|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| INTERNATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATION UNION | |
| Descrição: Description: ITU globe2 | **Council Working Group on Child Online Protection** |
|
|
| **Contribution from Zambia to the Council Working Group on Child Online Protection**  **Source: Zambia**  **February 20, 2014** | | |

**ZAMBIA’S CHILD ONLINE PROTECTION PROGRAMME**

**1.0 Survey on Online Risks and Illicit Content**

Online risks and illicit content are concepts that are increasingly common in the Zambian community as the usage of ICTs and the internet increases. As the ICT sector landscape evolves, we have seen the migration of traditional voice revenue to data services which are being driven by the rise of social media and other broadband services, criminal and unethical activities are also shifting to online. Children may be exposed to these vices at early an early age and this poses a great danger that Zambia may lose its cultural values and identity in this information society.

In order to develop a comprehensive strategy based on empirical data, Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority undertook a survey on Child Online Protection in Zambia in 2013. The results of the findings have just been finalized. The survey intended to find out the level of exposure, awareness and available mitigation measures in Zambia. The survey obtained perspectives of internet users who included parents and children as well as that of operators offering internet services in Zambia.

This survey is aimed at assessing the usage patterns and potential risks especially among the children.

This survey intended to find out the level of exposure, awareness and available mitigation measures in Zambia. The survey obtained perspectives of internet users as well as that of operators offering internet services in Zambia. Operator indicators were meant to provide information on available tools and mechanisms for mitigating exposure of internet users to cyber risks, whereas user indicators were meant to provide information on their experience of internet risks.

In addressing the online risks especially among child using internet services the following recommendations have been made:

1. ZICTA should develop collaboration with international stakeholder to build capacity and learn international best practices on Child Online Protection (COP)
2. ZICTA should develop a coherent national child online strategy and awareness programme to protect both child and adults from online vulnerabilities. Specifically:
   1. Survey result show that the most popular social media for all children below the age of 14 years who are using the internet is Facebook. ZICTA should formulate COP awareness programme around Facebook
   2. ZICTA should design and implement parent awareness regarding child’s online activities (posts, pictures, video etc.) and the potential effect on their children digital reputation
3. Arising from the fact that some households had children as young as 5 years using the internet, ZICTA should widen the scope of future ICT Survey to include children below the age of 10 years
4. ZICTA should engage mobile and internet service providers in order to encourage development safety features and tools appropriate young users
5. ZICTA and other stakeholder to carry out legislative audit of the existing Law on online risks

**2.0 National Child Online Protection Framework**

The Zambia Information and Communications Technology Authority (ZICTA) is in the process of Developing a Child Online Protection (COP) National Strategy Framework and Awareness Programme following completion of COP survey. ZICTA has been collaborating with ITU-IMPACT. The project will involve other key stakeholders responsible for Child protection in order to have a coherent strategy taking into account the role of different stakeholders and existing initiatives. This project will be a collaborative effort between the Authority and ITU-IMPACT and will be held from March 26-28, 2014.

**3.0 ICT CLUB IN 100 SCHOOLS**

In order for the Authority to achieve this mandate of protecting young ICT consumers, the Authority has embarked on establishing ICT clubs schools. So far the Authority has established 100 ICT clubs across the country. The objective of the ICT Clubs is it to impart on the pupils ICT knowledge and skills , educate them on the roles and functions of the Authority, highlight child on line protection issues to mention but a few. This year we hope to increase this number to 150.

**4.0 COLLABORATION WITH UNICEF**

ZICTA has enterered into a Memorandum of understanding with UNICEF Zambia. The purpose of the MoU will be to provide parameters for partnership and avoid duplicity between ZICTA and UNICEF on Child on-line Protection, Cyber Security, building evidence and creating awareness among Zambian children, encourage optimal and safe use of ICTs as well as sensitization activities for the Girl Child on the importance of ICTs, for a period of one year. The following are the key focus areas of the MoU:

* To ensure ZICTA ICT policies, regulations and guidelines (or updates to existing policies) have a child-focus, are child friendly, and incorporate children’s voices
* To promote research on children’s use of ICTs by both parties
* Establish a group of partners from Government, private sector, and NGOs to meet monthly to exchange updates on activities and identify collaboration activities are ICT oriented and promote children’s rights
* Partner on mass media outreach to children and young people and parents and caregivers about responsible and safe use of ICTs
* Partner on lobbying for the commemoration of Safer Internet Day in Zambia
* Organize a joint symposium with private partners and Ministry of Education Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, to determine how digital tools can be promoted among children and teachers and explore adding it to school curriculum
* Work towards development of COP National strategy.

The collaboration with UNICEF will add value to the protection of children from illicit and harmful content.

**5.0 Symposium on Child Online Protection**

The aim of the symposium was to exchange information on some of the dangers children, adolescents and the youth are exposed to online and how digital safety in Zambia can be improved.

The first day of the symposium consisted of a series of brief presentations by representatives from the facilitating agencies, a question and answer session based on the presentations, group discussions on the findings of the exploratory study on online safety conducted by UNICEF, and a training session.

The Guest of Honour was Honorable Yamfwa Mukanga, the Minister of Transport, Works and Supply. Mr. Mukanaga highlighted that the objectives of the symposium were

* To highlight some of the negative effects of ICT use on the youth
* To canvas support from the 3 arms of government to develop policies to fight the negative effects of ICT use
* To create a platform for all stakeholders to chart a roadmap for promoting child protection online.

Arising from the recommendations of the symposium ZICTA and UNICEF have come up with an action plan with a view of addressing issues raised by ZICTA.

**6.0 Girls in ICTs**

Recognizing the need and importance to expose the Girl Child to ICTs, ZICTA has commenced sensitization activities which included a story writing competition on the Topic of ICTs and their relevance for girls. A Girls in ICTs Ambassador programme to sensitize girls in schools and at different fora on the importance of utilization of ICTs and consideration of a career in the ICT industry will commence in the first quarter of 2014. However, in sensitizing the girls, ZICTA realizes that their level of vulnerability to Cyber abuse is even higher and as such, has incorporated Topics on Cyber Security in the sensitization programme.

**7.0 National Debate Time**

ZICTA has partnered with the National Broadcaster in the production and airing of national debate. The debate focuses on ICT related topics as well as Child Online Protection. The programme is watched in all the ten (10) provinces. Apart from financial assistance which ZICTA offered to the National Broadcaster to facilitate movement of the debate time crew in all the 10 provinces, ZICTA bought computers for the winners. Secondary schools from neighboring countries like; Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia and South Africa also participated. This platform is used to educate both parents and children on online risks and encourage productive usage of ICTs. The Debate Time qualifying process for 2014 has since commenced.