

Child Online Protection

Egypt seeks to establish clear and specific rules for the protection of children on the Internet through developing a legal and legislative framework in accordance with the provisions of international conventions, specifically the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989; the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Sale of Children; Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC); and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Egypt provides children online protection through two legislative systems; namely,

- A. Targeted legislative texts, including legal articles dealing with the issue of child online protection
- B. Indirect legislative protection, through legal provisions aimed at protecting Egyptian society as a whole, especially children

1- Targeted Legislative Protection

The most important legal texts to be listed in this category is Article 116-bis (a) of the Child Law No. 12 of 1996, amended by Law No. 126 of 2008. The article is considered a pivotal point in strengthening the legal approach for protecting Egyptian children from all sorts of online harms and abuses.

Article (116-Bis-A):

Any person importing, issuing, producing, preparing, displaying, printing, promoting, acquiring or broadcasting any pornographic materials involving children or are related to children sexual abuse shall be punished by imprisonment for not less than two years and a fine at no less than ten thousand pounds and at no more than 50 thousand pounds. Tools and equipment used to commit such crime and money resulted therefrom shall be confiscated. Moreover, places used in such crime shall be closed for at least six months, without prejudice to the rights of third party bona-fide.

Notwithstanding any sever punishment stipulated in any other law, the same punishment shall apply on the following:

- a) Anyone using the computer, Internet or animation to prepare, keep, process, display, publish, print or promote any pornographic materials or activities that are related to instigating or exploiting children in prostitution and pornography or to slandering or selling such children
- b) Anyone using the computer, Internet or animation to instigate children to go astray, commit or to carry out illegal activities or pornography, even if no crimes did occur

The National Committee on Child Online Protection, presented some amendments on this article to the legislative committee of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM).

2- Indirect Legislative Protection

In this context, there is a number of laws and articles that seek to protect members of the society as a whole, especially children, or criminalize child trafficking and exploitation in general, not specifically online. Those articles that regulate the use of technology tools to prevent illegal usage that may encourage online crimes, covering those against children, include:

- Article 178 of the Penal Code: (Article 178 did not mention children explicitly).

Whoever makes or holds, for the purpose of trade, distribution, leasing, pasting or displaying, printed matter, manuscripts, drawings, advertisements, carved or engraved pictures, manual or photographic drawings, symbolic signs, or other objects or pictures, in general, if they are against public morals, shall be punished with detention for a period not exceeding two years, and a fine of not less five thousand pounds, and not exceeding ten thousand pounds, or either penalty.

- Law No. 10 of 2003 Telecommunication Regulation Law

The Law regulates the provision of any telecommunication networks or any telecommunication service, thus legalizing the role of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) that play a vital role in protecting children online, and fines any ISP that violates

those regulations. According to Articles 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77 and 86, any person provides a telecommunication service without a license from the National Telecom Regulatory Authority (NTRA), broadcasts, publishes or records telecommunication messages without licenses, or discloses any information related to telecommunication networks users, intentionally disturbs or harasses others by misusing of telecommunication devices shall be punished by imprisonment or a fine.

- Article 95 of Law No. 150 of 1950 - Criminal Procedures Code

This article gives the judge the right to give an order to monitor wired and wireless conversations or make recordings of conversations held in a special place if this was to provide an evidence in a felony or a misdemeanor punishable by imprisonment for more than three months.

Although the Internet was not yet in use during the issuance of this law (1950), the legislator demonstrated a valuable foresight by including wired and wireless means of communications.

- Law No. 120 of 2008 for Establishing Economic Courts

These courts have a jurisdiction over criminal cases related to economic activities and investment operations. They cover those cases related to ICT technologies, including online crimes. Some measures were taken including:

- a. Databases Procedures: The General Administration of the Child Judicial Protection (GACJP), which is institutionally affiliated to the Ministry of Justice, amended the criminal database for children's issues to include Internet crimes in 2010.
- b. Capacity Building Procedures: Cybercrime issues were added to the capacity building curriculum prepared for judges and prosecutors at the "National Centre for Judicial Studies".

Several specialized trainings for judges and prosecutors were conducted in cooperation with cybercrime and child safety experts in international organizations and ICT multinationals. For instance, a workshop for judges on "cybercrime and child abuse" was organized by the National Centre for Judicial Studies (Cairo) in cooperation with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), Microsoft and the Council of Europe in December 2009. Two courses were offered in 2011 about electronic criminal evidence for 200 judges and 200 prosecutors, organized by the Ministry of Justice in cooperation with Multinational Corporations (MNCs). This is in addition to numerous courses offered, in the past few years, by ICT companies to the Ministry of Justice.

[Constitution](#)

[Penal Code](#)

[Amending Child Law and Penal Code](#)

[Child Law](#)

[Establishing economic courts law](#)

A] The National Agency Responsible for Coordinating Efforts Concerning the COP File:

The [NCCM](#) government entity is responsible for the coordination of efforts concerning child online protection initiatives and activities.

NCCM mandates regarding COP are as follows:

- Proposes relevant legislations and regulations related to children and motherhood in order to achieve the higher interests for them, in accordance with the developments that occur in the society; and presenting its viewpoint in this concern in the international and regional agreements related to childhood and motherhood.
- Strengthens cooperation with government, non-government and international organizations in the fields of childhood and motherhood at all levels.
- Ensures the availability of child protection mechanisms at all levels (centralized, decentralized) and it should be announced by "child protection committees" throughout the Republic.
- Undertakes to coordinate efforts and network with the concerned authorities to provide urgent relief to children through the child aid system.
- Enforces children rights stipulated in the constitution, national legislations, and the international and regional agreements.
- Reports violations of the rights of children and mothers, and all practices that put them at risk, ensuring that their "security, health, and morals" are guaranteed.

- Develops a draft comprehensive national plan for the protection of childhood and motherhood within the framework of the State's general plan, and follows up on its implementation.
- Cooperates with the concerned authorities for the empowerment, welfare and stability of the Egyptian family, ensuring full care for maternity rights for the sake of children, youth and a cohesive family.
- Enforces the implementation of the current legislations to achieve justice and prevent impunity.
- Monitors the real status of childhood and motherhood in Egypt, issuing periodic reports to guide policy makers and children carers at the centralized and decentralized levels.
- Gathers available information, statistics and studies in the fields related to childhood and motherhood, evaluating its indicators, and preparing what is needed according to political, social and cultural developments, considering it a national security issue.
- Informs and announces everything related to the safety and wellbeing of the child and mother, and mobilizing and educating the public regarding the needs of childhood and motherhood.
- Suggests training programs that support the performance of children carers.

Stakeholders and Partners with NCCM for COP:

Ministry of communication and information technology (MCIT)

Ministry of justice

National Media Authority

EG-CERT, National Telecom Regulatory Authority

B] NCCM COP initiatives:

EG-CERT has launched an [initiative to review and amend Egypt's Child Online Protection Strategy](#). To introduce the modification of the national strategy, a committee has been formed from among the concerned authorities in the country to develop a comprehensive national strategy.

This modification is intended to deal with constant changes and developments, and tackle gaps and issues in the original version of national strategy [published by NCCM in 2018](#), and the National Strategy for Child Online Protection issued by [MCIT](#). This strategy shall determine the implementation of relevant national policies/regulations, enforcing the ISPs to block any potentially harmful content pursuant to the [Telecommunication Regulation Law No. 10 of 2003](#), and the Anti-Cyber and [Information Technology Crimes Law No. 175 of 2018](#), A good example is [Vodafone Egypt's disclosure agreement](#). All this will take place through cooperation with the Child Protection Bureau of the Egyptian's Public Prosecutor's Office [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#) to take urgent and necessary measures to protect the child from imminent online dangers.

NCCM and UNICEF awareness for antibullying online

C] Coordination and overseeing of activities:

Furthermore, EG-CERT is actively contributing to the advancement of Child Online Protection in Egypt. For instance, EG-CERT is coordinating with key stakeholders to ensure that the emendation process of the National Child Online Protection Strategy is clearly and plainly demonstrated and that implementation of the substantive policies and laws is enforced. These coordination efforts is carried out by EG-CERT through a [committee](#) that comprises the key stakeholders: (NTRA's [EG-CERT](#)", [NCCM](#), [MCIT](#) [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#), [MOJ](#) [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#), [PPO](#) [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#) [\[3\]](#), [National Media Authority](#), [Supreme Media Council](#)). The National Committee for Child Online Protection's vision focuses on the protection of children from online risks and their empowerment to use the information network safely. The Committee will launch the National Child Online Protection Strategy through close collaboration with stakeholders based on the five pillars mentioned in ITU's Policy-Makers Guide for COP

including organizational frameworks, Legislation, awareness materials, response and support mechanisms and industry controls and regulations.

Stakeholders' Roles and Responsibilities are as follows:

Entity	Responsibility
The National Committee	Organizational framework
Ministry of communication and information technology	Raise Awareness
NCCM	Response and Support Mechanism
Ministry of justice	Legislation
National Media Authority	Media Awareness
NTRA	Industry Framework