DISRUPTING HARM IN MOZAMBIQUE [SNAPSHOT]

Evidence on online child sexual exploitation and abuse

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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FOREWORD

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, which are very often distributed and 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.

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 a series of unique 'data insights'. 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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funded by the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children, through its Safe Online initiative, ECPAT, INTERPOL, and UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti worked in partnership to design and implement *Disrupting Harm* – a research project on online child sexual exploitation and abuse (OCSEA). This unique partnership brings a multidisciplinary approach to a complex issue in order to see all sides of the problem. OCSEA refers to situations that involve digital or communication technologies *at some point* during the continuum of abuse or exploitation. Abuse and exploitation can occur fully online or through a mix of online and in-person interactions between offenders and children. The *Disrupting Harm* research was conducted in seven Eastern and Southern African countries, including Mozambique, and six Southeast Asian countries. Data were synthesised from up to nine different research activities to generate each national report. The national reports tell the story of the threats, and present clear recommendations for action.

Internet use

More than half (56%) of children aged 12 to 17 in Mozambique are internet users, meaning they have used the internet within the past three months. According to the *Disrupting Harm* representative household survey of 999 internet-using children, internet access and frequency of use are higher among older children and those that reside in urban areas. Differences in use of the internet by gender are small.

Overwhelmingly, children access the internet using smartphones (91%), and a vast majority (83%) of these children face barriers in accessing the internet, such as high cost of the internet and poor/slow internet connection. Almost all 12–17-year-old internet users (96%) go online at home, and many (63%) do so on a weekly or daily basis. This mirrors the global trend. Internet use at school was found among 59% surveyed children. Use of public internet access points was less common.

The online activities that children in Mozambique engage in the most on a weekly basis were using social media (63%), chatting (45%), watching videos (45%) and doing schoolwork (44%). Children's digital skills varied. While 68% felt confident to know when to remove people from their contact lists, only 55% of children said they could determine which images of them and their friends to share online, 48% indicated that they knew how to change their privacy settings and only 43% knew how to report harmful content on social media. This might be influenced by the fact that 60% of internet-using children have never received information on how to stay safe online.

Data from the household survey showed that not all caregivers of internet-using children use the internet themselves, and that caregivers use the internet less frequently than their children. Fifty-five percent of surveyed caregivers were internet-users and only 21% accessed the internet daily, as compared to 43% of internet-using children. Among caregivers, 42% have never used the internet and 22% did so infrequently. This discrepancy has implications, as parents can be a vital resource in helping children to navigate their lives online, spot risks and prevent them from turning to harm. It might be more difficult for caregivers that are less familiar with the internet to support children's internet activities and teach them about how to stay safe.

Risky online activities and children's experiences of online sexual exploitation and abuse

Many of the children surveyed had engaged in potentially risky behaviour online. For example, 28% of the 999 children said they had met in person within the past year someone they first got to know online. When asked about this, the majority (70%) of those reported that they were happy or excited by the outcome.

In addition, 12% of internet-using children in Mozambique reported having shared naked images or videos of themselves online in the past year. Most children said they did this for fun, because they were in love or flirting. In some cases, children however shared naked images or videos of themselves following threats or pressure.

In the *Disrupting Harm* household survey, children were also asked whether they have been subjected to different forms of OCSEA in the past year prior to data collection. Under the *Disrupting Harm* study, OCSEA is defined as situations that involve digital or communication technologies at some point during the continuum of the sexual exploitation or abuse of a child. In the past one year alone, 13% internet-users aged 12–17 in Mozambique were subjected to clear examples of online sexual exploitation and abuse that included blackmailing children to engage in sexual activities, sharing their sexual images without permission, or coercing them to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. More younger children aged 12–13 years have experienced OCSEA compared to the 14–17-year-olds. There was little variation between boys and girls and between children in urban and rural settings. It is also however, likely that the true figures are even higher given that children may be reluctant to speak openly about such a sensitive subject.

Among the internet-using children surveyed, 11% said they had received unwanted requests to talk about sexual acts and requests for a photo or video showing their private parts in the year preceding the survey. These requests for sexual content can indicate grooming attempts. Most of these children refused to comply. Only 5% of children who received requests to talk about sex complied, while 9% of those who received requests to share sexual images complied. The rest responded by, for example, blocking or ignoring the offender, or stopping to use the internet for a while. Meanwhile, 8% of internet-using children aged 15–17 years reported having accepted money or gifts in exchange for sexual images or videos of themselves.

Children were most commonly subjected to online sexual exploitation and abuse via social media platforms. Facebook (including Facebook Messenger) and WhatsApp were the social media platforms through which the instances of OCSEA most commonly occurred. This is most likely because these are the largest and most popular platforms.

In most of the instances of OCSEA disclosed by children, the offender was a person that the child was familiar with, such as an adult friend or peer, a family member or a romantic partner. People unknown to the child were identified as offenders in about one in three OCSEA experiences. These findings have significant implications for prevention efforts, as many activities focus mostly on the threat of harm from strangers and less on people the child already knows. It should also be a consideration for response systems, as it could be difficult for victims to seek help if they are emotionally and/or economically dependent on abusers.

Disclosure and reporting of online sexual exploitation and abuse

There are several channels though which individuals can formally report instances of OCSEA in Mozambique. Besides contacting authorities directly, one can contact the Child Helpline 116 or report child sexual abuse material (CSAM) through the online portal that has been set up in coordination with the Internet Watch Foundation. Despite the existing mechanisms, formal reporting of OCSEA is low.

Depending on the type of OCSEA incidents they had been subjected to, between 11% and 28% of children said they did *not* tell anyone what had happened to them. These children indicated that they kept things to themselves mainly because they did not know where to go or who to tell, or felt embarrassed or ashamed or simply found it too emotionally difficult to tell anyone.

In turn, children who had been subjected to OCSEA and *did* disclose to others what happened, were more inclined to tell someone they knew well such as a friend, sibling or caregiver, rather than to engage with the police. While helplines, such as the established by *Linha Fala Criança* Child Helpline 116 is well known and used among children in Mozambique, very few turn to the helpline to disclose sexual abuse and exploitation.

Law enforcement

Interviews with government representatives indicated that the National Criminal Investigation Service is the main law enforcement entity for investigating sexual crimes against children. However, there is not yet a specialised unit to address OCSEA. There is a need to build the capacity of the National Criminal Investigation Service staff when it comes to the criminal investigation of online crimes.

Data on recorded national crimes related to OCSEA was requested from Mozambique law enforcement, via the National Central Bureau Maputo. No data was made available.

Access to justice for OCSEA victims

Mozambique has laws that facilitate the provision of social support services for children subjected to sexual abuse, and these are applicable to victims when there are online elements to the abuse. However, the research team was unable to confirm how these services function for victims, as it was not possible to speak with children who had been subjected to online sexual exploitation and abuse.

According to government representatives, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Minor Court are the two leading entities in investigating and prosecuting sexual crimes against children. The *Disrupting Harm* team was unsuccessful in its efforts to find and interview criminal justice professionals who had experience working with OCSEA cases or children who had been subjected to online sexual exploitation and abuse and sought justice as very few such cases have yet proceeded to court on this topic in Mozambique. Thus, the *Disrupting Harm* study could not determine what the process of accessing justice is when addressing incidents of OCSEA in Mozambique.

Coordination and cooperation

A multi-stakeholder approach, where the government coordinates and regulates collaboration between the public, private and civil society sectors, is crucial to preventing and responding to OCSEA. In Mozambique, all ten government representatives interviewed by the *Disrupting Harm* team mentioned that the governmental institutions have been working with non-governmental organisations to develop prevention programmes, to draft legislation, and to strengthen skills on topics such as human trafficking and child protection. While no OCSEA programmes have been put into place to date, there is an apparent willingness to start addressing the issue in a more coordinated way.

Insights

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

1. In the past one year alone, 13% of internet-users aged 12–17 in Mozambique were subjected to clear examples of online sexual exploitation and abuse that included being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, having their sexual images shared without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. Scaled to the national population, this represents an estimated 300,000 12–17-year-old internet-using children who were subjected to any of these harms in the span of just one year. This number likely reflects underreporting.

2. Most OCSEA offenders (about 65%) are someone the child already knows. These crimes can happen while children spend time online, or in person but involving technology.

3. Children experienced OCSEA mainly through the major social media platforms, most commonly via Facebook/Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp.

4. The majority of children were more inclined to disclose being victims of OCSEA to their interpersonal networks rather than to helplines or the police. A notable proportion of children (30%) did not tell anyone about their OCSEA experiences.

5. *Disrupting Harm* was not able to identify any OCSEA cases that the justice system has processed. No data on recorded national crimes related to OCSEA were available. While interviews with government officials shed some light on the response systems in Mozambique, there is an urgent need to invest in further research and evaluation of the OCSEA response mechanisms of law enforcement and judicial systems.

6. OCSEA-related legislation, policies and standards have not yet been enacted in Mozambique, hindering the criminal justice system to address OCSEA and victims to access justice.

The report ends with a detailed road map to be taken by all relevant stakeholders in protecting children from OCSEA: government; law enforcement; justice and social services sectors and those working within them; communities, teachers and caregivers; and digital platforms and service providers. The detailed recommendations can be found in full on page 78 of this report.

DISRUPTING HARM METHODS

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 make constructive recommendations on public policies for prevention and response. Informed by the 2018 WeProtect Global Alliance Threat Assessment[1] and a desire to understand and deepen the impact of its existing investments, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, and to End Violence Against Children 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 Southeast Asian region are: Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam. The countries of focus in the Eastern and Southern Africa region are: Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, and Uganda.

ECPAT, INTERPOL and UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti worked in collaboration to design and implement the *Disrupting Harm* project. In total, the three organisations collected data for nine unique research activities. Extensive data collection took place from early 2020 through to early 2021 and focused on the three-year period of 2017–2019. This was followed by intensive triangulation that resulted in a series of 13 country reports. Using the same methodology in all participating countries also allows for inter-country comparisons. The findings and recommendations are expected to have relevance for a broader global audience.

Data analysis for Mozambique was finalised in April 2022. The desired outcome of this report was to provide a baseline and evidence for policy makers in Mozambique to tackle and prevent online child sexual exploitation and abuse and strengthen support to children. The recommendations made in the report are aligned with the WeProtect Model National Response and contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Summary of methods used by ECPAT International in Mozambique

Interviews with government representatives[2]
Eleven semi-structured interviews were conducted between January 2021 and March 2021 with twelve senior national government representatives[3] with mandates that include OCSEA. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some interviews were conducted virtually. More information on the methodology can be found here, while the preliminary report of the data can be found here. Attributions to data from these respondents have ID numbers beginning with RA1 throughout the report.[4]

Analysis of non-law enforcement data and consultations
A range of non-law enforcement stakeholders have data and insight on the nature and scale of OCSEA. Data were obtained from International Association of Internet Hotlines (INHOPE), 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.

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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. Government representatives were sought holding specific responsibilities for responding to the risks of OCSEA at a national level.
3. Participants represented: National Institute of Communications of Mozambique, General Prosecutor 's Office, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action, Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, Ministry of Transport and Communications, Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs, National Institute of Information and Communication Technologies, National Human Rights Commission, National Criminal Investigation Service.
4. The format RA1-MZ-01-A is used for IDs. 'RA1' indicates the research activity, 'MZ' denotes Mozambique, '01' is the participant number and 'A' indicates the participant when interviews included more than one person.

Frontline workers survey

A convenience sample of 50 client-facing frontline workers such as outreach workers, social workers, case managers, psychologists, and health and legal professionals directly working with children's cases, participated in a survey administered online during February and March 2021. This research activity aimed to explore the scope and context of OCSEA as it is observed by those working the social support frontline to prevent it and respond to it. The data presented by the frontline social support workers reflects their perception of OCSEA in the country. More information on the methodology can be found here, while the preliminary summary report of 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[5] and their caregivers

This research activity aimed to provide a better understanding of how and to what extent victims of OCSEA can access justice and remedies in Mozambique. Ten interviews with 15–18-year-old children and their caregivers were intended to be conducted. **However, due to lengthy delays in obtaining ethical clearance for the study, this activity was unfortunately not conducted.** Therefore, data about children accessing justice mechanisms for OCSEA is not presented in this report. This limits the ability to triangulate other data points in the analysis.

Access to Justice – interviews with justice professionals

Interviews with 10–12 criminal justice professionals were also supposed to be conducted in Mozambique. **Despite extensive efforts to identify criminal justice professionals who had experience working with OCSEA cases, the *Disrupting Harm* team could not find any individuals meeting the inclusion criteria.** Of the 22 justice professionals contacted, all indicated they had no experience with handling OCSEA cases. The most likely explanation is that OCSEA cases are not yet entering the justice mechanisms in Mozambique. This represents a finding in itself, as it indicates a lack of disclosure by victims and displays that these cases might not be recognised as distinct crimes within the formal justice system.

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 Mozambique was conducted and finalised in July 2020. More information on the methodology can be found here, while the full report on the legal analysis can be found here.

Conversations with OCSEA survivors[6]

Unstructured, one-on-one conversations led by trauma-informed expert practitioners were arranged with 33 young survivors of OCSEA in five of the *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). Participants were between 16 and 24 years in age, but had all been subjected to OCSEA as children. Although not held in all countries, these conversations are meant to underline common themes and issues in all 13 *Disrupting Harm* countries. More information on the method for this activity can be found here. The report presenting the analysis of the 33 survivor conversations will be released separately in 2022. Attributions to data from these respondents have ID numbers beginning with RA5 throughout this report and are depicted in separate boxes.

Summary of methods used in Mozambique by INTERPOL

Quantitative case data analysis

Data were 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 several 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.

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5. The term 'OCSEA victims' refers to their role as victim in the criminal justice process.
6. The term OCSEA survivor refers to children who were victimised but may no longer identify with the term victim as they are on the path of healing.

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 requested interviews with 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. More information on INTERPOL's methodologies can be found here.

Summary of methods used in Mozambique 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 as well as the opportunities they face online and their specific experiences of OCSEA, a nationally representative household survey was conducted face-to-face with 999 internet-using children while adhering to COVID-19-related restrictions and procedures in force in the country at the time. The term 'household survey' is used throughout the report to indicate findings that come from this specific research activity.

The target population for the survey were children aged 12–17 in Mozambique who had used the internet in the three months prior to the interview. Additionally, one parent or caregiver of each child was interviewed. The term 'household survey' is used throughout the report to indicate findings that come from this specific research activity. The survey sample was composed of 522 (52%) boys and 477 (48%) girls. The age breakdown is as follows: 207 (21%) 12–13-year-olds, 317 (32%) 14–15-year-olds and 475 (47%) 16–17-year-olds were surveyed.

To achieve a nationally representative random sample, the survey used random probability sampling with national coverage. In Mozambique fieldwork coverage was 100%. 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. This means that all regions of Mozambique were represented in the sample. The regions included Cabo Delgado, Gaza, Inhambane, Manica, Maputo Cidade, Maputo Província, Nampula, Niassa, Sofala, Tete and Zambézia.

The sampling followed a three-stage random probability clustered sample design. At the first stage, 100 primary sampling units were selected. The list of primary sampling units was based on the 2017 Mozambique Population and Housing Census provided by the National Institute 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 randomisation methods.

In every household visited we attempted 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 for an estimation of the internet usage rate for all 12–17-year-old children in Mozambique.

The fieldwork took place between 13 February and 30 July 2021. Data collection was carried out by IPSOS MORI through IPSOS Mozambique on behalf of UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

To enhance the precision of the estimates presented, the household survey data used throughout this report was weighted following best practice approaches for the weighting of random probability samples. The weighting included the following stages:

- Design weight adjustments to reflect the probabilities of selection (inverse probability weights);
- Non-response weights to reduce non-response bias; and
- Post-stratification weights to adjust for differences between the sample and population distributions.

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 UNICEF Innocenti and ECPAT International research components received approvals from the Ministry of Health and National Committee on Bioethics for Health at a national level. The protocols of ECPAT and UNICEF were also reviewed and approved by the Health Media Lab Institutional Review Board.

INTERPOL assessed the threat of OCSEA and the capacity of law enforcement to counter the threat of OCSEA. Both assessments entailed interviews with law enforcement in relevant units dealing with the crime area and relevant police units and national agencies that handle police data.

INTERPOL did not have contact with children or victims. Nevertheless, to ensure proper ethical conduct and research standards, the INTERPOL team completed 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 June 17th 2022, representatives of the government, law enforcement authorities and civil society in Mozambique were asked to comment on the *Disrupting Harm* findings and recommendations, to ensure that the recommendations were relevant for the Mozambique context.

Figure 1: *Disrupting Harm* methods in Mozambique.
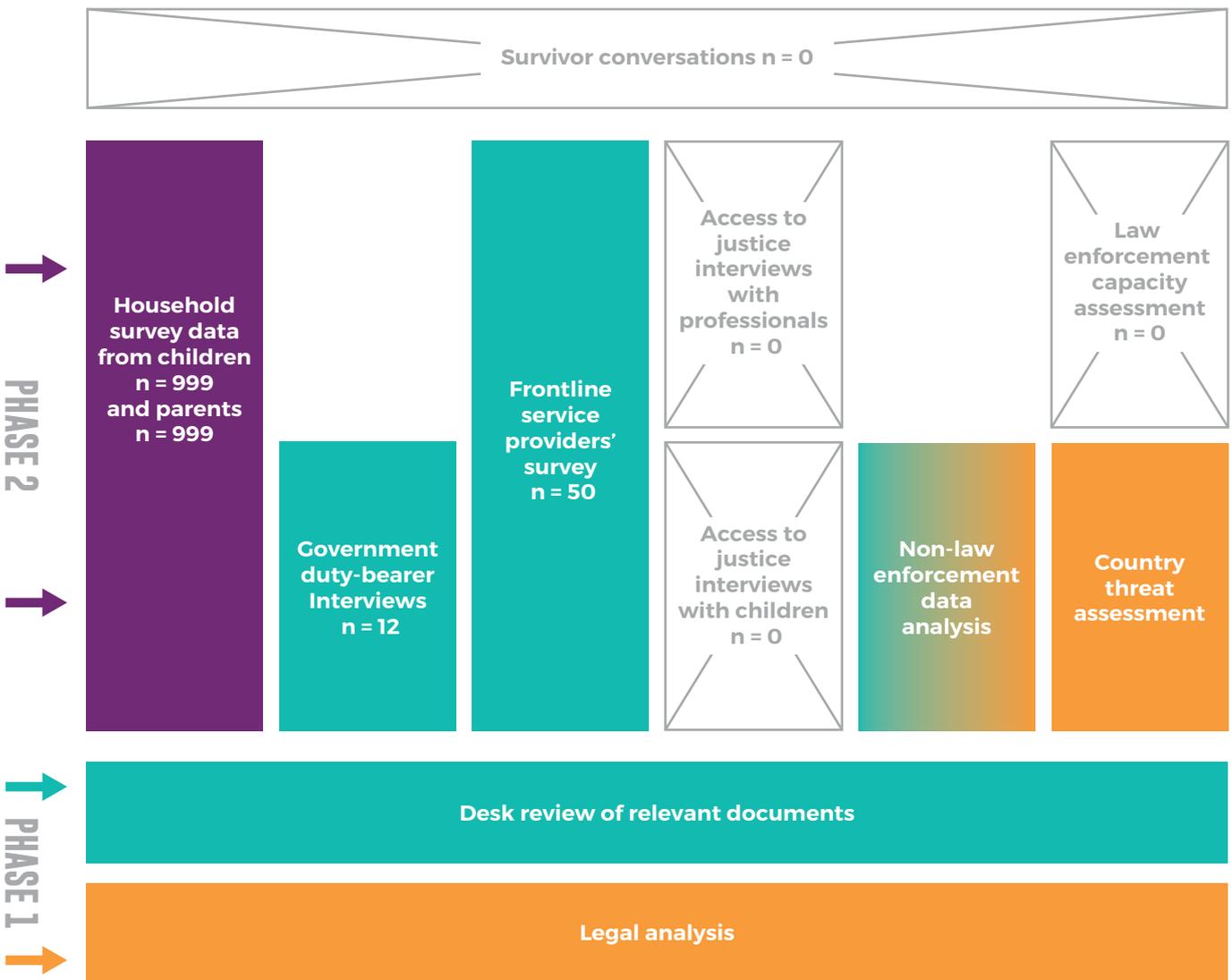
ABOUT ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Child sexual abuse **refers to various sexual activities perpetrated against 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.[7]**

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 or a relationship), or even the mere promise of such, must also be present.[8]

> **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.

Labelling child sexual exploitation and abuse as exclusively 'online' or 'offline' does not help in understanding, preventing or responding to the issue, nor is it the intention of *Disrupting Harm* to create such an artificial divide. 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. It contributes to the evidence base needed 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[9] and that responses need to consider the whole spectrum of activities in which digital technologies may 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.[10]

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.[11]

- **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[12] criminalising grooming indicate that this must take place with intent to meet the child in person, it has become

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7. 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.

8. *Ibid.,* 24.

9. 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.

10. 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.

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. 40.

12. 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. Article 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. Article 6.

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.

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**[13] 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 through deception or coercion.

- **Sexual extortion of children**[14] refers to the use of blackmail or threats to extract sexual content or other benefits (e.g., money) from the child, often using sexual content of the child that has previously been obtained as leverage.

- **Sexual harassment** of a child[15] and **unwanted exposure of a child to sexual content**[16] are other phenomena, which *can* constitute or enable OCSEA in some instances. 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.

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

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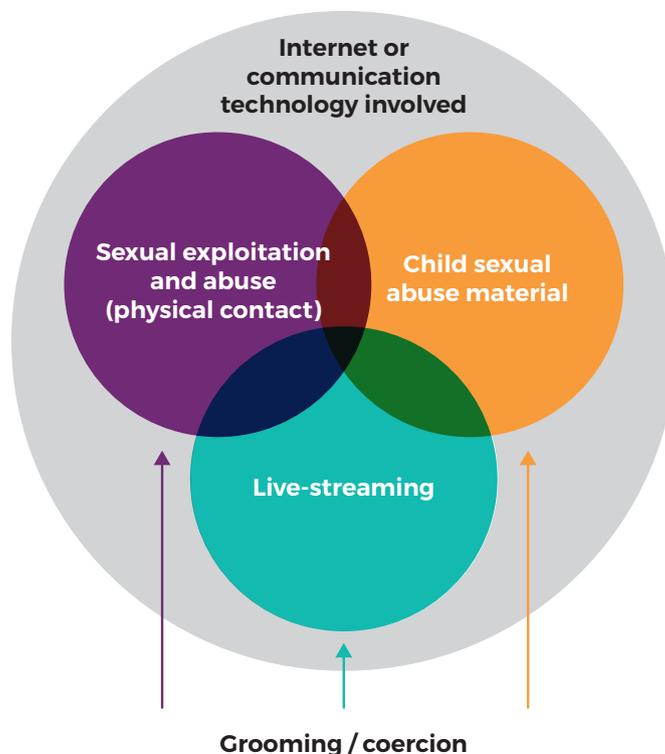
13. Cooper, K., Quayle, E., Jonsson, L. & Svedin, C.G. (2016). Adolescents and self-taken sexual images: A review of the literature. Computers in Human Behavior, vol. 55, 706-716.
14. Interagency Working Group on Sexual Exploitation of Children. (2016). Terminology Guidelines for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Bangkok: ECPAT International. 52.
15. *Ibid.,* 21.
16. *Ibid.,* 44.

ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE – 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 available data on internet access and social media use in Mozambique.

Some of this data was gathered directly through the Disrupting Harm nationally representative household survey of internet-using 12–17-year-olds.

The data below provides an important backdrop for understanding the various facets of children's internet use. *Disrupting Harm* data indicates that internet usage of 12–17-year-olds in Mozambique is four times the general population internet penetration estimate from the International Telecommunications Union.

POPULATION TOTAL 2021
Country data:
30,832,244[17]
UN data:
32,163,000[18]

FEMALE POPULATION 2021
Country data:
15,946,457[19]
UN data:
16,524,000[20]

MALE POPULATION 2021
Country data:
14,885,787[21]
UN data:
15,639,000[22]

POPULATION UNDER 18 2020
UN data:
15,968,000[23]

Under 18

51%

URBAN POPULATION 2018: 36%[24]
2030 prospective: 43%[25]

Urban

36%

MEDIAN AGE 2020
18[26]

17. Instituto Nacional De Estatistica. (n,d). Population 2021.
18. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). World Population Prospects 2019.
19. Instituto Nacional De Estatistica. (n,d). Population 2021.
20. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). World Population Prospects 2019.
21. Instituto Nacional De Estatistica. (n,d). Population 2021.
22. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). World Population Prospects 2019.
23. UNICEF. (2021). The State of the World's Children 2021. UNICEF, New York.
24. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision.
25. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). World Urbanization Prospects: The 2018 Revision.
26. United Nations Population Division. (n.d.). World Population Prospects 2019.

ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

GDP PER CAPITA 2020 (US$)
$449[27]

POVERTY RATES (2014)[28]
46.1%

LANGUAGES

PORTUGUESE

PORTUGUESE IS THE OFFICIAL LANGUAGE.[29]

INTERNET PENETRATION RATES 2019: 15%[30]

15%

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

Source: Disrupting Harm data

Total 56%

12–13 Years 31%

14–15 Years 51%

16–17 Years 80%

Girls 53%

Boys 59%

Rural 51%

Urban 68%
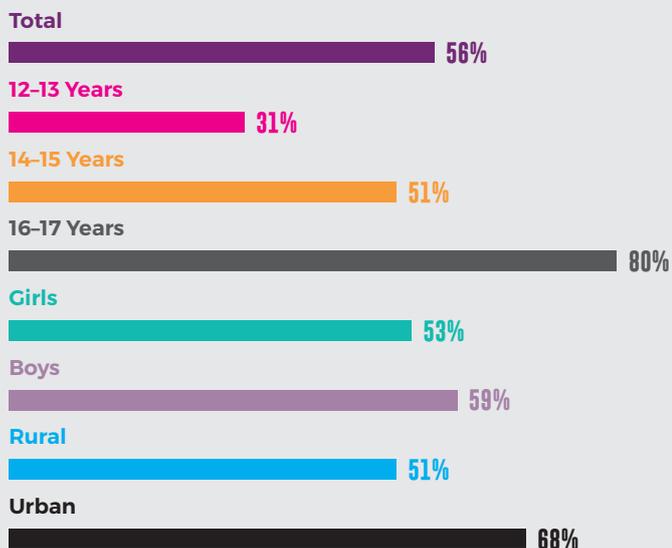
n = 2,829 households

INTERNET USE AMONG CAREGIVERS OF INTERNET-USING CHILDREN
56%

Source: Disrupting Harm data

n = 999 caregivers of internet-using children.

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

Source: Disrupting Harm data

Tablet 3%

Computer 7%

Mobile 94%

n = 999 internet-using children.   *Multiple choice question

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27. World Bank. (2020). GDP per capita (current US$) – Mozambique
28. World Bank. (n.d.). Poverty & Equity Data Portal.
29. Government of Mozambique. (2004). Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique, Article 10.
30. International Telecommunications Union. (2020). Country ICT data: Percentage of Individuals Using the Internet.

ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

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

Mall
18%

Internet café
19%

School
58%

Other
59%

Home
96%
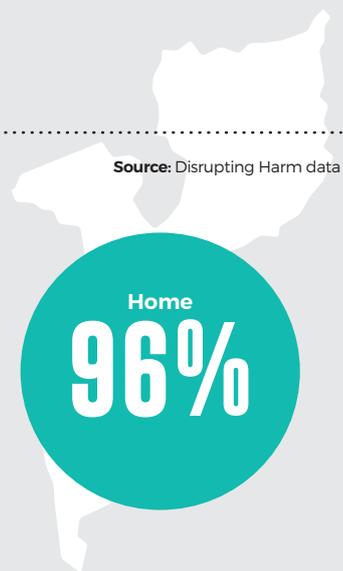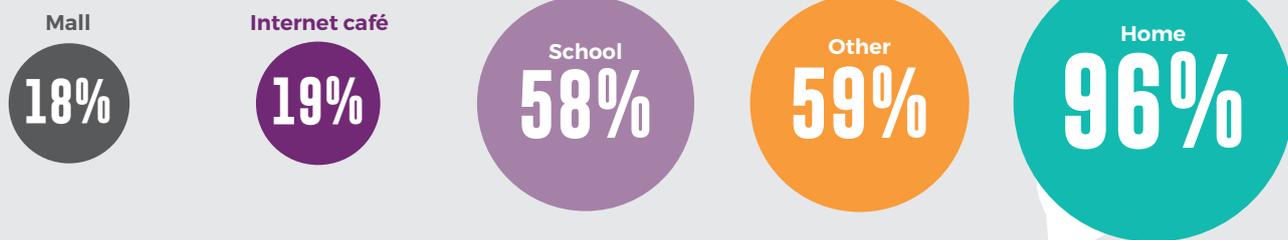
n = 999 internet-using children.   *Multiple choice question

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

Legend:
- Less than once a month
- At least monthly
- At least weekly
- Once a day or more

X-axis: Total, 12–13, 14–15, 16–17, Boy, Girl, Urban, Rural
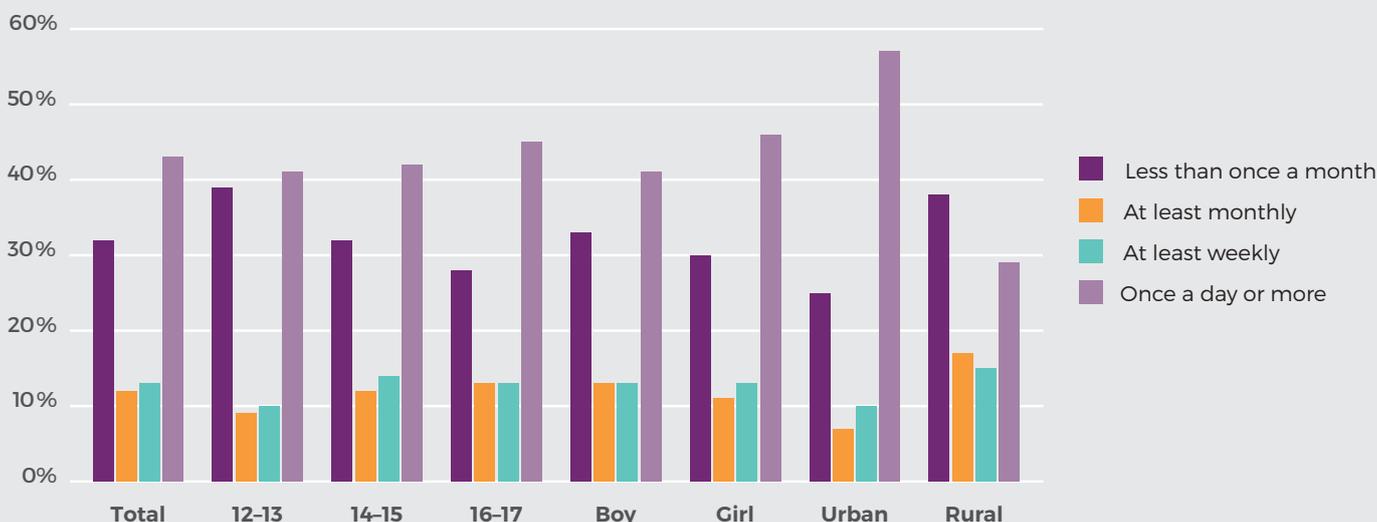
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999.

FREQUENCY OF INTERNET USE AMONG CAREGIVERS OF INTERNET-USING CHILDREN

- At least once a day — 21%
- At least weekly — 6%
- At least monthly — 6%
- Less than once a month — 22%
- Never — 42%

n = 999 caregivers of internet-using children.

ABOUT MOZAMBIQUE – DEMOGRAPHICS AND INTERNET USAGE

Source: Disrupting Harm data

CHILDREN WHO USE SOCIAL MEDIA ON A WEEKLY BASIS

Total	12-13	14-15	16-17	Boys	Girls
63%	56%	64%	65%	63%	63%
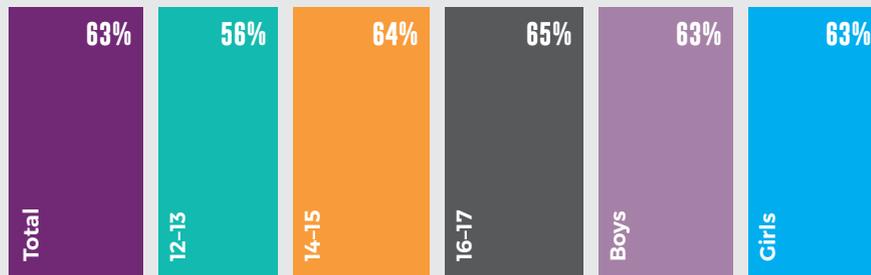
n = 999 internet-using children.

Source: Disrupting Harm data

CHILDREN WHO USE INSTANT MESSAGING APPS ON A WEEKLY BASIS

Total	12-13	14-15	16-17	Boys	Girls
45%	43%	48%	44%	43%	48%
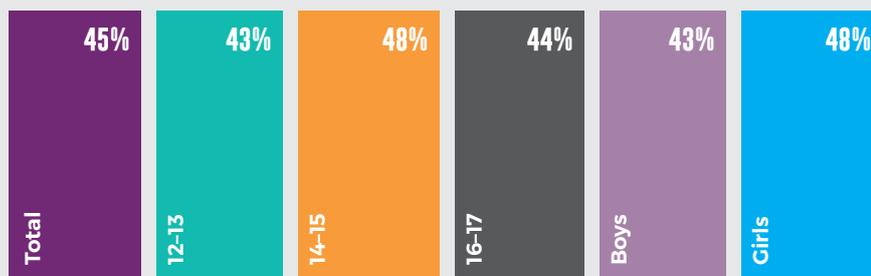
n = 999 internet-using children.

ICT DEVELOPMENT INDEX RANKING (ITU) 2017

Asia & Pacific: 19/38[31]

World: 150/176
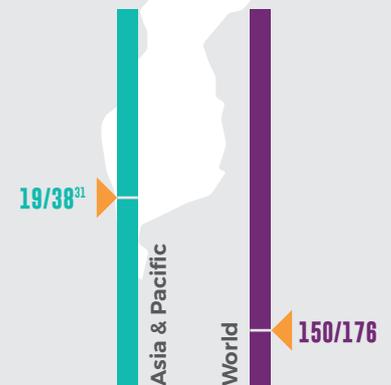
GLOBAL CYBERSECURITY INDEX RANKING 2018[32]

Asia & Pacific: 26/42[33]

World: 132/175

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31. International Telecommunication Union. (2017). ICT Development Index 2017.
32. 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.
33. International Telecommunication Union. (2019). Global Cybersecurity Index (GCI) 2018.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY RELEVANT TO OCSEA

Despite Law No. 7/2008 on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child explicitly stating that the Government of Mozambique must adopt legal and administrative measures to protect children against all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse,[34] Mozambican legislation on OCSEA is limited and mostly referring to conduct related to child sexual abuse material.

The Mozambican Penal Code defines child sexual abuse material – referred to in the law as "child pornography" – [35] as "any material, whatever the support or platform, that visually represents a minor or person appearing to be a minor engaged in sexually explicit behaviour."[36] The wording of the provisions clearly excludes materials other than visual, such as audio recordings, as well as depictions of the sexual parts of a child for primarily sexual purposes. Although not explicitly mentioned, the reference to persons appearing to be minors could potentially cover computer or digitally generated child sexual abuse material.

The Penal Code comprehensively punishes a range of conducts related to child sexual abuse materials, with punishments differing depending on the act and the purpose. Indeed, persons distributing, importing, exporting, displaying or transferring professionally or for-profit child sexual abuse material are liable to be punished with imprisonment of up to two years, plus a fine proportional to the convicted offender's earnings.[37] The mere sharing, exhibition, transfer, import, export or distribution of such material, with no professional or profit purpose, is punishable with imprisonment from one to two years and a fine.[38] The possession for personal use of child sexual abuse materials can incur a penalty of up to a year of imprisonment.[39]

A further discrepancy exists with regards to the use of children in the production of child sexual abuse material, with offenders liable to one to five years of imprisonment when the child is below 18 and two to eight years when exploiting a child below 12 years of age.[40]

The Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking features an additional and generic definition of "pornography".[41] Although not specific to children and limited to cases of trafficking for the purpose of exploitation through pornography,[42] this definition specifically includes conducts carried out in the online environment or through information and communication technologies.[43]

The Mozambican Penal Code also criminalises the use of a child in pornographic performances, with associated penalties differing based on the age of the child.[44] The broad wording of the provision could expand its scope to criminalise those who facilitate the live-streaming of child sexual abuse, which is however not criminalised explicitly.

Existing Mozambican legislation does not criminalise other forms of OCSEA, such as the online grooming of children for sexual purposes and the sexual extortion committed in or facilitated through the online environment.

34. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 7/2008 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Article 63 (1).
35. Child sexual abuse material is the preferred term, subsuming older terminology such as 'child pornography'. Although still used in a legal context, this older term should be avoided as it is misleading and undermines the gravity of these crimes. The term's use suggests that images of child sexual abuse are just another form of pornography and distracts from the fact that they are actually images of a serious crime. 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.
36. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 211.
37. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 213 (1).
38. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 213 (2).
39. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 213 (3).
40. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 212.
41. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking, Annex – Glossary. English translation available.
42. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking, Article 11. English translation available.
43. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking, Article 11.
44. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 212 (2).

All these provisions of law theoretically apply to all children below the age of 18. In practice, however, children between 12 and 18 may be less protected than children below 12. This is due to the fact that whilst penalties associated with this crime have been increased in the revisions of the Penal Code, the age of sexual consent (often referred to as 'statutory rape') remains at 12.[45] Children between 12–16 years receive protection only when the sexual acts are committed through violence or serious threat.[46] Consequently, different levels of protection are afforded to children based on their age and penalties imposed on offenders vary.

Policy

Interviews with government representatives identified a number of policies that touch on elements of OCSEA. Representatives discussed the National Cybersecurity Strategy of Mozambique, the National Policy on Cyber-Security (2017–2021),[47] the National Child Action Plan (2013–2019)[48] and the National Broadband Strategy.[49]

Interviews revealed that the National Cybersecurity Strategy of Mozambique and the National Policy on Cybersecurity included components that could benefit the response to OCSEA, such as promoting education on cybersecurity issues, removing illegal content, and enhancing coordination between relevant entities. However, two government representatives indicated that the National Policy on Cybersecurity was never finalised, despite the fact that its implementation period (2017–2021) has already passed. (RA1-MZ-01-A; RA1-MZ-10-A)

The National Child Action Plan was another outdated policy mentioned by government representatives. The plan was developed by a combination of civil society organisations and children themselves, through the Child Parliament.[50] A representative from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action stated that the policy was meant to tackle issues regarding the sexual abuse of minors. However, the representative did not make reference to how the plan would specifically tackle OCSEA. Further research found that there are currently no plans to develop a new child action plan. The representative from the National Human Rights Commission advocated for the inclusion of a strategy that addresses OCSEA in any future child action plan. (RA1-MZ-11-A) The representative also pointed out that the current COVID-19 situation makes the need to regulate and include OCSEA in the new national child action plan even more crucial and urgent. *"We don't have yet a strategy on online sexual abuse. (…) Under these circumstances I do believe that the new plan will have this component on online abuse because it is a reality and during this time of COVID-19, with people being confined and using computers more, it is clear that the plan must bring some strategy to fight online sexual abuse."* (RA1-MZ-11-A)

Key government agencies for OCSEA

Figure 3 presents the key agencies identified by interviewees as driving or playing supporting roles in response to and prevention of OCSEA in Mozambique. The information provided below is based on responses from interviews with various government representatives conducted between January and March 2021.

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45. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 202.
46. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 203.
47. Government of Mozambique. (2017). National Cybersecurity Strategy of Mozambique 2017 – 2021, (translated from Portuguese).
48. Government of Mozambique. (2012). National Child Action Plan 2013 - 2019, (translated from Portuguese).
49. Ministry of Transport and Communication. (2017). National Broadband Strategy 2017 - 2025, (translated from Portuguese).
50. Established in 2000, Mozambique's child parliament was established by a civil society to give children a forum to speak on critical issues within their country. More information can be found here.

Figure 3: Government agencies relevant to OCSEA response in Mozambique.

Agencies with a mandate on child protection	Agencies relevant to ICT and cybersecurity	Law enforcement and legal community entities	Other mentioned agencies
Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action	Communications Regulatory Authority (INCM)	Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs	Ministry of Education and Human Development
Ministry of Interior – Family and Minor Victim of Violence Help-desk	Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education	General Prosecutor's Office	Ministry of Health
General Prosecutor's Office	National institute of Information and Communication Technologies	Minor Court	National Human Rights Commission
		National Criminal Investigation Service	

The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action and the Ministry of Interior's help desks have mandates specific to protecting children. The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Action was cited by one legal expert as the central leader in child protection efforts. (RA1-MZ-02-A) According to an employee of the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs, their ministry supports child protection by spreading awareness of child protection issues. The Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, as well as the National institute of Information and Communication Technologies, are believed to actively participate in matters involving usage of internet and communication technologies and the promotion of regulations for cybersecurity. The Communications Regulatory Authority, in particular, is thought to have great potential in developing laws on telecommunications and cybersecurity that could benefit potential victims of OCSEA.

Although government interviewees noted the existence of specific units working on child protection and programmes on child protection, none were noted to be addressing OCSEA specifically. For example, the representative from the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action, said: *"We do have two departments; one is the Child Development Department where we deal with the designing and framing of child protection issues in a broad manner, and there is another department which deals with children in vulnerable situations because it is necessary to develop specific plans to address them. (...) Cases of child violence are dealt with in a broad manner with no distinction of victims of online sexual abuse."* (RA1-MZ-05-A)

Government Response to OCSEA – Promising practices and Challenges

Good intra-government collaboration: Four government representatives indicated that there is a good level of cooperation between the different institutions dealing with child protection when it comes to the elaboration of strategies and laws. One example, mentioned by a representative from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, was a strong cooperation between institutions during the creation of the National Policy on Cybersecurity. (RA1-MZ-06-A) The director said that because information and communication technologies and child protection were cross-cutting issues, this type of communication was crucial to success. The representative also indicated that good cooperation was a legal requirement and not only based on the willingness of individuals. (RA1-MZ-06-A) Additionally, other interviewees described the relationship between non-governmental organisations and the government as cooperative but in need of increased communication (see Chapter 3.4.1).

Relationship between child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) and OCSEA: While government representatives in Mozambique suggested there are efforts being made to prevent and respond to CSEA, they also noted that the specific needs related to online forms of CSEA are not well understood and hence, are not receiving customised responses. Some challenging areas of government response to OCSEA include legislation and policy (RA1-MZ-05-A), public awareness and prevention initiatives (RA1-MZ-11-A) and personnel training. (RA1-MZ-05-A)

The existing child protection system could be used to address OCSEA if training and resources are provided. It is important that cases of OCSEA are not handled in isolation and that children who experienced OCSEA can benefit from the same services that exist for other children subjected to violence. (see "The Continuum of Online and Offline Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse")

Lack of methods to track the OCSEA threat: In line with the above point, government representatives discussed many other aspects of government response that were holding the government back from properly addressing OCSEA. They mentioned there is a need to:

- Systematically record and classify cases of OCSEA (RA1-MZ-05-A; RA1-MZ-11-A)
- Conduct further research on OCSEA (and on internet usage more generally) (RA1-MZ-06-A)
- Create a national image database (RA1-MZ-12-A)
- Create a national offender registry (RA1-MZ-12-A)

Need to identify a leading entity for OCSEA prevention and response: Among those spoken to, there was a lack of clarity as to which government agency leads on coordinating response to and monitoring of OCSEA. A representative from the National Criminal Investigation Service pointed out that while the strategies and the activities related to OCSEA in Mozambique included a range of governmental institutions, there was no leading body to coordinate and monitor all of them. (RA1-MZ-12-A) While a representative from the General Prosecutor's Office pointed to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Action as the leading body for OCSEA (RA1-MZ-02-A), another representative indicated that it was actually the General Prosecutor's office that was the leading entity for an issue like OCSEA. (RA1-MZ-09-A; RA1-MZ-04-A) Another governmental representative mentioned the National Social Welfare Council along with the Technical Council on Child Rights (established in 2019) as leading coordination entities for addressing OCSEA. (RA1-MZ-05-A)

Budget concerns: None of the interviewed government representatives described clear budget allocations for child protection, let alone specifically for OCSEA. One representative mentioned that there were only "general budgets" that were dedicated to certain agencies, which would then be further allocated to various projects at that agency's discretion. (RA1-MZ-09-A) Overall, as one representative from the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs put it, *"The main challenge is budget scarcity. This is … [an] Achilles' heel in relation to the achievement of progress in fighting these crimes."* (RA1-MZ-09-A)

Consultations with children to reflect their perspectives of online risks: concerning child participation in public decision-making processes, several respondents mentioned the lack of inclusion when it comes to the drafting of laws and policies. Two government representatives suggested the inclusion of children in the drafting of laws and policies could be highly beneficial in the future. (RA1-MZ-01-A; RA1-MZ-06-A) The government interviewee from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education elaborated: *"What we did was engaged the Ministry of Education, engaged the Ministry of Gender, Child and other non-governmental organisations that work with the group. We thought that we were being inclusive, but I don't recall conducting consultations with children."* (RA1-MZ-06-A)

1. CHILDREN ONLINE IN MOZAMBIQUE

The main focus of the *Disrupting Harm* report series is to present the perspectives of young people, government representatives, service providers and others 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 Mozambique. This first chapter, therefore, presents a brief overview of children's internet access and the activities enjoyed by the majority of children online before going on to describe the occurrence of riskier online activities and the ways in which these are perceived by internet-using children and their caregivers.

1.1 INTERNET ACCESS AND BARRIERS

Sampling data from the *Disrupting Harm* household survey of children shows that 56% of 12–17-year-olds are internet users. [51,52] This proportion is much higher than the internet penetration rate for the general population of 15% that was estimated by the International Telecommunications Union in 2019.[53] Internet use was slightly higher among boys (59%) than girls (53%) and more common for older than younger children from 31% among 12–13-year-olds to as high as 94% among 16–17-year-olds. Children in rural areas were slightly less likely to be internet users (51%) than children in urban areas (68%).

When it comes to the frequency of internet use, 43% of children aged 12–17 go online at least once a day. A higher percentage of children living in urban areas went online daily (57%) compared to those in rural areas (29%). Slightly more girls than boys, and older children aged 16–17, use the internet daily (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Frequency of children's internet use.

	Less than once a month	At least monthly	At least weekly	Once a day or more
Total	32%	12%	13%	43%
12–13	39%	9%	10%	41%
14–15	32%	12%	14%	42%
16–17	28%	13%	13%	45%
Boys	33%	13%	13%	41%
Girls	30%	11%	13%	46%
Urban	25%	7%	10%	57%
Rural	38%	17%	15%	29%

■ **Less than once a month**   ■ **At least monthly**   ■ **At least weekly**   ■ **Once a day or more**
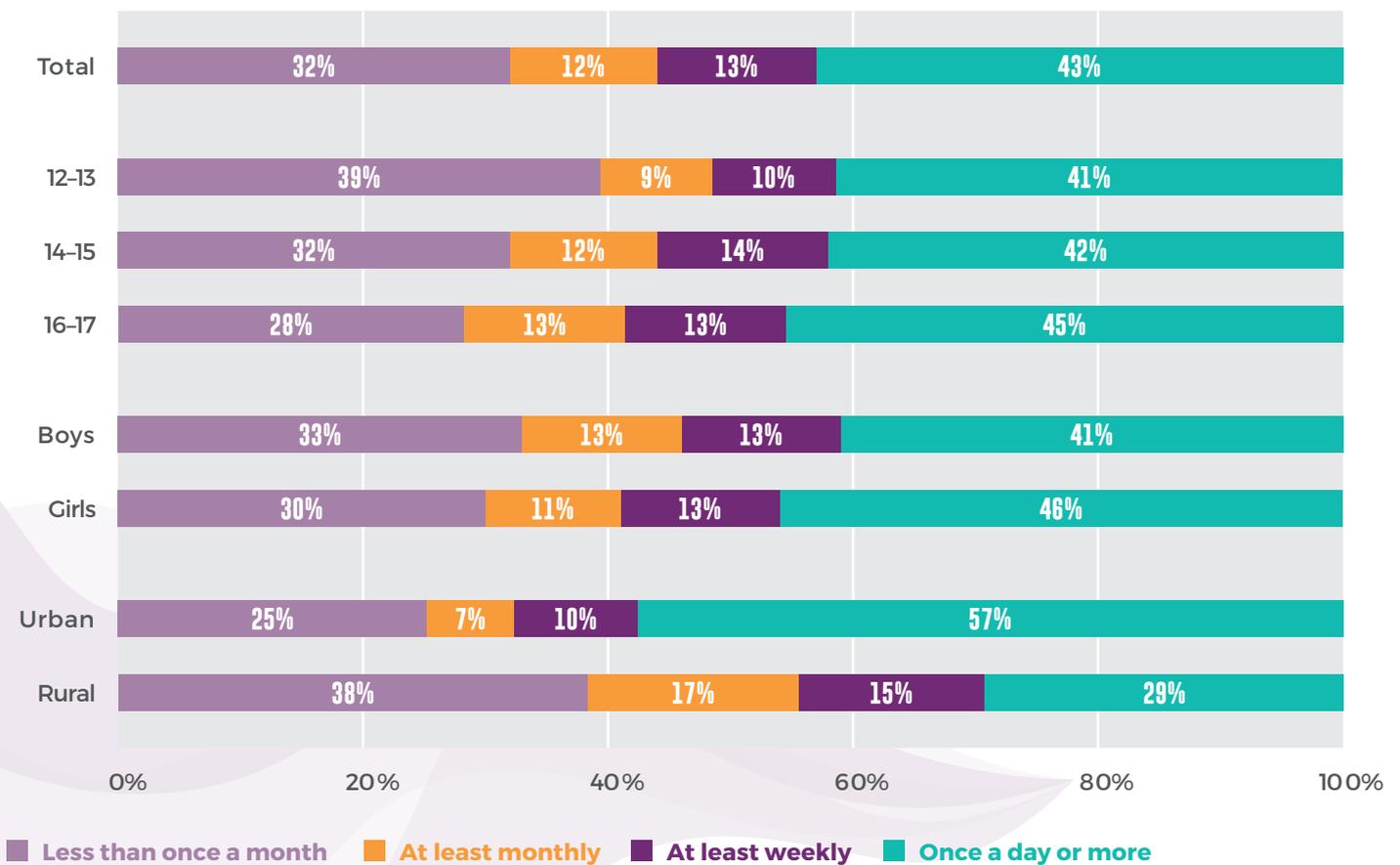
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999.

51. While conducting the random walk to identify eligible children to partake in the main survey, data was also collected from every household visited about the number of 12–17-year-old children living there, their gender, age, and whether they had used the internet in the past three months. This allowed the estimation of internet penetration rates for all 12–17-year-old children in Mozambique. n = 2,899 households.
52. The question used to determine whether a 12–17-year-old was an internet user: 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.
53. International Telecommunications Union. (2020). Country ICT data: Percentage of Individuals Using the Internet.

Disrupting Harm in Mozambique – Evidence on online child sexual exploitation and abuse

One caregiver of each child interviewed also took part in the survey. Of those caregivers, 42% had never used the internet. These are mostly older caregivers aged 50 and above. Among caregivers who are internet users, only 21% used the internet on a daily basis (see Figure 5). This represents a substantial difference between young people and their caregivers, which could make it more difficult for caregivers to support children's internet activities and teach them about how to stay safe.

Place of internet use: Almost all 12–17-year-old internet users in the sample go online at home (96%), and many do so weekly or daily (63%), mirroring the global trend.[54] Around 59% of children use internet at school, but only 23% use it at school on a weekly basis or more often.

Use of public internet access points was less common, with only 20% of children indicating that they used internet cafes and malls to go online (see Figure 6). Given the data collection took place in 2021, COVID-19-related lockdowns may have impacted these figures if internet cafes or malls were less accessible than before.

Device for internet use: As in most other *Disrupting Harm* countries, the vast majority (94%) of internet-using children surveyed use smartphones to go online, likely due to their relatively low cost and portability.[55] Among those children who use smartphones, 49% shared the device with someone else. Children were most likely to share their smartphone with a caregiver (20%), a sibling (20%) or friends (18%). Children surveyed were less likely to go online through computers (7%) and/or tablets (3%). There were very small age and gender differences in the use of any of these devices (see Figure 7).

Figure 5: Frequency of caregiver's internet use.

Legend: ■ Never ■ Less than once a month ■ At least monthly ■ At least weekly ■ Once a day or more
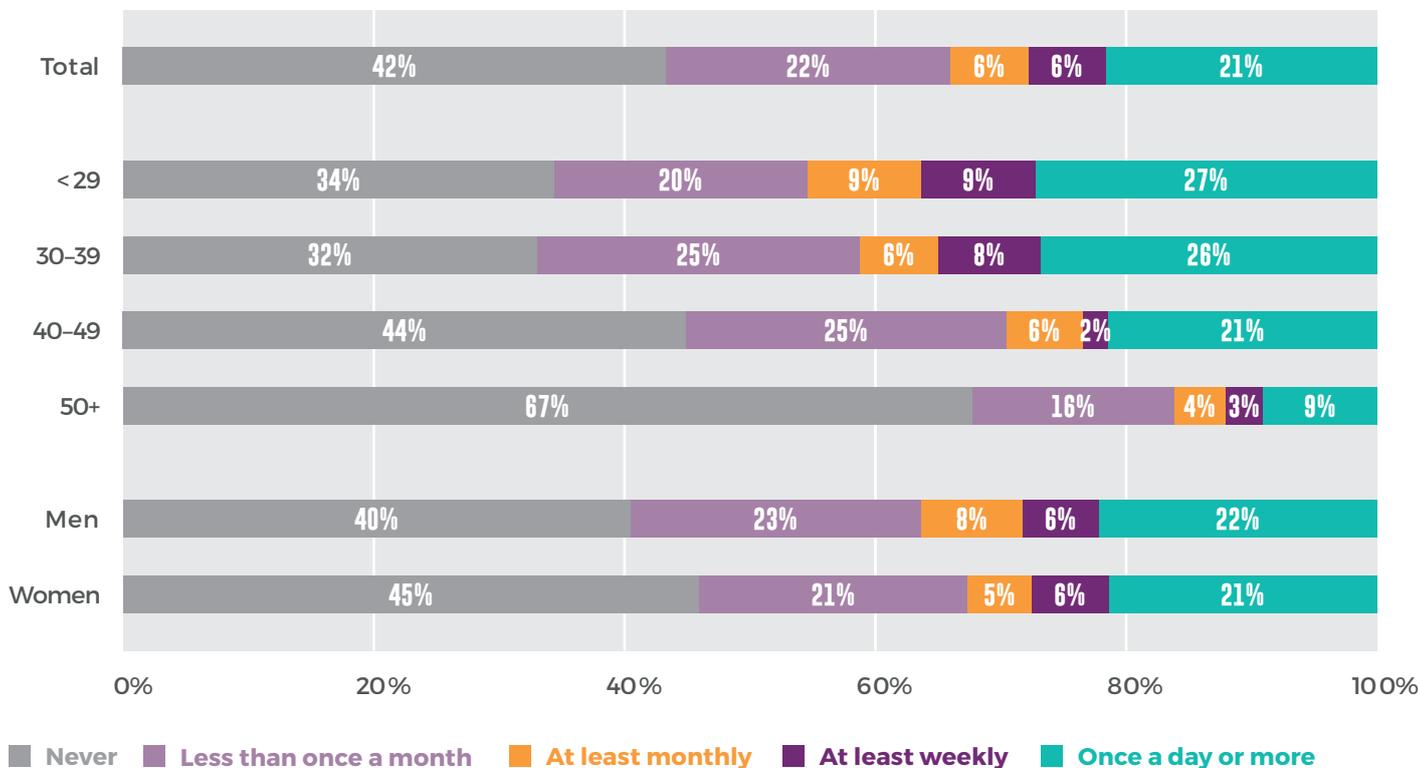
Caregivers of internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999.

54. Smahel, D., MacHackova, H., Mascheroni, G., Dedkova, L., Staksrud, E., Olafsson, K., Livingstone, S., & Hasebrink, U. (2020). EU Kids Online 2020: Survey results from 19 countries. London School of Economics and Political Science, London, UK.
55. Livingstone, S., Kardefelt Winther, D., & Saeed, M. (2019). Global Kids Online Comparative Report. Innocenti Research Report. UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti, Florence.

1.1 INTERNET ACCESS AND BARRIERS

Figure 6: Place of internet use.

	Never	Less than once a month	At least monthly	At least weekly	Once a day or more
Home	4%	26%	8%	13%	50%
School	41%	31%	4%	9%	14%
Café	80%	12%	3%	1%	3%
Mall	81%	13%	2%	1%	3%
Somewhere else	38%	24%	8%	8%	18%
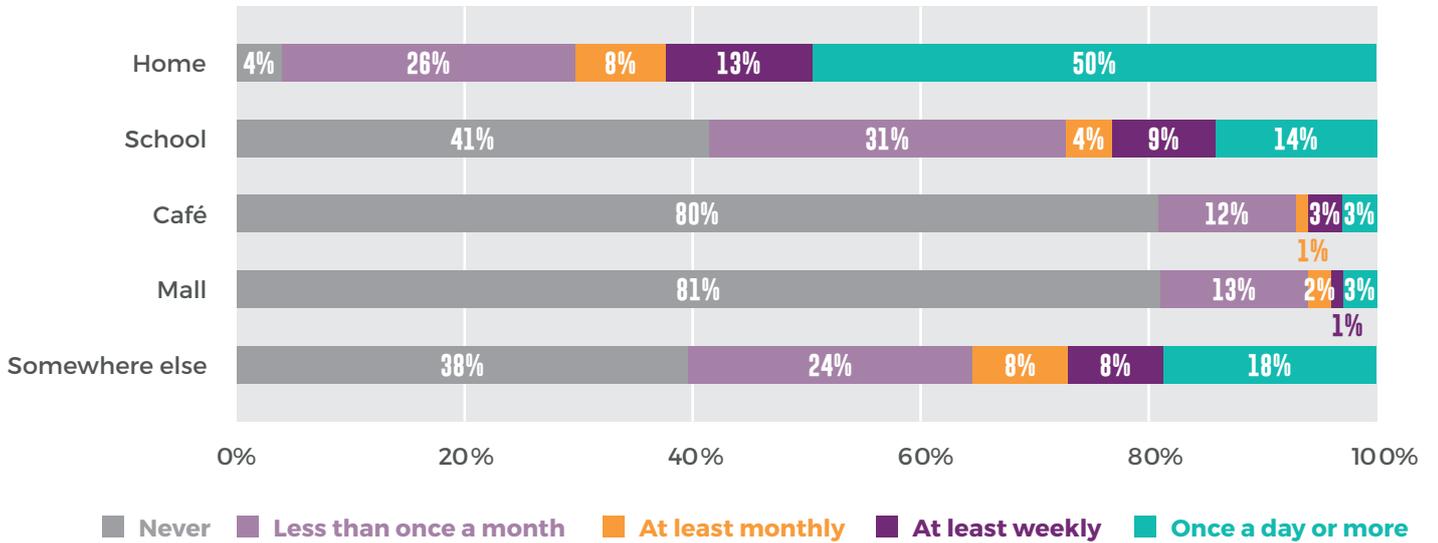
Caregivers of internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999.

Figure 7: Devices children use to go online, by age.

	Mobile phone	Computer	Tablet	Other digital device
Total	94%	7%	3%	1%
12–13	94%	6%	4%	1%
14–15	93%	5%	6%	1%
16–17	95%	8%	1%	1%
Boys	95%	8%	3%	1%
Girls	94%	6%	4%	1%
Urban	95%	11%	4%	
Rural	93%	3%	3%	1%
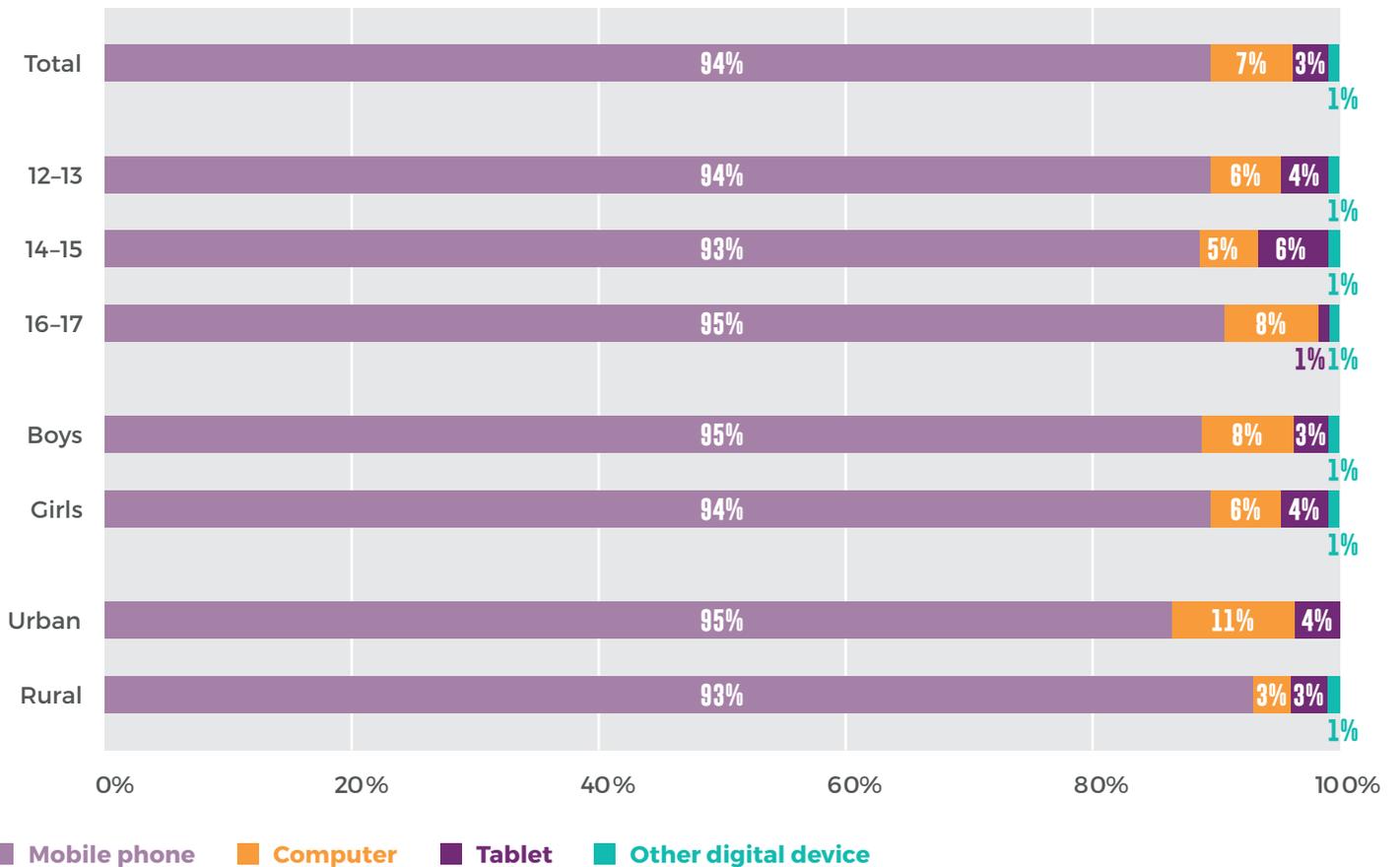
Caregivers of internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999.

Figure 8: Barriers to access for internet-using children.
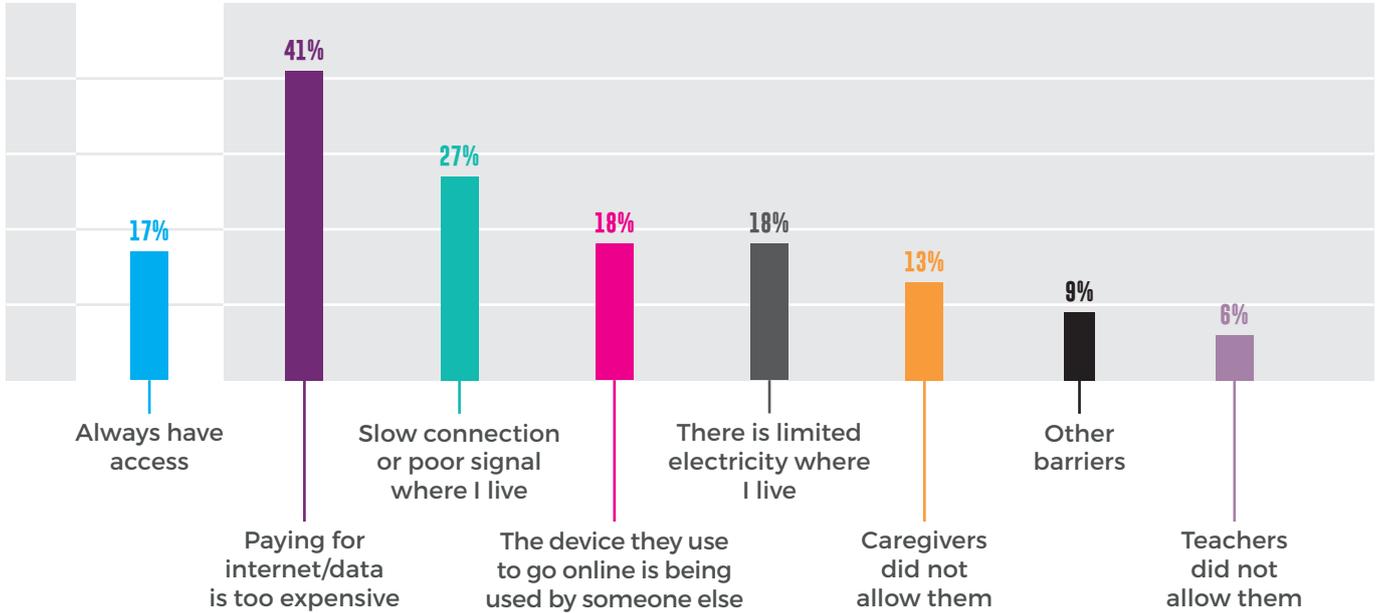
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17in Mozambique. n = 999.

Barriers to access and use of the internet: Four in five children using the internet in Mozambique face barriers when they want or need to access the internet (see Figure 8). The main barriers for children are high internet/data cost and slow connections, or poor signal coverage where they live. Poor connection affected more children living in rural areas (34%) than urban areas (20%), while high internet/data cost affected more children in the urban areas (43%) than rural areas (38%). Other notable barriers include limited electricity to power their devices, and a general lack of devices, both of which affected 18% internet-using children.

> High internet/data cost and slow/poor connection are the main barriers to access and use of the internet for children in Mozambique.

1.2 CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES ONLINE

Children engage in a wide range of online activities on a weekly basis. The online activities that children in Mozambique engage in the most on a weekly basis were using social media (63%), chatting (45%) and watching videos (45%). These were closely followed by using the internet for schoolwork (44%). Children aged 14–17 engaged in most online activities more often than children aged 12–13, though differences are fairly small.

Figure 9 provides a greater understanding of how 12–17-year-olds in Mozambique use the internet and the activities they enjoy.

These categories are not intended to be mutually exclusive; for example, a child could go online to watch a video as part of their schoolwork.

Figure 9: Activities children engage in online at least once a week.

Online activities	Total	12–13	14–15	16–17	Boy	Girl	Boy	Girl
Used social media	63%	56%	64%	65%	63%	63%	73%	53%
Used instant messaging	45%	43%	48%	44%	43%	48%	55%	35%
Watched videos	45%	39%	47%	46%	47%	43%	52%	38%
School work	44%	35%	48%	45%	42%	47%	53%	36%
Followed celebrities and public figures on social media	34%	33%	35%	33%	32%	36%	42%	26%
Talked to family or friends who live further away	30%	17%	34%	32%	32%	27%	33%	27%
Searched for new information	22%	17%	24%	23%	22%	22%	24%	20%
Looked for news	22%	16%	21%	24%	23%	20%	21%	22%
Played online games	21%	24%	27%	17%	24%	18%	23%	19%
Looked for information about work or study opportunities	19%	21%	20%	18%	18%	20%	20%	18%
Watched a live-stream	15%	10%	21%	13%	16%	13%	14%	15%
Looked for health information	13%	9%	16%	12%	12%	14%	11%	14%
Created their own video or music	12%	16%	13%	10%	11%	13%	12%	13%
Participated in a site where people share their interests	11%	14%	11%	9%	10%	11%	10%	11%
Sought emotional support	9%	9%	11%	8%	7%	11%	7%	11%
Created a blog or website	7%	9%	9%	5%	7%	7%	3%	11%
Discussed political or social problems	7%	4%	11%	6%	7%	7%	5%	9%
Looked for information or events in local neighbourhood	7%	4%	10%	6%	7%	7%	5%	9%

Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999 children.

Disrupting Harm in Mozambique – Evidence on online child sexual exploitation and abuse

1.3 PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF RISKY ONLINE ACTIVITIES

Discussions of online risks for children are often based on adult-centric perceptions of what is risky and harmful. To help us understand children's perspectives, both children and their caregivers were asked about their engagement in, and perceptions of, various risky online activities.

1.3.1 Contact with unknown individuals online and in person

Communicating with someone unknown online

A common concern around children's online use is that children will meet people unknown to them online and then decide to meet them in person, which can be risky and could lead to harm. Children and caregivers were asked to rate the level of risk for children when 'talking to someone on the internet whom they have not met face-to-face before'. Among caregivers who took part in the household survey, 69% said that talking to someone on the internet who they have not met face-to-face before was very risky for children. Among internet-using children, 43% ranked this behaviour as very risky for children their age.

Although most children and caregivers recognised that this activity carried a level of risk, some still viewed it as not risky at all (7% of caregivers and 21% of children), and 49% of the children said they had added people who they had never met face-to-face to their friend or contacts lists (see Figure 10).

Similarly, 77% of caregivers and 64% of children, considered sending personal information (for example, their full name, address or phone number) to someone they had never met face-to-face as very risky for children (see Figure 11), and only 7% of children thought it is not risky at all. But the household survey also revealed that 33% of the internet-using children surveyed have shared their personal information with someone they had never met face-to-face in the past year.

Meeting someone in person following an online interaction

In the household survey, children and caregivers were asked about the level of risk they associate with children meeting someone face-to-face whom they first got to know online. A higher percentage of caregivers (76%) than children (55%) said that meeting people they first got to know online is 'very risky'. A small proportion of caregivers (5%) and children (8%) described this as being not risky at all for children.

In practice, during the past year, 28% of children surveyed had met someone in person whom they had first met online. These were mostly older children aged 16–17 years. According to children, many of these face-to-face encounters did not result in immediate harm and most respondents described being pleased about the outcome (see Figure 13). Research undertaken across more than 30 countries around the world has produced similar findings.[56,57]

Even if the experiences of most internet-using children in Mozambique and other countries seem to indicate that the risk of harm from engaging with someone unknown online is relatively low, all children should be informed about the possible risks, and taught how to engage responsibly and to take safety precautions, like informing a trusted adult or meeting only in public places.

56. UNICEF. (2020). Country Office Annual Report 2020.
57. Smahel, D., Machackova, H., et al. (2020). EU Kids Online 2020: Survey results from 19 countries. Florence: UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti.

Figure 10: Level of risk attributed by children to speaking to someone unknown online.

How risky is it for children to talk to someone online whom they have never met face-to-face?

43%

% of children who say this is 'very risky' for children their age

I have added people who I have never met face-to-face to my friends or contacts list

49%

% of children who have done this in the past year
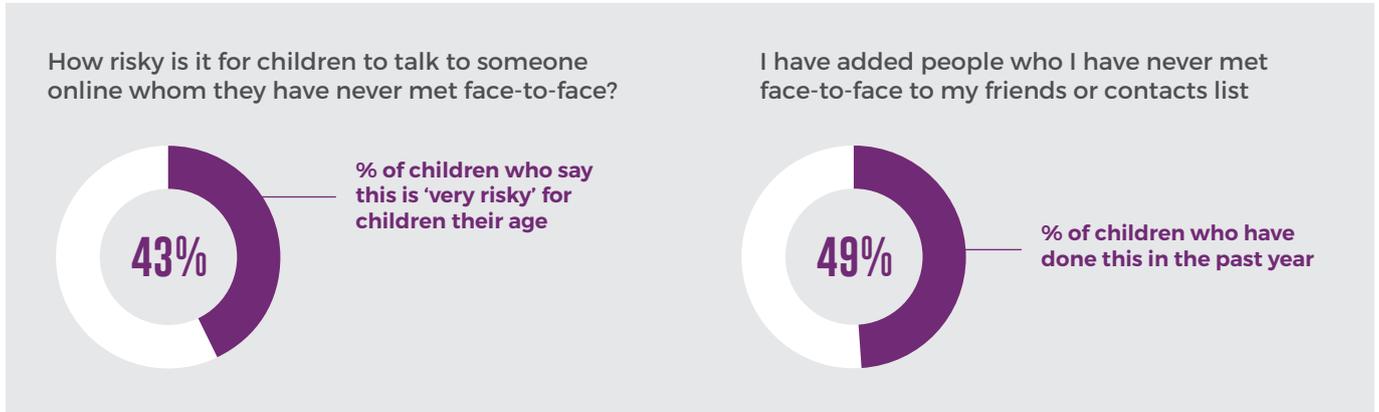
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999

Figure 11: Level of risk attributed by children to sharing their personal information with someone unknown online.

How risky is it for children to share personal information to someone they never met face-to-face?

64%

% of children who say this is 'very risky' for children their age

I have sent my personal information to someone I have never met face-to-face

33%

% of children who have done this in the past year
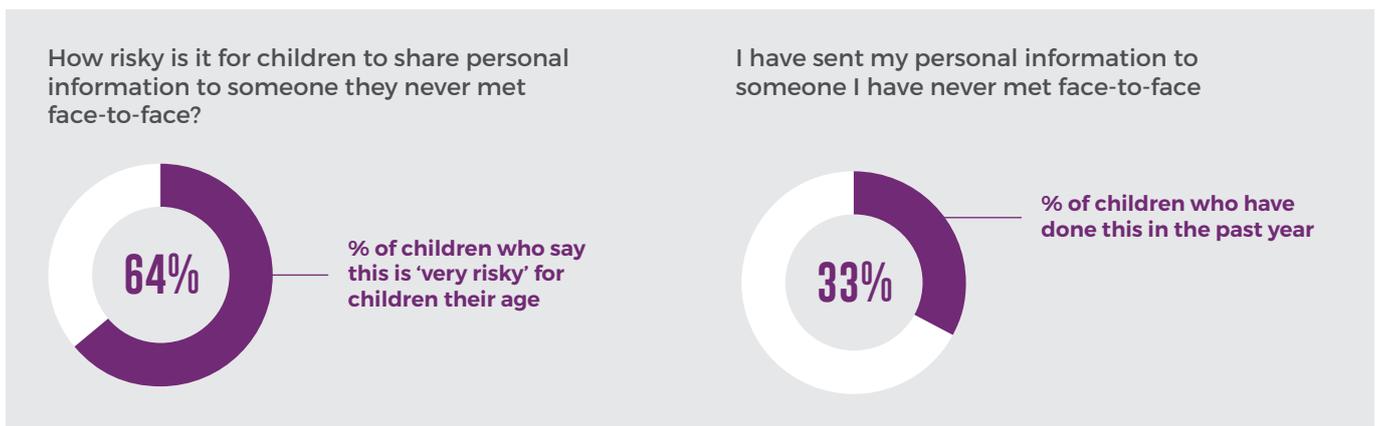
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999

Figure 12: Level of risk attributed by children to meeting people in person, whom they first met online.

How risky is it for children to meet someone face-to-face that they first got to know online?

55%

% of children who say this is 'very risky' for children their age

Children who have met someone face-to-face that they first got to know on the internet in the past year

28%

% of children who have done this in the past year
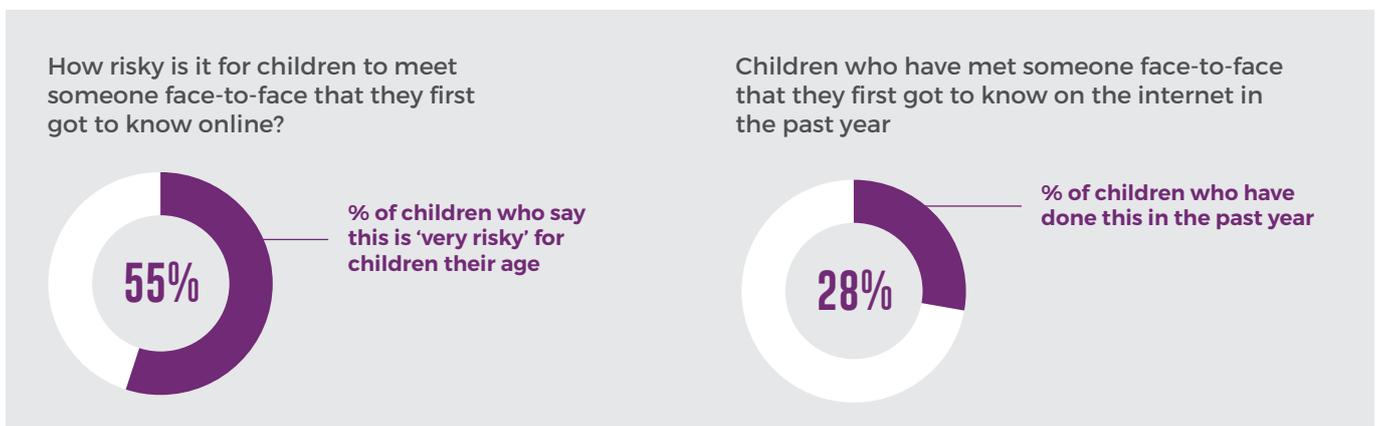
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999

Figure 13: How children felt the last time they met someone in person they first met online.

- Happy: 70%
- Excited: 33%
- Anxious: 23%
- Proud: 8%
- Fearful: 7%
- Other: 7%
- Thoughtful: 4%
- Sad: 3%
- Don't know: 1%
- Prefer not to say: 1%
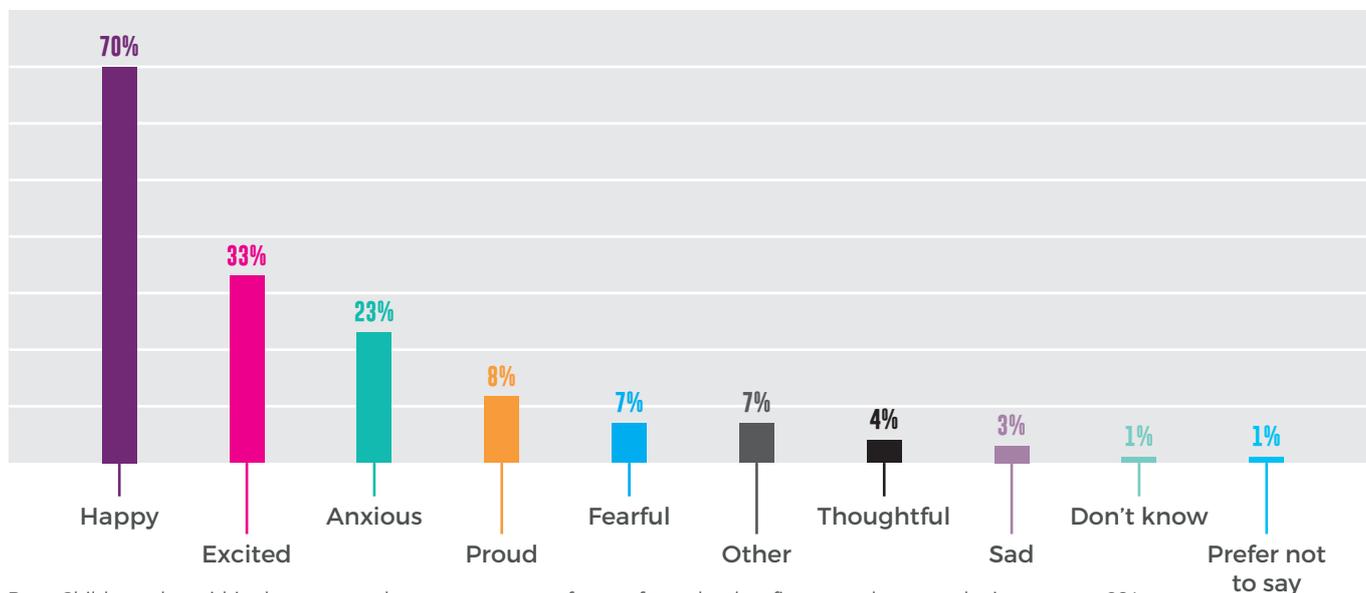
Base: Children who, within the past year, have met someone face-to-face who they first got to know on the internet. n = 284.

Empowering Caregivers to Guide their Children's Internet Use

When faced with common public perceptions that technology and increased internet use equates with increased vulnerability to OCSEA, caregivers might instinctively react by restricting their children's internet use in a bid to protect them. This approach might reduce children's exposure to online risks in the short term, but in the longer term it also reduces their digital skills and familiarity with the online environment. An alternative approach, *supportive engagement and mediation* by adults, has been associated with positive skills development for children in other countries.[58]

In the household survey, 41% of caregivers noted that they would talk to their child about what happened if their child was bothered by something online, while 25% of caregivers said they would respond by restricting their child's internet access. Fourteen percent of the children noted that their caregivers often limit how long they stay online.

More positive and helpful forms of support provided by parents could include engaging in activities together, talking to children about their internet use, and educating them about the risks that exist online and how best to avoid them. Caregivers can be an important line of defence in protecting children from online harms, but they are more likely to be able to do so if they have a grasp of basic digital skills, are aware of online risks, and can have open and honest conversations with their children about these issues.

Forty-two percent of the caregivers in the household survey in Mozambique had never used the internet and therefore might lack some digital skills and knowledge to support their children's internet use. Among internet-using caregivers surveyed, about half had some digital skills relevant for supporting their children online; 44% knew how to check if a website can be trusted, 47% knew how to change privacy settings, and 44% knew how to report harmful content on social media. In addition, 39% of caregivers felt they can help their children to cope with things online that bother or upset them.

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

Around 47% of children noted that their caregivers sometimes or often suggest ways to use the internet safely; and 40% said that their caregivers help them when something bothers them online. Caregivers should be supported to provide as much guidance as possible and this can be reinforced by other entities such as schools or protection agencies.

Given that many of the caregivers have never used the internet and many among those that have used it lack the required competences to support their children online, the development of skills and knowledge for parents could be an important part of OCSEA prevention efforts, in order to harness the possibility of positive parental support.

Talking about sex

In the household survey, children and caregivers were asked about the level of risk they associate with children talking about sex with someone online. More caregivers (76%) than children (53%) associated children talking about sex with someone online as a 'very risky'. A small proportion of caregivers (4%) and children (11%) described this as being not risky at all for children.

1.3.2 Seeing sexual images online

Household survey data indicates that half of children surveyed believed that seeing sexual images or videos on the internet is very risky. As with other risky behaviours online, the perception of risk was greater among caregivers (71%) than among children (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 (see chapter 2.2.1) 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 some pornography appears to be an increasingly present experience for young people.[59] Addressing both phenomena is needed.[60]

In the household survey, 36% of internet-using children said that they had sometimes or often seen sexual images or videos online *intentionally* within the past year. It is possible that children under-report seeing such images intentionally because it is a sensitive and private issue. On the other hand, 44% of the children said that they had sometimes or often seen sexual images or videos online *by accident*. In general, it was more common for children aged 16–17 to report having had these experiences (both intentional and accidental) than for younger children, aged 12–13. Children who had seen sexual images or videos online *by accident* reported seeing this content most frequently via direct messages (49%), and social media posts (35%). Online advertisements (23%) were also cited. Fewer children (14%) reported encountering sexual content online by accident while conducting a web search.

59. 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.
60. Bell, C. (2017). An Overview of Research on the Impact that Viewing Pornography has on Children, Pre-Teens and Teenagers. Bravehearts.

Figure 14: Level of risk attributed by children to seeing a sexual image or video on the internet.

Seeing sexual images or videos on the internet

50%

% of children who say this is 'very risky' for children their age

I have seen sexual images or videos online because I wanted to (for example, I accessed a website or social network expecting to find that kind of content there)

36%

% of children who have done this in the past year

Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999

Figure 15: Level of risk attributed by children to sending sexual content online.

Sending a sexual image or video to someone on the internet

66%

% of children who say this is 'very risky' for children their age

In the past year, how often have you shared naked pictures or videos of yourself with someone else online?

12%

% of children who have done this in the past year
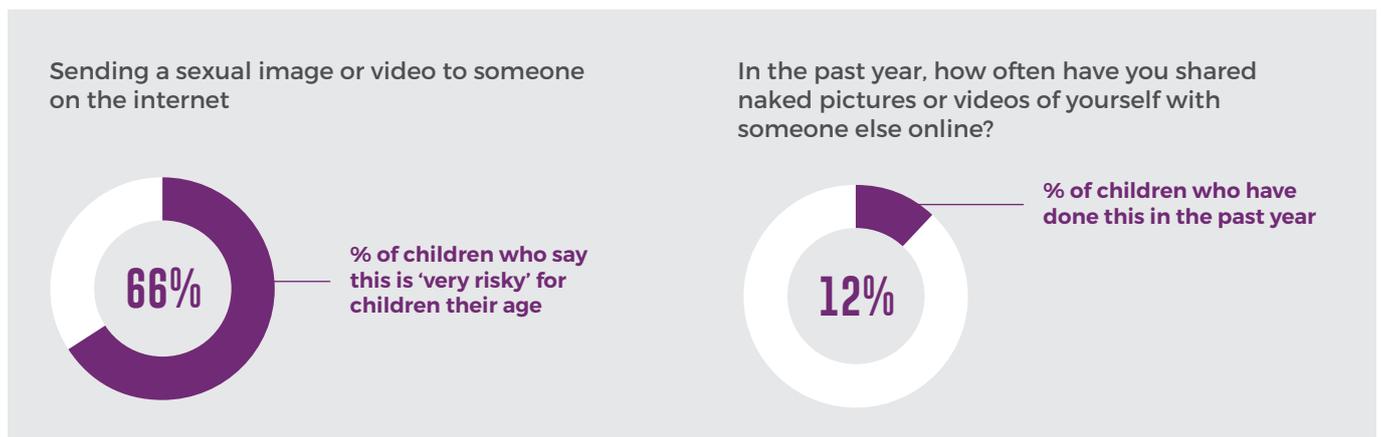
Base: Internet-using children aged 12–17 in Mozambique. n = 999

1.3.3 Making and sharing self-generated sexual content

In the household survey, respondents were presented with a range of online activities and asked to rate how risky each activity is. Around two-thirds of children (59%) and even more of the caregivers (77%) believed that it is wrong for a person to take naked images or videos of themselves. In the same survey, 66% of children and 81% of caregivers surveyed said it was very risky for children to share a sexual image or video with someone online.

In practice, 12% of the children surveyed said that they had shared naked pictures or videos of themselves online in the past year. This was more common among children aged 16–17 (15%) than among 12–13-year-olds (10%). The data did not reveal any notable differences by gender, or whether the child lived in an urban or rural area. In addition, 7% of children surveyed said they allowed someone else to take naked pictures of videos of them in the past year. It is unclear whether these were consensual activities among peers or if these are instances of sexual abuse. These figures could be under-reported due to common discomfort around discussing sex or because children did not want anyone to know about it.

There are varying contexts and circumstances within which children can generate and share sexual content. In some cases, children can be asked for sexual images within trusting – and sometimes genuine – relationships with others, or may even initiate sharing this kind of content. However, in certain cases, they may share self-generated sexual content as a result of intentional deception or ill-advised engagements with others, including peers.

A young person in Namibia that who was interviewed as part of the _Disrupting Harm Survivor Conversations_ explained how trust was established and abused to get her to exchange sexual pictures or videos: _"So, with the online relationship with that guy, we somehow kept on sending pictures on WhatsApp, and because of the sweet messages, I also came to a point where, I felt safe to send the topless pictures and also the videos started."_ (RA5-NA-04-A)

Figure 16: Reasons given by children for sharing naked images or videos of themselves.

Reasons for sharing naked images	Total	12–13	14–15	16–17	Boy	Girl
Trusted the other person	43%	40%	56%	38%	41%	45%
In love	21%		32%	22%	19%	23%
Flirting or having fun	16%	10%	12%	21%	20%	13%
Wanted the attention of the person	13%	5%	24%	10%	16%	8%
Prefer not to say	11%	24%	3%	13%	8%	17%
Did not think there was anything wrong with sharing the pictures or videos	7%	10%		9%	6%	7%
Worried that I would lose the person if I didn't share	5%	5%		7%	5%	5%
Offered money or gifts in exchange for the pictures or videos	2%		3%	3%	5%	
Threatened	2%	5%	3%		2%	2%
Pressured to share the pictures or videos by their friends	2%	10%			3%	
Other	1%			1%	2%	
Don't know	6%	5%	3%	7%	5%	7%

Base: Children who have shared naked images or videos of themselves in the past year. n = 124..

Among children who had shared sexual images or videos of themselves, the most common reason for doing so was trusting the other person (see Figure 16). Some children shared sexual images or videos of themselves because they were in love, flirting or having fun. The most common recipients were current or former romantic partners (42%) or a friend/someone they already knew before it happened (36%).

❝

Trust in the other person is the most common reason for sharing sexual images or videos of themselves. The most common recipients are current or former romantic partners and friends.

❞

## The Rise in Self-Generated Sexual Content Involving Children

The increasing use of technology is leading to shifts in notions of privacy and nature of sexual interactions among children in some parts of the world, particularly adolescents.[61] Forms of behaviour that are increasingly normal to young people can be bewildering for adults who grew up in a different time. For instance, chatting and video live-streaming is common, whether among small private groups of friends or large, anonymous public audiences. While much of these activities are harmless, producing and sharing self-generated sexual content using these tools is also increasing and bringing significant risks.[62]

The sharing of self-generated sexual content by children is complex and includes a range of different experiences, risks, and harms. As the *Disrupting Harm* data show, some self-generated content is shared with others because children trust the other person, are in love, or having fun. Globally, such exchanges are increasingly becoming part of young people's sexual experiences.[63] However, the *Disrupting Harm* data also show that the creation and sharing of self-generated sexual content can be coerced through threats or peer pressure (see chapter 2.2). While such coercion is a crime and can lead to harm, there can be negative consequences for children from sharing any sexual content, including in cases where sharing is *not* coerced. 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 (see Figure 17).[64,65]

In Mozambique, a substantial proportion of 12–17-year-olds seem to be aware that producing and sharing sexual content can carry risks for children. Yet, 12% of children have shared sexual content in the past year. The possible risks that sharing sexual content online entails should be central to all discussions with children both about their internet use and relationships with other people – at home, at school, and in the community.

It can be difficult for children to seek help if sexual content involving them is shared with others without permission, partly owing to the fear of victim blaming. In Mozambique, the household survey showed that a large majority of children (59%) and caregivers (60%) believe that 'if someone allows these kinds of image(s) or video(s) to be taken, they shouldn't be surprised if it is shared further'. When self-generated content is shared without permission, reluctance or inability to seek help may lead to further harm for children.

Figure 17: Mapping the consequences of sharing self-generated sexual material involving young people.
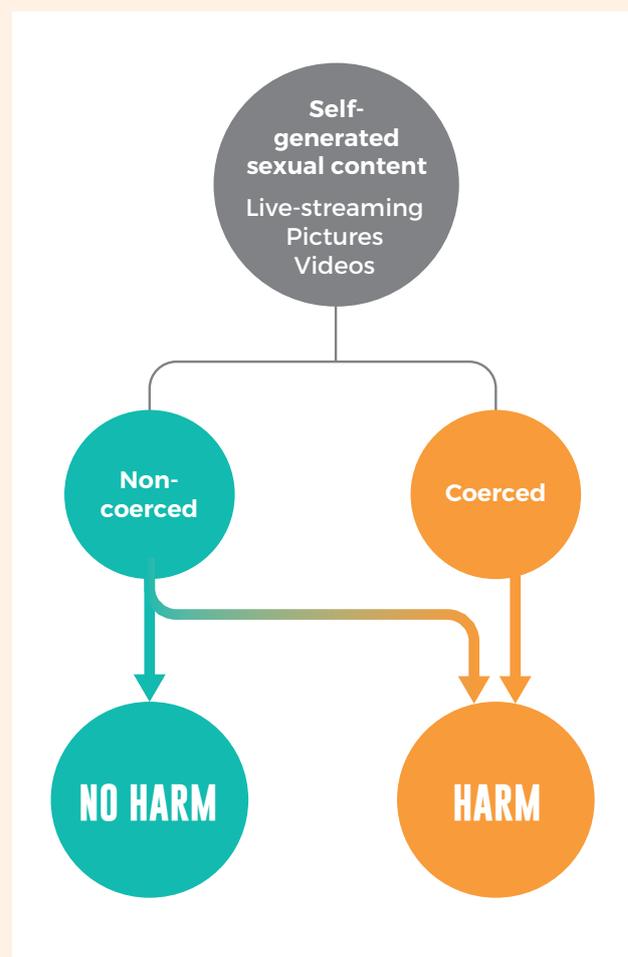
61. Livingstone, S. & Mason, J. (2015). Sexual Rights and Sexual Risks among Youth Online: A review of existing knowledge regarding children and young people's developing sexuality in relation to new media environments. London: European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online.
62. Thorn & Benson Strategy Group. (2020). Self-Generated Child Sexual Abuse Material: Attitudes and Experiences.
63. Internet Watch Foundation (2021). The Annual Report 2020.
64. EUROPOL. (2019, 9 October). Internet Organised Crime Threat Assessment 2019.
65. Bracket Foundation. (2019). Artificial Intelligence: Combating Online Sexual Abuse of Children.

1.4 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR ONLINE SAFETY

It is notable that, according to the household survey, 60% of internet-using children have never received information on how to stay safe online. This lack of access to information was more common among children residing in rural areas than those in urban areas.

This was confirmed by a representative from the National Human Rights Commission in Mozambique, who stated that there is inequality in public awareness efforts: *"We start seeing such programmes in schools because basically most of them are working in an online system and they already have this component of prevention. But this is not for all areas. There are certain areas where this is not discussed yet but in urban areas this discussion has already started."* (RA1-MZ-11-A)

One frontline worker echoed the lack of digital literacy training in Mozambique stating: *"there is no dissemination of information on how a child should use social networks and how to protect from offenders of OCSEA. Thus, the child has no knowledge and may consider these practices as a common joke on the internet."* (RA3-MZ-37-A)

When it comes to digital skills that children can use to stay safe online however, children seem to be slightly more confident in their ability to judge situations than in their technical skills. According to the household survey, 55% of children are confident in their ability to judge which images of themselves or their friends to share online and 68% feel confident to know when to remove people from their contact lists, while 48% indicated that they knew how to change their privacy settings and 43% knew how to report harmful content on social media (43%). These are subjective evaluations of their own competence and should be interpreted with caution.

> **There is no dissemination of information on how a child should use social networks and how to protect [themselves] from offenders of OCSEA.**
> RA3-MZ-37-A

2. ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN MOZAMBIQUE

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 Mozambique. National crime data from national law enforcement authorities were not available in Mozambique (for reasons detailed under chapter 2.1.1). This chapter draws on a variety of sources in order to create a snapshot of the nature of these crimes against children: NCMEC CyberTipline, foreign law enforcement agencies (chapter 2.1), children's self-reported experiences (chapter 2.2 and 2.3) frontline workers (chapter 2.4). While foreign law enforcement data and mandated reports from U.S.-based technology companies to NCMEC cannot be validated by Mozambique law enforcement in the same way as internally approved statistics are, the information contained in them might be helpful in interpreting the data found by the *Disrupting Harm* project.

For several reasons, estimates are not intended to provide a conclusive picture of the prevalence of OCSEA. Firstly, there is the absence of national crime statistics and case studies from the law enforcement authorities. Secondly, with respect to the household survey, a degree of under-reporting could be expected due to privacy concerns, discomfort when talking about sex, and stigma around sexual exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, in households where sexual abuse occurs, researchers would be less likely to be given permission to talk to the children in such a survey. The survey only included internet users and children who live at home and may not therefore represent vulnerable populations such as children engaged in migration, children deprived of liberty, children in institutions or street-connected children. Finally, many estimates are based on the analysis of sub-samples of the survey data which are small because OCSEA is still a rarely reported phenomenon, resulting in a larger margin of error.

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 instances of OCSEA in Mozambique and the extent to which internet-using 12–17-year-old children in Mozambique are subjected to OCSEA.

2.1 LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

2.1.1 Recorded OCSEA offences

Data on recorded national crimes related to OCSEA was requested from Mozambique law enforcement, via the National Central Bureau Maputo. No data was made available.

As with all *Disrupting Harm* countries, the COVID-19 pandemic negatively affected data collection. Mozambique law enforcement indicated pandemic-related enforcement priorities as a reason for their inability to contribute. Pandemic-related health concerns did not allow for on-site visits for further clarification or supplemental categorisation. The conversations with Mozambique law enforcement bodies were carried out remotely.

The data from NCMEC CyberTipline and foreign law enforcement agencies presented in this chapter was obtained as a result of requests made to these institutions by INTERPOL on behalf of the Mozambique law enforcement authorities.

2.1.2 International OCSEA detections and referrals

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.

NCMEC triages these service provider reports and passes CyberTips on to the relevant countries' national law enforcement units for action. However, for providers not based in the United States, this reporting is voluntary. As not all platforms report suspected child exploitation to NCMEC, the data below did not encompass several platforms popular in the *Disrupting Harm* focus countries.

Most CyberTips include geographic indicators relating to the upload location of CSAM.[66] For the years 2017, 2018 and 2019, NCMEC CyberTips of suspected child sexual exploitation in Mozambique are shown in Figure 18.

Mozambique saw a smaller overall increase in CyberTips (13%) than the global trend between 2017 and 2019, and a sharper reduction in 2019 (-37%). This may be indicative of OCSEA offenders in Mozambique moving away from the platforms that report suspected child exploitation to NCMEC, thereby raising the question of where offenders might move to next.

Analysis of the types of incidents reported to NCMEC reveals that the possession, manufacture and distribution of CSAM (referred to in U.S. legislation as "child pornography") accounts for all but two of Mozambique's CyberTips in the reporting period as shown in Figure 19.

Figure 18: Number of CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Mozambique.

	2017	2018	2019	% CHANGE 2017 to 2019	% CHANGE 2018 to 2019
Mozambique	4,142	7,444	4,688	13%	–37%
Global Total	10,214,753	18,462,424	16,987,361	66%	–8%
Mozambique as % of Global Total	0.041%	0.040%	0.028%		

Base: CyberTip data supplied by NCMEC.

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66. It is important to note that country-specific numbers may be impacted by the use of proxies and anonymisers. In addition, due to variance of law, each country must apply its own national laws when assessing the illegality of the reported content.

2.1 LAW ENFORCEMENT DATA

Figure 19: CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Mozambique, by incident type.

Incident Type	2017	2018	2019
CSAM, including possession, manufacture and distribution (NCMEC classification: child pornography)[67,68]	4,142	7,443	4,687
Misleading Words or Digital Images on the Internet		1	
Unsolicited Obscene Material Sent to a Child			1
Mozambique Total	**4,142**	**7,444**	**4,688**

Base: CyberTip data provided by NCMEC.

In terms of priority level, NCMEC tagged zero CyberTips in the reporting period as Priority 1, which would indicate an imminent risk of harm to a child.

Nearly all NCMEC CyberTips for Mozambique in the period 2017 to 2019 had electronic service providers as their source. A total of 14 electronic service providers submitted at least one report of suspected child exploitation for Mozambique in the reporting period:

Figure 20: NCMEC CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Mozambique, top twenty reporting electronic service providers.

Reporting Electronic Service Provider	2017	2018	2019	% of 2019 Total
Facebook	3,923	7,208	4,477	95.52%
Google	119	138	124	2.65%
Instagram Inc.	70	62	53	1.13%
WhatsApp Inc.	7	25	26	
Microsoft – Online Operations	2	2	4	
4chan community support LLC			1	
Pinterest Inc.	1	1	1	
Twitter Inc. / Vine.co	2		1	
Imgur LLC		1		
Multi Media LLC/Zmedianow LLC/Chaturbate	2			
Tagged.com		1		
Tiversa	3			
Younow.com	3			
YouTube Inc.	10	5		

Base: CyberTip data supplied by NCMEC, sorted by 2019 counts, null results removed.

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67. The terminology used in this column reflects classification by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children in line with U.S. legislation. D*isrupting Harm* advocates use of the term Child Sexual Abuse Material, in line with the Luxembourg Guidelines.
68. CyberTips under this category may reference more than one file of CSAM. For example, some reporting electronic service providers include more files per report, as opposed to one image per report and multiple reports per suspect.

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Both in 2019 and in the reporting period as a whole, 96% of reports for Mozambique were submitted by Facebook. The number of Facebook reports fluctuated in line with the national report total; a year-on-year increase of 84% in 2018, followed by a reduction of 38% in 2019. At smaller volumes, reports from Google were fairly stable over the reporting period, while Instagram reports declined.

Reported incidents from the live video broadcasting platform YouNow suggests at least some level of engagement with live-streamed CSEA. Appearance in the data of Tagged.com spoke to the misuse of adult dating sites for suspected distribution of CSAM. Reports from Chaturbate, a platform specialising in the provision of adult live-streamed sexual activity that is often paid for in tokens, raise the possibility of OCSEA with a commercial element. A report from anonymous image-based bulletin board 4chan, and reports from dark web and peer-to-peer monitoring firm Tiversa, may indicate the presence in Mozambique of OCSEA offenders with a level of technical sophistication and specialist interest.

An Internet Protocol (IP) address is assigned to each individual device on a specific network at a specific time. NCMEC data for Mozambique permits high-level analysis of unique IP addresses used to engage in suspected child exploitation.

During the reporting period, the total number of reports of suspected child exploitation in Mozambique increased by 13%, while the number of unique upload IP addresses increased by 199%. The average number of reports per unique IP address declined consistently over the reporting period (-62% overall).

A higher rate of reports per unique IP address would be suggestive of a tendency for offenders (or at least their devices) to upload multiple items of CSAM in a detected session, thereby generating multiple reports with the same upload IP address. Since this number is an average, it is reasonable to assume that some suspect IPs will have been linked to more reports, some less.

In addition, it would not be impossible for a report to contain more than one upload IP address. A lower rate of reports per unique IP address would perhaps reflect more than one instance of suspected child sexual exploitation, as would be the case for manual reports that collate multiple events for a single suspect. It may also reflect a dynamic assignment of IP addresses by the suspect's telecommunications provider. For instance, if a suspect's internet connection were refreshed while uploading CSAM to a particular platform, it is possible that more than one IP address would be assigned to that device by the telecommunications provider, and therefore captured by the platform reporting to NCMEC.

The ongoing transition from version 4 of the Internet Protocol address system, which in recent years has shared 32-bit IP addresses among a large number of devices by means of carrier grade Network Address Translation, to version 6's assignment of unique 128-bit addresses for devices may also have an impact here. Scrutiny of the content of NCMEC CyberTips destined for Mozambique would be required to test these hypotheses.

Figure 21: CyberTips concerning suspected child sexual exploitation in Mozambique, number of unique upload IP addresses by year.[69]

Mozambique Unique Upload IP Addresses	2017	2018	2019	% CHANGE 2017 to 2019	% CHANGE 2018 to 2019
Total Mozambique Reports	1,099	4,746	3,288	199%	–31%
Reports per Unique IP Address	4,142	7,444	4,688	13%	–37%
Reports per Unique IP Address	3.77	1.57	1.43	–62%	–9%

Base: CyberTip data supplied by NCMEC.

69. 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 ISPs 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.

2.1.3. Evidence of CSAM from other sources

CSAM Distribution on peer-to-peer networks

Data from the Child Rescue Coalition regarding the distribution of CSAM on peer-to-peer file-sharing networks reveals that only six IP addresses in Mozambique were found in the period from 9 June 2019 to 8 June 2020. Since the Child Rescue Coalition does not monitor all file-sharing networks, this figure should be treated only as an indication. That said, CSAM distribution on the monitored peer-to-peer networks would appear to be much less popular in Mozambique than in several other *Disrupting Harm* focus countries in Africa (see Figure 22).

Figure 22: CSAM distribution and downloading from *Disrupting Harm* focus countries, observed on peer-to-peer file-sharing networks by the Child Rescue Coalition.

	IP Addresses	Globally Unique Identifiers (GUIDs)[70]
Ethiopia	7	4
Kenya	76	24
Mozambique	**6**	**10**
Namibia	94	117
Rwanda	2	1
South Africa	2,413	842
Tanzania	47	5
Uganda	4	4

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

CSAM hosting

Mozambique has not been identified as a hosting country for images and videos assessed as illegal by INHOPE member hotlines contributing to the ICCAM platform.[71] Since data pertaining to the ICCAM project is limited to submissions from INHOPE member hotlines, this should not be taken as evidence of an absence of CSAM hosting in the country.

A CSAM reporting portal was launched in Mozambique in February 2018 by the Internet Watch Foundation. As of December 31st 2019, a total of two reports had been received, neither of which were identified as actionable (confirmed CSAM). In the calendar years 2017, 2018 and 2019, the Internet Watch Foundation actioned zero reports concerning confirmed CSAM hosting in Mozambique. Since the Internet Watch Foundation operates primarily as the United Kingdom's CSAM hotline, this should not be taken as evidence of an absence of CSAM hosting in the country.

Web Searches for CSAM

Research was conducted on Google Trends, with a view to identifying levels of interest in CSAM in Mozambique.[72] In the first instance, a sample of 20 specialist search terms[73] selected by the INTERPOL Crimes Against Children team served as keywords and phrases for estimating potential knowledge of and interest in CSAM. For each of these 20 terms, queries for the time period 1 January 2017 to 31 December 2019 regarding searches in Mozambique returned a result of 'not enough data'.

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. This suggests that globally popular CSAM search terms may be used less in Mozambique than in some other countries.

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70. A GUID number is generated by the version of the peer-to-peer software programme 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.
71. INHOPE. (n.d). What is ICCAM & Why is it Important?
72. Google Trends (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 was 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", https://support.google.com/trends/answer/4365533?hl=en&ref_topic=6248052, accessed 17/02/2021.
73. English language terms were selected because local dialects rendered sporadic results. These universal specialist terms were identified by INTERPOL Crimes Against Children team. In order to maintain uniformity in all DH reports, vernacular terms were not used unless otherwise some terms were provided by the law enforcement. In the case of Thailand, law enforcement did not provide any such terms.

While it may also be argued that more sophisticated CSAM offenders 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.

Less specialist, more 'entry level' searches related to OCSEA were present in Mozambique in the reporting period, including English-language searches for image and video content depicting sexual activity with and between teens, although to a more limited extent than some other *Disrupting Harm* focus countries in Africa. Additional Portuguese CSAM search terms identified by INTERPOL were also of limited interest. There was no available information on use of search terms in local languages or slang.

❝

Data regarding the distribution of CSAM on peer-to-peer file-sharing networks reveals that only six IP addresses in Mozambique were found in the period from 9 June 2019 to 8 June 2020; CSAM distribution on the monitored peer-to-peer networks would appear to be much less popular in Mozambique than in several other Disrupting Harm focus countries in Africa.

❞

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. None of the foreign law enforcement agencies consulted by INTERPOL had reported notifications of convicted sex offenders that intended to travel to Mozambique. This does not mean that Mozambique is not a destination for some travelling child sex offenders since not all countries have such schemes for registration and notification, and many individuals travelling to commit CSEA offences are not identified by law enforcement.

2.2 CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF ONLINE SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN MOZAMBIQUE

Under the *Disrupting Harm* project, OCSEA was defined specifically to include online grooming of children for sexual purposes, CSAM and the live-streaming of child sexual abuse. These concepts are used in this chapter to organise and present the research findings. At the same time, it must be recognised that the ways in which children are subjected to OCSEA are often far more complex and nuanced. The experiences or offences in question often occur in combination or in sequence. Moreover, as explored in *The Continuum of Online and Offline Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse* box on page 47, 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 revealed that in the past year alone, an estimated 13% of internet-using children aged 12–17 in the Mozambique were victims of clear examples of online sexual exploitation and abuse. This aggregate statistic encompassed the following four indicators of OCSEA experiences:

- Someone offered you money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos
- Someone offered you money or gifts online to meet them in person to do something sexual
- Someone shared sexual images of you without your consent
- Someone threatened or blackmailed you online to engage in sexual activities

Scaling the results of the household survey to the population of 12–17-year-old internet-using children in Mozambique reveals that an estimated 300,000 children in the country were subjected to at least one of these harms in the span of just one year.

The household 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 represented in these figures.

Moreover, OCSEA may have been under-reported in the household survey for several reasons, such as privacy concerns, shame or discomfort talking about sex, fear of stigma or self-incrimination, and sampling limitations.

A more precise assessment of the extent of OCSEA in Mozambique was challenging because the *Disrupting Harm* team was unable to conduct three out of the nine planned research activities, which would have allowed for a further interpretation of these findings and a more comprehensive picture of the issue.

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

The offer of money or gifts to a child in return for sexual images or videos constitutes evidence of grooming (see chapter 2.2.1) with the aim of obtaining CSAM. Of the 999 Mozambican children who participated in the household survey, 8% (76 children) said they had been offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos in the past year. These were more often girls (10%) than boys (6%).

Online or offline? Of the 76 children who had been offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos in the past year, 42% (32 children) said the request had occurred online – mainly via social media platforms, out of which the most common is Facebook (including Messenger) followed by WhatsApp. Notably, 38% (29 children) said the request had occurred in person.

IN THE PAST YEAR
# I WAS OFFERED MONEY OR GIFTS IN RETURN FOR SEXUAL IMAGES OR VIDEOS

YES 8%

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED…

Where did it happen?*†

42% Social media

38% In person

7% In an online game

7% Some other way

n = 76 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger
81%

Whatsapp
25%

Imo
7%
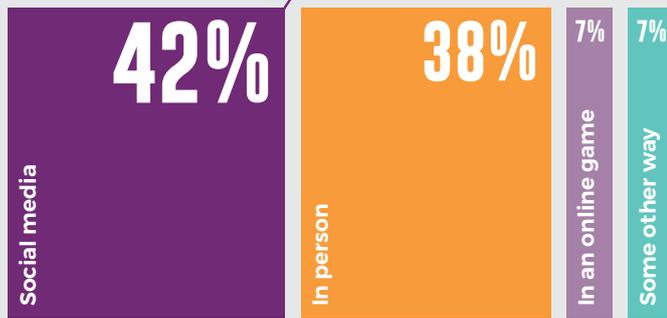
n = 32 children offered money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos via social media

---

IN THE PAST YEAR
I WAS OFFERED MONEY OR GIFTS TO MEET IN PERSON TO DO SOMETHING SEXUAL

YES 6%

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED…

Where did it happen?*†

41% Social media

33% In person

9% In an online game

9% Some other way
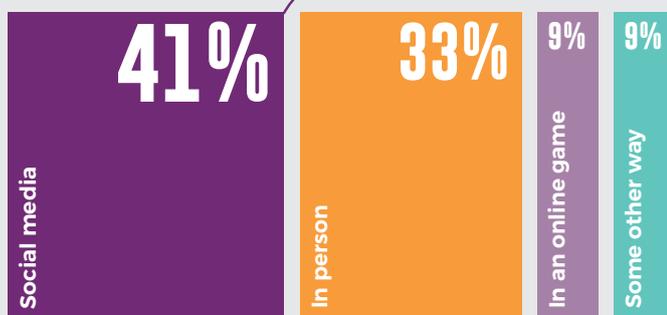
n = 64 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger
73%

Whatsapp
36%

Twitter
15%

n = 26 children offered money or gifts to meet in person to do something sexual via social media

---

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data

Offering children money or gifts for sexual acts

Conversations with survivors of OCSEA conducted in other countries as part of the research for *Disrupting Harm* indicate that grooming of children online for the purpose of meeting in person to engage in sexual activities presents a real threat to children (see chapter 2.2.1). Offering children money or gifts for sexual acts either online or offline constitutes child sexual exploitation. In the household survey, 64 (6%) of the 994 children surveyed said they had been offered money or gifts to meet someone in person to do something sexual within the past year. Out of these responses, a higher percentage of older children aged 16–17 (8%) than younger 12–13-year-olds (6%) indicated this; and girls (9%) reported this more often than boys (4%).

Online or offline? Of the 64 children who said they had been offered money or gifts to meet in person and engage in sexual activities in the past year, 41% (26 children) said the offer was made online mainly via social media platforms, most commonly through Facebook (including Messenger) and WhatsApp, while 33% said this happened in person. Overall, 3% (32 children) of the 999 surveyed children were offered money or gifts online (via social media or online games) to meet in person and engage in sexual activities.

Sexual extortion

Sexual extortion is sometimes used in the grooming process (see chapter 2.2.1). Offenders who have already obtained sexual images of children may threaten to publicly publish 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. Such threats can also be used to extort money.

The Mozambican Penal Code does not explicitly criminalise the online sexual extortion of children. The Mozambican legislation does criminalise those who, taking advantage of their position of authority and/or power related to their employment, function or domestic relations, coerce and/or threaten someone to obtain sexual advantages or favours, with imprisonment up to two years and a monetary fine.[74]

However, this provision is not specific to children nor to sexual extortion committed in/facilitated through the online environment.

In the household survey in Mozambique, 68 (7%) of the 999 internet-using children surveyed said that they had been threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities at least once in the past year. These were slightly more often younger children aged 12–13 (9%) than the older 16–17-year-olds (7%), with no gender variation. It is not known what kind of threats were used as specific follow-up questions were not asked about the use of sexual images to extort money.

Online or offline? Of the 68 children who had been threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities in the past year, the largest proportion (35%) revealed that it occurred via social media, most commonly on Facebook (including Messenger) and WhatsApp. Notably, 25% said that they had been threatened or blackmailed in person. Overall, 3% (33 children) of the 999 surveyed children were threatened or blackmailed online (via social media and online games).

> Survivor conversations conducted by *Disrupting Harm* in other countries illustrated how the sexual extortion process can unfold and the pressure children can feel from the coercion used against them. One child in **Namibia** recalled that the offender *"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)

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74. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 205.

IN THE PAST YEAR
SOMEONE THREATENED OR BLACKMAILED ME TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITIES

YES 7%

Base: Internet using children 12–17
n = 999 children

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED...

Where did it happen?*†

35%	**25%**	**13%**	**15%**
Social media	In person	In an online game	Some other way
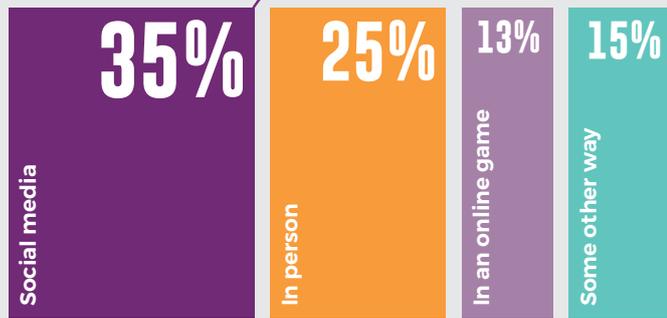
n = 68 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger
75%

Whatsapp
33%

Instagram
8%

n = 24 children threatened or blackmailed to engage in sexual activities via social media

---

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

YES 6%

Base: Internet using children 12–17
n = 999 children

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED...

Where did it happen?*†

36%	**19%**	**8%**	**21%**
Social media	In person	In an online game	Some other way
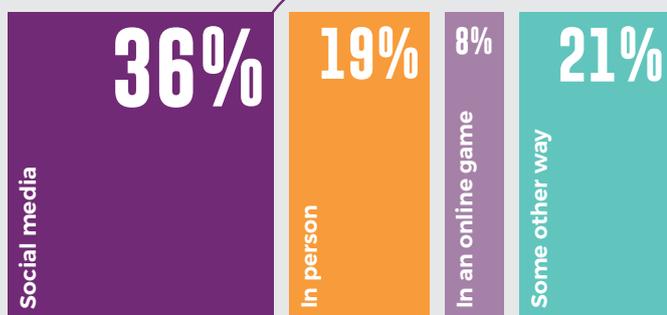
n = 62 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger
50%

Whatsapp
36%

YouTube
13%

n = 22 children whose sexual images were shared without their consent via social media

---

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data

> **6% of surveyed children had their sexual images shared without their consent. Non-consensual sharing of sexual images typically occurred online via social media platforms, particularly on Facebook and WhatsApp.**

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

The findings of the household survey demonstrated a reasonable level of awareness of the gravity of sharing sexual images of other persons without their permission; 64% of the children and 60% of their caregivers agreed that it should be illegal for a person to share images or videos of someone else naked. However, 59% of children and 60% of caregivers also attached blame to the victims in cases where the naked images or videos were self-generated.

In the household survey, 62 (6%) of the 999 children declared that someone had shared sexual images of them without their consent. The percentage of children who declared this had happened to them was higher among 12–13-year-olds (9%) than among 16–17-year-olds (5%). No differences in the results were observed based on gender. When such sexual content is shared online, it may be widely circulated and viewed repeatedly all over the world, resulting for many victims in an enduring sense of shame and fear of being recognised. When these images or videos capture instances of severe sexual abuse, the trauma associated with these experiences may be repeatedly activated in knowing that the images continue to circulate.

Online or offline? Non-consensual sharing of sexual images typically occurred online (36%) via social media platforms, particularly on Facebook (including Messenger) and WhatsApp. For some (19%), the non-consensual sharing of sexual images occurred in person.

Accepting Money or Gifts in Exchange for Sexual Images or Videos

As explored within the context of grooming, children are sometimes offered money or gifts in return for sexual content. When children create sexual content in exchange for something, this constitutes child sexual exploitation, irrespective of whether they are coerced or actively engage in this activity.[75] The following paragraphs consider 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,[76] 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 may increase the risk of non-consensual sharing. For instance, 90% of the '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.[77]

Given the sensitivity of this topic, only the 15–17-year-old respondents in the household survey were asked whether they had accepted money or gifts in exchange for sexual images or videos of themselves. Among the 649 surveyed 15–17-year-olds, 8% said they had done this in the past year. The true figure is expected to be higher, as children may have been hesitant to reveal their involvement in such activities – even in an anonymised survey.

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.

75. ECPAT International (2020). Summary Paper on Sexual Exploitation of Children in Prostitution. Bangkok: ECPAT International.
76. Stoebenau, K., Heise, L.,Wamoyi, J., & Bobrova, N. (2016). Revisiting the understanding of "transactional sex" in sub-Saharan Africa: A review and synthesis of the literature. Social Science & Medicine, vol. 168, 186-197.
77. Internet Watch Foundation and Microsoft. (2015). Emerging Patterns and Trends Report #1 Online-Produced Sexual Content.

OFFENDERS OF OCSEA

CHILDREN OFFERED MONEY OR GIFTS IN RETURN FOR SEXUAL IMAGES OR VIDEOS
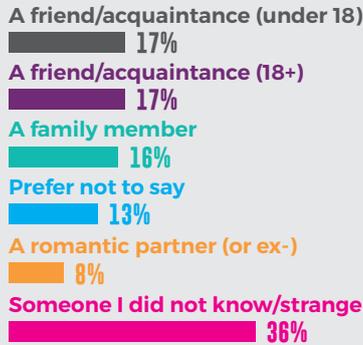
Who did it?*†

A friend/acquaintance (under 18)
17%

A friend/acquaintance (18+)
17%

A family member
16%

Prefer not to say
13%

A romantic partner (or ex-)
8%

Someone I did not know/stranger
36%

n = 76 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos.

CHILDREN THREATENED OR BLACKMAILED TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITIES ONLINE
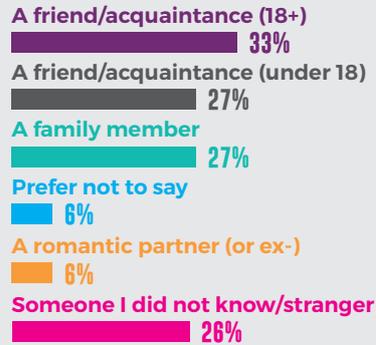
Who did it?*†

A friend/acquaintance (18+)
33%

A friend/acquaintance (under 18)
27%

A family member
27%

Prefer not to say
6%

A romantic partner (or ex-)
6%

Someone I did not know/stranger
26%

n = 33 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were threatened or blackmailed *online* to engage in sexual acts in the past year.

CHILDREN OFFERED MONEY OR GIFTS TO MEET IN PERSON TO DO SOMETHING SEXUAL ONLINE
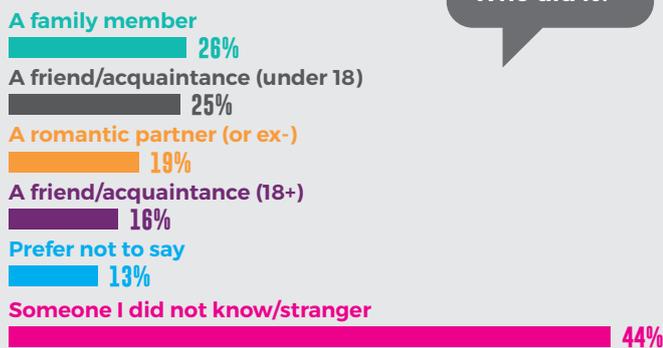
Who did it?*†

A family member
26%

A friend/acquaintance (under 18)
25%

A romantic partner (or ex-)
19%

A friend/acquaintance (18+)
16%

Prefer not to say
13%

Someone I did not know/stranger
44%

n = 32 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts *online* for in-person sexual acts in the past year.

CHILDREN WHOSE SEXUAL IMAGES WERE SHARED WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT
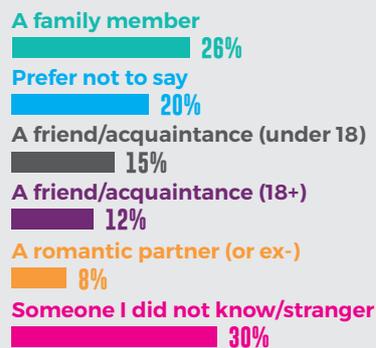
Who did it?*†

A family member
26%

Prefer not to say
20%

A friend/acquaintance (under 18)
15%

A friend/acquaintance (18+)
12%

A romantic partner (or ex-)
8%

Someone I did not know/stranger
30%

n = 62 internet-using children aged 12–17 whose sexual images were shared non-consensually in the past year.

AGGREGATE
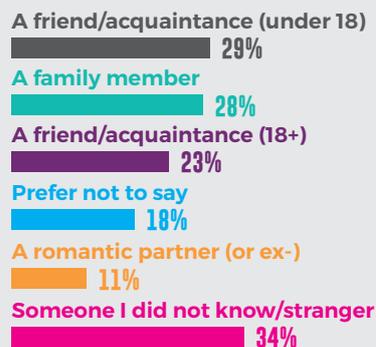
Who did it?*†

A friend/acquaintance (under 18)
29%

A family member
28%

A friend/acquaintance (18+)
**23%**

Prefer not to say
18%

A romantic partner (or ex-)
11%

Someone I did not know/stranger
34%

n = 125 internet-using children aged 12–17 that experienced at least one of the four forms of OCSEA above.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Offenders

According to the children that experienced OCSEA in all of the four above-mentioned manifestations,[78] the offender was most often someone they already knew (65%) – such as adult friends and peers, family member or a romantic partner. People unknown to the child were identified as offenders in about one in three (34%) OCSEA experiences.

These same perspectives were echoed in the survey of frontline social support workers. The frontline workers ranked their perception on the type of relationship between victim and offender, in order of most common to least common, as following: community members over the age of 18, caregivers, family friends, unknown individuals (nationals), siblings under 18, community members under 18 and other relatives over 18. Only one frontline worker mentioned a case of OCSEA involving a foreign offender.

When asked to further elaborate, the frontline workers talked about their perception that offenders are sometimes individuals close to the victim's family. One said: *"These cases happen, mostly, within the community because those who rape or harass are people known by the family, and children look at them as family members who deserve respect. Sometimes children are abused and remain silent. Only later these cases of abuse are discovered."* (RA3-MZ-33-A) Another frontline worker reiterated this point: *"Usually, it's community members who know the family of the victim."* (RA3-MZ-05-A)

Among the 38 frontline workers who had worked on OCSEA cases, a majority said men were identified as offenders of OCSEA more often than women.

> **Depending on the type of incidents, between 11% and 28% of children did not tell anyone what had happened to them.**

Children's disclosures

In the household survey, children that had experienced OCSEA were more inclined to disclose their experience to someone they already knew – most likely a friend, a sibling or caregiver – rather than through formal reporting mechanisms such as police, social workers or a helpline (see infographic Disclosure of OCSEA). Depending on the type of incidents, between 11% and 28% of children did not tell anyone what had happened to them. These children indicated that they kept things to themselves mainly because they did not know where to go or who to tell, felt embarrassed or ashamed or simply found it too emotionally difficult to tell anyone.

Interviews with government representatives and the survey of frontline workers revealed some additional potential reasons why children may not disclose or report OCSEA in Mozambique. Frontline workers strongly agreed that barriers to disclosure include fear of stigma in the community, caregivers' low knowledge of OCSEA, social taboos regarding sex and sexuality, lack of knowledge on reporting mechanisms, and poor quality of reporting services.

As one frontline worker explained: *"In our society and mainly in the communities, there is a certain stigma towards girls who have been sexually assaulted. Community members discriminate these children and their parents, trying to keep them apart. Sometimes the child is obliged to move for her own safety."* (RA3-MZ-33-A) Another worker agreed, stating that, *"There are cases where children suffer abuse and don't report because they think they will be criticised by their friends or other adults."* (RA3-MZ-20-A)

Another frontline worker elaborated on the discomfort around openly discussing sex and sexuality: *"There is still a lot of taboo because of the culture, in relation to the different practices of violence and the different forms of violence, psychological violence is the most vulnerable. We won't get tired of giving good living conditions to the children. It's my opinion that we should create basis or clubs in communities so that the communities would feel confident to open up, since they still have fears of disclosure."* (RA3-MZ-25-A)

78.1. Someone offered you money or gifts in return for sexual images or videos; 2. Someone offered you money or gifts online 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 online to engage in sexual activities.

Interviews with government representatives and the survey of frontline workers revealed some additional potential reasons why children may not disclose or report OCSEA in Mozambique. Frontline workers strongly agreed that barriers to disclosure include fear of stigma in the community, caregivers' low knowledge of OCSEA, social taboos regarding sex and sexuality, lack of knowledge on reporting mechanisms, and poor quality of reporting services.

As one frontline worker explained: *"In our society and mainly in the communities, there is a certain stigma towards girls who have been sexually assaulted. Community members discriminate these children and their parents, trying to keep them apart. Sometimes the child is obliged to move for her own safety."* (RA3-MZ-33-A) Another worker agreed, stating that, *"There are cases where children suffer abuse and don't report because they think they will be criticised by their friends or other adults."* (RA3-MZ-20-A)

DISCLOSURE OF OCSEA

CHILDREN OFFERED MONEY OR GIFTS IN RETURN FOR SEXUAL IMAGES OR VIDEOS

Whom did you tell?**†

TOP 3

Friend
20%

Male caregiver
18%

No one
20%

BOTTOM 3

4%	4%	0%	0%
Police	Other adult I trust	Teacher	Social worker

n = 76 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos.

Why did you not tell anyone?*†

I felt embarrassed
60%

I did not know whom to tell
27%

I did not think it was serious
20%

I feared it would cause trouble
20%

n = 15 children who were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos and didn't tell anyone about it.

CHILDREN OFFERED MONEY OR GIFTS TO MEET IN PERSON TO DO SOMETHING SEXUAL ONLINE

Whom did you tell?**†

TOP 3

Sibling
34%

Male caregiver
36%

No one
28%

BOTTOM 3

0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Teacher	Other adult I trust	Police	Social worker	Prefer not to say

n = 32 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were offered money or gifts *online* for in-person sexual acts in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?*†

I did not know whom to tell
60%

I feared it would not be kept confidential
22%

I did not know I could report
22%

n = 15 children who were offered money or gifts online for in-person sexual acts in the past year and didn't tell anyone about it.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
**These figures represent the most and least common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data

DISCLOSURE OF OCSEA

CHILDREN THREATENED OR BLACKMAILED TO ENGAGE IN SEXUAL ACTIVITIES ONLINE
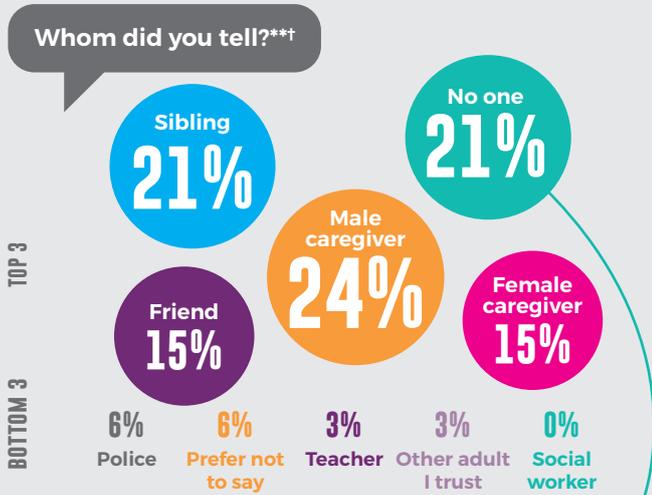
Whom did you tell?†

TOP 3

Sibling 21%

No one 21%

Male caregiver 24%

Friend 15%

Female caregiver 15%

BOTTOM 3

6% Police
6% Prefer not to say
3% Teacher
3% Other adult I trust
0% Social worker

n = 33 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were threatened or blackmailed *online* to engage in sexual acts in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?†

I did not know whom to tell — **71%**

I feared it would cause trouble — **29%**

I did not think I would be believed — **25%**

I did not think anything would be done — **25%**

n = 7 children that were threatened or blackmailed online to engage in sexual acts in the past year and didn't tell anyone about it.

CHILDREN WHOSE SEXUAL IMAGES WERE SHARED WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT
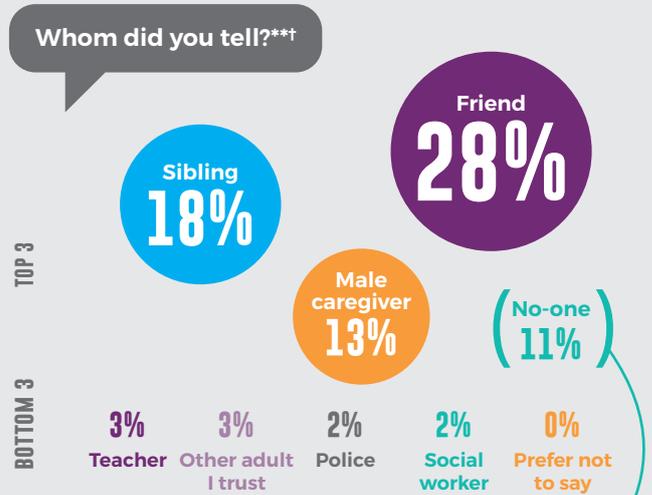
Whom did you tell?†

TOP 3

Sibling 18%

Friend 28%

Male caregiver 13%

No-one 11%

BOTTOM 3

3% Teacher
3% Other adult I trust
2% Police
2% Social worker
0% Prefer not to say

n = 62 internet-using children aged 12–17 whose sexual images were shared non-consensually in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?†

I did not know whom to tell — **57%**

I felt embarrassed — **29%**

I did not think it was serious — **14%**

n = 7 children whose sexual images were shared non-consensually in the past year and didn't tell anyone about it.

AGGREGATE
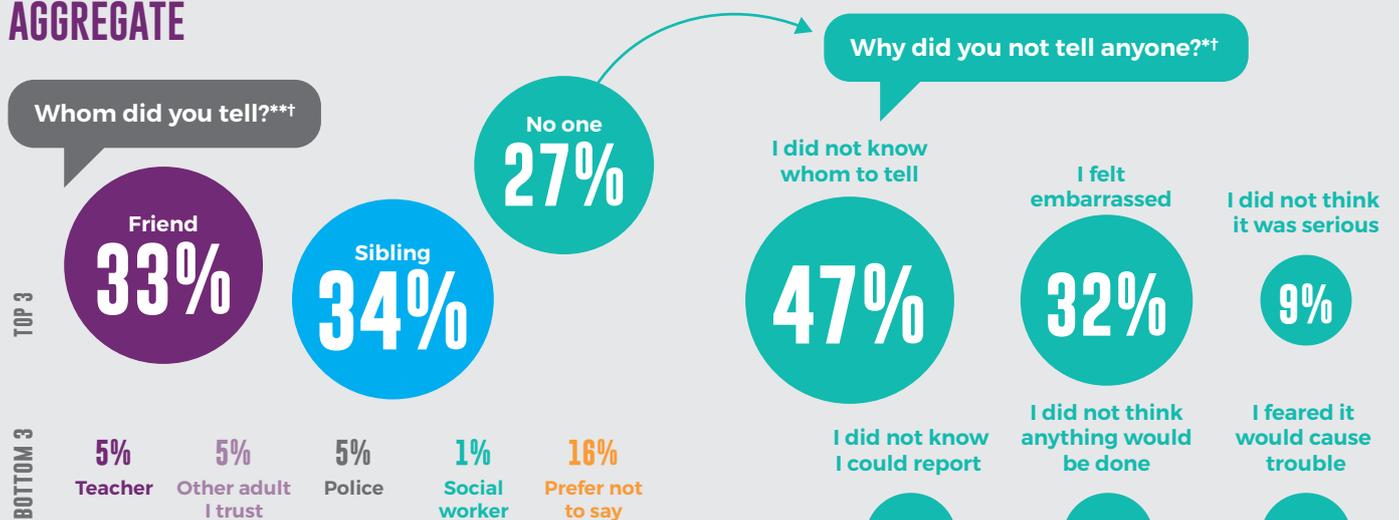
Whom did you tell?†

TOP 3

Friend 33%

Sibling 34%

No one 27%

BOTTOM 3

5% Teacher
5% Other adult I trust
5% Police
1% Social worker
16% Prefer not to say

n = 125 internet-using children aged 12–17 that experienced at least one of the four forms of OCSEA above.

Why did you not tell anyone?†

I did not know whom to tell — **47%**

I felt embarrassed — **32%**

I did not think it was serious — **9%**

I did not know I could report — **9%**

I did not think anything would be done — **9%**

I feared it would cause trouble — **9%**

n = 34 children that experienced at least one of the four forms of OCSEA above and didn't tell anyone about it.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
**These figures represent the most and least common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data

Another frontline worker elaborated on the discomfort around openly discussing sex and sexuality: *"There is still a lot of taboo because of the culture, in relation to the different practices of violence and the different forms of violence, psychological violence is the most vulnerable. We won't get tired of giving good living conditions to the children. It's my opinion that we should create basis or clubs in communities so that the communities would feel confident to open up, since they still have fears of disclosure."* (RA3-MZ-25-A)

Children's tendency to confide in their peers rather than in adults places a heavy burden on children and young people to know how to support and guide one another in the face of sexual violence. The story of one young person in **Namibia**, who participated in *Disrupting Harm*'s conversations with survivors, illustrates how peers can and do provide a strong support system: *"I was, I don't know what to say, my feelings were all over the place, up until I got home, and I told a cousin of mine that stays very close by to me. I had not told her in the beginning where I was going because I knew she was going to stop me. I told her after the fact. She was there to comfort me and be there for me. She advised that I shouldn't talk to that person again. I then deleted the number that time."* (RA5-NA-04-A) Nonetheless, this does not negate the fact that caregivers and other adults should play a stronger role in supporting children and being able to identify signs of abuse so that the responsibility does not fall squarely on children's shoulders.

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 popularity and are changing the ways people engage with each other, particularly young people. Live-streaming is increasingly used both in small private groups and for 'broadcasts' to large, public, unknown audiences. In Mozambique, 15% of internet users aged 12–17 watch live-streams at least once a week.

While watching live-streams is often harmless and can have many benefits, the misuse of such tools is creating new ways of perpetrating OCSEA, including the following:

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.

Streaming platforms do not retain content shared, only metadata concerning access to their services. This means that when the live stream stops, the CSAM evidence vanishes, unless the stream was deliberately recorded. This creates specific challenges for investigators, prosecutors and courts, especially as the existing legislative definitions of CSAM and the methods of investigation and prosecution can rely on outdated conceptualisations of the problem.

Self-generated sexual content involving children: As noted in chapter 1.3.3, the rise in self-generated sexual content- both coerced and non-coerced, live-streamed or recorded, poses complex challenges. Even if its production is non-coerced, this content may still make its way into circulation, through sharing without permission or nefarious means such as hacking. Governments and support services everywhere are grappling with how to address these issues.

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 occur either completely online or through a combination of online and in-person interactions. Some 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.

In 2015, amid concern about this issue, the Lanzarote Committee in charge of overseeing implementation of the Council of Europe's Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (also known as the 'Lanzarote Convention') issued an opinion on this subject. The Committee recommended that states should extend the crime of grooming for sexual purposes to include "cases when the sexual abuse is not the result of a meeting in person but is committed online."[79]

Online grooming is a complex process, which is often fluid and difficult to detect, especially where it involves a slow 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 deceit, coercion, or threats. However, online grooming can also be or appear to 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.

At the time of writing of this report, the existing Mozambican legislation does not criminalise online grooming of children for sexual purposes.

In the household survey of internet-using children in Mozambique, 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 mis-representation of the data. Recognising that sexual exploitation and abuse of children can happen in many different ways and places, most data points below allow for multiple responses and may add up to over 100%. Differences between age groups, genders, or urban and rural areas are only reported when they are five percentage points or more.

Children asked to talk about sex

According to the household survey of 999 internet-using children in Mozambique, 11% (111 children) had received unwanted requests to talk about sex or sexual acts within the past year. Among children aged 16–17, 13% received such unwanted requests and 11% aged 14–15, compared to 7% among children aged 12–13. Depending on the context, these experiences could mean varying levels of harm for a child. For example, a child being asked to talk about sex by a boyfriend or girlfriend 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.

Online or offline? Of the 111 children in the household survey who had received unwanted requests to talk about sex within the past year, 49% received the request online, mainly via social media platforms, mostly through Facebook (including Messenger), followed by WhatsApp. Overall, therefore 63 children (6%) in the household survey said that this happened with facilitation of technology representing OCSEA cases.

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79. Council of Europe's Lanzarote Committee. (2015). Opinion on Article 23 of the Lanzarote Convention and its explanatory note. Paragraph 20.

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

YES 11%

Base: Internet using children 12–17
n = 999 children

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED...

Where did it happen?*†

49% Social media

25% In person

8% In an online game

8% Some other way
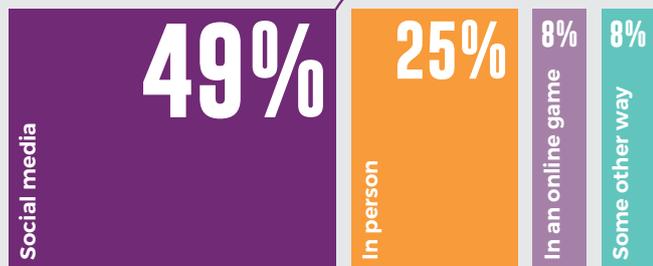
n = 111 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests *online* to talk about sex in the past year.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger
78%

Whatsapp
43%

Twitter
9%
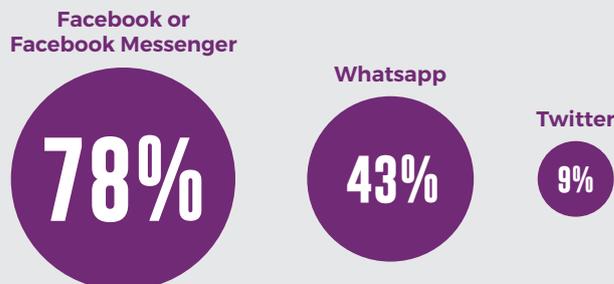
n = 54 children asked to talk about sex or sexual acts with someone when they did not want to via social media.

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

YES 11%

Base: Internet using children 12–17
n = 999 children

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED...

Who did it?*†
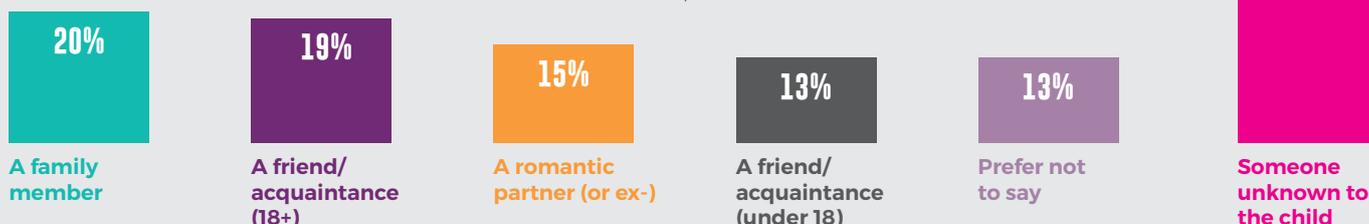
20% A family member

19% A friend/acquaintance (18+)

15% A romantic partner (or ex-)

13% A friend/acquaintance (under 18)

13% Prefer not to say

38% Someone unknown to the child

n = 112 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests for sexual images in the past year.

Where did it happen?*†

59% Social media

21% In person

8% In an online game

4% Some other way

n = 112 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests for sexual images in the past year.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger
80%

Whatsapp
23%

YouTube
5%

n = 65 children asked for a photo or video showing my private parts when they did not want to via social media.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data
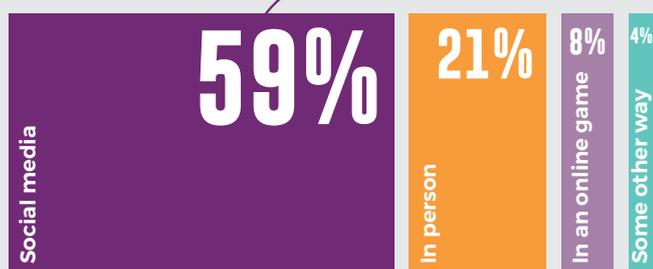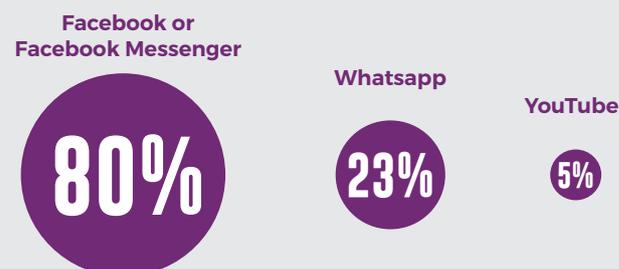
REACTION AND RESPONSE TO ONLINE GROOMING

CHILDREN ASKED TO TALK ABOUT SEX OR SEXUAL ACTS WITH SOMEONE WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO ONLINE

How did you feel?*

- **Annoyed** 29%
- **Scared** 14%
- **Distressed** 13%
- **Embarassed** 16%

What did you do?*†

- Said no **52%**
- Blocked the person **29%**
- Ignored it **18%**
- Did as they asked **5%**

n = 63 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests *online* to talk about sex in the past year.

CHILDREN ASKED FOR A PHOTO OR VIDEO SHOWING MY PRIVATE PARTS WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO

How did you feel?*

- **Annoyed** 15%
- **Scared** 21%
- **It didn't affect me at all** 14%
- **Embarassed** 23%

What did you do?*†

- Said no **55%**
- Ignored it **12%**
- Deleted their messages **12%**
- Did as they asked **9%**

n = 112 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests for sexual images in the past year.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data

Children asked to share sexual images or videos
The children who took part in the household survey were asked if, in the past year, they received a request "for a photo or video showing their private parts when they did not want to." While these data could capture relatively harmless sharing of such images among peers, it could also point to attempts to manipulate children into self-generating and sharing sexual images or videos through digital technologies. Within the past year, 11% of the internet-using children surveyed in Mozambique had received unwanted requests for a photo or video showing their private parts.

Online or offline? Of the 112 children in the sample who had received unwanted requests for images of their private parts in the past year, the majority (59%) received such requests mainly via social media platforms, mostly on Facebook (including Messenger). It's worth noting that 21% indicated that they received such requests in person.

How children felt and responded to online grooming
Most children receiving unwanted requests online to talk about sex or to share their sexual images felt negatively about this encounter. The most common negative feelings were feelings of embarrassment, anger, or annoyance.

# OFFENDERS OF ONLINE GROOMING

CHILDREN ASKED TO TALK ABOUT SEX OR SEXUAL ACTS WITH SOMEONE WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO ONLINE

Who did it?*†

A friend/acquaintance (under 18) — 19%
A family member — 18%
A friend/acquaintance (18+) — 16%
A romantic partner (or ex-) — 10%
Someone else — 3%
Prefer not to say — 3%
Someone unknown to the child — 44%

n = 63 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests *online* to talk about sex in the past year.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

CHILDREN ASKED FOR A PHOTO OR VIDEO SHOWING MY PRIVATE PARTS WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO

Who did it?*†
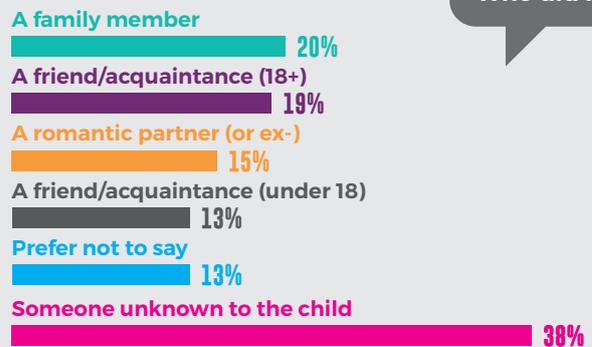
A family member — 20%
A friend/acquaintance (18+) — 19%
A romantic partner (or ex-) — 15%
A friend/acquaintance (under 18) — 13%
Prefer not to say — 13%
Someone unknown to the child — 38%

n = 112 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests for sexual images in the past year.

Source: Disrupting Harm data

In response, about half of the children who received unwanted requests online, refused to comply. Only 5% of children (three children) complied with requests online to talk about sex, and 9% complied with requests to share their sexual images. The rest responded by, for example, blocking or ignoring the offender, or in stopping use of the internet for a while.

Offenders of online grooming

According to the children that experienced grooming online, the offender was most often someone they already knew – such as adult friends and peers, a family member or a romantic partner. People unknown to the child were identified as offenders for about one in three online grooming experiences.

Disclosure of online grooming in Mozambique

The household survey revealed that children who had experienced grooming online were more inclined to disclose their experience to someone they already knew – a friend, a sibling or caregiver – rather than through formal reporting mechanisms such as police, social workers or a helpline. About one in six victims of online grooming did not disclose what had happened to anyone; their reasons for not disclosing were that they did not think it was serious enough to report, did not know where to go or who to tell or felt embarrassed or ashamed.

When young people are subjected to OCSEA, they face a range of challenges in seeking help including victim blaming, which frames them as somehow responsible for the behaviours of offenders. One young person from **Namibia** that participated in Disrupting Harm's conversations with survivors described the need to overcome a real fear of being judged: *"My family and the community feel that you as a victim are to blame and its very wrong because there are a lot of factors that lead one to do such things. It`s very wrong as well because then you don't have the support that you need at that time. Even if I am desperate, it means I can`t think clearly, I am trying to find a solution and if anyone outside makes me feel comfortable, then it will allow me to feel free from fear of judgement and confess or ask for advice. Whenever you mention such thing, you are the victim, but they will put it as if you put yourself in that situation, you need to get yourself out."* (RA5-NA-07-A)

DISCLOSURE OF ONLINE GROOMING

CHILDREN ASKED TO TALK ABOUT SEX OR SEXUAL ACTS WITH SOMEONE WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO ONLINE

Whom did you tell?†

TOP 3

Sibling
38%

No one
13%

Friend
30%

BOTTOM 3

3%
Other

2%
Female caregiver

0%
Helpline

n = 63 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests *online* to talk about sex in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?*†
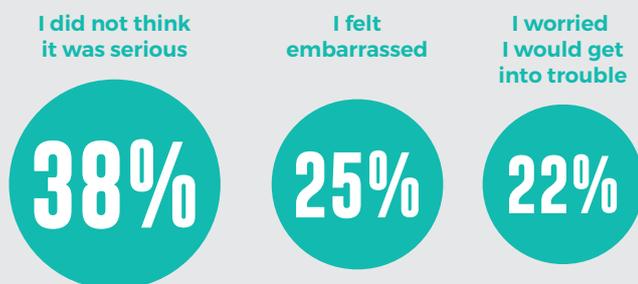
I did not think it was serious
38%

I felt embarrassed
25%

I worried I would get into trouble
22%

n = 8 children who received unwanted requests online to talk about sex in the past year and didn't tell anyone about it.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
**These figures represent the most and least common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

CHILDREN ASKED FOR A PHOTO OR VIDEO SHOWING MY PRIVATE PARTS WHEN THEY DID NOT WANT TO

Whom did you tell?†

TOP 3

Sibling
20%

No one
19%

Friend
28%

BOTTOM 3

2%
Police

1%
Helpline

1%
Other

0%
Prefer not to say

n = 112 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted requests for sexual images in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?*†

I felt embarrassed
38%

I did not know whom to tell
24%

I worried I would get into trouble
14%

n = 21 children who received unwanted requests for sexual images in the past year and didn't tell anyone about it.

Source: Disrupting Harm data

2.3 OTHER EXPERIENCES OF CHILDREN THAT MAY BE LINKED TO ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE

Beyond the examples of OCSEA presented, children may be subjected to other experiences online which can be harmful, such as sexual harassment or unwanted exposure to sexual 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

Sexual harassment, defined as any unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a person,[80] is not criminalised in Mozambique.

In the household survey, 19% (193 children) of the 999 surveyed internet-using children in Mozambique had been during the past year the subject of sexual comments that made them feel uncomfortable including jokes, stories or comments about the child's body, appearance, or sexual activities. This happened more commonly to girls (24%) and to older children aged 16–17 (26%) than to boys (15%) and to 12–13-year-olds (18%), respectively. The majority of the 193 children that had been subjected to sexual comments, reported having negative feelings such as being embarrassed, guilty, angry, annoyed, or scared, while almost one third indicated that it didn't affect them at all.

Online or offline: Of the 193 children that experienced sexual harassment, 45% revealed that it occurred online, mainly via social media platforms, most commonly on Facebook (including Messenger) and WhatsApp. In contrast, 47% said that these comments had been made during a face-to-face encounter.

Offenders: Among the 193 children that were sexually harassed, the offender was most commonly already known to the child – a friend, a family member or a romantic partner; the offender was unknown to the child in only 26% of cases.

Disclosure: While many of the 193 children that experienced sexual harassment disclosed it to someone, around one third did not disclose to anyone, mostly because they did not think it was serious enough to report or did not know where to go or whom to tell. Again, children were more inclined to disclose their experience to someone they already knew – most likely friends, caregivers or siblings – rather than through formal reporting mechanisms such as social workers or a helpline.

2.3.2 Receiving unwanted sexual images

In the household survey, 26% of children (259) said they had been sent unwanted sexual images in the past year. These were slightly more children aged 16–17 (28%) than the 12–13-year-olds (24%); and slightly more boys (28%) than girls (24%). Most of the children who had been sent unwanted sexual images (74%) felt negatively about these images and reported feeling annoyed, embarrassed, scared, angry or guilty, while 26% reported that it didn't affect them at all.

Online or offline? When asked about the last time they had received unwanted sexual images, 60% revealed that this had occurred online, mainly via social media platforms, of which the most common were Facebook (including Messenger) and WhatsApp.

Offenders: Among the 259 children who received unwanted sexual images over the past year, 35% indicated that the offender was unknown to them. The rest cited the offender as someone they already knew, such as friends (adults and peers) or a romantic partner.

Disclosure: Once again, children were more inclined to disclose their experience to someone they already knew – most likely friends, caregivers or siblings – rather than through formal reporting mechanisms such as police, social workers or a helpline. Notably, almost one third did not disclose to anyone, mostly because they did not think it was serious enough or did not know where to go.

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80. 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.

IN THE PAST YEAR
SOMEONE MADE SEXUAL COMMENTS ABOUT ME THAT MADE ME FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE

YES 19%

Base: Internet using children 12–17
n = 999 children

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED...

How did you feel?*

- **28%** It didn't affect me
- **24%** Embarassed
- **10%** Annoyed

Who did it?*†

- A friend/acquaintance (18+) — **31%**
- A friend/acquaintance (under 18) — **19%**
- A family member — **16%**
- Prefer not to say — **11%**
- A romantic partner (or ex-) — **10%**
- Someone else — **2%**
- Someone unknown to the child — **26%**

n = 193 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were subjected to sexual harassment in the past year.

Where did it happen?*†

- Social media **39%**
- In person **47%**
- In an online game **6%**
- Some other way **8%**

n = 193 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were subjected to sexual harassment in the past year.

On which platform did this happen?*†

- **Facebook or Facebook Messenger** — **77%**
- **WhatsApp** — **43%**
- **Twitter** — **4%**
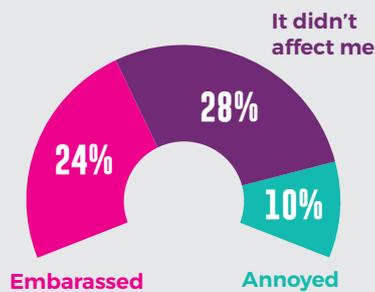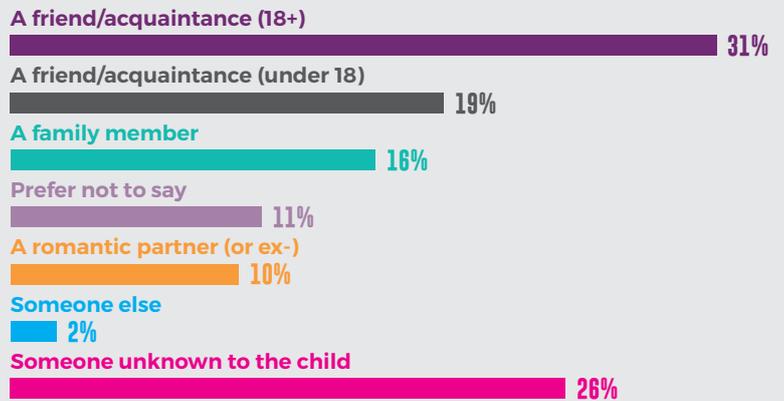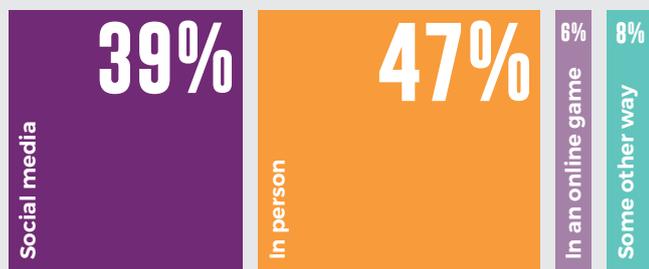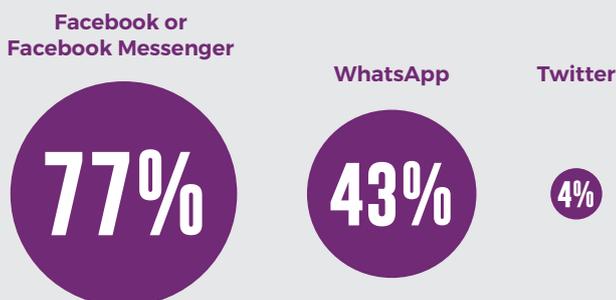
n = 75 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were *most recently* subjected to sexual harassment *via social media.*

Whom did you tell?**†
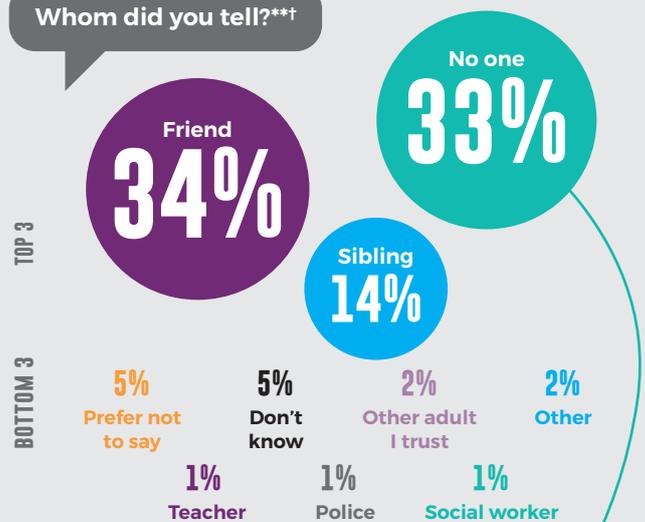
TOP 3
- Friend **34%**
- No one **33%**
- Sibling **14%**

BOTTOM 3
- **5%** Prefer not to say
- **5%** Don't know
- **2%** Other adult I trust
- **2%** Other
- **1%** Teacher
- **1%** Police
- **1%** Social worker

n = 193 internet-using children aged 12–17 who were subjected to sexual harassment in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?*†

- **I did not know whom to tell** — **45%**
- **I did not think it was serious** — **22%**
- **I felt embarrassed** — **14%**

n = 63 internet-using children aged 12–17 who *did not tell anyone* the last time they were subjected to sexual harassment.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
**These figures represent the most and least common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

Source: Disrupting Harm data

IN THE PAST YEAR
SOMEONE SENT ME SEXUAL IMAGES I DID NOT WANT

YES 26%

Base: Internet using children 12–17
n = 999 children

THE LAST TIME THIS HAPPENED...

How did you feel?*

Angry **20%**
It didn't affect me **26%**
Embarrassed **13%**
Annoyed **16%**

Who did it?*†

A friend/acquaintance (under 18) **24%**
A friend/acquaintance (18+) **22%**
A romantic partner (or ex-) **12%**
Prefer not to say **10%**
A family member **8%**
Someone else **1%**
Someone unknown to the child **35%**

n = 259 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted sexual images in the past year.

Where did it happen?*†

Social media **60%**
In person **0%**
In an online game **4%**
Some other way **20%**

n = 259 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted sexual images in the past year.

On which platform did this happen?*†

Facebook or Facebook Messenger **72%**
Whatsapp **46%**
YouTube **7%**
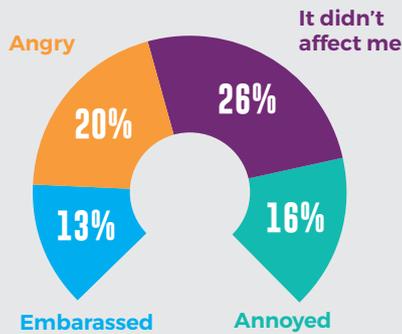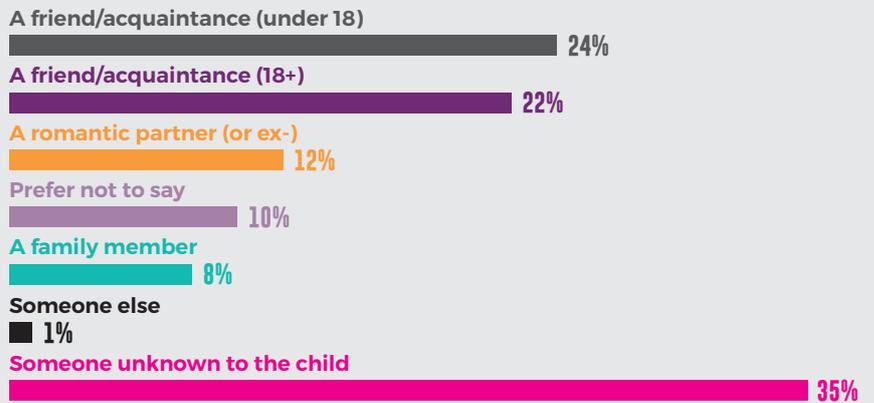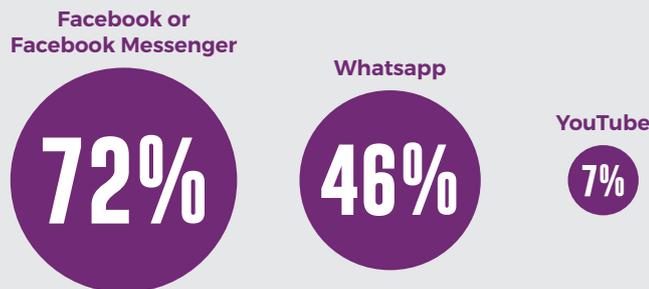
n = 155 internet-using children aged 12–17 who *most recently* received unwanted sexual images *via social media*.

Whom did you tell?**†
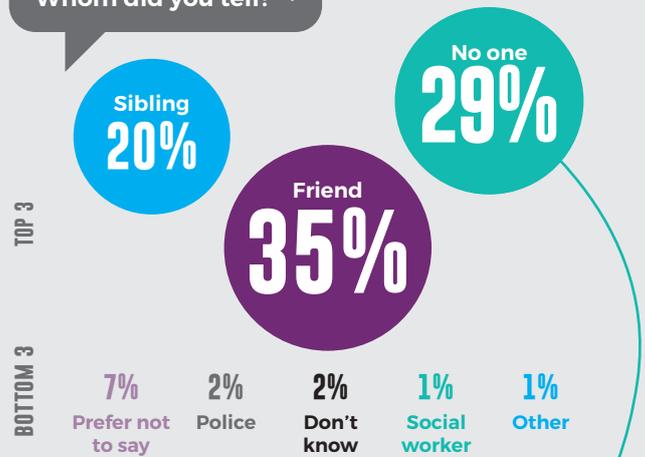
TOP 3

Sibling **20%**
Friend **35%**
No one **29%**

BOTTOM 3

Prefer not to say **7%**
Police **2%**
Don't know **2%**
Social worker **1%**
Other **1%**

n = 259 internet-using children aged 12–17 who received unwanted sexual images in the past year.

Why did you not tell anyone?*†

I did not know whom to tell **37%**
I did not think it was serious **24%**
I felt embarrassed **11%**

n = 74 internet-using children aged 12–17 who *did not tell anyone* the last time they received unwanted sexual images.

*These figures represent the most common responses selected by children.
**These figures represent the most and least common responses selected by children.
†Multiple choice question

The Continuum of Online and Offline Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

The *Disrupting Harm* data reveal that strictly categorising child sexual exploitation and abuse as 'online' or 'offline' does not accurately reflect the realities of sexual violence that children are experiencing.

Disrupting Harm explores and presents data about:

- Sexual exploitation and abuse that takes place exclusively in the online environment
- Sexual exploitation and abuse that takes place offline but is facilitated by digital technologies
- Sexual exploitation and abuse that is committed offline and then moves online through sharing images or videos of the abuse

The research findings illustrate that whilst all instances of OCSEA are characterised by an online element, the abuse and exploitation can, and often does, occur at multiple points along the continuum between online and offline. This abuse and exploitation can move between online and offline at different points in time.

For instance, an offender may use the online environment to connect with, convince and/ or coerce a child to share self-generated sexual content, which may later be shared more broadly in the online environment. An offender may use the online environment to groom a child with the intention of later meeting face-to-face to engage in sexual abuse or exploitation in an offline environment. An offender may engage with and subsequently abuse or exploit a child in an offline environment but may use online tools to communicate with the child, to coerce the child, to capture sexually explicit images or videos (and potentially to share the sexual content within the online environment).

These are only a few examples of the dynamic nature of OCSEA and the fluidity of movement between the online and offline sexual abuse and exploitation.

There was some indication from one government representative in Mozambique that OCSEA and CSEA were portrayed as different kinds of abuse, rather than interconnected. The representative stated: *"If I were to compare what I see on newspaper and what I hear on the radio, I would say that there is a lot of information on physical sexual abuse perpetrated by relatives, neighbours and other people but I don't hear much about this kind of abuse on social media."* (RA1-MZ-06-A) It is important that OCSEA is incorporated into existing awareness raising programmes on CSEA to show how these two forms of violence against children are connected.

Household data showed that a proportion of children experience CSEA in person but facilitated by technology. For instance, among children that were offered money or gifts for sexual images or videos, 38% said it happened in person. Similarly, among children whose sexual images were shared without their consent, 19% said it happened in person. In addition, among children that were asked for a photo or video showing their private parts, 21% said in happened in person. This may indicate that OCSEA is an extension of existing abuse already experienced by the child, or that there are a common set of vulnerabilities that make children who experience violence offline more likely to also experience violence online, or vice versa.

2.4 PERCEPTIONS ON ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN MOZAMBIQUE

Perceptions on factors that increase vulnerability to OCSEA

Each child might be vulnerable to OCSEA, experience it and be affected by it differently depending on several factors. These factors can include age, type of online sexual abuse experienced, relationship to offender or perception of the online sexual abuse and exploitation activities. While each case should be considered separately, frontline workers often spoke about similar factors influencing vulnerability of children to OCSEA in Mozambique. It should be noted that the perspectives of the interviewees presented here are based on their subjective interpretations and do not necessarily reflect the views of the *Disrupting Harm* research teams.

The frontline workers surveyed for *Disrupting Harm* were asked whether certain factors about the child increased the risk of being subjected to OCSEA. The most common factors selected by respondents included exposure to pornography, having to migrate for work, extreme poverty, access to technology and internet usage (see Figure 23). One issue of concern is a common incorrect causal link between watching pornography and becoming a victim of OCSEA. This myth can lead to victim blaming and keep providers of care from supporting children if they perceive them as complicit in their own abuse. Children's actions are irrelevant to offenders' victimisation of them, and the perpetuation of this myth could result in inadequate awareness-raising initiatives, misguided governmental responses and social support services, potentially leading to further harm.

Figure 23: Frontline workers' perceptions of factors affecting children's vulnerability to OCSEA.
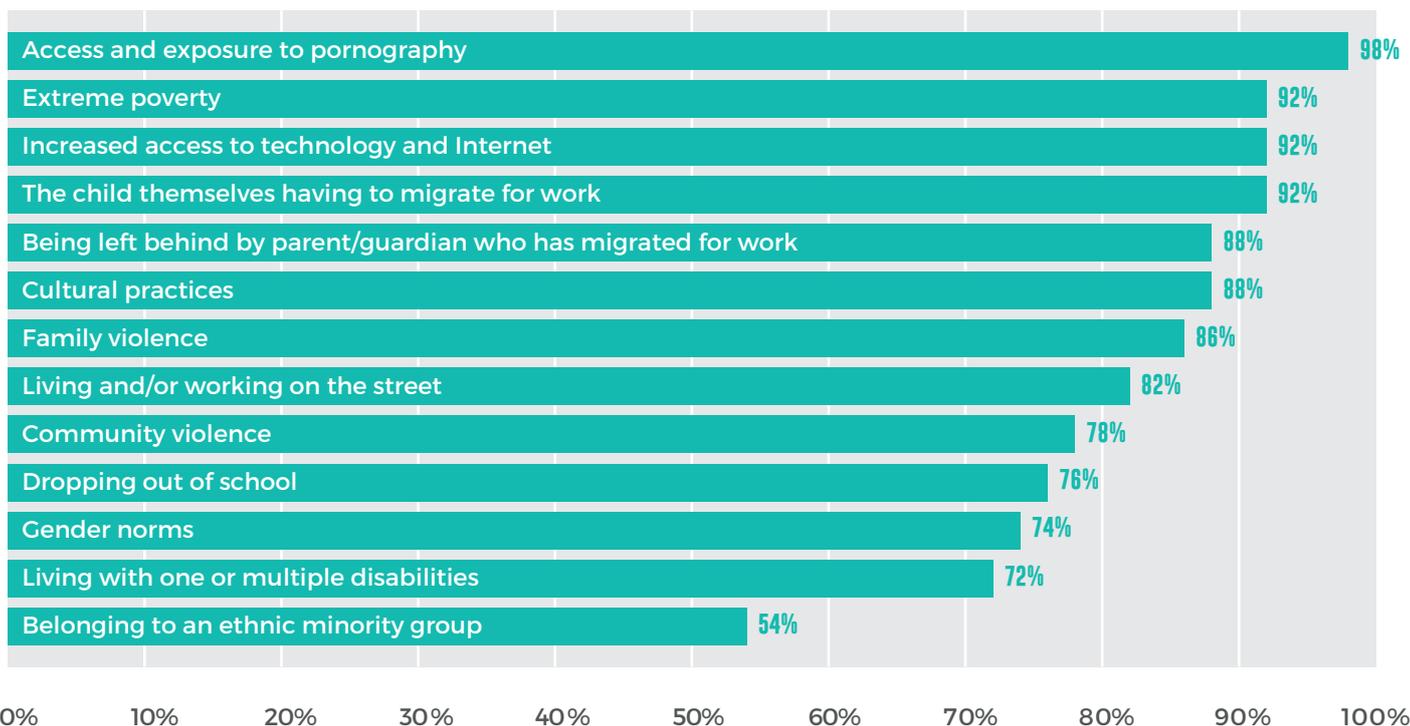
Base: Frontline welfare workers. n = 50.

Frontline workers further revealed that a child's vulnerability to OCSEA is impacted by certain *societal* factors, such as high levels of violence against children, discomfort around openly discussing sex and sexuality, stigma from the community if the victim is known, status of children in society and expected roles for men and women. One surveyed frontline worker further elaborated on stigma and physical violence against children, saying: *"Factors such as stigma make an individual feel inferior and, subsequently, used by others. Physical violence, especially in the house, makes other people take advantage of the situation because the child does not have family protection."* (RA3-MZ-08-A)

Figure 24. The perceptions of surveyed frontline workers on the level of awareness of OCSEA in young people, caregivers and the general public.
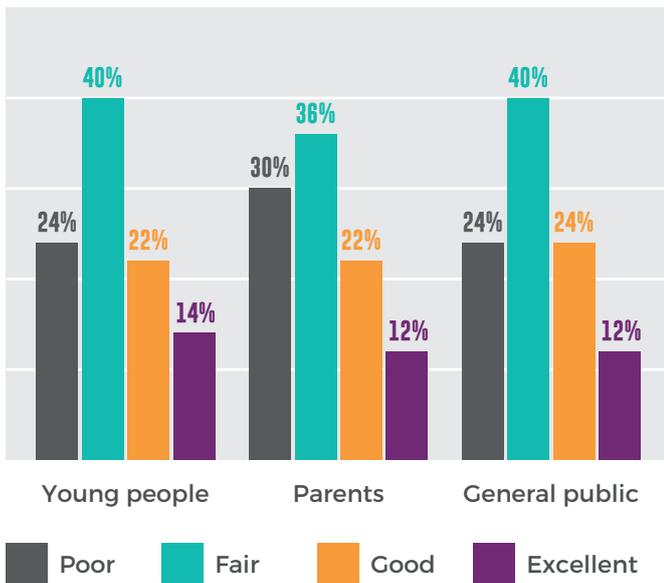
Base: Frontline welfare workers. n = 50.

> **Currently these children spend a lot of time on social media, on the Internet and not always their parents or tutors know what types of contacts these children have in this virtual world.**
> RA1-MZ-02-A

Some frontline workers explained why awareness was poor or fair for the majority of the community. One suggested that, *"It's difficult because some parents do not speak openly, with their children, about violence, making them vulnerable to it."* (RA3-MZ-33-A) Interestingly, government representatives from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education as well as the General Prosecutor's Office echoed this belief; The representative from the General Prosecutor's Office explained: *"Currently these children spend a lot of time on social media, on the Internet and not always their parents or tutors know what types of contacts these children have in this virtual world."* (RA1-MZ-02-A)

Another theme seen in the interviews with governmental representatives was the perception that children in urban areas and rural areas are impacted differently by OCSEA. A representative from the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs, indicated that she believed children from urban areas would be more affected by OCSEA because of their increased access to the internet: *"This phenomenon of online exploitation occurs more in major cities because children there have access to smartphones and access to the Internet."* (RA1-MZ-09-A) However, the household survey found no notable difference between children in urban and rural areas with regards to OCSEA experiences. In the household survey, 12% of urban children experienced the four clear examples of OCSEA, compared to 13% of rural children. The household survey also found that children in rural areas were slightly less likely to be internet users (51%) than children in urban areas (68%).

Existing Awareness Raising Initiatives

Most frontline workers surveyed rated government awareness raising efforts on OCSEA as fair (44%) or poor (22%). A few government representatives mentioned work by law enforcement and legal professionals addressing CSEA, which included elements on how technology can facilitate harm. A representative from the National Criminal Investigation Service detailed: *"We have conducted one debate at Josina Machel Secondary School. [...] The topic of this debate was sexual abuse and social media."* (RA1-MZ-12-A) A representative from the General Prosecutor's office shared: *"one year ago we did prevention work at national level related to online child trafficking. We did this work mainly in schools to call the attention of the youth and adolescents to the fact that social media have a positive side but they can also be used by child abusers, traffickers and paedophiles especially nowadays where most of our communication is through internet and social media."* (RA1-MZ-02-A). These initiatives are encouraging; however, they need to detail OCSEA in all its forms more specifically.

Furthermore, a few interviewees spoke about work by industry to raise awareness: *"Vodacom, Mcel and Movitel have been conducting not only debates but disseminating information on this topic [OCSEA], as well. Well, there are some advertisements on radio, TV from these mobile telecommunication companies. They have been doing this for more than five years now."* (RA1-MZ-10-A)

Additionally, interviews indicated that sex education is included within the course curriculum starting in grade 7. At the time of writing the curriculum is being revised by the Ministry of Education.

While these awareness raising initiatives are promising, *Disrupting Harm* was unable to find any evidence of these programmes online or identify any research measuring their impact.

One government representative from the Ministry of Transport and Communications of Mozambique advised that a first step towards raising awareness of OCSEA by the government had to be teaching professionals in the field: *"What I see as a big challenge is that, while we don't increase the awareness of this crime to those who are supposed to deal with these issues, we will always have the challenge of these issues being neglected. So, it would be very important to, whenever there is the opportunity, to talk about or develop documents that allow clarifying people."* (RA1-MZ-01-A)

3. RESPONDING TO ONLINE CHILD SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE IN MOZAMBIQUE

This chapter presents evidence on current Mozambican response mechanisms to OCSEA. This includes formal reporting systems, as well as responses by the police and the court system. It considers the contributions which government, civil society and the internet and technology industries make to combating OCSEA in Mozambique. The data was drawn from qualitative interviews with governmental representatives and the survey of frontline professionals, along with analysis of policy and legislation in Mozambique. Since the *Disrupting Harm* team could not interview OCSEA victims and criminal justice professionals who had experience working with OCSEA cases, the data presented in this chapter offers a limited picture of the justice response to OCSEA in Mozambique.

3.1 FORMAL REPORTING MECHANISMS

3.1.1 Reporting to law enforcement and the legal system

Mozambique's Revised Penal Procedure Code establishes that both the Public Prosecutor and law enforcement agencies can receive complaints and initiate investigations, including for OCSEA,[81] following specific procedures set forth by the Code.[82]

Mandatory Reporting Legislation

For early detection of and timely response to OCSEA offences, proper monitoring and reporting mechanisms need to be in place. Therefore, professionals who work with children and institutions that, due to the nature of their activities, may come across suspected cases of OCSEA, should be obliged to report such cases to the relevant authorities.

Although in Mozambique, there is no general provision establishing mandatory duties for all professionals working with children to report suspected cases of OCSEA, reporting is mandatory for police entities and civil servants who become aware of any crime while performing their duties.[83] The Mozambican legislation also includes a provision which makes reporting mandatory for private citizens when they learn about any situation that can constitute a crime under the Law No. 6/2008 on human trafficking,[84] which criminalises, among other crimes, trafficking for the purposes of pornography and sexual exploitation.[85]

Under Mozambique legislation, there is a protection system in place for individuals who have reported a crime. This system applies when their life, physical or mental integrity, freedom or property are endangered by the contribution they have made or are willing to make or by the production of evidence in court.[86] Finally, Mozambican legislation establishes that complaints must be signed by the person lodging them,[87] therefore, it does not allow for the option of anonymous complaints.

3.1.2 Child Helpline 116 and CSAM hotline

Child Hotlines and Helplines – What is the Difference?

There are several channels through which children and adults can report cases of OCSEA. These include CSAM hotlines and child helplines. CSAM hotlines focus on working with the industry and law enforcement agencies to take down content, and they more often use a web-only format rather than phone numbers. The child helplines tend to respond to a broader range of child protection concerns, although some may focus specifically on OCSEA. Some helplines provide immediate crisis support, referrals and/or ongoing counselling and case management services.

There are several channels though which individuals can formally report instances of OCSEA in Mozambique. Besides contacting authorities directly, one can contact the Child Helpline 116 or report CSAM through the online portal that has been set up in coordination with the Internet Watch Foundation.

Child Helpline 116

One possible avenue through which children in Mozambique can seek help is the toll-free Child Helpline 116 established in 2009 by a non-profit organisation *Linha Fala Criança*. The helpline receives reports on abuse and connects victims with appropriate services, such as emergency rescue, psychological support, and social services. In 2019 *Linha Fala Criança* conducted awareness raising activities to promote its helpline, reaching around 22,000 students from 25 schools.[88]

81. Government of Mozambique (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code- Law No. 25/2019, Article 59(2)(a) and Article 291.
82. Government of Mozambique (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code- Law No. 25/2019, Article 59(2)(a) and Article 291.
83. Government of Mozambique (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code- Law No. 25/2019, Article 285.
84. Government of Mozambique (2008). Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking, Article 8. English translation available.
85. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking, Article 11. English translation available.
86. Government of Mozambique (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 2.
87. Government of Mozambique (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code- Law No. 25/2019, Article 289 (2).
88. Linha Fala Criança (2019), Report – July (translated from Portuguese)

Linha Fala Criança helpline is a part of the Child Helpline International network which surveys its members every year to gather information about the contacts they received and the actions they might have taken to follow-up on these contacts. *Linha Fala Criança* reported zero cases of OCSEA to Child Helpline International in 2017 and 2018 and only one in 2019, which involved online sexual exploitation of a girl.[89,90]

Government representatives mentioned that in addition to Child Helpline 116, reports can be made at the national level to Family and Minor Victims of Violence Help-desks. However, these help desks are not equally accessible in all communities in Mozambique. No further information was provided on their availability.

CSAM Hotline – Internet Watch Foundation reporting portal

In 2018, Mozambique's police, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Communications Regulatory Authority in cooperation with *Linha Fala Criança* and Internet Watch Foundation established, an online portal for anyone to anonymously report CSAM.[91,92] As of December 31st 2019, only two reports had been received through the portal, neither of which were identified as confirmed CSAM.

Several government representatives from Mozambique voiced their opinions on how the portal could be improved, including increasing awareness, creating new pathways to submit reports and streamlining the processes.

Increased promotion: The representative from the Mozambique Communications Regulatory Authority indicated the need for the portal to be promoted more to the public by the government. (RA1-MZ-01-A) The survey of frontline workers showed one in four were not even aware these mechanisms existed: 24% of respondents said that a key factor influencing reporting of OCSEA was the non-existence of hotlines or helplines.

More accessible means to submit reports: The representative from the Mozambique Communications Regulatory Authority also suggested the need to develop systems of reporting that are *not* based on the internet. The representative elaborated on this point, saying of the portal: *"maybe the way in which it was developed [limits its effectiveness], because it is 100% web-based. Maybe if it was something like a call centre or a SMS platform, maybe it would cover more people and we would have better outcomes, but not today."* (RA1-MZ-01-A)

> **Individuals can formally report instances of OCSEA in Mozambique by contacting authorities directly, the Child Helpline 116 or through the online portal that has been set up in coordination with Internet Watch Foundation.**

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89. In 2019 Child Helpline International simplified its data framework to improve the quality and reliability of the data collected and reported by child helplines. Data was reported under nine sub-categories in 2017 and 2018, and two sub-categories in 2019.
90. Presented data reflect levels of help-seeking, namely the number of times children and young people reached out to a child helpline to receive support related to OCSEA. They do not reflect the prevalence of the OCSEA in the country.
91. Internet Watch Foundation. (2018). Mozambique takes vital step to remove online child sexual abuse from the internet by launching a public reporting system this Safer Internet Day.
92. IWF. (n.d). Reporting Portal.

3.2 LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSE

This chapter focuses on local law enforcement capabilities to prevent and respond to OCSEA cases in Mozambique, and is primarily based on the interviews conducted by ECPAT with government representatives and complemented by data from frontline social support workers. It should be noted again that INTERPOL was unable to conduct interviews with law enforcement to assess its capacity in Mozambique.

National Criminal Investigation Service

Insights gleaned from interviews with government representatives indicated that the National Criminal Investigation Service is the main law enforcement entity for investigating sexual crimes against children. No respondents identified the existence of specialised units to address OCSEA. One representative from the National Criminal Investigation Service described the organisational structure, claiming that *"There is no specific unit to deal with this area specifically but there is a department that deals with all kinds of abuse involving children and adults."* (RA1-MZ-12-A)

In its 2017 annual report to the Assembly of the Republic, the General Prosecutor's Office stressed the need to build the capacity of the National Criminal Investigation Service staff when it comes to the criminal investigation of computer-related crimes.[27] One respondent from the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education underlined the incapacity of investigators to investigate proper cases of OCSEA, due to a lack of technological tools or cybersecurity forces.

Three government representatives mentioned that the majority of the officers are not trained to deal with cases of OCSEA and that there is a lack of appropriate equipment, human and financial resources. For instance, the participant from the National Criminal Investigation Service highlighted the lack of training of investigators: *"On this area of online child sexual exploitation, there is a huge gap. We don't have a large number of colleagues who have been trained and who have skills on this issue. (...) The number of people specifically trained to deal with these issues is very small. I am working on this area and I know all the colleagues and some who work directly with these issues thus I can tell you that in terms of training this is the area with more gaps because we don't have such training. (...) For a person to be able to investigate online activities related to children, such a person must be trained.* (RA1-MZ-12-A)

Additionally, lack of adequate equipment was mentioned as another obstacle for efficient investigation processes: *"There is also the issue of appropriate equipment. These topics are not discussed in a room with 10, 15 or 5 people. There should be a limited number of people with access to this equipment and this information and these people should be trained and use specific equipment. Not with a desktop that is used by five or six people."* (RA1-MZ-12-A)

Collaboration with other law enforcement units

The representative from the National Criminal Investigation Service described that law enforcement entities in Mozambique do collaborate, however there were still challenges to be addressed, such as sharing information during investigations: *"There is coordination between institutions, but this coordination is done on different occasions. (...). We have cooperation, either with the Police of the Republic of Mozambique, with the General Prosecutor's Office and with other institutions from which the National Criminal Investigation Service [Serviço Nacional de Investigação Criminal] intends to collect some evidence.' (...) There is an issue in the promotion of coordination between institutions. There should be a linkage between the different institutions and sharing of information. We have to insist on this cooperation. This is one of the main challenges."* (RA1-MZ-12-A)

With regard to international cooperation, a legal professional from the General Prosecutor's Office noted there is collaboration between INTERPOL and the National Criminal Investigation Service, but stressed the need to improve international cooperation on addressing OCSEA: *"They are virtual crimes and in the virtual world there are no physical borders. (...) Because of this, the major challenges that we have are related to international cooperation, to reinforce the cooperation."* (RA1-MZ-02-A) It is noted that during data collection for *Disrupting Harm*, no cases of international collaboration regarding OCSEA crimes were identified by INTERPOL.

Perceptions on law enforcement awareness and response to OCSEA

While law enforcement data and perspectives were not available, frontline workers were asked to rate law enforcement awareness and response to OCSEA. While nearly half (44%) indicated that law enforcement *awareness* is fair, 22% indicated that law enforcement awareness was poor. Similarly, nearly half of frontline workers (46%) rated law enforcement *response* as fair and 26% suggested it is poor. When explaining their ratings, two frontline workers said that there is some awareness of OCSEA but there is not much of a response. One frontline worker shared: *"People are aware of OCSEA crimes but there are no records of these cases. What they have been reporting are physical cases, sometimes when the situation is very serious or through third party complaints."* (RA3-MZ-41-A) Another commented: *"Several complaints are made but they don't go beyond that."* (RA3-MZ-38-A)

> **On this area of online child sexual exploitation, there is a huge gap. We don't have a large number of colleagues who have been trained and who have skills on this issue...**
> RA1-MZ-12-A

3.3 OBTAINING JUSTICE AND ACCESS TO REMEDIES

According to government representatives, the General Prosecutor's Office and the Minor Court are the two leading entities in investigating and prosecuting sexual crimes against children in Mozambique. This section outlines legislation relevant to children and witnesses in court proceedings as well as available compensation and social support services. Also described are the perceptions of frontline workers and government representatives regarding the availability and quality of social support services. It must be noted that since the *Disrupting Harm* team could not interview OCSEA victims and criminal justice professionals who had experience working with OCSEA cases, the data presented in this chapter offers a limited picture of the access to justice and remedies for OCSEA victims in Mozambique.

3.3.1 Child-sensitive justice

Mozambican legislation provides special protection measures for witnesses and victims of crimes during criminal proceedings where the punishment is more than two years of imprisonment[93] and when their physical and psychological integrity is at risk.[94] As some CSAM-related offences carry penalties below two years, as described in the chapter on legislation and policy relevant to OCSEA, some victims of OCSEA may not be afforded the special protection measures provided for by these provisions.

The special protection measures include the use of video conferences and recorded statements, as well as the non-disclosure of the identity of victims, notably through the use of image and voice distortion techniques.[95] The law also requires that administrative and jurisdictional information is kept confidential to ensure victims' privacy.[96] Additionally, the law also provides for the police protection of victims, families and dependants, as well as measures to guarantee their personal safety and integrity,[97] including a special security programme.[98]

In order to implement and oversee these protection measures, the law also created a Central Cabinet for the Protection of Victims.[99]

The Revised Penal Procedure Code also contains provisions that may be relevant to ensuring the protection of victims of OCSEA during criminal proceedings. For example, media should not disclose the identity of a child victim of sexual crimes before and/or after a legal hearing,[100] and details related to sexual crimes against a child should not be made public.[101]

Witnesses younger than 16–years-old can be interrogated only by the chair of the tribunal or by the elected judges, and thus the attorney and the representatives of the parties must submit their questions directly to the chair.[102] Moreover, the accused must be removed from the courtroom whenever witnesses or declarants below 16 are delivering a statement, provided that there are reasons to believe that their presence could be prejudicial to the witness or declarant.[103]

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93. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 3.

94. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 2.

95. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 13.

96. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Articles 7 and 8.

97. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 16.

98. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 17.

99. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and renterests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 22.

100. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code - Law No. 25/2019, Article 98(2)(c).

101. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code - Law No. 25/2019, Article 97(4).

102. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code - Law No. 25/2019, Article 397(1)(b).

103. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code - Law No. 25/2019, Article 397(1)(b).

All witnesses have the right to protection against threat, pressure or intimidation, particularly in cases of violent or organised crime.[104]

While it seems that the Mozambican legislation contains provisions necessary to protect children during the criminal proceedings, this protection is provided only to children aged 16 or below, even though under Mozambique's law a child is consistently defined as any person under the age of 18.[105]

During the course of the *Disrupting Harm* project, interviews with young people or justice professionals with experience working on OCSEA cases in Mozambique were not conducted. Therefore, determining whether these stipulations regarding procedures occur in practice is unknown and warrants more research.

Beyond the existence of limited provisions towards child protection during criminal proceeding, additional obstacles were identified during interviews with government representatives. These included training for legal professionals that did not include specific focus on OCSEA. One representative from the General Prosecutor's Office said training on cyber criminality was conducted in 2020 for judges, prosecutors and investigators, however not specifically on OCSEA. (RA1-MZ-02-A) Furthermore, one government representative from the National Human Rights Commission identified delays in the justice system in cases involving children as a challenge: *"We have seen that there is a lot of work done but still there are delays in cases involving children, because these are sensitive cases and they take long to be investigated in order to prosecute those who are involved. In some instances, the cases are submitted but then they are withdrawn. But sometimes because these are public crimes, they can't be withdrawn but the parents or interested third parties will abandon the case."* (RA1-MZ-11-A)

3.3.2 Compensation

In Mozambique, compensation for victims through country-managed funds is not available by law. However, convicted offenders of a crime have an obligation to return to their victims the things that were deprived from them, or if this is not possible, pay them a legally verified amount.[106] Beyond such compensation through criminal proceedings, compensation can also be sought through independent civil litigation under certain circumstances.[107]

The amount of compensation that may be awarded varies and is determined by a judge, who takes into account the gravity of the crime, the material and non-material damage caused by it, and the economic situation and social condition of the victim and the offender.[108] As noted, the *Disrupting Harm* team could neither confirm nor evaluate whether victims of OCSEA in Mozambique in fact received compensation.

3.3.3 Social Support Services

The Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights legislation, which provides general standards on child protection, includes a provision that victims of child abuse and exploitation are to be provided with medical and psychosocial care services, as well as social and legal protection by organisations specialised in the protection of children's rights.[109] Entities providing these support services to victims must comply with a number of principles related to the reintegration of children, such as the preservation of family bonds and relationships, ensuring availability of educational, leisure and cultural activities, ensuring the child's preparation for an independent and self-sustaining life, and ensuring the child's participation in local community life.[110]

104. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code - Law No. 25/2019, Article 164(2).
105. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 7/2008 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Article 3.
106. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Penal Code Revision Law - Law No. 24/2019, Article 141.
107. These circumstances/case types are outlined in Article 81 of Mozambique's Penal Procedure Code.
108. Government of Mozambique. (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code - Law No. 25/2019, Article 94(3).
109. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 7/2008 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Article 67.
110. Government of Mozambique. 2008). Law No. 7/2008 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Article 70.

Beyond these general standards, the legislation does not include specific provisions or specific programmes on the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of OCSEA crimes, unless they are victims of human trafficking. Indeed, in this case there is a system in place to monitor the implementation of rehabilitation and reintegration measures.[111] While the legislation can theoretically provide support for children, confirming how it works in practice was not possible due to the lack of interviews with victims of OCSEA and justice professionals.

Perception of availability and quality of support services

In the survey of frontline social support workers, respondents were asked to evaluate the overall availability and quality of medical, psychological, legal, and reintegration services for child victims of OCSEA. The perception of availability was rated as fair to poor for all services, with the exception of availability of psychological services, which was perceived as good by 30%.

One frontline worker said that another key barrier to accessing resources might be fear of "denouncing" the offender: *"Child victims of OCSEA have priority to receive assistance. What happens is that there is fear in denouncing the offender because sometimes it is a family member or a member of the community."* (RA3-MZ-33-A)

The same frontline worker added: *"The support services to child victims of violence exist, but the fear that families have to denounce the assailant is overwhelming because sometimes it is someone close to the family or a family friend and because of that they solve the matter at family level and don't look for the services that are available."* (RA3-MZ-33-A)

When asked about the reason for the poor availability, the frontline workers named the fact that services are mostly concentrated in urban areas (71%) and that these services are simply not being offered (60%). The frontline workers perceived the quality of all services mostly as fair, with the exception of psychological services, which were rated as good by around 30% of workers.

One frontline worker commented on the location of services: *"It is necessary to improve the quality of the existing services and expand them until sub-urban areas."* (RA3-MZ-11-A) Another professional indicated the need for more regulation on support services: *"I just think that if there was government control over those cases things would change to good."* (RA3-MZ-26-A)

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111. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 6/2008 on Human Trafficking, Article 21. English translation available.

3.4 COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

Government and non-governmental organisations
All ten government representatives interviewed mentioned that the governmental institutions have been working with non-governmental organisations to develop prevention programmes, to draft legislation, or to receive training from organisations on topics such as human trafficking and child protection. Perceptions on collaboration between non-government organisations were mixed among surveyed frontline workers; 28% indicated it was good and 12% indicated it was excellent, while 24% said it was poor and 10% said it was non-existent.

Internet service providers and global platforms
In Mozambique, there are no laws regarding retention or preservation of data or evidence relevant to OCSEA. Additionally, there are no legal provisions requiring internet service providers or cybercafé owners to report suspected child sexual abuse material to law enforcement.

Despite this gap in the legislation, two government representatives (one from the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs and another from the National Institute of Information and [112] – was being developed; this new regulation would address reporting, retention and preservation of data from internet service providers. The legal expert from the National Institute of Information and Communication Technologies commented: *"There is a bill of regulation which is not approved yet. We believe that probably in the coming three weeks or in the coming month it will be approved. This document already reflects the issue of obligation of internet service providers to report to the regulatory body, the National Institute of Information and Communication Technologies [Instituto Nacional de Tecnologias de Informação e Comunicação], if there is any aspect related to child abuse. They have to report not only to the* National Institute of Information and Communication Technologies *but also to the General Prosecutor's Office."* (RA1-MZ-10-A)

However, during the interviews with government representations, no clear information or plan regarding this bill's implementation was obtained. The representative from the Ministry of Justice, Constitutional and Religious Affairs confirmed that the timeline for the bill was unclear: *"In relation to this question [obligation to retain and preserve digital evidence] what I can tell you is that we are now developing a programme in coordination with the colleagues from the IT department so that we can have a kind of observatory to manage this kind of information. Currently we don't have anything planned."* (RA1-MZ-09-B) As of June 2022, this bill had not been presented to parliament.

Transparency Data from Major Social Media Platforms

In 2017, 2018 and 2019, the transparency reports[113] of major social media platforms show that authorities in Mozambique made:

- One request to Google for user data via mutual legal assistance in 2019
- One request to Apple for user data in 2018
- No other requests to globally popular platforms or technology companies

This negligible number indicates that Mozambican authorities have very limited familiarity with processes for requesting the data available from these companies and have not routinely pursued OCSEA reports with international gathering of electronic evidence.[114]

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112. Confederação das Associações Económicas de Moçambique. (n.d.). PROPOSAL FOR THE REGULATION OF INTERNET PROVIDERS AND USERS: Private Sector advocates harmonisation with other existing national and international legislation (translated from Portuguese).

113. 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 number 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.

114. Platforms were selected on the bases of high volumes of reports to 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 MOZAMBIQUE

Disrupting the harm of online child sexual exploitation and abuse requires comprehensive and sustained actions from all stakeholders, including families, communities, government, law enforcement agencies, justice and social support service professionals, and the national and international 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 to protect themselves from harm without support.

This chapter presents a detailed set of actions needed in Mozambique. They are clustered under six insights from the *Disrupting Harm* research and sign-posted for different stakeholder groups. All these recommended actions are interlinked and will be most effective if implemented in coordination.

4.1 SIX KEY INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTIONS

INSIGHT 1

In the past one year alone, 13% of internet users aged 12–17 in Mozambique were subjected to clear examples of online sexual exploitation and abuse that included being blackmailed to engage in sexual activities, having their sexual images shared without permission, or being coerced to engage in sexual activities through promises of money or gifts. Scaled to the national population, this represents an estimated 300,000 12–17-year-old internet-using children who were subjected to any of these harms in the span of just one year. This number likely reflects underreporting.

Government

1.1 Deliver national-scale awareness and education programmes about the sexual exploitation and abuse of children – including how technology might play a role.

Key objectives of awareness programmes should include:

- Making children, caregivers and teachers fully aware of the role technology might play in the sexual exploitation and abuse of children.

- Equipping caregivers with the knowledge and skills to foster safe and ongoing communication with children about their lives – both online (see *Start the chat*[115] for an example) and offline – leveraging, when possible, existing positive parenting programmes in Mozambique.

- Equipping adults and children to recognise signs of potential abuse and informing them about how and where to seek help for oneself or for others.

- Fostering an environment in which children are more comfortable having conversations about sex or asking adults, including teachers, for advice. Norms that cause discomfort, shame or embarrassment when talking about sex can make it more difficult for children to report and seek help when experiencing sexual exploitation or abuse. Partnering with existing children and adolescent platforms to ensure peer to peer education is one of the avenues that can be explored.

- Supporting caregivers – especially caregivers who are infrequent users of the internet or have never used the internet – in going online and becoming more familiar with the platforms that children are using (see *Be Connected*[116] for an example).

- A key step towards increasing impact of OCSEA awareness and education programmes is involving the private sector, and in particular the technology industry, in design and implementation of activities.

Ensure that:

- Awareness and education programmes are evidence-based. They should be tested and developed through ethical consultations with children, caregivers and teachers, to ensure that the programmes address children's lived experiences of online risks and also include techniques children use to keep themselves safe. This will help to create campaign messages that are relevant to children's lived experiences and therefore more likely to resonate with them.

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115. See: The Australian eSafety Commissioner's programme 'Start the Chat' to encourage caregivers to talk with their children about their lives online.
116. See: eSafety Commissioner's programme: 'Be Connected'

- The campaigns should reach different groups as well as the most vulnerable. For instance, children in rural areas (66%) reported never having received information about how to stay safe online. Children not in school should also be reached. This might for instance require organising awareness and education campaigns in strategic places such as markets, schools, places of worship that have population clusters that are hard to reach at times.
- A formal process is established to continually monitor, evaluate and modify awareness and education programmes to ensure they are relevant to the current state of OCSEA/CSEA and are reaching the entire population, including in rural communities.

1.2 Invest in digital literacy and online practices for children

- Sixty percent of children surveyed have never received information on how to stay safe online, there is a need for comprehensive digital literacy and safety training to ensure that *all* children are aware of possible risks and know how to respond.
- Computer literacy and online protection classes should be added to the school curriculum, with a particular focus on recognising OCSEA and reporting on it. Mozambican children – including those with disabilities and out-of-school children – should be strategically targeted through relevant avenues and provided with information about what can be done if they are being bothered online, and what kind of content is appropriate to share online with others; they should be trained on basic internet skills such as how to change privacy settings, block people from contacting them, and to eliminate pop-ups.
- Integrate digital literacy information into positive parenting programmes.
- Ensure that these programmes reach younger children and children in rural areas.

1.3 Increase coordination and cooperation across programmes focused on online versus offline violence and, to the extent that it makes sense, across programmes focusing on violence against women and children.

Caregivers, teachers, medical practitioners and social support services[117]

1.4 Improve the understanding of digital platforms and technologies. Around 42% of the caregivers of internet-using children in Mozambique have never used the internet themselves. Frontline workers in Mozambique identified "low knowledge of risk" about OCSEA as a main barrier limiting reporting on these types of crime. It is crucial to support caregivers in becoming more familiar with the platforms that children are using.

When caregivers are involved and supportive of a child's internet use, it helps the child understand the risk and benefits of being online and leads to a more open dialogue between children and adults when children face dangers or harm online. Messages in local languages should be disseminated about the use of digital platforms and technologies via television, radio and school meetings (these were given as the top three preferred sources of information on how to support child's internet use among caregivers). There is need to provide additional support to older caregivers, many of whom have never used the internet.

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117. Government, intergovernmental agencies and civil society need to translate these messages and convey to caregivers, teachers, medical practitioners and social support services.

INSIGHT 2

Most OCSEA offenders (about 65%) are someone the child already knows. These crimes can happen while children spend time online, or in person but involving technology.

Government

2.1 Develop programmes to guide those with a duty of care for children – caregivers, teachers, medical staff, etc. – on violence prevention. Where possible, incorporate this into existing teacher trainings or parenting programmes. These materials should encourage positive adult-child interaction and to overcome discomfort in discussing sex and sexuality in age-appropriate terms. This can encourage open dialogue about sexual abuse and exploitation online or in person. In the longer term, this will help caregivers teach children how to recognise such behaviour and keep safe and make it more likely for children to seek support from these adults when needed. Best practices already exist[118] and can be utilised with adaptations for the local context.

Caregivers, teachers, medical practitioners and social support services[119]

2.2 Learn about what children are doing both online and offline. Because OCSEA affects children regardless of sex and gender, caregivers should be vigilant about all children's online and offline interactions regardless of their gender or gender identity.

2.3 Inform children about their right to be protected from all forms of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse and exploitation. This could include information on how to stay safe by setting appropriate boundaries with others, recognising appropriate and inappropriate behaviour from adults and those around them, and how to seek help. Children should be made aware that all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse are unacceptable, even if committed or facilitated by family members and friends.

INSIGHT 3

Children experienced OCSEA mainly through the major social media providers, most commonly via Facebook/Facebook Messenger and WhatsApp.

Government and Law Enforcement

3.1 Consult with internet service providers, law enforcement, privacy experts, and technology companies to develop realistic, mandatory regulations for filtering, removing and blocking CSAM addressing grooming and live-streaming of sexual abuse, and complying with legally approved requests for user information in OCSEA cases. Monitor for timely compliance and implement consequences for failure to comply.

3.2 Liaise with global technology platforms and build on existing collaborative mechanisms to ensure that the digital evidence needed in OCSEA cases can be gathered rapidly and efficiently, including in response to data requests, and illegal content is promptly removed.

3.3 Make it mandatory for online platforms to have clear and accessible formal reporting mechanisms for children. Detail in child-friendly terms what the process looks like *after* children submit a report. Platforms and service providers must demonstrate transparency and accountability in how they make timely responses to reports, particularly those made by children.

Industry

3.4 Technology companies and online financial providers should consider proactively detecting and eliminating CSAM, identifying grooming attempts and live-streamed child sexual abuse, utilising technology tools, such as PhotoDNA[120] or Project Arachnid.[121]

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118. See: the Australian eSafety Commissioner's programme 'Start the Chat' to encourage caregivers to talk with their children about their lives online; and eSafety Commissioner's programme for seniors going online for the first time 'Be Connected'.
119. Government, intergovernmental agencies and civil society need to translate these messages and convey to caregivers, teachers, medical practitioners and social support services.
120. Microsoft. (n.d). PhotoDNA.
121. Project Arachnid, the Canadian Centre for Child Protection's platform to detect known images of child sexual abuse material and issue takedown notices to industry.

3.5 Prioritise safety by design by considering children's needs in product development processes. The safety by design must be informed by evidence on children's digital practices and their experiences of online child sexual exploitation and abuse, including the *Disrupting Harm* study.[122]

3.6 Promote awareness of OCSEA among relevant private sector entities including internet, mobile and financial service providers to ensure companies of all sizes have a better understanding of the risks children face and what they can do to combat OCSEA. Promote multi-sectoral initiatives, to develop and/or strengthen internal child protection policies. Leverage existing awareness raising campaigns such as those by Vodacom, Mcel and Movitel.

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. Despite not being a member of the Global Alliance, Mozambique made a firm commitment to use the Model National Response to Preventing and Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse to help organise its response to OCSEA. The Model is a valuable tool for governments to improve the level of their response.

Most of the recommendations in this report align with the 21 'capabilities' articulated in the Model National Response, and *Disrupting Harm* identifies priority areas for interventions based specifically on data about Mozambique. Most *Disrupting Harm* recommendations address legislation,[123] dedicated law enforcement,[124] judiciary and prosecutors,[125] and education programmes.[126]

INSIGHT 4

The majority of children were more inclined to disclose being victims of OCSEA to their interpersonal networks rather than to helplines or the police. A notable proportion of children (30%) did not tell anyone about their OCSEA experiences.

Government

4.1 Create and raise awareness about community-level mechanisms for disclosure and reporting. As children tend to be most inclined to disclose abuse to those within their existing interpersonal networks (most often friends, siblings or caregivers), it is critical to provide a diversity of mechanisms that will best support children affected by OCSEA to share their stories in safety. Children who indicated that they were subject to OCSEA shared that they kept things to themselves mainly because they did not know where to go or who to tell. It is important that children become aware of those avenues. Community-level mechanisms are also important for those living in areas with no telephone access. Community-level mechanisms will need to be supported, facilitated and trained on OCSEA if they are to be relevant and effective.

4.2 Raise awareness about Child Helpline 116 as a source of information and support for people subjected to OCSEA. Awareness raising efforts can communicate that peers, siblings, caregivers and teachers can find information, support services and help with Child Helpline 116.

An important prerequisite is that Child Helpline 116 is adequately resourced and trained about OCSEA so that they may provide good quality information and advice. Additionally, the helpline should operate 24 hours a day and have functional case follow-up mechanisms; have representation in all provinces for better handling of cases; provide services in the most widely spoken local languages in the country.

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122. A good starting point for exploration are the free tools made available by the Australian eSafety Commissioner as well as well as this framework developed by UNICEF.
123. Model National Response #3.
124. Model National Response #4.
125. Model National Response #5.
126. Model National Response #13.

Caregivers, teachers, medical and social support services

4.3 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 abuser or exploiter of the child. *Disrupting Harm* data shows that some children who have been subject to OCSEA, do not disclose because they are afraid of being criticised and judged by peers or adults.[127]

4.4 Avoid placing restrictions on children's internet access as a response to potential harm. Twenty-five percent of caregivers said they would restrict their child's internet access if he/she was upset by something online. Restrictions by caregivers might protect children from immediate harm in the short term, but in the long term it can also have a negative impact on children's digital skills (including skills needed to be safe online), which are increasingly needed in a digitised world.

It might also be perceived by children as punishment and may reduce the likelihood of disclosure. Caregivers should therefore be sensitised to provide a supportive environment such as actively engaging in children's lives online; taking an interest in their online activities, participating in activities with them, and suggesting ways to use the internet safely.

4.5 Help children, caregivers, teachers, and those working with children to understand the full extent of the risks when sharing sexual content online and how to engage in harm minimisation to limit possible negative repercussions. Most children who shared sexual content initially did so because they trusted the other person and/or was in love, but this behaviour can lead to serious harm, such as non-consensual sharing of the content with others and sexual extortion.

INSIGHT 5

Disrupting Harm **was not able to identify any OCSEA cases that the justice system has processed. No data on recorded national crimes related to OCSEA were available. While interviews with government officials shed some light on the response systems in Mozambique, there is an urgent need to invest in further research and evaluation of the OCSEA response mechanisms of law enforcement and judicial systems.**

Government

5.1 Establish and synchronise data collection systems and monitoring of OCSEA cases both on the national and local levels, including sex offender registries. Systematic recording and classification of cases will facilitate the lead agencies, law enforcement and Internet service providers in developing evidence-based prevention and response mechanisms to OCSEA. If possible, link OCSEA data with existing child protection information management systems.

5.2 Establish or appoint a government body to lead on coordinating OCSEA response and prevention. The response and prevention of OCSEA in Mozambique was believed to require a range of governmental institutions, however, it was noted that there was no leading body. Establishing/appointing a lead agency will help to avoid duplication of efforts across agencies, by streamlining the mandates and responsibilities of all agencies working on OCSEA and ensure efficient use of resources. Ensure that non-government organisations are represented in coordination bodies.

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127. See e.g. World Health Organization. (2019). WHO Guidelines for the Health Sector Response to Child Maltreatment.

5.3 Invest in building the technical knowledge of police officers, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, courtroom staff, child protection officers and frontline social workers, including those in remote regions about OCSEA. Considering the rapidly evolving online tools and opportunities, it is essential for professionals to understand and know how to address OCSEA within their respective professions individually and as a community. These capacity building initiatives should be institutionalised as part of the training calendar of the Government of Mozambique, to ensure necessary resources are secured and a regular and recurring budget is allocated.

5.4 Evaluate the availability of support services for victims of OCSEA. The Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights legislation, includes a provision stating that victims of child abuse and exploitation are to be provided with medical and psychosocial care services, as well as social and legal protection. Entities providing these support services to victims must comply with a number of principles related to the reintegration of children, such as the preservation of family bonds and relationships.[128] Monitor that these provisions are being implemented by the relevant entities.

5.5 Standardise the implementation of child friendly approaches towards child victims of OCSEA by criminal courts in Mozambique by ensuring that all criminal justice professionals, including those in more remote regions, possess the required awareness and training.

5.6 Dedicate budget for OCSEA prevention and response. None of the interviewed government representatives described clear budget allocations for child protection, let alone specifically for OCSEA.

5.7 Invest in research involving justice professionals who have worked on OCSEA cases as well as children who have been subjected to OCSEA (and their caregivers) to determine whether the existing legislative provisions are working well enough in practice to give survivors sufficient access to justice. While the legislation can theoretically provide support for children, confirming whether it works in practice is essential for strengthening response systems.

5.8 Ensure and monitor that protection for the families of victims during court proceedings including police protection is applied, as stated in Law No. 15/2012.[129]

Justice professionals

5.9 Recognise OCSEA as a crime that needs a tailored response by the legal system. The inability to collect data in Mozambique suggests that OCSEA cases are not yet entering the justice mechanisms in the country. This indicates lack of disclosure by victims and highlights that cases are not recognised as crimes within the formal justice system.

5.10 Ensure that child victims of OCSEA receive compensation. While compensation through country-managed funds is not available in law, convicted offenders of a crime have an obligation to return to their victims the things that were deprived from them, or if this is not possible, paying them an amount determined by the law.

5.11 Monitor and evaluate the work of the Central Cabinet for the Protection of Victims, which was created to the implement and oversee these protection measures.[130] Through Mozambique's Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses or experts in criminal proceedings, video conferencing, statement recording and image and voice distortion techniques measures are in place to protect victims.[131]

128. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 7/2008 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Article 70.
129. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 17.
130. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 22.
131. Government of Mozambique. (2012). Law No. 15/2012 on mechanisms for the protection of rights and interests of victims, witnesses, whistleblowers or experts in criminal proceedings, Article 13.

Social support services

5.12 Train all staff working in social support services (not just specialist services) to recognise the unique risks and harms of OCSEA, and provide them with evidence-based best practices for responding. This should reach health workers, teachers, sport coaches, traditional and religious leaders and all those providing psychosocial support. The training could be done by incorporating information on OCSEA into the existing child protection social services training. When children are brave enough to seek help, those they seek help from must be equipped to provide it.

Law enforcement

5.13 Collect data and the monitor OCSEA cases on the national and local levels. Systematic recording and classification of cases by law enforcement will facilitate in developing evidence-based prevention and response mechanisms to OCSEA.

5.14 Invest in assessing the capacity of law enforcement's response to OCSEA. Evaluate if officers have knowledge about OCSEA, are trained on conducting OCSEA investigations, are equipped with specialised equipment, know how to collaborate with internet service providers and social global media platforms, and respond to NCMEC CyberTips.

5.15 Create a dedicated specialised unit, or dedicated specialised officers within a unit, to investigate OCSEA cases. This unit or team should be composed of officers with experience in cases of both online and offline crimes against children. Ideally the specialised unit has public-facing reporting desk, child-friendly spaces, internet connectivity, and technical tools and capacity on-site. Short of a dedicated specialised unit, a taskforce or sub-unit of dedicated officers may suffice.

5.16 Prioritise a connection to INTERPOL's International Child Sexual Exploitation database in order to join a community of law enforcement officers from 67 member countries working to address OCSEA; this will reduce duplication of efforts and enable a more effective response through proactive surveillance.

INSIGHT 6

OCSEA-related legislation, policies and standards are limited in Mozambique hindering the criminal justice system to address OCSEA and victims to access justice.

Government

6.1 Amend the legislation on CSAM in order to explicitly cover depictions of a child's body for sexual purposes as well as any type of material, and 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.[132] This Protocol is relevant to combating child sexual abuse material and other crimes related to the sexual exploitation of children.

6.2 Amend legislation to remove discrepancies in the penalties associated with conduct related to child sexual abuse material, in order to ensure equal protection of children no matter their age nor the purpose for which the material was produced, possessed or transferred.

6.3 Explicitly criminalise live-streaming of child sexual abuse, the online grooming of children for sexual purposes, and the sexual extortion of children committed/facilitated in the online environment.

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132. UN General Assembly. (2000, May 25). Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. (A/RES/54/263). Art. 2(c).

6.4 Consider legal amendments to align with international conventions that offer excellent guidance for addressing the issue of OCSEA. For example, the Convention on the Protection of Children Against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) and the Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) adopted by the Council of Europe. Although these conventions are regional commitments for Member States of the Council of Europe, the guidance they provide on OCSEA is highly relevant. While it may not be required for States outside this region to comply with these conventions, they are a useful measure of national legal frameworks related to OCSEA and they are open for accession by States which are not members of the Council of Europe.

6.5 Provide guidelines to internet service providers on when and how to record IP data and preserve content-based or non-content-based data.

6.6 Amend legislation to allow for anonymous reporting of crimes, including OCSEA. Mozambican legislation establishes that complaints must be signed by the person lodging them,[133] therefore it does not allow anonymous complaints.

6.7 Amend the legislation to protect children aged 18 and below during the court processes. While the Mozambican legislation contains provisions necessary to protect children during the criminal proceedings, this protection is provided only to children aged 16 or below, even though under Mozambique's law a child is consistently defined as any person under the age of 18.[134]

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133. Government of Mozambique (2019). Law revising Penal Procedure Code- Law No. 25/2019, Article 289 (2).
134. Government of Mozambique. (2008). Law No. 7/2008 on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Article 3.

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