



PREVENTING HARM **BEFORE IT TAKES ROOT**

Lessons from World Hope's Work in the Philippines
by Frederico Cabredo



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According to UNICEF, of the 202,478 trafficking victims detected between 2020–2023, 38% were children.

WHAT IS OSAEC?

Online Sexual Abuse or Exploitation of Children

OSAEC refers to situations in which children are sexually abused, exploited, or coerced through digital platforms, including live-streamed abuse, online grooming, sexual extortion, and the production or distribution of sexual images of children.

The harm usually originates in offline realities: poverty, family stress, unsafe caregiving, weak protection systems, and limited digital literacy.

WHY IT MATTERS?



In the Philippines, online sexual abuse and exploitation of children is not only a criminal justice issue. It is a family issue, a community issue, and a systems issue.

WHY IT MATTERS?



From a practitioner's standpoint,

HOW DO WE STOP OFFENDERS?

HOW DO WE PREVENT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE
FROM EVER MOVING TOWARD HARMFUL BEHAVIOR IN
THE FIRST PLACE?

WHAT WE SEE ON THE **GROUND?**

WHAT WE SEE ON THE GROUND?



Economic vulnerability shapes risk

Digital exposure outpaces digital protection

local protection systems are stretched

PREVENTION AS A SYSTEMS CHALLENGE



Effective prevention must align three layers:

- Families, where norms and behaviors are shaped.
- Children and adolescents, who navigate digital and social risks.
- Local protection systems, which must detect, respond, and prevent escalation.

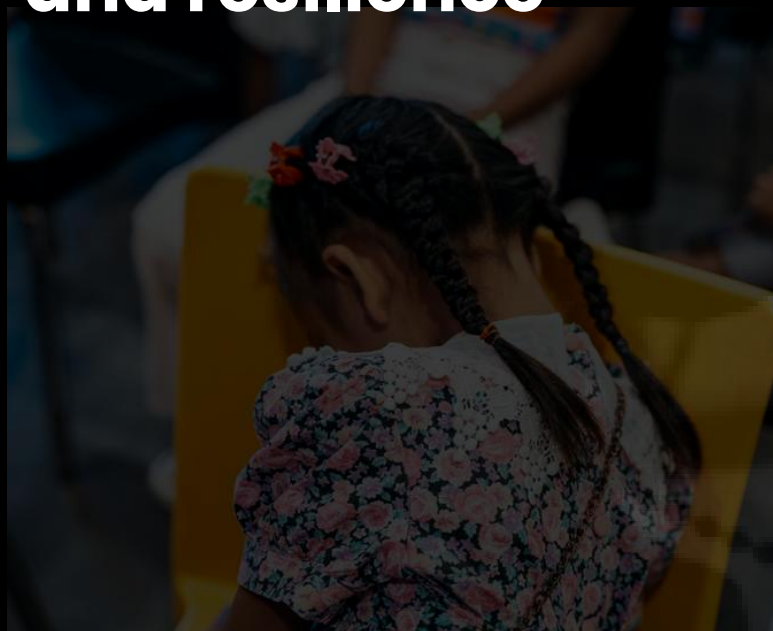
WORLD HOPE'S APPROACH **IN PRACTICE**



Family-centered protection



Child digital safety and resilience



Strengthening local systems



WHY PARTNERSHIPS ARE ESSENTIAL



In the Philippines, meaningful prevention requires partnerships across multiple sectors:

- Local government units for policy and coordination
- Social welfare offices for case management
- Schools for early education and detection
- Law enforcement for accountability
- Civil society organizations for community trust and outreach
- And academic partners, like JHU, for evidence and learning

WHY PARTNERSHIPS ARE ESSENTIAL



Strong partnerships allow us to:

- share information responsibly,
- avoid duplication,
- intervene earlier, and
- sustain impact beyond individual projects.



THE ROLE OF PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTIONS



When a child has experienced online sexual exploitation, the harm does not stop with the incident itself. Families often carry shame, fear, mistrust, and trauma.

At World Hope, psychosocial interventions aim to:

- help children process trauma safely,
- rebuild their sense of dignity and agency,
- strengthen caregiver capacity to protect and support, and
- restore healthier family relationships.

WHAT OUR PRACTICE TEACHES THE FIELD



Prevention begins in families

Digital safety is inseparable
from child protection

Psychosocial recovery
strengthens prevention

WHAT WE NEED FROM RESEARCH AND POLICY



To advance prevention in LMICs like the Philippines, practitioners need stronger collaboration with research and policy partners.

We need:

- Evidence that reflects real family and community contexts,
- Practical tools that frontline workers can realistically use,
- Funding that prioritizes early prevention and family strengthening, not only crisis response, and
- Integrated models that combine protection, psychosocial care, and community systems.

World Hope's work shows that preventing harmful sexual behavior is not only about stopping offenders.

It is about building safer families, safer digital environments, and stronger local protection systems in partnership with communities, government, and researchers.



THANK
YOU!