



***ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for
the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable
Children on the Move and Young Migrants***

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	3	Preface
Introduction	6	Introduction
	10	Vulnerabilities of children
	11	What do children need?
	12	Conceptual framework of vulnerability
	14	Representation of action for the care of the child
The Standards	15	Eight steps for the quality care of children
	19	General guidelines
	21	1. Identification
	31	2. Emergency Care
	43	3. Study of personal situation
	53	4. Family tracing and assessment
	63	5. Alternative placement
	75	6. Social and professional reintegration
	85	7. Follow-up and monitoring
	95	8. Family and community support
Annexe	105	Glossary



Preface

The goal of child protection is to promote, protect and fulfil children's rights to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other human rights, humanitarian and refugee treaties and conventions, as well as national laws. Every child in the ECOWAS region has the right to be protected and his/her welfare promoted – whoever he/she is, and wherever he/she might be. It is up to us to ensure that this is a reality regardless of whether the child is in his/her country of origin or might have migrated to another country.

Delivering child protection results in crosscultural and religious contexts are particularly challenging. Part of the responsibility of the implementing organisation is to challenge cultural and religious practices that are harmful to children. There is the need to do this in a way that does not stereotype the whole social group and/or alienate the implementing organisation; and also to identify, acknowledge and engage other incountry groups that campaign to change many practices such as child marriages, female circumcision, child labour and other practices that are harmful to children.

The "West African Network for the protection of children (WAN) Standards" have been put in place to overcome these challenges. These Standards were promulgated in November 2011 by the Steering Committee of WAN with support from the Swiss Foundation of the International Social Service (ISS). The West African Network for the protection of children (WAN), a network of governments, civil society organisations, individuals and other actors working in the different countries, recognised and supervised by ECOWAS, is the referral mechanism for the protection of Children on the Move in West Africa.

In December, 2015 in Abuja, Nigeria, during the annual Steering Committee meeting WAN was recognised as a viable mechanism for transnational protection and care of children and the Standards developed by WAN were validated by ECOWAS member states and thus the birth of the ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants. The suggested actions in the document focus on the child as the centre of all concerns and his/her family/community as being of utmost importance for the development

and welfare of the child. In addition, the child is considered a whole person, and his/her resources, opinion and relationships are also considered.

The eight steps identified to support the child in the document have been integrated into the ECOWAS Child Protection M&E framework and in its Guidelines for implementation. It was in realisation of the need to practice these Guidelines based on ratification of relevant treaties and creation of effective legal framework both at the national and local levels; harmonisation of legal Instruments to accommodate the needs of Children on the Move; effective implementation of the laws at national and local levels; strengthening of policies and institutional frameworks; efficient provision of child care services to all children without discrimination; and maintaining international and regional co-operation, partnerships, networks and collaborations across the entire region, enabling all the member states attain the goals of child protection, that the Commission embarked upon the review of the ECOWAS Child Protection Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Implementation Guidelines.

The framework covers the identified areas of child protection in the ECOWAS Child Policy and Strategic Plan of Action. It specifies the various components and norms which should be put in place for an effective system of child protection. The M&E framework is aimed at assessing the impact and quality of the ongoing actions of ECOWAS member states in the spirit of the Action Plan and its

stipulated standards/norms; while the Implementation Guidelines take cognisance of every aspect that is required to build a desirable environment for children's wellbeing in the ECOWAS sub-region.

Protecting children and promoting their welfare is a collective activity and responsibility, and I am pleased to commend this Reference of Standards as an aide in delivering accountable, consistent and transparent practice in protecting children in West Africa. Our aspiration for children in this region as encapsulated in the ECOWAS Child Policy is that they will fulfil their potential and be healthy in every aspect of their lives, physically, emotionally and mentally. This vision can only be achieved with the co-operation of the relevant professions across the member states, ministries, departments, support services and communities. The vital work of social workers and other professionals together with technical partners in assessing risk and acting to protect vulnerable children is difficult and demanding. This Reference of Standards is designed as a quick reference guide to help support front-line practice. It sets out the key issues in the different stages of action – from identification, emergency care, assessment to intervention, referral through to re-integration. It has taken account of the recommendations of inquiries and case reviews, together with international research and best practices. It will also support policies, procedures and legislation in all the ECOWAS member states. These Standards are measurable, data-driven, practical and implementable.

This Reference of Standards builds on the skills as well as the resilience and determination of partners, organisations and agencies working together to put children first. It is a professional guide to help us be reliable and dependable partners and to ask the same of others. We should work assiduously towards protecting our children. Finally, I want to recognise the dedication, hard work and commitment of the many front-line social workers and other professionals who are challenged on a daily basis to provide quality services. They deserve the respect and support of the communities they serve. They should not be hindered from making the best intervention possible for children and families within West Africa.

The task for all of us who are dedicated to making West Africa safer for children is to use our professional skills, work together and offer accountable and consistent services.

I welcome you all to place our collective hands on deck.



Dr Fatimata Dia Sow

Commissioner, Social Affairs and Gender

Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants

Migratory movements are on the rise in an increasingly globalised world. A significant number of migrants are minors, sometimes accompanied but other times not. While migration contributes undeniably to the potential of human development through social, cultural or professional interactions, the conditions under which migration takes place today also cause adverse effects for the most vulnerable migrants, among them children.

In West Africa, thousands of children and young people leave their homes each year driven by a lack of access to education and basic health care or in order to seek a better future. Often

they are fleeing economic, social, cultural, political or climatic conditions that prevent them from growing up in a way that guarantees their rights or from envisioning a future.

Vulnerable and lacking protection from a family member or guardian, they are often victims of the violence of traffickers or people having bad intentions who exploit them for their bodies or labor. Many of these children are isolated and have no way to return to their families. Despite the growing numbers of these children, regional measures for the protection are still insufficient to meet their needs and ensure their rights.

A regional effort for the protection of children

Recognising the need to act, the countries of West Africa have decided to work together to improve the support provided to these children.

The operational cooperation between the countries in West Africa has gradually developed into a regional network of protection that covers the whole of ECOWAS space and Mauritania.¹

The primary mission of the West Africa Network for the protection of children (WAN) is the transnational protection of vulnerable children moving between countries of West Africa. The goal is their social reintegration, accompanied by measures enabling them to develop prospects for the future.

To achieve this goal, WAN was developed as a regional mechanism of cooperation between states and civil society actors of ECOWAS. Key principles of this cooperation include networking between the social actors, complementarity and the pooling of

human, material and financial resources of states, civil society and international partners.

WAN is a functional tool made available for the countries of West Africa that enables co-ordination between the national systems of child protection. It provides a framework and instruments to guarantee quality transnational support of children in need of reintegration, and facilitates co-ordination between the host country and country of origin or third countries.

The first criterion for the intervention of WAN is the identification of the child or young migrant in a vulnerable situation. Through the established co-operation mechanisms between actors, WAN can conduct family tracing and subsequent social evaluations – an essential precondition before any return of a child in the family environment.

¹*Year of integration in WAN – 2005: Senegal, Mali, Guinea Bissau; 2007: Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea; 2008: Niger; 2009: The Gambia; 2010 : Nigeria; 2011: Benin, Ghana, Togo; 2012: Capo Verde, Liberia, Sierra Leone; WAN collaborates with Mauritania since 2015*

A common procedure for support.

The procedure of support and the Standards proposed in this document are based on national and transnational practices of countries in the sub-region, as well as on experiences acquired from the reintegration of more than 6,000 children by dozens of civil society organisations within the West African Network in different countries of the region between 2005 and 2016. This document is seen as a practical tool to support professionals in their daily work, and provides guidance for listening to and working with children. It aims to get children to be participants in their own solutions. Finally, it intends to emphasise the responsibility and duty of all parties in society to ensure the

welfare of children, whether they are families, communities, teachers, traditional or religious authorities, entrepreneurs, NGOs or the State.

The procedure has eight steps for supporting the child, from the identification and protection of the child, and the follow-up of his/her reintegration, to the reinforcement of the socio-economic capacity of the family. Each step includes a standard to ensure the quality of support provided to the child.

The guiding principle is that “every child identified is unique, he or she should be orientated and accounted for”.

From Hope (an active member of the African Movement of Working Children and Youth AMWCY)

We have waited a long time for a world in which people come together to support and protect the interests of children like us.

The WAN Standards give us the opportunity to speak and be heard, and feel involved in the decisions about our journeys and our futures.

The eight steps contained in the Standards fulfil a clear and identifiable need in the ECOWAS region to treat every

child according to their needs – whatever their circumstances, and wherever they are.

And they ensure that all groups, individuals and stakeholders involved in the care and support of children and young people are guided by the same principles, and work together for the same goals.

This is also a document that helps us take care of our friends, by recognising what we all need as children and giving

us the guidance to make a contribution towards achieving it.

What we wish most is to see our footprint in the eight steps of Standards – for every member state and every contributing group or individual to put the needs of children at the centre. This can only happen if everyone uses the same tools to improve their understanding of all children and their unique circumstances and vulnerabilities, as well as their mobility and resources

Towards the harmonisation of minimum standards

The approach described in this document is based on evidence and experiences acquired from the transnational reintegration of more than 6,000 vulnerable children in West Africa over the last eleven years.

This document aims to be:

- a working method contributing to the harmonisation of the support of children, and ensuring that at each step of national or transnational reintegration, the bests interest of the child are taken into account,
- an encouragement to professionals to become interested in the child as a person, and to listen actively and support effective participation,
- an attitude aiming to apply an individual approach based on respect for the child, his/her skills as well as resources so that he/she can be an actor of his/her own life,
- a means of giving every child the right to a personalised reintegration that takes into account the development of his/her personality through social, educational or professional measures,
- a tool for professionals that enables them to ask themselves the right questions at every stage of supporting the child so that he/she will be treated with respect throughout his/her reintegration,
- a procedure for establishing a chain of actors made up of state services, NGOs, family and community to provide protective support to the child while being cared for and beyond, and
- a resource to support parents and the community, and to ensure that every child has a reference person who accompanies him/her with consideration and empathy.

Who are these vulnerable children involved in mobility, labour, exploitation and trafficking²?

Children on the move (especially at-risk groups, including young children, unaccompanied children and children exposed to dangerous or illegal forms of migration)

Children engaged in illicit work (factors that increase vulnerability include age, activities performed and whether or not the work is underground)

At-risk children or victims of exploitation (through work or sexually)

At-risk children or victims of trafficking (internal or trans-national)

Child victims of mistreatment and abuse (in households, workplaces or institutions where they are placed)

Children deprived of care and education (such privation may be the cause or the consequence of a departure)

Orphans, lost or abandoned children

Children living on the streets

Children affected by crises, disasters and conflicts (refugees, displaced persons, individuals associated with armed groups)

Child victims of early and forced marriages (early departure/forced by family and risk abuse/sexual exploitation and through work)

Child victims of minors in conflict with the law (entered into conflict during mobility and/or went into mobility due to a conflict)

Harmful traditional practices (FGM, forced marriages, discrimination of so-called 'child-witches', etc)

It should be taken into consideration that situations of vulnerability can occur at any point during the child's journey: before departure, during transit, at the destination or during his/her return to the place of origin or integration.

²Adapted from: *Project on Joint Regional Study on the Mobility of Children and Youths in West Africa*, "Which protection for children involved in mobility in West Africa," p. 56, 2012. Collective project by Terre des hommes Lausanne, Save the Children, Enda, MAEJT, BIT, OIM, UNICEF, Plan. Reproduced with authorisation.

What do children need?

Intellectual, mental and physical development of skills and resources in all areas of life, in the family, at school and during leisure

Protection against all forms of violence and abuse, humiliation and shame

Happy moments, positive experiences, self esteem

Respect and esteem for their environment of origin and their social history (cultural and religious)

An understanding of their life conditions to develop and strengthen their true identity

CHILD

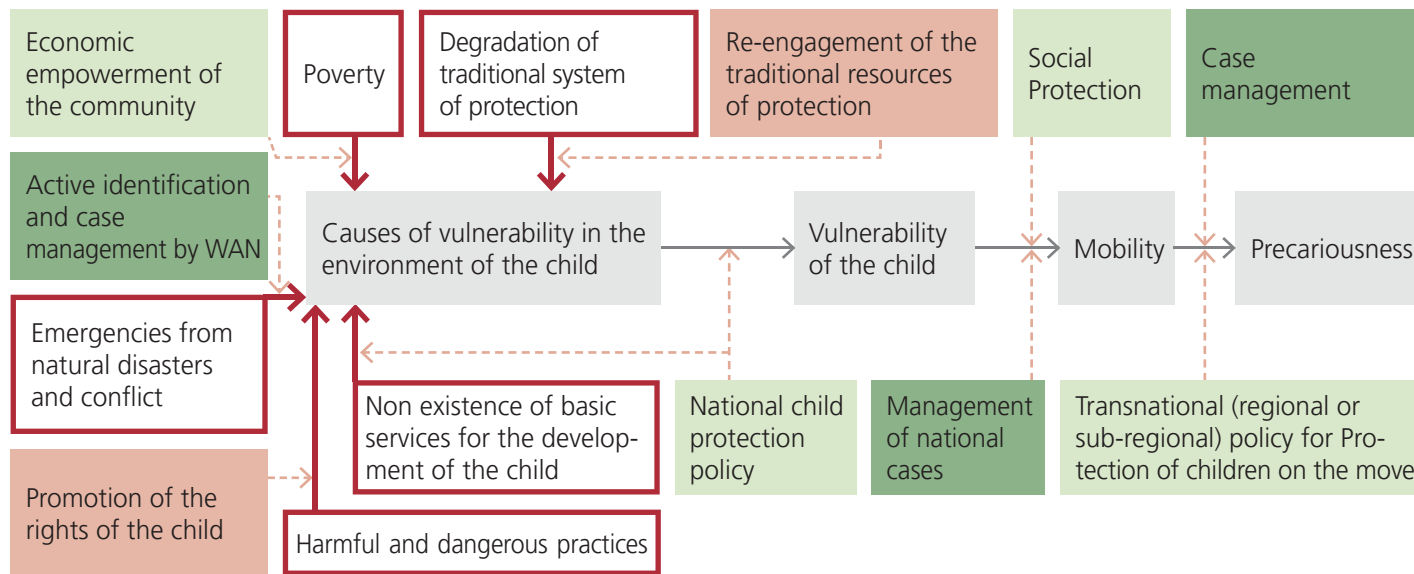
Strong and reliable relationships, close ties with other people, and with animals and nature

Certainty of being listened to, and that their opinion is taken into account in all procedures and decisions

Conceptual framework of vulnerability

The conceptual framework of vulnerability is centred on the vulnerability of children in mobility. It shows the natural course of events from the environment of the child to the precarious situation engendered by mobility. The conceptual representation of the intervention of WAN is as shown below:

WAN Model of Action of Vulnerability induced by mobility



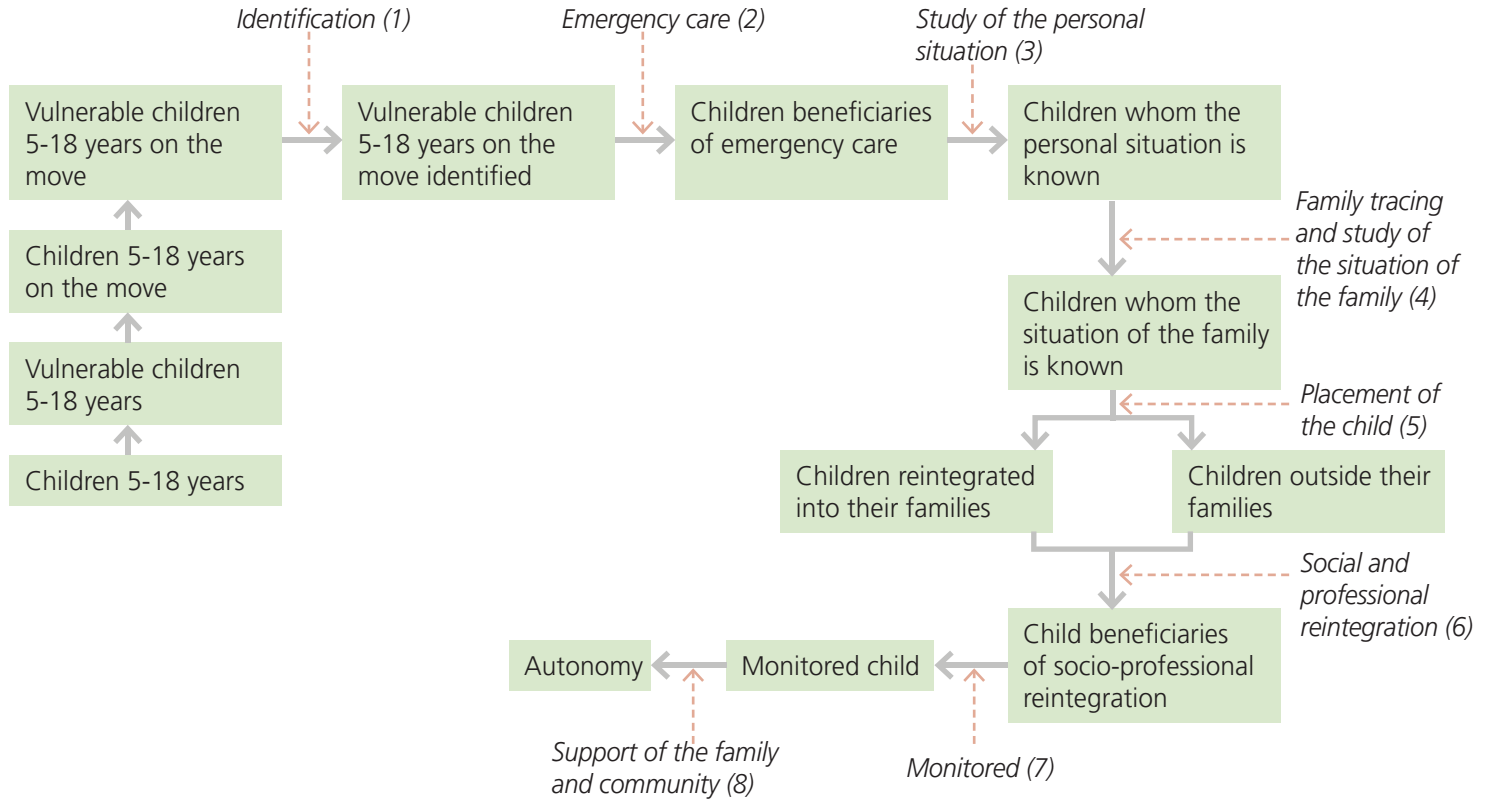
- Activities for the promotion of the rights of the child (community activities)
- Prevention activities (advocacy/economic empowerment/capacity building)
- Case management

- Natural course
- Contributing Factor
- - - - - Inhibiting Effect

The above framework is centred on vulnerabilities, that is, the problem faced by the child on the move. In order to deliver the packages of intervention described in this framework, there is a need for tools. These tools are the step-by-step operational activities to be undertaken to address different stages of vulnerabilities. The ISS has developed a manual for the promotion of rights of children and preventative activities at the household and community levels.

The tool for case management below is the ECOWAS Support Procedures and Standards for the Protection and Reintegration of Vulnerable Children on the Move and Young Migrants. It is a representation of action, as it focuses and depicts the movement of the beneficiaries in the intervention chain as well as the effectiveness of the services rendered as the beneficiaries move from one stage to the other. The representation of intervention provides a template for beneficiary-centred reporting as well as an evaluation tool for measurement of effectiveness of each intervention.

Representation of action for the care of the child



Eight steps for the quality care of children

- 1. Identification of the child**

- 2. Emergency support for the child**

- 3. Study of the personal situation of the child**

- 4. Assessment of the family and environmental situation of the child**

- 5. Alternatives for placement of the child outside his/her family**

- 6. Social, educational or professional reintegration of the child**

- 7. Monitoring of the child after the return to his/her family and/or community**

- 8. Family and Community Support**

The 8-step procedure: Definitions and who does what

Standards	Definition	Objective of the step	Who does it?	Some qualitative indicators	Some quantitative indicators
1. Identification	Process of detecting a vulnerable child.	To remove from child from the physical environment of vulnerability.	a. Law enforcement agencies b. Social workers c. AMYWC (MAEJT) d. Psychologist e. Health workers f. Teachers g. Vigilantes h. Any citizen i. Other children	1. The child fits the criteria of vulnerability. 2. The opinion of the child is respected.	1. Number of children passively identified. 2. Number of children actively identified. 3. Number of children identified by partners.
2. Emergency care	Meeting the immediate physical and psychological needs of the child in a safe environment.	To provide immediate succour, protection and security for the child.	a. Case (social) workers b. Law enforcement agencies c. Co-ordinators d. Medical facility e. Specialised agencies f. Ministry of children affairs g. Other social workers	1. The immediate needs of the child as regards physical and psychological needs are met. 2. A care giver is assigned to the child. 3. The child feels secured and protected. 4. The child is willing to share his/her story.	1. Number of children who benefitted from emergency care. 2. Number of children for whom guardians were assigned. 3. Number of children who needed medical care. 4. Number of children who needed other specialists care. 5. Number of children who stayed in the shelter for: < 10 days 10–20 days 20–30 days > 30 days
3. Study of the personal situation of the child	Process of listening to the personal history of the child.	To understand the circumstances (family, community and personal) that drove the child into vulnerability To facilitate tracing of the family of the child.	Case (social) worker in the country of identification of the child.	1. There is a conducive environment to discuss and listen to the child. 2. The child shares his/her story.	1. Number of children listened to. 2. Number of children whose personal situation is documented. 3. Number of children for whom guardians (peer or adult) were assigned.

4. Family tracing and assessment of the family and environmental situation of the child	Process of locating the family and evaluating the family and community circumstances of the child.	To locate the family and ensure safe return To make an informed decision on the appropriateness and the implications of returning the child to the family.	a. Case (social workers) in the country of origin of the child b. AMCYW (MAEJT)	1. A qualitative assessment of the family environment is carried out. 2. The opinion of the parents of the child is taken into consideration. 3. The suitability or contrary of the family environment is established.	1. Number of children whose families were traced before return. 2. Number of children whose family environments were conducive for their reintegration. 3. Number of children whose families were hostile to their return. 4. No of children whose families pose a risk (problems of alcoholism, physical abuse, or serious psychiatric problems in the family) to the wellbeing of the child.
5. Alternatives for placement of the child outside his/her family	The act of identifying suitable alternatives for placement of the child when the family environment is not conducive for reintegration.	To provide the most appropriate placement solution for the child taking his/her best interests into consideration.	a. Case (social) worker in the country of origin of the child working closely with the Ministry of Social Welfare and other relevant government authorities	1. The process of identification of alternative placement is discussed and agreed with the child. 2. The alternative placement is evaluated. 3. The child is willing to be placed in this new environment.	1. Number of children for whom alternative placements were considered. 2. Number of children placed in their extended families. 3. Number of children placed in foster care 4. Number of children placed in centres.
6. Social and professional reintegration of the child	process of reintroducing and stabilising the child within their family (or otherwise) environment and providing him/her with ageappropriate educational or vocational solution.	To set the child on an appropriate life course (to return childhood to the child and prepare him/her for an autonomous adulthood).	a. Case (social) worker in the country of origin of the child in close collaboration with the Ministry of Social Welfare and other relevant government authorities	1. The child participates in family life. 2. The child does not bed wet. 3. The child interacts and plays with his/her peers in the community. 4. The child is diligent in the execution of his/her life project.	1. Number of children who benefitted from formal educational reintegration. 2. Number of children who benefitted from vocational reintegration. 3. Number of children who benefitted from trading. 4. Number of children assigned guardians (peer or adults) in their communities. 5. Number of children with birth certificates. 6. Number of children for whom birth certificates were obtained.

7. Monitoring and follow-up	Process of visiting and supporting the child at regular intervals to find out their progress and development.	To ensure that the child stays on their chosen life course.	a. Case (social) worker b. AMCYW (MAEJT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is progress in the condition of the child. 2. The child has a network of friends among his/her peers. 3. There is progress in the life project of the child. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of children who benefitted from monitoring and follow-up at least every quarter. 2. Number of children whose destination is unknown after reintegration.
8. Family and Community Support	Process of supporting the family or the community of a reintegrated child in order to reinforce their capacity to meet the needs of the child as well as to provide sufficiently protective environment for his full development and the development of other children in the community.	To ensure a durable protection of the reintegrated child and other children in the community.	Case (Social) worker	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The family environment is sufficiently protective for the child and other children in the family. 2. There is a career plan for the other children in the family. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many families of reintegrated children benefitted from support? 2. How many members of the family benefitted from the support? 2. Number of supported families who have fully taken over the responsibility of meeting the needs of their children? 3. How many of the total number of siblings of the reintegrated child are in school?

General guidelines

Preamble

- Any intervention must be done in compliance with the legal and regulatory framework.
- The purpose of any intervention must be the rehabilitation and the reintegration of the child.
- The intervening party must take into account the background, culture and values of the child, family and environment.
- Any intervention must be aligned with the code of conduct.
- The children must be considered not only as victims in need of protection, but also as capable individuals with talents, resources, skills and solutions to remedy their situation.

1. Consider the child's interest in each of your actions
2. Remember that children and young people have the right to be respected (this includes respect for their physical, social, intellectual and emotional wellbeing).
3. Respect the cultural, religious and ethnic environment of any person with whom you work, no matter how different that could be from yours.
4. Show an exemplary behaviour that others are encouraged to follow.
5. Make sure that there is always more than one adult present during activities including children and young people, or activities should take place under the supervision of others.
6. Respect the right of children to personal privacy.
7. Create an atmosphere of trust in which children and young people can challenge attitudes or behaviours they dislike.
8. Observe the behaviour of each worker with the children.
9. Discuss your actions and direct contact with children.

10. Contest any inappropriate behaviour with children.
11. Report any suspicion or allegation of abuse.
12. Be extremely careful and cautious when discussing sensitive topics with children and young people (CONFIDENTIALITY)
13. Remember to observe the codes of conduct and the rules applied in the organisation where you work.
14. Children have the right to choose at what level they wish to have contact (except in a medical case).
15. Physical contact should be initiated by the child, not by the adult (except in a medical case).
16. Seek advice for any concern related to the behaviour of any adult with children.
17. Recognise and help discover the child's capacity and personal resources.
18. Make sure that children and young people know trustful adults (eg, co-ordinator at school, social services) whom they can contact in case a problem arises.
19. Talk to the children so they understand us and listen to them so they can talk.
20. Consult the children to share their ideas knowing they can be different from ours.

Mistakes to strictly avoid

1. Engaging in any inappropriate verbal communication with the child or the youth.
2. Having any inappropriate physical contact with child or the youth.
3. Allowing oneself or looking for inappropriate attitudes.
4. Uttering disparaging remarks or displaying negative attitudes to the child/youth or in the presence of the child/youth.
5. Drawing conclusions about third parties involved in the case without checking the facts.
6. Exaggerating or trivialising child abuse problems.
7. Showing favouritism to any individual child/youth.
8. Promoting your reputation or your job to protect yourself.
9. Taking an unwarranted risk when common sense, policy or practice suggests a more cautious approach.

STEP 1

IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHILD



STEP 1

IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHILD

Definition: Identification is the process of detecting a vulnerable child

Objective: To remove the child from the physical environment of vulnerability

Adjo*, an 11-year-old Togolese girl, found herself in Benin after a woman there promised her parents to find her a job. However, Adjo was the victim of labour exploitation and abuse from the woman, who used her as a 'house help' without pay and sometimes beat her. Adjo fled and lived on the streets before being found by a social worker from a WAN-partner NGO during one of their field visits.

To establish first contact with the child, the social worker introduced himself and explained his organisation's structure, mission and goals. He invited Adjo to do the same in return – where did she come from and why she was on the street? Withdrawn to begin with, Adjo began to feel more confident when she realised that the social worker listened carefully and made an effort to understand her situation. Losing any sense of shame or suspicion, Adjo began to trust the social worker.

**Fictional name*

Passive identification is when a child either walks into a shelter or looks for a social worker for protection. Reception of children intercepted by the authorities is also passive identification

Active identification is when case/social workers, AMWCY and others go out to possible places of exploitation of children and seek out vulnerable children. It is only through active identification that large numbers of vulnerable children are identified. Active identification is an important marker of performance of case (social) workers.

Actors and their roles

The child	The identification step includes a set of educational interventions to welcome and integrate the child, developed by the intervening party of a social or private institution. It ensures the right to protection against any form of abuse, violence and exploitation.
The family	When the family in charge of the child is confronted with serious problems, identification can serve as a support mechanism. The ultimate objective of this supportive approach is to fix and restore family ties so that the child can develop and reintegrate. Interventions must be planned, standardised and developed by a competent organisation.
The community	Among other community mechanisms, early warning committees are informal structures composed of people from the community who are made aware of this purpose and whose task is to identify the children who need protection. They are linked to a communal/regional service capable of intervention when necessary.
The professionals	The identification is conducted by legally recognised professionals who are able to identify children in vulnerable situations and support them. It is based on an empathetic approach and the development of a relationship based on dialogue and mutual trust. This will facilitate the identification of appropriate support for the child when the time comes.

Ethical frame

Motivate the child to find an alternative to his/her situation in a more protective environment

Consider the child as a unique person and treat him/her with dignity and respect at all times.

Examine the protection needs of the child (physical and emotional protection), ensure the satisfaction of his/her basic needs (accommodation, food, hygiene and education) and support a quick reintegration, if possible, in his/her family environment.

Assure the highest possible level of appropriate protection.

Consider the child in his/her psychological state and in the reality of the environment where his/her social relations are established.

Create a framework that allows the child to think about his/her situation and not only about his/her survival – for example, a day care centre and listening centre with trustworthy persons who listen to him/her in the medium term.

Know and respect the legal environment for child protection.

Psychological, medical and social support

Respect the specificities of the conditions of the child

First, ensure the basic needs of the child are met.

Show interest in the solutions proposed by the child. The strategy for action depends on the individuality of each child, including his/her personality and background.

Examine the vulnerability of the child.

Identify the risk factors affecting the child.

Study the situation of the child's family and community of origin.

All the above factors must be considered and analysed before determining the action to be taken.

Provide the child with support and opportunities so that he/she may escape his/her vulnerable situation.

Organise meetings with young people and ask them to share experiences of overcoming vulnerable situations.

Attitudes to be adopted by the persons responsible for the child

Reach out to the children in vulnerable situations to help them

Make sure that the best interests of the child are the criteria for any support.

Talk with and listen to the child in the places and at the moments where the child feels comfortable. If the child accepts the discussions and exchanges, this will facilitate the development of trust between the child and the social worker.

Establish a relation based on an empathetic approach and aim for dialogue and mutual trust.

At an appropriate moment, invite the child to go to a drop-in point, such as a centre or temporary shelter to begin the 'reintegration' process. Formalising the relationship sets the path to stabilising the child's situation.

Respect for the unique situation of the child (keeping in mind his/her development, as well as educational concerns) is of prime importance.

What should I think of during this phase?

What would motivate a child to accept the support process?

Listen to the child, find out about his/her situation and determine with him/her what would be in his/her best interests.

His/her present situation represents a great danger for the child.

His/her present situation no longer offers prospects for the future (the attractiveness of the freedom to live independently and without family support no longer exists).

An important aspect of support for the child is his/her participation in the process.

The effort needed to live in the situation is greater than the benefits obtained.

The child's friends support the reintegration project.

A meeting with one of the family members helps renew contact with the family.

Supporting the cognitive, emotional, physical and social development of the child is essential to help him/her achieve maximum potential.

Regular contact with social workers supports the child's reintegration into society.

Actively show interest in the solutions the child has already identified.

How did I ensure the child's participation during this phase?

What are my concrete actions?

Do not assume that you already know the child's potential and what is best for him/her.

Ensure the basic needs of the child

- food
- health
- hygiene

Regularly talk with the child and listen to his/her hopes and worries

Expose the child to opportunities away from the street

Organise peer group contacts with young persons who have a similar past

Organise workshops to think about the past, present and future

Ensure a close cooperation with community 'watch committees' and the police

Ensure cooperation with the centres

Try to understand the reasons children may choose to stay on the street on the street.

CHECKLIST FOR ACTIVE IDENTIFICATION

	Item	Tick		Specific Actions undertaken
		Done	Not done	
1	Identify places of congregations of children OR known places of exploitation of children.			
2	Observe the child from a distance.			
3	Evaluate his/her physical appearance.			
4	Approach the child respectfully.			
5	Engage the child in a friendly conversation.			
6	Ask open ended questions.			
7	Talk less, encourage the child to talk and listen carefully.			
8	Encourage the child to confide in you.			
9	Make sure the child understands you. If possible try to do at least the first interview in his/her native language.			
10	Find out about the child's nationality.			
11	Analyse the present situation of the child.			
12	Propose getting the child out of the vulnerable situation.			
13	Engage the necessary authorities by informing them.			

Mistakes to strictly avoid

1. The children are withdrawn from their situation against their will (the child does not accept the proposed solution).
2. Physical force or intimidation is employed in the withdrawal of the children from their situation.
3. The opinion of the child was not taken into account in the process of decision taking.
4. The proposed solution does not take into account the best interest of the child.
5. The basic needs cannot be satisfied.
6. The children have to stay in their situation of vulnerability because there is no other solution.
7. The children have been informed of their rights but have not been made aware of their duties.
8. The cooperation between professionals is not assured.

STEP 2

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR THE CHILD



STEP 2

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FOR THE CHILD

Definition: Meeting the immediate physical and psychological needs of the child in a safe environment

Objective: To provide immediate succour, protection and security for the child

After the death of her father, Akissi*, a 15-year-old Ivorian, wanted to help her mother take care of her younger siblings, so decided to quit school and go to Burkina Faso to find work.

In Burkina Faso, Akissi could not find work and was chased out of the room she shared with other girls after being unable to pay her rent. She met a man who offered to look after her but instead forced her into prostitution. Akissi was sometimes the victim of rape and abuse from the man. However, after being picked up for questioning during a police patrol, Akissi was referred to an NGO member of WAN who worked in child protection.

Akissi was placed in a shelter, where she was given emergency care. She was housed, clothed and fed, and her wounds were taken care of. Not surprisingly, the forced prostitution and physical abuse had taken their toll, so Akissi also received psychological support at the centre. The psycho-social care helped Akissi regain her confidence and self-esteem, and helped her accept her past and look positively to the future.

**Fictional name*

Actors and their roles

The child	Provide the child with psychological and medical care, as well as social services. Ensure the child's right to a dignified standard of living in all aspects, including food, health, clothing, hygiene, education and lodging.
The family	Support efforts to put the child in touch with his/her family or family alternatives and his/her community.
The community	Ensure the child's right to live in a family environment and to participate in community life.
The professionals	The individual responsible for support demonstrates professionalism and is very demanding towards himself/herself, particularly with regard to the legal framework. The person regularly seeks the view and perspectives of children, taking into account the maturity of the child. In addition, the professional collaborates with colleagues and others involved in the regional network.

Ethical frame

Each child is unique

Remember that the child is a unique person with dignity and demonstrate respect at all times.

Listen to the child and consider his/her potential as well as possible opportunities.

Take into account his/her age and maturity.

The organisation of emergency support must promote the physical and psychological development of the child.

Implement appropriate measures to reduce harmful factors that affect the child's development.

Ensure the highest possible level of protection.

Encourage the child to build a personal connection with his/her person of reference.

Respect the right of the child to confidentiality and privacy.

Seek the active participation of the child and take into account his/her views in any proposed decision or choice.

Support the child's autonomy.

The role of shelters in the management of children

The duty of centres is to welcome the child on a temporary basis. Children should be protected, ensured care and their development should be promoted when it is not possible to remain in an ordinary life environment. It is the duty of the centre to do the following:

Ensure the fundamental rights of the child with the aim to create the conditions for the future reintegration of the child with his/her family.

Receive children in an emergency case.

Provide support to the child on a temporary basis.

Integrate in the community and the nearby environment

Maintain each child's file that contains all the personal information concerning:

- The social investigation The judicial ordinance of placement
- The individualised intervention plan
- Any other information concerning the child

The child's file is confidential. The person of reference responsible for the child informs the child, parents and tutor. In certain cases and circumstances, the professionals in the field of child protection and the judge for minors can have access to the file.

The centre assures the satisfaction of essential needs:

- Lodging
- Nutrition
- Clothing
- Hygiene
- Healthcare
- Attention and affection
- Security
- Social and educational activities

Confidentiality mechanisms are put in place so that the child can express claims in a confidential manner

The personnel is recruited on the basis of professional criteria and moral aptitude

The personnel follows a code of conduct.

The administrative authority is responsible for the supervision of the centre.

An empathic approach is required as the child is welcomed to the centre

Each child must have a guardian (person of reference).

Each child must have regular meals, safe lodging, medical care and a stimulating environment.

The stay in the centre must not exceed 30 days during which time the study of the personal situation of the child and family tracing must have been completed.

During the stay, long-term social and professional opportunities are examined with the child and, if possible, with the family.

Psychological, medical and social support

The child has a right to privacy

Before placing a child in a centre, one must assess the possibility of support in a foster family (family alternatives, for which standards are also applicable). In each case, the child should have a private sphere.

The intervention must be planned: What is the intervention procedure needed by the child? It is absolutely necessary to operate as a network.

1) In the case of placement in a care centre, the minimum standards must be respected:

Make sure each child has his/her own bed (in small dormitories).

Guarantee separate rooms for girls and boys according to their age (children and young persons).

Identify separate areas to eat, study and play.

Assign each child a compartment where he/she can keep his/her personal belongings.

Ensure there are suitable separate toilet facilities for girls and boys.

Ensure that showers are taken separately (individually), and secure assisted baths.

Ensure there are protected outdoor spaces to play.

For a group of eight children, two animators/responsible adults in alternating care are needed to ensure the appropriate accompaniment of children during the day.

Ensure that there is one nurse per centre who co-operates with the regional medical services.

2) In the case of placement in a foster family, the minimum standards must be respected:

The arrival of the child is desired by all family members who live in the same space.

Regular, professional follow-up of the foster care situation is ensured

The child has an external person of reference to whom he/she can refer at any time and who regularly asks about the child

Attitudes to be adopted by the supervisors of the child

Live and co-operate with the children

All persons involved in supporting children must agree to the principle of personal commitment, ethics and professional responsibility in any action for and with the child.

All persons involved must adapt their practices to each child, taking into consideration his/her capacities, family background, life context, language, cultural heritage and community conditions.

All persons involved must inform and explain their role to children, as well as the role of their organisation, working methods and the possibilities for receiving support.

All persons involved must establish personalised relationships with the children within the legal framework.

The child must feel important for who he/she is and know that adults are interested in what s/he experienced and wishes to become.

All persons involved must encourage the children to freely express their opinions, preferences, anxieties and take these into account in the support process.

The child must be encouraged to learn a wide range of skills related to the local context.

The organisation of the day and of the activities with the children must be planned with the active participation of children and respond to the individual development of the children present at the centre.

An individual plan for each child must be developed with collaboration between the child and his/her reference person.

Work with the children is oriented around the past, present and future (dialogues, role plays, dreaming, artistic means, etc).

What should I think of at this stage?

Find out about the resources of the child (skills, wishes, persons of reference).

Develop an individual intervention plan.

Know the reasons why the child is no longer with his/her family.

Know the legal situation.

Ensure the satisfaction of his/her basic needs (housing, food, health and education).

What are the expectations of the child regarding his/her near future?

What are the expectations of the child regarding medium-term support?

Is the child part of a group in need of our support?

Ensure a personalised welcome (if possible, by the person of reference).

Explain to the child why he/she was admitted to the centre.

Teach the child about community life.

Introduce the child to the other residents and members of the team.

Organise a visit of the centre (possibly assign this task to a resident) and introduce all persons present during the visit.

Encourage the child to actively participate in the community life of his/her current place of living.

Develop a personal plan with the child for the first week (daily schedule, school activities, listening, leisure).

Develop a programme of socio-educative activities with the child. Through different exercises, show the child how to make contact, ask for help, remain calm, etc – and demonstrate how his/her attitude may influence the course of things.

Organise a medical check-up with trustworthy medical personnel.

The person of reference must be reachable all day and in regular personal contact with the child (empathetic and reciprocal).

Assign the child a responsibility compatible with the skills of his/her age. Inform and consult the child (if possible through his/her person of reference) about all actions that concern him/her. The child must feel as if he/she is important as an individual and that the person of reference is interested by what he/she lived and what he/she wishes to do.

Learn about the child's personality and history through activities and observation (during the activities, personal dialogues, and, if necessary, through psychological follow-up).

CHECKLIST

	Item	Tick		Specific Actions undertaken
		Done	Not done	
1	Is a trained social worker assigned to the child?			
2.	Is the child placed in an environment as close as possible to that of his/her home country?			
3	Does the child have access to some members of the community of nationals of his/her home country?			
4	Does the child have some privacy?			
5	Is the child given three meals a day?			
6	Does the child have fresh clothes?			
7	Does the girl child have sanitary pads?			
8	Does the child have enough water for his washing and drinking needs?			
9	Does the child have soap?			
10	Is the child in psychological distress?			
11	Have the medical needs of the child been met by taking him to see a health professional?			
12	Has the child seen a specialist?			
13	Has the representation of the child's country been contacted (embassies, consulates, etc)?			
14	Has the corresponding WAN partner in the child's home country been contacted?			

Mistakes to strictly avoid

1. No reference person has been appointed, or the person designated is not easily reachable.
2. The child is not being listened to and is not included in the decisions concerning him/her.
3. The child does not have the possibility to contact his/her parents.
4. The child is not informed about his/her rights.
5. Be aware of the risk of reducing the child to his/her problems and not treating the child as a whole individual.

STEP 3

STUDY OF THE PERSONAL SITUATION OF THE CHILD



STUDY OF THE PERSONAL SITUATION OF THE CHILD

Definition: Process of listening to and analysing the personal history of the child

Objective: To understand the circumstances (family, community and personal) that drove the child into vulnerability, and to facilitate tracing of the family of the child

“My name is Aliu* and I am from Guinea Bissau. I lived with my parents and siblings until my father decided to entrust me in the hands of marabout to learn Koran in Senegal. I was only seven years old.”

“In Dakar, life boiled down to begging and corporal punishment. Totally distressed by this situation, I ran away from the dara and found myself in the street before being directed to a shelter centre. I was afraid I would be sent back to back to the dara and I was suspicious of everyone.

“A gentleman at the centre often came to talk to me. He assured me that I would not be sent back to the dara and he could even help me return to my parents if I wanted. Finally, I told him about my misfortunes and he asked questions about life in my village, my parents, what I liked to do, etcetera. I told him of my desire to be enrolled at school while continuing with the Koranic studies. Like all children my age, I want to go to school. Discussing my life with someone who really understood me has not only helped to overcome my past, but has also given me great hope for my future for the first time.”

**Fictional name*

Actors and their roles

The child	The study of the personal situation aims to understand the child, including his/her life story, the main difficulties faced, available resources and aspirations. Each supported child has a personal plan that outlines the actions of support that will be conducted with him/her.
The family	The reasons for the child's vulnerability and the separation from his/her family are to be explored and understood in order to provide improved response related to the family and home environment.
The community	The evaluation with the child of available structures, persons and inter-personal relationships is important for the child's development.
The professionals	The study of the personal situation is not conducted by way of interrogation, but it is realised step-by-step, at the pace dictated by the child. It is performed by a trained and available person, as per the standards and suggestions for listening to the child (standard 3).

Ethical frame

There is no difficult child, but there are children in difficulty

Study the personal situation of the child in order to know his/her life story, interests, motivations and the main challenges faced, as well as the child's resources (that will support the child's development).

Do not subject the child to questioning but show him/her your interest and availability.
Respect the child's pace and do not be rushed.

Develop a relationship of trust between you and the child.

Motivate the child to pursue his/her interests and find stability.

Attitudes to be adopted by adults supervising the child

Be available and show your interest in the child

Respect the child's right to confidentiality and privacy.

Facilitate the active participation of the child.

Demonstrate your empathy and show the child that he/she is important and make your best effort to understand him/her.

Give the child a chance to express himself/herself through different means (drawings, role plays).

Be attentive to the child's experiences and the way he/she overcame the painful moments and existing trauma.

Listening to and involving the child is an attitude towards children that anyone in contact with the child should have during the whole process

Four principles should guide individuals who listen to and involve children:

The child is recognised as a whole person and involved in the establishment of a positive emotional relationship

The child is a subject of rights – his/her views, fears and dreams are important to understand him/her and develop lasting solutions for and with him/her

The child is encouraged to express his/her opinion, views, preferences, desires and anxieties

The reasons for the vulnerability of the child should be explored and understood in order to improve his/her situation

Listening and participation is the key to reconstruction and stress reduction

Accept the child as a whole individual.

Support and develop a cooperative relationship between you and the child.

Adopt a good listening attitude, an attitude of empathy, respect and authenticity.

Help the child find a purpose and meaning in life.

Help the child develop his/her self esteem.

Foster a positive environment of trust.

Do not have prejudices, avoid stigmatising the child and do not categorise your experiences.

Reformulate what the child tells you to ensure mutual understanding.

Develop an individual approach because each child has a unique personality and distinctive life experiences.

Remember that the child is the greatest expert about his/her life.

Involve the child and his/her family in the search for solutions.

The study of the child is a process that takes place step-by-step

The study of the personal situation contains the following:

The needs of the child (health, education, emotional development, identity, family and social relationships, capacity for self-care).

People who are important in his/her life (with the child, identify trustworthy persons and arrange meetings).

The child's perception of his/her past, present and future life.

The child's perception concerning the separation from his/her family.

The child's hopes and fears related to reintegration with the family.

Following the study of the personal situation, the child develops an individual plan with a life project in the short, medium and long term, which specifies the actions of support that will be conducted with the child, his/her family and the environment.

Choose an environment where the child feels at ease to talk and listen.

Establish meaningful, warm and stable relationships with the child (looking, listening, empathy, gestures, words).

Explain to the child your role and the way you will co-operate with him/her (your availability, interest, reciprocity of the contact, confidentiality).

Respect the child's pace and conduct the study of the personal situation of the child step-by-step.

Provide moments of relaxation with the child to gain his/her confidence.

Be available and interested in his/her wishes, challenges and personal interests.

Involve the child in the study process and the development of the individual plan to the extent of his/her capacities and maturity.

Listen to the child's views about the changes he/she desires for himself/herself, family and the community.

Involve the child in defining the measures that concern him/her, from the objectives to the evaluation criteria.

Avoid the effect of prolonged care.

Enhance the capacity of self-care.

How have I ensured the child's participation during this phase?

CHECKLIST AND GUIDE

	Item	Tick		Specific actions undertaken
		Done	Not done	
1	Is the listening conducted by a trained person?			
2.	Is the listening conducted individually?			
3	Is the listening conducted in an appropriate and quiet place?			
4	Has a reference person been identified for the child?			
5	Is a person from the child's country of origin involved in the process of listening?			
6	Is the discussion conducted in a quiet environment?			
7	Engage the child in a friendly conversation.			
8	Ask open-ended questions.			
9	Talk less, encourage the child to talk and listen carefully.			
10	Encourage the child to confide in you			
11	Is the point of view of the child as regards desired changes in his life known?			
12	Has the appropriate questionnaire been completed?			
13	Is the case worker able to obtain all necessary information from the child?			
14	Inform the child of the steps taken to find his/her family and solutions to his/her difficulties.			
15	Clarify with the child the messages he would like to convey to his/her parents and respect what he wishes not to talk about.			

Mistakes to strictly avoid

1. The listening place does not respect the privacy and protection of the child.
2. No reference person has been appointed or the person designated is not easily reachable.
3. The child is not being listened to and is not included in the decisions concerning him.
4. The child does not have the possibility to contact his/her parents.
5. The child is not informed about his/her rights.
6. The child is reduced to his/her problems and related to as such.

STEP 4

ASSESSMENT OF THE FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION OF THE CHILD



STEP 4

EVALUATION OF THE FAMILY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION OF THE CHILD

Definition: Process of locating the family and evaluating the family and community circumstances of the child

Objective: To locate the family and ensure safe return
To make an informed decision on the appropriateness and the implications of returning the child to the family

Lost on the streets of Monrovia, Franck*, a ten-year-old Ghanaian, was found at the bus station by a social worker and referred to the WAN co-ordination partner in Liberia.

Franck was from Takoradi in the western region of Ghana. Franck told his case worker he had come to Monrovia by hiding in a ship – his goal was to transit through Liberia, work and have additional resources before continuing to Spain. But his plan did not go as intended.

Despite his young age, Franck was able to provide the information needed to trace his family, and the WAN co-ordination partner in Ghana used its local network to find them. Discussions and direct observation were used to assess the living conditions of the family, Franck's relationships with other family members and the ability of parents to take care of the children – ultimately to determine if the environment favoured Franck's return. The evaluation was positive!

**Fictional name*

Ethical frame

Each child needs his/her family or a surrogate family, as well as their community.

1. All the families, foreign or local, have the same rights regarding their protection and their fundamental rights.

2. The identification and location of the child's original family are priority activities that require the co-operation of all professional actors and communities.

3. The family tracing should be done in co-ordination with the different workers (social services, police, NGOs, radio, TV, etc) to facilitate information sharing and avoid duplication of efforts. This in the respect of the child's dignity.

4. When the family has been identified and localised, the social study must assess the potentials of the child and family, and determine the conditions under which the return of the child to his/her family should be organised, if this is in the child's interest. If this is not the case, an alternative must be found.

5. The social survey aims to collect the items to define the psychosocial and material support to implement to ensure integration of the child in response to the requirements of the CRC.

6. The psychosocial or psycho-emotional care is the process of responding to emotional, psychological and moral needs of the child. Meeting these needs is essential for a harmonious development of the child.

7. Every child and every family have their own way and have the right that solutions adapted to their individual situation be developed with them.

Actors and their roles

The child	<p>The reintegration of the child must meet his/her wishes and those of his/her parents.</p> <p>The child has the right to grow up in a safe environment with respect and stable relationships. He/she has a right to have good conditions to build his/her future.</p>
The family	<p>The reintegration of the child in his/her family and his/her environment is a priority, provided that the family is able to prevent the causes of vulnerability. Sometimes the child must be protected from his/her family or vice-versa.</p>
The community	<p>Know the factors that drove the child to leave the locality and what steps can be taken to support the family and the child in this situation in a positive way.</p>
The professionals	<p>The worker visits the place where the child is in a vulnerable situation without making any assumptions. He/she tries to understand the factors that foster vulnerability and takes measures to reduce them. He/she should be attentive to the whole family to understand the causes of the separation from the child and evaluate the potential and weaknesses of the family members (with the anticipation of monitoring the child if he/she is placed with the family).</p>

Family search

Using information received about the potential origin of the children, initiate research.

Social actors from the places of origin and destination should network.

Distribute the search area between the facilitators based on experience, understanding of ethnicity, language, and mastery and knowledge of the environment.

Involve traditional and religious leaders.

Involve and co-operate with the families of already reintegrated children.

Use networks and traditional channels of communication available within the places of origin.

Use community radio broadcasters (the results are effective but care should be taken to protect the child).

If necessary, give the list of potential families to the community leaders and return at a later date to collect the information.

Display lists of children (possibly photographs) in the public places of the alleged places of origin.

Visit popular/weekly markets to quickly circulate information about the searched families and also to locate and meet the persons coming from the areas where the family is suspected to be from.

In certain cases, the child is directly involved in family tracing.

Once the family has been identified, the search stops and evaluation can begin.

If necessary, find an appropriate family for placement.

How did I ensure the child's participation during this phase?

Meet the parents without prejudice and assess their strengths and weaknesses. Consider their socio-economic situation, the reasons for the vulnerability of their child and of the other family members. The most important is to feel their attachment to the child and their interest in him.

On meeting with the family

1. Respect and accept the parents as the most important persons in the child's life.
2. Create an environment of trust by focusing on the family's current concerns.
3. Create a climate of discussion and prepare to discuss openly about the issues to tackle, avoiding interrogation.
4. Try to assess the reasons and circumstances that led to vulnerability and try to understand the logic of the parents in their own way of seeing the difficulties with their child.
5. Make the parents aware of the needs of the child (health, education, emotional development, identity, orientation and stability).
6. Be attentive to the concerns of the parents (medical, education, material conditions of life, financial situation).
7. Establish the reasons and family circumstances that led to vulnerability.

Assess the following

1. Size and type of the household.
2. Dependency ratio: number of persons in working age, divided by number of dependent persons (youth, elderly and disabled).
3. Ability of the family and its environment.
4. Reasons for the difficulties with their child.
5. Possible changes within the family since the departure of the child.
6. Acceptance of the child by his family and the community.
7. Economic situation of the family.
8. Risks of reintegration in the family.
9. Possibility that there may be other children in this community who would have left the family.

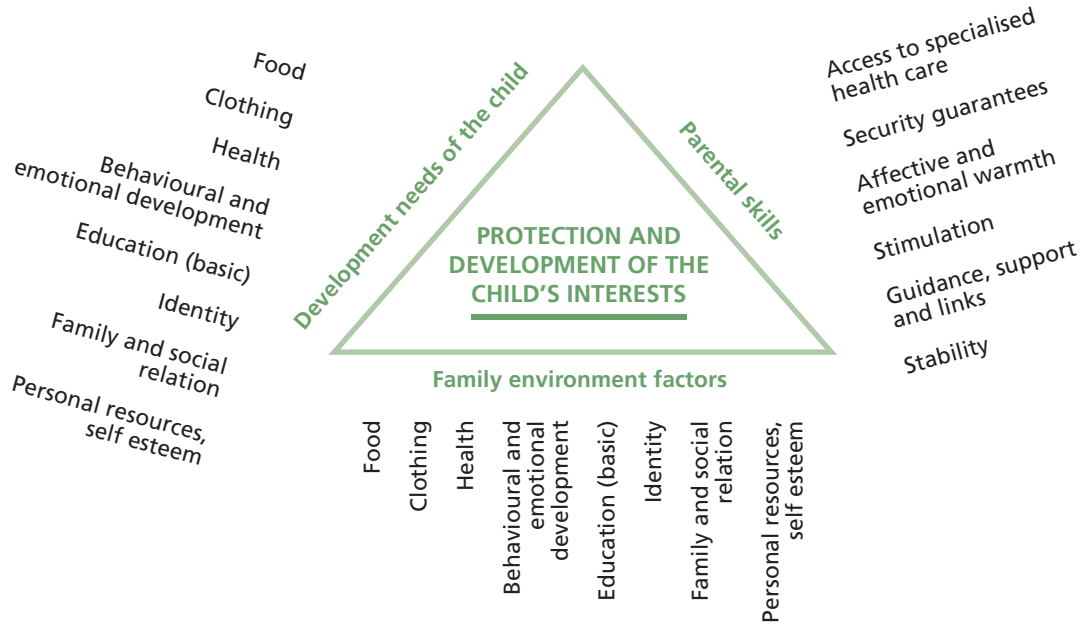
Pay particular attention to the following negative signs.

1. The child has no family setting.
2. The refusal of the child to return to the family.
3. The refusal of the family and/or the community to co-operate.
4. Alcohol abuse.
5. Serious psychiatric problems.

It is not advisable to reintegrate a child into a family with any of these situations!

CHECKLIST TOOL

Use the following tool as a checklist and a decision-making tool in the assessment of the family of the child



STEP 5

ALTERNATIVES FOR PLACEMENT OF CHILDREN OUTSIDE THEIR FAMILIES



Alternatives for placement of children outside their families

Definition: The act of identifying suitable alternatives for placement of the child when the family environment is not conducive for reintegration

Objective: To provide the most appropriate environment of life for the child taking his/her best interests into consideration

Twelve-year-old Ekoué* was found in the streets of Accra and referred to a local WAN partner.

According to the boy, he had arrived from Togo with his father, who then abandoned him at a bus station. After hours of waiting, the child decided to look for his father but became lost on the streets of Accra. Ekoué provided information that helped find his family in a district of Lomé in Togo. He had lived there with his grandmother until his father secretly took him to Accra.

The assessment of the family situation revealed that Ekoué's parents were drug addicts. His father, a violent man, had been to prison twice. He beat Ekoué's mother regularly, which eventually led to the child going to live with his grandparents. His parents no longer lived together and his father was homeless.

As the family environment was not stable, Ekoué was returned to Togo and placed in the care of his extended family. To prevent his father from repeating the abduction, a court order was gained. Ekoué now lives happily with his paternal uncle.

**Fictional name*

Evaluate the needs and resources of the child to define an appropriate placement as well as the motivation and competencies of the foster family or of the co-ordinators in the centres. The placement gives the child the possibility to develop in a secure environment, with persons of reference who strive to offer the child an appropriate place to develop and prepare his/her future.

Ethical frame

The child has a right to protection

The child should feel protected and know that the persons around him/her are against any form of violence and abuse. It should know that its rights as per CRC are respected:

1. A right to non-discrimination (art. 2).

2. Superior interest of the child (art. 3).

3. A right to live, to survive and to develop (art. 6).

4. A right to be heard (art. 12).

Actors and their roles

The child	When the reintegration of the child in his/her family proves impossible and/or contrary to the best interests of the child, all efforts should be made to offer the child an alternative and secured family environment.
The family	Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the family of origin to help the family overcome difficulties; and, if possible, maintain a bond with the child. The foster family should be ready to accept and maintain bonds with the family of origin. The family of origin, if possible, should be prepared for a possible return of the child.
The community	The community is aware of and knowledgeable about violence and other forms of mistreatment; and, if necessary, intervenes to prevent and denounce such acts, in order to protect the children. In addition, the community takes other necessary measures as needed.
The professionals	Act as persons of reference to whom the child, the parents or the adults involved in alternative placement can refer to at any moment. Professionals make known their availability and commitment to ensure a bond between the foster family and the family of origin in order to promote a positive relationship between the child and his/her family. Regularly evaluate the reintegration of the child in its family of origin.

Underlying principles of alternative placement

1. The reintegration and rehabilitation must be the purpose of placement.

2. The child has a fundamental right to live within a family and community structure.

3. The alternate family placement will be envisaged in cases where the child's parents cannot be identified or localised, if the parents do not wish to definitely abandon the child but cannot care for the child, or following an order of retrieval is sentenced by the judge for infants.

4. The child is in a situation of vulnerability and is exposed to the risk that his/her rights are not properly or totally respected and is exposed to situations that have a negative impact on its physical, psychological or social wellbeing and hinder its development.

5. The placement of a child outside its family environment remains the last solution for the child; it is only to be considered in the case where the family of the child finds itself in a situation that makes the placement necessary.

6. The alternate family placement should imperatively assure taking charge of all aspects of the life and education of a child by a family other than its family of origin (parents and enlarged family).

7. The child must be accompanied by its person of reference who prepares it to the upcoming change and remains available for it during the transition and process of integration.

8. The child must know and understand the reasons for which it is separated from its family.

Principles of responsibility

The basic principles of taking responsibility for a child, integrated in the functioning of the centres, are the following:

The institution as a last resort

A family environment is what is best to assure the wellbeing of parents and children. If this is not possible, an alternative solution is that the members of the community, the enlarged family or the foster family take responsibility for the child in a 'family type' environment. Formal residential institutions are appropriate only if the previous solutions are not feasible, or if the child needs to be placed in an institution for legal, medical or psychological reasons.

A rapid reintegration

The foster family or the institution have the obligation to periodically evaluate the placement outside family bonds with objectives for the rapid reintegration of the child within its family or within the community. A prolonged period in a placement outside family bonds is to be proscribed.

Consent

One should seek consent in the case of children placed in foster families or in institutions, though this consent can be provided by the child's parents, tutors or persons having authority over the child, for their protection and wellbeing.

Access to family

While taking into account the aspects related to protection, every child has a right to meet and interact with his/her family, including the members of his/her family that would be in jail or would have committed abuse.

Access to appropriate information

Every person who is taken in charge of has the right to be informed of his/her situation, identity, family and medical condition. Denial of information is acceptable in cases where the child or young person needs to be protected of a possible psychological traumatism.

Participation in taking a decision

Any child that is being taken charge of has a right to express their opinion regarding decisions that concern it, including place of residence, caretaking, education or professional apprenticeship.

Contact with others

The institution has the obligation to give the opportunity to the child taken charge of, to have contacts with persons of the surrounding community and to receive support from his/her peers. The institution should encourage the development of positive social and emotional ties.

Social environment

The foster family and the institution must recognise the necessity to create an environment that favours social and physical recovery.

The social environment includes friendly, positive and non-authoritative relations with the other children and those who surround them; adequate moments for recreational activities as well as access to friends and family. Physical environment includes the possibility for each resident to have a personalised space (a personal bed, private space to put away personal belongings, ability to personalise a space with objects and photographs). Living should be comfortable, clean and as much as possible should look like a family home.

Forms of formal placement

1. The foster families

The placement in a foster family is regulated by the judicial authority and implemented by the administrative authority with the help of NGOs and associations.

Each placement of a child in a foster family should be preceded by a proper introduction of the child, his/her family (if known) and the welcoming family.

The choice of a foster family is based on an exhaustive study of the personality, morality and interpersonal relations of the foster family so as to analyse the criteria of selection for the foster families, particularly for the mother of substitution.

Implement a programme to train and recruit foster families.

The foster family is a family structure that gives the child the elements that are necessary and essential to his/her development:

- Basic care
 - Secure life environment
 - Respect of the the child's habits
 - Respect of the child's values
 - Social environment
 - Diversified and committed relationships
-

The administrative authority is responsible for the creation of a supportive team in charge of the regular follow-up of the child, welcoming family and family of origin, which includes:

- Ensure the follow-up and integration of the child in the welcoming family.
 - Keep personal contact with the child and ensure him/her the opportunity to express views.
 - Follow-up on the child's integration in the new environment.
 - Oversee the child's attendance at school and its performance.
 - Maintain contact with the parents and follow-up with them.
 - Support the welcoming family in their support of the child.
-

2. The centre

The duty of centres is to welcome the child on a temporary basis. Children should be protected, ensured care and their development should be promoted when it is not possible to remain in an ordinary life environment. It is the duty of the centre to do the following:

Ensure the fundamental rights of the child with the aim to create the conditions for the future reintegration of the child with his/her family.

Receive children in an emergency case.

Provide support to the child on a temporary basis.

Integrate in the community and the nearby environment

Maintain each child's file that contains all relevant personal information:

- The social investigation.
- The judicial ordinance of placement.
- The individualised intervention plan.
- Any other information concerning the child.

The child's file is confidential. The person of reference responsible for the child informs the child, parents and tutor. In certain cases and circumstances, the professionals in the field of child protection and the judge for minors can have access to the file.

The centre assures the satisfaction of essential needs:

- Lodging
- Nutrition
- Clothing
- Hygiene
- Healthcare
- Attention and affection
- Security
- Social and educational activities

Confidentiality mechanisms are put in place so that the child can express claims in a confidential manner.

The personnel is recruited on the basis of professional criteria and moral aptitude.

The personnel follows a code of conduct.

The administrative authority is responsible for the supervision of the centre.

Finding a solution for the child in the country of identification

The reference person is evaluated, as well as the various options existing for the child. An on-site reintegration may be preferable in order to assure the child's best interests.

How did I ensure the child's participation during this phase?

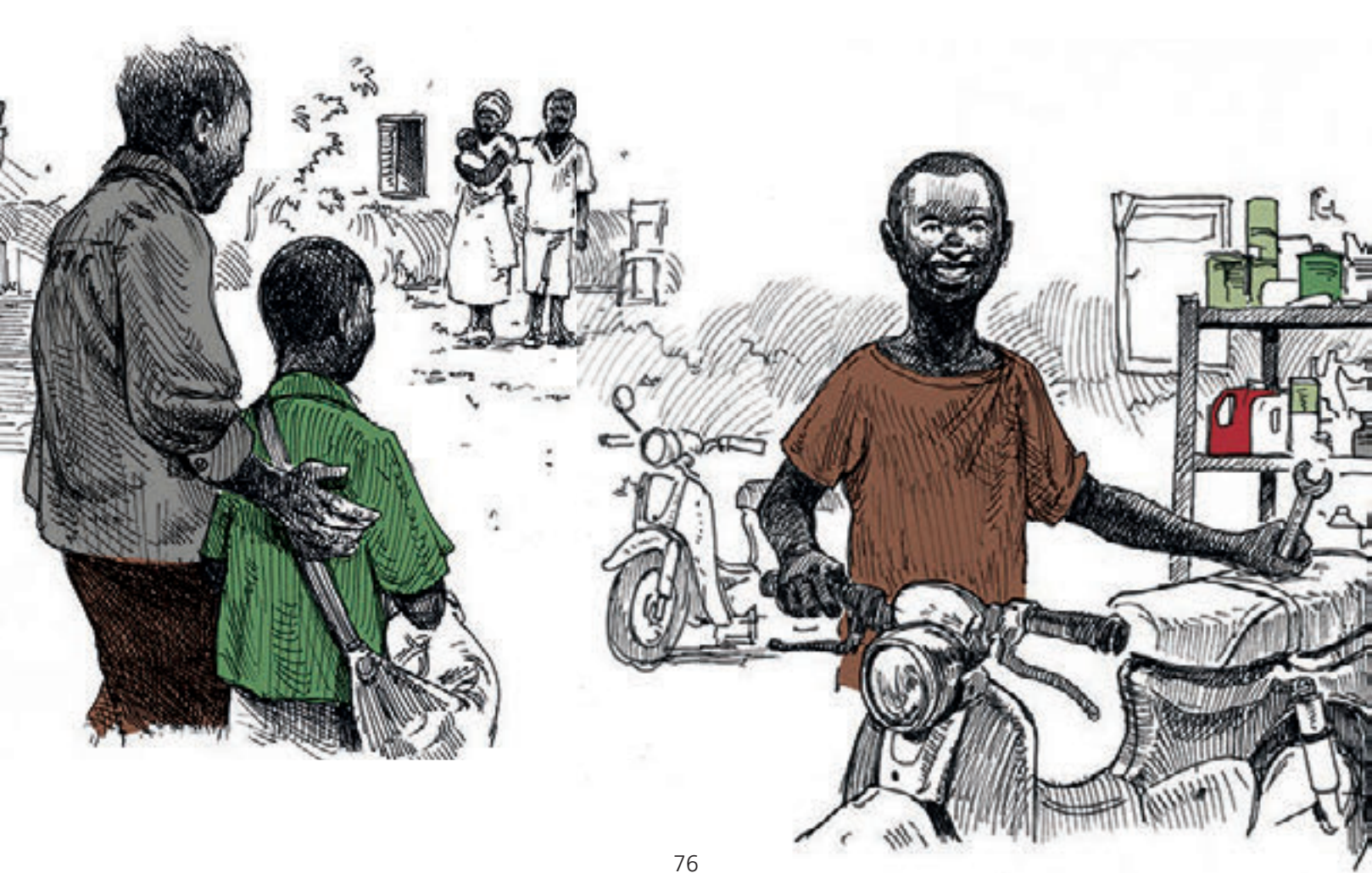
Who is the person of reference?

CHECKLIST

	Item	Tick		Specific Actions undertaken
		Done	Not done	
1	Have all options of placement of the child within his nuclear and extended family been explored?			
2.	Is the decision for placement in an institution or a foster family jointly decided by the partner and the government authorities?			
3	Has the child been appropriately and adequately informed of the failure of all the options considered in reintegrating him/her in their nuclear and extended family?			
4	Has the child been informed of the option of placement in an institution or a foster family?			
5	Has the child been participating in all the processes that concern him?			
6	Has the child given his consent to placement in an institution or a foster family?			
7	Is the process in accordance with the national legal norms of placement in an institution or a foster family?			
8	Is the whole process properly documented?			

STEP 6

**SOCIAL, EDUCATIONAL
OR PROFESSIONAL
REINTEGRATION OF
THE CHILD**



STEP 6

Social, educational or professional reintegration of the child

Definition: The process of reintroducing and stabilising the child within his/her family (or otherwise) environment and providing him/her with age-appropriate educational or vocational solution

Objective: To set the child on an appropriate life course (to return childhood to the child and assist him/her graduate into an autonomous adult)

Fode* is a young Malian boy, who wanted to improve his life by migrating to Europe. Supported by his parents, who sold all their property, Fode paid a 'ferryman' to drive him and other young people to Algiers, from where they hoped to continue to Spain. Their time in Algiers should have been a simple transit stop, but it became a long-term stay.

After two months in Algiers, Fode was short of money and lost contact with the 'ferryman'. He was forced to live on the streets. Picked up by the police, Fode was entrusted to the Immigration Service and the Embassy. His return to Mali was organised during the following days.

Fode was handed over to the Malian authorities and referred to the NGO partner, WAN Mali. Fode felt too ashamed to return to his city and the family who had sacrificed everything to help him. However, with the help of a WAN Mali social worker, he was reintegrated with his family. He started work with a poultry project and, with the money he earns, Fode is now able to support and assist his parents after all.

**Fictional name*

Ethical frame

Every child has a right to develop and grow, which includes access to education and professional training.

The right to education is a fundamental human right and is essential for the realisation of all other human rights.

- It promotes individual liberty and autonomy and brings significant advantages in development.
- The standard instruments of the United Nations and of UNESCO establish legal obligations regarding the right to education.
- Each child must have access to good quality education, without discrimination or exclusion.
- Professional reintegration above 18 years must be possible.
- The six objectives of education for all, including disabled children, have become the priority of UNESCO on the topic of the child:

Develop early childhood care and protection: expand protection and education in early childhood, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged.

Make primary education compulsory and free for all if possible: provide access to education for all children (girls and boys).

Promote learning and life skills for youth and adults: provide equitable access to programmes in order to develop knowledge and skills.

Increase the literacy rate among adults: provide equitable access to basic programmes and to continuing education.

Respect the equality between the sexes: provide equitable access to basic education for all children and respect the right to non-discrimination.

Continuously improve the quality of education: obtain data about learning outcomes for all children, especially regarding reading, writing, arithmetic and competencies.

Actors and their roles

Activities	Host country	Country of origin
Adapt the project according to the reality of the country in which it will be implemented	X	X
If the child is integrated in a foster family, assess whether it is possible and appropriate (according to the best interests principle) to maintain contact with the family of origin	X	X
Ensure the legal basis of the proposed rehabilitation project (and if the child is under age 18, obtain a legal act authorising the implementation of an Income Generating Project)		X
If the child must be reintegrated into the country of identification, ensure that his/her presence in the country is legalised (right to nationality)	X	

Attitudes to be adopted by the supervisors of the child

Stimulate and support the parents in the education of their children

Education is a universal right and the basis for developing life prospects.

Education goes far beyond school and professional apprenticeships. A child also learned useful things during migration and while on the move.

Developing an educational plan or professional project with each child and youth is a priority for the integration of the child.

Respect and accept the parents as the most important persons in the child's life and encourage the parents to participate in implementing the educational and professional project of their child.

Accompany and support the child in developing autonomy.

Involve state and non-state actors in the implementation of the individual project of the child.

Encourage and support parents so they may attend literacy classes to better support their children.

Guidelines for implementing life projects for the children

General rules

1. Adapt the project according to the reality of the country in which it will be implemented.
2. If the child is integrated in a foster family, assess whether it is possible and appropriate (according to the principle of Best Interest) to maintain contact with the family of origin.
3. Ensure the legal basis of the proposed rehabilitation project (and if the child is aged under 18, obtain a legal act authorising the implementation of and Income Generating Project).
4. If the child must be reintegrated into the country of identification, ensure that his/her presence in the country is legalised (right to nationality).

Implementation of an educational project

Conduct an appraisal of skills and remain especially attentive to skills acquired outside formal education.

Discuss with the child and his/her parents the integration of the child in school.

Prioritise the enrolment of the child in a public school.

Establish the birth certificate and search for missing documents (competent authority).

Identify the regional possibilities in terms of basic education and training of children and young adults (mapping of the region).

Assess the quality of teaching and encourage teachers to enrol in continuing education.

Support the schools so that they have basic materials to ensure quality education.

Take interest in the school's teaching methods.

Implementation of a professional project

Conduct an appraisal of skills and remain especially attentive to skills acquired outside the formal education system.

To gather preliminary information, discuss with the young person and get ideas for a potential project.

Keep parents and partners in the field informed about the outlook and prospects for the project.

Deepen the debate on the project of the child (study, career openings, relevance).

Involve state and non-state actors in the implementation of the individual project of the young person.

Involve local authorities.

Place in a training institution or with an artisan trainer.

Establish a practical training plan with the trainer and the young person.

Establish a training plan for capacity reinforcement including

- Technical training for hiring.
- Training with the approach GERME (better management of your business).

Develop a training contract.

Provide a training kit (first tools, work clothing, safety material according to the type of training, supplies).

Put the young persons in touch with microfinance institutions.

Encourage the establishment of community projects.

CHECKLIST

	Item	Tick		Specific Actions undertaken
		Done	Not done	
1	Is the child involved in the process of the development of his/her educational or professional project?			
2.	Are the parents involved in the process of development of the project for their child?			
3	Is the chosen project an agreement between all parties with guaranteed support from the parents?			
4	Is the project feasible in the environment of the child?			
5	Is the project suitable for the child?			
6	Have all the associated risks of the project been evaluated?			
7	Has a community guardian (adult or peer) been assigned to the child?			
8	Has a monitoring plan been established for the child?			

NOTE: Do not automatically develop a project based on the initial proposal of the child as it might not be the most suitable for him/her. In the context of schooling, involve the child, parents and school

STEP 7

MONITORING AFTER THE RETURN OF THE CHILD



STEP 7

Monitoring after the return of the child

Definition: Process of visiting and supporting the child at regular intervals to find out his/her progress and development

Objective: To ensure that the child stays on his/her chosen life course

Salamatu* was only 14 years old when her father decided to give her in marriage to one of his friends. Despite her fierce opposition, the 'friend' wanted to marry her by force. With the help of her mother, Salamatu travelled from her home in the north-east of Niger to Nigeria to find a job.

She was intercepted by police at the Niger-Nigeria border and referred to an NGO, Help to Migrant Children*. Mediation with Salamatu's family was positive and the family agreed not to give her away forcefully in marriage. Salamatu was returned to her parents in the village, where she received vocational training at a sewing centre that will help her make a living. The situation at home and work is being closely monitored by a person of reference who Salamatu trusts.

**Fictional name*

Reintegration in the family cannot be a single action with no follow-up. There should be follow-up with the child and the family in charge of the child to ensure the stabilisation of the child's situation, as well as to regularise family relationship and control risk factors. Support the parents in taking literary courses where possible.

Ethical environment

The follow-up of the child and his/her family is the key to success

The fact that someone is interested in the child as a person should help him/her feel respected.

The follow-up of each child is defined in the individual plan according to his/her profile.

The latter is adapted during monitoring sessions that bring together the child, parents and persons of reference.

Follow-up of the child, family and his/her environment involves establishing and maintaining a close relationship between the child and his/her family in which everyone is involved in an active manner within the extent of their ability to reach the expected results.

The reinforcement of family competencies and direct support given to the child are of utmost importance in situations when the family is not able to take charge of the child in a suitable way.

In view of obtaining a concrete impact, the specialised services must have a network of professionals to count on, as well as the resources and competencies of the community that is closely related to the families.

The various team players must co-operate at a local, national and international level.

Actors and their roles

The child	Follow-up of a child in a situation of vulnerability should continue for at least two years; and, if necessary, until he/she becomes an adult. The follow-up involves psychosocial support for better social integration. It also helps the child pursue an education or professional project for better future prospects.
The family	Develop support mechanisms and personalised support adapted to the resources of the family to reinforce and develop parenting capacities and/or provide financial assistance as needed.
The community	Within the community, select persons and communal groups to form a watch committee and serve as persons of reference for the children and their families. They should organise activities for awareness-raising in the local context. Establish mechanisms for monitoring and warning that serve as frame of reference.
The professionals	Set up monitoring for every child reintegrated to evaluate and adapt the individual plan of the child. Support the parents in raising and educating their children and in activities that improve their financial situation.

Behaviour of the persons taking care of the child

Support the parents and other responsible adults in developing their parental skills and improving their economic situation.

Reintegration in the family cannot be a single action with no follow-up. There should be follow-up with the child and the family taking charge of the child in order to ensure the stabilisation of the child's situation, regularise family relations and control risk factors. Support the parents in taking literacy courses, if necessary.

Support the child and family now for a better future

Specialised services (state or NGOs)

1. 1.Psychosocial follow-up

Develop a network of actors, including individuals from the state, NGOs and communities, and a reference committee of religious representatives and individuals, who have the ability to accompany children and families, or who can be active during public awareness campaigns.

Family mediation.

Create a communication and information platform between team players.

Evaluate the ability of resource persons and propose activities within their capacities.

Propose classes and continuing education for persons active in child protection in the region:

- Reference people for young persons.
 - Reference people and support for families in difficult situations.
 - Reference committee (peer group) to accompany and support children and awareness-raising programmes with young persons.
 - Religious leaders for awareness programmes within respective religious communities.
-

Define the objectives with the child, the family and every volunteer.

Develop exchange models between team players.

While working out reintegration measures, prepare a budget to ensure follow-up and monitoring costs are available.

Assure follow-up of the individual plan of each child.

2. Follow-up of a project for the child

The realisation of the educational or professional project of each child is essential because it represents an important element in the construction of the child's life.

Following the reintegration of the child in his/her family, implementation of the project must be done as quickly as possible to ensure a good living situation in the present with an outlook for the future.

To support and motivate the child, a person of reference should accompany him/her and develop a solid relationship. This person should also commit to maintain a regular relationship and show interest for the young person as a whole. The person of reference regularly provides information and updates to the service in charge of the wellbeing and the development of the young person. The child alone and/or the person of reference can contact the specialised service in case of problem.

Psychosocial support, family mediation and counselling are basic activities with specialised services in order to ensure better child protection.

3. Project of reinforcement of parental capacities

This is to support or initiate activities that improve the economic status of parents and enable them to carry out their role as parents (daily income that provides for the children's training).

Take steps for accompaniment and psychosocial treatment.

The purpose is to support or initiate activities that improve the economic situation of the parents.

Create IGPs by working with other organisations specialised in this area.

Create a framework that helps parents obtain microcredits.

Core tasks of the community guardian

1. Safeguard the child's best interests
2. Promote the child's safety and wellbeing
3. Act as a link between the child and others
4. Assist in identifying a durable solution in the child's best interests
5. Exercise legal representation, support the child in legal procedures and ensure access to legal assistance and counselling

Follow-up procedures

Each child must be followed at least two years and during that period it is important to:

- Listen to the child through a person of reference who is regularly in contact with the child; and, if necessary, the specialised service in charge.
- Implement the measures of the individual plan by co-operating with the child and family.
- Achieve the educational integration or professional integration of the child.
- Evaluate the impact of the measures and adapt them at least twice a year with the child, his/her parents and the person of reference.
- Support the parents in the development of parental capacities and with regard to their economic situation.
- Encourage the parents to take part in programmes that create economic prospects.

- Conduct and support the network of state partners, NGOs, volunteers and communities.
- Co-operate with other team players using a holistic approach.
- Implement follow-up Work with the parents to ensure they have an income.

Implementation of individual plan

- Develop a second checklist.
- Encourage psycho-medical and economic support.
- Assess the impact and effect of all measures.
- Facilitate and assist the support network built around the child.
- How did I ensure the child's participation during this phase?

CHECKLIST

	Item	Tick		Specific Actions undertaken
		Done	Not done	
1	Is there a monitoring plan for the child?			
2.	Is the child monitored at regular intervals?			
3	Does the child have a community guardian (peer or adult) who provides information on his/her performance?			
4	Are the monitoring and child progress reports written and kept in the file of the child?			
5	Are regular contacts maintained with the parents of the child?			

STEP 8

**SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT
OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC
CAPACITIES OF THE FAMILY
AND COMMUNITY**



Support the development of the socio-economic capacities of the family and community

Definition: Process of supporting the family or the community of a reintegrated child in order to reinforce their capacity to meet the needs of the child as well as to provide sufficiently protective environment for his/her full development and the development of other children in the community

Objective: To ensure a durable protection of the reintegrated child and other children in the community

Sintcham Bébé, a village in Guinea Bissau with a high mobility of children, has benefitted from a community gardening project.

The population of the village is aware that the purpose of the community gardening project is to benefit children. Income from the project is shared between families – they use some to take better care of their children and save the rest. A lot of families have benefitted from the project. The project supports the education and nutrition of many children through its support in Koranic schools. The project has made a real difference to the health education and nutrition of the children involved.

Ethical frame

Parents and the community are the key players to ensure the protection and development of the child.

The community approach builds dignity and self esteem and utilises protection mechanisms specific to the communities in the performance of their obligations towards their families and the collective.

The most important role of civil society organisations and international organisations is to support communities in demanding their rights and needs.

Better than advocacy on behalf of the poor or the range of services for the so-called poor, it is more efficient to support families and communities in claiming and expressing their basic rights.

The community approach is based on the principles of participation and empowerment of individuals and communities. It promotes behaviour change for improving life conditions and the economic situation of community members, especially for their children.

Strengthen the informal system and co-operation with the community in order to develop a set of good practices based on their own experiences.

Guaranteeing decent socio-economic conditions reduces the risks of alternative care measures and helps families take better care for their children.

Actors and their roles

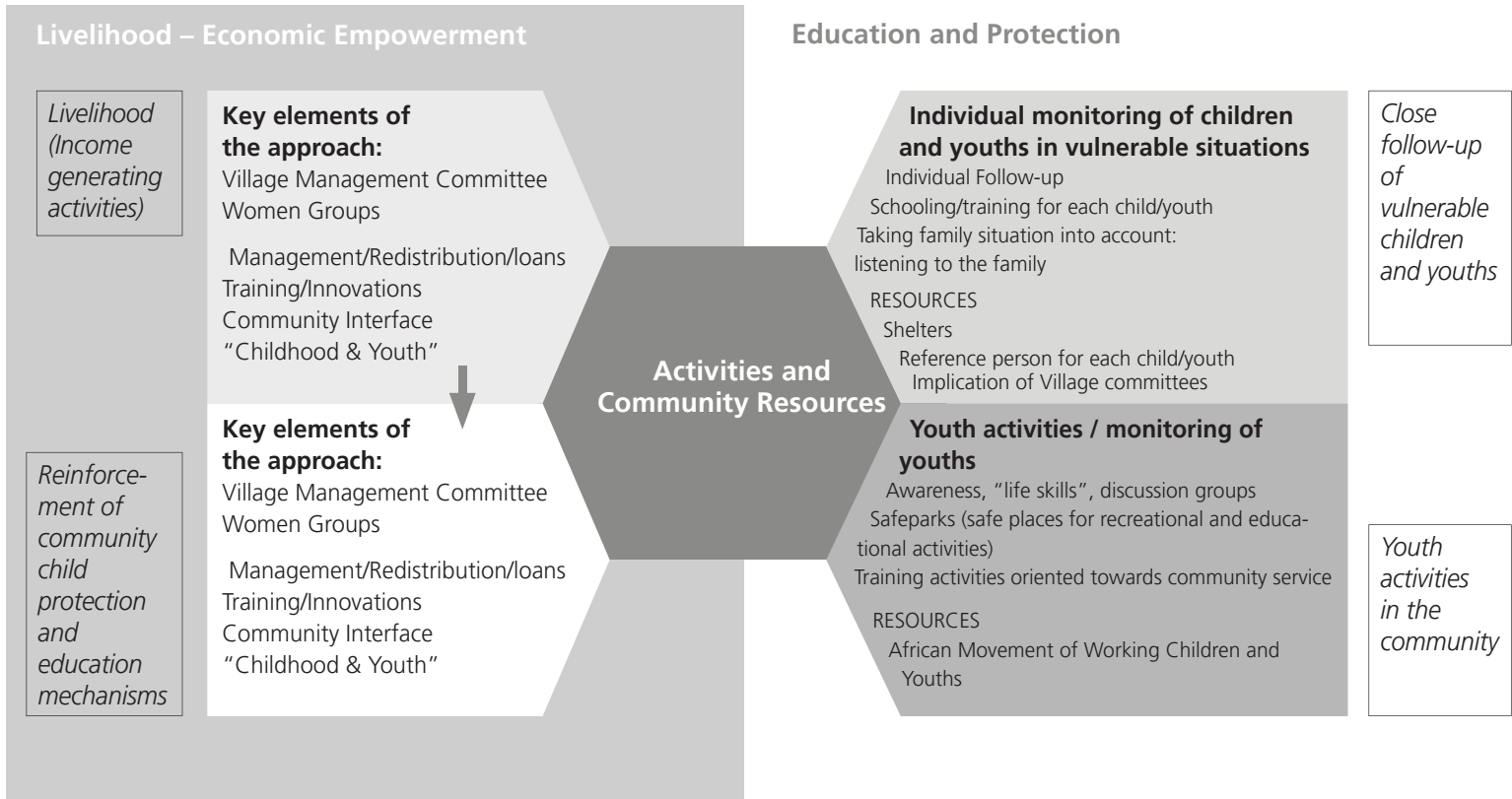
The child	The child should grow up in a protective environment that guarantees safety through parents or other persons who take care of him/her by ensuring basic needs and a suitable education. The child must feel respected by his/her family and community members.
The family	Parents develop skills and engage in activities that generate revenues, which allows them to ensure a dignified life to all members of their family with the support of the community and the activities.
The community	Capacity building should be designed with the community and is based on the objectives and skills of community members. This support should allow them to feel part of the decisions, interventions and solutions in which their skills and contributions are recognised.
The professionals	Professionals facilitate and encourage activities that are relevant to the community, meet different child protection needs and contribute to improving socio-economic life.

Dimensions of Family and Community support

There are four dimensions to family and community support. Together, these dimensions contribute to the protection, educational and vocational orientation of children and youth in the community. The dimensions are:

1. Livelihood
2. Reinforcement of community child protection and education mechanisms
3. Close follow-up of vulnerable children and youths
4. Youth activities in the community

Dimensions of Family and Community support



These four dimensions must be present in any discussion or proposal for family and community support

These four dimensions must be present in any discussion or proposal for family and community support

Dimension 1 Livelihood (income generating activities)	Dimension 2 Reinforcement of community child protection and education mechanisms	Dimension 3 Close follow-up of vulnerable children and youths	Dimension 4 Youth activities in the community
Engage the family/community in dialogue to identify a feasible income generating activity.	Engage the community in dialogue to identify the community's traditional child protection mechanisms.	Identify a community guardian (peer or adult) for the child.	Organise listening groups for children and youths.
Analyse with the family/community their resources.	Engage the community in dialogue to identify deficits and causes of deficits in the traditional child protection and education mechanisms	Engage the community in dialogue to agree on the best ways to protect a vulnerable child by seeking inputs from the community, family actors and others who bear responsibility	Organise community safe parks for children and youths. Develop a program for the functioning of these safe parks
Understand that improved income of families and communities may simply demand specialist advice on better use or marketing of available resources.	Engage the community in dialogue in the search for solutions within the limits of their own resources.	Encourage and strengthen creative ideas of different groups and persons in the community and learn from and with the community about how these ideas respond to different protection risks	Involve the AMWCY actively in the creation and functioning of these community parks.
Encourage the community to create management committees for their income generating activity.	Engage the community in the implementation of the solution with their own resources	Discuss how follow-up actions are carried out by members of the community and how this can be supported by the formal protection system	Put in place forums for vocational orientation of youths in the community.
Engage the community in dialogue to ensure that the returns from IGR are directed at the protection and education of children and youths in the community.	Hold forums with the community on the progress of their solutions	Involve AMWCY (MAEJT) in all these activities	Monitor and support the youths in their chosen vocation.
Agree with the community on follow-up mechanisms.	Ensure that women and children are fully represented in these deliberations		

Role of social actors of the formal system in the dialogue with the community

Understanding the practices and traditions of the community before planning activities can help you identify the right approach to begin communication. Focus on learning and listening, especially in the beginning.

Identify the standards and cultural values that respect human rights and emphasise them when you talk about respect for individual rights. Begin your discussions by focusing on the correct examples and be constructive rather than discussing only the negative points.

Do not propose immediate solutions to problems: let people digest the information and then lead a discussion on how to intervene, the resources they can invest and what they expect from civil society.

Allow plenty of time for people to express themselves and make sure that your approach is respectful of their culture. Simplicity and humility are fundamental to communicate and participate.

Do not force the results. Work with the community to identify small areas of change, such as alternative practices that respect the values without violating the rights.

Avoid making value judgements on community practices. Show respect, comprehension and cultural sensitivity, and talk with the community about all negative practices and try to understand their relevance in the community.

GLOSSARY

Actors	Agencies, organisations, groups or individuals who have direct or indirect interest in an intervention or an evaluation.
Alternatives for placement of children outside their families	Assess the needs and resources of the child to define the appropriate placement as well as the motivation and the skills of the foster family or the supervisors in the centre. The placement offers the child the opportunity to develop in a safe environment and with persons of reference who strive to provide the child with an appropriate environment to develop and prepare for his/her future.
Assessment of family and environmental situation of the child	Meet the parents without pre-judgements and assess their strengths and weaknesses. Consider their socio-economic situation, the reasons for the vulnerability of their child as well as the vulnerability of other family members. The most important aspect to assess is the strength of their relationship with the child and interest in him/her.
Authority for Child Protection	See “National Authorities responsible for Child Protection,” hereunder.
Best interests of the child	The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Art. 3.1) establishes that in all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by private or public social institutions, courts of justice, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.
BID	Best Interests Determination
Child	The term ‘child’ is used in this manual according to the definition contained in Art. 1 of the CRC: “(...) a child is an individual under the age of 18, unless the law applicable to the child mentions that the majority is reached before this age.”
Child prostitution	Use of children for sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of consideration.

Commercial sexual exploitation (of children)	The sexual exploitation of a child against payment (in cash or in kind) is usually but not always organised by an intermediary (parent, family, pimp, 'mackerel', etc), mainly for prostitution or the production of pornography.
Community	All persons living in a collective or forming an association of political, economic, social or cultural order.
Country of destination	The country in which a vulnerable child on the move has been identified.
Country of origin	The country of the child's nationality or in which he/she has a permanent residence at the time of his/her entry into a country of destination.
Domestic trafficking	Trafficking practiced in a single country (between regions, districts, etc – but also when a child is recruited to be exploited not far from his/her home).
Emergency support of the child	When the child is taken in, he/she receives empathetic support and care. Emergency support guarantees that the child has a person of reference and that he/she is provided with medical care, regular meals, a secure living place and a stimulating environment. During this stay, which should not exceed more than 30 days, long-term social and professional opportunities are developed with the child, and, if possible, with his/her family.
Exploitation	In the context of human trafficking, exploitation refers to all forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour, modern forms of slavery or servitude or the removal of organs. The international definition (see 'UN Protocol against trafficking') says that this is the minimum conception of exploitation, meaning that a state can decide to include additional categories of harmful practices within its conception of exploitation.
Exploiter	A person who earns money from a child in any of the ways defined above or who requires that he/she work in any of these forms of exploitation (ie, subjects the child to forced labour or to servitude, exploits him/her through prostitution or takes money a child has earned in prostitution).
Family reunification	The process of uniting a child with members of his/her family or in a foster family by establishing or recreating a long-term relationship.

Human trafficking	<p>The recruitment, transportation, transfer, housing or reception of persons (children, adults or both):</p> <p>a) In the case of adults, the term refers to the use of threat, force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud or deception, the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or by payment or receipt of a profit to receive the consent of a person having control over another person.</p> <p>b) In the case of children, this expression refers to the recruitment, transportation, housing or receiving a child, whether the means described above are used or not.</p> <p>In both cases (children or adults), trafficking is done with the purpose to exploit, which includes exploitation by prostitution of another person or any form of sexual abuse, forced labour or services, slavery and similar practices, servitude or the removal organs.</p>
Identification of the child	<p>Identification takes place by meeting the child in the street. They must be treated with dignity and respect; show them that we are interested in them as individuals.</p>
Life skills	<p>The term 'life skills' refers to important skills that we must have to go ahead in life. This includes learning negotiation, decision-making, finding solutions to problems that occur, critical thinking, efficient communication, building interpersonal relationships, resolving conflicts, consciousness/self esteem, empathy and management of emotion and stress.</p>
Listening to the child	<p>Listening to the child is an attitude of the supervisors throughout all stages of supporting the child. The child is a subject of rights and his/her views, fears and dreams are important to understand the child and to develop sustainable solutions for and with him/her.</p>
Mapping	<p>Designates the work that consists of listing all actors, team players and child protection actors, in order to identify their location and determine their missions as well as their roles and capacities.</p>
Monitoring	<p>Follow-up and support.</p>

Monitoring the child after his/her return to the family and/or community	The reintegration of a child must be monitored to support the reintegration process and support the child and/or family in case of problems. Depending on the location, it may be necessary to set up regional vigilance committees that are formed and supported by professional structures.
National authorities responsible for child protection	The ministry or government department that has been designated as responsible for matters relating to child protection or concerning childhood in a more general way.
National referral mechanism	Procedure designated to ensure coordination between government departments, NGOs and other actors that are involved in supporting victims of trafficking and in making decisions concerning them.
Official agent responsible for enforcing the law	The police or other official agents in charge of enforcing the law, including paramilitary forces involved in this task, as well as detectives and prosecutors.
Palermo Protocol	See 'Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants (...),' hereunder (which is often referred to as the Palermo Protocol, named after the Italian city where it was signed in December 2000).
Person of reference	A person who is especially interested in the welfare of a specific child and a person in whom the child can confide. This person listens to the child, shows interest in him/her and accompanies him/her with empathy. This person should be found in his/her network.
Professionals	In this document, the term refers to all agreed upon and recognised experts of child protection, whether of the state or not. Some trained volunteer child protection workers, for example, from NGOs, not-for-profits or social service organisations, may fall into this category even if they are not paid <i>sensu stricto</i> .

Protection	In the context of trafficking, the term protection refers to the steps meant to ensure the full respect of the rights of a person who has been the victim of trafficking (child or adult). For example, after a person has been trafficked, or in the case of a child, after he/she has been recruited in the street. In the broader context of child protection, the term protection refers to a wide range of measures taken to protect a child against all forms of harm or abuse, as well as to prevent further harm in the case of a child who has already suffered from separation from his/her companions.
Recovery	The various processes involved in rehabilitation and reintegration. Assistance is provided to ensure the recovery of a child.
Referrals, referral system or referral mechanism	In the context of child protection, this term designates a set of standardised rules for responding to the case of a separated child, both to refer the victim to specialised services and to implement protection measures to prevent further abuse. For example, by involving the police to investigate a possible crime or by asking social workers to react under standard procedures.
Rehabilitation	A set of measures that tend to allow a vulnerable child to recover his/her dignity or social status as a whole being.
Reintegration	A process by which the vulnerable child is returned and restored in his/her social and cultural environment.
Separated child	Separated children are those who have been separated from both their parents and legal guardians, but not necessarily from other family members. This notion implies that other adult family members accompany the children.
Services for vulnerable children	A wide range of assistance provided to children living in the streets, in order to meet their immediate needs and enable them to recover and rebuild their lives. This assistance includes food, accommodation, clothing, medical care, education and professional training, as well as legal advice.

Social and professional reintegration of the child	Prepare the child and family for their future life together by ensuring that the child can grow safely in an environment where he/she feels accepted. Ensure that the child and family get adequate support to help the child receive an education or professional training.
Standards	These are quality criteria for the development, monitoring, supervision and reasoning of responsible persons and professionals to improve the quality of the services and measures in favour of children in difficulty and based on the RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.
Study of the individual case	As a reference person, progressively learn about the child's experience through individual meetings. Also consider the observations of others who surround the child. Do not doubt the child's version when he/she recounts his/her experience and avoid interrogating the child!
Sustainable solution	Long-term arrangement established for a child who is vulnerable as opposed to the so-called short-term or intermediary solutions (such as emergency assistance). There are usually three possible options for a sustainable solution: local integration, return to the country or place of origin or (in rare cases) resettling in a third country. Sustainable solutions can be considered measures of prevention.
Trafficker	A person who engages in the trafficking of persons (such as defined by the United Nations Protocol on Trafficking).
Transit country	A country through which children and young people pass, en route to the planned country of destination.
Unaccompanied child	Unaccompanied children (also called 'unaccompanied minors') are children who have been separated from both their parents or from other family members and are not supported by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for them.

<p>Worse Forms of Child Labour</p>	<p>Defined by ILO's Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (adopted in 1999), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) all forms of slavery or similar practices such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom, as well as forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, including production and trafficking of drugs, such as defined by the relevant international conventions; (d) labour that, by its nature or conditions in which it is done, is likely to harm the health, security or morals of the child. <p>Beyond those categories, the states that have ratified Convention 182 must "take immediate and effective measures to ensure prohibition and eradication... immediately, of categories a, b and c, by organising a tripartite consultation including state officials, representatives of organisations of employers and of workers (unions) to determine what belongs to category d (and to re-analyse and review the list periodically).</p>
<p>Youth</p>	<p>Refers to children (below the age of 18) and to young adults (between the ages of 18 and 25).</p>



www.resao.org

Member countries and year of integration

	Benin 2011		The Gambia 2009		Liberia 2012		Senegal 2005
	Burkina Faso 2007		Ghana 2011		Mali 2005		Sierra Leone 2012
	Cape Verde 2012		Guinea 2007		Niger 2008		Togo 2011
	Ivory Coast 2007		Guinea-Bissau 2005		Nigeria 2010	<hr data-bbox="1200 837 1484 842"/> 	Collaboration with Mauritania 2015

In June 2016, the ECOWAS Commission in collaboration with ISS organised a meeting for a group of regional experts from West Africa to review the validated revised Manual as well as incorporate some elements of the Standards into the ECOWAS Child Protection M&E Framework and its Guidelines for Implementation for the specific protection of Children on the Move.

Manual produced by



**Economic Community
of West African States
(ECOWAS)**

with the technical support of



**SWISS FOUNDATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE**

www.ssis.ch



**Service Social International Afrique de l'Ouest
Servizo Social Internacional África Occidental
International Social Service West Africa**

and the financial support of



**Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra**

**Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC**



European Commission

The initial content of this manual and its further update were developed by organisations of the civil society (WAN co-ordinations) and the responsible authorities for child protection in the 15 countries members of ECOWAS + Mauritania under the West African Network for the protection of children (WAN). The first version was approved in Nov. 2011 in Accra, Ghana, in the presence of a representative of the ECOWAS Commission, the Chairman of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and a representative of the regional platform Mobility (now Regional working group on child protection based in Dakar, Senegal).

