



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency



STANDARD OPERATING
PROCEDURES FOR THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF
BEST INTERESTS PROCEDURE
FOR CHILDREN AT RISK
(BIP SOPs)

TOOLKIT



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ABOUT THE BIP SOPS TOOLKIT

Conflict and displacement affect girls and boys in profoundly negative ways. Children become separated from their parents and relatives, and many face risks of abuse, exploitation, trafficking, recruitment into armed forces or groups, and violence – including gender-based violence. Children also face risks including harmful traditional practices such as child marriage and female genital mutilation, hazardous and/or exploitative labour, and risk of substance abuse. Children are exposed to these and many other risks both during flight and while being displaced in camps or urban setting alike.

The 2021 UNHCR Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child¹ supports UNHCR and partner staff in improving the protection outcomes for refugee children by situating the best interests of refugee children within a comprehensive child protection system and strengthening child protection case management for all refugee children.

Best Interests Procedure (BIP) is the UNHCR case management framework for asylum- seeking and refugee children. It may also be applied to other children of concern to UNHCR in certain circumstances. BIP includes the key steps of child protection case management as well as the UNHCR Best Interests Determination (BID) process and is implemented for individual children at risk who are in need of targeted, structured, systematic, sustained and coordinated support. It ensures that decisions and actions aimed at addressing protection risks and needs for children are in their best interests. BIP is embedded within, and linked to, refugee protection case management.

The implementation of a safe and timely BIP requires a concerted effort on the part of specialised child protection actors as well as actors whose services indirectly affect or benefit children and their caregivers. The need for joint and coordinated action, and sharing of responsibility and resources, calls for clarity of purpose and agreement amongst agencies² on ways to better manage interventions that support children and their families.

Over the years, the development and use of SOPs for the implementation of Best Interests Procedure for children at risk (also referred to as the Child Protection Case Management SOPs or BIP SOPs) have guided humanitarian actors in coordinating efforts to systematically address the protection needs of children both in terms of immediate responses as well as identifying appropriate durable solutions. While some UNHCR operations have established SOPs that are comprehensive in scope, others have opted for SOPs for the purpose of implementing the Best Interests Determination (BID) process – specifically in BIDs for Durable Solutions. A number of other operations have developed SOPs that integrate actions for Child Protection and Gender-based Violence (GBV) prevention, mitigation and response.

Section 3.4.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines highlights the need for and provides brief guidance on establishing BIP SOPs. This BIP SOPs Toolkit provides expanded guidance to UNHCR, and its partners on designing and developing SOPs for the implementation of Best Interests Procedure for children at risk. Various forms, Terms of References, and checklists which are referred to in the 2021 BIP

¹ UNHCR, *2021 Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child*, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c18d7254.html>.

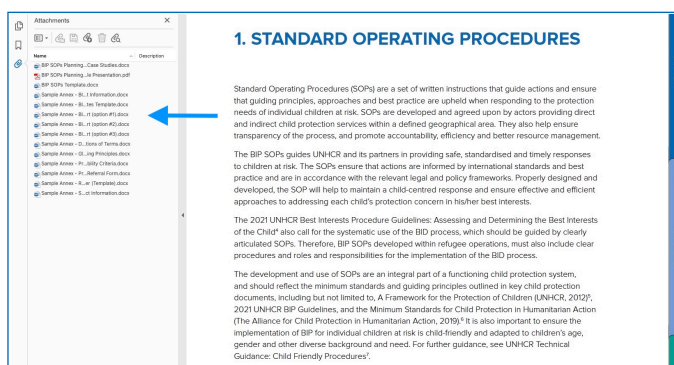
² The term 'agency/agencies' in these Guidance Note refers to UN agencies, government agencies (including the police, security or border authorities), and NGOs. Likewise, the term 'Heads of Agency/Agencies' refers to the head, manager, coordinator or the director of the agency, under whose overall management programmes are implemented.

Guidelines and in this Toolkit are available in the UNHCR BIP Toolbox³ – and online repository for additional resources for implementing BIP for children at risk.

CONTENT OF THIS TOOLKIT AND ACCESSING THE TOOLS

The table below provides an overview of the four chapters of the Toolkit. Some of the tools referred to in the Toolkit, particularly in the [section on annexes](#) to the SOPs below, are available in the online BIP Toolbox. As in the 2021 BIP Guidelines, links to these are provided throughout this document.

Other tools are included within this BIP SOPs Toolkit as attachments. To access the attachments pane, open this Toolkit in Acrobat Reader, and navigate to the left sidebar. You can also click the hyperlinks where provide to access the file from the attachments.



Chapter	Content of the Chapter	Where to find the tools
Chapter 1	Provides an introduction to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)	-
Chapter 2	Provides guidance on drafting and operationalising the BIP SOPs	-
Chapter 3	Provides detailed guidance on the various sections of the accompanying BIP SOPs Template	Click here to access the attached SOPs Template
Chapter 4	Serves as a facilitator’s guide for a BIP SOPs drafting workshop	Click here to access the attached sample PowerPoint presentation

TOOL 1. SOPs Template: The sample BIP SOPs template included in this toolkit provides the foundation for developing a BIP SOPs. Some sections are pre-filled with information that is usually standard across operations. However, these may be updated/revised to ensure that the final SOPs better reflects the situation for children within the operational area.

TOOL 2. Planning Workshop Presentation: The initial stages of the drafting process should preferably take place during SOPs planning workshop. This will promote participation of and contribution from as many stakeholders as possible and ensuring that final BIP SOPs is a collective child protection tool. The Planning Workshop Guide, which is found in [chapter 4](#), includes a sample presentation, which may be used during the workshop. The presentation contains only suggestions and should be modified to reflect the operational context.

Once the SOPs are developed, offices/operations are encouraged to share a copy with the Child Protection Unit at hqchipro@unhcr.org for inclusion in the online repository. For further guidance and discussion, visit the UNHCR Child Protection Community of Practice: <https://unhcr365.sharepoint.com/sites/community-childprotect>.

3 The BIP Toolbox and the contents of its subfolders can be accessed here: <https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/biptoolbox/>.

1. STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are a set of written instructions that guide actions and ensure that guiding principles, approaches and best practice are upheld when responding to the protection needs of individual children at risk. SOPs are developed and agreed upon by actors providing direct and indirect child protection services within a defined geographical area. They also help ensure transparency of the process, and promote accountability, efficiency and better resource management.

The BIP SOPs guides UNHCR and its partners in providing safe, standardised and timely responses to children at risk. The SOPs ensure that actions are informed by international standards and best practice and are in accordance with the relevant legal and policy frameworks. Properly designed and developed, the SOP will help to maintain a child-centred response and ensure effective and efficient approaches to addressing each child's protection concern in their best interests.

The 2021 UNHCR Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child⁴ also call for the systematic use of the BID process, which should be guided by clearly articulated SOPs. Therefore, BIP SOPs developed within refugee operations, must also include clear procedures and roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the BID process.

The development and use of SOPs are an integral part of a functioning child protection programme, and should reflect the minimum standards and guiding principles outlined in key child protection documents, including but not limited to, A Framework for the Protection of Children (UNHCR, 2012)⁵, 2021 UNHCR BIP Guidelines, and the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019).⁶ It is also important to ensure the implementation of BIP for individual children at risk is child-friendly and adapted to children's age, gender and other diverse background and need. For further guidance, see UNHCR Technical Guidance: Child Friendly Procedures⁷.

It is important to note that SOPs are as much about the process as the final document. Focusing on the process will help to ensure that the advantages of the SOPs are fully realised and limitations⁸ are minimised. Developing SOPs is also about practices and approaches that are being agreed upon and owned by all relevant stakeholders.

SOPs need to be realistic, and comprehensive, yet formulated in a concise and easy-to-read format. Noting that those who actually implement the procedures outlined in the SOPs may have different levels of proficiency in the original language of the SOPs, it may be necessary to translate the SOPs into languages used by the child protection actors and refugee. A good practice is to keep the length of the SOPs, excluding annexes, to within twenty pages.

4 UNHCR, *2021 Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child*, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c18d7254.html>.

5 UNHCR, *A Framework for the Protection of Children*, 2021, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4fe875682.html>.

6 The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*, 2019, available at: https://alliancecpha.org/en/CPMS_home.

7 UNHCR, *Technical Guidance: Child Friendly Procedures*, 2021, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/61b7355a4.html>.

8 Limitations include concerns that SOPs can become restrictive and inhibit individual initiatives that may be required to address specific child protection issues, and that they can become time consuming and process-heavy. There have also been fears that new developments or challenging individual case can result in planning and review meetings that can overtake actual timely preventive or response interventions.

The operational success of the SOPs depends on its use; staff should be familiar with their content and be able to contribute to its on-going development. The use of the SOPs will also need leadership and support from managers at all stages of the process. The SOPs should be seen as a living document and be regularly reviewed and revised as necessary (see below for a [checklist](#) to assess when a revision is required). The dissemination of the SOPs must be combined with providing training to practitioners in their use.

1.1. SECTIONS OF THE SOPS

The BIP SOPs is composed of seven components as described below. These sections are further discussed in the [Chapter 3](#).

- 1. Context, Objective & Standards:** This section of the SOPs provides a background and describes the process for dissemination and revision of the SOPs. It begins by introducing the operational context in which the SOPs are being used and articulates the objective of the SOPs. This section also identifies and refers to the key legal and policy framework, and guiding principles and standards that govern the actions described in the SOPs. The section further outlines the link between the BIP SOPs and other relevant SOPs that are in use within the operational area, and finally, it describes processes and responsibilities relating to both dissemination and revision of the SOPs. The guiding principles, and the relevant legal and policy framework listed in this section, may be expanded in annexes to the SOPs.



2. **Service Providers:** The second section of the SOPs provides an overview of key actors providing direct or indirect services for children. Contact information should be provided as a supplementary annex, as this is likely to be updated frequently.
3. **Prioritisation & Sensitivity Criteria:** These criteria are to be used as a reference by all actors, and the first action to be taken and timeframe for action. They help determine which types of risks/ cases need to be handled as a matter of priority. The sensitivity section guides caseworkers in deciding which cases may be handled by community-caseworkers and which should be directly managed by an agency staff.
4. **Best Interests Procedure (Case Management):** This section details the implementation of BIP for individual children at risk, from identification to case closure. Roles and responsibilities and timeframe for each action is clearly defined. The section also makes clear reference to the specific tools used in implementing BIP (e.g., Best Interests Assessment form) which are included as annexes.
5. **Best Interests Determination (BID):** While BID is a component of the BIP, the SOPs describes the process separately for the purpose of clarity. This section discusses the agreed procedure for full BID as well as simplified BIDs should this be considered within an operation.
6. **Signature:** This section will include the signatures of the Heads of Agencies participating in the implementation of the SOPs. It provides the SOPs the requisite level of authority.
7. **Annexes:** Includes forms, flow-charts that are relevant to / supports the use of the SOPs. This may include glossary of terms and list of abbreviations used in the SOPs, as well as detailed explanation of relevant policies or legal tools.

1.2. SOPS DURING THE INITIAL PHASE OF EMERGENCIES

As an operational principle, SOPs should be comprehensive, yet user-friendly. The suggested seven sections of the BIP SOPs help ensure that response to the protection needs of individual children at risk is systematically managed. BIP SOPs should therefore, be developed and implemented at the early stages of an emergency. However, allocating sufficient time to develop a full SOPs can be a challenge. During the initial phase of an emergency, the BIP SOPs should include the following components/sections as a minimum:

1. **Context, Objectives & Standards** – drafting the sections on international, regional, and national legal framework, guidelines and policies, reference to other SOPs (i.e. Sections 1.4 to 1.9 in the SOPs Template) may be left for the subsequent revision of the SOPs.
2. **Prioritisation Criteria**
3. **Best Interests Procedure**
4. **Signatures**
5. **Annexes** – this may be limited to the relevant forms (BIA form and referral form), sample BIP flow chart, and referral contact lists

2. DRAFTING & OPERATIONALISING BIP SOPS

The process of drafting and operationalising BIP SOPs involves the following steps:

1. Contextual analysis and initiating the SOPs development
2. Reviewing existing SOPs
3. Defining & developing the contents of the SOPs
4. Drafting the SOPs
5. Reviewing and testing the SOPs
6. Approval, dissemination and capacity-building
7. Periodic revision of the SOPs



2.1. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS AND INITIATING THE SOPS DEVELOPMENT

The SOPs need to be context-specific and involve all key stakeholders. When individual child protection cases are identified and managed through a multi-agency support process, such process must be articulated and agreed in writing. The BIP SOPs fulfils this requirement. Additionally, a situation requiring the use of a BID may not be immediately present, but a well-crafted SOPs that is in place will ensure that the response is timely and appropriate should the need arise.

The development of BIP SOPs should begin with an analysis of the operational context. The participation of relevant actors must be sought and encouraged not only in relation to the implementation of the actions expressed in the SOPs, but also during its development and revision.

The forum through which SOPs are designed and developed will usually be the child protection coordination mechanism. The process should therefore begin with the proposal to develop a BIP SOPs being tabled at the child protection coordination meeting. However, in operations where child protection is coordinated through the protection coordination mechanism (this may be the case in slow emergencies and protracted refugee situations) the proposal will be tabled and agreed at the protection coordination meeting.

The coordination mechanism will agree on the following outcomes in relation to the development of BIP SOPs for the operational area:

- Formal agreement to develop BIP SOPs
- Commitment to the process by child protection and protection actors
- Assignment of a staff member to the role of [SOP Coordinator](#)
- Nomination of [SOP focal points](#) by all relevant / participating agencies
- Agreement on a timeframe for completion of the drafting process
- Agreement on key stages of the drafting process (i.e. planning workshop, drafting, review and approval)

Responsibility for implementing the best interests principle, including procedures for assessing and determining a child's best interests, is first and foremost that of the State. Where UNHCR is responsible for implementing BIP as the State is unwilling or unable to implement all components of BIP for refugee children, UNHCR should identify which if any elements of the BIP can be carried out by national authorities (for instance custody or removal decisions), as set out in the BIP Guidelines. UNHCR should also involve local and national governments in UNHCR-led BIP as much as possible, for example, identifying which cases should be referred to authorities for which services and involving authorities as BID Panel members. Authorities may also assume more of an oversight role in the overall management and coordination of BIP and in capacity building for other partners implementing BIP. As such, involving relevant authorities in the development and implementation of the SOPs are important. This also means, where possible, UNHCR should seek to integrate BIP for refugee children in the national SOPs.

The successful development and use of the SOPs will also depend on the process receiving the full support of the Heads of Agencies at the operational level. It is therefore important that the proposal to develop a BIP SOPs is tabled at the Heads of Agencies meetings or, in the absence of such coordination mechanism, an especially convened meeting of Heads of Agencies.

SOPs Coordinator

The SOPs Coordinator is appointed by the child protection coordination mechanism (or the Protection Coordination mechanism) for the purpose of facilitating the SOPs drafting process, and subsequently overseeing the implementation and periodic review. Where a BID Supervisor is assigned and available, the role of SOPs Coordinator will be performed by the BID Supervisor.

The following competencies are required for the SOPs Coordinator (in addition to competencies required to perform the role of BID Supervisor⁹):

- Child protection experience, including knowledge of BIP for children at risk / child protection case management (in the geographical area and relevant technical areas)
- Demonstrated skill in leadership and coordination
- Staff of UNHCR or a child protection agency
- Proven ability to communicate orally (e.g. ability to facilitate meetings and workshops) and in writing (e.g. ability to write clearly and concisely)

Roles and Responsibilities of a SOPs Coordinator:

- Liaise with other child protection focal points from each agency and organise a SOP Planning Workshop
- Facilitate the SOPs Planning Workshop to design the components and substance of the SOPs
- Draft the SOPs together with the SOPs focal points
- Test the SOPs and revise as necessary
- Facilitate the approval process and ensure that the SOPs are disseminated
- Oversee the implementation of the SOPs
- Facilitate the periodic review and revision of the SOPs



⁹ See Terms of Reference for BID Supervisor, available in the UNHCR BIP SOPs Toolbox: <https://www.unhcr.org/handbooks/biptoolbox/terms-of-references.html>.

SOPs Focal Points

The SOPs focal points are nominated by each participating agency, and are responsible for contributing to the designing, development and implementation of the SOPs. Where applicable, the child protection focal person (e.g. the Child Protection Officer, Coordinator, Manager or Advisor) within each agency is usually best placed to take on the BIP SOPs focal point role.

The SOPs focal points will have a good knowledge of key elements of child protection including best interest procedure for children at risk / child protection case management, be team players, and skilled in coordination and communication. They are may be assigned responsibilities for drafting sections of the SOPs, under the guidance and leadership of the SOPs Coordinator.

2.2. REVIEWING EXISTING SOPS

Some operations may have already developed and operationalised SOPs to guide the response to specific protection issues. This may include SOPs for the prevention, mitigation and response to Gender-based Violence (GBV), SOPs for Medical Referrals, SOPs for Registration, SOPs for Resettlement, SOPs for Alternative Care for Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC), and Best Interests Determination (BID) SOPs. Where such SOPs already exist, the SOP Coordinator should begin by reviewing them to assess and understand the degree to which these address the protection needs of children at risk.

Generally, GBV SOPs would include actions to respond to the child survivors of GBV¹⁰. Similarly, Medical Referral should include specific procedures relating to the referral and transfer of children in need of specialised medical treatment. SOPs that solely focus on care arrangement for UASC or ones that guide the BID process need to be seen as part of the BIP for children at risk.

It is important that the proposed BIP SOPs builds on, refers to and creates clear links with existing SOPs, rather than repeat and restate the procedures that are already in place. If existing SOPs do not adequately tackle child protection concerns, this should be communicated to the relevant units, specialised agency, or the relevant sector coordination body with the suggestion that they consider revising the document. For example, calling on the GBV actors to review and revise the GBV SOPs to include specific actions for responding to the needs of child survivors of GBV.

2.3. DEFINING & DEVELOPING THE CONTENTS OF THE BIP SOPS

This stage of the SOPs development process relates to the task of formulating the concept and defining and clarifying actions, roles and responsibly relating to the response to children at risk. In this BIP SOPs Toolkit, this step is differentiated from 'drafting', which means the process of actually writing in the outcomes of the design and development process.

Defining and formulating the contents of the SOPs are crucial elements of the process. As such, the involvement all stakeholders from the outset is vital. This can be achieved through a SOPs Planning

¹⁰ For more on coordinating with GBV actors within BIP see page 98 of the *2021 UNHCR Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child*, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c18d7254.html>.

Workshop, which will not only function as a forum for sharing experience, defining actions and designing the contents of the SOPs, but will also help foster ownership amongst stakeholders of the process and the final product.

The workshop participants are the engines of the SOPs designing and development process; it is therefore essential that participants are drawn from all levels including managers, field staff, refugee/community volunteers, and national actors (e.g. police, health workers, judicial officials and immigration officials). A multi-sectoral representation is also essential to this process.

The workshop participants, together with the SOPs Coordinator, will decide whether the drafting of the SOPs will be done by a single individual (e.g., the SOPs Coordinator), or the responsibility for drafting different sections will be shared between several persons.

See [Chapter 4 - Planning Workshop Guide](#) for further guidance.

2.4. DRAFTING OF THE BIP SOPS

The contents which were designed and developed during the SOPs Planning Workshop (see [Sub-chapter 2.3](#)) are written into the SOPs Template. This BIP SOPs Toolkit refers to this process as the drafting step. As agreed during the SOPs Planning Workshop, the SOP Coordinator or another designated individual will be responsible for drafting the document or will share this responsibility with counterparts (i.e. SOP focal points) from other child protection agencies. In the case of shared drafting responsibility, the SOPs Coordinator will oversee the drafting process.

If the responsibility for drafting the SOPs is divided amongst counterparts, those tasked with this responsibility should meet regularly to discuss and ensure clarity and consistency of the contents. The SOP Coordinator will check in with the drafters and organise regular check-in meetings as required.

Once all sections have been drafted, the SOP Coordinator will compile these into a single document, cross-referencing related sections, checking for accuracy and consistency, before presenting the draft for review and testing.

2.5. REVIEW AND TESTING OF THE BIP SOPS

The first draft will be presented to the Child Protection coordination mechanism or the Protection Coordination mechanism for initial review. With the agreement of the coordination mechanism, the content of the SOPs will be shared with selected members of the community, and a randomly selected group of families as well as children, for their review and feedback. This does not mean handing over a copy of the draft SOPs and asking for feedback. Rather, this may be done through structured meeting where elements of the SOPs will be presented, and their views sought. The key contents may be presented verbally with visual aids as required.

Copies of the draft BIP SOPs should also be shared with the Heads of Agencies for their initial comments, if any.

At this stage, it can be helpful to test the draft SOPs, preferably by individuals different from those involved in the drafting process.

Testing the SOPs

In the interest of time, it is possible to test the draft SOPs against known/open child protection cases. Testing should involve all staff members that were in contact with the children from the time of their identification but must adhere to the principles of confidentiality and do no harm.

Testing the draft SOPs begins with a review of how the case has been handled thus far and assessing how the SOPs could have benefited the implementation of BIP for children at risk. In the interest of confidentiality, identifiable information should be redacted from the cases being used to test the SOPs.

2.6. APPROVAL, DISSEMINATION & CAPACITY-BUILDING

The final version of the BIP SOPs should be reviewed and approved at a meeting of Heads of Agencies. Upon approval, the document should be signed, duplicated and disseminated amongst staff who are responsible for the implementation of the SOPs.

The SOPs focal points from each participating agency should normally be responsible for disseminating the copies of the SOPs within their respective agencies. These SOPs focal points together with the relevant protection staff / community-based protection staff need to ensure that the content of the SOPs, particularly the emergency/referral contact information is shared amongst the refugee community.

It is a good practice to ensure that staff, especially caseworkers, who will be directly involved in implementing the SOPs are trained on its content, including specific actions as well as roles and responsibilities of stakeholders. Depending on the operational context, this training may be organised by the SOPs focal points for staff in their respective agencies, or a series of joint training may be organised through the Child Protection Coordination mechanism.

2.7. PERIODIC REVISION OF THE SOPS

Ideally the SOPs should be written with sufficient foresight in order to ensure that it remains current. However, the changing nature of refugee response, means that unforeseen developments is likely to result in the need for change in the practical implementation of some procedures. SOPs are useful only if they reflect the actual situation vis-à-vis the protection situation for children, child protection programming, staffing and resources, and the types of services that are available within the operational area.

In dynamic operations where influx of refugees is high or fluctuating, the SOPs focal points should frequently review the SOPs and their agency's adherence to it. In stable operations where the refugee population is constant, reviews meetings can be organised every six months.

When a revision is called for, the SOP Coordinator will liaise with all relevant actors and oversee the revision process. Once changes have been made, the revised draft will be presented to the SOP focal points of each agency for feedback. The new version, bearing the new revision number and date, will then be presented to Heads of Agencies and identified community representatives for review, approval and official signing.

Checklist – Is a Revision Required?

The following questions should be answered when considering revision of the SOPs. If the answer to any of the questions is 'yes', revision should be initiated.

- Are the SOPs not reaching stated objectives?
- Have there been any changes to the operational environment since the SOPs were last reviewed, which significantly impact child protection?
- Have there been any changes (increase or decrease) in the number of service providers in the area of operation?
- Have any of the service providers adopted a different strategy/approach that impacts service provision?
- Have any of the procedures proven unworkable in the current context?



3. USING THE SOPS TEMPLATE

As described in [Chapter 1.1](#), the SOPs Template is divided into 7 main sections. This chapter will explain how to use the SOPs Template in order to produce BIP SOPs that are relevant to the operational context.

Some sections of the SOPs Template are pre-filled with introductions, summaries, and potential actions. These are generally standard and common across operations. However, all sections must be reviewed in relation to the context and updated accordingly.


Click here to access the attached editable [SOPs Template](#).

SECTION 1: CONTEXT, OBJECTIVES & STANDARDS

Section 1.1: Context / Setting

This section succinctly introduces the context within which the BIP SOPs have been developed and operationalised. Although the statistical information provided in the text may change, it is useful to include the overall number of refugees and/or asylum-seekers, the number of refugee children, and the rate of arrival (including projections). Additional information relating to the SOPs should include the geographic location of refugees, the names of refugee camps, the composition of refugee groups (in camps or urban areas depending on the context), information on new arrivals and refugees in protracted displacement situations. For urban settings, briefly include information on the living arrangements and how persons of concern to UNHCR access protection and assistance. The geographical scope of the SOPs will determine the amount of detail the introduction should include.

The suggestion below assumes that the present SOPs are being developed for a refugee context. Each office/operation should amend the content to suite their context.

 This section of the SOPs Template is pre-filled with suggested text. Revise and update according to the operational context.

Section 1.2: Objective of the SOPs

This section articulates the objectives of the BIP SOPs. The objectives would have been formulated collectively during the SOP Planning Workshop.

Section 1.3: Guiding Principles

Any child protection programme or intervention must adhere to a set of guiding principles. Implementation of BIP for individual children at risk should be guided by the principles provided in section 3.1.4 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines¹¹. While these Guiding Principles should be referenced in the SOPs, it is not necessary to provide a full description or definitions the principles in this section. Instead, listing the main guiding principle should suffice. The description should, however, be included as an annex to the SOPs.

¹¹ UNHCR, *2021 Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child*, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c18d7254.html>.

- ! This section is pre-filled with a list of Guiding Principles. Drafter may include additional principles.

Section 1.4: International and Regional Legislative and Humanitarian Framework

Humanitarian interventions are founded on, and seek to uphold, international and regional legal frameworks. Listing relevant international and regional legal and humanitarian frameworks within the SOPs reinforces the commitment of all actors to ensure that the standards and procedures outlined in the document are in accordance with such framework.

- ! This section is pre-filled with a list of international and regional legal tools. Drafter may include additional principles.

Section 1.5: National Legislative Framework

Humanitarian actors are obligated to promote and build on national laws, which promote and protect children's rights. Where such legal frameworks exist, they can be used as tool for advocacy, and encourage and support national authorities to assume their responsibility for ensuring the protection of refugee children. Listing them in the SOPs links the BIP SOPs to the national child protection systems.

It is important to note that some national laws may not be in the child's best interests, and thus be detrimental to children's enjoyment of their rights and their protection (e.g. laws that recognises child marriage). Such laws cannot be seen as supporting children's protection.

- ! This section is pre-filled with an incomplete list of possible national legislation. The terminology may vary, or such laws may not be relevant to the operational context and must be revised and updated accordingly.

Section 1.6: Guidelines and Policies

Over the years, UNHCR and other child protection actors have developed guidelines and policies on key approaches to addressing children's protection needs. Interventions should build on UNHCR's guidelines and policies, while other guiding principles should inform the actions taken to address protection risks of children of concern to UNCHR. This section, therefore lists, key guidelines and policy that govern the implementation of the SOPs.

- ! This section is pre-filled with a list of guidelines and policies relevant to the implementation of the SOPs. Drafter may include additional tools relevant to the context.

Section 1.7: Other SOPs Currently in Use

In this section, list the other relevant SOPs that are currently in use or in development, and highlight how these are linked to the BIP SOPs. Some operations may already have established SOPs for BID or incorporated BIDs into the SOPs for Resettlement. In such case, the operations are encouraged to:

- a) incorporate existing BID SOPs into these present BIP SOPs, and
- b) revise other SOPs that makes reference to BIDs to point to the Section 5 of the BIP SOPs, which deals with implementing the BID process.

! This section is pre-filled with examples of SOPs that are likely to be in use. Review and update this section.

Section 1.8: Dissemination

This section states how the final version of the BIP SOPs will be disseminated, and the responsibilities for doing so. The SOPs will also need to be shared amongst other actors within the area of operation, including members of the refugee community and children themselves. However, owing to the sensitive and confidential nature of certain types of cases, each operation may decide as to which sections of the SOPs should not be shared.

! This section is pre-filled but should be revised/updated.

Section 1.9: Review and Revision

This section should indicate how frequently the SOPs should be reviewed and revised, and the modalities for this process. For instance, review meetings may be held every six months with the SOP Coordinator being responsible for convening such meetings. Any actor may initiate an early review process if the above criteria are met (see the checklist under [Chapter 2.7](#) of this BIP SOPs Toolkit).

! This section is pre-filled but should be revised/updated.



SECTION 2: SERVICE PROVIDERS

This section of the SOPs provides a list of actors delivering services that benefit children, and thus will be a referral point for individual case support. This listing is included as a reference. Contact details for specific focal points should be included as an annex – i.e. an annex that may be updated without following the SOPs revision process. This flexible approach is adopted based on the recognition that in any emergency staff turnover is inevitable.

A separate contact list/information for referral at the various geographical levels should be provided as a separate annex and must be current at all times. The actors listed in this section should not be limited to the main collaborators in the SOPs.

The SOPs Coordinator may circulate a contact information template as a mechanism for obtaining information. The information that is sought should include:

- Name of agency
- Primary services
- Target beneficiaries
- Name, email, and phone number of focal point for child protection/services for children
- Geographical area of coverage
- GPS coordinates of services points

SECTION 3: PRIORITISATION & SENSITIVITY CRITERIA

UNHCR operations around the world are increasingly seeing high numbers of children crossing international borders in search of protection. Camps around the world are hosting large numbers of persons of concern to the agency. Similar trends are visible in urban settings as well. While every case should be given due weight and timely follow-up, the current trends necessitates that cases are priorities in according to their level of urgency and impact on children.

Similarly, engaging refugees themselves in the protection of children in the community has proven to be effective. Community-based prevention and response ensures sustainability of protection services and strengthens resilience. In its commitment to promote greater participation and leadership of members of the refugee communities, including young refugee men and women, UNHCR has adopted a range of strategies that involved persons of concern in all stages of the displacement cycle.

This section of the SOPs includes a criteria list to help staff determine which cases to prioritise and the urgency needed in terms of responding to a case. The sensitivity section of the list indicates which cases may not be handled directly by a member of the community. Often cases that are complex and is likely to put the community member at risk or cases that should be handled with an extra level of confidentiality may only be handled by a designated agency staff. The Prioritisation & Sensitivity Criteria needs to be reviews and agreed by the relevant child protection actors.

It must be noted, however, that this set of criteria is included as a guidance. Child protection/ protection staff must also use their own judgement to evaluate whether or not a child needs to be classed as an urgent case or not. A more detailed screening tool to help determine vulnerability should be included as an annex to the SOPs.

! This section is pre-filled, but should be revised/updated according to operational context.

SECTION 4: BEST INTERESTS PROCEDURE

The section on implementing BIP for individual children at risk is the main element of the BIP SOPs. As stated earlier, UNHCR uses the term Best Interests Procedure to refer to what may also be called child protection case management. However, for UNHCR Best Interests Procedure is rooted in its mandate on international protection and the agency's commitment to upholding and protecting children in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

BIP includes the Best Interests Determination (BID) process. However, considering the specific nature of the process and for the purpose of clarity BID is described in a separate section in the BIP SOPs (see [Section 5](#)). It is important to remember, however, that the BID process depends of the proper implementation of BIP.

Starting from identification, the section will state the procedures for systematically responding to the assessed protection needs of children at risk. Each action/procedure listed in this section should include the title of the staff and the agency responsible for its implementation.

The subsections included in the SOPs Template may not all be relevant to every operational context. At the same time, other interventions may not be currently included in the Template. The SOPs Coordinator and other SOPs focal points may, therefore, have to modify the sub-sections to ensure that the procedures are in line with the operational needs. The Template follows the BIP steps described in the 2021 BIP Guidelines:

1. Child is identified and is referred to the lead child protection agency.
2. Best Interests Assessment
3. Case planning
4. Implementing the plan (through direct services or referral services)
5. Follow-up and review, and
6. Case closure.

Best Interests Determination is initiated if the child's situation requires it.

FIGURE: **Steps in the Best Interests Procedure.** BIP is a multi-step process to address the risks faced by individual children. BID is a component of BIP. For guidance, see section 3.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines¹².



Section 4.1: Identification and Assessment

! This section is pre-filled, but should be revised/updated according to operational context.

Identification is the action or process of establishing that a child is at risk of, or they has been subjected to or is at the present time experiencing violations of their rights. This includes the identification of children who have been separated from their families or primary caregivers (unaccompanied and separated children). Depending on the operational context, identification may take place at the border, refugee registration centres, transit centres, during Refugee Status Determination (RSD), during durable solutions or complementary pathways interviews, infant and young child feeding centres, distribution centres, health centres, police stations, etc. The identification may be done by registration staff, RSD staff, resettlement staff, community-based protection staff, caseworkers, service providers (e.g. food distributors, health professionals, etc.), community members, or children themselves.

¹² UNHCR, 2021 Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c18d7254.html>.

This section of the SOPs Template includes the following sub-sections. Please refer to relevant sections of the 2021 BIP Guidelines for more information.

Sub-section 4.1.1: Identification, Initial Registration and Referrals – provides details on roles, responsibilities and procedures for identification of children at risk at a range of services points in a refugee operation. **Initial Registration** in this section refers to the refugee registration process, often conducted by UNHCR or a partner, using its *proGres*. When a child at risk is identified by a non-child protection actor, the child will be **referred** to the specialised child protection actor, or child protection focal point within UNHCR. For more information see section 3.2.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.1.2: Intake and Case Registration – procedures relating to the intake and case registration by the specialised child protection actor or child protection focal point within UNHCR. Case registration may include completing the bio-data section of the BIA form, and using the Prioritisation Criteria to decide on the timeframe for the next course of action. This section should also discuss the use of *proGres* child protection module, and how the *proGres* registration number is included as a unique identifying number for each case. For more information see section 3.2.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.1.3: Assessment and Documentation – describes the roles and responsibilities relating to assessment of a child's case. According to the 2021 BIP, a Best Interests Assessment (BIA) is essential before any action affecting an individual child at heightened risk, unless a BID is needed. This section provides details on **assessment**: appropriate approach for interviewing children, home visits, and seeking information from external sources (e.g. members of the community), as well as the timeframe for completing the assessment. **Documentation** refers to collecting, compiling and compiling relevant information/documents (e.g. birth certificates) into a consolidated file. It is a continuation of the registration process and not a separate undertaking. For more information see section 3.2.3 and 3.5 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.



Sub-section 4.1.4. Information Management – refers to the organising and managing of personal information using an electronic database. In refugee operations the primary case management information management tool is *proGres*, particularly the child protection module of *proGres* v4. Operations that are not using *proGres* v4 may temporarily use an excel tracking sheet or other data management system. The procedures for using *proGres* v4 child protection module should be described in the relevant SOPs. For more information see section 3.5 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.1.5: Case Planning / Care Plan – a case plan or care plan will be based on the assessment of the child’s case. It identifies actions to meet the identified needs, who should do it, and when the actions should take place. It should also include a plan for routine monitoring of the child’s situation, with frequency depending on the risk level and the needs of the child. This section describes the key steps in the developing a care plan. For more information see section 3.2.4 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Section 4.2: Response Services

The type of response will depend on the assessment of the child’s situation and the risks that they face, i.e., response to the child’s protection needs will be based on the outcome of the BIA. In most instance a combination of interventions will be required. Although, for the purpose of clarity, each intervention/response is discussed separately in the SOPs.

When describing each response, the SOPs should clearly state what is actually to be done, rather than what is ideal/expected in each instance. It must also state that interventions often do not follow a linear path as listed in the SOPs.

The SOPs Template includes the following sub-sections. Those not relevant to the operational context may be removed, while additional actions/interventions may be added as new sub-sections. The sequencing of sub-sections may also be changed depending on the operational requirement.

For more information see section 3.2.5 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.2.1: Alternative Care – describe the actions and follow-ups relating to alternative care for unaccompanied and separated children. Further information can be found in UNHCR’s Child Protection Issue Brief on Alternative Care¹³, the Inter-agency Alternative Care in Emergencies (ACE) Toolkit¹⁴, Handbook and Toolkit on Unaccompanied and Separated Children¹⁵, UNHCR’s Guidelines on Supervised Independent Living for Unaccompanied Children¹⁶, as well as section 3.8 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.2.2: Restoring Family Links / Family Tracing and Reunification – describe the roles and responsibilities relating to Restoring Family Links (RFL) and/or Family Tracing and Reunification (FTR). Often the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is an important actor in this process. The ICRC, however, may not be an active participant in and a signatory to the BIP SOPs. This section should therefore not only describe the procedures relating to RFT/FTR, but also how the response will be collaborated with the ICRC. This section should also make a link to Section 5 of the SOPs as in some instances a BID may be required prior to initiating FTR.

13 UNHCR, *Child Protection Issue Brief on Alternative Care*, 2014, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/52f0e4f34.pdf>.

14 Interagency Working Group on UASC, *Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit*, 2013, available at: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/alternative-care-emergencies-toolkit>.

15 Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, *Handbook on Unaccompanied and Separated Children and Toolkit on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, both available at: <https://alliancecpha.org/en/uasc>.

16 UNHCR, *Guidelines on Supervised Independent Living for Unaccompanied Children*, 2021, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/61bc48844/guidelines-supervised-independent-living-unaccompanied-children.html>.

Sub-section 4.2.3: Child Survivors of GBV – describe the specific actions and responsibilities for handling cases of child survivors of GBV. These actions will be linked to / coordinated with the actions and approaches outlined in the GBV prevention and response SOPs.

Sub-section 4.2.4: Medical Care – describe the actions and responsibilities for follow-up on children in need of medical attention. This section will refer to the Medical Referral SOPs if one is in use within the operation.

Sub-section 4.2.5: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support – describe the key actions, approaches and responsibilities relating to the provision of mental health and psychosocial support. Interventions may include community-based psychosocial programmes and psychosocial support through Child Friendly Spaces. Further information can be found in the IASC Guidelines on MHPSS in Emergencies¹⁷.

Sub-section 4.2.6: Legal/Judicial Aid – describe the type of legal support a child should receive, and the actor responsible for this service. Children may require legal advice, representation and guidance in the following instances:

- The child is a survivor of violence, abuse, neglect and/or exploitation (prosecution)
- The child is alleged to have committed a criminal or delinquent act (defence)
- The child has not been granted refugee status during the RSD process
- The child is the subject of a custody claim
- The child is being considered for resettlement

Sub-section 4.2.7: Education and Vocational Training – children at risk, child survivors and their families may be referred for educational or vocational training. Steps that support enrolment/reenrolment in schools, catch-up education or vocational training are described in this section.

Sub-section 4.2.8: Material Support – in certain situations, targeted material support may be required. This describes/refers to the criteria for providing additional support, responsibility for providing support and timeframe for delivery, and the importance of involving community groups/structures from the outset. Such targeted support may include:

- Food ration and/or wet feeding, including nutrition
- Shelter or renovation of shelter
- Non-food items (NFIs)

Sub-section 4.2.9: Livelihoods – livelihood support can facilitate recovery and reintegration. Livelihood support may be provided to families caring for UASC and other children at risk, as well as unaccompanied children in supervised independent living arrangements. This section will describe the agency responsible for providing livelihood support, and the mechanism for referral. For more information also refer to the UNHCR Guidance on Promoting Child Protection Outcomes Through Cash-Based Interventions¹⁸.

Sub-section 4.2.10: Transition to Adulthood – these measures are specific to unaccompanied and separated children, specifically those in supervised independent living arrangements, or are in

¹⁷ IASC, *Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies*, 2007, available at: http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_psychosocial_june_2007.pdf.

¹⁸ UNHCR, *Guidance on Promoting Child Protection Outcomes Through Cash-Based Interventions*, 2021, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/60d43f824.pdf>.

community-based group care or in foster care. This section should describe to the specific planning, preparation and support to be provided to children who will (within a stated timeframe) become adults. For further guidance, also see section 4.6 of the UNHCR Guidelines on Supervised Independent Living for Unaccompanied Children.¹⁹

Sub-section 4.2.11: Reintegration – reintegration must involve the refugee community, as it not only encompasses specific interventions targeting the children, but also creating a safe and accepting environment for them (particularly children associated with armed forces/groups, children who had been in conflict with the law, and/or survivors of SGBV). Steps may include:

- Community mobilisation
- Meetings with community elders
- Appointing a community member as a guardian to the child/family

Sub-section 4.2.12: Durable Solutions – some cases may require UNHCR and partners to identify durable solutions for the child and their family. Where durable solutions are being explored for a child and their family the case will normally be referred to the relevant unit or authority (e.g., national authorities, UNHCR resettlement unit. This section should describe how durable solutions will be explored and responsibilities for follow-ups.

Section 4.3: Monitoring, Case Review and Case Closure

BIP must include a robust system of monitoring. Cases should be reviewed regularly through a well-defined and agreed process, while cases may only be closed when outcomes of the case plan have been achieved or under specific conditions as defined in the SOPs.

Sub-section 4.3.1: Monitoring – this section describes the specific responsibilities relating to case monitoring (usually by the child’s caseworker). The child’s individual case file must be updated if new developments are noted.

For more information see section 3.2.5, 3.2.6 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.3.2: Case Review and Case Conferencing Meetings – case review meetings and case conferencing facilitate coordination between actors involved in the response and follow-up of child protection cases. This section should include reference to a specific committee that may advise/guide the implementation of BIP for children at risk that should already be in place or should be established. This section should also include information regarding:

- The purpose of the meeting (e.g. to assess the status of cases, agree on next steps, agree on case closure, etc.)
- The frequency and venue of meetings (setting dates and times will ensure that the process is formalised, and allow for preparation)
- The meeting participants (the selected participants should be staff who are authorised to make decisions on individual cases)
- The documentation of decisions and circulation of minutes (remember that no information that can be used to identify children should be included in the minutes for purposes of confidentiality)

¹⁹ UNHCR, *Guidelines on Supervised Independent Living for Unaccompanied Children*, 2021, available at: <https://www.unhcr.org/protection/operations/61bc48844/guidelines-supervised-independent-living-unaccompanied-children.html>.

For more information see sections 3.2.5 and 3.2.6 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.4.3: Case Transfer – children and their families/caregivers may move from one geographical area to another. This may include move between camps, relocation to another part of the country of asylum, return to the country of origin, or resettlement in a third country. In some instances, the responsibility for managing a case/cases may be transferred from one agency to another. In such cases, any open child protection case should be transferred to the relevant actor for continued follow-up and support. This section of the SOPs should specify the mechanism for case transfer, with specific reference to the data protection and information sharing protocols. Nothing in this SOPs will override any formal agreement between UNHCR and its partners. Additionally, the decision to transfer cases must also be based on the child’s best interests.

For more information see section 3.2.7 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 4.3.4: Case Closure – the decision to close cases should be made on the basis of reaching the protection outcomes set out during the assessment process and documented in a child’s case plan (see [sub-chapter 4.1.5](#) for further information on case planning). The case closure procedure must include a review of the child’s status and confirmation of family and community support in ensuring the child is safe from further harm or new risks.

Case closure steps include:

- Initial recommendation by child protection staff member with responsibility for implementing BIP; this may be based on a request by the BIP committee (case management committee).
- Assessment of the recommendation by relevant field staff
- BIP Committee review of the recommendation and determination to close the case
- Consultation with the child, their family and relevant community members (e.g. leaders) throughout the process, and communication of the decision regarding case closure
- Updating of the child’s individual case file

For more information see section 3.2.7 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

SECTION 5: BEST INTERESTS DETERMINATION

Section 5.1: Best Interests Determination (BID) Process

Best Interests Determination (BID) describes the formal process with strict procedural safeguards designed to determine the child’s best interests for particularly important decisions affecting the child. It should facilitate adequate child participation without discrimination, involve decision-makers with relevant areas of expertise, and balance all relevant factors in order to assess the best option.²⁰

If a BID SOPs is already in place and in use, this section of the BIP SOPs should refer to it and the existing BID SOP be annexed. If no BID SOPs are in place, the below information can be used to guide the drafters in outlining BID process. Depending on when the existing BID SOPs were developed, it may require revision in order to ensure that it is aligned with the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

²⁰ UNHCR, *2021 Best Interests Procedure Guidelines: Assessing and Determining the Best Interests of the Child*, available at: <https://www.refworld.org/docid/5c18d7254.html>.

! Some parts of this section are pre-filled, but should be revised/updated according to operational context. Refer to the 2021 BIP Guidelines for guidance

Sub-section 5.1.1: Situations Requiring a BID – primarily based on the BIP Guidelines, this section provides a brief contextualised summary of when a BID is required.

For more information see sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.1.2: Roles and Responsibilities for Implementing the BID Process – this section provides an overview of the functions/roles required to implement the BID process. This section should also refer to the relevant Annex of the SOPs containing the TORs for the roles. The main roles are: BID Supervisor, BID Reviewing Officer (if different from the BID Supervisor), and caseworkers.

For more information see section 5.1 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.1.3: Composition and Responsibilities of the BID Panel – this section describes the purpose, composition and responsibilities of the BID panel. The frequency of meeting and how meetings are convened must also be described. The SOPs will reiterate that the members of the panel will sign and adhere to the provisions of the ‘Undertaking of Confidentiality’ agreement.

For more information see section 5.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.1.4: Collecting Information & Preparing the BID Report – this section describes the processes of and responsibility for collecting information (e.g. through reviewing the child’s BIA, interviewing the child and other persons in the child’s network, home visits, consultations with relevant experts, etc.). Collecting information is usually the responsibility of the child’s caseworker. BID Reports are compiled in the BID Report Form.

For more information see section 5.1 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.1.5: Reviewing BID Reports & Submission to the BID Panel – this section explains the role of the BID Reviewing Officer, i.e. reviewing the BID Reports submitted by the caseworkers. The purpose of the review is to:

- Assess quality and clarity of the report, including consistency of information
- Review proposed recommendation/s, ensuring clarity by requesting additional information or clarification if necessary
- Ensure that the BID report is signed

Reviewed BID Reports should be submitted to the BID panel. This is done by the BID Supervisor. This section of the BID should explain how the reports are circulated, and when it would be circulated (e.g. electronically or in print, one week before the panel meeting).

For more information see section 5.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.1.6: Panel Decisions-making Process – this section outlines the procedure for BID panel decision-making. Suggested consideration include:

For more information see section 5.2 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.1.7: Implementing the BID Decision – this section describes how BID decisions will be implemented, clarifies the roles, responsibilities and timeframes for completion. Interventions such as the removal of a child from abusive families (separation of the child from their parents) or durable solutions must be clearly articulated. Some of the services recommended by the BID process can be linked to [section 4.2](#) of the SOPs which describes the response and follow-up services. Where implementation is referred to a different agency or a different unit within an agency, the child’s caseworker will need to liaise with the concerned staff and ensure that the child and their family is kept informed of the process. There should be regular monitoring of the child’s case, as well as whether the child has received the services recommended by the BID process.

Sub-section 5.1.8: Reopening a BID Decision – this section describes the procedure and circumstance under which a BID decision may be reopened. For instance, the BID decisions are normally reopened by the BID Supervisor as described in the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

This section must also describe the process by which the case will be reviewed, collection of additional information, updating the BID Report, and submission to the BID panel.


For more information see section 5.4 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Section 5.2: Simplified BID Process

Undertaking and completing a BID should not be rushed, as the outcome of each BID will have far-reaching consequences for the child. However, in some situations, the process may have to be expedited, and thus require an element of simplification. Establishing and employing a Simplified BID process does not mean that the standards and quality of process is diminished. Instead, only the decision-making process is simplified. The simplified BID process should only be used in exceptional situations.

This section of the BIP SOPs describes the situation that require the use of a simplified decision-making process, responsibility and process of deciding whether and when to employ a simplified process, and the procedures of a simplified BID process.

For more information see section 5.3 of the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

 Some parts of this section are pre-filled but should be revised/updated according to operational context. Refer to the 2021 BIP Guidelines.

Sub-section 5.2.1: Situations in which a Simplified BID Process will be Employed – this section describes when a simplified BID process may be employed.

Sub-section 5.2.1: Decision to Trigger and Employ a Simplified BID Process – this section describes the process of deciding when to trigger and employ a simplified BID process.

Sub-section 5.2.3: Collecting Information, Preparing the BID Report, & Report Review – information collection, report drafting, and review must ensure the same standard as in a full BID as described in sections 5.1.4 and 5.1.5 of the SOPs.

Sub-section 5.2.4: BID Panel & Decision-making Process – this section explains the composition of a BID panel when a simplified BID process is employed, and how decisions are made.

Sub-section 5.2.5: Implementing the Decision – the implementation of BID decisions should be expedited. It is particularly urgent in the cases where a simplified BID process is employed. This section should state the roles and responsibilities for implementing the decision.

SECTION 6: SIGNATURES

The final version of the BIP SOPs should be reviewed and approved by the Heads of Agencies participating in the development and implementation of the SOPs. The SOP Coordinator may organise a meeting to present the final document. Upon approval, the document will be signed and dated by the heads on behalf of their respective agencies.

SECTION 7: ANNEXES

Annexes to the SOPs should contain documents and forms that are relevant to its implementation. These may include, but are not limited to, those listed below. Some of these are available in UNHCR BIP Toolbox – links to these are provided in the table of suggested annexes below:

What to annex	Where to find it
Definitions of Terms	Click here to access the attached file
Glossary of Guiding Principles	Click here to access the attached file
Service Providers/Focal Points Contact Information	Click here to access the attached file
Prioritisation & Vulnerability Criteria Tool	Click here to access the attached file
Prioritisation & Case Sensitivity Criteria Tool	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
Protection Referral Form	Click here to access the attached file
Short Best Interest Assessment (BIA) Form	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
Comprehensive Best Interest Assessment (BIA) Form	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
Best Interest Determination (BID) Report Form	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
BID Focal Points Contact Information	Click here to access the attached file
BID Panel Meeting Minutes Template	Click here to access the attached file
BIP Flow Chart (option 1)	Click here to access the attached file
BIP Flow Chart (option 2)	Click here to access the attached file
BIP Flow Chart (option 3)	Click here to access the attached file
Referral Pathway Dissemination Flyer (Template)	Click here to access the attached file
TOR – BID Supervisor	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
TOR – BID Coordinator	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
TOR – BID Reviewing Officer	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox
TOR – Caseworker	Click here to access the BIP Toolbox

4. PLANNING WORKSHOP GUIDE

4.1. INTRODUCTION

SOPs for the Implementation of Best Interests Procedure for Children at Risk (BIP SOPs – also referred to as the child protection case management SOPs), are a set of written instructions that guides the actions and ensure that principles, approaches and best practice are upheld when responding to the protection needs of children at risk.

A good SOPs are those which are developed and agreed upon by actors providing direct and indirect child protection services. The quality and the usability of the SOPs also depend on the process through which they are developed: open discussion, joint identification of key challenges, foresight, building on the knowledge and expertise of relevant actors at all levels, and agreement on the shared roles and responsibilities, as this ensures ownership

This chapter of the BIP SOPs Toolkit describes how to organise and manage such a planning workshop. The details serve as suggestions only, and workshop organisers should expand and contextualise what follows as required.



4.2. PARTICIPANTS AND DURATION

Ideally, all actors providing services to children should be part of the workshop. However, the invitee list should be compiled based on the operational requirement. Participants should be those who are both decision-makers as well as those engaged in operational-level service delivery.

It is important to ensure that the following actors are represented in the planning workshop (see section 3.4.1 on Partnerships for BIP – 2021 BIP Guidelines):

- National agencies and authorities responsible for child protection, social welfare and family affairs;
- NGOs (both national and international), including implementing partners as well as other operational partners that play a role child protection in the operational area;
- Community associations and leadership groups as appropriate;
- UN agencies (specifically, UNICEF).

In order to facilitate interactive participation and contribution those attending the workshop, it is preferred that the number of participants does not exceed 30.

4.2.A. Duration of the workshop

The proposed duration of the workshop is one full working-day, including lunch and refreshment breaks.

4.2.B. Documenting the outcomes and decision

The facilitator will compile and distribute the minutes of the workshop. This should normally be done within one week of the workshop. The minutes will highlight the process, and the key decision (e.g., the next step, persons responsible for follow-ups and timeframe).

4.3. PREPARATION

The following preparatory steps are to be undertaken by the SOPs Coordinator.

- Consult within the child protection coordination mechanism and/or with heads of agencies, and agree on the need for a workshop
- Agree on a date in consultation with potential participants
- Identify a funding source/budget line to cover the workshop cost (see below for sample budget)
- Identify and book a venue
- Send formal invitation to all actors (follow-up by meeting with Heads of Agencies, if necessary)
- Share copies of existing SOPs, and request participants to review the existing SOPs prior to the workshop

4.3.A. Resources requirement

Venue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A venue that is large enough to seat up to 30 participants • The venue should include adequate space for group-work (separate room, sheds or tents)
Refreshments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunch • Coffee/Tea and snacks (for coffee/tea break) • Water
Stationary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flipchart paper (avoid using white boards – notes made on flipchart paper will be useful during the drafting process) • Notebooks • Pens • Marker pens • A4 paper
Additional considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpreters • Actor/Resource matrix on a flipchart (prepare before the workshop) (see Annex: Service Providers/Focal Points Contact Information) • Copies of case studies (see attached Case Studies for Planning Workshop) • Copies of pre-existing SOPs (about five copies of each) • Copies of SOP Template (about two copies per group – used during group work) • PowerPoint: Child Protection Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) (see attached sample PowerPoint presentation)



4.3.B. Sample Budget Format

This is a sample budget that will assist the SOP Coordinator organise the SOP Planning Workshop.

The 'source' column is used, if collaborating agencies choose to share the cost.

No.	Item	Quantity	Amount	Total	Source
	Venue				
	Refreshments				
	Lunch				
	Notebooks				
	Pens				
	Marker pens				
	A4 Paper				
	Flipchart paper				
	Printing/Photocopying				
	Communication				
	Transportation				
	Stipend* (*if required)				

4.4. WORKSHOP GUIDE

Time	Topic	Details
08:30-09:15	Introductions and Objectives of Workshop	<p>Purpose: Participants and facilitators establish a working relationship with each other, and become familiar with the background and knowledge each individual brings to the process.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slide 2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitators and participants introduce themselves. It is assumed that most participants will know each other. <p>If this is the case: simply ask each person to stand up and state their name, agency and what areas of child protection they are responsible for.</p> <p>If some of the participants are not familiar with each other, consider asking each participant to interview the one seated next to them, and present their name, agency, responsibility.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. ICE-BREAKER: Distribute flipchart papers to each table and ask each group to quickly sketch a scene of an event/activity/ location within the camp (or community) which brings a smile to a child's face. Once done, each group (everyone seated around the table) comes forward and present their drawing to the rest of the participants. 3. Facilitator introduces the objective of the workshop: “Jointly developing an outline of key steps linked to the BIP SOPs in the area of operation”. 4. Facilitator reminds participants that they not only represent their own organisation, but are participating as experts in their own field for the benefit of all children. 5. Identify a volunteer or volunteers to draft the workshop minutes in support of the facilitator.
09:15-09:30	Introduction to Child Protection	<p>Purpose: Establish a foundational knowledge of child protection and children at risk, and to link child protection with international, regional and national legal frameworks/guiding principles</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slides 3 to 5</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brief introduction to the concept of child rights and child protection. 2. This session needs to be customised to the knowledge and background of the workshop participants. 3. Make the session as interactive as possible as this information will guide the rest of the workshop. Consider allocating more time and using flipcharts to brainstorm risks etc.)

Time	Topic	Details
09:30-10:15	Guiding Principles & Legal Frameworks	<p>Purpose: Reach a common understanding between participants on the fundamental principles that will guide their actions when addressing the needs of individual children at risk.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slide 6</p> <p>In their groups (around their tables), the participants are asked to formulate and write down (on separate flipchart papers) a list of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> key guiding principles that are relevant to child protection prevention and response activities national and international legal frameworks that are pertinent to child protection in the area of operation <p>Ask one group to come forward present their list, which the facilitator will write on the flipchart. The other groups are invited to question, comment on and add to the list.</p> <p>The facilitator should introduce some of the key principles that the participants did not suggest.</p>
10:15-10:45	Taking Stock	<p>Purpose: Take stock of the challenges children face, available resources and opportunities to address the needs of children at risk, and how existing SOPs facilitate actions to address the needs of individual children at risk.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ask participants to discuss with each other around their table and identify risks children face in the operational area. Each table is asked to state what they have identified: this is listed on a flipchart Display the Actor/Resource matrix so that it is visible to all participants. Ask the participants to randomly state which agency is responsible for specific services, allowing them to discuss amongst each other. The facilitator ticks the corresponding grids, and ensures all are in agreement before moving to the next point Ask participants to list the existing SOPs, under each, note the actors involved in its implementation <p>Display the three flipchart papers around the conference room so that participants can easily refer to them during the rest of the workshop.</p>
10:45-11:00	Coffee / Tea Break	

Time	Topic	Details
11:00-11:45	SOPs, Objectives and Structure of the SOPs document	<p>Purpose: Explain what SOPs are, and how they will be developed and used. Jointly develop the objectives of the SOPs and agree on the structure.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slides 7 and 8</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce the purpose and use of SOPs and set out how the rest of the workshop will be the basis for developing BIP SOPs for the area of operation 2. Ask the participants to work in their groups and propose the key points that will form the objective of the Child Protection SOPs. Allow the participants up to 15 minutes to discuss and develop their ideas. Each team will present their points, which will be written on a flipchart. <p>The facilitator will then sum up these ideas into a set of objectives, which will be properly articulated during the drafting process.</p>
11:45-12:30	Case Study	<p>Purpose: To establish the foundation for group-work on the content of the SOPs.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slide 9</p> <p>Distribute the copies of the cases to each group (click here to access the attached sample case studies – these should be reviewed and contextualised prior to the workshop). Ask the participants to review the cases and identify the main child protection risks and challenges which are described.</p> <p>Once the groups have identified the main child protection risks and challenges, distribute the SOPs Template (two copies per group should suffice) and ask the participants to consider whether the headings can provide them the outline necessary for describing appropriate actions to address the protection need of the child at risk.</p> <p>NOTE: if necessary, changes can be made in order to make the Template relevant to the operation.</p> <p>NOTE: small groups work best, a maximum of 8 persons per group is recommended.</p>

Time	Topic	Details
12:30-13:15	Prioritisation & Sensitivity Criteria	<p>Purpose: To agree on the Prioritisation and Sensitivity Criteria to be used when considering children in need of BIP.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slide 10</p> <p>Using PowerPoint slide 10, give participants a brief of introduction to Prioritisation and Sensitivity Criteria, highlighting why these are necessary and how they are used. Refer also to Chapter 3.2.2 (page 67-75) of the 2021 BIP Guidelines for further guidance.</p> <p>Divide participants into groups and distribute copies of the sample Prioritisation & Sensitivity Criteria provided in the BIP SOPs Template (Section 3).</p> <p>Each group reviews the sample Prioritisation & Sensitivity Criteria, and using flipcharts, will list the changes they wish to make (a note-taker in each group will separately take note of the reasons for the change).</p> <p>Gallery Walk: The note taker will remain with the flipchart (at the groups' table). The other members of the group will rotate clock-wise to the next group's table, where they will review the suggestion of the group, discuss with the note taker and make additional suggestions.</p> <p>The note takers will share their notes and flip charts with the SOPs drafters.</p>
13:15-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:30	Group Work on Content of SOP	<p>Purpose: Brainstorm and develop specific actions to address the needs of children at risk and identify roles and responsibilities for intervention and follow-up.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slide 11</p> <p>In their groups, the participants will develop specific actions to address each of the protection and assistance need of individual children at risk. They will also identify and describe the staff/agency responsible for implementing these actions.</p>
15:30-15:45	Coffee/ Tea Break	

Time	Topic	Details
15:45-16:45	Plenary	<p>Purpose: Allow ideas for actions developed by each group to be presented, debated and agreed.</p> <p>In plenary, each group presents the actions they have identified during the previous group activity.</p> <p>The facilitator should take extensive notes and guide the process. Once the groups have made the presentation, the facilitator will present an outline the compiled set of actions, as they will be drafted into the SOPs. The participants will then be asked to comment on these.</p>
16:45-17:15	Next step	<p>Purpose: Agree on next step in the process.</p> <p>Show: PowerPoint – Slide 12 and 13</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> The facilitator outlines the next step in the SOP development process, and agrees on timeframes for completion together with the participants. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translate the outcomes of the Planning Workshop into a user-friendly SOP document Stress the importance of active involvement and support from child protection focal points within each agency/organisation Field testing and updating Review and approval by Heads of Agencies Dissemination (including responsibility and translation into other languages) Review and revision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree on the frequency for reviewing the SOPs (ideally every six months) Who should be involved in the review process (for instance, the child protection focal points from each collaborating agency) Agreeing on whether a revision is required (present the checklist provided in chapter 2.7 of this BIP SOPs Toolkit, and update it based on suggestion from the participants)
17:15-17:30	Wrap-up	Final comments from facilitators.

