

Child Online Protection: The Situation in Nigeria

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Tree Foundation at the
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Protection (COP) Africa Forum

Country Information

- 44% of the population consist of children under the age of 15
- As of December 2018, there were 172.4 million telecom subscribers in Nigeria
- *87% penetration rate*
- 30% broadband penetration rate
- Over 115 million internet users
- 33 million Facebook users

Available Research

- There is a research gap. However, we conducted our in-house research and surveyed over 3000 children in 2016-2017
- Found high internet access and smartphone ownership among respondents. Nine in ten children.
- They overwhelmingly use the internet for academics, entertainment and socialization

Research

- At least, 6 out of 10 girls surveyed have seen pornography online, without looking for it.
- 1 in 4 girls have intentionally visited a pornographic website or intentionally accessed pornographic material online.
- At least, 1 out of every 4 teenage girls have been asked online to send a nude/semi-nude picture of themselves. 7% of the girls who had received such requests admitted that they had sent a nude/semi-nude picture of themselves in response to such requests.

Research

- Only 1 in 4 teenagers say that their parents place some form of restriction on their mobile phone use. 92% say that their parents are on social media. 8% of the teenagers whose parents use social media, say that their parents' use of social media affects time which they should devote to them.

Child Protection in Nigeria

- Child Rights Act which domesticates the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Has been domesticated by 24 states only.
- Implementation is low due to weak political will coupled with administrative, bureaucratic and cultural issues.

Child Online Protection

- CYBERCRIMES (PROHIBITION, PREVENTION, ETC) ACT, 2015
- The Act covers a broad framework of issues
 - ✓ Fraudulent issuance of e-instructions.
 - ✓ Reporting of cyber threats.
 - ✓ Identity theft and impersonation.
 - ✓ Childpornography and related offences.
 - ✓ Cyberstalking.
 - ✓ Cybersquatting.
 - ✓ Racist and xenophobic offences.

Implementation

- Aside from a few cases of prosecution, particularly pertaining to cases of sexual assault arising from online-to-offline contact, there's no known prosecution of cases arising from the Act, particularly affecting children.

Child Online Protection

- Beyond the CyberCrimes Act, there are several laws that protect children generally, particularly, the Criminal Law of the states in Nigeria.
- Nigeria was invited to join the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime in 2017 but is yet to.
- The country is also yet to sign the Malabu convention

CSOs

- Three active CSOs in the space. But very little collaboration.
- We observe Safer Internet Day but the penetration is low

Education - The Curriculum

- There is a current push to have online safety included in the curriculum. Currently in an advanced stage.

Administration

- No clear lead, hence, duplicated, stalled, or little known efforts:
- There's been activities by:
- Nigerian Communications Commission
- National Information Technology Development Agency
- The Office of the First Lady of Nigeria

Administration

- Nigeria is a federal state and issues relating to children are mostly state issues.

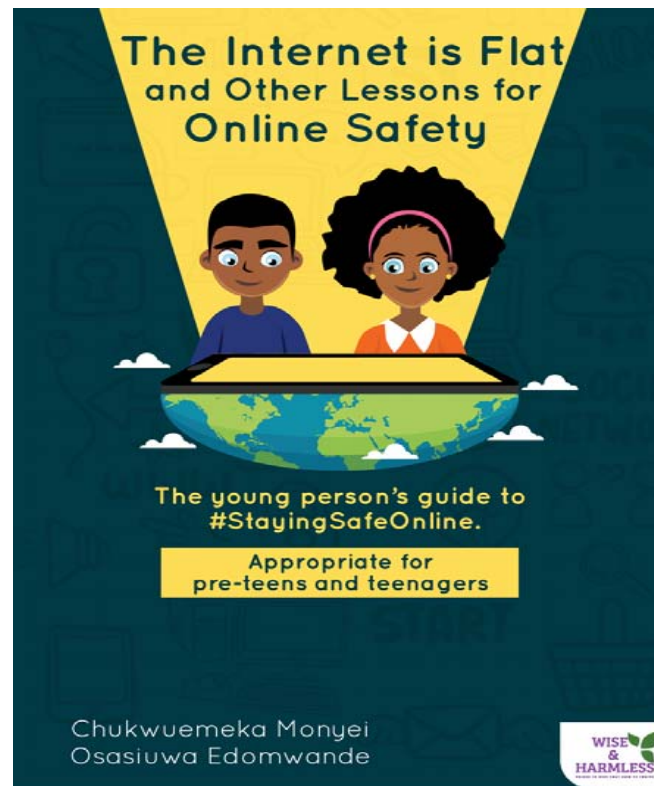
Industry

- Recent activity in that space. A training was held by the ITU for regulators in the space two weeks ago.
- One of the MNOs recently launched a product for child online protection, although limited to parental control.

Recommendations

- CSOs need to double effort
- Re-work and adoption of the National Child Online Protection Policy 2014
- Clear direction from regulators, including establishment of a specific cyber-security agency with COP mandate

Publications



Publications

