

Information Technology and Child Protection. A Case Study of World Vision International Initiative -“Keep Children Safe Online (KCSO)”

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The Internet and other mobile technologies open up a child's world, providing access that is outside of known and understood social contexts. This fluid technological environment poses an opportunity for children to learn constructively and grow; however, it also generates a greater threat of exposure to unknown risks. Half of all new internet connections today are mobile allowing one to access the internet through handheld or portable devices such as an iPod Touch, iPhone or Blackberry. The uptake of web mobility is proceeding eight times faster than that of the desktop ten years ago. The mobile phone industry has its sights set on a golden future as smart phone sales are predicted to surpass PC sales by 2013, and mobile data traffic will have increased 66 times by then (Insafe Annual Report 2009/2010). With mobile access, risks are increased due to the very private nature of the mobile phone, which in turn creates more difficulties for parents to provide any form of supervision. This project will attempt to outline both spheres of opportunity and risks when using mobile devices, while emphasizing the need for protection.

This paper presents the experience of World Vision International in Middle East and East Europe (MEER) region in the field of information and child protection through implementing their intervention “KCSO”, which started in 2009 in Armenia and Lebanon.