



RWANDA SAFER INTERNET DAY 2021

The Fight Against Online Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)



FEBRUARY 9, 2021
RWANDA SID COMMITTEE
G.S NYIRARUKOBWA | G.S NYAMABUYE, BUGESERA

Safer Internet Day 2021 Report



I. Introduction

Safer Internet Day is celebrated globally in February each year with the global theme of **“Together for a better internet”** to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology for children and young people.

Safer Internet Day (SID) Celebration in Rwanda is organised by Rwanda Safer Internet Day (SID) Committee with the support of Internet Society Rwanda Chapter together with Safer Internet Day Coordination Team, which is based at the heart of the European Union in Brussels, each February to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology, especially among children and young people. Celebrated on the second day of the second week of the second month, each year on Safer Internet Day millions of people unite to inspire positive changes online, to raise awareness of online safety issues, and participate in events and activities right across the globe.

As always, Safer Internet Day aims to create both a safer and a better internet, where everyone is empowered to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively. The campaign aims to reach out to children and young people, parents and carers, teachers, educators and social workers, as well as industry, decision makers and politicians, to encourage everyone to play their part in creating a better internet.

This year the National theme is entitled **“The fight against Online Child sexual abuse Material (CSAM)”** and everyone will get the time to explain how they contribute to the fight against CSAM in their own ways.

While we recognise that celebrations may look a little different this time around as we adapt to COVID-19 constraints, we hope that SID 2021 will still be a vibrant and engaging celebration, allowing us all to reflect on our increased use of technology as a result of the pandemic.

Rwanda Safer Internet Day Committee works with all supporters around the country and youth to ensure an evidence-based, multi-stakeholder approach to creating a better Internet.

The day offers the opportunity to highlight positive uses of technology and to explore the role we all play in helping to create a better and safer online community.

II. About the Topic – The Fight against Online Child Sexual Abuse Material

Many of the technologies that our societies have come to rely upon have also created vulnerabilities that pedophiles find all too easy to exploit –to trade illegal images, to discuss fantasies about abusing children, and even to find and target potential victims.

It is an uncomfortable reality that while technology offers incredible possibilities to our societies, never before has it been easier for those who want to exploit children sexually to make contact with potential victims around the world, share images of their abuse and encourage each other to commit further crimes.

The sheer volume of child sexual abuse material online is almost inconceivable. Tens of thousands of victims of child sexual abuse depicted in this material are unidentified and may still be at risk. Evidence suggests that online child sexual exploitation is seriously harmful to victims, creating long lasting feelings of shame and powerlessness as they grow up.

Why is this topic important?

The amount of CSAM online is rising at a high pace worldwide. Law Enforcement and hotlines cannot stop this growth. Last year in Rwanda, we witnessed the rise of illicit content known as Ibishegu on social media: Facebook, YouTube, Instagram to mention a few. This has created hot discussions in the community where people asked themselves if the content published was illicit. To some, the content can be published as long as it is available, to others it must be regulated by the government.

Though many have even gone beyond the problem by suggesting possible solutions, the problem is still alive and it needs the attention of the whole community.

We are passionate about raising awareness on this matter and develop the capabilities needed within our community and pursue cooperation on a scale that has not been seen before, and in a way that can only be accomplished when people who truly care work together.

We believe that the technology industry, academia, policy makers, content creators, civil society and community must now act together and make their own ambitious commitments to raise awareness, including to support this comprehensive approach, coordinate their efforts and harness the power of innovation to help protect children online. Together we can ensure a safe and happy future for children everywhere.

III. Opening Remarks

Emmanuel Mfitumukiza, Chair of ISOC Rwanda Chapter and Coordinator of Rwanda SID Committee gave the opening remarks and welcomed all participants who attended Safer Internet day (SID) celebration and Rwanda Safer Internet Forum (RWSIF).

He Introduced Safer Internet Day as an event organized to raise awareness of the importance of both a safer and a better internet, where everyone is empowered to use technology responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively.

He has also Introduced Rwanda Safer Internet Forum as a multi-stakeholder bottom-up initiative which aims at providing a platform for Rwandans to engage in discussions of

Internet technologies, risks and solutions related to Children Online Safety and making the Internet a better place for children and youth.

He has recognized the presence of everyone and has expressed the gratitude of appreciation to supporters of Rwanda SID in particular Rwanda SID Committee and ISOC Rwanda Chapter for the provided support.

Introducing the year's theme, he highlighted how COVID-19 has amplified the need for Child online safety due to the massive Child Sexual Abuse Material being shared online, a medium on which children are using now for Education.

He noted that the theme of the year simply opens discussion on the matter not to decide but to engage in discussions for a while, to inform the public for what is happening in the cyberspace where children are encouraged to be as well as informing everyone the role to be played in creating both Better and Safer Internet for Children and youth to learn and Innovate.

IV. Activities

The following activities were conducted in this year;

ACTIVITY 1: PREPARATORY MEETING

In the implementation phase, one preparatory meeting was conducted to organize both Safer Internet Forum and Safer Internet Day.

31 participants attended the meeting.

ACTIVITY 2: WEB DEVELOPMENT

A website (<https://saferinternetday.rw/>) was developed and 3 Articles were published on the website.

The event was also published on chapter social media channels (Twitter, Facebook). @isoc_rw, and the following hashtag were used #saferinternetday, #SID2021, #RWSID2021

ACTIVITY 3: RWANDA SAFER INTERNET FORUM

Rwanda Safer Internet Forum was hosted for the first time with the goal of providing a platform for Rwandans to engage in discussions of Internet technologies, risks and solutions related to Children Online Safety and making the Internet a better place for children and youth.

The forum had 1 panel discussion moderated by Jules NIZEYIMANA, vice Chair of ISOC Rwanda Chapter and was composed of the following;

- Theophile NKUNDINGABO, Head Teacher of G.S NYIRARUKOBWA
- James Ndahayo, Educator
- Delphine Murekatete, Parent
- Eric Ndayisenga, Managing Director of ITSM Ltd
- Emmanuel Mfitumukiza, Chair of ISOC Rwanda Chapter and Rwanda SID Coordinator

The composition of the panel was well structured to have relevant insights and outcome as they are shared on Rwanda SID website.

Key questions

1. What are the impacts of CSAM to Children and a country?
2. How can we contribute in the fight against online child Sexual abuse Material?

ACTIVITY 4: SAFER INTERNET DAY CELEBRATION

On Tuesday, 9 February 2021, we celebrated the 2nd edition of Safer Internet Day With a campaign slogan “Together for a better internet” with a theme of the Fight against Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM), the day called upon all stakeholders to join together to make the internet a safer and better place for children and young people.

In the celebration, the role of Encryption in ensuring children online safety has been highlighted and everyone was encouraged to become a role model in considering Encryption.

V. Date

Safer Internet Day is celebrated on the second day of the second week of the second month, each year. This year edition was celebrated on **09th February 2021**

VI. Participation Summary

The forum was successfully organized in 2 schools and participation summary is shared in the table and diagram below;

Activity	Day	Number of participants
Rwanda Safer Internet Forum (RWSIF)	09 th February 2021	84
Safer Internet Day (SID)	09 th February 2021	60

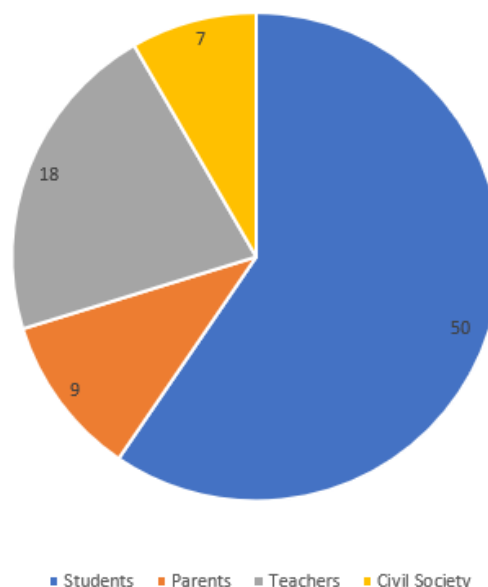


Figure 1 : Rwanda Safer Internet Forum Participation

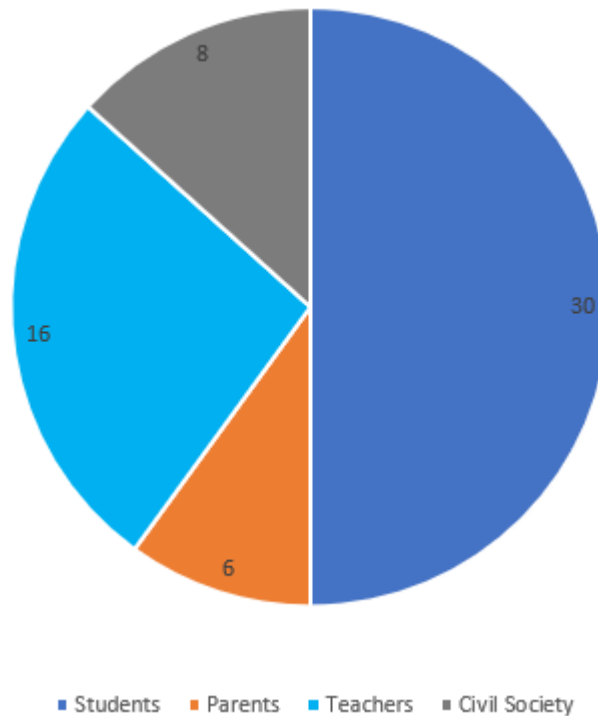


Figure 2 : Safer Internet Day 2021 Participation

VII. Feedback

As a feedback, participants have expressed their gratitude and has committed themselves to play their role responsibly to preserve the next generation of responsible Internet users.

VIII. Recommendations

In order to improve the quality and relevance of future forums and celebration, the participants recommended the following;

- To engage more stakeholders from different background,
- To add more topics,
- To produce factsheet and toolkit on discussed topic,
- To Establish Safer Internet Clubs in schools.