Lessons from a Decade of TF-CSEA System Change in Kenya and the Philippines

What worked, where the countries' paths converged and diverged, what drove or stalled progress, and what it means for governments, donors, industry, practitioners, and partners strengthening child protection systems today.

K Kenya specific

P Philippines specific

Building durable systems

Political commitment, legal frameworks and coordination create the foundations for change.

Legal and institutional reforms create important foundations but progress depends on turning them into funded implementation, clear responsibilities and routine practice. P K

Formal coordination is not enough on its own. Effective systems depend on accountability, working relationships and sustained collaboration across justice, child protection, technology and other actors. P K

Local referral networks bridge the gap between informal disclosure and formal systems. K

Legal reform can catalyse system progress but also places new demands on institutions and exposes capacity and resourcing gaps. P

Prioritising data, evidence and the outcomes gap

Data and learning help shape responses, track progress and make the case for continued action.

Country-specific evidence can make TF-CSEA visible, strengthen advocacy and political attention and help target policy and investment K P

The impact of prevention and public awareness efforts about TF-CSEA can be systematically integrated into ongoing public health efforts rather than stand-alone. P

Data management systems within different institutions in the ecosystem can be aligned with common definitions, indicators and classifiers for measuring TF-CSEA. P

Cross-country learning and peer exchange can accelerate learning, support adaptation of promising practices, and strengthen programme effectiveness. K

Institutional scaffolding (such as law reforms, clarified mandates, budget allocations) are important foundations, but evaluative evidence of how these improvements demonstrate better outcomes for children is needed. K P

Enhancing capacity, practice and trust at the frontline

Specialist, local and frontline capacity are all needed to turn policy and plans into practice.

Training alone is not enough. Frontline workers need clear procedures, specialist support, supervision, resources and strong working relationships across services. K P

Formal systems often depend on informal professional relationships, information sharing and networks across sectors to work effectively in practice K P

Different training approaches involve trade-offs between reach, cost and depth; capacity-building needs to be designed deliberately and reinforced over time. P

Child and survivor feedback can help reveal whether reporting, justice and support systems are actually accessible, trusted and responsive. K P

Local community organisations inspire community trust and visibility of emerging risks and enable earlier identification and reporting of TF-CSEA. K

Standardised training materials, SOPs, and shared guidance frameworks help harmonise responses and strengthen interagency collaboration. Training must be ongoing, not a one-off event. K

Addressing a changing threat landscape

Responses must adapt to evolving risks, technology and a cross-border, multi-actor environment.

National responses need to keep adapting as technology, offending patterns and evidence requirements change. K P

Industry is part of the protection system. Effective TF-CSEA responses need clear responsibilities for technology, telecommunications and financial actors on prevention, detection, reporting, evidence preservation and transparency, alongside strong cooperation with authorities and the specialist capacity to use digital and financial evidence. K P

International cooperation and cross-border evidence are part of the national response, not an add-on. K P

Monitor emerging risks such as synthetic CSAM and AI-facilitated grooming, even where these are not yet dominant in current casework. P

International and regional knowledge exchanges help adapt learning from other contexts, while flexible funding helped programmes respond to emerging needs. K

Localising and communicating for impact

Trusted local actors and community-level engagement strengthen prevention, identification, reporting and support.

National progress only becomes meaningful when it reaches local systems and reflects the realities of different communities. K P

Approaches need to reflect local governance, geography, language, social diversity rather than assuming one national model will work everywhere. P

Advocacy can combine child-rights, social and economic arguments and should be tailored to different decision-makers. P

Media and public opinion can create visibility and pressure but messages can also be diluted or distorted, so engagement needs to be careful and adaptable. P

The impact of prevention and public awareness efforts about TF-CSEA can be systematically integrated into ongoing public health efforts rather than stand-alone. P

Trusted community organisations and visible local advocates can encourage reporting, make risks more visible and connect people to services. K

Sustaining progress

Long-term impact depends on domestic financing, institutional ownership and continued political and public support.

External finance can help start and accelerate change, but recurrent public functions - workforce, supervision, technology, evidence systems, services and coordination - need to become part of domestic planning, costing, budgeting and institutional responsibilities over time. K P

As systems move from establishing foundations towards wider implementation, priorities shift towards consistency, sustained resourcing and institutionalisation rather than continually creating new structures. K P

Evidence of domestic funding or government ownership regarding TF-CSEA remains scant with continued dependence on external funding a sustainability risk, particularly for community programming and evidence generation. K

International actors can continue to play a significant role in financing and providing technical capacity and operational inputs even as domestic ownership grows. P

Over-reliance on external donor funded community programming means uneven geographic coverage of TF-CSEA programming and sustainability challenges. K

What this means

Invest as much in implementation as in reform.

Laws and coordination structures need clear mandates, operational relationships, accountability and resources to work in practice.

What this means

Evidence is most useful when it is context-specific, built into national systems, translated into policy and practice and used to track whether systems are improving outcomes for children.

What this means

Strengthen the conditions around frontline practice, not just individual skills. Training should be backed by supervision, specialist support, manageable workloads, clear procedures and trusted referral pathways.

What this means

Design systems to adapt, not just respond to today's threats. Keep legal, technical and investigative capacity connected to industry, financial actors' and international networks as technology changes.

What this means

Adapt implementation to local realities and work through trusted actors who understand community context, barriers and reporting pathways.

What this means

Plan for sustainability from the start. Use external finance to build capability and unlock change, while costing and progressively embedding recurrent public functions in domestic plans, budgets and institutions.

Cross-cutting lessons across both countries

- Systen change is non-linear and context-specific
- Implementation matters as much as legal or policy architecture
- National progress can mask significant local disparities
- Relationships and coordination are the “connective tissue” of the ecosystem
- Industry cooperation and interrational connectivitiy are essential parts of the national responses
- Child and survivor trust, participation and feedback strengthen systems
- External finance can catalyse change, but recurrent functions need sustainable ownership
- Evidence of institutional change is stronger than evidence of improvements in outcomes for children

Safe Online

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