Digiworld

An example of how the ITU Guidelines on Child Online Protection can be delivered in practice

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In this case study, we explore how the ITU Guidelines on child online protection (COP Guidelines) for industry and policy-makers, parents, educators and children can be delivered effectively through cross-sector partnerships, co-design with local audiences and a shared vision for supporting children and families to thrive in a connected world.

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What are the ITU COP Guidelines?

The ITU Guidelines on child online protection are a comprehensive set of **recommendations** published by the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**, the specialized UN-Agency for information and communication technologies (ICTs), for all relevant stakeholders on how to contribute to the development of a **safe and empowering online environment for children and young people**.

Targeting **policy-makers, industry, parents and educators as well as children** themselves, the COP Guidelines, co-authored by a group of international experts in the field, are meant to **act as a blueprint,** which can be **adapted and used in a way that is consistent with national or local customs and laws**.

As the nature and impact of ICTs is borderless, promoting online safety requires global efforts, through collaboration from all stakeholders at the local, national, regional and international level. Calling for a **multi-stakeholder and multi-sectoral approach to child online protection**, the COP Guidelines help to develop **harmonized COP frameworks**, through integrated approaches including child participation, legal and regulatory frameworks, technical and procedural measures, organizational structures, capacity building, and international cooperation.

What is Digiworld?

Digiworld – https://www.telenor.com/digiworld-en – is a learning resource designed to help **children aged between 5 and 16** to develop the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the online world in a safer and more enjoyable way.

Interactive **online games**, a digital **library** full of challenges and downloadable **worksheets** allow children to explore at their own pace and progress through different levels depending on their age, experience and ability. **Certificates** are awarded at each level to enable children to demonstrate their new understanding and to recognise their achievements.

The supporting guides help **parents, carers and teachers** to play and learn alongside their children and to actively support them in developing their digital understanding and resilience.

The curriculum has been created for children, families and schools by digital life experts Parent Zone with support from **Telenor Group**.

Working closely with regional providers, NGOs, schools and children themselves, Digiworld has been translated, localised and tested for audiences in **Bangladesh, Pakistan and Thailand**.

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How Digiworld applies the ITU COP Guidelines

Here we explore how the ITU COP Guidelines for industry, policy-makers, parents, educators and children are reflected in the design of Digiworld, the content it provides and the approach taken throughout the development and rollout.

Design and accessibility

Multiplatform and Offline

When producing educational materials, it is important to bear in mind that many people who are new to the technology will not feel comfortable using it. For that reason, it is important to ensure that safety materials are made available in either written form or produced using other media with which newcomers will feel more familiar, for example, with video – **Guidelines for policy-makers on Child Online Protection**

Digiworld is available online and can be used on mobiles, tablets and computers without any plugins or installation of apps. To help parents, educators and children become more familiar with new technologies and concepts a 'library' section provides simple explanations of common terms.

The library, quizzes and activities in the game have also been adapted for offline use – users can download worksheets and the library as printable documents. This allows all children, educators and families to engage with, and benefit from, the resources even with limited, one-time access.

Understanding the digital world: 1

Learning objective: Understand different aspects of the digital world.

Online kindness: 1

Learning objective: to be able to identify kind and unkind messages online.

⬇ Download

Staying safer online: 1

Learning objective: to be able to identify safe and risky messages online.

How to recover when things go wrong: 1

Learning objective: to be able to identify different ways to recover from online problems and mistakes.

⬇ Download

⬇ Download

Privacy by default

Adapt and implement heightened default privacy settings ...Default privacy settings and information about the importance of privacy should be appropriate to the age of the users and the nature of the service. ***Guidelines for industry on Child Online Protection – Creating a safer and age-appropriate online environment***

Data collection has been minimised in Digiworld. Users are not required to register or submit any personal information. To enable users to return to the game and pick up where they left off Digiworld provides a simple way to create a username and track progress through the levels. However, this data is only stored on the user's device and not shared with anyone.

Anonymised aggregate data is collected using google analytics on the number of visitors, which games are played and how many users complete each level. This information helps the partners understand, in broad terms, the pathways users take through the game, how engaged they are and what areas may need improving.

Challenges and considerations

Minimising data collection does present a challenge for the Digiworld delivery partners as it increases the complexity of tracking and evidencing impact. However, in this case, the rights of the child are better served through having increased privacy as the default.

Content

Teacher support

*Based on the local context, provide materials for use in schools and homes to educate and enhance children and young people's use of information and communication technologies – **Guidelines for industry on Child Online Protection***
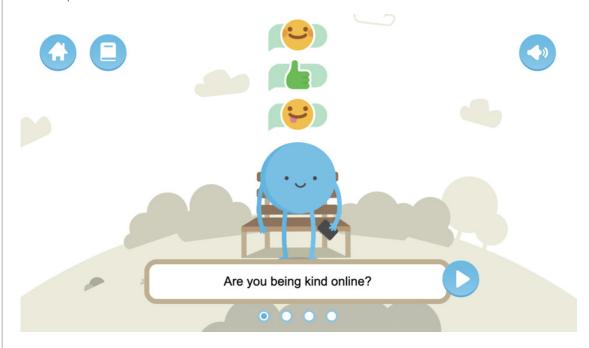
Alongside the online activities and downloadable worksheets, a dedicated teacher hub provides educators with detailed lesson plans and guidance on extending activities and discussions in the classroom. This is particularly helpful for teaching with limited resources/Internet access or when exploring more challenging topics, such as hate speech, with older students.

Breadth

*Children and young people need to be able to recognise online risks -some are obvious but others less so – such as coercion, blackmail, shaming. ...Teachers need to have an understanding of what children and young people are doing when they go online and the risks and benefits that they can face – **Guidelines for parents and educators on Child Online Protection***

Helping children understand risk in all its forms online is a key aim of Digiworld. Each area of the online game explores different kinds of risk, how to recognise them and, importantly, how to recover from harm. The topics covered were informed by research, practical experience working with families and direct input from children.
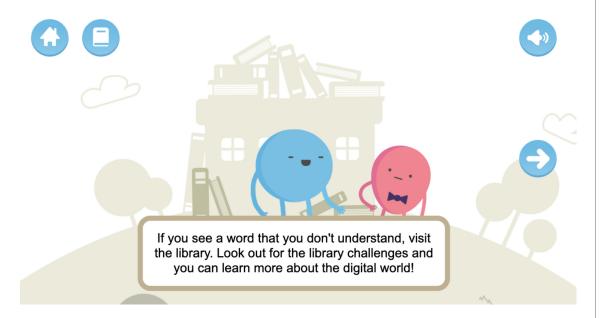
Kindness

> *Beyond raising awareness about safety, companies can facilitate positive experiences by developing content for children and young people about being respectful, kind and open-minded when using ICTs and keeping an eye out for friends –* **Guidelines for industry on Child Online Protection** *– Educating children, carers and educators about children's safety and the responsible use of ICTs*

Digiworld includes quizzes and worksheets that specifically help children consider what is kind and unkind online and how messages may be misunderstood or hurtful. On completing a level children are presented with different challenging scenarios and invited to consider how they might use their new knowledge and skills to help their friends.

Age and stage appropriate

> *Develop and/or offer a range of high-quality content that is age-appropriate. –* **Guidelines for industry on Child Online Protection**

All the Digiworld content is appropriate for children aged between 5-16 years old. There is a dedicated learning area for children aged 5 and 6 to use alongside their parents/carers. For children aged 7-16 years, there are three levels to complete. Each level increases in complexity and builds on previous learning. When they complete a quiz learners are rewarded with a digital badge. Once they collect all the badges for a level they receive a digital certificate that details what they have learned and celebrates their achievement. Completing a level also unlocks the next level of games, so they can continue to progress and learn.

> If you see a word that you don't understand, visit the library. Look out for the library challenges and you can learn more about the digital world!

Approach

Resilience

*Recovery and learning from experiences are vital elements of developing digital resilience. If children experience risk or harm online, parents can help their children to find ways to recover so that they are able to safely benefit from the positive aspects when appropriate and avoid exclusion where possible – **Guidelines for parents and educators on Child Online Protection***

A resilience approach – based on UK Council for Internet Safety Digital Resilience Framework – is woven throughout Digiworld. This includes a specific interactive game and worksheet focussed on recovery. Lesson plans and other resources expand the recovery concept so that parents and teachers are able to provide appropriate support with greater confidence.

For Parents

Here, you can explore some of the key areas of digital resilience, how to use the resources on the site and how to support your children in becoming more **digitally resilient**.

What is digital resilience?

'...the ability to understand when you are at risk online, knowing what to do if anything goes wrong, learning from your experiences of being online, and being able to recover from any difficulties or upsets.'*

A child who is digitally resilient will be able to:

- Understand when they are at risk online
- Know what to do to seek help
- Learn from their experiences
- Recover when things go wrong

*The UK Council for Child Internet Safety (UKCCIS) Resilience Working Group's definition

How to use the website and games

Frequently asked questions about the online resources and how to get the most out of them with your children.
Find out more...

Parental engagement

*industry can work in collaboration with government and educators to strengthen parents' abilities to support their children and young people to behave as responsible digital citizens. industry Guidelines – Educating children, carers and educators about children's safety and the responsible use of ICTs – **Guidelines for industry on Child Online Protection***

From the start, Telenor recognised that engaging parents and carers was key to achieving a successful outcome for child online protection but they also knew that they would benefit from some expert advice in this area. Working with Parent Zone – an international, social enterprise – enabled them to develop Digiworld with a strong, evidence-based approach to engaging and supporting parents and carers. Providing parents with localised support materials ensured that children could be supported in and out of school, on and offline.

Localisation

*It is very important that materials are produced locally which reflect local laws as well as local cultural norms. This will be essential for any Internet safety campaign or any training materials that are developed. – **Guidelines for policy-makers on Child Online Protection***

All of the Digiworld resources are available in Urdu, Bangla, and Thai. Parent Zone worked closely with local partners and consulted with specialists in each target country to ensure the content reflected cultural norms, trends and priorities. Once the English language version was developed, Telenor business units worked with NGOs and specialists in their country to translate, localise and test Digiworld.

Challenges and learning

Translation and localisation of content is a complex challenge that requires good communication between partners and a clear shared vision. It requires time and resources to deliver but is essential to ensure that the local needs of children are understood and can be met effectively.

Campaigns

*Organise national awareness campaigns to create the opportunity to universally highlight child online protection issues. It may be beneficial to harness global campaigns such as Safer Internet Day to build a campaign – **Guidelines for policy-makers on Child Online Protection***

Digiworld was initially launched as part of Telenor Group's global Safer Internet Day activity. The initiative was also incorporated into their existing 'Be Smart Use Heart' campaign. This provided a wider context and enabled partners to build on previous activities in this area.

Each participant country developed its own communication and marketing campaign to support the launch of their localised version of Digiworld. In Thailand, this included partnering with the Ministry of Education to roll out the programme in schools and extensive press coverage to reach parents and families directly.

Partnerships

*Draw upon internal and external expertise and consult with key stakeholders, including children and young people, on child online safety mechanisms to obtain on-going feedback and guidance on company approaches – **Guidelines for industry on Child Online Protection***

The development and roll-out of Digiworld included many partners and stakeholders who helped to inform, design, test and promote the service. Parent Zone's expert knowledge and experience in child online protection and family engagement were complemented by local development agencies and delivery partners.
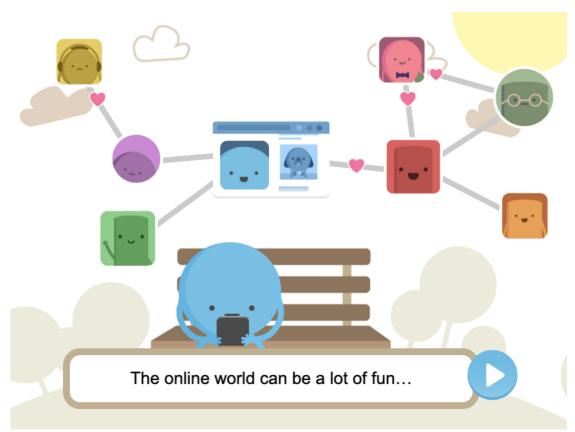
Children and teachers participated in consultations and testing throughout the development and their feedback led to improvements in the service. Digiworld continues to be refined and localised based on feedback from children, families, educators and partners.

Challenges and learning

Partnerships can be complex to coordinate and ensuring meaningful participation by children and end users can take time and resources. However, the investment in these areas has contributed to the development of a more considered, high quality initiative, greater local support and on-going engagement with children, families and educators.

Summary

Digiworld provides just one example of how the ITU Guidelines on Child Online Protection can be used in very practical ways to inform design, content and approaches to child online protection. There are many other ways these could be delivered. However, the key learnings and considerations presented here will be applicable to many other child online protection initiatives.

The online world can be a lot of fun…

Partners and further links

ITU and the COP Initiative

The Child Online Protection (COP) Initiative was launched as a multi-stakeholder international initiative by ITU in November 2008, in order to respond to the challenges posed by the rapid development of ICTs and the potential risks and harms that the online world may bear for children.

As the **United Nations specialized agency for information and communication technologies and in the** spirit of ITU's role as a global convener, the COP Initiative aims to bring together partners from all sectors of the global community to create a safe and empowering online experience for children around the world.

Focusing on both the great opportunities of the digital environment for children to learn, communicate and play and also the risks and potential harms that children can face online, the COP Initiative set up Guidelines on Child Online Protection for all relevant stakeholders, including children and young people, strengthening the responsibility of all relevant stakeholders and providing concrete recommendations for each target audience on child online protection, child online safety and the development of digital skills.

The COP Initiative has been recognised as a platform to raise awareness and share best practices on child safety issues, by continuing to provide assistance and support to ITU Member States in developing and implementing roadmaps for COP at the national level. The initiative also reinforces the importance of the protection of children online within the frameworks of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights treaties by encouraging collaboration between all stakeholders involved in child online protection.

More information can be found on the COP website.

Parent Zone

Parent Zone are experts in digital family life. They provide support and information to parents, children and schools around the world, helping families to navigate the Internet safely and confidently.

They regularly work with parents, schools, governments and businesses industry to study, understand and address the impact of emerging technologies on children and families.

Using their experience and expertise in creating learning resources for children, Parent Zone have developed the digital world curriculum exclusively for Telenor, including downloadable resources and an interactive game.

For more information about their work and resources, visit www.parentzone.org.uk or email info@parentzone.org.uk.

Telenor

Telenor Group is a leading telecommunications company across Scandinavia and Asia, committed to responsible business conduct and driven by the ambition of empowering societies. In the efforts to achieve that ambition, Telenor aligns with UN Sustainable Development Goal #10, which aims for Reduced Inequalities.

Connectivity has been Telenor's domain for more than 160 years, and the companie's purpose is to connect customers to what matters most. Telenor is committed to protect vulnerable groups and to help them maximize the benefits of connectivity.

Together with experienced partners, Telenor takes an active role in promoting safer use of communications services among children and young people as well as among teachers, parents and caregivers. Key priorities are preventing cyberbullying and contributing to make the online environment a safer place for young people to explore.

Telenor is listed at Oslo Stock Exchange under the ticker TEL. For more information, see www.telenor.com

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