GSMA Mobile Alliance to Combat Digital Child Sexual Exploitation

Update on 2024



The GSMA Mobile Alliance to Combat Digital Child Sexual Exploitation is an international group of mobile operators within the GSMA who have committed to working together and taking proactive steps to fight technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation.

The GSMA Mobile Alliance's mission is to be a trusted and valued partner in the global community working to end child sexual exploitation and abuse in the digital environment.

It achieves this by providing leadership to the global mobile community and working with key national and international stakeholders to enable a coordinated response to digitally-facilitated child sexual exploitation and abuse.

The GSMA Mobile Alliance was relaunched in 2024. This document outlines a selection of the initiatives undertaken by the members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance in line with their shared goal of protecting children in the digital environment.

Standard setting

Members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance use their position in the community and the value chain to help set standards by deploying and promoting good practice approaches to combatting technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation.

All members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance have taken steps to make their services hostile to digital child sexual exploitation in keeping with the baseline standards outlined UNICEF's Mobile Operator Child Rights Impact assessment (MOCRIA). For example, members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance take steps to restrict access to known child sexual abuse material using list provided by national law enforcement, internet reporting hotlines or internationally recognised organisations such as INTERPOL.

Specific examples include:

- Telia deploys the INTERPOL 'Worst of' list across all its markets.
- Telefonica has worked with the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF) since 2002, and restricts access to known child sexual abuse material using the IWF's URL List in Ecuador, Spain, Mexico, UK, Uruguay and Venezuela.

These approaches help to prevent the viewing of child sexual abuse material and therefore the revictimisation of people who have experience digital child sexual exploitation.

Safer internet education & awareness programmes

The members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance offer a wide range of education programmes and information on staying safe online. Representative examples include the following:

- Orange developed educational content through collaborative articles and newsletters (see here, for example) on online child sexual exploitation in collaboration with specialist NGO, Cameleon.
- Movistar (Telefonica) Spain's Blue Movement educational platform promotes a more responsible and safer use of technology by offering practical ideas, recommendations and articles developed in collaboration with educators, psychologists and other professionals.
- MTN provides child online protection digital tips for both parents and children.
- Telenor's Digiworld platform gamifies internet safety guidance for children and young people.
- Telia's educational tools to protect children's online safety & wellbeing include an online 'Mobile Driver's License' which help parents discuss online safety with their children including the Parental Packages.
- Vodafone UK partnered with NSPCC to develop and promote a phone safety toolkit.
- Zain's Online Safety Booklet and Internet Monsters campaign highlight risks faced online and strategies for staying safe.

Child helplines and digital support services

Wherever possible, members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance work to support and signpost national child helplines or digital support services so that children who have experienced any form of digital child sexual exploitation can reach out for help.

On behalf of its members, the GSMA works directly with Child Helpline International to support collaborations between their respective communities.

Examples of on the ground partnerships include the following:

- In Sweden, Telia has provided long-standing support for the Bris national helpline for children and young people, including developing an SMS function so that the helpline can be reached anonymously and free of cost. The new helpline method was made available in October 2023 and has quickly become one of the preferred ways for children to seek support. The company's support has enabled more children to contact Bris and supporting conversations increased by 23% between 2023 and 2024, in which the SMS channel played an important part.
- In Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and KSA, Zain has partnerships with the child helpline to facilitate and raise awareness of the line.

Convening and advocacy

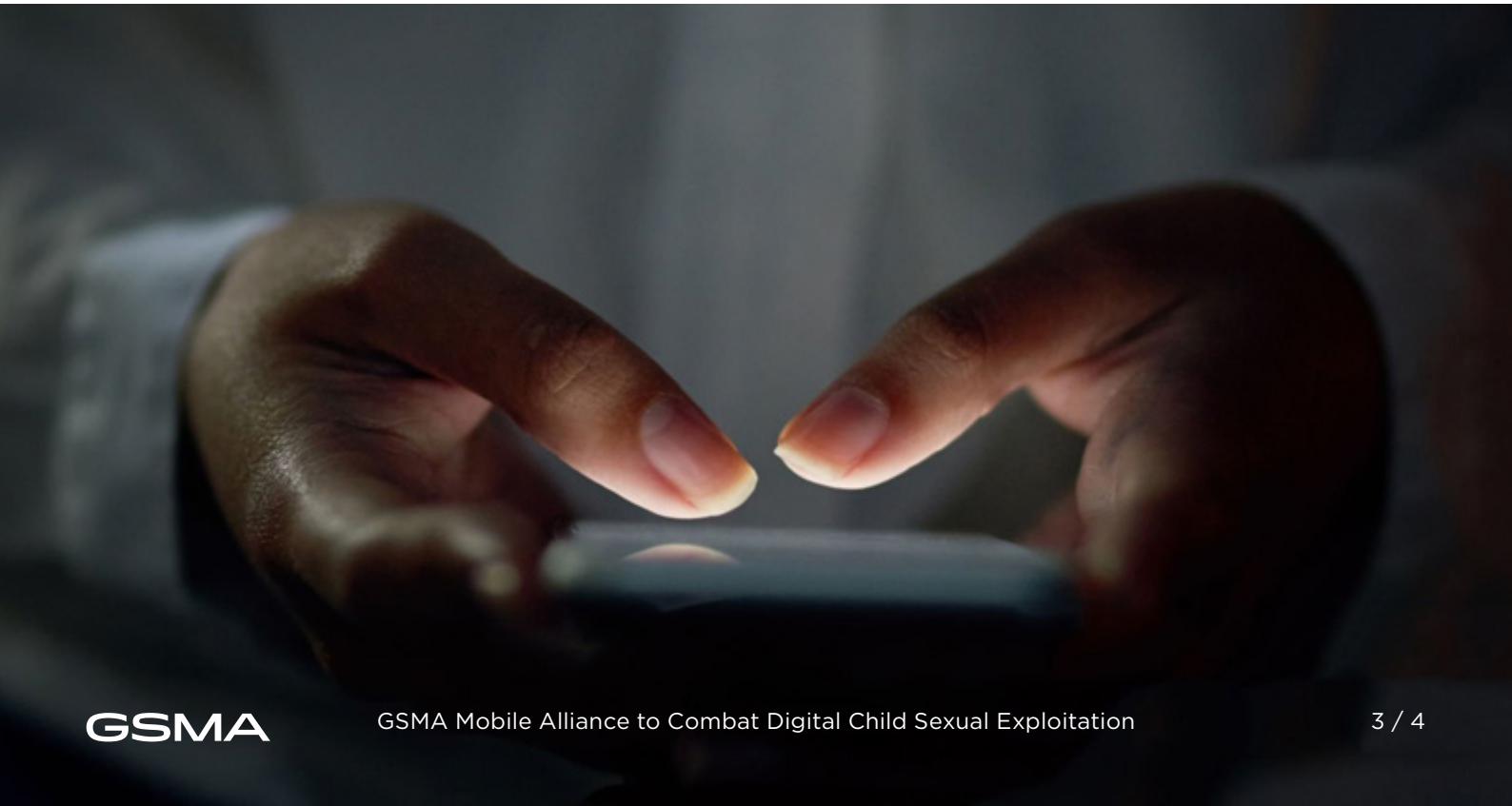
Members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance are committed to using their convening power to work with all stakeholders to advocate for multistakeholder action to combat digital child sexual exploitation and abuse.

Throughout 2024, mobile operator members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance took part in events organised by partners including Safe Online and WeProtect Global Alliance, and collaborated with partners to organise events focusing on protecting children online, such as:

- In December 2024, as part of its Help Children Be Children initiative, MTN Group convened policymakers, educators, advocacy groups, and digital safety experts to unveil the findings of its Online Child Safety African Insights research (conducted in partnership with IPSOS in Nigeria, South Sudan and Zambia) to galvanise collective action to protecting children online.
- In February 2024, Telenor Pakistan joined for forces with the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA), the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC), and UNICEF to launch a guide on "Safeguarding your Child in the Digital Age-Guide for Caregivers & Policy Brief on Child Online Protection."
- On an ongoing basis, on behalf of its members, the GSMA offers a free capacity building course for policymakers on Children's Rights and Connectivity which addresses responses to child sexual abuse and exploitation online, using the WeProtect Model National Response as a framework.
- In addition, within the 2024 Mobile World Congress Ministerial Programme, the GSMA ran two sessions focused specifically on supporting children and vulnerable users in the digital environment.

Members of the GSMA Mobile Alliance commit to cooperating with and supporting the specialist LEA units which investigate crimes of child sexual abuse in the digital environment. The GSMA Mobile Alliance supports calls for the creation of such units in countries where they are not already in place.

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