



14 October 2022

Committee Secretary
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Re: Inquiry into law enforcement capabilities in relation to child exploitation

Dear Committee Secretary

UNICEF Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the Joint Committee on Law Enforcement's inquiry into law enforcement capabilities in relation to child exploitation.

UNICEF believes in a fair chance for every child and we are the world's leading organisation working to protect and improve the lives of children in over 190 countries. At UNICEF Australia, we work to protect and promote children's rights by advocating for the rights of children in Australia and overseas.

The digital world was not originally designed for children, but it undoubtedly plays a significant role in their lives. Being able to connect online provides children with valuable opportunities to learn, play and socialise with friends and peers, as well as to access information and support. However, spending time online also comes with risks for children, such as being exposed to potentially harmful content or exploitation. UNICEF Australia seeks an online world that mitigates these risks whilst also contributing to the healthy development and wellbeing of children.

Globally, UNICEF has been conducting world-leading work into ending online child exploitation and abuse. Several initiatives are of relevance to this inquiry and may be of interest, thus we commend the following to the Committee's attention:

- *Legislating for the digital age*: Global guide on improving legislative frameworks to protect children from online sexual exploitation and abuse - <https://www.unicef.org/reports/legislating-digital-age>
- *Framing the future*: How the Model National Response framework is supporting national efforts to end child sexual exploitation and abuse online - <https://www.unicef.org/reports/framing-future>
- *Ending Online Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse*: Lessons learned and promising practices in low and middle income countries - <https://www.unicef.org/documents/ending-online-child-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>
- *Disrupting Harm*: Holistic and innovative research project that aims to better understand how digital technology facilitates the sexual exploitation and abuse of children - <https://www.end-violence.org/disrupting-harm>

The Committee should note that good practice from Australia is highlighted across the above research, a promising sign that we are on the right track. However, we should always strive for continuous improvement, so we encourage the use of these valuable resources in the future work of the Committee. Should the Committee be interested, we are happy to connect you with our international colleagues who may be able to provide further detail on this work.

Warm regards,

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