

Terms of Reference

Case Studies on System-Level Changes to Address Online CSEA in the Global South

1. Background and Rationale

Since its inception in 2016, [Safe Online](#) has led global efforts to combat online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (CSEA). As the only global investment vehicle dedicated to child safety in the digital world, Safe Online supports systemic change through investments in evidence-building, innovative solutions, cutting-edge technologies and cross-sectoral programmes. Through its investments, Safe Online builds global evidence and facilitates advocacy and collective action for the rights and safety of children in the digital world.

With over US\$100 million invested in more than 100 projects¹ across +85 countries, Safe Online seeks to enhance its strategic impact by documenting system-level changes in addressing online CSEA, particularly in the Global South. These case studies will provide actionable insights to support policy, advocacy, financing, and public awareness efforts.

This Terms of Reference (ToR) invites applications from qualified consultants or organizations to conduct in-depth, narrative-driven case studies that highlight best practices, enablers, and lessons learned in achieving systemic responses to online CSEA.

2. Objectives

The objective of this assignment is to:

1. **Examine National-Level System Change:** Analyse how systemic responses to online CSEA have been developed and embedded in national policies, governance structures, financing mechanisms and institutional frameworks.
2. **Assess Pathways of Change:** Identify key mechanisms, actors, and strategies that have contributed to sustainable transformation at the national level, across Safe Online's three investment pillars (Systems & Networks, Technology Tools, Research & Data) as applicable.
3. **Document Best Practices and Challenges:** Capture scalable approaches, enablers, and barriers in addressing online CSEA through systemic change.

¹ Please refer to Safe Online's timeline of investments and list of grantees [here](#).

4. **Contextualize in Regional and Global Developments:** Examine how regional and global initiatives – such as international organizations, technology sector advancements, advocacy, knowledge sharing, and multi-stakeholder platforms – have influenced national-level interventions on online CSEA.
5. **Contribute to Global Knowledge:** Synthesize findings into narrative case studies and a structured “Lessons Map” using visual storytelling formats to inform diverse audiences such as donors, policymakers, practitioners, and advocacy efforts.

3. Scope of Work

The selected team of consultants or organization will:

1. **Identify Case Study Countries:** Propose at least two countries in the Global South from the Safe Online investment portfolio that have demonstrated significant progress in tackling online CSEA at the system level. Justify the selection based on measurable achievements, system-level changes, policy initiatives, innovative and scalable practices, and the potential to provide diverse insights across different contexts. The selection process should ensure a balance of sectoral engagement across Safe Online’s three investment pillars (Systems & Networks, Technology Tools, Research & Data).

The specific timeframe to be analysed in each country will be agreed upon during the inception phase with the Safe Online team, ensuring that the period of study captures the most significant developments and milestones in the national response to online CSEA.

2. **Conduct In-Depth Case Studies:** Develop detailed case studies in selected countries, focusing on:
 - Key enablers of national-level system change and sustainable transformation.
 - Pathways of change (key mechanisms, strategies and actors).
 - Policy, legal, institutional and financial frameworks.
 - Multisectoral collaboration (government, private sector, civil society, media, survivors and child/youth engagement).
 - Regional and global influence on national action.
 - Prevention, child and survivors centred approaches, and gender considerations.
 - Role of research/evidence, technology and innovations.
 - Challenges and solutions encountered.

The structure of the case studies will be agreed during the inception phase in consultation with the Safe Online team to ensure alignment with strategic and donor priorities.

3. **Engage Stakeholders:** Conduct in-person and virtual interviews and focus groups with relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, law enforcement, child protection agencies, technology companies, and civil society actors.
4. **Develop a Lessons Map:** Synthesize findings into a structured, visual framework categorizing primary/secondary enablers, resources, challenges, and key lessons and recommendations.
5. **Organize Regional Roundtables:** In coordination with Safe Online, the agency will organize two in-person/hybrid regional roundtables in the respective case study countries or regions. These roundtables will serve as platforms for presenting preliminary findings, engaging key national and regional stakeholders in sense-making and validation, and fostering peer learning and cross-sectoral dialogue. Outputs and insights from these roundtables will be integrated into the final case studies and lessons map.
6. **Deliver Actionable Outputs:** Ensure findings are designed for visually impactful communication across multiple audiences, both technical and non-technical. The case study products should be tailored to address the specific needs of diverse audiences, including but not limited to:
 - Donors: High-level summaries emphasizing impact, return on investment and key enablers for sustainable funding.
 - Policymakers & Government Agencies: Policy briefs highlighting systemic changes, legal frameworks, and recommendations for national action.
 - Practitioners & Implementing Partners, including Civil Society Organisations: Detailed case study reports with practical insights, strategies, and lessons learned for programmatic application.
 - Technology Sector & Private Industry: Key takeaways on the role of digital tools, return on investment, innovations, and cross-sector collaboration in combating online CSEA.
 - Advocacy, Communications and Media: Story-driven and compelling narratives and key messages to support awareness-raising, coalition building and advocacy efforts including for media engagement.

The final set of outputs will be diversified based on audience needs, with communication formats agreed upon during the inception phase to maximize accessibility and impact.

4. Methodology

The consultants or organisations will apply a participatory, creative, and structured approach, ensuring a deep exploration of national-level system

change and pathways of change in addressing online CSEA. The methodology will integrate qualitative and analytical methods to provide actionable insights while ensuring engagement with key stakeholders across multiple sectors.

1. *Documentary Review*

- Analyse national policies, legal and financial frameworks, and governance structures related to online CSEA.
- Assess the evolution of system-level changes, identifying enablers, lessons and barriers.
- Contextualise online CSEA within broader agendas, including technology facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV), digital expansion, child protection, cyber-security and multi-sectoral collaboration.
- Examine regional and global influences, including international agreements, regional and international organisations, and developments in financing and the technology sector.

2. *Stakeholder Engagement*

- Conduct in-person and virtual key informant interviews, focus groups and sense-making workshops with diverse stakeholders, including policymakers, law enforcement, child protection agencies, technology companies, civil society actors, researchers, survivors, parents and child/youth representatives.
- Engage relevant regional and global actors to understand how/if international collaboration has shaped national responses.
- Ensure participatory approaches that capture context-specific insights from those directly involved in policy implementation, prevention and frontline interventions.

3. *Structured Case Study Development*

- Use a defined analysis framework to document national-level system changes, pathways of change, key enablers and challenges.
- Develop detailed narrative-driven case studies, ensuring they capture best practices, survivor-centered approaches and policy innovations.
- Ensure each case study reflects a balanced perspective across government, private sector, civil society, and technology actors.
- Align findings with Safe Online's Theory of Change and Results Framework.

4. *Regional Roundtables*

- Lead the planning, coordination, and execution of two in-person or hybrid regional roundtables in the selected case study countries or regions.
- Develop the agenda in consultation with Safe Online and ensure alignment with the case study objectives and timelines.
- Identify and engage relevant stakeholders, including government representatives, civil society actors, survivors, children/youth representatives,

private sector, donors, and regional institutions, with support from Safe Online.

- Manage all logistical arrangements, including venue booking, technology setup for hybrid participation, translation/interpretation services (if needed), and participant coordination.
- Facilitate the roundtables or contract facilitation support where necessary.
- Document key insights, emerging themes, and stakeholder feedback to inform final case studies and the Lessons Map.
- Submit a Roundtable Summary Report for each event, including participant list, agenda, discussion highlights, and follow-up recommendations.

Safe Online Responsibilities:

- Provide strategic guidance on the objectives and structure of the roundtables to ensure alignment with broader programmatic goals.
- Support the vendor in identifying key stakeholders and making introductions where relevant.
- Review and provide feedback on the proposed agenda and materials prior to finalization.
- Participate in and contribute to the roundtable discussions as appropriate.
- Review and validate the summary reports and ensure integration of insights into final knowledge products and the Lessons Map.
- Promote the roundtables and outputs through its communication and advocacy channels, where applicable.

5. Knowledge Products and Lessons Mapping

- Synthesize findings into a structured, visual framework that categorizes primary and secondary enablers, challenges, resources, and key recommendations.
- Highlight cross-country comparisons, showcasing scalable and replicable approaches for global adaption.
- Ensure findings are designed in knowledge products for multi-audience dissemination, addressing policymakers, donors, practitioners, media and advocacy groups.

Organizations may propose additional innovative methodologies that enhance engagement, data richness, and the overall impact of the case studies.

5. Expected Deliverables and Tentative Timeline

The estimated timeline for conducting the below activities is 8 months, with a tentative start date of 14 July 2025 and completion on 13 March 2026.

Activities	Deliverables	Due Date	Details
Inception Phase			
Kick-off meeting with Safe Online team	Kick-off meeting notes	Week 1	Virtual meeting to confirm scope, objectives and methodology
Draft Inception Report (in-depth document review, approach, methodology, work plan, geographical scope - two Global South countries, stakeholder mapping, draft interview guides and survey tools)	Inception Report (draft)	Week 6	The draft report will be reviewed by the Safe Online team and may need to undergo two rounds of revision.
Final Inception Report submission detailing the approach, methodology, work plan, key stakeholders and identified countries for case studies.	Inception Report (final) & audit trail of comments and responses (how feedback received was addressed)	Week 8	Incorporates feedback from Safe Online First tranche of payment
Data Collection Phase			
Data collection in selected countries identified for case studies	Stakeholder Interviews, Surveys and Field Visits	Weeks 9-15	Data collection in alignment with agreed final methodology.
Data Analysis and Case-Studies Development Phase			
Data analysis and interim presentation of initial findings, including stakeholder feedback	Interim Findings Presentation	Week 18	Second tranche of payment

Draft of two in-depth case studies (comprehensive documentation of system level changes in selected countries)	Two In-Depth Case Studies (draft)	Week 21	The draft case studies will be reviewed by the Safe Online team and may need to undergo a minimum of two rounds of revision. The structure of the case studies will be agreed during the inception/data collection phase with the Safe Online team.
Regional Roundtables	Summary reports from 2 regional roundtables (including agenda, participant list, and key insights for synthesis)	Weeks 22-24	In-person or hybrid events held in case study regions to validate findings and promote knowledge exchange. Outputs to inform final case studies and Lessons Map.
Final two in-depth case studies submission	Two In-Depth Case Studies (final) and audit trail of comments and responses on the draft (how feedback received was addressed)	Week 28	Final design-ready version submitted and incorporates feedback from Safe Online. Third tranche of payment
Lessons Mapping and Knowledge Synthesis			
Draft Lessons Map: A structured map highlighting cross-country learnings, key enablers, pathways of change, resources, activities, and challenges for policy and practice across cases with thematic framework	Lessons Map (draft)	Week 30	The lessons map will be reviewed by the Safe Online team and may need to undergo a minimum of two rounds of revision.

Final Lessons Map Submission	Lessons Map (final)	Week 32	The Lessons Map need to be designed to support diverse stakeholders, including governments, donors, regional and global organisations, and advocacy groups.
Communication Products	Tailored Knowledge Products* (draft)	Weeks 29-33	Policy briefs, donor materials, visual storytelling materials, and digital dissemination formats. Co-developed or sub-contracted. The drafts will be reviewed by the Safe Online team and may need to undergo one round of revision.
	Tailored Knowledge Products* (final)	Week 35	Policy briefs, donor materials, visual storytelling materials, and digital dissemination formats. Final tranche of payment

*Additional Notes:

- **Audience-Specific Outputs:** The final case study outputs will be tailored to different stakeholders, including:
 - **Donors & Funders:** High-level impact briefs.
 - **Policymakers:** Policy recommendations and systemic change insights.
 - **Practitioners:** Technical case studies with implementation guidance.
 - **Advocacy Groups:** Engaging narratives with key advocacy messages including for media engagement.

6. Duty Station, Management and Travel Arrangements

The assignment will be managed by the Safe Online team. The Chief Fund Manager will be the main focal point for the team for contractual and administrative matters and the Senior MEL Specialist will be the main focal point for day-to-day management of the activities and deliverables. The team will be expected to work remotely and be responsible for providing their own IT equipment and health insurance.

Travel to two countries in the Global South (as identified during the inception phase) will be required for stakeholder engagement, field visits and regional roundtables. The two countries and specific locations will be decided during

the inception phase. Travel costs associated with this will be included as an amendment of the contract at a later stage.

General information: Travel will be pre-approved by Safe Online team. Safe Online will reimburse travel costs (economy class, most economical direct flight and standard accommodations) based on documentation (receipts, boarding passes, tickets, etc.) submitted. Travel costs shall be calculated based on economy-class shortest route, regardless of the length of travel. Costs of accommodation, meals and incidentals shall not exceed applicable daily subsistence allowance (DSA) rates, as promulgated by the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC). Safe Online will cover costs for no more than 2 people for travel to locations selected for case studies (countries to be decided during the inception phase) – if required.

7. Ethics and Safeguarding

In order to ensure the protection of, and respect for, human and child rights throughout the process, the applicants will be required to follow relevant international norms and standards of ethics in research and evidence generation - including [UNICEF's Procedure for Ethical Standards in Research, Evaluation and Data Collection and Analysis](#) and United Nations [ethical guidelines](#) and [norms and standards for evaluation](#).

It is also expected that the contractor will select for this work reliable persons who will perform effectively, respect the local customs, and conform to a high standard of moral and ethical conduct and comply with relevant provisions of the [Safeguarding Framework](#) of Safe Online, and internationally agreed core labour standards.

8. Qualifications and Experience

Applications are open to consultancy firms, or research organisations, and multidisciplinary teams with expertise in:

1. Team Leader

- Advanced degree in public policy, social sciences, development studies, or a related discipline.
- At least 10-15 years of experience in system-level analysis, governance or child protection issues.
- Proven experience in conducting case studies or evaluations, preferably in child protection or technology-related fields.
- Demonstrated experience in managing large scale research projects.
- Strong expertise in stakeholder engagement and qualitative research.
- Strong leadership and management skills.
- Demonstrated ability to produce visually impactful reports.
 - Excellent communication and facilitation skills.

2. Research and Technical Experts:

- Experience in system-level change, multi-sectoral collaboration and qualitative analysis.
- Experience conducting interviews and focus groups with diverse stakeholders.
- Experience with Safe Online's thematic areas (child protection, digital safety, technology, governance, etc.).

3. **Communications Expert**

- Strong experience in synthesizing complex findings into compelling, accessible formats for different audiences.
- Proficiency in visual storytelling, data visualisation, and creative communication.

The agency may explore the **option of subcontracting a communications firm or creative agency** to support the development of specific action-oriented knowledge and advocacy deliverables. The Safe Online team will be closely involved in the selection process to ensure alignment with the communications objectives, target audiences, and desired tone and format of the outputs. This will include visual storytelling materials, donor-facing content, policy briefs, and digital dissemination formats.

Desirable Skills and Competences on Team Composition:

- Expertise on other thematic areas of Safe Online is an asset. Desirable Intersections of society and technology.
- Relevant experience within the UN system, other multilateral organizations or Public-Private Partnerships.

Note: Teams should demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively and adapt findings for multiple audiences.

9. How to Apply

Structure of the proposal (MANDATORY document requirements)

The Proposal shall contain the mandatory documentation identified below.

1. Consultant/Organisational profile and qualifications of the personnel
 - Provide a brief description of the consultant/organisation submitting the proposal, including types of activities undertaken.
 - Describe the availability of resources in terms of personnel and their qualifications required for this assignment. Describe the structure of the proposed team/personnel, and the work tasks which would be assigned to each.
 - Provide curricula vitae of the personnel who will be involved in the assignment. Highlight relevant academic qualifications, work experience, and specialized knowledge areas.

- Special attention should be given to providing a clear picture of roles, responsibilities and accountability.
- Filled and signed Appendix 1. - UNICEF Procedure on Sustainable Procurement.

2. Methodology, project management and quality assurance plan

- The proposal should describe the methodology used to provide the services, including the approach to quality assurance and involvement of Safe Online and other stakeholders during each step.
- Workplan – including timelines and deliverables.
- Describe the potential risks that may impact quality or timely completion of expected results. Describe measures that will be put in place to mitigate these risks.

3. Experience and References

- Please outline experience in providing the required services. Bidders should include at least three (3) cases with a description of the services provided, its outcome (sample case studies) and contact details for references.

IMPORTANT: Items 1-3 will constitute vendor's Technical Proposal.

4. Financial proposal

The financial proposals should be prepared in the Financial Proposal Template (Annex C) provided with RFPS document. Detailed breakdown of hourly rates and time estimates should be included.

The financial proposal shall be submitted separately from the technical proposal per each deliverable described in Section 5 on "Expected Deliverables and Timeline".

The Financial Proposal shall include a cost breakdown for the work phases as per the TOR, detailing the types of roles proposed and days required, and any other cost elements deemed relevant.

The calculation of fees should indicate the all-inclusive cost in US dollars and an estimate of the time-effort to be allocated for the services, expressed in number of working days by designation of staff performing the service and their fees per working day. Estimates for other items required (e.g. Travel), must be detailed and listed separately.

The proposals will be evaluated only for those offers that meet the minimum passing grade in the technical evaluation.

Evaluation process and method

Proposals will be reviewed following a three-step process:

- a) An initial administrative check for completeness and compliance
- b) Technical evaluation (80 points)
- c) Evaluation of financial proposal (20 points)

A maximum of 80 points will be allocated to the technical aspects of the bids, with a further 20 points for the price component, for a maximum possible score of 100 points.

The evaluation will be carried out by UNICEF in accordance with UNICEF's regulations, rules, and practices and all determinations are made in UNICEF's sole discretion.

A. Preliminary Evaluation

This is an administrative check for completeness and compliance of the proposals prior to conducting the technical evaluation. Proposals will be reviewed for their completeness in terms of the information requested in the ToR and their compliance with requirements. If they are submitted through the correct channel as indicated in the RFPS. Acceptance of UNICEF GTC may be considered as a criterion during the administrative evaluation due to the time sensitivity of the project. Only proposals that successfully pass the administrative check will be subject to technical evaluation.

B. Technical evaluation (80 points)

Each proposal will first be assessed on the basis of the consultants/organisational profile and proposed methodology, including processes for effective quality management. The organisation's structure and capacity and the expertise and experience of the proposed team will then be reviewed. Finally, the bidder's particular experience with the required services assignments will be assessed.

Reviewers will use the following point system to evaluate the proposals received:

1. Consultants/Organisational profile and personnel	
1.1 Relevance of the consultants/organisational profile	10
1.2 Qualifications and relevant experience of proposed consultants/organisation	10
1.3 Qualifications, competencies and specialized knowledge areas of proposed personnel	10
2. Proposed methodology and project management	

2.1 Methodology, project management and quality assurance	15
2.2 Work plan – timeline and deliverables	10
2.3 Potential risks and mitigation measures	5
3. Experience in similar projects and their outcome	
3.1 Sufficient experiences (minimum 3 cases)	15
4. Sustainable Procurement practices	
4.1 Appendix 2 filled and returned	5
Total	80

Only proposals scoring **65 points or higher** will be considered technically compliant and will proceed to the financial evaluation.

C. Financial evaluation (20 points)

A proposal offering the most competitive total costs for the assignment shall be awarded 20 points; all other price proposals receive scores in inverse proportion.

The total score for the financial offer (TS_{FO}) will be calculated in the following manner (rounded to one decimal):

$$TS_{FO} = \frac{\text{Lowest offer}}{\text{Actual Offer}} \times 20$$

Combined Evaluation

The proposal obtaining the highest cumulative score after adding the scores for the technical and financial offers will be considered as the most responsive proposal. The proposal that offers best value for money and is in the best interests of Safe Online will be recommended for award of the contract.

Appendix 1 – UNICEF Procedure on Sustainable Procurement

The UNICEF Procedure on Sustainable Procurement is one of UNICEF's responses to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly Goal 12 – “Ensure Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns” and its target 12.7 – “promote public procurement practices that are sustainable, in accordance with national policies and priorities”. Sustainable procurement encompasses three pillars – economic, environmental, and social. Bidders are encouraged to read [Sustainable procurement procedure](#) (UNICEF Supply Division).

Each box below has been assigned with 1 point. Last box has been assigned with 2 points. If applicable, please checkmark the box for the following:

- ☐ Has your company made a commitment to economic pillar (example: policy/ SOP to inclusion of local resources to develop local economy in area of work, including small businesses and businesses owned by marginalized groups). Please provide relevant policy / certification / SOP to evidence the claim.
- ☐ Has your company made a commitment to social pillar (example: policy/ SOP to protecting human rights and labour issues (workers' rights), inclusion of persons with disabilities and gender in the work force). Please provide relevant policy / certification / SOP to evidence the claim.
- ☐ Has your company made a commitment to environmental pillar (example: policy/ SOP to minimize the impact on environment from purchasing, reduction of wastage, reduced CO2 emissions etc.). Please provide relevant policy / certification / SOP to evidence the claim.
- ☐ Please explain how you plan to integrate sustainability measures in the execution of the contract, if awarded to you (250 words):

Appendix 3 for SDG Goal 12 and its target 12.7 must be duly completed, signed, and returned with the Technical Proposal