

## Policy Objective Option 2: Promoting Digital Citizenship

### What problem are we addressing and what do we want to achieve?

1. **Problem statement:** Digital connectivity has the potential to improve children's lives. At the same time life online also poses risks for children. Improving children's digital citizenship<sup>1</sup> and their ability to use technology responsibly can improve children's safety online. (See *Summary of Key Policy Issues – Online Safety.*)
2. **Policy objective:** To increase children's safety online, ChildFund Alliance (CFA) will **empower children to become effective digital citizens, use technology ethically and contribute positively to civic progress.**

### How will we do this and how prepared are we to do this?

3. **Desired outcomes:** Evidence suggests that the most effective strategies to promote digital citizenship are those that involve a multi-stakeholder, multi-sectoral approaches, including engagement from parents and children themselves.<sup>2</sup> The following **three, mutually-reinforcing outcomes** would help to achieve the above-stated policy objective. CFA could select one or more of these outcomes. The actions included under each outcome are an indicative list and were informed by the findings of the Country Survey.
  - a. **Outcome 1. National governments and local authorities deliver digital citizenship education through schools and existing curricula.**
    - CFA encourages national governments to adopt changes to existing curricula through working with allies and leveraging [established curricula](#) and other [platforms](#).
    - CFA develops a model response for how national governments improve digital citizenship for children and conducts a range of private and public advocacy efforts to promote uptake of the model. CFA could also promote the model at a global level with a digital marketing and advocacy campaign, which would raise children and adolescents' voices.
    - CFA works with allies to train teachers and bolster their digital literacy and ability to teach digital citizenship curricula.
    - Where education systems are under-resourced or under-developed, CFA will provide or advocate with others to provide support and technical advice related to digital citizenship.
  - b. **Outcome 2. More opportunities exist for building the digital citizenship and [digital resilience](#) of children living in vulnerable conditions, including out-of-school opportunities.**
    - CFA works through peer networks, specialized clubs or other groups outside formal education structures to deliver a range of low-tech and offline tools to improve children's

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<sup>1</sup> Originally coined in 2007, digital citizens are those who use the internet regularly (daily) and effectively. This definition has since been expanded to include competent and positive engagement with digital technology (access and skills), active and responsible participation (empowerment and etiquette), and lifelong learning in formal, non-formal and informal contexts (including risk management and resilience).

<http://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/21st-Century-Children-as-Digital-Citizens.pdf>, accessed 1 March 2021.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/75e2c8d8-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/75e2c8d8-en>, accessed 1 March 2021.

digital citizenship.<sup>3</sup> This requires strong partnerships with tech firms and [global leaders in digital citizenship education](#).

c. **Outcome 3. Parents are able to help their children build safer online lives and [strengthen safe digital activism](#).**

- CFA launches a digital marketing campaign — centered around children/adolescents’ voices — for roll-out at national level that targets parents and children, provides information on the importance of digital citizenship and signposts online resources.
- CFA works with children to establish national-level, child-friendly mechanisms to report dangerous or inappropriate content, conduct and contact using a range of pathways, including technological tools, telephone hotlines, and peer-to-peer networks.

4. **Branding opportunities and capacities:** Branding and reputation building opportunities would focus around the model response and the companion digital marketing and advocacy campaign. The digital marketing campaign targeting parents and teachers could also be a primary branding opportunity. CFA seems to have more “ready-made” capacity in areas like advocacy with national governments, working through educational structures, and promoting teacher trainings. CFA would need some scale up for activities related developing a model response and rolling out a digital marketing campaign(s).

## Who are the relevant stakeholders?

5. Positive or improved actions from a range of **targets** will be needed to boost children’s digital citizenship. Partnerships are critical to the successful delivery of these outcomes. A number of agencies and organizations have strong experience in developing children’s digital citizenship and thus would serve **important allies and partners**. Some private sector partners, including technology firms, have a growing interest in children’s digital citizenship along with technical resources.

	Targets	Allies
<i>Outcome 1. Digital citizenship through schools</i>	Ministries of Education, other national-level education agencies, schools and local authorities, educators and school staff	UN agencies, including UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF, and the UN ITU; multilateral agencies such as the Council of Europe and the European Commission; other civil society, including <a href="#">Common Sense</a> ; and tech firms.
<i>Outcome 2. Out-of-school opportunities</i>	Children and their families, schools, educators and school staff	As in Outcome 1. Also foundations.
<i>Outcome 3. Parents’ digital literacy</i>	Children and their families	As in Outcome 2.

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF, Policy guide on children and digital connectivity, New York, 2018.  
<https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/3141/file/PolicyLab-Guide-DigitalConnectivity-Nov.6.18-lowres.pdf>