Safe Online

Investment in *System Level Solutions* for Addressing Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Lessons from Kenya and the Philippines

What is Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (TF-CSEA)?

TF-CSEA encompasses abuse that occurs through, or is enabled by, information and communication technologies.

TF-CSEA harms millions of children worldwide through online grooming, the production and distribution of child sexual abuse material (CSAM), live-streamed abuse, sexual extortion, and other forms of exploitation. It is fast-evolving, and new forms such as generative AI-enabled CSAM, continue to emerge[1].

Why Invest Now?

Technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and accessibility of digital technologies, social media platforms, encrypted messaging services, livestreaming tools, and artificial intelligence have created new opportunities for offenders to contact, groom, exploit, and abuse children.

Most countries have struggled to keep pace with the rapid growth and ever-changing nature of TF-CSEA. Policy and legal frameworks take time and careful consideration to update. Institutional responses are slow moving and law enforcement and support practitioners have limited access to the tools, skills, and capacity to respond effectively. Public awareness of the nature and risks present are also frequently low.

A decade of investment in research has been critical to advancing understanding of the scale and nature of TF-CSEA and to informing the upgrading of laws and policies, and to improving responses.

The Potential Impact of Investment

In 2026, Safe Online undertook case study analyses in Kenya and the Philippines to analyse a decade of grant-making support and identify national progress, and its catalysts and constraints.

Evidence from Kenya[2] and the Philippines[3] shows that TF-CSEA is best addressed through sustained, system-wide investment. Proven approaches and implementation frameworks already exist, but progress has not yet been scaled to match the magnitude of the challenge.

The case studies from Kenya and the Philippines suggest that sustained investment across multiple parts of the ecosystem can enable reinforcing system effects. Across both countries, progress emerged through the interaction of government leadership, civil society action, international cooperation, industry engagement, evidence generation and external investment.

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[1] ECPAT, INTERPOL, & UNICEF (2026). Disrupting Harm: Evidence on Technology-Facilitated Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Country Reports. Safe Online.
[2] Kavenagh, M. Gacengo, B. & Singsakhorn, S. (2026). Decade of Change: A Stocktake of the TF-CSEA Ecosystem in Kenya. Safe Online.
[3] Kavenagh, M. & Singsakhorn, S. (2026). Decade of Change: A Stocktake of the TF-CSEA Ecosystem in the Philippines. Safe Online.

System Domains Where Sustained Investment Contributed to Change

Domain	Observed Pathways of Change
Evidence Generation	Evidence informed laws, policies, operational guidance and data collection
Governance	Stronger legislation, action plans, and coordination mechanisms
Law Enforcement & Justice	Improved institutional capacity and child-friendly justice
Child-Centred Services	Better coordination, referrals, and survivor support
Industry Engagement	Greater private sector participation
Awareness & Education	Expanded prevention and public awareness efforts
Financing & Scale	Increased integration of child protection into government budgets

In Kenya and the Philippines, the past decade has seen movement from fragmented responses towards more coordinated national system strengthening, though at differing rates. Progress remains incomplete and uneven.

In both countries, national laws, institutions and coordination mechanisms have advanced, but implementation lags; specialist capacity remains concentrated; services and workforces are under-resourced; and data systems remain fragmented.

The Philippines shows greater institutionalisation in several domains, while both countries continue to face implementation, financing and government ownership limitations. In particular, sustainable domestic financing is beginning to emerge in the Philippines, though this is uneven and not yet secure.

While the experiences of Keny and the Philippines provide valuable lessons, successful approaches have not yet been widely scaled nationally in either country, and further progress is still critical. However, the system analysis undertaken in the project illustrates points that have – and can continue to be – targeted for the most effective investment and impact.



Recommendations for Investment

1. Long-Term Investment in Comprehensive Ecoysystem Responses



Focus on sustainability rather than short-term projects

Shift from short-term, project-based funding to long-term investment in systemic responses that facilitate sustainable changes and align domestic improvements with global responses to TF-CSEA.

Comprehensive ecosystem responses refer to coordinated actions that view child protection as an interconnected system featuring complementary actors and sub-systems. Investment that enables coordination and stronger relationships between actors may take longer but is more effective in the long term. Connecting with global actors can accelerate progress as known lessons are able to immediately be contextualised and applied.

Strengthen government mechanisms

Support reforms to laws, regulations, operational procedures, and national coordination mechanisms to reduce duplication, improve efficiency, and streamline systems.

Develop workforce capacity and practitioner support systems

Invest in work that motivates and enables domestic government mechanisms to take on and sustainably manage ongoing capacity-building and competency monitoring of relevant professionals in the TF-CSEA ecosystem. Workforce investment also includes staff retention, workload management and practitioner wellbeing.

Investments that that motivate and enable governments to prioritise and take ownership of these functions for their people are essential to ensuring their long-term sustainability of the TF-CSEA ecosystem.

Adjust and use existing staff management systems, performance indicators, renumeration standards and professional development and support systems for law enforcement officers, psychosocial support workers, and other relevant practitioners.

2. Use Donor Funds for Catalytic Investments that Prioritise Public Financing



Accelerate sustainability through government budget mechanisms

External donor funds should focus on supporting catalysts that encourage national ownership by aligning investments with national strategies, identifying and supporting applications for domestic appropriations to continue.

Invest in public finance management capacity

Strengthen capacity of a range of TF-CSEA ecosystem actors in planning, budgeting, and seeking resource allocation to ensure long-term sustainability. Forward budgeting and costing should include the full recurrent (and increasing) costs of the interventions being introduced, not only the initial investment.

For example, consider staffing, annual software/licensing, equipment maintenance and replacement, staff supervision and ongoing training.

3. Evidence-to-Policy Translation



Invest in high-quality evidence generation integrated with existing data management mechanisms

Support integration of interoperable data systems that support common definitions, indicators, classification and reporting regarding TF-CSEA, and are in line with access controls, retention and deletion rules, privacy and other safeguards for sensitive information. This will ensure that data may continually be accessed on the scale, patterns, drivers, barriers, opportunities, and emerging trends of TF-CSEA.

Translate evidence into policy and budgeting decisions

Support research, costing, policy development, and strategic communication of evidence to policymakers, budget authorities, and political leaders to inform legislation, policy reform, and budget allocation.

4. Child-Friendly Justice and Rights Protection



Integrate justice systems hardware and software

Support countries to establish ongoing access to forensic tools for the identification, collection, preservation, and management of digital evidence regarding TF-CSEA. Make catalytic investments in child-friendly interviewing facilities and video-recording systems concurrently with the training, system strengthening and procedural reform needed to establish and maintain their ongoing use in justice systems.

Strengthen child-friendly digital protections

Support legal and procedural reforms along with establishing mechanisms that protect children's digital identities, including content removal mechanisms (Right to be Forgotten/Take-Down) and proactive safety-by-design protections.

Establish clear protocols to support child survivors from the point of disclosure through to recovery and reintegration, with a focus on safety, access to information, and age-appropriate participation in decision-making.

Support catalytic One-Stop Service mechanisms, rehabilitation programmes, and compensation schemes that are integrated in national systems and budget capabilities.

5. Funding for Localisation and Scaling Up



Translate national policies into local implementation

Once national legal frameworks and coordination mechanisms are established, investment must move to the tasks necessary to adjust the system so that it enables localisation – such as the local awareness work, financing architecture to enable effective implementation at provincial, municipal, and community levels.

Ensure localisation is participatory

Engage and resource local civil society, grassroots organisations and survivor-led initiatives in the design, adaptation and accountability of local responses, recognising their potential to contribute trusted relationships, contextual knowledge and lived experience expertise. However, note that meaningful participation requires strong ethical practice and safeguarding.

Support cost-effective scaling models

Use funding for catalytic expansion of local child protection services through developing and sharing tailored operational tools, guidelines and practice standards, blended learning, mentorship, and cross-regional learning networks.

Support parenting programmes and community-based initiatives that strengthen digital safety knowledge and skills for children and caregivers.

6. Convening and Private Sector Engagement



Strengthen the supporting role of external donors and international partners

Government led coordination supported by external donors and international partners can support multi-lateral collaboration amongst neighbouring governments, civil society actors and the private sector.

Promote collaboration between industry and government

Facilitate programs that enable cross-border evidence sharing, referrals and cooperation between global technology platforms and law enforcement, and promote industry-government operational cooperation.

Reduce duplication and strengthen collaboration between the technology and financial sectors

Convene actors so that goals and resources align and integrate. For example, financial criminal aspects of some forms of CSEA exist in parallel to money laundering and other financial crimes and can be fought together.

Create incentives and partnerships that engage technology companies, digital platforms, internet service providers (ISPs), and financial institutions in developing standards and innovations for financial investigations, strengthening international cooperation and disrupting financial flows linked to TF-CSEA.

Extend regulatory precedent across sectors

Promote guidance and regulation that articulates platform responsibilities regarding TF-CSEA such as preventative actions like safety-by-design measures and strengthening capabilities to proactively detect TF-CSEA. Existing obligations on regulated sectors such as financial institutions' duty to flag suspicious transactions under anti-money-laundering frameworks, paired with safe-harbour protections, offer a proven legal template that could be extended to other actors.

System-level investment should support the legal and policy analysis needed to adapt such models across sectors. Create incentives and partnerships that engage technology companies, digital platforms, internet service providers (ISPs), and financial institutions in developing standards and innovations for financial investigations, strengthening international cooperation and disrupting financial flows linked to TF-CSEA.

7. Invest in Ecosystem-Level Monitoring and Evaluation



Shift measurement from outputs to system-level changes

Avoid measuring success solely through project outputs, such as the number of people trained or materials distributed. Continue to track immediate outputs, but complement them with measures of broad system-level change (such as these case study analyses), service quality, and outcomes for children.

Support longer-term measurement approaches that allow sufficient time to identify and assess systemic change.

Monitor structural change and system relationships

Track ecosystem-level changes, including inter-agency coordination, information-sharing, digital evidence flows, sustainable government funding for child protection, service quality, and the ability of children and communities to safely access protection and support.

Read the case studies reports for
Kenya and Philippines
and learn more at

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This policy brief was commissioned by Safe Online and prepared by Evident