



Working together  
to stop child sexual  
abuse online

**CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

# Evaluation of IWF's Reporting Portals

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

In 2013, the IWF launched its first [international reporting portal](#) dedicated to reporting online child sexual abuse imagery and videos, allowing UK-based analysts to assess imagery and seek its removal. Since then, the initiative has expanded, establishing 53 portals across the globe. Starting in 2017, EVAC (Safe Online) funded the creation of 30 additional portals, made possible through partnerships with various in-country stakeholders.

These portals offer a safe and anonymous reporting mechanism for over 2.7 billion people in more than 54 countries.

The program features locally branded webpages, simplifying the process for individuals to report directly to the IWF. **Despite this extensive reach, the number of reports submitted remains low.** To address this challenge, an independent evaluation is essential to **assess the portals' effectiveness and identify the obstacles** hindering their usage.

## THE IWF SEEKS AN EXTERNAL EVALUATION PARTNER TO:

- Provide an objective assessment of the **achievements and impact** of the Portals project, and the **strengths and weaknesses** of the project, in relation to the level of usage of the Portals and number of reports received.
- **Understand the Portal partners' actions to date to promote the Portal to in-country citizens** – for example, amount of promotional content, number of round tables to discuss the Portals and their usage etc. **Assess the local integration of the Portals, and identify any successful collaborations or missed opportunities**, including with other Safe Online grantees. Understand barriers to being able to promote/market the portals (i.e., budget, resource, knowledge, socio-cultural norms, etc.).
- **Provide an objective assessment of the Portal webpage based on its sustainability, findability, and usability**, with the aim of improving visibility in-country, and build users' trust and alignment with other relevant initiatives.
- **Perform a thorough examination of the obstacles linked to the project and devise solutions to tackle them in the future.** Generate insights gained and suggestions for future implementation to **enhance the significance, visibility and efficiency of the IWF Portals**, and potential routes forward for the project in the context of the wider online CSEA (Child sexual exploitation and abuse) reporting ecosystem ([NCMEC](#), [INHOPE](#), EU new centre, etc.) and data generation efforts (Data for Change initiative).
- The successful evaluator/team will be required to have an **advanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check**. IWF will facilitate and pay for this.

The evaluation is expected to take approximately 10 months and must be completed no later than December 2025.

We seek an evaluator with experience conducting large, multi-stakeholder mixed methods evaluations, primarily with organisations and individuals located in the global south. The evaluator must be capable of working in a culturally sensitive manner across multiple locations and ensuring an enabling environment for key stakeholders. This involves clearly communicating a participatory evaluation approach and addressing potential power imbalances.

## ACRONYMS GLOSSARY

<b>CSAM</b>	Child sexual abuse material
<b>CSEA</b>	Child sexual exploitation and abuse
<b>NCMEC</b>	National Centre for Missing & Exploited Children
<b>ERG</b>	Evaluation Reference Group
<b>EAG</b>	Evaluation Advisory Group

## EVALUATION PURPOSE:

**The evaluation aims to assess the Reporting Portals project, generating insights into what is effective and what challenges exist, to provide recommendations for enhancing the Portals' efficacy and impact in the future.**

The motivation for conducting an evaluation is that although the Portals have a significant reach, providing potentially 2.7 billion people across over 54 countries with a safe place to report suspected online CSAM (Child Sexual Abuse Material), it is clear that they are being underused. The sharing and consumption of CSAM is a global, and ever-expanding, problem, yet many Portals receive no, or very few, reports each year.

Portals are a unique tool for reporting CSAM in countries that lack the resources or expertise to host a **hotline**. Providing an anonymous reporting platform for CSAM is a crucial element in building a country's response to online child sexual abuse, as outlined in the **WeProtect Global Alliance Model National Response**

(see point 11 of the framework). The Model National Response sets out the capabilities needed to ensure an effective and coordinated national response to prevent and respond to child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

Therefore, under this Model, the Portals are an indicator of a country's response to online child sexual abuse, so optimising the functioning of the Portals may help to strengthen developing countries' responses to CSAM, building a stronger global response to this threat.

**Additionally, IWF is committed to hosting the Portals, and processing the reports received, in perpetuity. IWF will consider improvements to the Portals based on outcomes from this evaluation.**

## PAST MONITORING AND EVALUATION ACTIVITIES:

Since the launch of the first Portal in 2013, we have collected data and statistics on the Portals as part of ongoing monitoring. This includes information on all reports received by the Portals, including whether reports were judged to contain illegal material and were therefore actionable; where actioned

reports were hosted; which categories actionable material fell into (e.g. [Category A, B or C](#)); the age of children in the images, and so on. No independent evaluation of the Portals has taken place.



## IN SCOPE:

- 1. Development of a Reconstructed Theory of Change and Exploration of Project Assumptions**

Engage in the thorough reconstruction of the project's Theory of Change to ensure it aligns with the project's objectives and context. Critically examine and refine the underlying assumptions to strengthen the project's strategic framework.
- 2. Engagement with People In-Country to Measure Levels of Awareness**

Engage stakeholders (including potential Portal users) in mapping the user journey, from awareness of the Portal to successfully submitting a report. This can be done in focus groups or through participatory surveys.
- 3. Engagement and Consultation with All Portal Partners,**

Implement a participatory approach that involves informing and consulting all Portal partners about the evaluation. Collect data through a light-touch survey, designed to be completed at the partners' convenience, thereby minimising non-engagement risks and ensuring comprehensive participation.
- 4. Analysis of 20 Portals, and Comprehensive Study of 5**

20 Portals will be selected for detailed data collection, including interviews, and in-depth analysis. The sample will be chosen to ensure a diversity of contexts (e.g. Portal partnership structures, country size, levels of engagement, languages, economic development, internet penetration, literacy, and digital skills). A smaller sample of 5 Portals will be chosen for more comprehensive case studies. These case studies will involve a deeper dive into the implementation, usage, and outcomes of the Portals and will be selected to represent diverse conditions.
- 5. Evaluation of Portal Webpage Design**

Evaluate the Portal webpage's sustainability, findability, and usability objectively. Assess the functionality of the Portal webpages in terms of accessibility and identify any improvements related to equality, user experience, and diversity.
- 6. Examination of Portals' Integration with Local Systems**

Analyse the extent of the Portals' adaptation to and integration with local systems. Identify areas of effective integration as well as gaps that need addressing to improve local relevance and impact.
- 7. Assessment of Collaborations and Missed Opportunities**

Evaluate the collaborations and missed opportunities with other Safe Online grantees and the broader work of the IWF. Highlight successful collaborations and suggest strategies to capitalise on potential synergies in the future.
- 8. Evaluator Travel to Selected Portals**

The budget includes on-site visits to selected Portals to gather in-depth, contextual data. While acknowledging travel risks (there are FCO travel danger risks for at least 14 countries where Portals are hosted) in certain regions, the evaluator should ensure that these visits are strategically planned to maximise data collection and insight gathering. We appreciate that travelling to all 20 Portals within the sample is not possible.
- 9. Application of Qualitative and Quantitative Methods**

Employ a balanced mix of qualitative and quantitative methodologies to achieve a comprehensive evaluation. The evaluator will propose the most effective methods to meet the evaluation objectives, ensuring a rigorous and thorough analysis.

## EVALUATION SCOPE:

This scope of work is meticulously designed to not only assess the current state of the Portals but also to provide actionable insights and strategic recommendations, thereby ensuring the ongoing success and impact of the project.

## OUT OF SCOPE:

These out-of-scope considerations have been identified to ensure a clear and focused evaluation process, aligning with the project's time and resource constraints.

### 1. Longitudinal evaluation

Due to the duration of the evaluation period, conducting a longitudinal study is not feasible. Consequently, it will not be possible to assess the long-term impact of various Portal webpage designs on the volume of reports submitted to the Portals.

### 2. Extensive user engagement across all countries

The evaluation will not encompass extensive engagement with potential Portal users across all operational countries. The limited timeframe for the evaluation necessitates a focus on more immediate and achievable objectives, precluding a broader user engagement strategy. However, it is expected that some form of user engagement will take place, for barriers to using the Portals to be understood.

# Evaluation objectives

## OBJECTIVE 1:

### Assess the effectiveness and impact of the Reporting Portals

Determine how well the Portals function as reporting mechanisms for child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and the extent to which they meet their objectives in the countries they serve, including any improvements in national responses to online CSEA.

## OBJECTIVE 2:

### Evaluate the efficiency of the implementation process

Review the steps taken to establish the Reporting Portals and assess how efficiently resources (financial, technical, and human) have been used in the project.

## OBJECTIVE 3:

### Identify barriers to Portal usage

Understand the level of usage and in-country awareness of the Reporting Portals and identify the key challenges and barriers preventing effective reporting of CSAM through these platforms.

## OBJECTIVE 4:

### Provide recommendations for improvement

Develop actionable recommendations to optimise the function and use of Reporting Portals, ensuring they meet the needs of users and enhance global efforts to tackle online CSEA.

# Evaluation questions, design and methodology

## KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

**The following evaluation questions are proposed – they will be developed further and finalised during the evaluation’s inception phase.**

To answer these overarching questions, the evaluator will be expected to develop sub-questions as part of the evaluation matrix to further focus the evaluation.

1. How effective are the IWF Reporting Portals for reporting online CSAM and how well are the Portals integrated into the broader national response system in the targeted countries?
2. What intended and unintended outcomes and impact has the Reporting Portals project achieved?
3. How efficient was the process of setting up the Reporting Portals, including stakeholder engagement and resource allocation?
4. What are the main barriers preventing individuals from using the Reporting Portals to report CSAM?
5. How do cultural, technical and infrastructural factors in the targeted countries affect Portal usage?
6. Are there differences in Portal usage across different countries or regions, and what explains these variations?
7. What changes should be made to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Reporting Portals?
8. How can the IWF and in-country partners enhance the visibility and usage of the Portals?
9. What additional support or resources are needed to increase the impact of the Reporting Portals in the targeted countries?

## EVALUATION DESIGN

**To answer the broad evaluation questions, we propose that the evaluator employ an outcome evaluation using a theory-based approach that will allow for the use of various participatory methods such as contribution analysis or outcome harvesting, to assess the Reporting Portals’ effectiveness, efficiency and impact.** This design will enable the evaluation to trace the causal pathways between project activities and outcomes and assess the extent to which the project has contributed to change.

A hierarchical design will enhance the evaluation by collecting and analysing the data at multiple stages, encouraging participation and appreciative inquiry to understand what has worked well in each context. Case studies will be integral to this design, providing in-depth insights into specific Portal experiences. It is expected that the evaluator will ensure that the purpose of the case studies is clearly defined to apply the most appropriate selection criteria.

**We encourage prospective evaluators to propose a design and methodology based on their understanding of the evaluation requirements.**

However, during the inception phase, the design and methodology will be finalised using a participatory approach based on discussions with the IWF team, portal hosts and the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG).

## METHODOLOGY: THEORY OF CHANGE

**In 2017, the EVAC/Safe Online-funded project was launched without an explicit Theory of Change. However, it did have a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework that outlined key results, indicators, and targets to measure the progress of the initiative.**

The independent evaluator will reconstruct the Theory of Change from the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework. This Theory of Change will serve as the analytical framework for the evaluation.

Here is a suggested approach for the evaluator to use and how it will contribute to the evaluation. We acknowledge that the selected evaluator may propose a different methodology based on their expertise and past experience, and we are open to adjusting the approach if it better aligns with the project's objectives.

### **1. Review of existing documentation:**

The evaluator will begin by thoroughly reviewing the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, along with any other relevant project documents, to gain a deep understanding of the project's objectives, activities, and intended outcomes.

### **2. Stakeholder consultation:**

Engaging with key stakeholders involved in the project, including IWF staff, funders, EAG and ERG, Portal partners, and potentially also beneficiaries, to gather insights into their perspectives on how the project is expected to create change and achieve its goals.

### **3. Logic model development:**

Based on the reviewed documentation and stakeholder input, the evaluator will develop or refine a logic model illustrating the project's Theory of Change.

This model will outline the causal pathways through which project activities are expected to lead to desired outcomes and impacts.

### **4. Identifying assumptions and dependencies:**

The evaluator will identify and critically examine the underlying assumptions and dependencies embedded within the Theory of Change. This may involve conducting a risk analysis to assess the likelihood of these assumptions holding true and the potential consequences if they do not.

### **5. Validation and refinement:**

The reconstructed Theory of Change will be validated and refined through iterative feedback loops with stakeholders. This ensures that the ToC accurately reflects the complex realities of the project context and is aligned with stakeholders' expectations and experiences.

### **6. Contribution to evaluation:**

The reconstructed Theory of Change will serve as a foundational framework for guiding the evaluation process. It will:

- Provide a systematic and structured approach for assessing the project's effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.
- Serve as a basis for selecting appropriate evaluation methodologies, indicators, and data sources.
- Facilitate the interpretation of evaluation findings by establishing clear links between project activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts.
- Enable stakeholders to make evidence-based decisions about the future direction of the project and its potential scalability or replication.

**In summary, reconstructing the Theory of Change will enable the independent evaluator to develop a robust analytical framework for evaluating the Portals project.**

**By systematically mapping out the project's Theory of Change (key indicators) and identifying key assumptions and dependencies, the evaluation will be better equipped to assess the project's contribution to addressing the issue of child sexual abuse imagery online and its overall impact on stakeholders and target communities.**

# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY :

---

**Although we encourage prospective evaluators to propose a methodology, we suggest the following key elements:**

## 1. Mixed Methods Approach:

- **Quantitative Data:** Analysis of data from the Reporting Portals including the number of reports received, user engagement, and trends in report types. A survey will be conducted with all the Portal hosts to gather insights into their experiences with the Portals.
- **Qualitative Data;** A range of qualitative data methods may be used including interviews with key stakeholders (e.g. IWF team, selected sample of Portal hosts, law enforcement, NGOs) and focus group discussions (FGDs) to gather in-depth perspectives on the challenges and successes of the Portals. Qualitative data will also come from case studies in select countries to provide detailed contextual insights.

## 2. Sampling Strategy:

- **Survey of All Portal Hosts:** A light-touch survey will be administered

to all Portal hosts to ensure broad representation and inclusiveness in the evaluation process.

## • **Sample of 20 Portals for Further Data Collection:**

A subset of 20 Portals will be selected for more detailed data collection, including interviews and in-depth analysis. The sample will be chosen to ensure a diversity of contexts (e.g. Portal partnership structures, country size, levels of engagement, languages, economic development, internet penetration, literacy, and digital skills).

## • **Sample of 5 Portals for Comprehensive Case Studies:**

A smaller sample of 5 Portals will be chosen for more comprehensive case studies. These case studies will involve a deeper dive into the implementation, usage, and outcomes of the Portals and will be selected to represent diverse conditions.

## 3. Suggested Participatory Methods:

- **Contribution Analysis:** This method will be used to assess the extent to which the Portals have contributed to the desired outcomes. This will

involve mapping causal pathways and identifying external factors that may have influenced the results.

- **Outcome Harvesting:** This method will be used to collect evidence of changes (intended and unintended) that have occurred as a result of the Reporting Portals. Stakeholders will provide feedback on the outcomes they have observed, and this data will be cross-referenced with the Portals' performance data.
- **Participatory Workshops:** Conduct participatory workshops where stakeholders work together to retrospectively build the Theory of Change for the Reporting Portals project. Stakeholders will also participate in data interpretation sessions to validate evaluation findings and provide feedback on emerging recommendations.
- **User Journey Mapping:** Engage stakeholders (including potential Portal users) in mapping the user journey, from awareness of the Portal to successfully submitting a report. This can be done in focus groups or through participatory surveys.

## 4. Case Studies:

- **Purpose:** Case studies will provide detailed insights into specific contexts, challenges, and successes of the Reporting Portals. They will offer a more nuanced understanding of the factors that influence Portal effectiveness, particularly in countries with varying levels of economic development, internet access and digital literacy.
- **Selection Criteria:** The case studies will be selected based on diverse factors, such as Portal partnership structures, country size, level of reports per capita, economic context, internet penetration, and digital literacy.



## GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY:

The ERG will be convened by IWF. It is made up of four experts in CSEA, CSAM, and evaluation. The role of the ERG is to review and provide feedback on the evaluation deliverables.

The ERG will meet four times during the evaluation:

1. **Initial Meeting:** Establish the Terms of Reference and feed into the selection process for the independent evaluator.
2. **Second Meeting:** Provide feedback on the inception report and final methodology before data collection.
3. **Third Meeting:** Review and provide feedback on the draft evaluation report.
4. **Final Meeting:** Support dissemination and communication strategies and explore ways to implement the recommendations.

Although these are the main points of contact between the ERG, the evaluator and IWF, it is anticipated that **ad hoc input from the ERG may be sought at other key points in the evaluation process.**

IWF and/or the Safe Online Senior Evaluation Specialist will seek guidance from the Safe Online EAG as required throughout the evaluation processes and feedback to all parties. The EAG will provide oversight of the evaluation and support to maximise the evidence gathered and the impact of the evaluation.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES :

We envisage that **the responsibilities associated with the evaluation** will be divided as follows:

External evaluator	IWF
Designing the overall evaluation approach, including refining the evaluation questions	Convening and consulting with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)
Conducting desk-based analysis of project documentation and data held by IWF	Liaising with Safe Online, including with the Evaluation Advisory Group (EAG)
Collecting data from Portal partners, including through travel to meet with Portal hosts	Providing access to data held by IWF
Analysing qualitative and quantitative data	Facilitating contact with the Portal partners
Producing the deliverables outlined in this document, including the final report	Supporting the dissemination of project findings through a learning and dissemination event
Sharing the evaluation findings and recommendations through a learning and dissemination event	Collating and sharing feedback from the ERG/EAG on the draft reports with the evaluator

## EVALUATION DELIVERABLES AND OUTPUTS:

**We anticipate that the external evaluator will produce the following deliverables:**

- Detailed evaluation plan, including approach, methodology, activities, guiding questions, interview/ survey questions, a proposed list of stakeholders to be interviewed or otherwise involved, and a timeline for the evaluation process,
- Inception report,
- Tools and interview guides,
- Draft report, for comments, internal fact-checking, and review by the ERG and the Safe Online EAG,
- Final evaluation report,
- PowerPoint presentation summarising the evaluation report,
- Documentation and delivery of a learning workshop to present key findings and recommendations to stakeholders.

**The deliverables will contribute to three ambitious and widely applicable outputs, drawn from EVAC’s Safe Online Results Framework:**

- New and improved systems/ processes/tools are in place to effectively prevent and tackle online child sexual exploitation and abuse (CSEA) and support survivors,
- Robust evidence base to prevent and tackle online CSEA and support survivors generated and disseminated,
- Learning from the evaluation is shared with a range of stakeholders.

## PROPOSED PROJECT TIMELINE :

Activity	Date
IWF convenes the ERG	September 2024
4 meetings of the ERG held	October/November 2024; January/ February 2025; July 2025; August 2025 (months may change)
Procurement of independent evaluator	October/November 2024
Project management framework put in place and adhered to throughout the evaluation process	November/December 2024, then continued until conclusion of the project
Reconstruction of Theory of Change	December - January 2024
<b>Inception Phase:</b> Development of a detailed evaluation framework and finalisation of evaluation design, questions, sampling, methodology and tools	December 2024 – January 2025
<b>Data collection Phase:</b> with a sample of Portals and stakeholders and case studies	February – April 2025
<b>Data Analysis:</b> Analysis of data collected from Portal hosts and stakeholders	March – May 2025
Preliminary findings presented to stakeholders	May 2025
Draft report written and shared by the evaluator, along with case studies	June 2025
First draft reviewed by IWF	June 2025
Second draft produced based on feedback	July 2025
2nd review by ERG and EAG	July 2025
Final report submission including the case studies	August 2025
Organise online learning and dissemination event	September 2025

## EVALUATION PROCESS:

### Question & Answer Session:

Wednesday 23 October 2024 at 11am (BST) via Teams – email Shelley Sykes ([shelley@iwf.org.uk](mailto:shelley@iwf.org.uk)) to register.

### Submission deadline:

Wednesday 6 November 2024.  
Applications will be considered on a rolling basis and may close early due to this.

### Notification of selection:

Wednesday 20 November 2024

### Procurement framework signed by:

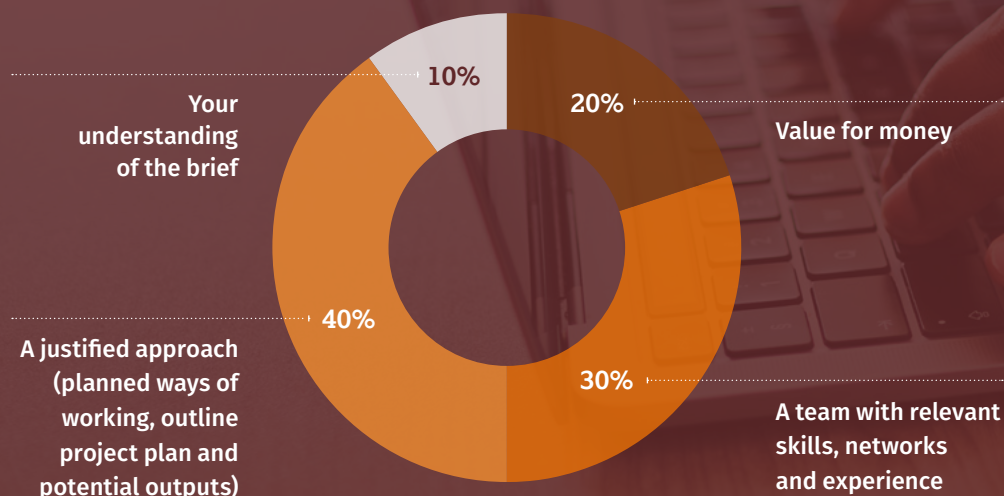
Friday 29 November 2024

### Project start date:

Monday 2 December 2024

## PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT:

All proposals will be assessed based on the following criteria.



## BUDGET:

The budget is \$107,000 USD (or equivalent in GBP) to cover all evaluator fees and expenses (including travel, accommodation, subsistence etc.) and any other costs associated with the evaluation. Please note our funding partner will require proof of expenditure.

## HOW TO APPLY:

To be considered for this work, please submit a proposal (of no more than 10 pages of A4) including the following details:

- Your biography,
- How different expertise, skills and experience among team members will complement and integrate with each other (only applicable if a team is expected to carry out the evaluation),
- Distribution of responsibilities among team leader and members,
- Evidence and examples of your experience conducting similar evaluations in the past,
- Methodology, including an explanation of why you are proposing these methods,
- Your ethical considerations and practices (the evaluation will follow as applicable the [UNEG Norms and Standards for Evaluation](#), the [UNEG ethical guidelines](#), and the [UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation](#)),
- Proposed timelines, including key milestones to take account of the dates included above,
- Two professional references.

## SUBMISSION:

Please submit your proposal by email to [international@iwf.org.uk](mailto:international@iwf.org.uk).  
If you have any questions, please contact Thomas Dyson ([thomas@iwf.org.uk](mailto:thomas@iwf.org.uk)).