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| Contribution by the secretariat |
| UPDATE ON THE ITU CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION INITIATIVE AND THE COP GLOBAL PROGRAMME |
| **Purpose**This report is intended to provide an overview on the status of the COP Initiative and the implementation of the COP Guidelines.**Action required**The Council Working Group on Child Online Protection is invited **to note** this report.\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**References**[CWG-COP website](https://www.itu.int/en/council/cwg-cop/Pages/default.aspx); <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/COP.aspx> |

The Child Online Protection initiative aims to protect children from online risks and potential harm and empower them to fully benefit from online opportunities through research, in-country policy support, capacity building and technical tools.

ITU Child Online Protection serves as global leadership platform with a multi-stakeholder community with proven expertise and successful technical assistance record of more than 13 years on child online protection activities worldwide. Through a strong network of more than 80 knowledge partners from leading institutions active in the ICT and child rights sectors, the Child Online Protection initiative provides resources and tools that support children’s and their families’ digital skills development and provide support to industry and government stakeholders in the development of corporate and national child online protection strategies and frameworks allowing countries to provide a safer online environment for children.

**As part of** [**ITU’s global programme (2021-2024)**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/COP.aspx)**, between October 2023 and January 2024, the following activities were undertaken**:

**Capacity building**

* Conduction of Training of Trainers for Educators in Malawi.
* Conduction of training sessions for policymakers, ICT industries, and civil society in Morocco
* [Online trainings](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/Trainings.aspx): Publication of the ITU-UNICEF joint online self-paced training module focused on child rights and business in the digital environment for Industry.

**Child Participation**

* A child and youth advisory board was established to collaborate with ITU on child online protection.
* A testimonials video sharing the stories of three members was developed.
* A *PoP hackathon* was organized in October with young people from IE University and Generation Connect developing solutions for PoP: Protection through online Participation.

**The following results were achieved:**

* 200 additional parents, carers, and educators participated in training and capacity building activities (total of 1700 participants by end of 2023).
* Two additional countries benefited from Training of Trainers for Educators (total of five countries by end of 2023).
* Two offline capacity-building activities delivered to government stakeholders and ICT Industry with a total of 180 participants (total of 405 participants by end of 2023).

**Collaborating across sectors, the ITU COP Initiative took further actions:**

* **Online Safety for Girls**
	+ The Child online protection initiative collaborated with the Equals Partners (Ernst and Young, GSMA, Women's World Wide Web) to develop an online training course for women and girls aged 16-25 years old focusing on online safety.
	+ Five trainings were delivered face-to-face in Burundi (Bubanza rural area and the city of Bujumbura) and Ethiopia (Addis Abeba) to girls, boys, young women, teachers and practitioners on online safety, benefiting a total of 226 participants as part of a collaboration with the project Tech as a Driver of Women's Economic Opportunity in LDCs implemented by ITU and the Enhanced Integrated Framework.
	+ A total of 1,070 girls and young women were trained and certified through various EQUALS Tech4Girls workshops and mentoring cycles. The workshops emphasized the importance of Child Online Protection, incorporating a safety online for girls module developed in collaboration with the Child online protection initiative under the Digital Inclusion TP. The training sessions took place in multiple countries, including Australia, Belgium, Burundi, Commonwealth countries, France, Germany, Haiti, Italy, Lesotho, Mexico, Pakistan, the Caribbean, and the USA. This initiative aims to empower and ensure the digital safety of girls in diverse regions worldwide.
* [**Child Online Protection in Sports:**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/Sports.aspx)
	+ ITU in collaboration with SCORT Foundation published a [policy brief on Child Online Protection in Sports](https://www.itu.int/dms_pub/itu-s/opb/gen/S-GEN-COP.CHILD_PB-2022-PDF-E.pdf).
	+ Development and distribution of an [ITU/SCORT partnership](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=shared&v=_j3mDVaUsdw) video showing the impact of the joint initiative on young coaches using football to guide children towards safer digital experiences.
* [**“PoP: Protection through online participation”**](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/POP.aspx)
	+ Led by ITU and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children.
	+ Aims to provide insights and recommendations on the development, implementation, and improvement of online protection services.
	+ Global partners meeting was held in Madrid in November 2023 to discuss and formulate guidance.
	+ Evidence on the three different types of systems (Helplines and Official help services, Child- and Youth-led solutions, AI driven systems) has been acquired and is now accessible on a digital map.
	+ First guidance drafted and shared with partners for consideration and contribution.
* **Child and youth consultation and engagement**
	+ *PoP: Protection through online participation* disseminated a [global survey for children and young people](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Cybersecurity/Pages/COP/Surveys/Survey-en.aspx) through social media networks and trusted partners, including helplines, to assess how children and young people use the internet to stay safe and offer support to their peers online.
	+ Results show notable benefits of online support systems compared to offline support systems.
	+ A hackathon with youth was organised encouraging young participants to formulate innovative proposals in line with the initiative's objectives.
	+ ITU’s child and youth advisory group composed of 19 children from Albania, Columbia, Kenya Lebanon and Nepal between the ages of 9-17 years, contributed significantly to [ITU resource development for children](https://www.itu-cop-guidelines.com/children) related to child online protection. A video testimonial where three members tell their story with the ITU board, was developed.

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