Out of the Shadows: Benchmarking country responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation

Identifying gaps and the road forward

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The Out of the Shadows Index is a benchmarking tool that assesses how countries and industries are responding to child sexual abuse and exploitation across four categories and 60 countries.

**Overview**

**Environment**
- Instability
- Livelihoods
- Social protections
- Consumption of stimulants
- **Societal attitudes**
- Perceptions of violence
- Attitudes to law enforcement

**Legal Framework**
- Contextual legal framework
- Age of consent
- Child sexual offenses
- Child marriage
- Child-specific rape laws
- General sex laws
- Exemptions and qualifiers
- **Purchasing sexual services**
- **Procuration of minors**
- Visual depictions of minors
- **Online grooming**
- Protecting child interests
- **Internet protections**

**Government Capacity & Commitment**
- International standards/conventions
- National plans and policies
- Resources for legal and enforcement professionals
- Data collection: prevalence
- Reporting
- Government and law enforcement capacity
- Complaint mechanisms
- Access to victim support programmes
- Access to offender support programmes

**Engagement: Industry, Civil Society & Media**
- **Technology industry engagement**
- Travel and tourism industry engagement
- Frontline support workers
- Civil society engagement
- Media industry engagement
Objectives of the ‘Out of the Shadows’ Index

To raise awareness and mobilise action globally to address child sexual abuse and exploitation.

- Develop a best-practice framework to identify policy gaps
- Create an independent assessment of responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation
- Ensure accountability in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 16.2 and allow countries to track progress
- Raise awareness of the role of civil society and the private sector in safeguarding children from sexual abuse
Index scope: 60 countries globally

OOSI countries
Findings
There is a strong relationship between social norms and responses to sexual violence

Stigmas around perceptions of sex, sexuality and gender can create a more secretive environment in which sexual abuse and exploitation are not openly addressed.

Correlation co-efficient (r) = +0.73
And often these norms are most prevalent in lower-middle and low-income countries

1.5) Societal attitudes
Score 0-100 where 100=best environment for children.
Resource constraints are not insurmountable

The top ten countries in the index are among the world's richest, but middle- and low-income countries are not far behind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overall scores, quartiles</th>
<th>First quartile</th>
<th>Second quartile</th>
<th>Third quartile</th>
<th>Fourth quartile</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>Myanmar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>76.1</td>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>Mongolia</td>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>76.0</td>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>Cote d'Ivoire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
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<td>Thailand</td>
<td>Nigeria</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
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<td>Malaysia</td>
<td>Kazakhstan</td>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>70.3</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>65.5</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Angola</td>
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<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>63.9</td>
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<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colombia</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>Madagascar</td>
<td>Cameroon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>China</td>
<td>Niger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>62.9</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>59.1</td>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>Dem Rep of Congo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Improved Internet connectivity carries risks

The rapid rise of Internet access, especially among burgeoning youth populations in developing countries, requires action. For example, 16 (of 60) countries do not have laws that protect children against online grooming.

2.11) Online grooming
Score 0-100 where 100=best environment for children.

Consider if there is legislation that seeks to protect children from online grooming.

Scores 75 or more | Scores 50-74.9 | Scores 25-49.9 | Scores less than 25 | No Data
Gaps exist between legal systems and implementation

Country action has been most pronounced on legal frameworks that protect children. However, most have not implemented policies or created effective institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index category</th>
<th>Average score (60 countries)</th>
<th>Average score (lower-middle income countries)</th>
<th>Average score (low-income countries)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk environment</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>50.0</td>
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<td><strong>Legal framework</strong></td>
<td><strong>58.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>56.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>50.5</strong></td>
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<td>Domestic capacity and commitment</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>33.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engagement: Industry, civil society &amp; media</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>30.8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Scoring: 0-100, where 100=best environment for children*
Using the OOSI:
An advocacy tool to drive change
Using the ‘Out of the Shadows’ Index

The Out of the Shadows Index helps stakeholders identify gaps in responding to the scourge of sexual violence against children globally.

Best practices
- Showcases global trends towards combatting child sexual abuse and exploitation; **identifies best practices**
- Highlights how industry, policymakers, civil society and the media can and must collaborate to address the issue

Gaps
- Identifies gaps, especially compared with similarly situated countries
- Leads to **recommendations for action**
- Builds on existing research and tools (eg, INSPIRE)

Advocating for change
- Provides a **platform for action** around ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking against children
- Sparks dialogue within the policy community & the public
- Creates accountability to support the Sustainable Development Goals
The Index has been used to start dialogues with governmental organisations working to end all forms of violence against children.

- The Index has been presented to the European Parliament Intergroup on the Rights of the Child.

- A roundtable discussion with the Brazilian government, CONANDA, the State of Sao Paulo and the municipality of Sao Paulo drew attention to Index findings.

- Working sessions with government leaders, particularly in the Middle East, leveraged the Index to identify next steps

- The Index was presented to officials from UNICEF in NY, who introduced us to their country representatives.
Using the Index: Building out private-sector action

“It is absolutely crystal clear that the arrival of fast broadband in a particular country will be followed by the patterns of offending behavior that we’ve seen in richer countries.”
- John Carr, expert adviser to the European NGO Alliance for Child Safety Online

- The UN Broadband Commission has used Index insights in discussions with regulators and business operators to encourage child protection online.

- Index results were discussed at a child-protection meeting organised by GSMA, the mobile operators group, in Barcelona.

- Our research team is in discussions to use data from NetClean, a company that helps businesses detect child sexual abuse materials.

- World Childhood Foundation in Brazil initiated a dialogue with Microsoft to discuss child safety.
The findings from the study are highlighted in a white paper, index tool and country profiles that can be downloaded from the *Out of the Shadows* digital hub. A social–media campaign is also underway.

outoftheshadows.eiu.com
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