



CROSS-BORDER PROTECTION OF CHILDREN ON THE MOVE IN EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA:

A Quick Reference Guide
for Bilateral Coordination



Save the Children

OUR VISION

A world in which every child attains the right to survival, protection, development and participation.

OUR MISSION

Inspire breakthroughs in the way the world treats children and achieve immediate and lasting change in their lives.

OUR VALUES

We will stay true to our values of Accountability, Ambition, Collaboration, Creativity and Integrity

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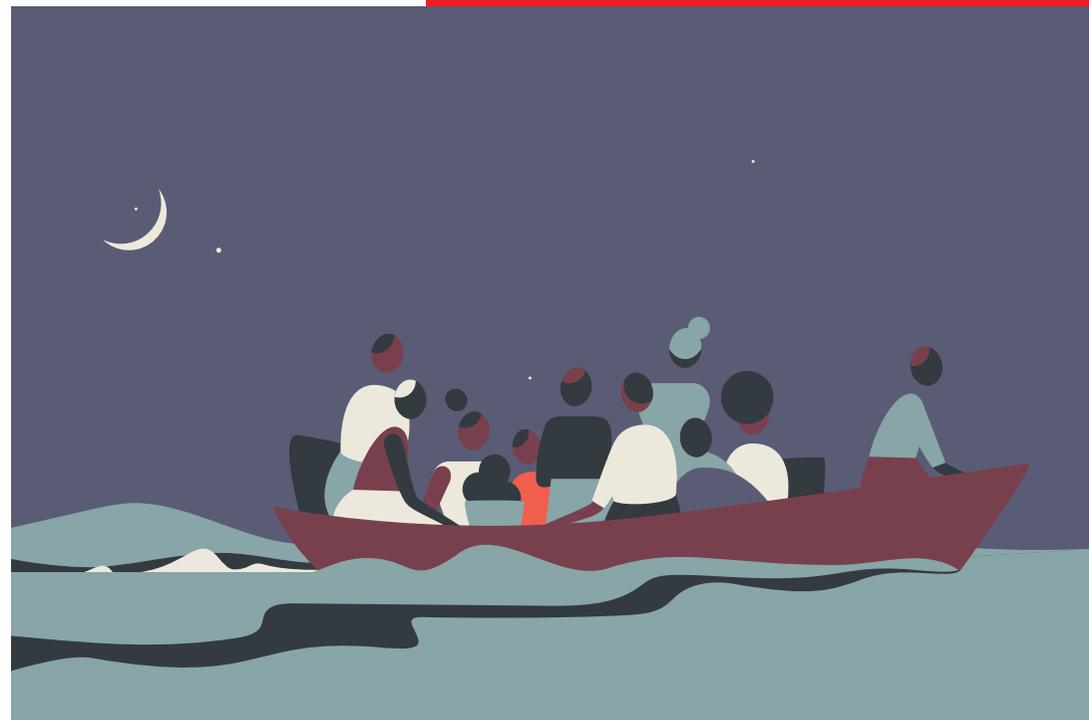
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Dedicated commitment from various donors over the last decade has made it possible to advocate for and secure the interest and participation of many different actors to bilateral activities which initially seemed idealistic and impossible at times. In this regard, we would like to acknowledge the Oak Foundation, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the European Union for support in the historic period covered by the learning presented in this guide and to extend a special thank you to Sida who funded this publication and who continues to provide long-term support to expanding the approach.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACRWC	African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
AU	African Union
BID	Best Interest Determination
COM	Children on the Move
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CYCC	Child and Youth Care Centre
EU	European Union
FTR	Family Tracing and Reunification
IOM	International Organization for Migration
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
MIDSA	Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RPU	Regional Programming Unit
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SC	Save the Children
SCI	Save the Children International
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TOR	Terms of Reference
USMC	Unaccompanied or Separated Migrant Children
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Charter for the Rights of Children
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund



1. Introduction

Cross-border coordination is an effective strategy for improving the care and protection of children on the move. For the past decade, state and non-state actors in Southern Africa have deliberately built bilateral cross-border mechanisms for coordinating the protection of children in situations of migration or displacement. These mechanisms function across borders, between neighbouring governments and along key migration routes and borders in Southern Africa. The results include:



- Improved communication between cross-border stakeholders at all levels, such as policymakers, social workers and border officials;
- Harmonised standard operating procedures between countries; and
- Continuous protection for children who are without care.

1.1 ABOUT THIS GUIDE

AIM

This *Quick Reference Guide* is a practical guide for all stakeholders who hope to implement a government-led, cross-border coordination mechanism for the protection of children who are unaccompanied and separated while in situations of migration or displacement. It highlights **why** cross-border coordination mechanisms are important and **how** they can be developed. The *Quick Reference Guide* is designed for adaptation or replication in East and Southern Africa, and possibly other contexts, by delivering accessible and clear guidance on the **why** and the **how**.

THEORY OF CHANGE

The *Quick Reference Guide*'s theory of change centres on **government's duty of care as primary duty bearer** to ensure the protection of children without appropriate care, in accordance with international and national legislation. In East and Southern Africa, Save the Children has played a key role in supporting governments to establish bilateral coordination mechanisms by leveraging strategic partnerships and providing technical, logistical and financial support throughout the change process. Sustainable, meaningful change relies on the commitment and participation of countries of origin and transit, as well as host countries,

to bring their respective governments together to work jointly for the protection of children on the move.

TERMINOLOGY

Save the Children defines **children on the move** as:



“Children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement, while it may open up opportunities, might also place them at risk (or at an increased risk) of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence”.

This includes, among other categories:

- ‘Unaccompanied children’ who are persons under the age of 18 who are without the care of those who are responsible to do so by law or custom; and
- ‘Separated children’ who are living/moving with their relatives but not with their parents or their previous legal or customary primary caregivers.

1.2 CHILDREN ON THE MOVE AND THE GLOBAL COMPACTS FOR MIGRATION AND ON REFUGEES

The Global Compact for Migration¹, as well as the Global Compact on Refugees², both finalized by the United Nations in 2018, together represent an unprecedented global commitment to collaborate across international borders in finding solutions to challenges posed by migration and displacement, while remaining responsive to the opportunities for survival, protection and education that are sometimes only accessible through mobility. Both Compacts call for trans-national cooperation in various ways.

The Global Compact on Refugees recommends cross-border cooperation as a strategy to meet the needs of children, adolescents and young people, by facilitating the provision of a continuum of care, protection and services for at-risk children on the move (B, 2.5).

The Global Compact for Migration calls for establishment of cross-border cooperation frameworks to protect migrant children along migratory routes (Objective 7). It also advocates for cross-border cooperation as a key information exchange and law enforcement strategy to strengthen the trans-national response to smuggling of migrants, including vulnerable populations such as children (Objective 9).

In addition, the Global Compact for Migration seeks to promote commitment between state actors charged with migration governance to collaborate bi-laterally in order to improve respect for human rights of people seeking to cross international borders (Objective 11).

This Guide aligns with the ambitions captured in both Compacts to leverage bi-lateral collaboration and commitment for the protection of children on the move. As such, it represents one example of how these ambitions can be translated into pragmatic action across borders.

¹ <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact>

² <https://www.unhcr.org/the-global-compact-on-refugees.html>

1.3 GUIDING PRINCIPLES CONCERNING CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

In 2016, nine principles on the rights of children on the move were developed as part of an extensive consultative process led by the Terre des Hommes campaign ‘Destination Unknown’. This process involved non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academics, donor agencies and civil society organisations (CSOs). It additionally drew on recommendations set out by the Committee on the Rights of the Child’s 2012 Day of General Discussion Report on “The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration”. Those principles inform the cross-border coordination approach detailed in this guide. Save the Children, amongst others, participated in drafting and/or advocacy work around the principles.³

³ The original tool *Recommended principles to guide actions concerning children on the move and other children affected by migration* can be downloaded here: <http://destination-unknown.org/wp-content/uploads/recommended-principle-EN.pdf>. More information on the document can be accessed here: <https://principlesforcom.jimdo.com>.

⁴ The term ‘children on the move’ refers to children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers. ‘Other children affected by migration’ refers to children remaining in the country of origin after their parents have migrated and to children living with their parents in the destination country.

Recommended principles to guide actions concerning children on the move and other children affected by migration⁴

A child first	Children on the move and other children affected by migration shall be considered children, first and foremost, and their best interests shall be a primary consideration in all actions concerning them.
Life, survival and development	All children have the right to life, survival and development.
Freedom of movement	Children have the rights (a) to liberty of movement within their State and (b) to leave their State and any other.
No child detention	The detention of children because of their or their parents’ migration status constitutes a child rights violation and always opposes the principle of the best interests of the child.
Families belong together	Children in all phases of migration shall not be separated from their parents or primary caregivers (unless this is in their best interests).
No child is illegal	No child is illegal: children should be protected against all forms of discrimination.
Inclusive child protection systems	Child protection systems shall protect all children, including children on the move and children affected by migration.
Human rights in migration	Migration management measures shall not adversely affect children’s human rights.
Child participation	Children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them and to have their views taken into consideration in accordance with their age, maturity and understanding of the options available.

2. Rationale for cross-border coordination

2.1 CHALLENGES FACING CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT

Children in situations of migration or displacement can be particularly vulnerable to protection risks. They have the same rights as all children, yet their double status as “unaccompanied or separated children” and “migrants” can expose them to additional violations or non-fulfilment of those rights. Cross-border migration and displacement involve a variety of multinational systems and stakeholders that can present risks for children.



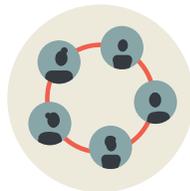
DIFFERENT OR INCOMPATIBLE LEGISLATION

Children in situations of migration or displacement can be affected by many different types of legislation that governs movement and migration.

- Children’s migrant status may limit their ability to meet certain requirements for services, such as the need for documentation.
- Migration legislation may lack special provisions for children and be inconsistent with child protection legislation.

COMPLEXITY OF STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR COORDINATION

The protection of children in situations of migration or displacement involves a wider range of stakeholders (such as government officials, NGOs, CSOs and others on both sides of the border) than the protection of national children. The stakeholders in both countries may be unaware of:



- Their counterparts in the neighbouring country;
- Stakeholders with different mandates within their own country;
- Gaps and inconsistencies in policies within and between countries;
- National and cross-border referral pathways; and
- Procedural requirements for reunification (such as case files or other documentation) that are necessary for children’s protection.



Good Practice: Cooperation on documentation



Through bilateral communication, Mozambique became aware of the impact the lack of documentation had on Mozambican children’s ability to access services in South Africa. Consular services in destination areas responded by offering to interview and document identified Mozambican children on the move, especially in border communities.

“Cross-border cooperation is required to create a continuum of care with harmonised case management systems, referral systems and standard operating procedures.”



GAPS IN NATIONAL PROTECTION SYSTEMS

Most countries submit to the same international legislation governing the protection of children, including children on the move. However, national legislation, policies and procedures vary between countries. When child protection systems are not harmonised across international borders, children may experience:

- Gaps in care and protection during transit as well as in the way they are received upon arrival;
- Inconsistent case management;
- Custodial changes from social services to immigration; or
- Family tracing processes without best interest determinations.

FRAGMENTED CASE MANAGEMENT AND FAMILY TRACING AND REUNIFICATION PROCESSES

Children who are unaccompanied or separated while in situations of migration or displacement are often involved in a family tracing and reunification process. Whether started by the parents or the child's temporary caregivers, the process can take years. Without appropriate and coordinated case management and family tracing processes, children can face increased risks of:

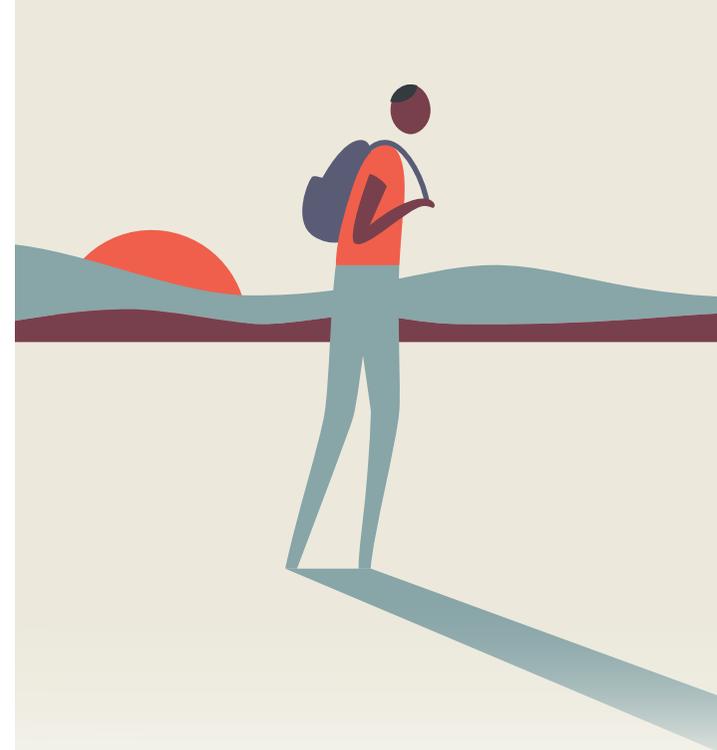
- Inadequate or harmful interim care;
- Untreated physical conditions;
- Untreated emotional conditions; and
- Permanent family separation.

NEGATIVE ATTITUDES TOWARDS CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF MIGRATION OR DISPLACEMENT

Irregular migrants are at higher risk of being stigmatised and ostracised in host communities. This can be especially true of children without adequate parental care, they have more vulnerabilities and fewer easily recognisable assets that communities value. Negative attitudes can expose children to:



- Discrimination;
- Abuse;
- Police harassment; and
- Legal or social barriers to services.



“Cross-border coordination can strengthen coordination and communication between stakeholders and ensure consistent access to care, protection and services for children on the move.”

2.2 THE BENEFITS OF CROSS-BORDER COORDINATION

POSSIBILITIES OF CROSS-BORDER COORDINATION

Children who are unaccompanied or separated while in situations of migration or displacement can experience specific protection risks that arise from a combination of (a) the challenges above and (b) a gap in one (or more) of three key areas – coordination, communication or access.

Cross-border coordination can address these challenges by improving coordination and communication between national and international stakeholders and ensuring consistent access to care, protection and services for children on the move.

Coordination across child protection systems and migration governance can result in:

- Frontline border officials being aware of child protection policies; and
- Social workers understanding processes for determining children’s best interests and supporting family tracing and reunification.

Communication between stakeholders can result in:

- Teachers and school principals who have guidance on how to enrol children who are in migration.

Access to care, protection and other basic services such as health, education and documentation can result in:

- Children having to access the documentation required for essential services; and
- Children in situations of migration or displacement being included in the national protection systems instead of relying on “special provisions” alone that may have large capacity gaps and make individual children’s protection dependent on the specific official encountered.



Good Practice: Needs-based groups/meetings



The proliferation of sub-groups and meetings is a side-effect of bilateral meetings. These offshoots often address specific communication and exchange needs.

EXAMPLE: A border post reference group in Zambia that includes immigration, police, local CSOs and social workers meets regularly to discuss issues relevant to the specific border where these frontline officials are working.

HOW CROSS-BORDER COORDINATION MECHANISMS SUPPORT CHILDREN'S PROTECTION

Cross-border coordination mechanisms support the protection of unaccompanied and separated children in situations of migration or displacement by strengthening the three areas of coordination, communication and access.



1 Coordinate child protection services and systems across borders.

Cross-border coordination mechanisms seek to:

- Improve communication between frontline border officials;
- Harmonise/align standard operating procedures and corresponding action plans; and
- Implement a seamless, cross-border child protection system that supports comprehensive, rights-based services at all stages of case management, including family tracing and reunification.



2 Improve horizontal (across different departments and stakeholders) and vertical (from local to national level) communication.

All stakeholders:

- Share relevant information;
- Understand legally guaranteed protection services;
- Recognise unaccompanied and separated children on the move as distinct rights-holders with unique risks and vulnerabilities; and
- Affirm their specific commitments regarding mandates, budgets, legal clarifications, etc.

Cross-border coordination mechanisms can be initiated by local-level actors, but lasting improvements in bilateral coordination and communication require the support of national leaders and policy makers. Access to services is partly a matter of available resources, but it is also a matter of political priorities and international good will.

**Good Practice:
Harmonised SOPs**



The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) between South Africa and Zimbabwe outline clear guidelines for family tracing, family assessment, best interest determination (including child participation), alternative care placement, follow-up and case closure. The SOPs emphasise care-to-care repatriation, international communication and consistent case management (including documentation).



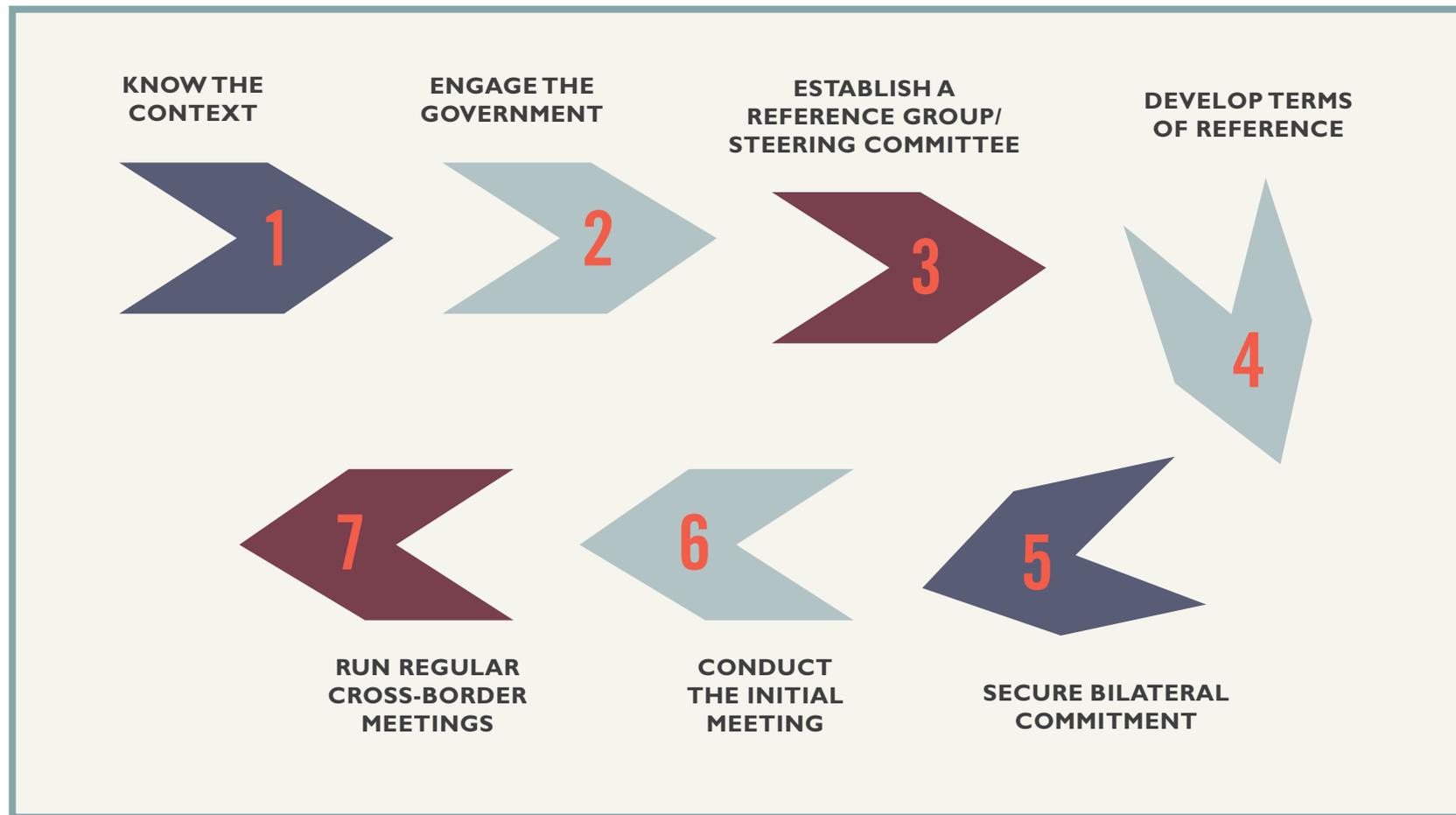
3 Ensure that a child's legal status does not directly or indirectly restrict their access to key services, including best interests determinations, case management, education, shelter, food, health and documentation.

- Ongoing monitoring allows the coordination mechanism to understand whether these objectives are being met.
- Directly refers to policies or laws that only apply to national children.
- Indirectly refers to legislation or policy that grants universal access but includes requirements that children in migration are unable or less likely to reach.

“ Cross-border coordination mechanisms seek to implement a seamless, cross-border child protection system that supports comprehensive, rights-based services at all stages of case management, including family tracing and reunification. ”

Challenges facing children on the move	Interventions	Indicator guidance	Relevance to Global Compacts
Multiple, contradictory or incompatible types of legislation	Harmonise policies and specific provisions that target the needs of children in situations of migration or displacement	National laws and policies are harmonised across borders to provide care and protection to children without appropriate care in situations of migration or displacement [Yes]	GCM: Cross-border cooperation frameworks (Objective 7) GCR: Cross-border cooperation for child protection (B, 2.5)
Complex range of stakeholders	Communicate and coordinate between cross-border stakeholders	Recurrent opportunities are institutionalised for regular, ongoing coordination between cross-border stakeholders (e.g. Cross-border coordination meetings or other platforms for interaction that occur on a regular, predictable basis) [Yes]	
Gaps between/across national protection systems	Map and identify protection gaps in protection systems and develop joint action plans to address gaps (e.g. inadequate access to basic services or case management for children on the move)	Migrant-sensitive national protection systems and monitored action plans support the care and protection of children without adequate care in situations of migration or displacement [Yes]	GCM: Include migrant children in national CP systems by establishing robust procedures for the protection of migrant children as well as cross border cooperation frameworks GCR: Cross-border cooperation for child protection (B, 2.5)
Fragmented case management and family tracing and reunification processes	Harmonise case management procedures and information-sharing protocols between countries	Cross-border standard operating procedures and action plans are in use and reviewed on an ongoing basis [Yes]	GCM: “cross-border cooperation frameworks, in order to ensure the best interests of the child are appropriately integrated” GCR: Best interest assessment and/or determination (B 1.5); Support family tracing (B, 2.5)
Negative attitudes towards children in situations of migration or displacement	Sensitise stakeholders by sharing stories from and about actual children in situations of migration or displacement that are respectful and based on shared values	Regular sensitisation for relevant duty bearers [Yes]	GCM: Intra- and cross-regional, trauma-informed trainings for first responders and government officials Training in rights of the child and child sensitive procedures GCR: Invest in national CP systems and training authorities in child sensitive procedures (B, 2.5) and cross border protection

3. Key considerations for implementing a cross-border coordination mechanism



3.1 ESTABLISHING A CROSS-BORDER COORDINATION MEETING: STEP-BY-STEP

1) KNOW THE CONTEXT

Collaborate with governments and other stakeholders to:

- Map governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in host countries and/or countries of origin (including their perceptions of children in migration).
- Review participating countries' legislation, policies and procedures (including gaps or discrimination) that influence the protection of children in migration. Identify non-threatening or urgent entry points for harmonising policies or procedures that can be used to engage governments bilaterally.
- Map basic services and their accessibility to children who are unaccompanied, separated, in migration or displaced.

2) ENGAGE THE GOVERNMENT

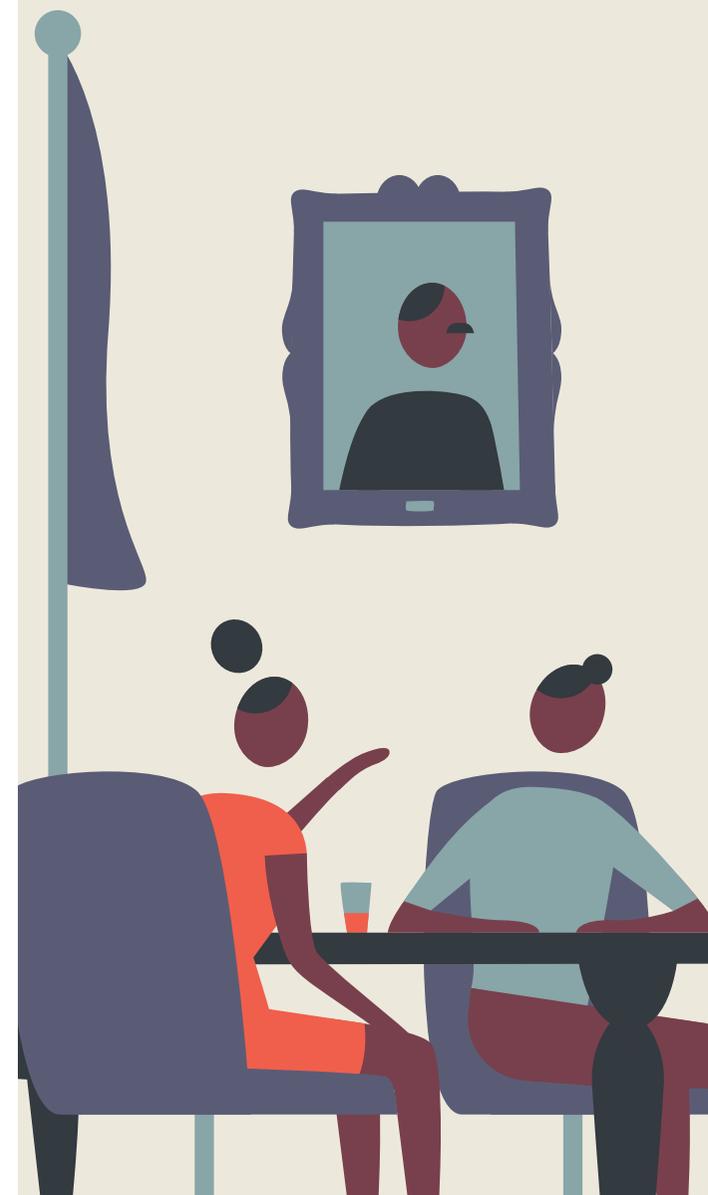
Once there is an evidence base, build on Save the Children's relationships with governments to gauge:

- Governments' interest in protecting children in migration; and
- The possibility of bilaterally engaging neighbouring countries.

3) ESTABLISH A REFERENCE GROUP/STEERING COMMITTEE

Support the establishment of a national-level reference group or steering committee that:

- Includes key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders;
- Establishes a national-level purpose for the bilateral meetings;
- Ensures the attendance of key stakeholders;
- Aligns cross-border meetings to overall government policies and interests; and
- Supports cross-border meeting logistics by reviewing minutes, assessing progress towards agreed-upon actions and organising the meetings.





The reference group and/or steering committee:

- Sets the agenda that invited participants agree upon.
- Confirms the date set at a previous meeting.
- Reviews participants.
- Issues invitation letters and agenda.
- Works with Save the Children to organise transport, conferencing and, if required, translators.
- Confirms chair and scribe.
- Works with Save the Children to determine who takes minutes, records agreed-upon actions and arranges subsequent meeting dates.
- Finalises and circulates minutes.
- Implements action list.

4) DEVELOP TERMS OF REFERENCE

Develop and clarify national-level terms of reference that:

- Capture the purpose of the meetings;
- Connect the protection of children on the move to wider child protection and migration agendas; and
- Support the development of joint action plans that govern the bilateral interaction and cooperation during meetings.

5) SECURE BILATERAL COMMITMENT

In order to secure interest and commitment from both countries:

- Save the Children Country Offices from both countries must communicate their progress to each other;
- Save the Children Country Offices must communicate with respective governments; and
- Governments must engage with each other to coordinate the initial meetings.

6) CONDUCT THE INITIAL MEETING

Initial meetings may feel hostile or uncomfortable, but over time attitudes tend to shift towards more collegial interaction and focus more clearly on cross-border child protection. The exact content and agenda of the first cross-border coordination meeting will depend on:

- Political mood;
- National perceptions of purpose (often different between sending, transit and receiving countries);
- Progress on Terms of Reference; and
- The extent of bilateral engagements in other spheres.

7) RUN REGULAR CROSS-BORDER MEETINGS

Once governments have agreed and committed to leading the process, cross-border meetings follow a very simple process.

3.2 THE ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS – WHO DOES WHAT?



The success of the cross-border coordination mechanism relies on context-specific **government** initiative, leadership and ownership that reflects:

- The governments' individual and comparative strengths;
- The composition of departments (including those who do not have daily contact with children in situations of migration or displacement);
- The political climate (especially related to migration);
- The governments' relationship with NGOs (especially Save the Children); and
- The governments' relationships with neighbouring countries.



Save the Children acts as secretariat, contributing to the meetings by:

- Securing initial donor funds if necessary to help establish buy-in and initiate first meetings between authorities who will be influential in convening new cross-border meetings;
- Financially supporting initial establishment of cross-border mechanisms;

- Supporting the government's interest in and commitment to participating in the mechanism;
- Providing technical support for the meetings and related outputs, including drafting terms of reference to govern the meetings and anchoring aspects of the agenda in prevailing AU and regional policy frameworks and guiding international principles;
- Providing logistical and financial support to recurrent meetings until such time as this is handed over to government duty bearers; and
- Building on established bilateral or regional communication pathways that Save the Children is participating in, such as regional mechanisms, other bilateral programmes or internal networks.



UN Agencies, NGOs and CSOs (for example, UNICEF, IOM, UNHCR, UNODC, IDC, Lawyers for Human Rights, local transport unions and more) are key in establishing and maintaining working groups through:

- Establishing strong inter-agency partnerships;
- Drawing on the influence of wider networks;
- Leveraging international mandates; and
- Providing technical inputs and support.



The inclusion of **communities** in cross-border meetings usually focuses on community leadership structures, including community leaders or church leaders, who could fulfil referral or service roles for children in situations of migration or displacement.



3.3 OVERCOMING KEY CHALLENGES

LACK OF CLARITY IN THE PURPOSE



Save the Children Country Offices have to make an early effort to ensure that governments take ownership of the coordination process by:

- Establishing terms of reference with support from stakeholders;
- Establishing a national reference group or steering committee that can prioritise a formal set of objectives and a theory of change; and
- Using the reference group to keep the government and other key stakeholders informed on the meetings' progress.

ATTITUDES



Attitudes can be hostile, and readiness to engage neighbouring governments in a common cause can be undermined by different political priorities and the impact of migration on specific countries. These difficulties can be overcome by:

- Ensuring national-level terms of reference have a clear child protection focus; and
- Dividing the responsibility for writing guidance documents (and the entire process) between key actors, such as the departments responsible for child protection and Home Affairs.

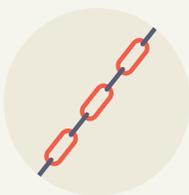
FINANCES



Reaching the point where governments recognise the value and importance of these meetings and are willing to finance them can take many years. If the meetings lose funding before gaining bilateral government support, it could mean the end of meetings and the loss of progress made up to that point. To avoid that situation, it is best to:

- Fund the project through a long-term secure funding source; or
- Pursue other potential funders (such as IOM or UNICEF).

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES



The protection needs and related barriers vary greatly for individual children who are unaccompanied and separated while in situations of migration or displacement. It is important to include stakeholders who may not initially seem relevant but who deal with concerns such as:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Disability;
- Education; and
- Livelihoods.

To ensure all stakeholders are involved, cross-cutting issues should be included when mapping relevant stakeholders and service providers, such as CSOs that have a gender focus.

GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY



The shift from government ownership with financial support from Save the Children towards government funding of the cross-border coordination meetings is a significant one. Securing funding from governments involves complicated dynamics including:

- The availability of funding;
- The specific government department(s) that should be funding the mechanism; and
- The perceived value of the meetings.

“Bilateral meetings that focus on the protection of children (who migrate) have, in part, been successful because they address stakeholders who have mandates to protect children and who manage migration in their capacity as points-of-contact with these children. These efforts ensure that child protection policies and mechanisms are better equipped to reach children in migration.”



“ **Bilateral meetings that include stakeholders, such as prosecuting authorities and trafficking police units, can produce significant results.** ”

STAFF CHANGES



The change of staff is often a problem for institutions or mechanisms, particularly when the knowledge and capacity is focused on a specific topic. New staff will fit more easily into the meetings if:

- Meetings are scheduled regularly;
- The group develops simple training and capacity-building tools for governments to use with new staff; and
- Meeting participants approach new members with a collegial, welcoming attitude that promotes active participation and knowledge sharing.

EXPANSION



Successful bilateral cross-border coordination mechanisms can naturally expand to include additional countries. This is a great achievement, but it requires forethought and planning at a multi-country level. Each added country requires additional bilateral meetings with the existing participants, which requires additional funding and staff resources. As the number of participating countries increases, it may be beneficial to include a regional component to:

- Alleviate some of the country-level resource strain by combining several bilateral meetings into one larger regional meeting; and
- Incentivise the participation of higher-level government officials.

Good Practice: Synergies between trafficking and cross-border coordination



The trafficking in children for the purpose of labour or sexual exploitation is a key concern for many countries. Addressing trafficking is a difficult task, but bilateral meetings that include stakeholders, such as prosecuting authorities and trafficking police units, can produce significant results.

In Mozambique, the Cross-Border Coordination Meetings form part of a larger initiative to combat trafficking. The bilateral cooperation in this area includes (1) prosecution of traffickers, with South African and Mozambican police assisting each other with investigations, and (2) support and reintegration of victims.

If anti-trafficking initiatives exist prior to establishing Cross-Border Coordination Meetings, it is valuable to connect with such initiatives and explore synergies.



Good Practice: Using ICTs



Information and Communications Technology (ICT) offers up many new avenues for cooperation between stakeholders.

Mozambique: The Attorney General (AG) has established a phone-based chat group that includes the AG, Save the Children Mozambique, social workers and other stakeholders. This group:

- Provides instant support;
- Addresses urgent case management challenges; and
- Distributes media reports and other information on relevant child protection topics.

Online cross-border chat platforms are increasingly common and facilitate planning and coordination across borders and between stakeholders.

4. Conclusion

This *Quick Reference Guide* summarises the rationale, key considerations and step-by-step process for implementing a cross-border coordination mechanism to support the protection of unaccompanied and separated children in situations of migration or displacement.

These mechanisms address some of the common challenges faced by both children on the move and the governments that are responsible for them by strengthening:

- **Coordination** between nations;
- **Communication** between national stakeholders; and
- Children's **access** to necessary services.

Cross-border coordination mechanisms bring together the full range of stakeholders – including children, communities and government actors – to establish common policies and goals for protecting children on the move. Ultimately, the goal is that participating governments will not just participate in but will lead and finance the mechanisms.

5. Resources

Save the Children has established a Resource Centre (<https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/>) that includes a large library of documents covering a wide range of issues, including the protection of children on the move and related topics, such as case management, violence against children and more. The Resource Centre also includes a wide range of country-specific documents.

CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

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