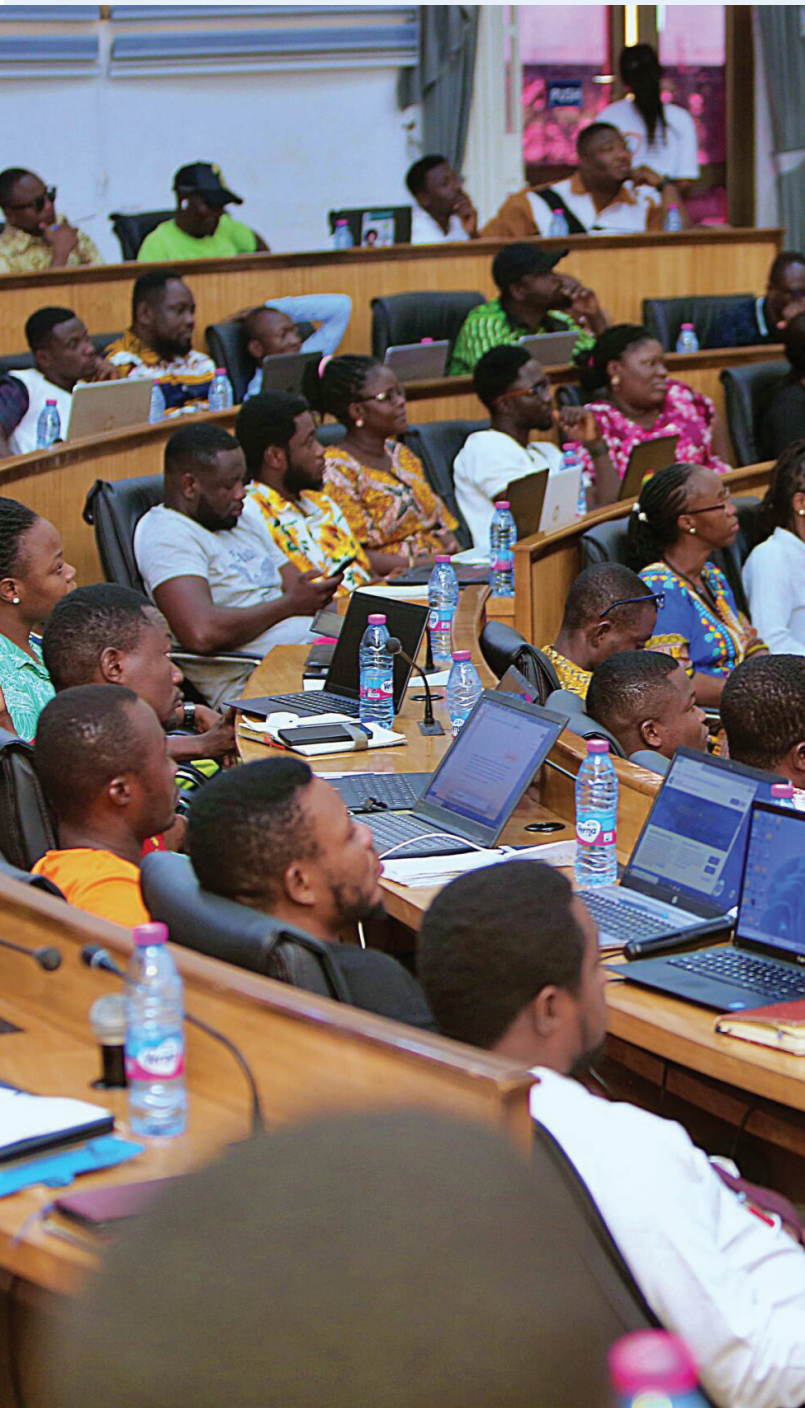


Child Online Protection In Ghana



- Combatting CSAM/OCSEA In Ghana
- Upskilling Law Enforcement
- Promoting Digital Rights
- Providing Victim Support

Annual Report 2024

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Leadership Messages

Message from the President

Emmanuel Edem Adinkrah

President

The year 2024 marked a pivotal period of growth and strategic advancement for the Ghana Internet Safety Foundation (GISF). Guided by a clear vision and strengthened by enhanced leadership capabilities, GISF expanded its operations and deepened its commitment to digital safety, online abuse prevention, and child online protection. Our work was significantly aligned with national policy milestones, particularly the introduction of the National Child Online Protection Framework by the Government of Ghana, developed in collaboration with the Cybersecurity Authority and other key stakeholders.

This framework represents a foundational shift in Ghana's approach to child online safety, embedding global standards such as those from the WeProtect Global Model into local policy. As part of our commitment to safeguarding children, GISF has actively contributed to refining the framework by incorporating evidence from the lived experiences of children exposed to online risks. These insights continue to inform the development of more targeted, child-centric protection strategies.

Despite notable achievements, critical challenges remain. The rise in AI-generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and the broader misuse of artificial intelligence to produce harmful content underscore the urgency for responsive and robust intervention. GISF recognizes the need for increased investment in resilient, security-conscious solutions and calls for strengthened collaboration with law enforcement agencies to build investigative and prosecutorial capacity in this domain. Our participation in high-level global forums such as TrustCon 2024 and the Stanford Trust & Safety Research Conference served to amplify Ghana's voice in international child protection discourse. Through these platforms and strategic alliances, GISF has positioned itself as a leader in designing forward-thinking policies and solutions that prioritize the digital safety of children across borders.

Looking ahead, GISF remains committed to expanding digital parenting education programs, integrating child protection into national education systems, and continuously monitoring the evolving digital landscape. Our mission is clear: to ensure every child is equipped, supported, and protected in the digital age through informed policy, empowered communities, and collaborative global action.



Message from the Board Chair

As Chair of the Board of the Ghana Internet Safety Foundation (GISF), I am pleased to present this message as part of our 2024 Annual Report—a year marked by important strides in Ghana’s digital child protection landscape. Our collective efforts have strengthened policy frameworks, expanded stakeholder engagement, and elevated public discourse on the need for a safer digital environment for children. Yet, our internal research reveals that much work remains to be done to ensure all children in Ghana are adequately protected online.

The 2024 GISF research findings shed light on critical gaps in parental awareness and digital literacy. While 50% of parents acknowledged concern about the potential risks their children face online, only 30% reported engaging their children in conversations about digital safety. More concerning is that only 25% of parents use available parental control tools, despite being aware of them. These statistics highlight a clear need for targeted digital literacy education and family-centered interventions to bridge the knowledge and preparedness gap.

The study further identified that children aged 13 to 17 are particularly vulnerable to cyberbullying and online sexual exploitation. Many of these incidents go unreported due to fear of retribution, stigma, or limited understanding of the support systems available. It is, therefore, imperative that we strengthen reporting protocols, psychosocial support systems, and youth-led awareness programs to protect children and provide safe avenues for redress.

Despite these challenges, 2024 marked significant policy achievements, most notably the adoption of the National Child Online Protection (COP) Framework as part of Ghana’s national Child Protection Policy. This landmark initiative, led by the Cybersecurity Authority of Ghana, demonstrates a strong commitment to aligning national strategies with international standards, including the WeProtect Global Model. The COP Framework offers a structured pathway for creating and institutionalizing robust child protection mechanisms in the digital space. GISF’s operational activities over the past year were strongly aligned with these national priorities. The Foundation trained over 600 individuals—including 500 educators and 100 law enforcement officers—on digital safety, online child protection, and investigative protocols. In addition, through direct outreach and public education efforts, more than 10,000 children, youth leaders, and parents received practical knowledge and tools to protect themselves and others online. Equally important has been the expansion of GISF’s strategic partnerships across Africa and globally. Collaborations with organizations such as SafetyNus (Zimbabwe), ZeeTech Foundation (Nigeria), and Digital Aid International (USA) have not only expanded our programmatic reach but have also elevated Ghana’s contribution to the broader African and global child protection agenda. As we look toward the future, GISF remains focused on deepening community engagement, embedding online safety into school curricula, scaling digital parenting initiatives, and enhancing the capacity of frontline responders. These priorities are essential if we are to respond effectively to emerging threats, including AI-generated child sexual abuse material, deepfakes, and online misinformation.

We are proud of what has been achieved in 2024, but we are also reminded that protecting children in digital spaces is a shared responsibility—one that demands continued collaboration, innovation, and commitment at all levels of society.



Strategic Review

Year Review



10,000
children, youth
leaders, and
parents



500
Educators



100
law enforcement
officers

In 2024, the Ghana Internet Safety Foundation (GISF) reached **over 10,000 children, youth leaders, and parents** with digital safety education, trained **500 educators** and **100 law enforcement officers** in online harm prevention, and launched **five major national programs** targeting awareness, capacity-building, and youth engagement. These achievements underscore the Foundation's commitment to translating policy into meaningful, measurable action.

As GISF worked to support the effective implementation of Ghana's **National Child Online Protection (COP) Framework**, it became increasingly clear that **strong international and local partnerships were essential** to operationalizing the framework at scale. A strategic collaboration was established with the **Ghana Police Service**, supported by the **National Youth Authority** and the **Ministry of Communications and Digitalization**, which allowed GISF to deliver **standardized web safety instruction** through interactive sessions with youth and parents, as well as structured training workshops for frontline law enforcement personnel.

The Foundation's influence extended beyond national borders. In 2024, GISF actively participated in global convenings including the **WeProtect Global Alliance Summit** and **TrustCon 2024**. These high-level engagements affirmed GISF's role in advancing child protection standards globally and emphasized the importance of **cross-border collaboration in addressing technology-facilitated child sexual exploitation and abuse**.

GISF's global efforts were further bolstered by partnerships with the **Internet Watch Foundation (IWF)** and **INHOPE**, which provided technical support and alignment in tackling the proliferation of **child sexual abuse material (CSAM)**. These collaborations strengthened GISF's ability to detect, report, and respond to online child exploitation incidents more effectively.

In addition to programming and partnerships, GISF assumed **leadership roles across multiple national and international child protection initiatives**, advocating for stronger safeguards in digital environments and contributing to the global dialogue on AI-related harms, online safety ethics, and responsive policy design. By integrating **community-level impact with global policy influence**, GISF has solidified its reputation as a trusted leader in Africa's digital safety ecosystem.

Research Findings

The 2024 GISF report described essential findings about how children use digital platforms while showing changes in cyber threat behavior. The research showed that parents provided internet safety education to only thirty per cent of their Ghanaian children. The majority of parents accepted the existence of digital risks despite their insufficient technological knowledge for managing these dangers properly. Results from the research indicate that 25 percent of parents have not adopted parental control tools. A high rate of digital illiteracy prevents parents from implementing enough intervention measures even though they are aware of available tools.

The research showed that teenage children aged 13 to 17 face the most significant risks of cyberbullying and online exploitation because they spend 4 to 6 hours daily in front of screens. People refrain from reporting online infractions because they feel scared, and there is currently no easy access to assistance.

Current research shows that adults must dedicate more attention to children's online activities because new education and better response systems must be developed. GISF analyzed these statistics to tailor its education initiatives by focusing on young people and their adult guardians. It also established new protective programs to help children search for online security assistance.

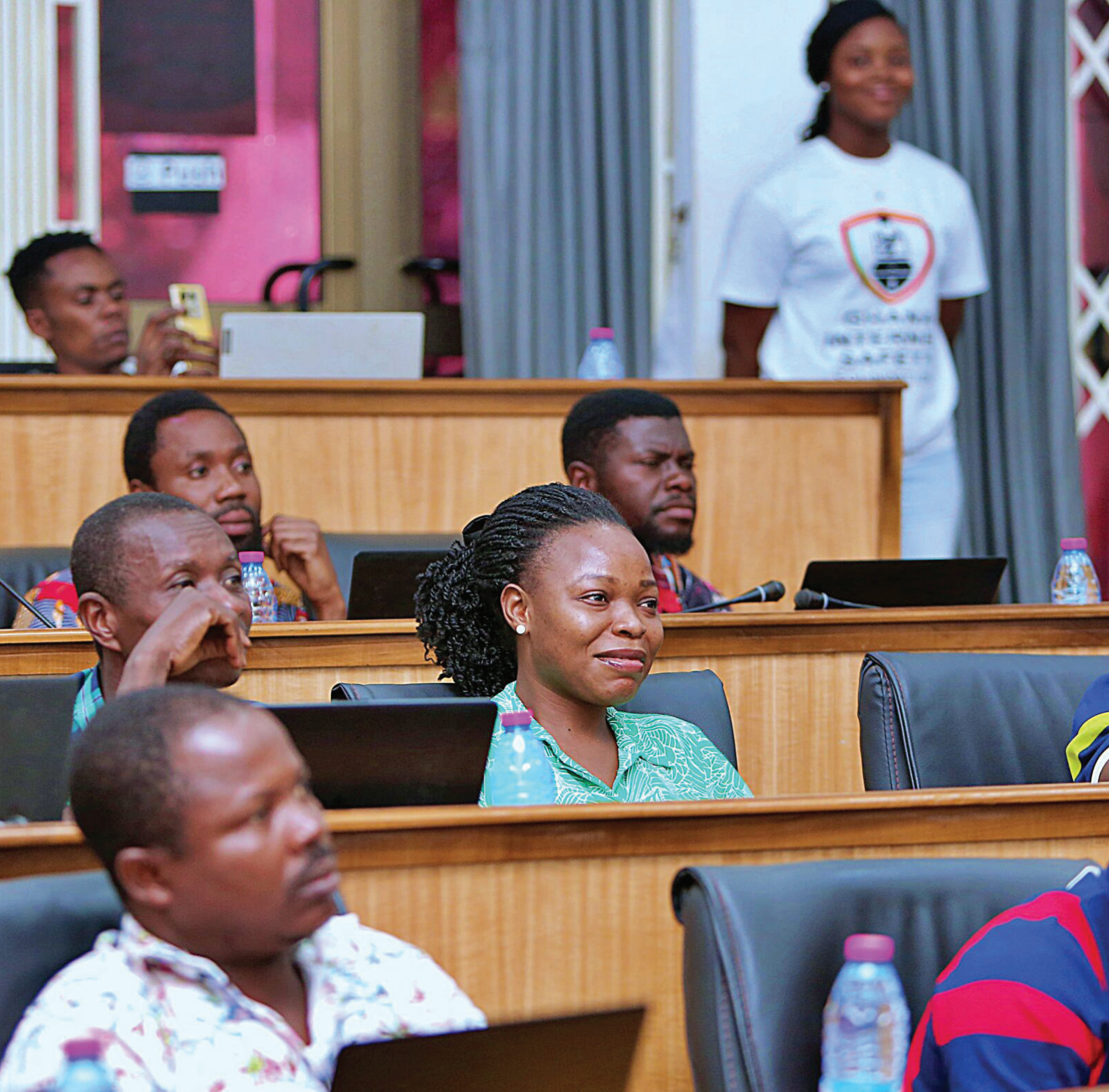


Aligning GISF's Work with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The vision of GISF supports four United Nations SDGs: Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), and Peace Justice Strong Institutions (SDG 16), as well as Partnerships for the Goals (SDG 17). SDG 4 is the foundation for GISF to deliver training that builds online security competencies among children, teachers, and parents.

The organization uses SDG 5 resources to combat gender-based violence and establish safeguarded online spaces for girls and adolescent women. It enhances child protection through cybersecurity standards developed through collaborative enforcement and governance approaches (SDG 16). SDG 17 allows GISF to form collaborative partnerships with global organizations like WeProtect Global Alliance and INHOPE to strengthen worldwide efforts to keep children safe online. Strategic partnerships made by GISF enhance its impact at national and international levels, thus creating a more secure digital space for all.





Program Highlights & Impact



Capacity Building for Parents, Educators, Law Enforcement.

In 2024, GISF prioritized capacity building for parents, educators, and law enforcement agencies in digital safety skills. The national campaign in January equipped parents and educators to identify and respond to online threats. Participation surpassed 10,000- an encouraging 25% increase over 2023. In April, the E-Police Academy trained 500 educators and 100 law enforcement officers, representing a 30% increase in law enforcement training compared to 2023, to enhance support for victims of online exploitation. In May, the Cybersmart Schools Campaign reached over 15,000 students and teachers, promoting digital safety in schools. In July, GISF addressed online gender-based violence by training 2,000 educators in the application of cyberlaw to improve legal enforcement against digital abuse.



Youth Engagement & Digital Literacy

Youth engagement remained a cornerstone of GISF's programming in 2024, with an expanded focus on digital literacy, online safety education, and youth-led advocacy. Throughout the year, GISF implemented initiatives that reached over 50,000 young people and their families, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. In February, GISF's Safer Internet Campaign reached more than 30,000 students and their families, marking a 40% increase from the previous year. The campaign provided practical education on topics such as cyberbullying prevention, responsible social media use, and digital citizenship.

In August, GISF partnered with the Korea International Volunteer Center (KIVC)—a program of the South Korean government—to host the KIV Summer Online Safety Camp. This initiative delivered hands-on cybersecurity and digital law training to 5,000 students, with modules delivered through the Cyberlaw Academy. The camp emphasized applied learning, ethical digital behavior, and the importance of staying safe in increasingly AI-influenced online spaces.

In September, GISF launched its Online Safety Podcast Series, which provided engaging and accessible audio content to over 10,000 young listeners across Ghana. The podcast covered critical topics such as data privacy, digital threats, and online relationship safety in formats tailored for youth.

GISF also collaborated with the African Youth Council for Online Safety to promote peer-led safety education through initiatives such as the Child Online Protection Soccerthon and Cyber Drill sessions. These interactive activities reached over 8,000 youth, blending sports, gamified learning, and live demonstrations to make digital safety both fun and impactful.

Together, these programs form a robust framework for empowering Ghanaian youth to become informed digital citizens and future advocates for online safety, while showcasing GISF's commitment to global cooperation, innovation, and scale.

Cybercrime Prevention & Awareness Initiatives

In 2024, GISF intensified its efforts in cybercrime prevention by conducting the Sextortion and Cyber Trauma Awareness campaign in March. This awareness campaign provided essential education on the dangers of sextortion. GISF supported the Trust and Safety Hackathon, bringing together professional experts to develop online protective solutions. Increased awareness through the Anti-Sextortion Campaign highlighted the growing threat of online sexual exploitation and educated individuals on preventive measures to avoid victimization.

AI & Emerging Digital Threats

The rapid advancement in Artificial Intelligence is both an opportunity and a challenge in digital safety. GISF recognizes the heightened risks associated with AI-generated child sexual abuse material and deepfake technology, necessitating targeted interventions. Therefore, GISF collaborates with cybersecurity and child protection organizations to develop AI-driven detection mechanisms and monitoring tools to prevent disseminating of harmful digital content.

GISF promotes workshops and awareness initiatives to educate educators, parents, and policymakers about the risks associated with AI. The organisation assists law enforcement in developing enhanced digital forensic procedures for investigations into AI-based exploitation cases. Through international partnerships, GISF will strengthen cooperation with organizations involved in the AI movement to establish new laws and mandatory standards that protect children from AI-based threats in the digital environment.



Advancing Digital Safety through Global and National Partnerships



GISF's Role in International Child Online Protection Networks

The Ghana Internet Safety Foundation (GISF) plays an active and strategic role in advancing global efforts to protect children from online harm. As a recognized stakeholder within the WeProtect Global Alliance and an operational collaborator with INHOPE, GISF contributes to shaping international policies and protocols aimed at reducing the risks children face in digital environments. These collaborations support intelligence-sharing, technology-enabled interventions, and the promotion of cross-border solutions to combat child sexual exploitation and abuse online.

GISF also aligns its work with international human rights frameworks, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC) General Comment No. 25, which outlines the rights of children in the digital environment. Through its partnerships with cybersecurity agencies and civil society organizations, GISF supports the implementation of evidence-based policies and reinforces global best practices tailored to emerging challenges, particularly across Africa.

By merging universal digital safety standards with region-specific approaches, GISF has positioned itself as a leading voice in Africa's child online protection ecosystem. Its work not only contributes to global discourse but also ensures that interventions are locally grounded, culturally relevant, and operationally impactful—effectively bridging the gap between international policy aspirations and on-the-ground realities for children across the continent.

Policy Advocacy and Collaboration with National and Global Stakeholders

In 2024, GISF deepened its collaboration with key ministries and regulatory bodies to strengthen the child online protection landscape in Ghana. Through coordinated efforts with the Ministry of Communications and Digitalization, the Ministry of Education, and the Cybersecurity Authority of Ghana, GISF supported the development and rollout of protective digital policies and educational frameworks. These efforts facilitated the mainstreaming of online safety education into schools, while also extending digital literacy training to families, teachers, and administrative staff across all educational levels.

Beyond national engagement, GISF maintained active representation at regional and global policy forums, including consultative meetings hosted by the United Nations and the African Union. At these platforms, GISF advocated for the adoption of child-centered internet governance principles and the harmonization of digital safety standards across jurisdictions. The organization's inputs into national cybersecurity frameworks—delivered in collaboration with law enforcement agencies, the technology sector, and civil society—also contributed to more responsive reporting mechanisms and evidence-based policy formation.

GISF's holistic approach to advocacy emphasizes the need for interconnected protection systems that reflect the realities of today's digital world. It calls on governments, private sector actors, and multilateral institutions to adopt integrated child safety models, drawing from international best practices while remaining grounded in local contexts. Through these partnerships and policy contributions, GISF has solidified its reputation as a trusted convener and policy advocate within Africa's digital safety ecosystem.





GISF's Global Representation & Leadership

GISF continues to provide pan-African leadership in the child online protection space by developing and adapting digital safety frameworks to fit the operational contexts of diverse African nations. Through strategic alliances with state agencies, civil society partners, and regional cybersecurity bodies, GISF has contributed to the creation of responsive, adaptable guidelines aimed at enhancing the digital safety of children across the continent.

GISF's prevention-focused programming emphasizes multi-stakeholder coordination across countries such as Kenya, South Africa, and Nigeria, and includes the Africa Child Online Safety Alliance (ACOSA)—a regional platform dedicated to aligning national responses with continental priorities under the African Union's cybersecurity and child rights agenda. ACOSA, co-convened by GISF, fosters collaboration between regional CSOs, regulatory bodies, and youth networks to build shared standards and policy coherence.

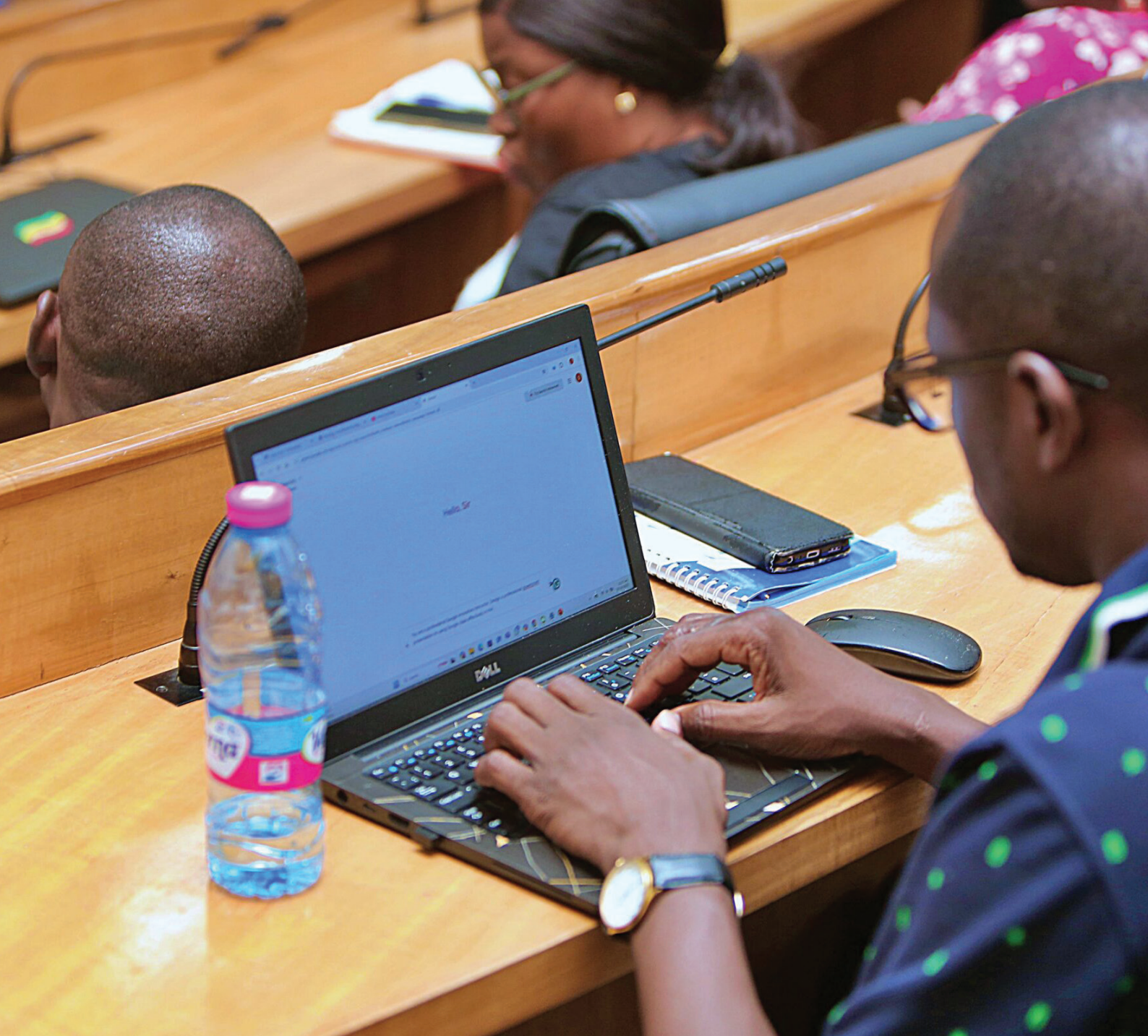
In 2024, GISF delivered cyber safety education to over 600 personnel, including educators, law enforcement officers, and cybersecurity professionals across West, East, and Southern Africa. These efforts directly supported institutional strengthening and legal capacity development for handling child-related digital crimes.

GISF's ongoing regional programs have had measurable impact on legal reform, capacity building, and public awareness, positioning the organization as a leading voice on the continent for the advancement of child digital safety. Through these sustained initiatives, GISF has emerged as both a continental leader and a globally respected institution in the fight to protect children from online harm.

While working on the specialized work, GISF works on staff development programs, which include cybersecurity education and digital security with law enforcement. Installation of the AI systems to generate proactive user security responses against online threats was done on GISF's digital threat identification systems to prevent digital threats. National online safety curriculum adoption and public-private partnerships for efficient measures of child internet safety through the building of efficient child internet safety measures with government bodies and sector representatives.

The worldwide threat comprehension of GISF enables their operational development through program learning from multiple countries. Through digital literacy integration in schools, Kenya provides guidance to GISF for its Africa-wide expansion. At the same time, South African cybersecurity standards and Nigerian cybersecurity campaigns bring additional concepts to the frame.

GISF aims to strengthen its police force partnerships, leading to improved international cooperation in cybercrime response. Through public-private partnerships, GISF ensures safe online conditions within the African region. GISF is committed to establishing a child-friendly digital security space worldwide by adopting established regional and global practices.

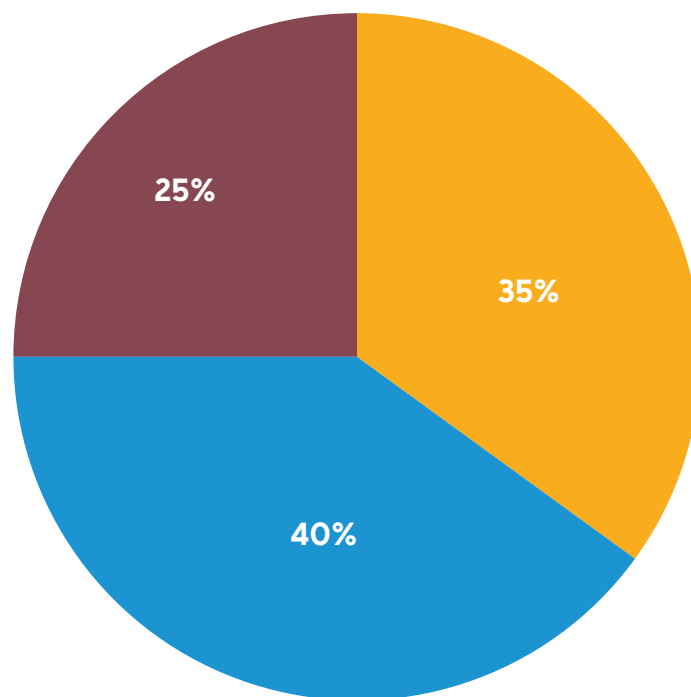


Financial Overview & Sustainability Strategy

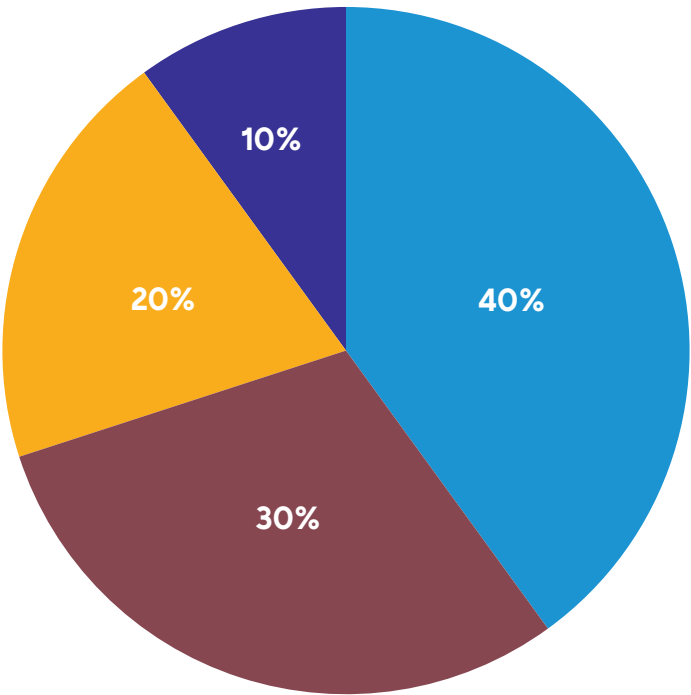
The GISF must maintain its financial ability to deliver its mission of providing a child digital safety program. In 2024, the GISF obtained grants from international donors, corporate sponsors, and local government bodies. The funding structure included 35% international donor donations, 40% corporate grants, and 25% support from local government bodies. The organization used its financial resources for program extension and site construction to create an environment that supported enhanced policies for protecting Internet-using children.

Training and capacity development occupied the largest budget, covering 40% of total spending. GISF devoted 30% of its expenditures to AI and cybercrime research efforts to maintain leadership against emerging threats. Digital literacy education through advocacy outreach received 20% of the total budget. The costs for administrative functions and operational expenses remained under 10% of the budget for sustainability purposes and efficient performance.

GISF Financial Summary for 2024



GISF Expenditure Breakdown for 2024



- Capacity Building & Training 40%
- AI & Cybercrime Research 30%
- Public Awareness & Advocacy 20%
- Administrative Costs 10%

GISF guarantees its financial stability by pursuing three main strategies. These strategies involve developing fee-based training programs while forming partnerships and international collaborations. The established measures will enable GISF to provide crucial online safety protection for children alongside long-term financial stability.



Acknowledgements

The GISF thanks all personnel and institutions that supported its 2024 projects and mission activities. This year's successful developments stemmed from domestic and international cooperative work efforts. The establishment of basic policies for GISF outreach and advocacy received critical support from government governance structures and community-based organizations.

GISF would like to express our profound thanks and appreciation to our partner organizations that have made the protection of children from online harm possible. GISF will push on in pursuit of a digital world where children can safely learn and flourish throughout childhood, free from sexual abuse and exploitation, because the work will continue. Safety and growth for future generations depend on intergovernmental cooperation.





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