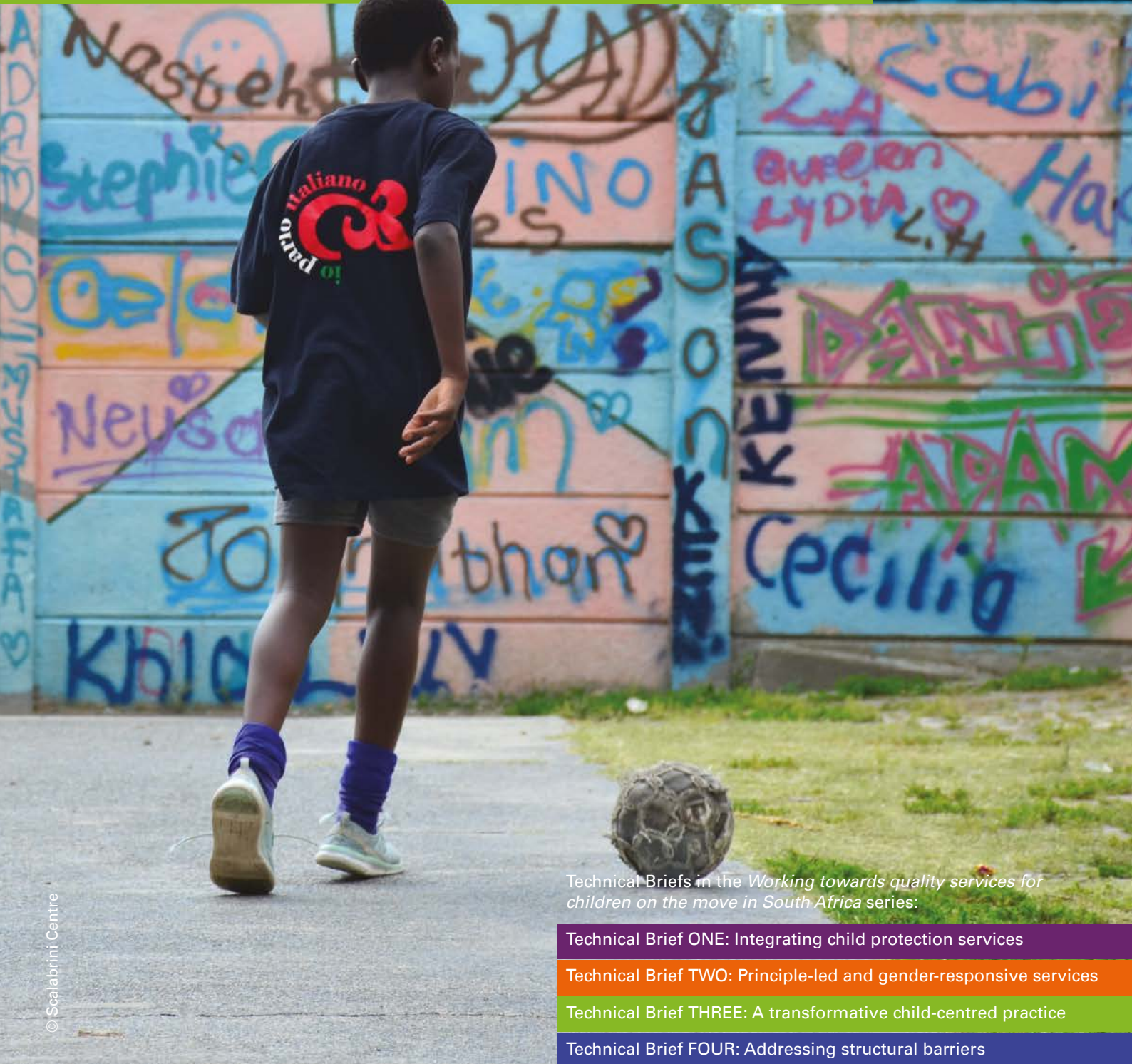


Working towards quality services for children on the move in South Africa

## Technical brief THREE

# A transformative child-centred practice



Technical Briefs in the *Working towards quality services for children on the move in South Africa* series:

Technical Brief ONE: Integrating child protection services

Technical Brief TWO: Principle-led and gender-responsive services

Technical Brief THREE: A transformative child-centred practice

Technical Brief FOUR: Addressing structural barriers

© Scalabrini Centre



European Union



social development

Department:  
Social Development  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



**UNHCR**  
The UN Refugee Agency



for every child

The copyright for *Technical Brief Three: A transformative child-centred practice* is held by the United Nations Children's Fund. Permission is required to reprint and reproduce. UNICEF has a formal permission policy that requires a written request to be submitted. For non-commercial uses, the permission will normally be granted free of charge. Please write to UNICEF at the address below to initiate a permission request.

Attribution: Please cite the work as follows: UNICEF 2023. "*Technical Brief Three: A transformative child-centred practice*" UNICEF South Africa.

**For further information or a permission request, please contact:**

Hellen Nyangoya  
Child Protection Manager  
UNICEF South Africa  
Equity House, 659 Pienaar Street, Brooklyn, Pretoria  
Email: [pretoria@unicef.org](mailto:pretoria@unicef.org)

## Acknowledgements

UNICEF South Africa Child Protection Manager Hellen Nyangoya

Written by Glynis Clacherty & Rebecca Walker

Technical advisors: Ajwang' Warria, Ibrahim Bangurra

Design and infographics: Sally Whines

Thank you to Sara Faust and Anna Truter of UNHCR

Thank you to the implementing partners for their dedicated work with children on the move and for sharing the details of this work with us.

*This Technical Brief was produced with the financial support of the European Union. Its contents are the sole responsibility of UNHCR and UNICEF and the South African Department of Social Development and does not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union.*

## EU Global Promotion of Best Practices for Children in Migration – a project, implemented by UNHCR and UNICEF and the South African Department of Social Development and co-funded by the European Union, UNHCR and UNICEF.

The Best Practices for Children in Migration Project was a 30-month project (October 2020 – July 2023). The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the effective protection of children on the move and the realisation of their rights through child protection systems that provide quality integrated services, alternative care and mental health and psychosocial support all with a gender sensitive lens. The project sought to document and share lessons learnt and best practices towards the use of alternative care options to replace immigration detention.

The project was implemented across four countries in two regions: El Salvador and Mexico in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region (LACR); and South Africa and Zambia in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region (ESAR). The programme's final beneficiaries are children on the move, including migrant, internally displaced, returnee, asylum seeking, and refugee children as well as children who move voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers.

Three of the four outcomes identified in the project framework for the South African component of the Best Practice Project are listed below:

- Child protection systems include gender responsive, high quality, and integrated services in reception centres and other care and attention facilities.
- Child protection systems have integrated, gender responsive psychosocial services and prevention mechanisms addressing gender-based violence and other structural problems.
- Child protection systems provide alternative care options, with emphasis on community and family-based alternatives.

The fourth outcome was to document and share lessons learnt and best practices related to processes, approaches, and methodologies adopted through the project experience in South Africa.

This is the third technical brief in a series of four that document what the implementing NGO partners have learned about how to deliver quality integrated services for children on the move.

This set of technical briefs focuses on the South African project which was implemented in partnership with the South Africa Department of Social Development, UNHCR and its implementing partners: The Scalabrini Centre (Western Cape); Refugee Social Services (KwaZulu Natal); The Centre for Child Law (University of Pretoria); Future Families (Limpopo); The South African Human Rights Commission (national), Action for Conflict Transformation (Gauteng); Childline (national), and The Consortium of Refugees and Migrants in South Africa (national).

## Children on the move

The umbrella term 'Children on the move' refers to children who migrate within their countries or across borders. Children move for a variety of reasons: to seek protection, to pursue a better life, or to reunite with family. Some children migrate with their families while others move alone because of conflict, natural disaster or other deprivations. Children on the move can include refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced children, trafficked and smuggled children, and children who are documented or undocumented (1).

## Acronyms

CYCC	Child and youth care centres
DBE	Department of Education
DIRCO	Department of International Relations and Cooperation
DOCJ	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DOE	Department of Education
DOHA	Department of Home Affairs
DOH	Department of Health
DOJ	Department of Justice
DSD	Department of Social Development
ESAR	Eastern and Southern Africa Region
EU	European Union
LACR	Latin America and the Caribbean Region
MHPSS	Mental health and psychosocial support
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SAHRC	The South African Human Rights Commission
SAPS	South African Police Service
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

# Background

Across Southern Africa, children move within and over borders, to earn money, to escape conflict, to support their families at home, to escape domestic violence, to escape oppression or persecution, for education, for adventure, or due to changes in families such as the death of a caregiver (2,3). Some children on the move in the region travel with family members or informal caregivers, but many travel alone, either having chosen to move in search of work and education or having been separated from families on their journeys. All children on the move in Southern Africa are protected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) which make it the responsibility of individual countries to protect children wherever they are regardless of the origin of those children (4,5). The ACRWC states that 'the best interests of the child shall be the primary consideration in actions concerning the child' and protects the right to education, the right to health, the right to a name, and the right to a nationality and to be registered at birth (4).

In South Africa there are an estimated 642,000 migrant and refugee children making it the country with the largest population of children on the move on the continent (6)<sup>1</sup>. South Africa's progressive legislative framework provides for the right to self-settlement of migrants (rather than being placed in camps), access to basic healthcare, and to education (7). The care and protection of unaccompanied and separated migrant children is determined by the courts and children are often placed in child and youth care centres (CYCC)<sup>2</sup>, or in community-based foster care (8).

However, the laws and policies designed to address key welfare and protection challenges for children on the move lack robust implementation. This means that many children, particularly those who are separated or unaccompanied, face barriers to accessing asylum, documentation, healthcare, education, and other basic services and rights. Additionally, the lack of social protection means that many families and children on the move live in deep poverty in unsuitable housing without the ability to access education or enter the formal economy because of a lack of documentation. These precarious living conditions coupled with high levels of xenophobia from some local residents creates ongoing stress which, in addition to past traumatic experiences, affects caregivers' and children's psychosocial wellbeing (9).

South Africa has adopted the UN and UNHCR Global Compact on Refugees (2018) and the Global Compact on Migration (2018) both of which ensure a human rights and child-centred approach to child protection across borders and within the country (10,11). Additionally, UNICEF's key frameworks on children on the move, including the Global Framework on Children on the Move, the Six-Point Agenda for Programmatic Action, and Children Uprooted – What Local Governments Can Do (1,12), contribute to the approach used in South Africa. However, an increasingly restrictive migration governance framework, inconsistencies between policy and practice, and increasing anti-foreigner sentiments pose challenges for those working with children on the move (13,14). That said, there have also been many positive steps, primarily driven by a collaborative approach by state and non-state actors, to safeguard and protect children on the move. The Best Practice Project has worked with some of these actors to extend the reach and increase the effectiveness of this work. This series of technical briefs highlights some of that work.



1 Accurate statistics on children on the move in the region are difficult to access as children and youth often choose to remain 'invisible' for their own protection. Additionally country census processes do not all make provision for migrancy. Therefore, the number of migrant children is likely much higher.

2 Amendment of Section 45 of the South African Children's Act 38 of 2005 provides for the placement of children in alternative care. A child and youth care centre is a facility that provides residential care. The Act outlines the norms and standards for the CYCCs.

# Methodology for documenting the Best Practice Project

A qualitative, emergent research approach was used to document the Best Practice Project. Implementing partners of the project participated in semi-structured interviews and a reflective workshop to share the work they had done (15). The reflective workshop included 'mapping' the context in which each partner worked including the policy frameworks within which they work, the activities they undertook, the underlying principles they applied, and the impacts they observed. The workshop provided an opportunity to create the story of their project using visual tools that explained the ways they worked and case studies of individual children. This approach allows authentic data to emerge and makes the resulting technical briefs co-created products (16).

The discussions from the workshop were recorded, transcribed, and combined with the data from the interviews. This data was analysed using a thematic approach where emergent themes were identified in the data. These themes directly informed the focus of each of the technical briefs in this series. In each of the briefs the examples provided by the implementing partners highlight different, but closely related, human rights and child protection initiatives, including legislative and policy reform processes in South Africa.



The research team reflected on the fact that the process of participatory documentation was, in itself, an example of good practice. The participatory nature of the workshop allowed for reflection and dialogue where practitioners compared approaches, successes and challenges. Here, we explore how the use of visual methods in the documentation workshop helped to problematise the principle of child-centred practice, a practice that many practitioners supporting children and young people identify as central to their work but do not often subject to critical reflection.

What we, as researchers observed in the documentation workshop, was that as participants, drew a diagram that told the story of their practice they drew a child at the centre of the image. None of them articulated why they had done this but accepted it as a given. When asked why they had drawn a child at the centre of the image the participants replied. In their replies they began to bring to the surface the nature of how they centre the child and each child's unique experience in their practice. Bringing this to consciousness, seemed to promote a greater commitment to the principle of child-centred work within their everyday practice.

**"Something I noticed is that every one of the project teams drew their activities with a child or family as the centre. When I reflected this back to them, it was a light bulb moment. 'Of course, that is what we do, we often forget that in the business of our work and the challenges and the overwhelming need'. There were then discussions about how to keep this principle at the centre of their practice"**

(Workshop facilitator)



© Scalabrini Centre, Julia Cumes

## Child-centred practice – recognising the unique nature of each child's experience of moving

One of the intended outcomes of the Best Practice Project was to encourage responsive systems that took into account the differing needs of children. This is clearly evident in the child-centred principles that motivated the work of the partners discussed below.

In much programming for children on the move the heterogeneity of migrant children's experience is often hidden in labels and homogenous responses. A symbol of this is the language used when describing particular children and processes, unaccompanied and separated children are often referred to in publications and speech by the acronym 'UASC' or family tracing and reunification as 'FTR'. Despite widely accepted guidelines (including UNICEF's MHPSS Guidelines of 2018) (17) that are built on a socio-ecological systems approach where individual children are seen as developing within a specific set of contextual systems and therefore requiring services sensitive to that context, many organisations respond

to children on the move without recognising the heterogeneity of their experiences. Another example of this is that many children, particularly those in marginalised and difficult contexts, have few opportunities to speak up, share their views and concerns and to collaborate on decisions that will go on to impact their future lives. For children on the move, especially girls on the move and unaccompanied and separated children, the need to be sensitive to specific needs is even more important because of the heightened risk of GBV and institutional discrimination. The social norms that 'blame and shame' young women for GBV and the institutional discrimination, mean that children on the move often remain hidden ('under the radar') because they are undocumented, or are afraid to speak out, if living within an abusive setting. Knowledge of confidential services is also low, because they mostly live in marginalised spaces in cities and township<sup>3</sup> areas, and they often do not know who they can speak with confidentially.

<sup>3</sup> 'Township' is a term still used widely in South Africa in spite of its negative origin in Apartheid policies where people designated 'black' were moved outside cities into low quality housing. Large informal housing spaces have become common within and alongside these townships. These are often underserved with high unemployment and community crime (18).

A number of organisations delivering social services to children on the move, work with standard operating procedures (SOPs). While there is a need to have protocols that can help to ensure quality control and standardise practices, it is important to acknowledge that SOPs can only go so far, given that children on the move are not a homogenous population (19). Each child has a different context and range of experiences, and what is essential in the delivery of quality services is the need to create a specific case management plan, or provide services based on the intersecting identities of children on the move. Intersecting characteristics include a child's age, gender, country of origin, journey experience, place where they presently live, physical ability, particular family situation, language, HIV status and experience of violence. Using an intersectional lens offers an alternative way of examining how contexts of inequality and marginalisation underlie the challenges

that practitioners have to respond to in interventions involving children on the move.

This aligns with the UNHCR Framework for the Protection of Children, which outlines a systems approach and was explicitly developed with input from girls and boys of different ages and abilities (20).

Many of the implementing partners described in the documentation workshop how, in their diverse contexts, they each examined the multiple forms of lived experience, inequalities and the complexities of the children and families they worked with in line with UNICEF's MHPSS Guidelines of 2018 (17). It was evident that the intersectional approach opened up their engagement to nuances of the complex linkages of multiple and intersecting systems that shape the lived experiences of children on the move.

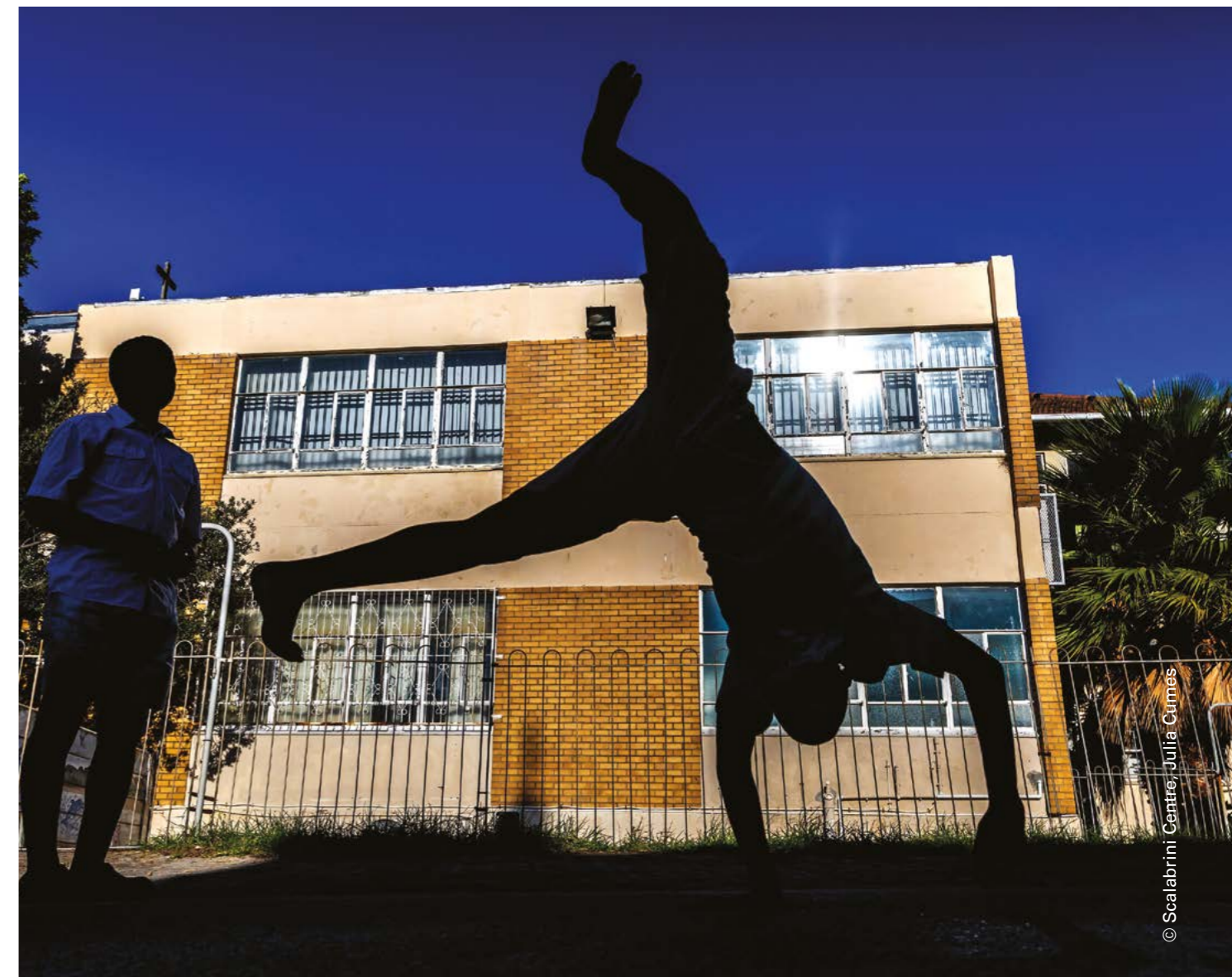
A transformative and culturally sensitive child-centred practice, therefore, is able to balance the heterogeneity of migrant experience (individual identities, needs etc.), with more standardised and formal mechanisms to ensure quality support. This is done through prioritising the experiences of the child in case management, legal and psychosocial services; listening when a child arrives at a service centre, and finding out details about a child's story – as much as they are willing to share and, in a language, they can express themselves in. However, this can also take time, and is dependent on building trust through listening with respect and treating the child as the expert on their own lives and futures. Children often arrive at a service centre with family or household members, and it is important that every member is listened to (often separately), especially girls, young women and young children. Strengths-based intervention tools are used to assess environmental, cultural, and individual and kin

assets, and risks and to support resilience, recovery, and healing related to their lived experiences.

This approach is aligned with making sure children access the right to participation enshrined in Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (5). An individual-sensitive practice is also anchored in human rights including freedom, access to basic needs and protection from discrimination. The examples below illustrate how two South African organisations have developed specific rights-based services. Important to note is that they can serve a large number of clients<sup>5</sup> while still ensuring that the specific and intersecting characteristics of each child are taken into account.



Each child experiences displacement in a different way. This is how an 18 year old young woman expressed being an 'outsider' in an art-based programme at Scalabrini Centre Cape Town.<sup>4</sup>



© Scalabrini Centre, Julia Cumes

<sup>4</sup> Shahrokh T. Finding 'belonging' in the caring relationships of young people with migration experiences in South Africa. *Journal of the British Academy*. 2022. 10(s2):15–36.

<sup>5</sup> For example, the service organisation described in Example 1 below has four full-time social workers and three community workers with about 400 people coming to the office per month and approximately 100 - 115 appointments with the social workers per month.

## Refugee Social Services

Refugee Social Services (RSS) was registered in 2008,<sup>6</sup> as a 'not for profit organisation' (NPO).<sup>7</sup> Its main drop-in service centre is based in inner-city Durban, in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. Most of the children and families live in inner city Durban. They often rent one room in a house or apartment and share bathroom and cooking facilities. The apartment buildings are often old office blocks or factories repurposed as housing. The living spaces are overcrowded with poor maintenance so facilities such as water, sanitation and electricity are unhygienic and dangerous. Security is poor and violence common. Outside of the inner city families on the move live in townships in outbuildings rented from South Africans and in informal housing. While less densely packed than the inner-cities, these areas are characterised by high unemployment and violence, particularly violent masculinity and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (GBV).<sup>8</sup> Services such as clinics, hospitals and schools are very limited, expensive, and often far away.

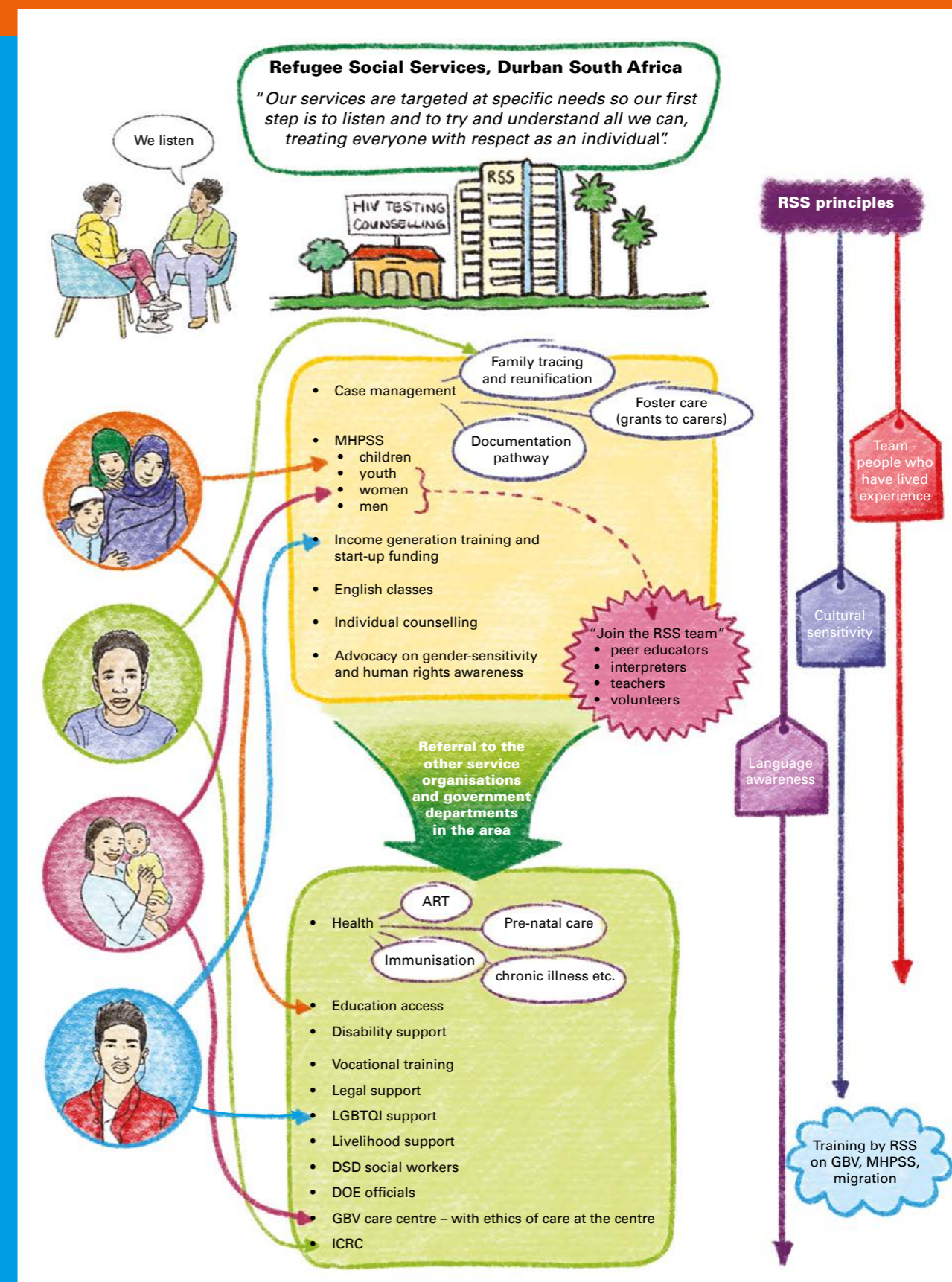
Even in these diverse settings with such varying needs, RSS has worked to create practice that

takes into account the specific needs of particular children and families. This includes: orientating all clients in their own language to refugee rights and responsibilities, information relevant to their particular needs on accessing services, casework that includes tailored referrals, time-limited material assistance when necessary, individual psychosocial counselling when it is considered necessary, gender and age-sensitive support groups and advocacy at city and area level around GBV prevention and responses and human rights awareness. They also run an extensive community outreach and information programme that does not differentiate refugees from local residents. This encompasses awareness of health, education and documentation rights and services and income generation projects. RSS describes this as a 'holistic package of services' and emphasises how they keep a careful balance between recognising and responding to specific needs within the set of services they offer.

The diagram opposite describes the approach taken by RSS.



© Scalabrini Centre



6 Previously the service was a project of the Mennonite Central Committee that worked for over 100 years to promote social justice in South Africa.

7 The South African Nonprofit Organisations Act 71 of 1997 defines an NPO as a trust, company or other association of persons, established for a public purpose, the income and property of which are not distributable to its members or office bearers except as reasonable compensation for services rendered.

8 Levels of GBV in South Africa are notoriously high and the country has one of the highest rape incidence in the world (21)

## Example 2: Adapting a national child helpline to include the needs of children on the move

### Childline South Africa

Child helplines are a common child protection intervention. Each year, millions of children all over the world, reach out to a child helpline service. In 2021, Child Helpline International reported 2, 925, 242 counselling contacts.<sup>9</sup> Child helplines offer children opportunities to look for help themselves, when they are in need. They use child-appropriate communication media such as telephone, SMS, chat, email or in remote areas, walk-in-centres or letter boxes. In Africa (and in some countries outside Africa) child helplines are now linked to the toll-free number, 116. When calling this number, children can speak to a counsellor in trust and confidence and if needed be referred to child protection services. Along with the helpline, Childline also offers Online Counselling through a 'chat' function available at certain times of the day.

Childline South Africa has functioned since 1986,<sup>10</sup> starting as a service in a few provinces and growing to a national helpline. The organisation describes itself as a prevention and early intervention service. Data Analysis in 2022 recorded 52 620 calls where children received counselling and 9332 calls where cases needed to be followed up and a referral made.

What is innovative about the work done by Childline South Africa under the Best Practice Project is the tailoring of the service for children on the move. This has been identified globally as important. "Child helplines are considered a low-threshold, easy to access and safe space for children and young people. They could, therefore, be a key point of support for children and young people in migration. However, at this point in time, child helplines are not commonly used by this group." (22)

One of the aims of the Childline work for the Best Practice Project was to create comprehensive and relevant communication and outreach strategies that specifically targeted children on the move, alongside reaching local children. The Best Practice Project work had two focus areas:

- Making sure the helpline had counsellors who could speak the languages of children on the move in the country.
- Outreach to communities with large populations of families and children on the move to raise awareness of the tollfree number and to encourage children to use it. This included explicit communication about the openness of the helpline to children on the move.

### A multi-language helpline

Language-sensitive protection services are key to listening and creating an appropriate care plan for children on the move, in fact, all partners mentioned this fact in the documentation workshop. It is a self-evident fact that children and families need to communicate in their own language, yet so often, this issue is given limited funding in proposals to donors and often there are no interpreters or staff that speak the languages of families and children on the move. Childline recruited staff who could speak migrant languages common in South Africa and were then able to offer help for children speaking languages such as Swahili, French, Portuguese on the helpline and online chat. The staff came from the local migrant community and were trained by Childline in helpline counselling and referral.

Childline were only able to offer a small stipend despite the fact that as the director of Childline pointed out, the staff are taking on highly skilled positions. Additionally, as migrants the volunteers faced challenges in making a living and providing for their families. Some of the trained counsellors withdrew as better paid work became available or because they had to spend more time on the informal income generation work they

did. This is a common problem globally in many child protection programmes that rely on volunteers. The difficulty of finding funding for interpreters was raised by all the partners in the Best Practice project. At the time of writing this brief Childline's project funding to employ the language volunteers had run out and the service was no longer operational.

The second practice that Childline introduced as part of the Best Practice Project to specifically meet the needs of migrant children was to run outreach programmes that made children aware of the helpline and the fact that it was confidential. Areas where large populations of migrant children lived were identified and the outreach programme was run in schools and community spaces and through faith-based organisations for all children, local and children on the move. Communication material that advertised the helpline service written in migrant languages were distributed in areas with high migrant populations. Examples are shown below.

**HOW CAN WE HELP?**

**Call Childline 116**

24 hours, 7 days a week and free from all networks and available across the African region.

dzayo dzisina muripo ndidzo dzinoti: 116. Unotibata nguva ipi zvayo yezuva (24 hours - 7 days a week) uchishandisa raini nipi zvano renetiweki rinoshandiswa munyika ipi neipi iri muAfrica

Nambari ya bure ya Childline 116. Inatumika saa 24 kwa siku na siku 7 kwa juma na ni bure ukutumia mitandao yote inayopatikana barani Afrika

Childline ligne d'assistance gratuite - 24 heures sur 24, 7 jours par semaine et gratuit de tous les réseaux et disponible dans toute la région africaine

Chat to us on our website  
Monday - Friday, 11am - 1pm and 2-6pm

Unokwanisa kutaura nacounselor padandemutande ravo rinoti  
Unaweza kuzungumza na mshauri wa mtandaoni kwenye Tovuti yetu  
Vous pouvez parler avec nos conseillers en ligne sur notre site

www.childlinesa.org.za  
Email: olcadmin@childlinesa.org.za

**Tell Us**  
TUAMBIE | TUAMBIE | DITES LE NOUS

**childline**  
South Africa

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?			
ENGLISH	SHONA	SWAHILI	FRENCH
Breaking down the self-confidence of a child	Zvingaita kuti mwana akanganisike mundangariro nemumaitiro ake	Kuvunjika kwa hali ya mtoto kujiamini	Detruire la confiance en soi d'un enfant
Not taking proper care of a child, for example: Not cleaning, clothing or feeding a child	Kusabata zvakana mwana, somuenzaniso: Kusagezesa mwana, kusawacha hembe dzemwana uye kusamupa chokudya	Kutotunza mtoto ipasavyo, kwa mfano kutosafisha, kutovika ao kutolisha mtoto)	Ne pas prendre bon soin de l'enfant par exemple : ne pas le vetir decemment, ne pas le nourrir a sa faim
Not listening to a child	Kusaterera zvinodikwa uye kutaunwa nemwana	Kutokusikiliza mtoto	Ne pas faire attention a ce que l'enfant vous dis
Forcing a child to touch your private parts	Kumanikidzira mwana kuti abate nhengo yako yesikarudzi	Kumlazimisha mtoto kushika ao kugusa sehemu zako za siri	Forcer un enfant a toucher vos parties intimes
Verbally abusing a child	Kutuka mwana	Kumtusi mtoto	Agresser verbalement un enfant
Neglecting a child's medical needs	Kusaendeswa mwana kuchipatara	Kupuuzwa mahitaji ya matibabu ya mtoto	Negliger les soins medicaux d'un enfant
Exposing a child to pornographic acts or literature	Kutaridza mwana mifananidzo yevanhu vakashama uye varikuita bonde	Kumuonyesha mtoto matendo au fasihi ya ponografia	Exposer l'enfant aux films et aux livres pornographic
Teasing a child unnecessarily	Kungotuka kana kushoropodza mwana zvisina negwara rose	Kumtania mtoto bila sababu	Taquiner un enfant sans raison
Engaging in any sexual behaviour (looking, showing, or touching) with a child to meet your interest or sexual needs	Kutaridza mwana neziso reruchiva, kutaridza mwana nhengo yesikarudzi yako, kubatisa mwana/kubata mwana nhengo yake kuti uzadzise zviko chete zvekuda bonde	Kujihusisha na tabia yoyote ya ngono (kutazama, kuonyesha au kugusa) ili kufanikisha maslahi au mahitaji yako ya ngono	Satisfaire vos besoins sexuels (ceux-ci incluent regarder,montrer,toucher) en utilisant un enfant
Leaving a child without supervision	Kungosiya mwana pasina munhu mukuru akamutarisa	Kumwacha mtoto bila uangalizi	Negliger l'education d'un enfant
Neglecting a child's educational needs	Kusaendeswa mwana kuchikoro	Kupuuzwa mahitaji ya kielimu ya mtoto	Abandonner un enfant a lui meme sans la supervision d'un adulte

9 (<https://childhelplineinternational.org/>).

10 The first helpline was opened in the province of KwaZulu-Natal but Other provincial offices developed from this date with the National Office opening on 1st August 2003.



## Conclusion

Standard 18 of the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action developed by the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Settings (of which UNICEF is a member) (23) makes the point that “Support to children should be adapted to their personal situation and characteristics including their gender, age, developmental stage, language and cultural identity”. Refugee Social Services and Childline South Africa have both developed best practice that aligns with this standard. Drawing on long-term experience and understanding the practice described in this brief illustrates how two organisations carefully and sensitively respond to the heterogeneity of children on the move and their differing lived realities while also working within standardised mechanisms that ensure quality support. The hope is that the documentation of their work inspires other organisations, also working in a similar challenging environment to think critically about how child-centred their work is.

### Key learnings related to the Best Practice Project intended outcomes

- Service provision to children on the move can be responsive to children’s specific context and needs even within the constraints of growing demand and reduced resources.
- This requires careful management of different components of a service centre and collaboration with outside services in the area.
- Gender, language, and culturally responsive psychosocial services and prevention mechanisms are possible with careful research into the specific characteristics of children on the move, who are not a homogenous group. This research should then lead to the development of responsive services.
- Including family and community into services for children on the move can provide a holistic response which takes into account the systems in which a child lives and grows up.

## References

1. United Nations Children’s Fund. Global Programme Framework on Children on the Move [Internet]. New York: UNICEF; 2017. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/media/83571/file/Global-Programme-Framework-on-Children-on-the-Move.pdf>
2. Save the Children. Study on unaccompanied migrant children in Mozambique, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. 2017.
3. United Nations Children’s Fund. Child Protection Advocacy Brief. Children on the Move. New York: UNICEF; 2018.
4. African Union. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child [Internet]. 1990 [cited 2021 Sep 22]. Available from: [https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36804-treaty-african\\_charter\\_on\\_rights\\_welfare\\_of\\_the\\_child.pdf](https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/36804-treaty-african_charter_on_rights_welfare_of_the_child.pdf)
5. UN. Convention on the Rights of the Child [Internet]. 1990 [cited 2021 Sep 22]. Available from: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>
6. UNICEF. UNICEF and The South African Red Cross partner to assist migrant children [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2021 Aug 26]. Available from: <https://www.unicef.org/southafrica/press-releases/unicef-and-south-african-red-cross-partner-assist-migrant-children>
7. IOM. Migrants Rights to Health in Southern Africa\_2022.pdf [Internet]. 2022 [cited 2023 Apr 26]. Available from: [https://ropretoria.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl691/files/documents/Migrants%20Rights%20to%20Health%20in%20Southern%20Africa\\_2022.pdf](https://ropretoria.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl691/files/documents/Migrants%20Rights%20to%20Health%20in%20Southern%20Africa_2022.pdf)
8. Sloth-Nielsen J, Ackermann M. Unaccompanied and Separated Foreign Children in the Care System in the Western Cape – A Socio-Legal Study. Potchefstroom Electronic Law Journal. 2016; 19:1–27.
9. United Nations Children’s Fund. Global Multisectoral Operational Framework for Mental Health and Psychosocial Support of Children, Adolescents and Caregivers Across Settings. New York: United Nations Children’s Fund; 2022.
10. African Union. Common African Position (CAP) on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly And Regular Migration. AU/STC/MRIDP/4(II). African Union; 2017.
11. United Nations Children’s Fund. Beyond Borders. How to make the global compacts on migration and refugees work for uprooted children [Internet]. New York: UNICEF programme Division; 2017. Available from: [https://www.unicef.org/media/48631/file/UNICEF\\_Beyond\\_Borders\\_Nov\\_2017-ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/48631/file/UNICEF_Beyond_Borders_Nov_2017-ENG.pdf)
12. UNICEF. ‘Children Uprooted - What Local Governments Can Do’,. 2022.
13. Department of Health. White Paper for the transformation of the health system in South Africa. 1997;
14. Walker R, Mahati S, Magaya I. Child Trafficking in South Africa: Exploring the Myths and Realities [Internet]. The Centre for Child Law: University of Pretoria; 2020 [cited 2021 May 12]. Available from: [http://centreforchildlaw.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/WEB-CFCL-Child\\_Trafficking-Report.pdf](http://centreforchildlaw.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/WEB-CFCL-Child_Trafficking-Report.pdf)
15. Patton M. Qualitative evaluation and research methods. Sage; 1990.
16. Clacherty G, Sharokh T. An arts-based participatory approach to research with migrant young people. In: Global Child: Children and Families Affected by War, Displacement & Migration. Rutgers University Press.; 2023.
17. United Nations Children’s Fund. Operational guidelines on community based mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian settings: Three-tiered support for children and families (field test version). New York UNICEF; 2018.
18. Donaldson R. South African Township Transformation. In: Michalos AC, editor. Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research [Internet]. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands; 2014 [cited 2023 Jun 2]. p. 6223–8. Available from: [http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5\\_4186](http://link.springer.com/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_4186)
19. Save the Children. Girls on the Move Research Series [Internet]. Save the Children International.; 2020 [cited 2021 Mar 1]. Available from: [https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/18292/pdf/girls\\_on\\_the\\_move\\_southern\\_africa\\_final.pdf](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/18292/pdf/girls_on_the_move_southern_africa_final.pdf)
20. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Framework for the Protection of Children [Internet]. UNHCR; 2012 [cited 2023 Jun 8]. Available from: <https://www.unhcr.org/media/31720>
21. Republic of South Africa. National strategic plan on gender-based violence & femicide human dignity and healing, safety, freedom & equality in our lifetime [Internet]. 2020 [cited 2023 Apr 21]. Available from: <https://www.justice.gov.za/vg/gbv/nsp-gbv-final-doc-04-05.pdf>
22. Child Helpline International. Child Helplines and Inclusive Practices by Child Helpline International - Issuu [Internet]. 2022 [cited 2023 May 27]. Available from: [https://issuu.com/chi-childhelplineinternational/docs/child\\_helplines\\_and\\_inclusive\\_practice](https://issuu.com/chi-childhelplineinternational/docs/child_helplines_and_inclusive_practice)
23. The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action [Internet]. Humanitarian Standards Partnership; 2019. Available from: <chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://spherestandards.org/wp-content/uploads/CPMS-EN.pdf>





 UNICEF South Africa

 @UNICEF\_SA

 @unicef\_southafrica

 @unicefsouthafrica

 [www.unicef.org/southafrica](http://www.unicef.org/southafrica)

 [pretoria@unicef.org](mailto:pretoria@unicef.org)

 UNICEF South Africa