

# IMPLEMENTING THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES FOR CHILDREN

## EXAMPLES OF CHILD-FOCUSED WORK



# ABOUT THE INITIATIVE FOR CHILD RIGHTS IN THE GLOBAL COMPACTS

The Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts (the Initiative) is a multi-stakeholder partnership bringing together over 30 UN, civil society and philanthropic organisations around a shared agenda: to ensure that children's rights are at the heart of the two global compacts on migration and on refugees in practice and to create a continuum of care, protection and support for all migrant and refugee children.

The Initiative actively engaged in the process leading to the drafting and finalization of the text of the [Global Compact on Refugees](#) (GCR), bringing together expertise and providing concrete recommendations on children. The Initiative supports the GCR's commitments relating to child protection, access to services for children and their families, sustainable solutions and cross border cooperation, which can have a direct or indirect impact on children. The GCR builds upon international legal systems for refugees – including the 1951 Refugee Convention – and is guided by relevant international human rights instruments including the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Initiative is co-chaired by Save the Children and Terre des Hommes. Members include: Caritas Internationalis; Child Fund Alliance; Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW); Committee on the Rights of the Child; Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants; Defence for Children International (DCI); Destination Unknown Campaign; Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children; International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC); International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA); International Detention Coalition (IDC); International Organization for Migration (IOM); International Rescue Committee (IRC); International Social Service (ISS); Mercy Corps; the MHPSS Collaborative for Children and Families in Adversity; Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA); Mixed Migration Platform (MMP); Lumos; NGO Committee on Migration; Norwegian Refugee Council; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Plan International; Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants (PICUM); Public Services International (PSI); Save the Children; SOS Children's Villages; the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children; Terre des Hommes; United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); World Vision.

For further information about the Initiative please go to [www.childrenonthemove.org](http://www.childrenonthemove.org)

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# INTRODUCTION

Children<sup>1</sup> make up 52% of all refugees globally, yet they are not sufficiently protected, and their care and development needs often go unmet.

Children in refugee situations face many potential dangers, such as violence, abuse, exploitation, discrimination, separation from their families, trafficking and military recruitment. The impact of these experiences can be devastating and long-lasting. Children have different needs from adults and these needs can only be identified and met if they are approached in a way that is specific to children.

The impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic has exacerbated the dangers faced by children in refugee situations and laid bare the need for their protection and for ensuring that all their human rights are upheld all the time.

The Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts welcomes the inclusion of child-focused commitments in the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) includes specific provisions that – if effectively implemented - can make a difference to children and adolescents.

The Initiative is committed to helping put the GCR into practice so that children have greater protection, can access their rights, and are able to participate in decisions that affect them. The Initiative believes that the framework is relevant and can make

<sup>1</sup> A child is defined by the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child as: ‘every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.’ Art 1.

a real difference to the lives of refugee children if effectively implemented and that the global pandemic shows that the time for change is now.

There are a multitude of examples of work being done in line with the recommended actions outlined in the GCR at local, regional and global levels which can serve as inspiration to help realize the commitments to children in the GCR. The goal of this publication is to share examples of approaches by members of the Initiative that have proven effective for children.

Our hope is that by sharing knowledge and concrete examples, we can help governments and other stakeholders to put the Global Compact on Refugees into practice in ways that work for children and that this will quickly make a tangible difference to refugee children.

The Initiative believes that the GCR framework is relevant and can make a real difference to the lives of refugee children if effectively implemented and that the global COVID-19 pandemic shows that the time for change is now.

The goal of this publication is to share examples of approaches by members of the Initiative that have proven effective for children. Special thanks go to the Open Society Foundation and to the Oak Foundation for supporting the work of the Initiative and the production of this publication.



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# WHAT DOES THE GLOBAL COMPACT ON REFUGEES SAY ABOUT CHILDREN?

The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) calls for a child-centred approach in its implementation. The GCR calls on States and relevant stakeholders to: “contribute resources and expertise towards policies and programmes that take into account the specific vulnerabilities and protection needs of unaccompanied and separated children, survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and harmful practices, and other children at risk”. More specifically, it calls for the contribution of resources and expertise to:

- Ensure the best interests of the child;
- Invest in child protection systems and cross-border cooperation to provide a continuum of protection for the child;
- Build the skills of key staff and authorities so they can act in a way that is sensitive to the needs of children;
- Establish reception and transit areas sensitive to age, gender, disability, and other specific needs;
- Provide appropriate care arrangements that guarantee child rights;
- Establish alternatives to detention for children;
- Ensure access to key services for children including healthcare, safe and nutritious food, get quick access to civil and birth registration and documentation;
- Ensure access to primary, secondary and tertiary education and minimize the time refugee boys and girls spend out of education, ideally a maximum of three months after arrival;
- End all forms of sexual and gender-based violence, trafficking in persons, sexual exploitation and abuse, and harmful practices;
- Promote complementary pathways for children and families to access international protection while keeping families together;
- Support family tracing and clear referral pathways for reunification;
- Promote gender equality, combating discrimination and xenophobia;
- Achieve solutions for children including return, reintegration, resettlement and complementary pathway for admission in third countries; and
- Promote the meaningful participation of all people concerned, including children and young people.

# PREPAREDNESS FOR DISPLACEMENT

## Predictive Analytics for Displacement - Reception and admission, Early warning, preparedness and contingency planning - Global - Save the Children

### About the example

A tool developed by Save the Children helps predict displacement, how it will affect children, and in so doing anticipates the protection needs which will need to be addressed in any response.

### The issue

For many years, aid agencies have struggled to predict the duration and scale of displacement crises and have responded to short-term needs at the expense of long-term, cost-effective solutions, making it difficult to plan responses that guarantee children's protection. One factor in this is the difficulty in effectively predicting displacement crises. Predictive modelling is an area of emerging good practice elsewhere in the aid sector yet had not previously been used for displacement settings.

### The approach

With support from Boston Consulting Group, Save the Children built a prototype model which predicts the duration and scale of a forced displacement crisis.

Using predictive capabilities, the tool predicts how a displacement crisis will unfold from day one, thus enabling better responses, stronger funding, and more effective advocacy for the immediate implementation of long-term solutions.

### What difference does this make for children?

The purpose of the tool is to inform programme design for displacement crises specifically affecting children and to strengthen child protection in any response.

This prototype has global geographic coverage, is relevant for conflict-specific displacement, and field staff end-users have been actively involved in its design and validation.

### What next?

Save the Children is both improving the prototype and scaling up the tool to improve its functionality, rigour, and sophistication. By 2021, it will be developed to:

- Predict environmental and economy-driven displacement alongside conflict;
- Improve demographic disaggregation (particularly gender and age);
- Model more types of crises (e.g. natural disasters, economy-driven displacement) and population disaggregation (e.g. age, gender, etc);
- Integrate machine-learning algorithms for improved automation;
- Process unstructured data sources and potentially introduce agent-based modelling of population movement behaviour during crises;
- Expand field testing, staff and stakeholder capacity building and engagement to strengthen accessibility, user experience and impact of the tool.



## 2.1 ENSURE THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) states that: *“In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.”*<sup>1</sup> This best interests principle applies to all children independent of their migration or refugee status, whether accompanied or unaccompanied. The UN Committees on the Rights of the Child and on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families have made clear that considerations such as those relating to general migration control cannot override children’s best interests.

The Global Compact on Refugees includes specific reference to the best interests of the child as a principle that underpins the provisions in the document.

Ensuring the best interests of the child takes various forms, from its inclusion in relevant legislation, policies and practices, to implementing procedures for determining the best interests of the child when making decisions affecting children.

The practices listed below are examples of procedures for Best Interests Determination (BID) and provide insight on steps for developing such procedures for the protection of children.<sup>2</sup>

### Using the BID process to inform the safe passage of unaccompanied children from Greece to other EU Member States – Europe – UNHCR, Government of Greece

#### About the example

During 2018 and 2019 in Greece, one UNHCR child protection priority included meeting the protection needs of the 3,000 to 4,000 unaccompanied children by also providing safe passage for unaccompanied children at heightened risk to Europe through relocation programmes. These efforts were in line with the advocacy of both the Greek Government and UNHCR to European countries to show compassion and solidarity by opening up relocation opportunities for the most vulnerable unaccompanied children.

#### The approach

In November 2017, a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) between the Ministry of Labour, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity (EKKA), the Ministry of Migration Policy and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Representation in Greece was signed (and renewed in 2018) to support the transfer of unaccompanied children to the UK under Section 67 of the 2016 UK Immigration Act (the ‘Dubs Scheme’).

The shared information supported UK counterparts to identify a relevant care arrangement and ensure that the required services were in place. It also informed security clearance and further necessary processing.

The BID process included the following steps:

- A child protection assessment (or BIA) was carried out by child protection actors on all unaccompanied children.
- Unaccompanied children at heightened risk who would benefit from transfer to the UK were identified based on the eligibility criteria established by the Dubs scheme and local vulnerability criteria established by UNHCR and endorsed by EKKA. They were then referred to EKKA using a standardized referral form.
- Each case was reviewed by EKKA and UNHCR and was prioritized based on the eligibility and vulnerability criteria.
- A BID was initiated for the prioritized unaccompanied children who met the (eligibility and vulnerability) criteria to transfer to the UK. The comprehensive BID report informed a multi-disciplinary panel chaired by EKKA.
- Following the decision of the BID panel, UNHCR ensured that the case was fully documented and submitted to the relevant State authorities for their consideration and further processing. Key State actors alongside EKKA included the Public Prosecutor and the Greek Asylum Service.

Upon receiving the State’s approval for the transfer of the child (Notification of Decision of the BID Panel by EKKA), UNHCR submitted the cases to the UK Home Office. Relevant case information (including a child information form and accompanying documents such as birth certificates, asylum cards and medical/ psychological reports) was also shared. The shared information supported UK counterparts to identify a relevant care arrangement and ensure that the required services were in place, it also informed security clearance and further necessary processing.

### Best Interests Procedures - Integrating asylum-seeking and refugee children into a national child protection system in North Macedonia – Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Government of the Republic of North Macedonia, with support of UNHCR and partners

*“We recognized a need to develop specific Best Interests Assessment tools that will assist social workers directly in implementing child protection mechanisms as a main vehicle in mainstreaming child protection on the national level. Cooperation with relevant state institutions, NGOs and UN agencies is important to us as we exchange the expertise and organize capacity building initiatives jointly to see Best Interests Determination protocol integrated within the social protection system across the country.”*

Institute for Social Affairs, Republic of North Macedonia

#### About the example

In North Macedonia, a core UNHCR focus has been to support the government to: (i) mainstream refugee and asylum-seeking child protection into the national system, and (ii) strengthen the best interest procedures in the country in general.

#### The issue

During the 2015-2016 refugee/migrant emergency, child protection was a particular focus. Best Interests Assessment (BIA) forms were introduced and used by government and non-governmental partners as part of the initial decision-making related to unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). This practice continued after the emergency, but all stakeholders recognized the need for further improvements in the case management process and Best Interests Procedure (BIP).

#### The approach

Following an initial mapping of the national child protection system, UNHCR initiated a series of consultative sessions with the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, UNICEF and several NGOs. The consultations assessed the child protection system needs for refugee and asylum-seeking children and identified areas for strengthening the case management system. Stakeholders, including the relevant State bodies, concluded that there was a need for initial training on international standards and good practices related to BIPs. This was jointly organized by UNHCR and the line Ministry, with participation of the other relevant State bodies, UNICEF and key NGOs. The parties involved then identified a lack of practical tools to deliver BIPs for refugee and asylum-seeking children. As a result, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy initiated the development of a Handbook for Best Interests Determination in coordination with the Institute for Social Affairs (a body tasked to provide capacity building and supervise implementation of all social protection services in the country), and with the support of UNHCR.

The Handbook included a set of tools for practitioners and a harmonized framework to be used within the child and social protection systems. The aim was to ensure implementation of the best interests principle in all relevant procedures. The Handbook was completed at the end of 2019. The next steps for UNHCR include working alongside UNICEF to support the government and other partners when using the tools developed.

<sup>1</sup> UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 Art.3(1), available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>

<sup>2</sup> See Joint General Comment No. 3 (of the CMW) and No. 22 (of the CRC), CMW/C/GC/3-CRC/C/GC/22, para. 33, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5a1293a24.html>

## Building Guardian Support and Monitoring Offices - Italy - UNICEF

Italian Law 47/2017 included a model of voluntary guardianship services integrated into the existing system of reception and protection for refugee and migrant children. Under the law, volunteer guardians are citizens who are appointed in coordination with the Juvenile Courts, trained by the Regional Ombudspersons and monitored by the National Ombudsperson. To support the operationalization of the law, UNICEF invested in establishing a Guardian Support and Monitoring Office within the Ombudsperson's facility in Palermo, Sicily. In 2018, UNICEF opened two additional offices in Palermo and expanded the initiative into other regions (Calabria, Latium and Sardinia). During the first half of 2019, around 228 guardians supported a total of 286 unaccompanied minors. This model is now being integrated into the national system for supporting guardians.

## Screening and Best Interests Determinations - Zambia - the government of Zambia, in conjunction with IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR<sup>1</sup>

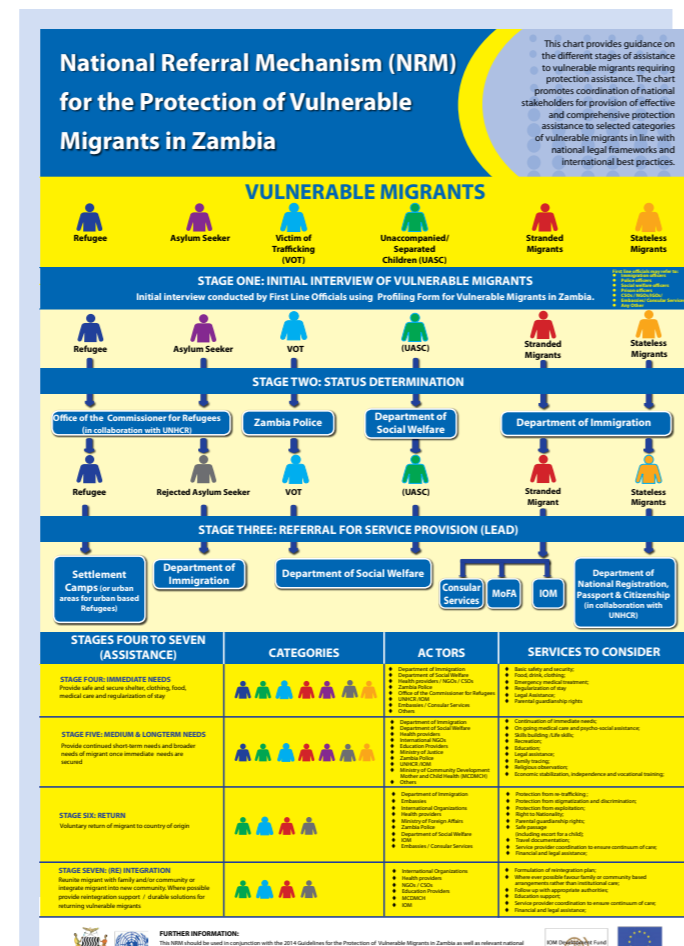
### About the example

The government of Zambia, in conjunction with IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR, developed a set of tools to guide the protection of vulnerable migrants in the country.

### What difference does this make for children?

The tools involve a comprehensive set of guidelines for the initial reception, screening and interviews of unaccompanied children.<sup>2</sup> If effectively followed, border officials will immediately refer unaccompanied children to the Department of Social Welfare. Furthermore, the guidelines make clear that children seeking protection should never be refused entry or subjected to detailed interviews on arrival.<sup>3</sup>

The guidelines also indicate that children be provided with case management, during which a Best Interest Determination (BID) must be undertaken. They state: "The BID for child asylum seekers and refugees is a means to ensure that specific protection and assistance is provided to children who are or may become deprived of the protection of their family. It ensures that such decisions take due account of the fundamental right to life, survival and development of the child to the maximum extent possible. The BID also provides the means for the child's participation in the process of the BID according to his or her maturity and capacity."<sup>4</sup>



## Best Interests Procedures - Family reunification pilot programme for children at risk in the central Mediterranean situation - UNHCR, RefugeePoint, International Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)

### About the example

In July 2019, UNHCR's Office of the Special Envoy for the Central Mediterranean Situation launched a family reunification project which aimed to assist at-risk children and youth by facilitating family reunification to third countries, across borders and back in the country of origin, when determined to be in the child's best interest.

The question of whether family reunification is in the best interests of the child is explored through the BID process. The project provides a mix of direct case management (through Best Interests Procedures) as well as legal support to families in third countries.

### The issue

While many of the children and families who qualify for family reunification had been profiled by partners, or identified through UNHCR ProGres<sup>5</sup> data, most do not have an assessment or Best Interests Assessment (BIA) on file. In most cases identified for family reunification, the child or children (in the case of siblings) are joining at least one biological parent and initial screening interviews suggest that there are no additional protection concerns. However, the length of separation is often several years as many of the parents took long journeys to Europe through Libya, moved onward in Europe as well as had to wait until their asylum applications were positively adjudicated.

### The approach

During initial screening interviews with children, the family reunification checklist is reviewed and, in most cases, the long separation period makes it necessary to proceed with a BID instead of a BIA. The question of whether family reunification is in the best interest of the child is explored through the BID process. For cases where an initial BIA has not already been completed, a BIA prior to the BID is not conducted as this is perceived as duplicative work in operations with limited child protection resources and high numbers of at-risk children.

<sup>5</sup> The Profile Global Registration System (ProGres) is an IT case management tool developed by UNHCR in 2002. The tool provides a common source of information about individuals that is used by different work units to facilitate protection of persons of concern to the organization. <https://www.unhcr.org/blogs/wp-content/uploads/sites/48/2018/03/2018-03-16-PRIMES-Flyer.pdf>



<sup>1</sup> International Detention Coalition (2018) Keeping Children Safe. Briefing Paper No. 3. Melbourne: International Detention Coalition, available at: <https://idcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Keeping-Children-Safe-IDC-Briefing-Paper-Oct-2018.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Available here - <https://weblog.iom.int/iom-rolls-out-tools-protection-vulnerable-migrants-zambia>

<sup>3</sup> IOM. 2015. Training manual (Facilitators guide): Protection assistance for vulnerable migrants in Zambia. IOM. p. 4

<sup>4</sup> IOM. 2015. Guidelines: Protection Assistance for Vulnerable Migrants in Zambia IOM. p. 18.

## 2.2 INVEST IN CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS AND CROSS-BORDER COOPERATION TO PROVIDE A CONTINUUM OF PROTECTION FOR THE CHILD

The GCR calls for investment in national child protection systems, in order that asylum-seeking and refugee children can receive protection in line with the protections guaranteed to national children.

Children are amongst the most vulnerable people in refugee situations, particularly in protracted situations, and they face significant risks, including: physical and sexual violence and other forms of gender-based violence; neglect; abuse; separation; trafficking; exploitation; child labour and child recruitment; and psychosocial trauma.

Strong, well-funded national and community-based child protection systems that are equipped to prevent and respond to the specific needs of refugee children are essential to minimize risks to children, ensure a timely and adequate response to the immediate needs of girls

and boys, and promote recovery and solutions for all children affected by displacement.

Additionally, as children move across borders, cross-border coordination becomes an essential part of a protection system. Improving coordination and communication between national and international actors working to protect children enables access to care, and protection and services, regardless of where children are.

The examples below include tools developed to ensure that key child protection standards are applied during humanitarian action, including in refugee settings, as well as examples of child protection system strengthening in a humanitarian context that responds to the needs of a mobile population.

### Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019 Edition - Global - The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action

#### About the example

Launched in 2012, the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS) are a key resource for humanitarian workers.

The Standards were revised and improved in 2019 and have benefitted from input from over 1,900 individuals in 85 countries. With this new edition, they are now entirely relevant for use in refugee settings, with highlighting throughout of specific concerns for refugee children and families.



#### What difference does this makes for children?

The Standards have been used by over 74,000 child protection professionals and other humanitarian actors in more than 50 contexts and have contributed to strengthening both quality of responses and accountability.

The standards support child protection work in humanitarian settings by:

- Establishing common principles between those working in child protection;
- Strengthening coordination between humanitarian actors;
- Improving the quality of child protection programming and its impact on children;
- Improving the accountability of child protection programming;
- Defining the professional field of child protection in humanitarian action;
- Providing a synthesis of good practice and learning to date; and
- Strengthening advocacy and communication on child protection risks, needs and responses.

The 2019 revision can be accessed at [https://alliancecpha.org/en/CPMS\\_home](https://alliancecpha.org/en/CPMS_home)

### Strengthening and Sustainability of Child Protection Systems - Tanzania - International Rescue Committee (IRC), UNICEF

#### About the example

The International Rescue Committee and UNICEF supported the Tanzanian government to deploy social welfare officers to refugee camps to strengthen the protection of refugees.

#### The issue

An estimated 116,932 people arrived in Kigoma from Burundi in 2015, putting Tanzania's social welfare system under considerable strain. Almost two thirds of the people arriving were children with multiple protection needs that could only be identified after rapid assessments.<sup>1</sup>

#### The approach

To support the Government of Tanzania (Government), UNICEF was instrumental in the deployment of up to 110 Social Welfare Officers (SWOs) from other local government authorities (LGAs) to the 3 refugee camps (Nduta, Nyarugusu and Mtendeli) for a period of 2 years. As this deployment of SWOs from other LGAs was not sustainable, in 2017, UNICEF supported the Government to recruit and deploy 9 new SWOs to work specifically in the refugee camps (3 in each camp). This enabled the social welfare system to be more directly involved in the child protection system as well as reflected the need for dedicated social welfare workers in the refugee response.

<sup>1</sup> <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/34226>

The SWOs deployed in the refugee camps were attached to the humanitarian agencies providing child protection case management in the refugee camps in the Kigoma Region, namely the International Rescue Committee (Nyarugusu) and Plan International (Nduta and Mtendeli). Deploying the SWOs not only strengthened the social welfare workforce, but also ensured the SWOs brought their social work expertise to the humanitarian context while also learning about the humanitarian response.

UNICEF also provided increased support to the Government in establishing referrals between SWOs, police, and immigration officials, a practice that improved information-sharing and consultation between frontline child protection workers in the protection of both host and refugee children.

In Nyarugusu camp, there are more than 900 boys and girls in need of protection response services. The International Rescue Committee (IRC) worked with three SWOs seconded by the Government in Nyarugusu refugee camp to strengthen the social welfare workforce in order to effectively provide child protection case management services. Once the SWO was deployed, after a phase of orientation and training, they were assigned cases by the IRC case management supervisor. IRC case workers and the SWOs formed the workforce that provided individual case management support to these children. The SWOs were also supported with technical capacity building by IRC in order to strengthen service provision. Supervision of the SWO sat with the IRC case worker supervisor to the extent that it supported coordination and management of cases. However, administrative supervision remained with the District and Regional Social Welfare Department. Humanitarian case management principles and standards were applied, including supervision and coaching practices introduced in the operation in late 2018.

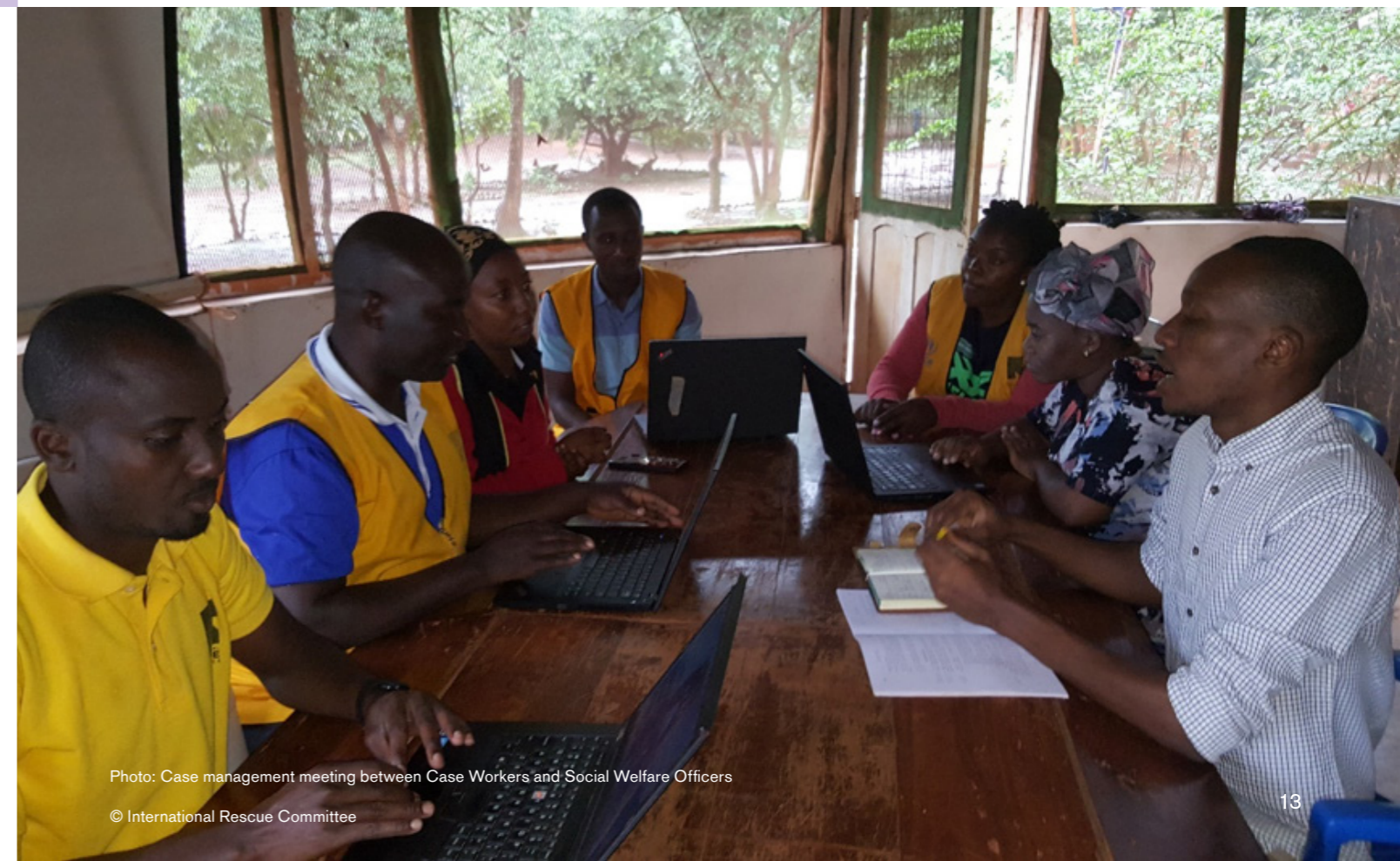


Photo: Case management meeting between Case Workers and Social Welfare Officers

The Law of the Child Act establishes Juvenile Courts for the purpose of hearing cases involving children. The Act mandates government SWOs to conduct social investigations and prepare social inquiry reports relating to children appearing before Juvenile Courts. Support for children during court proceedings extends to refugee children as well.

The process was fully funded by UNICEF with IRC providing support for transport to and from work. The arrangement was therefore funding-dependent. The retention of SWOs by the Government beyond the 2-year UNICEF funded period is uncertain. There have also been challenges with the role and responsibilities of the SWOs being well understood by other Government counterparts. Under normal circumstances, SWOs report to district medical officers (DMO), but in the camp-based scenario they are embedded within I/NGOs such as IRC. They have been, on occasion, called upon to address host-community issues which takes them away from their camp-based responsibilities. Moving forward, should the arrangement be put in place in the future, an MOU with the Government, UNICEF and I/NGOs would strengthen administrative processes including specific roles and tasks for smooth implementation.

**What difference does this make for children?**

The presence of SWOs strengthened collaboration between the Government and humanitarian actors through their representation in the various coordination structures that exist both in and outside the camps where important child protection information is shared.

The deployment of SWOs in the refugee camp provided invaluable and critical support to refugee children. With SWOs in the camps, and increased support provided to the Government in establishing referrals between SWOs, police, and immigration officials, there is now enhanced information sharing and consultation between front line workers in the protection of both host and refugee children. Concerted efforts are in place to ensure that the police, SWO, and Immigration work together to identify and refer children (both host and refugee) in exploitative situations, such as children engaged in exploitative labour or suspected victims of trafficking.

**Reinforcing support to Centres for Social Welfare - Bosnia and Herzegovina - UNICEF**

**About the example, the issue and approach**

In 2018, UNICEF supported the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina to develop Guidelines for Centres for Social Welfare on child-protection referral pathways for refugee and migrant children, as well as Standard Operating Procedures for Centres for Social Welfare on the care of vulnerable refugee and migrant children.

In 2018 and 2019, UNICEF, in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Policy and Save the Children, built the capacity of national actors involved in the child-protection response to improve their knowledge and skills in implementing and monitoring child-protection standards, providing psychological first aid, and supporting best interests determination. Of particular note is the support for deployment of additional professionals to the Centres for Social Welfare, which were overburdened with the increased caseload.

**What difference does this make for children?**

These capacity-building efforts and support for enhancing the regulatory framework contributed to some 5,000 children in the period from June 2018 to August 2019 benefitting from quality support and improved protection standards. These benefits include faster appointment of legal guardianships, referral to reception facilities/shelter, case management, and mental health and psycho-social support.



© Plan International

**Venezuelan refugee and migrant crisis: Mobile Child Protection - Colombia - Plan International in partnership with Colombian Red Cross, IOM, and a network of service provision partners**

**About the example**

The integrated child protection mobile programme was an innovative model developed as an additional emergency response to the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis and specifically designed to protect children and families in urban settings.

**The issue**

Effectively reaching refugee and migrant children and families spread across large areas in the district of Bogota presented a challenge. After static services were established, it became clear that the most vulnerable and hardest to reach were not able to access critical services due to distance, childcare, cost and lack of information. In response, Plan International and partners in Bogota designed a project to deploy mobile teams who could provide easily accessible services in neighbourhoods with high numbers of Venezuelans and needs identified through a city mapping.

**The approach**

In collaboration with the existing static response at the Migrant Centre and the capital city's transport terminal, additional mobile teams were deployed seven times to provide health, nutrition and protection services across Bogota. The project was coordinated by Plan International Colombia in partnership with the Colombian Red Cross, and IOM, as well as a linked

network of over 11 organizations to provide services – this linking up of services helped prevent duplication. The local government joined efforts to respond to the humanitarian needs of hundreds of refugee and migrant children and families arriving in the city daily. In order to identify the hotspots where Venezuelan migrants were living, partners collected data at the static services as well as through the Red Cross and the iMAPP mapping system. The coordinating units (Plan International and the local government mobile teams) conducted 3 days of community mobilization prior to the deployment. A safe registration system was implemented to ensure confidentiality of information, including protection needs.

Mobile child protection services included: Identification of the most vulnerable children and referrals (health, nutrition, education), psychological first aid for all and psychosocial support activities for children up to 12 years, information on rights in Colombia and legal orientation, mixed group sessions on gender-based violence risk mitigation, and sexual and reproductive rights and service availability, direct distribution of age appropriate hygiene kits for all, specialized health services for pregnant women, infants and young children including vaccinations, and dental services for children. A partnership with the mayor's office helped this response strengthen the way humanitarian assistance is provided to Venezuelans and connected it to the existing formal national and local systems.

**What difference does this make for children?**

This mobile protection service responded to the needs of refugees and migrants from Venezuela and other vulnerable people in Bogota. It provided a frontline holistic emergency response and ensured that new arrivals and vulnerable populations, especially undocumented migrants, received information and knowledge about their rights and available services.





The project started in 2019 is likely to continue thanks to its success. Next steps will include implementing child-friendly feedback mechanisms to ensure accountability to affected children and families; developing and disseminating joint procedures and referral pathways for protection cases during mobile response including guiding documents; prioritizing needs and targeted response services (i.e. case management, psychosocial support, recreational activities) for adolescent mothers and adolescents at risk of abuse, violence and exploitation; increasing the involvement of refugees and migrants from Venezuela and host communities in the activities during service delivery to ensure better acceptance, sustainability and participation; improving prior community mobilization using local networks, social media platforms and reinforcing the message of inclusivity of services for children and people in need, not only Venezuelans; analyzing and connecting identification of needs and services with advocacy for temporary or mid-term services; and conducting an evaluation and analysis for a continuation of mobile child protection services in Bogota addressing the most urgent needs of girls and boys and considering sustainability and capacity.

### **Cross-border and regional child protection systems-strengthening – Southern Africa – Save the Children and governments of South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Eswatini and Zambia**

#### **About the example**

Since 2010, Save the Children in the Southern Africa region has worked with the governments of South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Eswatini and Zambia to promote the protection, education and survival of unaccompanied and separated children by implementing a multi-country, regional approach to child protection. This was scaled up from 3 to 6 countries at the request of several governments, with other governments currently considering adoption of the practice.

#### **The issue**

Lack of coordination between key actors across the borders of countries where children move from and to meant that children were not receiving the care and support they needed throughout their journey.

#### **The approach**

Multi-disciplinary cross-border coordination working groups have been set up bilaterally between South Africa and Zimbabwe, South Africa and Mozambique, Mozambique and Zimbabwe, Zambia and Zimbabwe; these are being replicated also with the governments of Eswatini and Botswana. Cross-border coordination occurs on a regular basis, via meetings between government delegates and inter-agency staff, to coordinate procedures related to case management, family tracing and durable solutions in development contexts where the Inter Agency Child Protection Information Management System (IACPIMS) is not routinely implemented.

Each participating country conducted an initial policy review

and analysis of procedures, laws and policies guiding protection of children on the move followed by comparative regional and multi-country cross-border policy reviews to identify entry points for harmonizing child protection policy and procedures across relevant neighbouring borders. The cross-border coordination working groups were established bilaterally with the relevant government departments, and relevant actors (e.g. border officials, education and protection officials, INGO and civil society organizations with relevant mandate and activities both sides of the border) were convened. Governments run the working groups, with Save the Children acting only as secretariat and technical advisor. The project involves quarterly bilateral meetings, including sharing and follow up on action plans. There are also regular cross-border meetings, with government officials (social workers) visiting shelters and facilities for displaced children whose cases are being addressed. Regional advocacy is also undertaken, through research, reports and engagement with the regional economic community (SADC) and in regional consultative fora on migration such as MDSA.

Challenges to date have centred mainly around data protection and quality of case management. Social welfare workforce capacity remains a challenge, with few social workers on the ground in target countries, and varying capacity for implementing case management. Addressing these challenges has meant investing in case management capacity-building for government social workers in partnership with other inter-agency partners. Data protection remains a barrier in some contexts.

There have been challenges in harmonizing systems in non-crisis settings, where governments are understandably less keen to implement the IACPIMS because each country has its own case management system. Ownership and attendance were initially slow; this was addressed by involving anti-trafficking departments and other strategic actors whose mandates coincided and benefited from the agenda of the groups.

#### **What difference does this make for children?**

This regional and cross-border child protection approach has created and promoted sustainable bilateral collaboration between governments in countries of origin, transit and destination, along migration corridors, to strengthen cross-border child protection systems, and it advocates for regional policy frameworks that encompass harmonized case management procedures across borders.

It has resulted in improved coordination between the participating governments and agencies on resolving cases, including family tracing and reunification. It has also led to significant improvements in high-level government commitment to recognizing the rights and addressing the protection needs of children on the move in the region, with harmonized procedures across borders and improved reception conditions.

For more information, see this video: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/hkt2bjbpqxewgaz/Save%20the%20Children%20-%20Final%20%281%29.mp4>

### **Cross border coordination for Best Interests Procedures – Americas - Regional Safe Spaces Network**

**“The Regional Safe Spaces Network has permitted us, the organizations working on Child Protection, to have coordination and referral mechanisms to carry out the important task of protecting children in the region.”**

–Abel Antonio Santos Jacinto, Protection Supervisor, El Refugio de la Niñez in Peten/Izabal, Guatemala

**“This year we worked on two cases of unaccompanied adolescents in Ecuador with sisters in Peru. Government child protection institutions and NGOs conducted case evaluations to begin the coordination and case management process. Based on the evaluations, it was determined that the sisters in Peru were protective figures and from that point, through the Regional Safe Spaces Network, UNHCR Peru was contacted to carry out an analysis of the family environment in Peru. Once UNHCR Peru determined that the sisters lived in a safe environment, they again contacted us so that we could coordinate the transfer of the adolescents to the border with Peru. They were transported to the border and the sisters were also supported by UNHCR Peru to travel from Lima to the border. There, at the border, the teenagers met their sisters. This I think is an important example of the cross-border collaboration that we have had [through the RSSN] and that yielded results for the family reunification of two unaccompanied adolescents in this case”**

– HIAS Ecuador

**The Regional Safe Spaces Network has mobilized psychosocial care and social assistance services (transportation, food) at the request of the Venezuelan councils for the protection of children and adolescents at the border areas with Colombia and Brazil. The Regional Safe Spaces Network in Venezuela has contributed to the response to cases involving children and adolescents at risk of sexual and gender-based violence, child returnees from other countries, and unaccompanied and separated children.**

– HIAS Venezuela

#### **About the example**

The Regional Safe Spaces Network is an inter-agency coordination mechanism that was established in the Americas region in 2016 with the support of UNHCR's Regional Legal Unit (RLU) of the Americas Bureau. In consultation with partners and communities, the Network focuses on improving access to services for at-risk children, as well as other groups with protection needs, across and between countries.

#### **What difference does this make for children?**

The Network developed common standards and tools to promote cross-border coordination in the region. In 2019, more than 100 organizations were providing services in 14 different countries.

The Network has an online service and referral map which is complemented by national and local referral pathways. The organizations that are included in the online map / cross-referral pathway receive cases from other Network members who have conducted BIAs. BIDs are usually conducted by government institutions, which in some cases are also part of the Network.



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## 2.3. BUILD THE SKILLS OF KEY STAFF AND AUTHORITIES TO ENCOURAGE BEHAVIOURS AND TREATMENT THAT ARE SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN

Even if laws and policies are changed, often the way in which asylum-seeking and refugee children are treated does not change in practice unless key staff and authorities receive the necessary support and skills-training towards more child-sensitive practices.

The GCR calls upon States and relevant stakeholders to contribute resources and expertise to support concerned countries to build the skills of border staff so they can act in a way that is sensitive to the needs of children.

### Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights at International Borders - Global - UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

#### About the example

These Guidelines, developed by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, are offered primarily to States to support them in fulfilling their obligations to govern their borders in accordance with international human rights law and other relevant standards. They will also be of use to others, including international organizations, civil society actors, and private actors concerned with border governance. The principles are derived from international human rights law and apply to the implementation of all the guidelines.

#### The approach

The Principles assert in particular that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration applicable to all children at international borders, regardless of their migration status or that of their parents, and that States shall ensure that children in the context of migration are treated first and foremost as children as well as ensure that the principle of the child's best interests takes precedence over migration management objectives or other administrative considerations. The Guidelines cover practicalities related to such issues as screening, identification, interviewing, and referrals of children, recruitment of child protection professionals and guardians for unaccompanied or separated children.

#### What difference does this make for children?

These Principles and Guidelines have been used in trainings of border guards, police, ministry officials, National Human Rights Institutions, and a broad range of civil society partners.

When implemented in contexts of law, policy and practice, they can help ensure that human rights are upheld in all actions concerning children whether upon entry, transit or return.

### Massive Open Online Course on Caring for Children Moving Alone: Protecting Unaccompanied and Separated Children - Global - Taskforce for Children on the Move

Caring for Children Moving Alone: Protecting Unaccompanied and Separated Children is a free online six-week course launched in 2019.

Focusing on the care and protection of this specific group of children and young people, the course aims to support those working in alternative care and humanitarian responses and equip learners with an understanding of how to discern and respond to the needs, circumstances and wishes of unaccompanied and separated children on the move as well as those at risk of separation. The course includes resources and information on: prevention of family/primary caregiver separation; prevention of unnecessary placement of a child in alternative care; and, when such care is necessary, ensuring the availability of suitable alternative care. It aims to address any knowledge gaps for front-line workers, volunteers, policymakers and all who are responsible for protecting children. The course uses a combination of written and video content, with examples taken from real-life circumstances and promising practices in Mexico, Ethiopia and Sicily, along with a fictionalized story that takes learners through how to apply the new learning they acquire as the course unfolds. The course emphasizes the importance of inter-sectoral working and delivery of alternative care within national child protection systems. Guidance in the course takes into account international standards and policies, including principles and

commitments agreed to under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children; and the Global Compacts on Migration and on Refugees.

Backed by sixteen leading international humanitarian and children's rights organizations, the course is available in English, French, Spanish and Arabic. The creation of the course received significant funding from the government of Switzerland (Swiss Confederation), the government of Germany (German Cooperation), and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ).

To produce the course, CELCIS at the University of Strathclyde worked with several advisors and contributors, and Harvard FXB Centre for Health and Human Rights provided strategic advice as well as a review of the course content.

Caring for Children Moving Alone: Protecting Unaccompanied and Separated Children had 4,583 joiners in its second run, bringing the total number of joiners for its two runs to 17,038. There will be another three runs.

For more information on the course, visit: [www.childrenonthemovemooc.com](http://www.childrenonthemovemooc.com)

### Protecting refugee and migrant children on the move - Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia - Multi-agency capacity building resources - Child Protection Hub for South East Europe, UNICEF, Terre des hommes



#### About the example

A training package was created to build the capacity of those responding to the refugee and migrant crisis to be able to address child protection concerns within the unique settings of the largely transit countries, in particular Croatia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM). This effort was a recognition that the normal understanding and methods for working with refugee and migrant children are made especially difficult where large populations are on the move and spend relatively short periods of time in a country.

It was developed in the framework of the UNICEF Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) initiative, implemented by the Child Protection Hub for South East Europe and Terre des hommes Regional Office for Central and South East Europe (TdH) in its role as coordinator of the ChildHub.

#### The approach

The training course aims to:

- Meet immediate capacity needs regarding child protection including awareness, key actions and approaches for both response and prevention.
- Increase confidence and awareness in working with refugee and migrant families, including helping to reduce burnout and stress.

- Create a harmonized approach and understanding of child protection among all actors.
- Clarify roles and mandates, and create an opportunity for networking, with a view to enhancing interagency cooperation and collaboration (both on site, across site and across borders).
- Help contribute to identifying further development needs and strategy / plans for capacity building.

The training is available in 5 languages: English, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian and Slovenian. Please visit this website for more details and to download: <https://childhub.org/en/child-protection-online-library/refugee-migrant-crisis-child-protection-response>.

### Separated Children in Europe (SCEP) Statement of Good Practice - Europe

#### The issue

The Statement of Good Practice aims to provide a clear overview of the principles, policies and practices required to implement measures that will ensure the promotion and protection of the rights of separated children in Europe. It reflects the experience and practice of the specialist network of non-governmental partners created by Separated Children in Europe (SCEP).

The good practice outlined within the statement can be applied outside of Europe for work with separated children as much as within Europe. The Statement of Good Practice is principally informed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and a number of other international human rights documents.

#### The approach

This is the fifth edition of the Statement of Good Practice. It reflects the current changes in policy and practice impacting this group of children and integrates the emerging issues concerning separated children. It is an evolving document, which reflects the dynamic progression of human rights protection and issues particularly affecting separated children. The Statement of Good Practice is not merely an exhaustive listing of standards and good practice, but rather a framework for action and advocacy.

#### What difference does this make for children?

The Statement includes standards and good practice ranging from pre-arrival, arrival, reception and interim care, access to services, Durable, Concrete and Secure Solutions, and Determination of Best Interests.

The Statement of Good Practices can be accessed at: <https://defenceforchildren.nl/media/3798/2019-scep-full-report-statement-of-good-practice-including-annex.pdf>



## 2.4. ESTABLISH RECEPTION AND TRANSIT AREAS SENSITIVE TO AGE, GENDER, DISABILITY, AND OTHER SPECIFIC NEEDS

The GCR calls upon States and relevant stakeholders to offer support, resources and expert advice to concerned countries to provide basic humanitarian assistance and essential services in reception areas, to establish reception and transit areas that are sensitive to age, gender, disability, and other specific needs (through

“safe spaces” where appropriate), and to invest in robust reception and integration services for resettled refugees, including at-risk women and girls.

The following example outlines work specifically targeted at children in mixed migration contexts.

### Supporting unaccompanied children far away from their families in reception centres during the COVID-19 health emergency – Italy - Caritas Rome

#### About the example

In light of COVID-19 and the measures taken to manage the emergency, Caritas Rome adapted its response and developed new ways of working with unaccompanied children arriving and staying in reception centres in Italy to better understand and meet their needs and the different phases that they go through in facing this situation upon arrival in Italy.

#### The issue

The COVID-19 emergency and the resulting lockdown further complicated an already difficult and stressful situation faced by unaccompanied minors arriving in a foreign and unfamiliar land. Like children all over the world, their lives suddenly changed. In Rome, first the schools closed, and then one evening in March 2020 an almost total lockdown forced everyone to stay at home. Young people could no longer go out and see their friends, they had no visitors, and their plans were put on hold. They had to learn new habits, practise social distancing and wear face masks when seeing their educators.

Unaccompanied minors arriving at Caritas Rome’s reception centres when strict measures of confinement were in place went through different phases. As for many adults, the first reaction was one of disbelief and rejection. It was hard to understand and make sense of what was going on. They were in denial (“it’s not possible”, “they’re exaggerating”, “it’s not true”, “it won’t come here”), a defence mechanism characteristic of the initial phase of a traumatic event. Given the constant flow of information in the media and from their families, a feeling of vulnerability set in, as this emergency meant “putting on hold” expectations and recent plans. This all took place in an unfamiliar context, far away from their families and customs, and where people speak a different language.

In this phase, the first difficulties arising from traumatic disorientation occurred; many experienced disruptions to their sleep patterns. They tended to isolate themselves, staying in their rooms, and spending a lot of time with their phones and social media. There were cases of anxiety, panic, persistent sadness and psychosomatic reactions - especially regressive ones - through which minors sought attention and consolation from key adult figures. The young people expressed concern about their future in Italy, the interruption of their social inclusion, and in some cases fears about the safety of their loved ones.

Little by little this disorientation gave way to a subsequent phase: adaptation. In this phase the youngsters turned out to be highly resilient, adopting coping strategies and demonstrating a sense of responsibility even in the most complex and difficult-to-manage situations.

#### The approach

Caritas realised it was essential to provide a safe environment where children and young people could feel included, protected, and listened to, and in which their emotional responses of concern and anxiety were recognised.

Children and young people were supported to develop their capacity for resilience when faced with a situation that they could not change to adopt a mentality that “we can’t stop what’s happening, but we can change our reactions and perspectives, the way we see what we are experiencing”.

The reorganisation of work and resumption of activities by Caritas Rome’s educational team at the reception centres enabled young people to gradually “return” to group life, overcome resistance and isolation, and start to reach out and seek more stable relationships with peers and educational figures.

They resumed school activities and Italian classes through distance learning. This also helped address sleeping difficulties experienced by some young people. Psychological counselling sessions were maintained remotely for everyone who requested or needed them.

The teams proposed artistic expression and recreational games. Children were encouraged to play an active part in the creation of stories, tales, videos, films, drawings, music and games, and to edit a magazine. They participated and responded well. It helped them to focus on the present, to find a new equilibrium and to regain a sense of cohesion and interdependence.

The education team wanted to understand the impact the situation was having on children and so developed a questionnaire about children’s perception of changes relating to school, home life, leisure, and health. Through the survey which was translated into many languages, children and young people were able to reflect on and express what they were going through, to identify their emotions, and to gain a greater understanding of their experiences and behaviours. The questionnaire was also shared with young people outside of the community of the reception centres.

Examples of ways of working that proved useful include:

- Providing youngsters with accurate and timely health information
- Undertaking health screenings of minors arriving in the reception centres to protect their own health and that of the entire community
- Using digital tools to support their educational and integration pathways
- Providing psychological counselling to young people who have already embarked on a specific pathway, as well as to those who request it
- Developing workshop activities to support the resilience of young people
- Guaranteeing all youngsters an active and participatory listening space, in order to inform about, welcome and support the changes and fears relating to the health emergency.

### Child and youth friendly space - Spanish border of Beni Enzar in Melilla, Spain – Save the Children

#### About the example

Since 2016, Save the Children has been involved in supporting the Child and Youth Friendly Spaces at the border of Beni Enzar in Melilla, Spain. The project seeks to ensure the protection and psychosocial wellbeing of refugee and migrant children arriving at the land border through Morocco.

#### The approach

The goal of Child and Youth Friendly Spaces’ specific methodology and activities is to identify special situations of vulnerability and protection needs in children during their stay, while the parents or adults responsible for them are applying for international protection at the land border. Cases of particular vulnerability are detected and referred for attention by specialized services or organizations.

The transient context means every activity must be adapted to the needs of the child and adjusted to the time available. Because migration flows to the border are unpredictable, Child and Youth Friendly Spaces are required to be very flexible.

#### What difference does this make for children?

Child & Youth Friendly Spaces are key programme interventions to protect children from physical harm and psychosocial distress, as well as to help them continue their learning and development during and immediately after emergencies or critical moments for their protection. They are supervised environments in which parents and caregivers can leave their sons and daughters while they take care of administrative or asylum procedures with the different public administrations.

A Friendly Space can help reduce the anxiety caused by crisis situations in children by providing them with a protected environment in which they can participate in organized activities. Child and Youth Friendly Space activities are designed to take advantage of the natural and evolving capacities of children to adapt and proactively involve them in the selection of activities to ensure that they are most suitable and relevant to them. The broad range of available activities can be classified into five types of games: (i) creative, (ii) imaginative, (iii) physical, (iv) language development and (v) manipulative. Typically, Child and Youth Friendly Space activities include games, sports, expressive / creative activities, life skills educational activities and other activities that promote child development / psychosocial well-being and coping skills.



## 2.5. PROVIDE APPROPRIATE CARE ARRANGEMENTS THAT GUARANTEE CHILD RIGHTS AND ESTABLISH ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION FOR CHILDREN

When children are displaced and particularly when unaccompanied, one of the biggest risks to their physical and psychosocial well-being, as well as their safety, is the lack of appropriate care. Children who lack adult care and supervision are at a heightened risk of exploitation, violence and abuse. A common response to large numbers of unaccompanied children is to accommodate them in institutions, shelters, or, in the worst case, in detention centres where they do not receive the care, attention and services they require. Children who are inappropriately cared for in such situations not only fail to develop and thrive, but may also run away, making themselves more vulnerable to criminal activities as they struggle to survive.

Despite the many studies that have documented the damaging impacts of immigration detention – even for

short periods – on families and children, many children, including asylum-seeking and refugee children, are still being held in immigration detention facilities. Child-sensitive options, rather than immigration detention, can be utilized by States. The GCR calls upon States and relevant stakeholders to offer their support, resources and expert guidance to host communities to support the development of non-custodial and community-based alternatives to detention, particularly for children.

The examples below show models of alternative care options established in various regions and contexts, within or outside camps, for children on the move. They include models of foster care, independent living for older adolescents and alternatives to immigration detention.

### Alternative care for children on the move - Serbia and West Africa - Save the Children, Governments, and partners

**“When I came to the Institute for Unaccompanied Minors, I was completely lost...A few months ago, I was transferred to a Serbian family. It was completely different than staying in the Institute, in a good way. Now I really like that this happened. I met a lot of good people in the Institute, but that was not a place for me, at least not for that long.”**

12 year old asylum-seeking boy in Serbia

#### About the example

Working with governments and civil society, Save the Children has developed a number of context-specific options for alternative and appropriate care, including specialized foster care for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children in Serbia and in West Africa (Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso).

#### The issue and approach

In Serbia and West Africa where foster care systems have been adapted to refugee and migrant children, Save the Children has worked with governments to revise existing practices to meet the needs of refugee children, to develop appropriate training courses for potential foster carers, and to support foster carers to understand the cultural, psychosocial and legal support needs of asylum-seeking and refugee children. In Serbia, Save the Children, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the Serbian government have developed a specialized foster care training package for social welfare professionals and families interested in caring for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children. In Mali, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, foster families have been identified and given support to care for unaccompanied migrant and refugee children, influencing the overall approach to appropriate care in the region.

Challenges in developing foster care systems for children on the move have included a lack of formal, legal framework for the approach in some contexts. The mental health needs of unaccompanied refugee children are sometimes more challenging than foster parents are accustomed to handling. Identifying durable solutions for children if family tracing efforts prove unsuccessful can be difficult, and refugee and migrant children who often do not wish to stay in one place for a long period of time. In African contexts, the large number of private

institutions and the lack of political will to find alternatives to institutional care can prove challenging.

Ensuring government ownership and buy-in from key stakeholders has been essential in developing foster care systems and other alternative care options. Developing a strong partnership with relevant government departments to examine existing provision, policy and legal frameworks is an essential step; as is generating an understanding of the need to provide appropriate, non-institutional care for this group of children.

A range of tools have been developed and have helped address some of the challenges: training packages especially tailored to foster carers who are new to supporting refugee and migrant children, Standard Operating Procedures, Minimum Standards and other guidance materials for stakeholders. Recognizing the importance of explaining what foster care is to refugee children and their rights, responsibilities and expectations is also a crucial step in ensuring stability of the placement.

### Providing family-based care to unaccompanied refugee children in the Shire camps - Ethiopia - Lumos Foundation in partnership with UNHCR, the Ethiopian Government and partners

**“In the Shire region... UNHCR, Lumos and the Ethiopian government are increasing the availability of family and foster care for one of the world’s largest populations of unaccompanied and separated refugee children.”**

UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Filippo Grandi

#### About the example

The goal of this project was to provide a scalable, replicable model of family-based care in refugee camp settings, which could be adapted by other organizations, governments and funders to improve care for unaccompanied refugee children.

#### The issue

Decades of political persecution, indefinite and involuntary conscription and economic hardship in Eritrea have led to thousands of Eritreans fleeing their country of origin. Eritrean refugees who cross the border into northern Ethiopia are processed at Endabaguna reception centre, before being transferred to one of the four camps in the region. In October 2018, there were approximately 47,000 refugees in the four refugee camps, around 5,600 of whom were unaccompanied children. Most adults and families stay at Endabaguna for only a few days; however unaccompanied children often remain there for up to two months awaiting a placement in the camps. The centre is often overcrowded, and the institutional nature of the facility means that Endabaguna cannot meet the needs of these children and exposes them to risks of harm and abuse.

#### The approach

Together with UNHCR, the Ethiopian Government's Administration for Refugee and Returnee Affairs (ARRA) and implementing partners, Lumos designed a care transformation model aiming to reduce the amount of time unaccompanied children stay in the reception centre, and to move them as quickly as possible after registration to family-based care. Its main aim was to build on the existing child protection system developed in Shire, and to expand and improve family-based care. This was done through:

- Reducing the amount of time children spend in Endabaguna by introducing temporary foster care
- Expanding the long-term foster care network and speeding up family reunification in the camps
- Improving the quality of family-based care.

#### What difference does this make for children?

The project was developed by Lumos Foundation in partnership with UNHCR, NRC and IHS. Its aim was to reduce the amount of time that unaccompanied children spend in harmful institutional settings and prevent them from moving into the group care in the camps, a form of residential care identified by partners and the refugee community as an unsuitable care option. Temporary foster carers and refugee social workers received a salary for their work, and long-term foster carers were remunerated to reduce the financial burden of caring for a child. Carers and social workers also received training in areas such as foster care concepts, parenting skills, child development. This promoted self-reliance. Institutions place children at higher risk of neglect and harm in the short term and can lead to reduced life chances in the long term. In contrast, family and community-based care are documented to increase a child's resilience and lead to sustained and positive benefits for the refugee community and the host community.

This project required funding for child protection staff, refugee incentive social workers, remunerated temporary and long-term foster carers, and start-up allowances for children moving into care or being reunited with family. It also required technical support through provision of trainings, capacity building, and design of case management tools.

#### Lessons learned

Challenges included: the high levels of influx and a high proportion of children in the camps, the high case load for social workers with limited opportunities for capacity building, the low level of financial incentives for foster carers and a lack of opportunity for work in the camps, the mindset of adolescent children who aim to move beyond Ethiopia, and shortages of shelter in the camps.

These challenges were addressed through: recruitment campaigns to encourage adult refugees to become foster carers, selection criteria, and training provided to potential carers, and funding social workers to support children and families. There was also delivery of Trainings of Trainers to implementing staff, enabling them to provide ongoing trainings to social workers and foster carers, and additional capacity in social workers and legal staff to support the family tracing and reunification process. Awareness-raising campaigns about the benefits of family-based care and the dangers of irregular onward movement were enacted, and advocacy carried out by implementing partners around increasing shelter supply.

### What next?

The pilot project is currently small; it aims to develop a network of 20 temporary foster carers who can provide care to approximately 60 children over 12 months, and 100 additional long-term foster carers who can care for up to 200 children. The aim of the pilot was to test a model, ensuring quality care and positive outcomes for children and the community, which can now be scaled up to a rate which would provide quality care for all unaccompanied children in the Shire camps, and be emulated in other refugee camp contexts.

### Family Homes - a housing and care model for unaccompanied refugee children - Norway - SOS Children's Villages Norway

**"He is like a father to us. He is doing a lot for us and he is helping us very much. We are a small family..."**

Abdul (16) - living in one of the Family Homes with foster father and brother

**"I'm fond of them, and I'll do anything to make sure that they'll get what they need. What I'm hoping for is that the boys are here with me, enjoying themselves, because the house belongs to them. And I hope that they feel like a normal family... When the day comes for the boys to move out of the house, my wish is that they'll take a luggage full of joy and happy memories."**

Hiva Mirzai, foster father

**"Since the beginning of the Family home initiative, our experience has been very positive."**

Hassan Sono Ali, Child Welfare Services, Asker Municipality, Norway

The aim of the Family Home model is to create a stable and secure home for unaccompanied refugee children. Unlike traditional foster homes, the Family Home house is the children's home. If, for any reason, it does not work out between the children and the foster parents, the children stay on in the house while the foster parents move. In this way, the model prevents children from unnecessary moving. Unlike shared housing, the Family Homes do not have an institutional nature involving a shift work system and employees coming and going. The flexibility of the model considers the needs and capacities of gender, age and diversity. It is especially suited for sibling groups and young children but can be tailored to meet the needs of each individual child. The municipality rents or owns the houses and arranges for foster parents to move in together with children. Families are supported by a strong network of professionals in the municipality. Care for the children does not end when they are 18. Depending on the municipality, they can continue to receive support until they are 23 and, in some cases, even longer. The family can stay in the house for as long as they need and receive support from the municipality when moving out and starting their own lives.

One challenge for the project was the requirement that the municipality provide the house for the family. This also meant they had to look for new ways of recruiting foster parents to ensure the foster parents were able to move into a new house and start building a home from scratch with the children. To address this, the municipalities used their networks to recruit the families needed. Since the family home model involves the municipality providing the house, foster parents could come from other municipalities, including individuals from a variety of ethnic backgrounds.

The project began in 2016. Initial financing was governmental and from the Norwegian State Housing Bank. The project was developed in cooperation with the municipalities of Asker, Nesodden and Skien which provided the houses and the professional resources. SOS Children's Villages Norway had two employees working on this project. Since 2018, SOS Children's Villages Norway no longer provides financial support, but the municipalities that started work on the model continue to operate active Family Homes. SOS Children's Villages Norway supports the municipalities if needed with guidance and advice and shares information with other municipalities on the model.

For more details on this project, see this video: <https://vimeo.com/250240457>



© SOS Children's Villages Norway

### Holistic Alternative Care for unaccompanied children - Athens, Greece - SOS Children's Villages

#### About the example

SOS Children's Villages has supported children without parental care and at-risk families in Greece for 70 years. From late 2015 to June 2019, the organization extended this work to include a programme supporting refugee and migrant children. Two facilities for unaccompanied and separated children were created in Athens, one for up to 25 boys and the other for up to 12 girls. Funding was provided by the European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

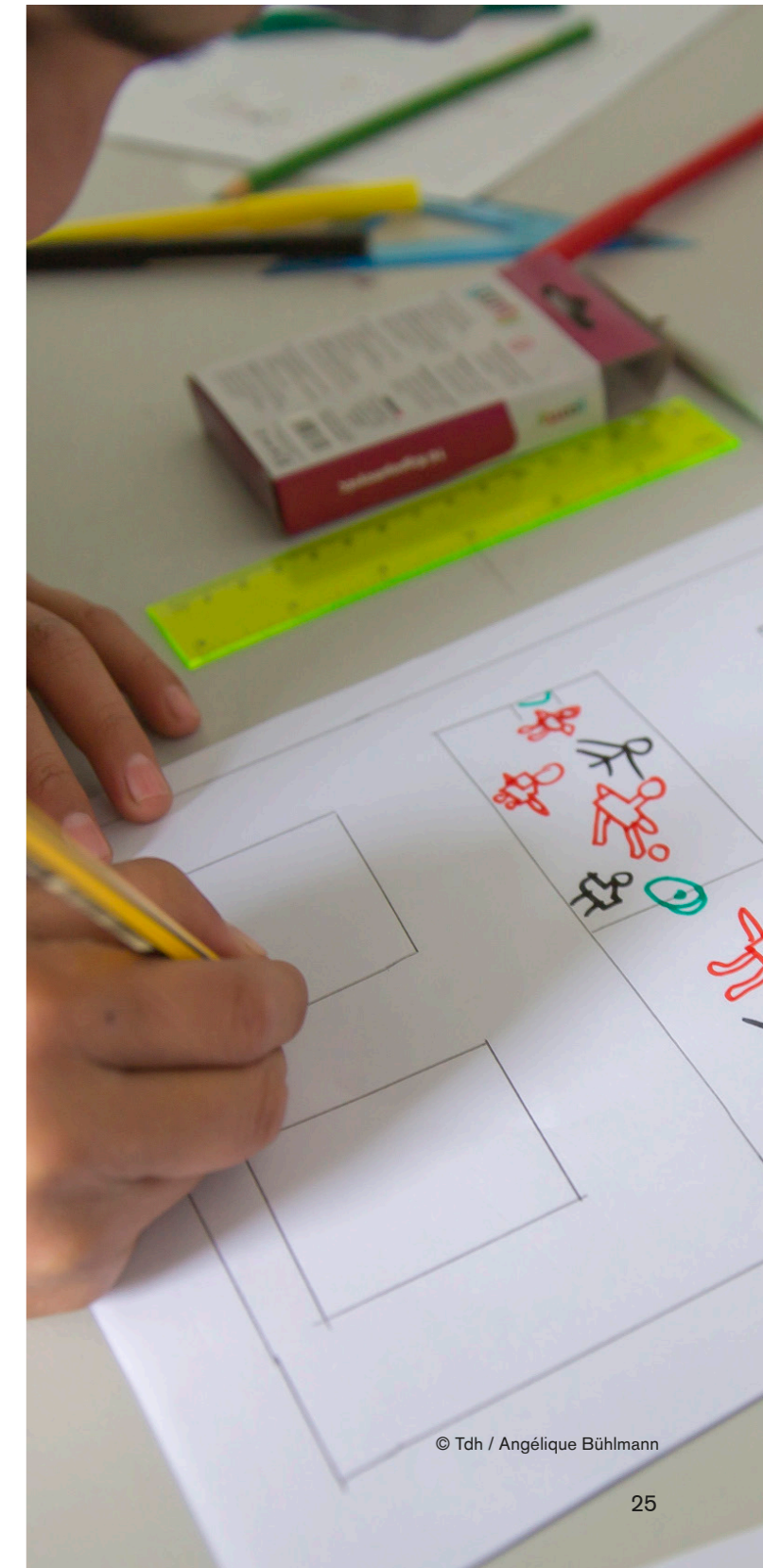
#### The approach and the difference this makes for children

The programme provided unaccompanied and separated children with accommodation, psychosocial, educational and health support. Additional services for the children included assessment of educational needs and creation of personalized, supportive classes, language lessons according to individual needs in cases of family reunification, psychotherapeutic support in one-to-one sessions and participation in self-empowerment groups for all children, life skills training and preparation of semi-autonomous living, re-establishing or maintaining communication with families, preparation for employment including participation in a summer internship programme in a multinational corporation, involvement of the children in programmes in the local community to facilitate exchange with the local population (i.e. soup kitchens, food distribution, sports activities, recreational classes), voluntary work for children in organizations supporting vulnerable populations, issuance of necessary documentation for all children, etc. All children were assisted with enrolment and with attendance at school with other local children. The programme reported a zero drop-out rate in formal education, despite the lack of preparation classes in some public secondary schools. Staff members, including teachers, caretakers, social workers and psychologists, received regular supervision from experienced specialists in child mental health in a support group setting in order to address daily challenges, prevent burnout and enhance the quality of services. In addition, staff were trained in child protection and the protection needs and vulnerabilities of unaccompanied and separated children.

All unaccompanied children staying in the shelters had regular private meetings with psychologists and social workers, with whom they discussed their personal plans and receive counselling. All children participated in weekly group meetings - assemblies - in which they discussed their experiences, plans, challenges and difficulties. They exchanged opinions and made decisions about sharing responsibilities, forming common rules and resolving possible conflicts. Children were asked about the daily programme, their environment, their educational challenges and their social and cultural interests. Children also participated in internal evaluation discussions, offering their views on the quality of the services provided.

### What next?

Although the shelter programme for unaccompanied boys and girls was reported to be successful (with low rates of children leaving the house, high rates of children attending school and engaging in legal procedures), the facilities were closed in December 2018 and June 2019 due to challenges in ensuring funding continuity. Nevertheless, in order to focus on including unaccompanied children in the local society, a number of them had already been transferred to regular long-term SOS Children's Villages programmes, which provide opportunities for refugee and Greek children to interact and get to know each other within a stable and caring family-like environment.



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## Supporting Independent Living for Unaccompanied Children - Greece - UNICEF

### About the example

Since January 2018, the Greek NGO METAdrasi, supported by UNICEF, has implemented the first-ever supported independent living accommodation pilot scheme for minors aged 16-plus. The scheme aims to specifically support unaccompanied adolescents close to reaching adulthood.

### The issue

The national child-protection system in Greece has been struggling to cope with the growing number of unaccompanied and separated refugees and other young people arriving in the country. Medium-sized residential shelters – hosting on average 25 to 30 children each – have been the primary model of care. However, demand continues to outpace supply, even though shelter accommodation capacity nearly tripled in the past four years.

### What difference does this make for children?

So far, 33 teens have been accommodated in supported independent living. Evidence shows that these adolescents are better responding to small-scale, community-based and holistic care provided in such living arrangements, greatly reducing the number of runaways.

## Community reception and placement: Model for unaccompanied migrant children - Mexico – International Detention Coalition

### About the example

The Model provides a framework that authorities and other decision-makers can draw upon to develop and implement mechanisms that enable effective care and case management for unaccompanied children, preserving at all times the best interests of the child and their right to liberty.

### The issue

The Model was created following a study by the International Detention Coalition on immigration detention and alternatives to detention in Mexico. The study identified areas of opportunity for the development and implementation of alternatives to detention for unaccompanied children. Each year, thousands of children leave their countries and enter Mexican territory. Whether at home or during their journey through Mexico, they often face situations in which they are especially vulnerable and have specific protection needs. Many are fleeing from violence or persecution and are at risk of or have already fallen victim to kidnapping, trafficking, domestic violence or labour exploitation. Others need special care due to pregnancy or chronic physical or psychological conditions, among other situations. Regardless, if these children are apprehended by the National Institute for Migration (Instituto Nacional de Migración, or INM) and are found to be undocumented, they are placed in immigration detention centres known as migration stations (estaciones migratorias).

### The approach

The Model outlines specific proposals regarding: screening criteria and referral mechanisms for unaccompanied children; how to identify and respond to protection needs; collaboration among public and private institutions and civil society organizations so that children can be placed in the community, ensuring the protection and guarantee of their rights during decision-making processes, in accordance with their best interests.

The Model is a local application of the IDC's Child-Sensitive Community Assessment and Placement (CCAP) Model<sup>1</sup>, which is based on the principles of non-discrimination, participation, and best interests of the child, as well as the basic right of survival and child development, in the migration context. The Model includes the five components of CCAP—1. Prevention; 2. Assessment and Referral; 3. Management and Processing; 4. Reviewing and Safeguarding; and 5. Case Resolution—all of which were adapted to Mexico's institutional, social and legal context, as well as to the specific situations faced by unaccompanied children in the country. Based on each component, the Model describes necessary actions in order to develop and implement alternatives to immigration detention for unaccompanied children in Mexico, and includes the designation of a case manager, guardian, and legal representative to ensure that unaccompanied children's rights are protected throughout the entire decision-making process, based on the child's best interests, and until their case is resolved.

### What difference does this make for children?

In a complex migratory context such as Mexico's, this model shows how - with the support of all relevant actors - States can effectively protect children on the move without resorting to the use of detention. The Community Reception and Placement Model for Unaccompanied Migrant Children in Mexico works to ensure that the use of detention is avoided for unaccompanied migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee children.

<sup>1</sup> Corlett, D., Mitchell, G., Van Hove, J., Bowring, L. and K. Wright. Captured Childhood, (Melbourne: International Detention Coalition, 2012). Available at <https://idcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Captured-Childhood-FINAL-June-2012.pdf>



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# 2.6. ENSURE ACCESS TO KEY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Despite being amongst the most vulnerable, refugee children are also at risk of discrimination in accessing essential services and in participating and thriving in the communities where they are. These essential services include: child protection services and best interests procedures; quality education and healthcare, including psychosocial support and sexual and reproductive healthcare; legal representation; child-friendly asylum procedures; and documentation, to name a few.

The GCR calls upon States and relevant stakeholders to offer support, resources and expert advice to concerned countries in order to provide support services that are integrated and appropriate for both refugee and host community girls and boys.

Through the practices listed below, the Initiative shares examples of providing psychosocial support for children and access to quality education in emergency and other settings.

## Psychology Service for Children - Rome, Italy – Caritas Rome, Caritas Internationalis

**“When the medicine came for my sadness, my inner spirits immediately welcomed it. It gave voice to my emotions, regenerating me. They’re helping me find the right path, With their experience, their professionalism. The light is coming from the darkness. I’m looking for the strength to say thank you; Today life has given me a different day, it is changing forever”.**

By Nezenet, an Eritrean girl – a poem dedicated to her psychotherapist

**“After a few interviews, a great nostalgia for her land and her loved ones emerged, a deep sadness accompanied by psychosomatic symptoms and mood disorders. After a few meetings in which she opened up and spoke at length about her experience, the resources she could draw on also emerged, including a natural talent as a sensitive and attentive poet. She started writing beautiful poems of all kinds: dedicated to her mother, to the people who were looking after her, to the suffering of the journey, to exile, and little by little, her ability to transform emotions and feelings into written words, proved to be therapeutic. So Nezenet began to feel better, relieving the pain of her wounds.”**

Nezenet’s psychotherapist

### The issue

Many of the asylum-seeking and migrant children welcomed in Caritas Rome’s reception centres present symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of traumatic experiences.

### The approach and the difference this makes for children

The work carried out by the psychological counselling service was divided into two phases: the first involved participatory, empathetic listening designed to provide the children with the psychological support to tell their own stories, to make them feel they were in a safe and protected space. The second phase involved referral to other services if specific vulnerabilities requiring long-term psychotherapy were identified. Interviews were conducted with the participation of a cultural mediator, and after each meeting a psychological report was drawn up and then shared with the team of educators and the managers of the reception centre where the child was being cared for.

The aim of the Psychology Service was to obtain an overview of the child, enabling the design of a tailor-made educational project taking into account the needs, skills, expectations, vulnerabilities and strengths of each child in care. The psychological counselling service also organized educational psychology and skills assessment workshops, encouraging personal and work development and supporting social and work integration. One of the biggest challenges for the project was to overcome the children’s hesitancy to open up and trust adults after their painful experiences. In addition to individual counselling, the Psychology Service used group meetings for children when appropriate, using tools to promote the development of resilience.

### What next?

The project started in February 2014 and officially ended in December 2020. The project involved partnerships with the Municipality of Rome, and the Italian Bishop Conference. All the children who attended the Psychology Service were also assisted by local and national government services.



## Providing Conditional Cash Transfers for Education to refugee children - Turkey - UNICEF

In 2017, UNICEF partnered with the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services; the Ministry of National Education; and the Turkish Red Crescent Society to launch the Conditional Cash Transfer for Education programme for refugee children in Turkey. The programme provides regular cash payments to vulnerable refugee children to encourage school enrolment, improve school attendance and reduce dropout rates. The programme expanded significantly in 2018 and the first half of 2019. By June 2019, nearly 511,500 refugee children had benefited. The child-protection component of the programme reached over 67,000 children (49 per cent girls) and referred 6,250 children (43 per cent girls) with medium/high protection risks to specialized services.

## Return to Learning - Lebanon - Save the Children

### About the example

Return to Learning is a Save the Children's rapid response education programme designed for use within the first phase of a humanitarian response to ensure children regain access to quality education that addresses the needs of the whole child. It can also be used in a protracted crisis, where the programme seeks to improve the academic and emotional readiness of children who have been out of school for varying amounts of time before they enter non-formal education programmes or formal school.

### The approach and the difference this makes for children

This programme is designed for out-of-school children and can be implemented in any Child Friendly Space, or community space, and aims to help restore a sense of normalcy and routine for forcibly displaced children. It can be used over the course of 1-3 months, depending on the frequency of lessons,

capacity of community facilitators and rigour of implementation. A toolkit of activities designed for varying developmental levels (emergent, foundational, intermediate and advanced), provides appropriate education and wellbeing activities for early learning, lower primary, upper primary and adolescents.

The programme uses a game-based approach to develop basic literacy, numeracy and social emotional learning skills, with the goal of helping children affected by crisis develop greater resiliency. Upon completion of the short-term Return to Learning programme, children will be ready to enrol in other education programmes - both formal and non-formal - depending on the context.

If children completing the Return to Learning Programme cannot be successfully transitioned into other education programmes due to a lack of existing options, then Save the Children's Social Emotional Learning Foundations (SELF) Programme can be used to keep children engaged and help them continue developing the social emotional skills necessary to improve their wellbeing and overcome trauma they may have experienced.

The programme includes an assessment tool - the Holistic Assessment of Learning and Development Outcomes (HALDO) - that provides an overview of children's existing academic skills and wellbeing to help community facilitators select appropriate activities to be used with each group of children based on their learning level.

## Improving Learning Environments Together in Emergencies - Uganda - Save the Children

### About the example

Improving Learning Environments Together in Emergencies (ILET) is a package that helps tackle the challenge of measuring quality in education in emergencies in a practical way through community and child participation. School Improvement Planning (SIP) is a well-established mechanism in a great number of countries. However, this process is not as

commonly implemented in emergency situations. The demands of emergency situations offer different challenges compared to more stable situations. Community and child participation in SIP offer considerable opportunities to increase accountability in emergency responses, as well as offering and promoting greater agency for communities in terms of providing education within their contexts.

### The issue and approach

Challenges have long existed in measuring quality in education in emergencies. The primary aim of ILET is to empower communities to improve the quality of the learning environment through a participatory process of planning and implementing School Improvement Plans. Community and child participation are at the heart of ILET. The process empowers the community, encouraging ownership of assessment, analysis, planning and implementation processes. The success of ILET rests upon meaningful community participation at the school level throughout the entire process. Sharing the visualized findings and discussing them with the school community increases accountability, as different actors become aware of the strengths and gaps and take a shared responsibility in enacting improvements in the school community. Important contributions have been brought to the School Improvement Planning process by children's involvement in all the steps. The open access web-based Data Management Platform has been welcomed as a helpful tool that supports efficient use of data and provides quick and easy ways to use data in programming.

Adjumani in North-West Uganda has hosted 1.2 million South Sudanese refugees, 400,000 of whom are school-age children. The ILET pilot was built on Save the Children Uganda's long experience in applying QLE (Quality Learning Environment) in a development context, which has been running in Uganda since 2013.

Initial data collection indicated weak physical protection of each school, due to the lack of drinking water, an unsafe route to and from school, and unsafe school facilities. Based on this data, children, caregivers and teachers created a school improvement plan to improve the physical environment. Parents and community members contributed by cleaning the school compound and setting up a playground for children.

The data on the children's and school's needs was shared with the Ugandan District Education Office and UNHCR. Sharing this data led to their provision of additional classrooms, WASH facilities and school furniture, complementing parents and community members efforts. After the second round of data collection, the School Findings Cards (the visual representation of children, caregivers and teachers' perceptions) showed a 46% to 68% increase in the physical protection of the school.

### What next?

The development of ILET began in 2017 and was completed in 2018. It is now being implemented in several countries. ECHO and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) provided



funding. In North West Syria, the MFA continues to support implementation. While ILET was piloted in only five schools, it is now being used to increase participation in school improvement planning in 20 schools in North West Syria supporting IDPs and host community children. In Uganda, Save the Children leads a consortium with the Norwegian Refugee Council and Finnish Church Aid, funded by ECHO, to expand the use of ILET from five pilot schools to 25. In addition, ILET is being applied in several other countries such as Colombia, Niger, DRC, South Sudan, and Myanmar.

More information on ILET is available at: <https://ilet.savethechildren.net/>

## Developing an Education Response Plan for refugee and host communities - Uganda - UNICEF

### The Issue

Over 1 million refugees have fled to Uganda in the past 2½ years, making it the third-largest refugee-hosting country in the world after Turkey and Pakistan.

### The approach and the difference this makes for children

UNICEF's Education Response Plan for Refugees and Host Communities aims to reach 567,500 refugees and host community learners (targeting those ages 3–24) per year, with \$389 million over 3½ years. Since 2018, gross enrolment has increased, at least 530 new classrooms have been constructed, 936 teachers have been hired, and there is now one textbook for every 10 refugee children – a vast improvement from one book per 51 children previously.

## Ensuring equitable access to education - Syria - UNICEF

### The issue

Syria and its neighbouring countries are facing one of the largest and most complex humanitarian crises in the world, both in terms of people in need and in terms of internal and external displacements.

### The approach

In partnership with the Education Above All Foundation and its Educate A Child initiative, UNICEF is promoting equitable access to quality learning, as well as self-reliance for children and young people affected by the crisis in Syria.

### What difference does this make for children?

Since 2018, more than 139,003 out-of-school children have made progress in catching up on the education they have missed by enrolling in two alternative curriculums. UNICEF and its partners have also procured 640,720 textbooks, distributed self-learning materials to 113,200 children in Raqqa, supported the activation of 537 learning spaces, procured 52,000 school bags and recruited 6,534 teachers.



**Community Support Volunteers for Unaccompanied and Separated Children - Middle East and North Africa- UNHCR, in consultation and collaboration with key child protection actors**

Children play at Zaatari Refugee Camp in Jordan. © UNHCR/J.Matas

**The Issue**

This concept was developed based on experience from across the region and the recognition that:

- Unaccompanied children are living independently
- Separated children in family-based and caregiver care are facing specific challenges, and in some cases varying degrees of risk.

**The approach and the difference this makes for children and young people**

Community-based protection is a key approach adopted by child protection actors. The specific needs of unaccompanied children who are living independently and separated children in family-based care are being met to varying degrees, but gaps and challenges remain. One challenge is related to outreach: there are large numbers of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) spread across a wide area, while limited resources means that there are insufficient numbers of trained Case Workers to undertake regular monitoring and timely follow-up.

**What difference does this make for children?**

The Community Support Volunteers for UASC Concept/ Toolkit is an effort to facilitate the establishment and management of a more structured programme that builds on community knowledge and linkages to provide:

- Mentoring & support to unaccompanied children living independently
- Support for families caring for separated children

Volunteers are members of the community and are vetted through a systematic process (using specific screening and reference check tools). They are identified, trained, mobilised and managed by a child protection actor (the organisation that is responsible for child protection case management work).

Volunteers perform a role that is, in a way, an extension of the Case Worker, and are assigned non-high risk UASC to mentor/ support based on sensitivity criteria. They are supervised by the Case Workers, who guide them, monitor their work, and support them. Primary responsibilities for Case Management will and should remain with the Case Worker.

**For Unaccompanied Children Living Independently**

- Provide support, guidance, and advise
- Help link to community support structures
- Be available to talk, console, provide attention and reassurance
- Help strengthen independence
- Provide information on risks, safety measures
- Provide information on services, accompany them when needed

**For Families Caring for Separated Children**

- Regular home visits: listen to/discuss with caregivers and children
- Provide suggestions on how to support children
- Provide suggestions on family-level solutions
- Help link family to community-level informal support
- Provide information on programmes and services
- Support and assist separated children engage in community based activities

**Professional mentor programme for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children living in network families - Sweden - SOS Children's Villages Sweden**

**About the example**

The mentoring activities support the accommodation of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people (16-21 years old) living in network homes supported by SOS Children's Villages Sweden. .

**The approach and the difference this makes for young people**

A network home designates the placement of young people, by the authorities, with a relative, family friend or simply a family that is already a part of the network. The programme was developed to address the individual needs of young people, based on their social context, their vulnerability, and the availability of support for social inclusion they have in their families. That is why it varies from participant to participant. The mentors work to provide individual and tailored support, in three essential areas: social orientation; leisure, culture and networking; education and work. With the support of the mentor, the young person develops action plans and development goals. This is done in a structured and transparent way, encouraging young people to be proactive in their own development. The programme relies on the improvement of the individual's abilities that enable them to reach their full potential, through their own driving force. The programme seeks to empower young people to develop themselves and to take decisions. It also aims to create an environment for an independent and autonomous life and support them during their transition to adulthood.

**What next?**

The programme engages with a very vulnerable social group of young people who have little time to establish themselves in Sweden before they turn 18, a point at which they are expected to be independent and autonomous. They struggle with little knowledge of the Swedish language, have insufficient educational background and sometimes insufficient support from their network families. For this reason, the NGO intends to expand the programme to involve the network families as well, although long-term funding is yet to be secured.

The programme has been implemented since January 2017 in Hammarkullen. Today the programme enrolls 60 young people, both boys and girls. The young people participate in the programme for one year but can be reassigned for another year depending on the young person's situation and needs. The programme is free and voluntary.

**Trauma Informed Youth Mentoring Programme for resettled refugees - Utah, USA - Catholic Charities USA**

**About the example**

The program pairs recently-arrived refugee youth, ages 9-17, The programme pairs recently arrived refugee youth, ages

9-17, with a mentor from the local community to support their schooling, community involvement, relationship building, self-advocacy, and more. It is supported by Catholic Charities USA.

**The issue**

Refugee youth face a unique and daunting set of challenges as they transition to a new life in Utah. Many have spent years living in refugee camps, where educational opportunities were either limited or wholly absent. Others have been more recently displaced, as their home country has fallen into conflict and catastrophe. Refugee youth may not speak English well, and a large number will be attempting to make this transition while simultaneously struggling with residual emotional trauma from the upheaval and horrors they have experienced. This combination of emotional trauma, familial instability, and lack of resources means that many refugee youths can be considered "at-risk."

**The approach**

The trauma-informed youth mentoring programme aims to improve social integration and bolster academic performances while reducing juvenile delinquency and other high-risk behaviours. Through the programme, the youth are placed in an environment that fosters positive relationships, supports their individual interests, and provides opportunities to engage in other communities.

The programme promotes successful transitions of refugee children into the host community. In the short-term, the programme promotes problem-solving skills, negating peer pressure, and avoiding drug involvement.. This provides the foundation for long-term success, self-reliance, and being a contributing member of society. It engrains positive practices such as good homework habits and school attendance. The youth develop better behavioural skills, become more self-reliant and are better positioned for success in life.

**What difference does this make for children?**

The programme has had a positive impact on the young people's school performance. Grades have improved, as well as study habits. Routine communication with a native-English speaker has improved language skills and language retention. Students have shown the ability to learn faster in the classroom, which benefits both the student and the classroom community. .

The Youth Mentoring programme has also positively impacted the participants' social skills. The programme gives youth increased self-confidence. Connecting with a mentor has given the young people resources to access opportunities in their community as well as the empowerment to seek out these opportunities

**Lessons learned**

The biggest challenge the programme has encountered is the language barrier between the Youth Mentor Coordinator and the youth/parents in the programme. While programme protocol dictates that Case Manager interpretation is the most effective form of communication, this is not always available, and can pose a challenge to the Youth Mentor Coordinator. To address this, the Youth Mentor Coordinator utilizes the



language skills of other staff members who are willing to assist in translation. Online interpretation services are also now available, and the hiring of more translation staff has been possible.

Another challenge is encouraging parent engagement. The programme faces challenges in successfully communicating the purpose and intent of the programme and explaining how the mentoring can benefit the whole family. To address this, the programme was adjusted and revised the parent check-in to include more freedom in responding to questions and voicing concerns. The revised format better highlights family voice and allows for higher engagement and more honest feedback. The Youth Mentoring programme also began to have events with parents involved to promote the value of the programme.

### What next?

The Youth Mentoring programme is run by the NGO, Catholic Community Services of Utah. Others involved are: Catholic Charities USA, which is a member of the Caritas Internationalis Confederation, MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, and the Search Institute's DAPS Assessment. The programme began at the beginning of 2018 and received grant funding from the US Government Department of Justice. The programme is funded up until 9/30/2021. There is no guarantee that the programme will be renewed, but it is hoped it will be continued if the grant application is approved.

## Rainbow of Education primary education programme – Greece, Lebanon, and Turkey - The Amal Alliance

### The approach

Rainbow of Education programming aims to empower displaced children through holistic education and integration programmes within four areas of focus: 1) Social-Emotional Learning, 2) Psychosocial Support, 3) Early Childhood Development, and 4) Peacebuilding. The trauma-informed programmes meet kids at their confidence and capability level, enhancing children's cognitive, interpersonal, and emotional skills through informal education and structured play. The curriculum incorporates kids' yoga, mindfulness, art therapy, dance, reading, and creative writing to create a safe space in which children cultivate their voice and self-worth. By partnering with host community organizations, Amal Alliance trains local leaders to teach the curriculum to refugee and host community children, providing skills development and contributing to the local economy through meaningful employment.

The programmes support holistic development and psychosocial wellbeing to enhance opportunities for learning, as well as the integration of children from the refugee and host communities to foster social cohesion and deconstruct xenophobia. Partnering with local agencies aids in the implementation of the curriculum by providing feedback to ensure its relevance to the community and cultural context.

### What difference does this make for children?

The innovative Rainbow of Education curriculum helps to (1) enhance refugee self-reliance, (2) ease the pressure on host countries, and (3) expand access to third-country solutions through a holistic educational approach and a sustainable model that builds upon existing community strengths. The curriculum also eases the pressure on host countries by facilitating integration into the host country's national education system by initially socializing children back into a classroom setting. In addition to a socio-emotional approach, modern pedagogical teaching practices are employed and an essential reading practice in the children's native languages to prepare them for future success. The unique incorporation of kids' yoga, breathwork, and mindfulness practices into the curriculum informally addresses the adverse effects of trauma to remove barriers to effective learning. Successful integration into the national education system can foster greater cohesion among diverse groups and increase the likelihood of individual success in the future.

### Lessons learned

Language barriers are a challenge in programme implementation, causing difficulties in in-class management and teaching more complicated topics. Teachers have been trained to overcome language barriers through exaggerated expressions, leading by example, and the use of games and physical activities that do not necessitate much verbal communication. The Amal Alliance has recently partnered with Translators Without Borders in hopes of translating curricula into various languages. This solution is dependent upon funding being secured.

The curriculum has had to be adapted to serve children who are illiterate. This involved refashioning writing components into drama and art therapy. This proved a successful adaptation and continued to engage children at their confidence and capability level.

Another challenge is that many local partners utilize volunteers as primary facilitators, who often lack formal training in trauma-informed work with children as evidenced by classroom management issues. To address this, the aim is to develop audio-visual trainings for partners, and provide continued capacity building for teachers and organizational implementing partners.

The programme began in 2018, and local partners involved include: Elpida Home, Give a Hand, InterEuropean Human Aid Association, We Are Here Community Center, Lebanese Organisation for Studies and Training, and Lifting Hands International. The Rainbow of Education can be repeated continuously with new cohorts of children after completing the initial 6-month cycle. Through a partner portal, resources are also provided for teacher innovation so facilitators can adapt and grow the programme's main themes. In-kind supply and individual financial donations and grants were received from donors, the McGinnity Family Foundation, the Pollination Project, and the Rotary Foundation. Partner organizations all have child-friendly spaces in which programming is conducted. The programme equips them with standard school supplies, as well as items specific to kids' yoga and mindfulness. Additionally, small libraries were created. There is an expectation that the programme will be renewed both in Greece and Lebanon next year. In Turkey, the Amal Alliance

conducted the Rainbow Programme as a summer version per the request of local partners, and it is expected to renew next summer.

### Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic

In response to the global pandemic and in the spirit of collaboration, The Amal Alliance formed the COVID-19 Emergency Response Consortium with Learning in Times of Crisis, Karanga, Qatar Foundation International, and the Salzburg Global Seminar. The closure of schools and community centres, in addition to mandatory quarantines, has been challenging for many households and can interrupt child development. The current situation is likely to further affect the psychosocial and emotional wellbeing of already vulnerable populations.

Therefore, the consortium has created a podcast series entitled We Are In This Together to support caregivers' and their children's well-being during the COVID-19 global health crisis. Each episode explores topics such as hygiene, nutrition, connectivity, and hopes and dreams in an inclusive and engaging manner. Families can access easy-to-follow examples of activities that complement the podcast. Daily activities and challenges will promote virtual community engagement and foster expression during this extended period of isolation. The podcast is available in English, French, Spanish, and Arabic for distribution to displaced and disenfranchised populations through multiple networks in Latin America, southern Europe, Africa, and the MENA region.

## Supplementary Teaching and Homework Support for Refugee Children who attend formal education - Lesbos Island, Greece - SOS Children's Villages

### The approach

Working with the Greek Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs, since 2018 SOS Children's Villages has been providing supplementary teaching and homework support for children in the Kara Tepe Hospitality Centre for Refugees and Migrants on Lesbos Island. The project's main goal is to prevent school dropout cases, prevent educational and social exclusion and create pathways of communication between refugees, the local community and others. Coordinators from the Ministry of Education provide the lists of the asylum-seeking/refugee students enrolled in formal education so the children can be included in the project; they also provide useful feedback from the schools and the teachers.

### What difference does this make for children?

Since this programme was set up there has been a decreased percentage of refugee students dropping out of local schools, especially in primary education (almost zero), and there have been increased performance by the children in classes and in language evaluations (tests and activities). Teachers have reported that the participating children were included more easily in the classroom. As they became more comfortable in the official language (Greek), they were more confident to participate in lessons and finish the tasks provided by teachers. The programme has helped children achieve faster social inclusion in the local community. Children attending this



Rainbow of Education Programme, Beqaa Valley, Lebanon #SEL #PSS #Lebanon  
© Amal Alliance

programme have felt more confident and secure, and they form relationships with others more easily, especially with students from the local community.

This project is designed to ease the pressures on the Greek government for refugee education and to enhance asylum-seeking and refugee children's self-reliance. The project shares information and good practices for intercultural education and teaching Greek as a second language. Its educators are always available and are trained to discuss and provide solutions to student difficulties, not only with the schools but also with family members.

The supplementary teaching project ensures a child-centred approach by evaluating individual needs, difficulties and strengths and providing the appropriate education environment. Also, it actively involves family members in the education process. It prepares the students to integrate in the school environment and form friendly relationships with Greek students, further enhancing refugee children's access to quality services including health and education and social inclusion.

### Lessons learned

One of the project's biggest challenges is the constant movement of the target population. This requires flexibility in terms of re-arranging the groups according to age and level and successfully integrating new students who will attend Greek classes. Also, many children tend to feel pressured and left behind and often express their desire to abandon the school environment because of the difficulty of the subjects and a lack of intercultural education training in the teachers. These challenges are being overcome by daily collaboration with the schools and Ministry of Education. Furthermore, it is important to be able to quickly identify the level/difficulties of the new students in order to include them and begin helping them immediately. This is being achieved with the help of experienced teachers and approved educational material used to identify levels and gaps.

### What next?

The project plans to continue supporting the local schools and the Ministry of Education as long as necessary in order to avoid asylum-seeking and refugee children dropping out of schools. There are plans to organize common activities and workshops, both with the children and with the educators, and promote the establishment of a productive dialogue and sharing of good practices.

## Three2Six: A bridging education project for refugee children who are out of the State schooling system – Johannesburg, South Africa – Three2Six

### About the example

Since 2008, the Three2Six Project has been offering access to education for 5-13 year-old refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant children who cannot register at mainstream schools in South Africa. The Three2Six Project, which is managed by Sacred Heart College, operates out of two other schools in Johannesburg (Observatory Girls' Primary School and Holy Family College) and is supported by Terre des Hommes

(Germany). It uses the facilities of its host schools from 3pm to 6pm to teach English, Mathematics and Life Skills to its learners, following the South African CAPS curriculum, to prepare them for their transition into State schools.

### The issue

The child rights enshrined in various South African international laws and conventions are not implemented for this population, and so refugee children end up without access to a basic education. Refugee children, already traumatized and lacking formal schooling, find it challenging to transition into mainstream education. Xenophobic attitudes and behaviours in South Africa are a threat to refugee groups and a barrier to the realization of their right to basic education. Other barriers include documentation, poverty, bureaucracy and language. This project aims to create a bridge to provide access to State schooling.

### The approach

The project was developed through dialogue and exploration with the local and refugee communities of the needs for educational support within the latter community.

The project supports the children in a holistic way. For example, lessons include a focus on helping prepare them for everyday life and build resilience and a capacity to engage within the community. Children are fed, clothed and transported to and from the project to ensure their safety, and are provided with all the necessary educational resources. There are opportunities both in and out of the classroom for cultural, sporting and environmental activities. Where possible, the project, through its partners, provides assistance for the children and their families to obtain documentation which will allow them to exercise their rights. The project also provides wider support to the families of the children who are enrolled through workshops and regular food parcels, and it keeps track of the children's progress after they move on. The support provided by the project also includes a one-off financial assistance towards registration fees for the children who have left Three2Six and have secured a place at a South African school.

The service provision is combined with advocacy initiatives to ensure that the children can transition into mainstream schools and that their rights, especially their right to education, are known by all and safeguarded.

The project also offers a monthly Saturday programme for past Three2Six learners, which keeps them connected with the project and helps them with their transition to state schools. The programme provides them with homework support, sports, a meal and informal role models through engagement with the volunteers who run the programme.

### What difference does this make for children?

By effectively creating a bridge for migrant and refugee children, the project has provided children who would otherwise remain outside the formal education system with access to that system. Over the last 12 years, the project has offered a safe space to over 2400 children. Past Three2Six learners report being better prepared for mainstream schools in terms of adaptation to school culture, and knowledge of Maths, Life Orientation and English. Since its inception, over

600 children have been able to register at State schools with the help of the project.

Three2Six, with the help of its partners, has helped ensure that the support provided to the children and their families goes beyond access to school and has also included rights awareness, psychosocial support, help with access to documentation as well as food parcels every fortnight.

Former pupils have evaluated the Three2Six project as a safe space which has created a sense of belonging, hope, and safety in otherwise fragile and challenging living conditions. They often come back to the project to volunteer and to be part of this space and community again.

## A "Refugee for refugee" Urban Model of Mental Health and Psychosocial support - Cairo, Egypt – Psycho-Social Services and Training Institute In Cairo, Terre des Hommes and in partnership with UNHCR

### About the example

Engaging and facilitating an emergency-affected population to help itself, the Psycho-Social Services and Training Institute in Cairo (PSTIC) was established in 2009 to provide protection services to refugees and asylum-seekers living in urban areas (primarily Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali, Sudanese, South Sudanese, Iraqi, Yemeni and Syrian). Created and managed by Dr. Nancy Baron, the Institute works under the administrative management and registration of Terre des Hommes (Tdh) and has been an implementing partner of UNHCR since 2011.

The model is a community-based protection support provided to refugees and asylum seekers by professional refugees and asylum-seekers of their communities and is guided by the Sphere standards:

*"Self-help and community-led initiatives contribute to psychological and social well-being through restoring dignity and a degree of control to disaster-affected populations. Access to social, financial, cultural and emotional support through extended family, religious networks and rituals, friends, schools and community activities helps to re-establish individual and community self-respect and identity, decrease vulnerability and enhance resilience. Local people should be supported to identify and, if appropriate, reactivate or establish supportive networks and self-help groups."*  
Dr. Ellis of PSTIC service

### The issue and the approach

PSTIC was established to assist the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers. This includes single mothers, children who are neglected or abused, victims of trafficking, victims of torture, people who have experienced sexual or gender-based violence, people with mental illness or serious medical disorders or disabilities, newly-arrived migrants who are unable to access necessary services, and people with security and protection concerns.

PSTIC's professional team of support workers is composed primarily of refugee and asylum seekers from the communities they are supporting – this ensures a more effective support

network because, for example, they can more easily identify the most vulnerable people within their own communities and because they speak the same languages.

PSTIC developed helplines which are accessible 24/7. Extensive community-awareness and information-sharing activities have ensured that people know about the services. With a strong reputation of trust and providing genuine assistance, referrals are often made by the UN, NGOs, community leaders, concerned neighbours, friends, family and people involved in the programmes themselves.

The following features are at the heart of the model:

- It is community-based, community-focused and genuinely "of" the community
- The programme ensures capacity building of a professional refugee team
- The services include holistic MHPSS programming, with multidisciplinary interventions to facilitate the protection and promote the psychosocial well-being and self-reliance of the most vulnerable refugees and asylum-seekers
- Workers and services are accessible 24/7
- It is resource efficient

### What difference does this make for children and young people?

In 2019, 12,699 children and young people and 6,317 parents benefited from the services and 895 children and young people received individual emergency care.

The PSTIC team of trained community-based refugee workers supported the protection and mental health and psychosocial wellbeing of vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers throughout Greater Cairo, including children, by providing emergency crisis responses and psychosocial support, and facilitating access to services including housing support.

*"In an environment rife with protection risks, the PSTIC activities have created a community-based safety net for migrants in Greater Cairo. The team of well-trained migrants working alongside communities to assist vulnerable migrants has become an appreciated [and] reliable support, providing essential [and] immediate 24-7 access to emergency, often life-saving care during health, protection, mental health and social crises... The workers are well respected and visibly known in their communities..."* Dr. Ellis of PSTIC service.

### Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic

The PSTIC teams adapted their responses to the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that vulnerable communities continued to receive support and guidance during this time of additional stress and uncertainty. The teams received extensive awareness-raising to be able to provide services safely and were able to maintain community-based work and support and emergency response to the most vulnerable people 24/7.

## 2.7. END ALL FORMS OF SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE, TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE, AND HARMFUL PRACTICES

The GCR calls upon UN Member States and relevant stakeholders to contribute resources and expertise to support concerned countries to increase international efforts to prevent and fight against all forms of violence, people trafficking and people smuggling. Specific attention is required for the situation of child victims of trafficking

Examples from the Initiative members include supporting victims of sexual violence, a protection programme for children and a training module on protection from gender-based violence (GBV).



**“As a group of youth facilitators, after the training we wanted to put something up to show what has to happen when there is a case of GBV. We wanted to make it simple to understand. We held a meeting, drew a sample and gave it to the artist. We wanted it put at the health clinic because it’s a public place where people come. The feedback is that people were very happy to see them, to see the procedures they can make. My hope is it will help to reduce the cases. That people who are thinking of doing such things will see these pictures and fear”**

Mary Peter Pio, Youth Facilitator, Yambio, South Sudan

### Combating stigma against survivors of sexual violence and children born as a result of sexual violence- Yambio County, South Sudan - World Vision International

#### The issue

In 2016 in Yambio County, former Western Equatoria state, in South Sudan, communities reported to World Vision that the majority of victims of sexual violence were girls and half of those surveyed knew of children who were born of rape..

#### The approach

World Vision worked with communities in Yambio in South Sudan for over two years to change attitudes, promote community acceptance of survivors and their children and improve locally managed systems to prevent and respond to sexual violence. The project was funded by the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office. After the project concluded, a study conducted in July 2018 found that attitudes and practices had changed with respect to sexual violence at both the individual and community level, specifically for rape survivors and for their children . These changes included increased awareness and openness, increased reporting of GBV incidents and survivors increasingly seeking health services, experiencing less stigma and increased acceptance and support by church and community.

#### Lessons learned

At the project’s end, a few ongoing challenges (mostly beyond the project scope) remained, including limitations on the material support available, a lack of comprehensive response services for survivors and that some survivors were still experiencing verbal abuse or isolation for various reasons. The project focused on working with multiple stakeholders, including faith leaders, youth leaders and women’s groups.. Faith leaders were seen as good entry points given their influence and moral authority, as long as both men and women across different denominations were engaged and were enabled to lead awareness-raising efforts themselves. Faith leaders demonstrated changed attitudes and behaviours towards GBV survivors as well as broader changed attitudes in relation to gender equality. The challenge was to reach all groups in the community, underscoring the project’s need for a diversified approach. Youth groups who had been trained and who developed corresponding action plans were increasingly involved in the project and gave multiple examples of how they were continuing to use their knowledge, feeling the project had given them an increased sense of trust within the community as referral focal points. Women’s groups were credited with undertaking strong advocacy on prevention and treatment of GBV and providing support to survivors during the project, something which continues. Many people interviewed suggested that the project methods, including the use of particular entry points of faith leaders and youth, reflective community dialogue and creative media all helped initiate sustainable attitude changes.

### Reach Out Refugee Protection Training Project Optional Module on GBV - Child protection Hub for South East Europe

In the framework of the Reach Out Refugee Protection Training Project, an additional module on gender-based violence (GBV) was developed. The main goal is to increase awareness of humanitarian staff working with refugees regarding GBV, increase their knowledge and understanding of it, which will consequently ensure better protection for GBV survivors. The module includes content on child abuse, neglect and exploitation.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.unhcr.org/4371faad2.pdf>. Here you can find material to use in a course or training on GBV, including practical information, data, case-studies and lessons learned.



## 2.8. PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION; COMBAT DISCRIMINATION AND XENOPHOBIA

One of the greatest challenges faced by refugee children can be discrimination and xenophobia, such as in schools and in the host community. The GCR calls upon States and relevant stakeholders to contribute resources and expertise to support concerned countries to set up projects that fight discrimination and help refugees and host communities to live peacefully together. It also recognizes that it is crucial to involve children, adolescents and youth in the fight against discrimination and xenophobia, including through sports and cultural activities, language learning, and education.

Refugee girls may suffer extra discrimination, and may be at risk of being trafficked, of sexual exploitation and

abuse and sexual and gender-based violence, particularly if they are travelling alone. The GCR recognises that girls may face particular gender-related barriers, and calls on States and relevant stakeholders to seek to adopt and implement policies and programmes to empower girls in refugee and host communities, and to promote full enjoyment of their human rights, as well as equality of access to services and opportunities – while also taking into account the particular needs and situation of boys.

The Initiative shares examples below of practices which promote the inclusion of refugee children in host communities and seek to combat discrimination.

### **“Our Strength” - Sport for Protection and Social Inclusion - Egypt – Terre des Hommes in partnership with local community-based organisations from refugee and host communities and the Egyptian Ministry of Youth**

**“I have dreamed of my football, which I left behind in my city, in my destroyed school. I went to the Abwab family centre and the facilitator helped me to recover my fitness, my technique, and my self-confidence. I became a member of the football team of Abwab center. We started to compete with teams of the other family centres with other Syrian and Egyptian children. I applied to be a player for the Syria team to participate in the SATUC world cup for orphans in 2017. After passing some tests, I was chosen as the best Syrian player in the required age category and represented my country in the Syrian team. We will go to Morocco to participate in the World Cup next July.”**

M, 14-year-old Syrian boy in Egypt

**“Thanks to the project I don’t feel like a stranger coming from away. I know most of the people here. My dream for the future is to become a football player in Real Madrid.”**

Sudanese boy in Egypt

**“I don’t want the children just to play. I’d like them to learn something new every day. I’d like to teach them new life skills and encourage social integration. “We drafted a code of conduct together with the children and stuck it on the wall. After a few weeks, I took the sheet down. They now stick to the rules themselves.”**

Khozayma Mohamed Mando, football coach working with “Our strength” project



© Terre des hommes MENA

### The issue

In March 2019, there were 247,724 refugees registered with UNHCR in Egypt. 38% were children and youth under the age of 18. The “Our strength” project supported refugee and host community children, by providing sport activities in different locations in the country. The project provided community-based protection and social inclusion through sustainable sport activities meant to increase the resilience and well-being of vulnerable refugee children and host community children and youth in Egypt. In Egypt, discrimination and racial harassment against Sudanese refugees are a major obstacle to integration. Children in the project were not allowed to separate teams by nationality in order to promote social integration and inclusion and to combat discrimination and xenophobia.

### What difference does this make for children?

The children and youth who participated in the project improved their personal and professional skills, such as communication, self-confidence, resilience, leadership skills, and organizational abilities. Coaches and youth leaders in the programme were trained to understand and fully adhere to the principles of promoting protection and social integration through sports.

### Lessons learned

Initially, girls and mothers participated in the project at low levels in some communities. In order to overcome this challenge, the project increased the number of female staff and female youth volunteers. The project also identified safer places for girls to practice activities without them having to worry about open playgrounds.

### What next?

The project ran from February 2018 to June 2019. It was partnered with local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) from refugee and host communities and the Egyptian Ministry of Youth. A second phase is planned, which will be extended to other refugee and host communities, but it is awaiting funds. Meanwhile, in some locations, youth leaders and parents continue to organize sport activities by themselves in the available playgrounds of the area.

For more information on this project, please see this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4uGDKcfx2w&t=9s>

### **TOGETHER, connecting unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people in the host community – Norway – SOS Children’s Villages Norway**

#### The issue

In 2015, more than 5000 unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) sought asylum in Norway. These young people needed to feel a part of their local community and become active participants.

#### The approach

The main goal of TOGETHER is to create an opportunity for UASC and Norwegian youth to get to know each other. In the autumn of 2016, three pilot municipalities which had accepted UASC into their community started a collaboration with SOS Children’s Villages Norway. In each of these municipalities the administration formed a working group that included a project leader and an adult working with the young people. Small groups of children and young people were created based on their interests and hobbies (e.g. three UASC and three local young Norwegian people). Over the course of approximately nine weeks, the group chose and created a project together and then developed it. It all started with a kick-off to get to know each other and ended with a proof-of-participation certificate. Since its establishment, the project has involved 25 municipalities, 450 young participants and resulted in 60 youth groups which gained valuable experiences and connections.

The project facilitated meetings and exchanges between young people with different cultural backgrounds. By meeting people of the same age and doing something collaboratively - where both parties contribute equally to the valuable exchange - the youth become part of something that connects them and provides a sense of belonging. They take ownership of their chosen project and through cooperation break through some cultural and social codes and prejudices. This, alongside the feeling of being important for their local communities, strengthens the young people’s willingness to contribute to their communities, making them a good place for everybody to live. Establishing good relationships and networks is key for the project’s success.

#### Lessons learned

One of the challenges of implementing TOGETHER in new municipalities has been identifying young Norwegian people interested in participating as well as establishing a stable relationship between the local administration and the management. These challenges have not, however, hindered the expansion or development of the project. The TOGETHER project is funded by Egmont Fonden and IMDI (Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity).

## Safe parks, a child-friendly space – Lebanon – himaya (International Social Services Lebanon)

**“The safe park is the only place I can go to, to play safely.”**

10 year-old Syrian child in Akkar

### The issue

UNHCR reports that 54.7% of registered refugees in Lebanon are under the age of 18. These children are at a high risk of being exposed to different forms of physical and psychological abuse, exploitation, early marriage, child labour, and even recruitment by extremist groups. Syrian refugee children in Lebanon have limited access to education or recreational activities, a situation which creates feelings of fear and insecurity. The limited time and space that children have for play is restricted by their obligation to work, the unsuitable living environment and the scarcity of safe spaces within the host communities. Without the means to play or the space to interact with the host community, Syrian refugee children risk becoming more isolated, anxious, aggressive and depressed.

### The approach

To address these issues, himaya developed a community-based child protection network through the establishment of Safe Parks in vulnerable communities across Lebanon. himaya's Safe Park concept is a type of child-friendly space, set up in collaboration with municipalities and other local partners, which provides prevention and early intervention care for children in the surrounding community. Children have access to physical and psychological protection, and they can enjoy their right to play. The children's trauma can be reduced through their engagement in Safe Park activities, by giving them the regular opportunity to express themselves through play and sports, to engage in awareness activities, to interact with other children in the community, and to seek advice from trained animators. Any children demonstrating signs of abuse will be referred to himaya's resilience programme for case management services.



© Himaya



© Tdh / Joakim Löb

The engagement and support of the municipalities and other local stakeholders nurture community ownership of the Safe Parks. Indeed, himaya developed a three-phase strategy for the effective establishment, implementation and then handover of a Safe Park to the community, in coordination with local stakeholders, in order to ensure the sustainability of each Safe Park beyond himaya's intervention.

### What difference does this make for children?

himaya has already successfully established a network of 17 Safe Parks in some of the most vulnerable communities across Lebanon, including in North Lebanon, the Bekaa Valley, and Mount Lebanon. More than 300 animators/members have been trained in all Lebanese regions. Between 2015 and 2019, more than 50,000 children benefitted from Safe Parks activities. Seventeen municipalities were trained on child protection to be able to serve their communities.

The initiative raises community awareness around child protection. The trained committee that is part of the municipality in each region becomes a reference which refugee and host community members can rely on to identify their needs and to make the appropriate referrals (e.g. to health and education services) when required. The initiative also works to lower the tensions between both communities by creating a safe space to which everyone has access, where children can play freely and safely surrounded by trained community members.

### What next?

In 2020, himaya finalized creation of the 17 Safe Parks all over Lebanon. Now that the model has been tested, adapted and implemented in several regions, himaya can implement additional Safe Parks in other regions as soon as funding is secured from new actors.

himaya is a Lebanese NGO founded in 2008, officially registered with the Ministry of the Interior in 2009. himaya is the lead organization in implementing the Safe Parks in Lebanon. ISS Switzerland provides technical and financial support. The concept of the Safe Parks was inspired by the Isibindi model developed by NACCW-South Africa, who played a major role in training the teams in Lebanon. The Ministry of the Interior, engaged through 17 municipalities all over Lebanon, provided the physical space and committed to the sustainability of the initiative. Municipality members were also trained by himaya on how to sustain the initiative. UNICEF also supported and promoted the initiative in different regions. Animators from both the host community and the refugee community were trained and continued delivering the activities even after Himaya was no longer involved. Finally, the Australian and Polish embassies also supported the implementation of this initiative.

For more information about this project, see this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxvflrF-Rt8>

# 2.9 PROVIDE SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

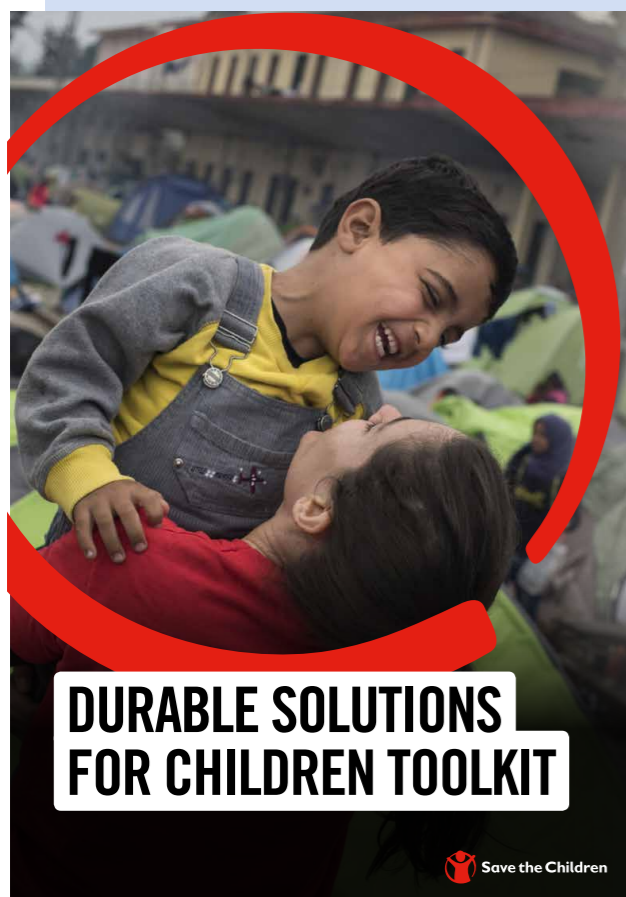
Protecting children does not just mean responding to immediate life-saving needs. Protection means safeguarding children's futures and their capacity to lead their community's long-term recovery, whether that be in a host country, country of origin or third country. This means investing in and increasing access to child sensitive sustainable solutions, including resettlement, complimentary legal pathways including family reunification, humanitarian visas and educational opportunities, return and local integration as well as ensuring that children are made aware of available solutions and meaningfully consulted on decisions about their future. As 80% of refugees are in displacement situations for at least 5 years, with 1 in 5 living in displacement for 20 years or more, child-centred

strategies for dealing with protracted crises is key. This includes ensuring access to quality child protection support, inclusive and quality education and learning, and livelihoods.

Measures aimed at identifying and implementing sustainable solutions must be child-focused and child-sensitive. They should be grounded on the principle of the best interests of the child and on the protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child. Such decisions need to be tailored to suit the individual child.

The examples highlighted in this section include tools that can guide both the decision-making and implementation processes when identifying durable and sustainable solutions that affect children.

## Child-Sensitive Durable Solutions Guidance – Global - Save the Children



### The issue

Measures aimed at identifying and implementing sustainable solutions must be child-focused and child-sensitive. They should be grounded on the principle of the best interests of the child and on the protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child. Such decisions need to be tailored to suit the individual child. However, available Durable Solutions tools and guidance for understanding and programming in return and reintegration contexts, while valuable, remain largely 'child-blind'. There is very little data available on child returns to guide solutions. Two fundamental questions remain unanswered. Firstly, how do we guarantee minimum standards for safe and dignified child returns? Secondly, how do we measure the extent to which children have successfully reintegrated into their original or new communities?

### The approach

For this purpose, Save the Children has developed the:

- [Durable Solutions for Children Toolkit](#),
- and an analysis report ['Achieving Durable Solutions for Returnee Children'](#)

### What difference does this make for children?

The Durable Solutions for Children Toolkit is an important resource in helping ensure children are at the heart of future responses and solutions to displacement. The toolkit provides detailed guidance for engaging with displaced children and allows practitioners to build evidence-based and child-focused long-term solutions and advocacy interventions. It outlines options, actions and legal guidance related to local integration and resettlement. It also offers practitioners a new indicator framework designed to measure child-specific gaps in displacement, monitor improvements and increase the

accountability of service providers, and inform or shape policy and programming decisions.

This is a 'working document' and will seek inputs and advice from sector colleagues and counterparts on its continued improvement. It also represents a timely opportunity for cross-sector collaborative engagement to further build good practices for child-sensitive durable solutions.

The report 'Achieving Durable Solutions for Returnee Children' offers one of the first comparative child-focused analyses of reintegration conditions across four priority returns contexts. Exploring returns conditions facing children within and across Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia and Syria, this report generates a series of findings and recommendations aimed at improving our collective knowledge base as well as developing standards of programming, policy, and advocacy in support of child returnees and their families. Specific recommendations focus on how to best guarantee minimum standards for safe and dignified child returns, and how to measure the extent to which children have successfully reintegrated into their original communities.

The Toolkit is being used in different displacement contexts and practitioners are appreciating how it presents concrete actions, and guidance (including legal guidance) for local integration and resettlement, both being key objectives of the GCR. Given the gaps in monitoring frameworks, the indicator framework included in the Toolkit has been well received for measuring child-specific gaps in displacement settings, monitoring developments, increasing the accountability of service providers, and shaping policy and programming decisions.

The returns report strongly confirms that across all dimensions of safety captured by its child-sensitive durable solutions framework and secondary data, children's rights are not currently met in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia and Syria. Although, returned and non-displaced children share many conditions of material and physical safety, returnee children and their families face a number of distinct disadvantages compared to host communities, often related to difficulties in accessing housing, land, property, education, WASH, legal support, and mental health support. The report offers recommendations in three main categories, all of which validate emerging best practices from return situations. These include: (i) Embedding the principles of child-sensitive programming in all returnee contexts; (ii) Establishing minimum standards and guaranteeing the rights of children through the return journey, from preparation through to integration; and (iii) closing the data gap and setting research priorities.

### What next?

The Toolkit is a recently developed resource and will be embedded within Save the Children's programme over the next years so as to inform programme interventions as well as policy and advocacy work. Additionally, Save the Children aims to introduce this useful tool to an increasing number of partner organizations and stakeholders.

## Guidance to respect children's rights in return policies and practices: Focus on the EU legal framework – Europe – Child Circle, ECRE, IOM, OHCHR, PICUM, Save the Children and UNICEF

This document developed by Child Circle, ECRE, IOM, OHCHR, PICUM, Save the Children and UNICEF provides guidance for States on the design and implementation of return procedures that are child-rights compliant. In particular, it sets out concrete measures to ensure respect for the rights of every child, including children in families, when implementing return legislation and policy in Europe, in line with international law obligations, in particular the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, and the EU Return Directive where applicable. It is aimed at the bodies that design and implement return procedures.

### The approach

The guidance document has been developed through a process of consultations, first among United Nations agencies and civil society experts on migration and children's rights, and then with EU agencies, the European Commission and Member State representatives.

### What difference does this make for children?

It aims to serve as the basis for dialogue with State authorities in the context of EU return procedures from EU Member States, complementing the 2017 revised Return Handbook and in the perspective that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning them. The precondition to any return of a child – whether unaccompanied, separated or within a family – is that their best interests have been examined and return is found to be in their best interests. This requires the implementation of specific procedures in every decision-making process that could lead to the return of a child. Consequently, the Guidance addresses how to design these procedures, what factors should be considered, possible outcomes and how to implement a decision when return is found to be in the best interests of the child. It does not address how to implement the decision when an alternative durable solution is found to be in the best interests of the child as a result of the procedure.

The Document is available at [https://picum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2019\\_Guidance\\_childrens\\_rights\\_in\\_return\\_policies.pdf](https://picum.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/2019_Guidance_childrens_rights_in_return_policies.pdf)



## ICMC deployment scheme, deploying experts to enhance protection – Global – ICMC in partnership with UNHCR

**“The population is very mobile, with refugees coming and going at all times, often trying to reach Europe. As families and caregivers leave the camp, children can sometimes be abandoned or left behind. As part of my duties, I am in charge of conducting Best Interest Determinations (BIDs); this is a formal process used to determine the best possible care arrangement for children at risk. In order to carry out a BID, I conduct interviews with the child and gather information from people who are particularly close to him/her. I make an assessment of the child’s living conditions and identify a durable solution – in other words, a more permanent placement and care arrangement. The BID process can yield various results for each child depending on his/her individual circumstances. Efforts are made to prioritize the most vulnerable children, either because they are orphaned, have protection or medical concerns, or have spent many years as an unaccompanied child with no prospects of family reunification.”**

ICMC child protection expert working within the framework of the [ICMC-UNHCR Resettlement Deployment Scheme](#) in Shire, Ethiopia

### About the example

For the past 20 years, through its strategic partnership with UNHCR, ICMC’s Deployment Scheme has been providing experts in Resettlement/Complementary Pathways, Child Protection/BID, and Refugee Status Determination to UNHCR operations globally. The Scheme consists of a pool of more than 500 qualified professionals from diverse backgrounds, who are ready to be deployed on short notice to UNHCR’s field operations whenever crucial support is needed. In 2019, ICMC deployed a total of 109 people to 31 countries in Africa, MENA (the Middle East and North Africa), Central America, Asia, and Oceania.

### The approach

Since 1999, when the scheme was established, ICMC has deployed experts to enhance protection through the referral of vulnerable refugees for resettlement to third countries and by assisting refugees in accessing complementary pathways to third countries (through family reunification, humanitarian visas, or educational opportunities).

Other ICMC experts come with solid experience in BID/child protection; resettlement (including family reunification); prevention of sexual and gender-based violence; and refugee status determination. ICMC’s BID/child protection experts enhance UNHCR’s protection capacity in field operations, ensuring that all actions are taken in the best interests of the child. To this end, the BID/Child Protection experts undertake case management, conduct BIAs or BIDs and work with

unaccompanied and separated children to identify durable solutions, including resettlement and family reunification. ICMC’s experts also provide training to UNHCR field staff, as well as to national and international partners, and contribute to further developing procedures and best practices on resettlement and child protection.

### What difference does this make for children?

Through resettlement and complementary pathways, the Deployment Scheme helps to achieve two of the objectives of the GCR, in support of the Three-Year Strategy: Easing the pressures on host countries and expanding access to third-country solutions. The Deployment Scheme thus aims to respond proactively and dynamically to new and emerging refugee situations through its diverse roster of experts. One such example is the Emergency Transit Mechanism in Niger and Rwanda for ex-Libya detainees, where it has deployed 6 people.

## Case Management Programme - reuniting unaccompanied children in Lebanon with their parents living in Germany – himaya (International Social Services Lebanon)

**“I love you Mom, I’m preparing everything to meet you again. I did a lot of drawings, mom, to tell you when we meet again about what I did during our separation.”**

M.A.M. - girl, 14 years-old

**“Mom, I drew your picture on the wall near me so I can stay beside you at night.”**

A.A.M. - boy, 7 years-old

**“I don’t care what might happen to me, if I can leave with them or not, the only important thing now is that my siblings meet our parents again and stop crying.”**

M.A.M., 19 year old elder who is still in Lebanon and hoping to join the 7 children

**“Although this case is challenging, we won’t stop until they are together again.”**

himaya staff member

**“I won’t take any rental fees from the kids! They can stay here for free. They are already suffering.”**

Owner of the apartment in the school where the children were residing

**“I saw one of them eating from the garbage! These kids cannot stay alone, let us all work together to help them.”**

Quote from the supervisor in school where the children were residing

### The issue

This is an example of the type of case that can be resolved for children through a case management programme.

In 2018, himaya (which as of 2017 was the Lebanese branch of International Social Services and therefore involved in inter-country case management) was mandated by the Lebanese Ministry of Justice to provide legal protection services in the north governorate of Lebanon.

In this particular situation, the migration service of the German Red Cross (DRK Suchdienst) referred the case to the German branch of International Social Services (ISS). After which, the German and Lebanese branches of ISS were able to closely coordinate, establishing contact between the parents and the children.

A Judge of the Juvenile Court issued a protection file for the children to be under his legal guardianship temporarily. himaya collaborated with UNHCR to submit a BID for family reunification. The parents of the children were collaborating with the German embassy in Lebanon on the process of reunification with their children.

The reunification process started in 2018 and was achieved in 2019 through the partnership with ISS. himaya has been engaged in other reunification processes with UNHCR through BID submissions as himaya is UNHCR’s implementing partner in Lebanon in specific areas, with expertise in BIDs.

### The approach

The process of family reunification takes time and is challenging in cases of unaccompanied and separated children, who need immediate assistance such as shelter or cash assistance while the process is being completed. himaya worked in close collaboration with UNHCR over referrals for cash assistance, and himaya conducted home visits to follow up on the children. Contact with parents was also facilitated through himaya and ISS Germany. Through ISS Germany, donations were raised in order to fund the flights for the children. A sum of 800 Euros was raised.

A case of this nature is labour-intensive, lengthy, and does involve some costs as set out above, but there are enormous long-term benefits for the investment. In this case, the children re-bonded with their parents as their primary caregivers and are now receiving the close supervision and care they had lacked for so long and so desperately needed. They regained feelings of security and safety as well as emotional stability. Furthermore, they are no longer involved in child labour. The children have been enrolled in school in order to learn German and to be integrated into German society, to re-start their lives there.

## Legal representation and free legal aid - Greece - SOS Children’s Villages Greece

### About the example

Since 2016, SOS Children’s Villages in Greece has been providing free legal aid and advice to all children living in its home for unaccompanied children, in order to support them in family reunification procedures. Funding is provided by the European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

### The approach and the difference this makes for children

Legal aid is provided to unaccompanied children going through different legal procedures. Most legal requests concern family reunification in other EU countries, followed by requests for asylum in Greece. Children whose family reunification requests have been approved have joined family members in Germany, UK, Italy, Austria, Spain, Ireland and Malta.

The legal assistance is offered by a specialized lawyer with knowledge and experience in refugee/migrant representation. The solicitor is a member of SOS Children’s Villages staff. SOS legal counselling is provided in close collaboration with all national authorities and bodies that are involved in addressing the needs of the children in order to secure the best interests of each child.

The co-operation between the SOS Children’s Villages specialized lawyer and the public authorities and other stakeholders is key to ensuring that children and families are appropriately supported throughout the process and their vulnerabilities are taken into consideration.

All actions are provided in the context of a supportive environment (an SOS Children’s Villages’ programme providing children with accommodation as well as psychosocial, educational and health support), which encourages children to trust the support team and stay engaged in the procedures. This helps discourage children from moving on irregularly to other countries, therefore decreasing the risk of abuse and exploitation.

## 2.10. PROMOTE THE MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION OF ALL PEOPLE CONCERNED, INCLUDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children are not solely a vulnerable group. Children are key stakeholders and agents for change both for themselves and the wider community. Meaningful participation of girls and boys in decisions that affect them is a right set out by the UNCRC and is an integral part of the GCR's programme of action (para 75). Children and youth should be engaged in identifying their own needs as well as participate in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programmes.

The Initiative shares an example of an initiative which seeks to engage and empower young people to participate and to develop actions to promote inclusion and a positive narrative about refugees, migrants and host communities living together.

### The Living Together Initiative – Europe – Terre des Hommes

**“As a young journalist having the status of a Syrian refugee in Austria, I felt that the voices of youth are often absent from media and in the public discourse. How is it possible that youth are not involved on issues that affect them most? With this initiative we want their voices to become stronger and more influential. Youth can provide a different source of information by sharing their experiences. We want young people from both migrant and host communities to connect, share and engage. Through the initiative, we meet youth from migrant and host communities across Europe to discuss their challenges and experiences on the issues of migration and living together.”**

Rania Ali, Syrian journalist, co-leader of the Living Together Initiative

challenges and positive ideas in a tangible way. Stories by host and migrant youth on their experiences of living together in the Euro-Mediterranean region are discussed with young Europeans through interviews and in public events, such as in the Sziget festival, and then shared through online media channels such as social media and websites and by participating in advocacy events. In this way, the LTI directly contributes to enhancing refugee self-reliance. The LTI is slowly but surely and organically growing with more and more participation of children and young people. Via public events, the LTI has reached out to over 4000 young people. Specifically, 400 youth engaged with LTI directly at the Sziget festival in Hungary last year through participation in workshops, social media and other activities, growing the LTI online community to 940 followers by the end of September 2019. In August 2019, the LTI participated again in the Sziget festival, engaging directly with over 700 young people and collecting over 50 video testimonies on empowerment, migration and integration.



©Rania Ali

The overall objective of the Living Together Initiative (LTI) is to empower and inspire young people to connect and engage towards inclusive societies in the European Union and create youth advocates for better protection of children and youth in migration.

The LTI aims to support, empower and encourage young people with different backgrounds to be active citizens for social change, participating in civic and democratic life, connecting with each other across Europe to promote volunteering, solidarity and intercultural understanding. The LTI sees young people from the refugee, migrant and host communities as the primary group capable of changing the narrative on migration in Europe. Their voices can provide an alternate source of information by expressing real experiences,

LTI has one dedicated staff member and a core group of 20 young volunteers from refugee, migrant and host communities. Many of the young volunteers have web and social media technical capacities.

At first the LTI community grew slowly. But they overcame this challenge by increasing their presence on social media and relying on amplifier professionals as well as by investing further in children and young people's online presence in different social media.

The LTI aims to continue with its current methodology but also by linking the LTI to other parallel initiatives. It also plans to increase its social media capacity to influence children and young people through organizing technical workshops and community-building in targeted locations.

### You Create child and youth-led art initiative - Iraq and Egypt – Terre des Hommes

#### **About the example and the issue**

You Create is a children and youth-led art initiative developed in Iraq and Egypt with the support of Terre des Hommes. It aims to strengthen the well-being, resilience and social cohesion of children and youth affected by migration and adversity through access to self-led and tailored psychosocial art-focused services.

#### **The approach**

Between November 2017 and September 2019, the Terre des Hommes Foundation developed the “You Create” project in collaboration with the International Institute for Child Rights and Development. The project had two phases: a Global Level Phase (research, development, monitoring and capitalization of lessons learned) and a Country Level Phase (implementation and replication).

The You Create methodology was tailored to emergency contexts (in Iraq) and long-term displacement settings (in Egypt). Six e-modules were produced to enable professionals world-wide to implement the methodology in their respective projects. The special section “Empowering Children and Youth through Art” was featured on the online platform, Childhub, to disseminate the methodology among different stakeholders (NGOs, CBOs, governmental institutions and child protection specialists) and provide them with Guidelines and Best Practices to develop and implement youth-led arts-based activities.

In Iraq and Egypt, the aim was to transfer the methodology to young local professionals and locally test it in partnership with local CBOs from refugee and host communities. This meant that trainings were conducted in both countries so that local organizations and youth leaders could run the artistic activities, oriented by the You Create methodology.

#### **What difference does this make for children and young people?**

The project resulted in participants expressing the ability to think and envision their future, despite the challenges of their daily lives because of forced displacement. The youth involved experienced self-discovery, gained self-esteem and found new ways, including creative ways, to express themselves. Youth Leaders' active engagement in Participatory Action Research training fostered opportunities for them to explore new ways of engaging as well as discover their potential in arts-based processes and leadership with other youth. The project helped participants to gain social respect and learn to live together: as youth gained a sense of self-confidence and learned to express themselves, they also expressed that the project helped them to gain social respect – respect from their community, families and their peers. They felt more confident in their social engagements and felt they could contribute meaningfully to their communities.



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The Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) is an important framework for protecting, supporting and empowering children who represent more than half of all refugees.

The Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts has developed this collection of practices to support governments to put the GCR into practice with children at its heart.

The examples are in line with the GCR's practical measures for improved cooperation on key issues affecting refugee children. They show how laws, policies and practices can have the best interests of the child at their heart, how refugee children can be protected and have access to services that respond to their specific needs, and how children and youth can participate in designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating programmes and policies. They show that it is possible for governments to make rapid change to increase the protection of children in vulnerable situations.

The Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts is a multi-stakeholder partnership bringing together over 30 civil society, trade union, UN and philanthropic organisations around a shared agenda - to ensure that children's rights are at the heart of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Regular and Orderly Migration, and to create a continuum of care, protection and support for refugee and migrant children. The Initiative is committed to working with governments, refugees and other stakeholders to ensure the GCR works for children in practice.

For further information and to contact the Initiative, please visit [www.childrenonthemove.org](http://www.childrenonthemove.org)