# Intelligence Briefings – the role of technology and the Internet in institutional child sexual abuse

September 2023

WeProtect Global Alliance is seeking an implementation partner to deliver a targeted piece of work around the role of technology and the Internet in institutional child sexual abuse. We are inviting interested parties to submit a written proposal which should be no longer than six A4 pages and must include:

- Information on proposed methodology (such as details on ethical considerations to be built into the project, estimated sample size, etc.) and project management, including a plan for addressing all requirements/issues covered in this document.

- A high-level timeline anticipating key dates and deadlines.

- Proven relevant experience, including examples of relevant intelligence briefings or qualitative research projects undertaken within the last three years;

- Details of fixed costs for the piece of work as described, quoted in **EUR** and inclusive of VAT.

WeProtect Global Alliance welcomes individual or consortium bids.

Please send completed applications to [info@weprotectga.org](mailto:info@weprotectga.org) by Friday 6th October **17:00 (BST),**

## About WeProtect Global Alliance

The internet was not created with children in mind and can be unsafe for children to explore. Every phone and computer is a potential gateway for offenders seeking to exploit children sexually. Our Alliance generates political commitment and practical approaches to make the digital world safe and positive for children, preventing sexual abuse and long-term harm.

WeProtect Global Alliance's geographical reach is unprecedented: 102 countries are members along with 66 private sector companies and 92 civil society and 9 intergovernmental organisations. This diverse membership is key to our ability to deliver real change.

Together, we break down complex problems and develop policies and solutions to protect children from sexual abuse online. More information on who we are and what we do can be found at [www.weprotect.org](http://www.weprotect.org).

## About the project

These intelligence briefings will consolidate knowledge to better understand and communicate how **technology and the online world intersect with experiences of sexual abuse in institutional environments globally**, drawing on contemporary research and data, and the experiences of children and survivors through this data.

# Deliverables of the research

The briefings will consolidate existing research on the relationship between online and offline elements of sexual abuse in institutional settings. They will give a brief overview of what we know and what the key issues are, highlight research gaps to signpost future work, and provide some recommendations or next steps to improve practice.

The briefings will be published and shared with Alliance members and the wider community. They will inform a roundtable event/s supported by survivor participation as part of the Alliance's more comprehensive empowerment and participation work plan and strategy.

For the purpose of this project, a central definition of institutional abuse will focus on sexual abuse that has occurred directly within the institutional setting.

We will focus on two institutional settings:

- Faith-based
- Sporting

We aim to publish a separate intelligence briefing for each setting but will also consider the rationale of doing one larger intelligence briefing that gives an overview of all institutional settings and breaks down the specific findings, differences and similarities between the two focus settings. This will be informed by the level of current research and whether it warrants separate publications.

### Questions to explore:

1) <u>How does technology facilitate child sexual abuse in institutional settings?</u>

- Existing evidence on the extent and nature of known cases of technology-facilitated institutional child sexual abuse and exploitation.

- Does digital technology facilitate boundary blurring of what is considered normal/appropriate behaviour between individuals and children/young people in these spaces?

- What factors may expose children to risk within institutions?

2) <u>What is the role/place of technology for children participating in institutional settings regarding sexual abuse?</u>

- A situational analysis of how offline and online experiences of child sexual abuse manifest in these institutional spaces. What is the relationship between the two?

- How are technology/digital solutions employed to support and/or protect children, victims and survivors in institutional settings?

3) <u>What are the key considerations to improve prevention and response?</u>

- Do institutions seek to proactively prevent child sexual abuse from taking place? What structural approaches to prevention have been identified in literature and/or in practice?

- How do institutions typically respond to cases of technology-facilitated institutional child sexual abuse and exploitation? Are their responses trauma-informed? Do they have clear and accessible complaint handling policies and procedures? Do they have external oversight of complaint handling?

4) <u>Future scanning to inform 'Next Steps'</u>

- Lessons for tackling institution-specific technology-facilitated child sexual abuse and exploitation for each individual briefing.

# Proposed methodology

Qualitative approach: including primary and secondary collection of qualitative and quantitative data.

- Literature review/ desk-based research to establish prevalence, current challenges, solutions, bottlenecks and gain an understanding of current data gaps building on the Alliance's knowledge database in technology and child abuse.
- Primary data collection through key informant interviews with Alliance members and potentially adult survivors.
- Following interviews, a collection of case studies from relevant members and some from survivor advocates/child advocate groups.

# Audience and structure

The report is intended for adult readers, but care should be taken to ensure details of child sexual exploitation and abuse are presented in an appropriate way. Language should remain accessible and trauma-informed, and align with the Alliance's communications guidelines.

Each briefing should be no more than 10 pages long and include sections such as: introduction, key themes, trends and findings, case studies interspersed in relevant sections (or pull-out boxes),summary recommendations and next steps

We are currently exploring publishing two separate briefings but may consider creating a joint briefing if there is rationale. In this case, we will expand the length of the publication.

# Research, ethics and risk management

As there will likely be involvement of individuals with lived-experience of abuse in this work the project will require use of a trauma-informed approach and will need to be fully risk assessed with a mitigation plan in place that details responsibilities of both the Alliance and the delivery partner.

There will also need to be documentation of ethical clearance conducted by the delivery partner.

# Global focus

These briefings must have a global focus. Therefore, we are looking for consultants who are either based in or have strong local and national in-country connections with countries beyond Europe and North America, to inform the global focus of these briefings. Additionally, the data collection and literature review should be heavily focused outside of Europe and North America.

# Budget and timeline

We have a budget of circa 30,000 EUR (including VAT) for this project – to include the design of the briefings (in English and translated into four other languages). Please submit a full cost breakdown and rationale.

The anticipated timeline is as follows:

- **October 6th:** Invitation to tender closes.

- **Week beginning 9th October:** Review of proposals and interviews scheduled.

- **Week beginning 16th October:** Partner Selected and Onboarded.

- **End of October:** Methodology and brief further expanded. Initial scoping work begins – focus on initial literature review and identifying interviewees.

- **November - December:** Interviews take place and literature review continues.

- **December - January:** Work on drafting briefings begins and case studies are constructed.

- **February:** First draft reviewed, and following feedback finalised

- **March:** Reports are translated and designed

- **March – April:** Briefings launched at survivor roundtable event.

*Please send completed applications to [info@weprotectga.org](mailto:info@weprotectga.org) by 17:00 BST on Friday 6th October. If you have any questions prior to submission, please address them to Delali Mortty ([delali@weprotectga.org](mailto:delali@weprotectga.org)).*