

Call to Action following the WeProtect 2024 Global Summit

4-5 December, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

A Focus on the Future

As delegates of the WeProtect 2024 Global Summit on 4-5 December in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, we remain committed to creating a positive digital future for children. Having gathered together as a united Alliance, we:

1. **Recognise a growing global crisis:** Child sexual exploitation and abuse online is a heinous and escalating global issue, compounded by emerging technologies that pose new opportunities for offenders and new risks to children. Victims and survivors suffer life-long impacts, highlighting the urgent need for action.
2. **Acknowledge progress and challenges:** Notable strides have been made, including advancements at the Ministerial Conference to End Violence Against Children in Colombia, Sixth Forum of the Global Network of Religions for Children and critical resolutions at the United Nations General Assembly and other regional bodies, alongside laudable national and transnational achievements by Alliance members and other stakeholders. However, we also recognise that the pace of change must accelerate to outpace the evolving threats and that it is essential to address disparities faced by children in the Global Majority, where resource constraints and systemic inequities often hinder progress.
3. **Commend countries** that have implemented measures in line with international frameworks, laws and standards, and have promoted public policies with the specific aim of addressing violence against children, and we urge all governments to follow suit.
4. **Call for deeper collaboration and commitment:** In 2023, over 300 million children were estimated to be victims of online abuse and exploitation. Only through unified efforts can we create safer digital environments. We recognise that Governments, private sector leaders, civil society organisations, and all stakeholders must continue to align strategies and pool resources to safeguard children globally.

Our commitments

Overarching commitments

All members of the WeProtect Global Alliance commit to:

- Use their resources, networks, and influence to drive forward the collective global response to child sexual exploitation and abuse online.
- Identify and progress their role in implementing the Model National Response and Global Strategic Response frameworks as part of their strategies and action plans to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse online.
- Contribute to Global Threat Assessments and other knowledge-gathering exercises to share their progress at least once every two years.
- Provide information to the Alliance on progress and activities on implementing the commitments on a biennial basis.
- Ensure genuine participation of victims/survivors and children during the development of policy, programmes, tools, and/or legislation.

Government delegates pledge to:

1. Strengthen cooperation

- a. Advance national, regional, and international collaboration efforts, including through greater inter-sectoral coordination.
- b. Sign and ratify the Council of Europe Lanzarote Convention or implement similar legislation.
- c. Use international platforms and participate in regional bodies to exchange best practices.

2. Enhance awareness and prevention

- a. Raise public awareness about the prevalence of child sexual exploitation and abuse.
- b. Educate parents, caregivers, and children about digital safety and collaborate with civil society, educational institutions, and governments to arm young people with skills to navigate digital spaces safely and securely.
- c. Invest in evidence-based prevention strategies, such as those consistent with the WeProtect Global Alliance Model National Response to end child sexual exploitation and abuse online or INSPIRE: Seven strategies for ending violence against children framework.

3. Implement future-proof and technology-neutral legislation

- a. Introduce comprehensive laws that prohibit all forms of violence against children and provide effective access to justice for victims.
- b. Criminalise emerging threats such as AI-generated abuse and financially motivated sextortion.
- c. Amend domestic legislation, policy, and practice to ensure compliance with obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.
- d. Prioritise children's wellbeing by passing or enhancing tech-neutral, globally aligned legislation.
- e. Strengthen or introduce regulations to encourage technology sector participation in eradicating online exploitation and abuse of children, prioritising mandating take-down procedures and shortening notice periods.

4. Address harmful norms and challenges

- a. Cultivate safe environments for children by addressing harmful norms that perpetuate violence.
- b. While developing and revising child safety policies and procedures, acknowledge context-specific challenges faced by girls, boys, and children, including those with disabilities, from marginalized groups, and those affected by geographic context and the experiences of children from the global majority.

5. Empower children and survivors

- a. Place the wellbeing of the child at the centre of national plans to achieve UN Sustainable Development Goals, recognising that social and gender inequalities undermine the rights of the child.
- b. Foster meaningful child participation in policymaking to ensure their voices shape responses and inform decision-making, with deliberate inclusion of children from underrepresented communities.
- c. Seek out and value the voices of those with lived experience of child sexual abuse and exploitation online to inform policy and legislative developments and decision-making.

6. Work to holistically strengthen child protection systems

- a. Build on existing child protection systems to ensure that they are inclusive and have in place legal and policy frameworks, governance and coordination structures, a continuum of services for survivors, minimum standards and oversight mechanisms, resources, mechanisms for child participation and community engagement and data collection and monitoring systems, to both prevent and respond to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children both offline and online.
- b. Ensure well-resourced and contextually relevant mental health and psychological support services are in place to support victims/survivors of child sexual abuse and exploitation, particularly in areas where such support is limited.
- c. Place diversity and inclusion at the heart of strategies to improve child protection systems, recognising the particular risks for children in poverty, with disabilities, or who have been displaced.

7. Coordinate and enforce

- a. Strengthen cross-sector responses at a country and global level using tools such as the WeProtect Model National Response framework.
- b. Proactively engage with the technology industry to better understand trends and challenges affecting online safety in varying contexts.
- c. Promote dialogue across religions, cultures, and generations to prevent crimes against children, eliminate harmful norms and build resilient communities.

Private sector delegates pledge to:

1. Support safety by design

- a. Better understand the consequences of child sexual abuse and exploitation through meaningful engagement with people with lived experience.
- b. Aim to build age-appropriate and safe digital services for children.
- c. Involve safety experts and responses at the ideation stage of new development.
- d. Embed child safety knowledge across engineering, policy, and product teams.
- e. Foster children's participation in product development and design to ensure their voices shape responses.
- f. Better understand the consequences of child sexual abuse and exploitation through meaningful engagement with people with lived experience.

2. Invest in children's digital safety

- a. Strengthen Trust and Safety teams, ensuring senior leadership includes personnel dedicated to pioneering safety responses to combat online risks to children.
- b. Invest in partnerships and projects with civil society to develop safety responses.
- c. Proactively work to address risks where payment platforms and banking tech can play a key role in responding, such as sextortion.

3. Favour collaborative approaches to the development of best practice

- a. Share best practices with industry peers, civil society, and government regulators to avoid siloed discussions around responses to combat online child safety risks.
- b. Welcome engagement from regulators, law enforcement, civil society, and victim-led organisations to help shape policy.
- c. Collaborate with governments to strengthen regulatory frameworks.

4. Leverage technology for good

- a. Build specialist and innovative capabilities and responses to address violence against children amplified by the use of technology, such as artificial intelligence.
- b. Create and leverage human-led AI responses to combat the scale and pace of online threats.

5. Support policy, legislation, and regulations strengthened to protect children

- a. Comply fully with new and existing child safety laws and regulations.
- b. Engage proactively with law enforcement to learn of emerging trends and comply swiftly with lawful requests for data and cooperate with take-down procedures and notice periods.

Civil Society delegates pledge to:

1. Support and amplify the voices of children and survivors

- a. Continue to work with children, survivors, educators, and carers to ensure understanding of the effects and trends relating to online child exploitation is up to date and accurate.
- b. Harness relationships with survivors to educate the technology industry and the wider public on the risks to children online and the life-long effects suffered by those abused online.

2. Advance data and research

- a. Continue to collect data and conduct research on the prevalence of child sexual exploitation and abuse online and its impacts to inform evidence-based interventions.

Together, we will continue to drive systemic change, leveraging innovation, collaboration, and compassion to ensure a safer digital future for all children.