TOR: MOOC, online training tool targeting professionals working with children in need of alternative care and at risk of so being

1. Background: According to UNICEF[1], more than two million children live in care institutions; this is likely to be a severe underestimate, whilst many more are living in other forms of alternative care. These children are subject to higher risks of exploitation, abuse and other violations. The Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (CRC) recognises the child's right to be cared for by his or her parents, and sets out States Parties' obligations to provide suitable alternative care, international instruments, offering partial detailed guidance.

From as early as 2004, Guidelines for children deprived of parental care or at risk so being were called for with a view of improving the implementation of the CRC for children deprived of their family. Much work was carried out by the Brazilian Government, multiple other Governments, the CRC Committee, UNICEF, civil society and other actors at the UNGA, HRC as well as in different regions and individual countries resulting in the "Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children" (Guidelines) being formally welcomed by the UNGA in November 2009 (A/RES/64/142). The Guidelines are based on two overarching pillars, principles of necessity and suitability[2], with a strong emphasis on preventing the need for alternative care.

2. International projects: Since 2009 through inter-agency initiatives, stakeholders have been working towards implementing the Guidelines, for example[3]:

- Moving Forward Handbook (2011-2013)

Moving Forward (MF) provides specific guidance on the how the Guidelines can be implemented, by providing promising practices among multiple countries and various regions. It provides professionals an impetus and innovative means for implementing the 'desirable set orientations for policy and practice' set out in the Guidelines. The handbook likewise offers crucial guidance to civil society in terms of monitoring implementation and reporting to national bodies such as ombudspersons, national child rights institutions as well as international treaty bodies, most notably the CRC Committee.

- Tracking Progress Initiative (2014 -2015)

The "Tracking Progress" Initiative (TPI)[4] is an interactive, strengths-based diagnostic and learning tool designed to help governments and NGOs determine the extent to which a state or region has effectively implemented the Guidelines, and the priorities for change still ahead. By identifying gaps, this in turn can inform improvements in services and support evidence-based advocacy and strategic planning. Promising practices identified in monitoring can then be shared for replication. In these ways systematic monitoring will help ensure full implementation of the Guidelines, improving the quality of care for children and above all creating positive change for children and their families.

3. International training tool:

Building on the Guidelines, MF and TPI, an International Training Tool is a logical follow up initiative:

- Stage 1: Handbook provides direction on the conditions at practice and policy levels needed to implement the Guidelines
- Stage 2: TPI measures the progress of the Guidelines' implementation, identifying achievements and areas for progress
- Stage 3: International training tool provides teaching, supporting policy and practical implementation between the Guidelines and priority areas for change revealed in the TPI. An International Seminar on Children's Rights in Alternative Care in October 2016, focusing on promising practices and ongoing challenges, could be used as one platform for the online training. (**see www.alternativecaregeneva2016.com**).

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[1] Progress for Children, UNICEF, 2009 at 23, http://www.unicef.org/publications/files/Progress_for_Children-No.8_EN_081309.pdf

[2] Moving Forward Handbook, 2012 at 22, http://www.alternativecareguidelines.org/Portals/46/Moving-forward/Moving-Forward-implementing-the-guidelines-for-web1.pdf

[3] Other examples include: The Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (CPMS) http://cpwg.net/minimum-standards/and Alternative Care in Emergencies Toolkit, Save the Children http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/resources/online-library/alternative-care-emergencies-toolkit etc.

[4] Text is adapted from article by Martin F, Tracking Progress Initiative – Monitoring the Guidelines' Implementation, ISS Monthly Review, 2015

The **format** of the international training tool would be presented as a free to access, open online course, a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) to engage the widest possible number of alternative care practitioners and others with an interest or responsibility for prevention of separation and alternative care, with the secondary benefit of disseminating the Guidelines. As the sessions would be interactive, a selection of most relevant questions posted and answered could later be placed on a central website[5] operational in several languages such as www.alternativecareguidelines.org.

The MOOC would be designed and developed in a manner that could be repeated and indeed lessons learnt could help improvements, although there would be cost and administration implications for future revisions. Such a design would allow for the inclusion of more promising practices as well as new challenges as they emerge in the coming years.

The **course content** would be principally anchored in the CRC and Guidelines principles and accessible to a wide variety of policy makers and practitioners worldwide. It would further build on the framework of MF (policy questions, analysis and practices) as well as TPI (identification of progress and obstacles). These aforementioned tools have the advantage of having wide support due to the collaborative process used for their development as well as already existing in multiple languages.

In addition to these tools, resources such as the successes and challenges identified at the October 2016 international alternative care conference in Geneva (see **www.alternativecaregeneva2016.com**), varied publications and other relevant material will be used to develop the curriculum. Whilst the conference provides a solid basis for filmed content, other opportunities for filming would also be sought. MOOC content will showcase as much national experience as is useful with local professionals explaining what implementation look likes.

To ensure continuity and coherency between the different modules, a video narrative would complement the instruction input which for example follows a family living in vulnerable circumstances (e.g.: a child with a disability and parents are unemployed or an emergency situation) moving through an alternative care system and eventually leaving the system. This might take the form of several short stories to illustrate different parts of the care system, thus incorporating three different regions/cultures/systems, but this will depend on available resources.

The academic rights based theory and sharing of practitioner expertise will be buttressed by University partnerships to the extent of their availability, whereas the practical elements will be supported by the steering group, through their networks as well as input from partners in the field. The steering group will have the primary responsibility for prioritising what content should be used for each module, as well as input into the content as well as the format of the course. The steering group will be chaired by Alan Kikuchi-White, SOS Children's Villages International and Mia Dambach, International Social Service. The professional/organisation awarded the bid will report directly to the chairpersons and upon request meet with the entire steering group regarding MOOC development (see supervision below).

A **monitoring and evaluation** process will be built into the development and dissemination of the MOOC, such as an optional survey for those who have completed the course.

The **target population** for the international training tool would be the same multi-disciplinary professionals that the handbook and TPI were aimed at. Primarily those who are working in providing services around

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[5] This would require comments to be attributed specifically to individuals as they are protected under Creative Commons BY-NC-ND. It should be noted that there can be thousands of comments so a selection would be necessary. Moreover additional funding would be required for translations if deemed necessary.

children's care including social workers, para-social workers, community support workers, lawyers, psychologists, child protection professionals, teachers, medical workers, government officials, policy makers, care workers including those in family based and residential settings, lay persons and others with an interest or responsibility for child protection and child care. Likewise the MOOC targets countries where care reform is occurring or being considered.

The material will be prepared on the basis that the target population will have some understanding or experience about child protection and child care but not necessarily of broader care reform and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children. Conversational level of English, French or Spanish is desirable – e.g.: B1 – although as an open platform, anyone interested in alternative care may access the MOOC.

In addition to having individual access to the tool, consolidated learning experiences will be promoted by the steering group through various Universities and other local opportunities. To help with consolidated learning experience, a short facilitation guide may be developed with preparatory reading materials and external resources.

The **objectives of the MOOC** will help the target population to:
- Fully understand the key principles, pillars and implications of the Guidelines
- Interpret the Guidelines in practice
- Consider implications in their own context and encourage exchange of ideas

5. Output: The chosen applicant body would prepare and finalise the International Training Tool by way of a MOOC. The scope of activities:
- Review of existing material (desktop review)
- Collect examples of policies and practices, including via previous international conferences as well as the 2016 international conference to inform MOOC content
- Ensure consultation with steering group members and other relevant experts to include cross regional and multi-disciplinary perspectives regarding possible MOOC content.
- Technical development of initial MOOC modules taking into account the draft outline previously prepared – SG will determine the extent of incorporation.[6]
- Prepare a draft initial script for MOOC modules
- Undertake preliminary consultation of script of initial modules with a select group to test the direction of MOOC (e.g.: focus groups, expert interviews in various regions)
- Drafting of MOOC content/script incorporating feedback from preliminary consultation
- Sharing second draft of MOOC content/script with a cross-section of professionals for comment
- Collection of suggestions and incorporation of appropriate revisions as decided with SG
- Finalisation of MOOC
- Funding dependant, a Monitoring and Evaluation process could be considered, such as identifying number of active participants as well as a short survey about their MOOC usage

6. Expertise required: The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate expertise in:
- Development of alternative care, social work and social welfare policy, including in developing and middle income country contexts.
- Deep knowledge and understanding of the principles and provisions of the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children.
- Proven experience developing and writing child's rights based guidance, training and advocacy tools.
- Demonstrate knowledge, competence and experience in developing a MOOC.
- Excellent writing and analytical skills in English, so that end product is accessible for target audience

The successful bidder would need to demonstrate they have a partnership with a MOOC platform provider or if not, show how they would deliver and market a MOOC.

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[6] Seed money has been provided to develop a draft outline of six MOOC modules to be submitted to ISS, who will then share with the SG for consideration.

7. Expertise desired:
- Experience of the UN system or other international and non-governmental organisations
- Working knowledge of other UN languages

8. Supervision: A steering group will be set up consisting of interested agencies primarily from the Working Group on Children without Parental Care in Geneva and New York, representing various regions as well as policy and practice professionals. Day-to-day guidance will be available from Mia Dambach, ISS and Alan Kikuchi-White, SOS Children's Villages International who will manage the contract for this work.

Steering Group members include Better Care Network, International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE), Hope and Homes for Children, International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), International Social Service (ISS), RELAF, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages International & UNICEF

9. Financial contributions: BCN, FICE, ISS, Hope and Homes for Children and UNICEF etc.

10. In-kind contributions: CELCIS, Save the Children, ISS, SOS Children's Villages International etc

11. Co-sponsors: In addition to the Steering Group, African Child Policy Forum, Maestral etc

12. Timescale and fee: A draft MOOC would be expected to be prepared within 8 to 10 months, with the final product ideally being ready within 12 months. This includes time for revisions of script/content upon further consultation with country offices and alternative care experts. The number of days required to carry out this task will depend upon the agreed format of the MOOC. This will be negotiated once the consultation is concluded. This work will take place in 2016 and finalised in early 2017. The fee payable for this work will be subject to negotiation with the successful applicant.

Expressions of interest in this consultancy addressing the expertise required should be sent with accompanying curriculum vitae(s) as well as a price proposal to Mia Dambach at mia.dambach@iss-ssi.org and Alan Kikuchi-White Alan.Kikuchi-White@sos-kd.org by <u>17 March 2016</u>. Only applications that include a more in-depth response/outline to the development of the MOOC demonstrating knowledge and competency will be considered.