document when executed”. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 3.

147. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 13.

148. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 45.

149. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 45.

150. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2020). [The Electronic and Postal Communications \(Online Content\) Regulations](#), Regulation 9.

151. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2020). [The Electronic and Postal Communications \(Online Content\) Regulations](#), Third Schedule.

152. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2020). [The Electronic and Postal Communications \(Online Content\) Regulations](#), Regulation 9.

153. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2020). [The Electronic and Postal Communications \(Online Content\) Regulations](#), Regulation 13.

154. Prohibitive content is described in: Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2020). [The Electronic and Postal Communications \(Online Content\) Regulations](#), Regulation 13. as: (a) content that motivates, promotes or facilitates publishing or exchanging child pornography, actual pornography, explicit sex acts, nudity and vice, save for related scenes approved by the body responsible for film classification and certification; (b) content that depicts, motivates, promotes or facilitates publishing or exchanging of homosexuality, adultery, prostitution, sex crimes, rape or attempted rape and statutory rape, or bestiality; (c) content that motivates, supports or promotes practices or trading of sexual or immoral goods such as movies, photos, drawings, books, stories, sexual games, toys and related things.

## 3.5 COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

None of the law enforcement officers interviewed suggested that internet service providers had failed to notify them of any illegal activity or to provide them with information on OCSEA as foreseen under the Cybercrime Act.<sup>155</sup> However, the research was also unable to determine the extent of any proactive monitoring on this issue. The respondent from the Police Gender and Children Desks merely indicated that internet service providers collaborate with the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority: *“Internet service providers often collaborate with the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority because their mandate falls under the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority, so if any issues of OCSEA arise, the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority would write them letters requiring them to handle these issues.”* (RA1-TZ-07-A)

### Global platforms

**Evidence gathering:** If a report is made to the Tanzanian police about OCSEA on a global platform, such as Facebook, a request is made to the platform to obtain subscriber information and IP data. Once the IP is known, the police then follow the domestic internet service provider request process to resolve the IP data and confirm the identity, location and other details of the suspect.

Global platforms cannot be compelled to disclose information by Tanzanian court orders or Tanzanian authorities since they are governed by the domestic laws in their own countries – in the case of the United States, the Stored Communications Act and Electronic Communication Privacy Act. U.S. law expressly prohibits the disclosure of communications content such as messages and images directly to non-U.S. law enforcement authorities.

However, U.S. tech platforms may voluntarily disclose non-content data, which includes subscriber data and IP logs needed for conducting investigations, to foreign authorities.

If the Tanzanian police need to obtain information on content hosted outside of Tanzania but not on a U.S. tech platform (e.g.: on a website), the request would rely on the existence of a mutual legal assistance arrangement with the government in question.

None of the respondents interviewed for *Disrupting Harm* commented on the procedures of gathering evidence from global platforms.

**Removing/reporting CSAM:** With respect to removing/reporting CSAM, there are rarely any formal agreements between national law enforcement agencies and global platforms. The platforms would prefer to view requests from government partners as notifications of potential violations of their own terms of service. Since CSAM is contrary to the platforms’ terms of service and U.S. law, it would be in the companies’ interests to remove such content.

### Transparency data

The annual transparency reports of major social media platforms provide statistics on the number of requests for user data and content removal from each country’s government authorities. While none of the major platforms list the numbers of requests specifically related to OCSEA, their transparency data gives an indication of the extent to which the law enforcement agencies of various countries are engaged in direct cooperation with large global platforms.<sup>156</sup>

- A review of transparency reports for 2017, 2018 and 2019 indicate that the authorities in Tanzania made:
- a total of two requests for Facebook user data;
- one request to Google for removal of defamatory content;
- no other requests to the global platforms sampled.

These figures suggest that the Tanzanian law enforcement agencies did not regularly engage in cross-border electronic evidence gathering or information sharing in 2017–2019.

155. Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. (2015). [The Cybercrimes Act No. 14 of 2015](#), Section 39(4).

156. Platforms were selected on the basis of high volumes of reports to the NCMEC (10,000+), availability of transparency reporting and known popularity in *Disrupting Harm* focus countries. In addition to U.S.-based companies, transparency reports for LINE and TikTok were also reviewed.

# 4. HOW TO DISRUPT HARM IN TANZANIA

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Disrupting harm from online child sexual exploitation and abuse requires comprehensive and sustained actions from us all – families, communities, government duty-bearers, law enforcement agencies, justice and social support service professionals, and the technology and communications industry. While children are part of the solution, the harm caused by OCSEA obliges adults to act to protect them; we must be careful not to put the onus on children.

The recommended actions below are clustered under five key insights from the *Disrupting Harm* data and sign-posted for different stakeholder groups. However, all these recommendations are interlinked and are most effective if implemented together.

## 4. HOW TO DISRUPT HARM IN TANZANIA

### INSIGHT 1

**In the past year alone, 4% of internet-users aged 12-17 in Tanzania were victims of grave instances of online sexual exploitation and abuse. This includes being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, someone else sharing their sexual images without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. Scaled to the population, this represents an estimated 200,000 children who were subjected to any of these harms in the span of just one year.**

#### Government

##### **1.1 Leverage existing awareness raising initiative to include child sexual exploitation and abuse and how digital technology might play a role.**

Existing national programmes and awareness raising initiatives that can be leveraged for OCSEA include:

- The violence prevention activities taking place under the Regional Communication Strategies to End Violence against Women and Children. These are currently being implemented in five regions through activities such as community theatre, community radio programmes and education to religious leaders on prevention of violence against women and children.
- Parenting programmes: the Tanzanian government in collaboration with UNICEF Tanzania country office has developed and is implementing parenting programmes, guidelines and national parenting frameworks in line with thematic area 4 – parenting, family support and relationships – in the National Plan of Action to End Violence against Women and Children (NPAVAWC 2017/18– 2021/22).<sup>157</sup>

There are several plans and frameworks under development which should include an OCSEA-awareness and prevention element:

- The National Plans of Action to End Violence against Women and Children (NPA-VAWC) in Mainland and Zanzibar. The first NPA-VAWC's 2017/18–2021/22 are currently being evaluated and second plans will soon be developed.
- The National Life Skills Framework (currently under development by the Government) and life skills programming, including interventions like the UNICEF-supported Integrated Programme for Out of School Adolescents centres and the Sara Radio programme.
- The National In-Service Teacher Training Package on Life Skills, which is currently being drafted by the Government.

To avoid messaging that is adult-centric and based on general perceptions or anecdotes, these programmes and messages must be evidence-based. Programmes should be developed (or adapted) and tested through consultations with children and caregivers, to reflect their perspectives of online risks and the techniques used to keep children safe.

*Disrupting Harm* findings in Tanzania suggest that key objectives of such programmes should be to:

- Equip caregivers with the knowledge and skills to foster safe and ongoing communication with children about their lives online (see *Start the chat*<sup>158</sup> for an example), including through existing parenting education programmes.
- Encourage open discussions about sex and sexuality between children and trusted adults (caregivers, educators) so that shame and embarrassment does not deter them from seeking help in case of sexual exploitation.
- Inform children, in age-appropriate terms, about the risks of harm through existing school-based violence prevention programmes and life skills interventions. For example, not only emphasising the risks of 'stranger danger' but also acknowledging that offenders could be known to the child. While these subjects may be uncomfortable to discuss, without proper awareness children are vulnerable to these kinds of abuses.

157. Government of United Republic of Tanzania. (2016). [National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children \(NPAVAWC 2017/18 – 2021/22\)](#), 45.

158. See: The Australian eSafety Commissioner's programme '[Start the Chat](#)' to encourage caregivers to talk with their children about their lives online.

- Support caregivers, many of whom have never used the internet, in going online and becoming more familiar with the platforms that children are using (see *Be Connected*<sup>159</sup> for an example).
- Strengthen children's digital literacy to provide them with the skills and understanding needed to avoid or navigate dangerous situations online. This could include lessons about how to block an individual and report inappropriate content or requests. Furthermore, establishing children's knowledge on the risks inherent to online interaction and the exchange of personal information, images and videos.

The suggested government bodies<sup>160</sup> that could lead in implementing this recommendation are the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government with technical leads from the Children's Department of Social Welfare. Implementation of these awareness programmes (see recommendation 1.2) should occur in partnership with civil society organisations and NGOs.

### **1.2 In addition to creating evidence-based messaging around OCSEA, dissemination should be universal, and reach multiple stakeholders.**

Caregivers of internet-using children in Tanzania are unlikely to have used the internet themselves. However, they are likely to get information on how to keep their child safe online from the radio or television. Disseminating awareness messages for caregivers could target those media and should be strategically planned to ensure they are effective. Existing dissemination techniques, including WhatsApp chatbots which were developed by WHO to disseminate information about COVID-19 could also be adapted to spread awareness of OCSEA and preventative measures to the public.<sup>161</sup>

Additionally, incorporate education about OCSEA, and how certain crimes against children can be facilitated through digital technologies, into comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education in schools as well as in life skills programmes targeting both in school and out of school children.

As caregivers in Tanzania are not always familiar with the digital space, schools can play an important part in supporting caregivers and teaching children how to safely navigate online interactions. The suggested body that could lead in coordinating government efforts around this recommendation is the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government with technical support from the Ministry of Education (technical lead on education awareness) and the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups (technical lead to ensure inclusion of out-of-school children).

### **1.3 Age-appropriate education and awareness raising approaches need to reach all children.**

Inclusivity is crucial in disseminating these messages. The youngest respondents, aged 12-13, were consistently the least likely to recognise the risks associated with potentially harmful online activities. Although it might be uncomfortable to discuss these issues with children, the data suggests that younger children should also be targeted in these awareness efforts. Special care should also be taken to ensure that information is communicated to children whose situation may increase their vulnerability to OCSEA, including children with disabilities, migrant children, children living on the street, and out of school children. Make sure the awareness-raising initiatives are held in both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar, and in both urban and rural areas.

### **Caregivers, teachers, medical staff and social support services**

**1.4 Caregivers and duty bearers should learn about what children are doing online and offline, and improve their understanding of digital platforms and technologies.** Around sixty percent of Tanzanian caregivers of internet-using children have never been online. Being involved and supportive of a child's internet use can help duty bearers in identifying the risks and benefits of being online. This kind of supportive involvement also paves the way for open dialogue between children and adults when children face dangers or harm online.

159. See: eSafety Commissioner's programme: '[Be Connected](#)'.

160. The recommendations for the leading organisations and bodies are based on discussions with over 30 participants - from government, law enforcement, CSOs, and NGOs - at the national consultation for the *Disrupting Harm in Tanzania* report.

161. WHO. (n.d.) [Creating new tools and channels to amplify health messages](#).

## 4. HOW TO DISRUPT HARM IN TANZANIA

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### INSIGHT 2

**According to the household survey, offenders of OCSEA are most often people already known to the child. These are friends or acquaintances of the child (both peers and adults) but also romantic partners and family members. However, OCSEA is also committed by people unknown to the child. These crimes happen while children spend time online or in person but involving technology.**

#### Government

**2.1 When children do not know about sex, it enables offenders to take advantage. We must ensure that knowledge reaches all children.** This should include information about sex, consent, personal boundaries, what adults or others around children can or cannot do to them, risks and responsibilities when taking, sending and receiving sexual images, and how to say no to others. This information can be incorporated into comprehensive age-appropriate sexuality education in schools – as well as in life skills programmes targeting both in school and out of school children.

This will help children to identify risky or inappropriate interactions both online and in person. There are existing reports<sup>162</sup> and initiatives<sup>163</sup> as good starting points and best practice examples of age-appropriate resource material.<sup>164</sup>

The suggested body that could lead in coordinating government efforts around this recommendation is the President's Office with technical support from the Ministry of Education (technical lead on education awareness) and the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups (technical lead to ensure inclusion of out-of-school children). These programmes can be supported by non-government and international organisations such as C-SEMA and UNICEF.

#### Caregivers, teachers, medical staff, and social support workers

**2.2 Like schools, caregivers can inform children about their right to be protected from all forms of physical, sexual and emotional abuse,** and engage them in conversations about reproductive sexual health and rights, consent, personal boundaries, what adults or others around them can or cannot do to them, risks and responsibilities when taking, sending and receiving sexual images, and how to say no to others. Guidance could be given to caregivers and teachers on how to counsel children regarding harmful content online.

**2.3 Ensure that awareness raising interventions highlight that sexual exploitation and abuse is often committed by people known to children.** Be vigilant about the people who children interact with, talk with them and monitor interactions with adults for appropriateness. Remember that not all threats come from strangers on the internet.

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162. UNFPA. (2021). [My Body is My Own](#).

163. UNGEI. (2020). [Bodily autonomy and SRHR](#).

164. NSPCC. (2017). [Talk PANTS with Pantosaurus and his PANTS song #TalkPANTS - YouTube](#).

## INSIGHT 3

**Among children who experienced OCSEA through social media, Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp were the most common platforms where this occurred.**

### Government

**3.1 Collaborate with internet service providers and impose legal duties on them** to comply promptly with law enforcement requests for information, to retain data for a minimal period, and to filter, block and/or take down CSAM. This will assist investigations into crimes as well as control the wide distribution of CSAM.

**3.2 Impose legal duties on internet service providers** to retain data for a set minimum period and to filter and/or block and/or take down CSAM as well as to comply promptly with law enforcement requests for information. This will assist investigations into crimes as well as controlling the wide distribution of child sexual abuse material. The suggested government bodies that could lead in implementing this recommendation are the Ministry of Home Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology.

### Law enforcement

**3.3 Improve law enforcement officers' abilities to flag/refer cases of OCSEA to global online platforms and to report content hosted outside of the country** – e.g., on a website. Training should be provided to the specialised dedicated unit or officers (or in the absence of these, dedicated staff within the Cybercrime unit) on how to engage with the most commonly reported platforms, and where to make reports and flag suspected instances of OCSEA.

### Industry

**3.4 Make formal reporting mechanisms within platforms clear and accessible to children** and detail in child-friendly terms what the process looks like after children submit a report. Platforms and service providers must respond rapidly to reports made by children and demonstrate transparency and accountability. Platforms should work proactively to prevent sexual content from appearing on children's feeds and where relevant adhere to government regulations on how to do so.

**3.5 Internet service providers should comply with regulations to filter and remove CSAM.** Enforcing this action is vital in keeping children safe online.

### **Disrupting Harm alignment with the Model National Response**

Many countries, companies and organisations have joined the WePROTECT Global Alliance to prevent and respond to online child sexual exploitation and abuse. As a member of the Global Alliance, Tanzania can use the [Model National Response to Preventing and Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse](#)<sup>165</sup> to help organise its response to OCSEA. The Model is a valuable tool for governments to organise and improve the level of their response.

Most of the recommendations in this report align with the 21 'capabilities' articulated in the Model

National Response, but *Disrupting Harm* identifies priority areas for interventions specifically targeted to the situation in Tanzania, based on the research findings. The evidence from Tanzania shows that even though some of the capabilities in the Model National Response exist, they are not functioning optimally.

The recommendations primarily address legislation,<sup>166</sup> dedicated law enforcement,<sup>167</sup> judiciary and prosecutors,<sup>168</sup> and education programmes.<sup>169</sup> All recommendations are practical, evidence-based and actionable.

165. WeProtect Global Alliance. (2016). [Preventing and Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: A model national response](#).

166. Model National Response #3.

167. Model National Response #4.

168. Model National Response #5.

169. Model National Response #13.

## 4. HOW TO DISRUPT HARM IN TANZANIA

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### INSIGHT 4

**Children who are subjected to OCSEA are most likely to disclose this to people they know in person, especially their friends. Children are very unlikely to rely on formal reporting mechanisms like helplines or the police.**

#### Government

**4.1 Increase the public's awareness of hotlines and helplines (e.g., the National Child Helpline) as reporting and help-seeking mechanisms for OCSEA.** Raise awareness among children – in child-friendly and age-appropriate terms – that these are safe ways for them to disclose difficult experiences. Explain to children how reports can be filed and what to expect next.

An important prerequisite is that helplines are adequately resourced and trained to provide good quality care and support. Even if children are made aware of helplines, if initial responses to disclosure and help-seeking are poor, the child – and others observing the case – will be much less likely to seek help again. The suggested government body that could lead in implementing this recommendation is the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government with technical support from the members of the National Child Online Safety Taskforce chaired by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups, including the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority.

**4.2 Leverage the fact that children rely on their interpersonal networks to disclose abuse by creating more community-level mechanisms for disclosure and reporting.** For example, create programmes in which trained community leaders can assist children and their families with the reporting and help-seeking process.

**4.3 Invest in improving the capacity of the social service workforce.** Improve the capacity of frontline staff in contact with children to better identify children at risk or that have experienced OCSEA and to adequately respond to disclosures of violence, including OCSEA. This should include teachers/pastoral care staff in schools as well as health workers, in addition to all those providing psychosocial support. Responses to disclosures of OCSEA should always convey that it is never the child's fault, whatever choices they have made. It is always the fault of the person abusing or exploiting the child. The research shows that children subjected to OCSEA often blame themselves and feel that they had let their caregivers and others down, or were judged by the police. Responses should be without judgement or punishment. For example, see guidelines on first-line response to child maltreatment.

#### Law enforcement

**4.4 Strengthen existing reporting processes** for cases of OCSEA and facilitate widespread training for all police and other duty-bearers to ensure that children and families are comfortable about reporting instances of abuse. Ensure that child-friendly procedures are implemented whenever children are involved as victims through the wider dissemination of training, guidance and good practices and the provision of the necessary resources. See for example the Barnahus model.<sup>170</sup>

#### Caregivers, teachers, medical staff, and social support workers

**4.5 Ensure that existing violence prevention programmes both in and out of school help children, caregivers, teachers and those working with children understand the full extent of the risks of sharing sexual content and how to engage in harm minimisation to limit possible negative repercussions.** Most children who shared sexual content did so because they were in love or trusted the other person, but this behaviour can lead to serious harm, such as non-consensual sharing of the content with others and sexual extortion.

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170. The [Barnahus model](#) is a standard practice for providing child victims and witnesses of violence rapid access to justice and care.

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## INSIGHT 5

**While good building blocks are already in place – an interagency working group and a fledgling child protection system that can be harnessed to address OCSEA – there remain gaps in the awareness, capacity and resources of the law enforcement, justice and social support systems that should be addressed.**

### Government

**5.1 Urgently invest in the training** of police officers, public prosecutors, judges/magistrates, lawyers, social welfare officers and other courtroom staff, child protection officers and frontline workers on what OCSEA is and how to address it within their respective professions.

Inform them about the linkages between online and in-person forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse and the provisions of law that can be used to bring charges in cases of abuse in the online environment.

Continue the training efforts aimed at informing local government officials working at the council level about OCSEA, and expand them to all 26 regions.

Address child protection issues including OCSEA in basic training and provide specialist training across various professions. Provide both initial and refresher training. Build on the existing training manuals and curricula in the country and use information from initiatives such as the ACT to EVAC programme implemented by C-SEMA, Child Helpline International and the International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children or the Lawyers Without Borders training programme.

**5.2 The mandated government agencies should budget** for their agency-specific interventions related to OCSEA instead of relying on the limited funding of non-government partners.

**5.3 ‘Online’ and ‘offline’ CSEA are increasingly entwined.** Use the existing child protection structures to incorporate the online element, rather than establishing new ones to tackle OCSEA.

**5.4 Support the Tanzanian Police** build capacity of both female and male personnel in delivering child-friendly support. Assign budgets to provide them with the necessary physical working spaces and equipment.

These services should not be concentrated in major cities only. Increase the expertise, resources and staff of the Police Gender and Children’s Desks to ensure a presence in more wards within both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar.

Strengthen the links between the Police Gender and Children Desks and local government authorities. Make sure that officers trained in handling OCSEA cases are not transferred to other units without a suitable replacement and necessary hand-over procedures to avoid loss of knowledge due to staff turnover.

**5.5 Ensure that the arrangements for child-friendly justice envisaged in the Law of the Child Act R.E 2019 are implemented consistently** in all cases of child sexual exploitation and abuse crimes, including those with online elements. This will require financial resources, operating procedures and training.

**5.6 While the creation of the National Child Online Safety Task Force constitutes an important step towards addressing OCSEA in Tanzania, allocate resources to ensure that the strategies developed are evidence-based, monitored, evaluated and adjusted as needed.**

Continue with the initiatives taken (such as those initiated by the Tanzania Communication Regulatory Authority) to build the capacities of the various mandated agencies on their specific roles in addressing OCSEA according to the plan of action developed. **Enhance the collaboration between the Mainland National Child Online Safety Task Force and Zanzibar.** Avoid transfers of Task Force representatives from the mandated government agencies without a suitable replacement.

**5.7 Support juvenile courts to be child-friendly** by training all court personnel including magistrates, prosecutors, police, legal aid officers and social welfare officers on the (existing) child friendly court procedures and proper management of children’s cases, and by also improving the court premises to make them child friendly spaces. Refresher trainings should also be undertaken on a regular basis.

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**5.8 Courts should provide transport to caregivers of child victims who cannot afford to accompany their children to court.** Currently, transport support is only available for the child victims when they appear in court as witnesses.

**5.9 Scale up the guardian *ad litem* scheme** services so as to ensure that victims of OCSEA have the support they need in court especially when a social welfare officer is not present or when a child has no legal representation.

**5.10 Facilitate access to legal aid support to victims of OCSEA** through existing government legal aid structures and legal aid programmes run by non-government stakeholders where available. This will increase the accessibility of legal support to victims of OCSEA by reducing the distance they have to travel to a legal aid centre.

**5.11 Ensure social welfare services are available for all victims of OCSEA and child victims of other forms of child abuse,** including those at ward and village levels, and not just in the urban areas. This can be done by strengthening the existing protection committees at all levels and recruiting more social welfare officers at these ward and village levels as data indicates that there are fewer government officers at these levels. Additionally, the government, with support from partners, has trained staff in health facilities in selected districts on clinical management of gender-based violence. This should be extended to all health facilities as this will bring the services closer to children.

**5.12 Use the established District level Case Management system** to collect data on OCSEA. That could be done by adding OCSEA indicators to the system when selecting the type of abuse. This data collection can be coordinated by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups through C-SEMA. These data should be combined with law enforcement data to allow for a more comprehensive evidence base on OCSEA cases in Tanzania (see recommendation 4.14).

### Law enforcement

**5.13 Train all police officers and prosecutors,** especially at the regional or local Government levels, about the linkages between online and in-person forms of child sexual exploitation and abuse as part of existing trainings on child protection. Inform them about the legal provisions that can be used to bring charges in cases of abuse in the online environment. This information should be used in both pre- and in-service training.

**5.14 Recruit and train specialised officers within existing law enforcement units** (Cybercrime Unit and Police Gender and Children Desks) to investigate OCSEA cases. This should be composed of officers with experience of both online and offline crimes against children. This should be implemented at the national and regional levels.

**5.15 Improve data collection and the monitoring of OCSEA cases** by the Police Gender and Children Desks. Systematic recording and classification of cases will help in developing evidence-based prevention and response mechanisms to OCSEA.

Since mechanisms to collect data on child abuse and violence appear to exist in Tanzania, which is a positive finding and rare in the region, the law enforcement authorities could consider incorporating OCSEA indicators into the existing data collection mechanisms, and training staff to recognise, interpret and record them. Steps should be taken to prevent the duplication of OCSEA indicators, and high-volume referrals such as NCMEC CyberTipline reports should be monitored carefully and counted accurately.

**5.16 Disseminate the Police Standard Operating Procedures to all police officers and monitor its implementation.** These procedures are already included in the standardised training packages on the prevention of gender-based violence and violence against children. They include modules on how to interview children during the criminal justice process. This will prevent children from being interviewed repeatedly, which can feel like a form of secondary victimisation. Investigators could record the interviews and share a copy of the interview with the prosecutor and the court instead of arranging multiple interviews.

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**5.17 Make sure to clearly explain to child victims of OCSEA what they can expect from the criminal justice procedures,** explain their rights and those of their caregivers, including their right to receive compensation. This will enable child victims to make informed decisions as well as familiarise them with the upcoming procedures. Disrupting Harm findings show that children were not always informed about the justice procedures and their rights.

**5.18 Consider connecting to INTERPOL's ICSE database. Establish a national CSAM image database.**

**5.19 Support the development of the electronic case management system for law enforcement.**

The current paper-based law enforcement case management system limits the ability of law enforcement authorities to connect data and monitor trends in offending. Invest in tools and training so that data extraction and analysis does not have to be done manually by the police Statistics Unit. This would require stable and reliable internet connections.

**5.20 Provide an effective mechanism and adequate resources to ensure that international OCSEA referrals** including NCMEC CyberTips are subject to an appropriate level of investigation, with a view to minimising ongoing harm to children.

**5.21 Increase the number of online patrols** in the Cybercrime Department to identify CSAM.

**5.22 Invest in additional equipment** such as computers, laptops, mobile phones, printers and scanners as well as 'live' forensic tools that perform analysis on active systems and tools to detect, triage and analyse CSAM. Hardware is currently shared among a large number of officers, reducing capacity for OCSEA investigations. Train officers on how to use the tools already acquired to conduct computer and mobile forensic examinations, and equip them with tools for online investigation. Improve the internet speed in the investigative units.

**5.23 Provide psychological support** to all officers working with CSAM and victims of OCSEA. This may include other professions such as probation officers, prosecutors, magistrates, lawyers, social workers and mental health professionals.

The suggested government bodies that could lead in implementing the recommendations for law enforcers include the Ministry of Home Affairs as well as members of the National Child Online Safety Task force chaired by the Ministry of Community Development, Gender, Women and Special Groups.

### **Justice professionals**

**5.24** Limit the duration of criminal court cases that include child victims by implementing existing rules on how cases of vulnerable groups including children should be handled. The rules provide that such cases must be processed and adjudicated without undue delays and this would therefore ensure child victims of OCSEA and their caregivers do not lose interest in pursuing justice.

**5.25 Make criminal justice professionals aware** of the availability of **legal support** for child victims of OCSEA through the Ministry of Legal and Constitutional Affairs and of the importance of referring victims to this service.

**5.26 Provide health facilities with police form number 3 (PF3 forms) in locations without one stop centres** so as to ease the process of accessing medical attention for child victims of violence. Currently, victims of violence have to go to police stations to first to get these forms without which, they do not receive medical attention.

### **Industry**

**5.27 Prioritise responding to data requests** in cases involving children to help reduce the duration of the investigation process. This could be done by having internet service providers appoint a law enforcement liaison officer to be responsible for handling any data requests from law enforcement to speed up the investigation and prosecution of OCSEA cases.

### INSIGHT 6

**Though existing legislation, policies and standards in Tanzania include provisions relevant to OCSEA, further legislative action is needed to criminalise all OCSEA-related acts.**

#### Government

**6.1 Accede to the Convention on Cyber Security and Personal Data Protection** adopted by the African Union in 2014. With respect to OCSEA, the Convention specifically includes CSAM.

**6.2 Amend legislation to bring it fully into line with the standards set by the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.** This Protocol is relevant to combating CSAM and other crimes related to the sexual exploitation of children.

**6.3 Consider amending legislation to conform to other international conventions** which offer good guidance for addressing OCSEA, such as the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) and Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention). These conventions provide useful measures of national legal frameworks related to OCSEA and are open for accession by states which are not members of the Council of Europe.

**6.4 Amend legislation to criminalise conduct related to CSAM more comprehensively.** The Cybercrimes Act is the most relevant piece of legislation on OCSEA in Tanzania. However, it does not include depictions of the sexual parts of a child's body for primarily sexual purposes and digitally generated CSAM including realistic images of non-existing children within its definition of CSAM. Nor does it criminalise the mere possession of CSAM (with no intent to distribute); currently, only the Zanzibar's Children's Act makes this an offence.

**6.5 Amend legislation to explicitly criminalise the live-streaming of child sexual abuse, sexual extortion committed in the online environment, and online grooming.** Consider consulting social media platforms including live-streaming platforms, internet service providers, and telecommunication companies in order to ensure all facets of these crimes are covered in the legislation.

**6.6 Remove the double criminality requirement** for the applicability of extraterritorial jurisdiction for crimes included in the Cybercrimes Act.

**6.7 Amend the existing policies** addressing child online protection to comprehensively cover OCSEA.

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