

WHAT WORKS TO PROTECT CHILDREN *on the move*

Rapid Evidence Assessment
July 2020



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For further information, please contact:
Evaluation Office
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
3 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
evalhelp@unicef.org

or

UNICEF Office of Research
Innocenti Via degli Alfani,
58 50121 Florence, Italy
florence@unicef.org

REPORT

WHAT WORKS TO PROTECT CHILDREN *on the move*

Rapid Evidence Assessment



Rachel Marcus, Amina Khan,
Carmen Leon-Himmelstine and Jenny Rivett

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Acronyms

CFS	child-friendly spaces	MHPSS	mental health and psychosocial support
CPIMS	child protection information management system	NGO	non-governmental organization
FGD	focus group discussion	NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
GBV	gender-based violence	NZIMS	New-Zambia immigration management system
GBVIMS	gender-based violence information management system	PLaCES	Protective Learning and Community Emergency Services
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre	RCT	randomized control trial
IDP	internally displaced person	REA	Rapid Evidence Assessment
IEC	information, education and communication	SBCC	social and behaviour change communication
ILO	International Labour Organization	SMART	Safe Migration and Reduced Trafficking Project
IOM	International Organization for Migration	SPLA	Sudan People’s Liberation Army
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour	UASC	unaccompanied or separated children
IRC	International Rescue Committee	UN	United Nations
KII	key informant interview	UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
LGBTQI	lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex	UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
M&E	monitoring and evaluation	USAID	United States Agency for International Development
MENA	Middle East and North Africa	WFP	World Food Programme
		WHO	World Health Organization



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Photo: © ILO

Background

Approximately 50 million children can be considered 'on the move'. Of these approximately 13 million are child refugees, 936,000 are asylum-seeking children, and 17 million children have been forcibly displaced inside their own country (Bhabha and Abel, 2019; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020). Other children considered 'on the move' include migrants and returnees.



Children are among the most vulnerable groups of migrant and displaced populations, facing risks to their survival, health and education, and more likely to experience violence, exploitation or abuse. Children experiencing violence “often find themselves running alongside violence on their journeys, rather than leaving it behind them” (United Nations, 2019, p. 15), while those primarily displaced by other factors face new risks. In addition to their age, the very fact of being displaced – often without documentation, and unable to speak the language of their destination – combined with economic need increases vulnerability to abuse and exploitation and, often, xenophobic discrimination (ibid.). Many of these risks vary by age and gender, with boys and girls facing different levels and types of risks in terms of violence, trafficking, child labour and child marriage (United Nations, 2019), while children and adolescents with disabilities, and adolescents and youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning/intersex (LGBTQI) face discrimination that overlays and intersects with these risks. Moreover, children who move on their own often lack safe and regular options to reunite with family members (UNICEF, n.d.).

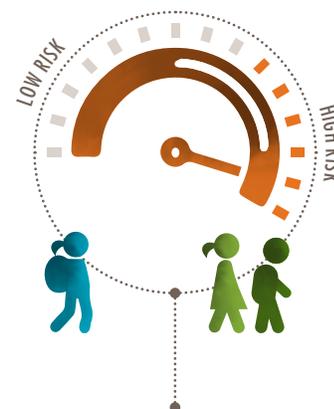
The context and nature of movement affects these risks. For example, migrants in transit are exposed to sexual and gender-based violence (GBV), forced labour, extortion and exploitation, among other abuses (IOM, 2020); while economic deprivation among refugees and internally displaced people increases the likelihood of engagement in hazardous or exploitative child labour and, in some contexts, of forced and early child marriage (United Nations, 2019). Education is disrupted (sometimes for long periods of time) and affects learning outcomes of children on the move. Where emergency education services are provided, they are often of low quality (Nicolai et al., 2020) and many children never return to formal schooling (ibid.). All of these risks are likely to be amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In recent years, global frameworks such as UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and the Global Compact on Refugees, have helped develop a more supportive legal and policy environment for protecting children on the move. At the same time, evidence on what works and what does not work in protecting children on the move, and why, has not been synthesized across a range of groups (refugees, internally displaced children, migrant children, returnees, children moving with and without families, and in different settings).

To fill the evidence gap, this rapid evidence assessment (REA) aimed to answer three questions.

- What interventions have been effective in ensuring the protection of children on the move?
- What are the implementation factors that make these interventions effective or that hamper effectiveness (for example the context of the intervention, and specific design features such as who is targeted)?
- What kinds of social welfare and child protection systems are linked to effective interventions?

This report provides an assessment of the reviewed literature and its key findings, and identifies gaps.



Children are among the most vulnerable groups of migrant and displaced populations, facing risks to their survival, health and education, and more likely to experience violence, exploitation or abuse.



Methodology of the review and of the included studies

The review involved a comprehensive search for relevant documents, screening of studies according to key inclusion and exclusion criteria, and assessment of studies for quality and relevance over a three-month period. It used systematic principles, tailoring these to the time available for the assessment. Studies eligible for inclusion had to describe an intervention that aimed to enhance the protection of children on the move, and to provide evidence of changes in outcomes at one of the following levels: laws and policies, systems and services, families and children’s wellbeing. Included studies had to be published from 2005 onwards and be in English, French or Spanish. We only included health and education sector interventions with clear child protection objectives and outcomes. While no studies were initially excluded on methodological grounds, all studies meeting initial inclusion criteria were assessed for relevance, methodological transparency, linkage between evidence cited and conclusions, and gender-sensitivity, using a bespoke quality and relevance assessment scale. This led to a total of 149 studies. To enable us to concentrate on the most insightful studies, we excluded low scoring studies, leaving us with a total of 89 studies, of which 21 were high-scoring and 64 were medium-scoring.¹

Of these high- and medium-scoring studies, 56 were evaluations (32 performance evaluations, 24 impact evaluations) and 33 were research studies – defined as studies that explored the effects of a policy or process or compared different approaches to enhancing the wellbeing of children on the move but were not based on a formal evaluation. Only 20 studies involved a counterfactual – these were all Randomised Control Trials (RCTs) or quasi-experimental studies of initiatives working directly with families and children in areas such as mental health and psychosocial wellbeing (MHPSS), parenting skills and violence prevention. Overall, mixed methods studies dominated, with review of project documentation constituting the most common data collection method. Interviews, focus groups or surveys were used in over half the studies. By contrast, only nine studies (11%) used participatory methods.

Throughout the report we use a framework of ‘positive change, no change, negative change’ to classify programme impacts. This proved more suitable for analyzing interventions involving direct activities with families than those that primarily focused on policy or system reform. These studies mostly recorded positive changes, but qualified these findings with an analysis of factors that had contributed to or hindered change.



89 studies of which:

21 were high-scoring

64 were medium-scoring

4 rated with a borderline score

¹ Four studies rated with a borderline score were included after consultation with the management group.



Overview of interventions and studies

Over half the studies examined initiatives in two regions: Sub-Saharan Africa (28 studies) and the Middle East and North Africa (26 initiatives) respectively. The review includes studies from all regions of the world, with a quarter of studies taking place in high-income countries. Compared to the scale of migration flows, North Africa, Southern Africa and Latin America were all under-represented. A total of 39 studies examined interventions supported by one of the four commissioning agencies: ILO, IOM, UNHCR and UNICEF.

The vast majority of studies (77) examined direct activities with children and families, broadly categorized as service provision. These were largely small-scale: over half the direct service activities served 5,000 people or less, particularly where they were either experimental pilot studies, or small-scale initiatives integrated with policy and system reform activities. Most initiatives were also relatively short term: 37 studies assessed initiatives that lasted for a year or less, and another 33 examined projects lasting between one and three years.

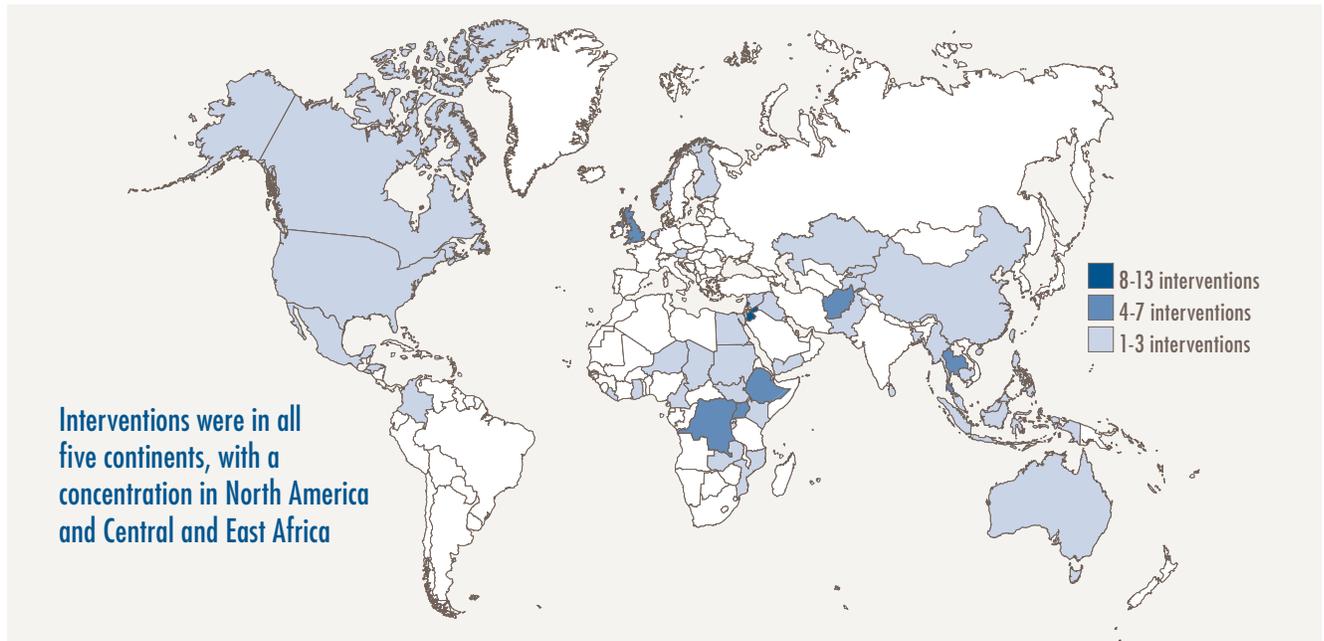
Figure 1 summarises the key types of initiatives examined in this review, their objectives, where they were implemented, and the groups of children on the move they aimed to protect. It shows that around a third of interventions aimed to strengthen systems for protecting children on the move through policy and legal reform, and investment in systems and workforce strengthening at national or community level. The majority of these also involved activities with children and/or families, the most common of which aimed to promote psychosocial wellbeing or reduce violence. Most interventions took place either in host communities: in refugee camps, settlements, or both.



Photo: © IOM/Muse Mohammed



Figure 1: Summary infographic of key initiative types examined



Most of the interventions took place in host communities

31 Host communities

18 Communities of origin/return

19 Camps

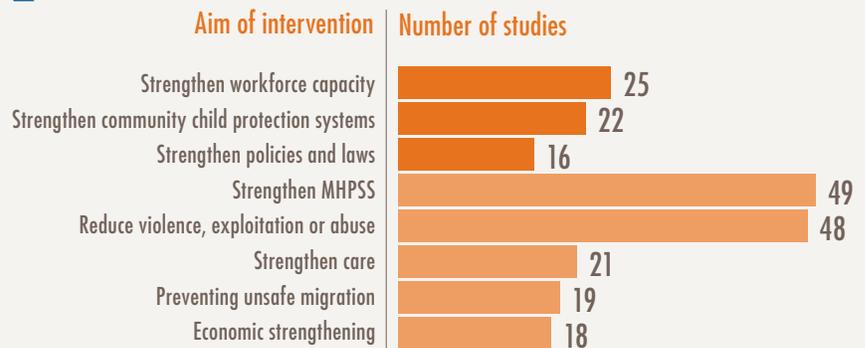
15 Settlements

14 Reception/care facilities

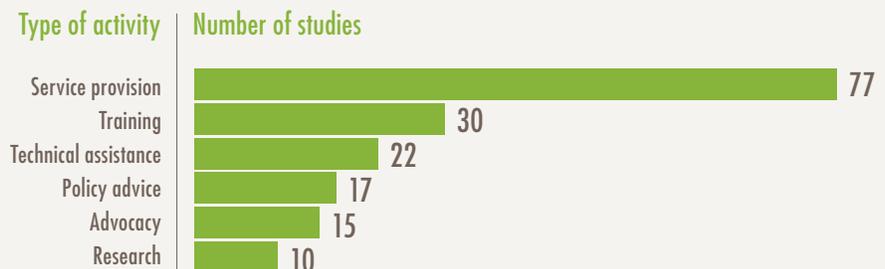
9 Camp or settlement plus host community

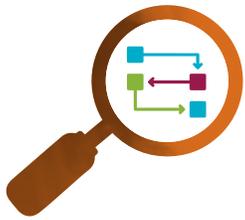
3 Not specified

Initiatives to improve MHPSS for children on the move, and to reduce violence, exploitation or abuse, were the two most common types of intervention



Nearly 80 studies focused on service provision activities, with training (30) a distant second



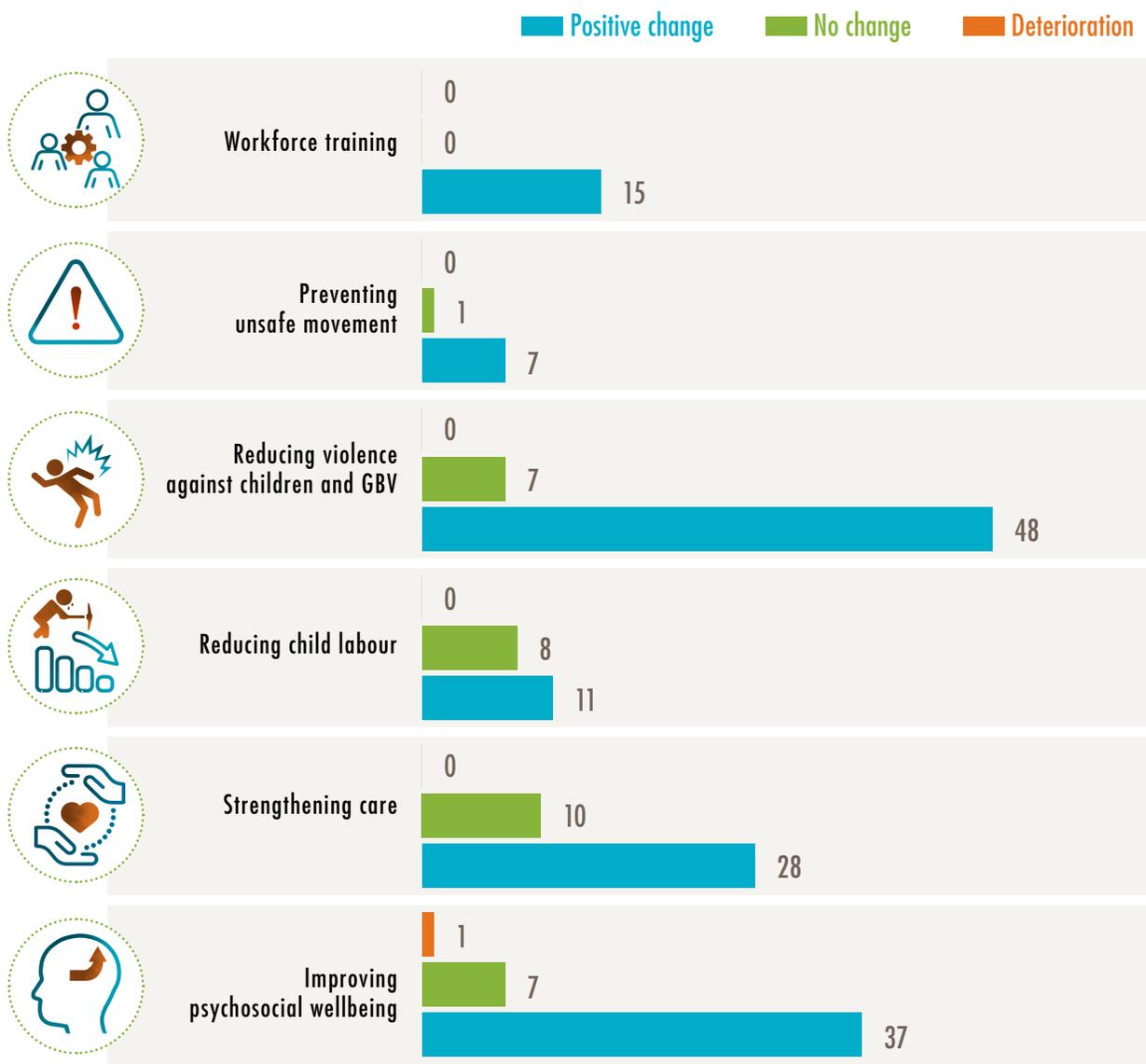


KEY FINDINGS

What interventions have been effective in ensuring the protection of children on the move?

Figure 2 summarises evidence reported in these studies on the balance of positive change, deterioration and no change in child protection outcomes across the main intervention areas. It does not include evidence on system reforms, which typically reported positive shifts along with evidence qualifying or explaining outcomes.

Figure 2: Summary infographic of child protection outcomes examined





CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS

All 16 studies of **national-level policy or legal reform processes** indicated progress, even if reforms were not complete at the time of evaluation, given the slow pace of change and factors leading to delays such as leadership changes or administrative reforms. These reforms related primarily to the protection of refugee children in emergency situations, anti-trafficking laws and policies, and the protection of child migrants (often child labourers), usually in more stable contexts. In the short-to-medium term, government agencies were able to overcome obstacles by incorporating these progressive reforms into their ways of working. Existing motivation or attitudinal shifts on the part of government officials resulting from participation in policy reform projects or training were key drivers of change. Linkages between countries' regular national systems, structures and projects on child protection and national and international efforts around humanitarian/refugee responses helped ensure that children on the move were protected by national-level institutions as well as humanitarian actors.

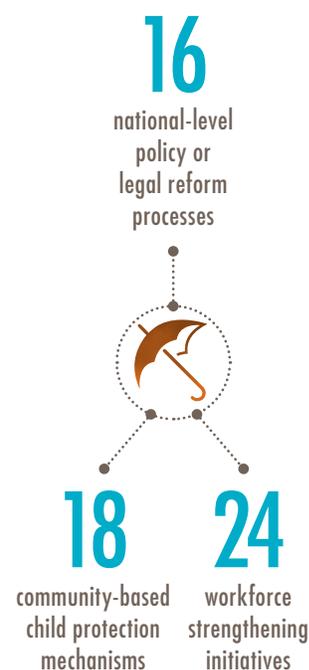
The 18 studies of **community-based child protection mechanisms** in refugee camps, post-emergency contexts with significant numbers of internally displaced children, and in communities with high levels of child migration and trafficking found that where they had a sense of ownership and collective responsibility, they were effective in challenging entrenched interests to address child protection violations. These mechanisms were often hampered by lack of operational budgets, declining motivation of volunteers, and a perceived lack of follow-up action after referral, which undermined ongoing commitment in three cases.

24 studies reported on **workforce strengthening initiatives**, with most focusing on the training of social workers or police across all contexts and in relation to the protection of all types of children on the move. These studies found positive increases in knowledge or skills in 11 cases and mixed findings (change among some groups or on some indicators) in five.² Training was most effective when sustained over time, repeated frequently to take account of staff turnover, and when carried out alongside wider system-strengthening efforts (including operational budgets) that enabled staff to put new learning into practice. Tailoring training to post-holders' roles and involving decision-makers as well as frontline staff also increased trainees' ability to implement new practices.

PREVENTING UNSAFE MOVEMENT

Seven studies, almost all conducted in communities with high levels of migration and trafficking, found positive change in **children's knowledge of migration and trafficking risks** and/or in their intention to migrate using safe pathways; one found no change. Effective initiatives used good quality information-sharing and behaviour change methods, with multiple information, education and communication (IEC) materials, community conversations, and messages delivered by trusted facilitators or public figures. These were insufficient to deter unsafe migration among adolescents living in poverty or communities with high levels of violence.

Child protection systems studies:



Children's knowledge of
migration and trafficking risks:



² In six there was insufficient data to draw conclusions about outcomes; three did not report on outcomes at all.



HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIC STRENGTHENING

Most of the 13 studies of **cash transfers** provided to refugees found mixed impacts on child protection outcomes, with some evidence of an association between improvements in living conditions and reduced financial stress, better psychosocial well-being for adults and children, and reduced violence against children. Evidence on their impact on child labour was mixed, though more studies found cash transfers lead to a reduction in children working than the opposite. A small number of studies suggested that receiving cash for longer periods (more than 12 months) and combining cash with other child protection activities/services achieved better protection outcomes.

The studies reviewed found little evidence that **skills training** is particularly effective in reducing protection violations, such as child labour or trafficking amongst refugees or in communities with high levels of migration and trafficking. It is most likely to be effective when combined with broader entrepreneurship support, and/or efforts to facilitate adult refugees' and migrants' employment (e.g. through addressing policy barriers).

REDUCING VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

55 studies examined the impact of interventions on **violence against children**, of which 48 reported positive changes and 9 reported no change. The most common approach, particularly with refugee, internally displaced and returnee families was social and behaviour change activities. In these initiatives, the engagement of facilitators skilled in working with people with low literacy using multiple, user-friendly IEC materials, was highlighted as playing an important role in changing attitudes. In gender-based violence (GBV)-focused projects, effective interventions directly raised awareness of harmful norms, and engaged men as partners in change rather than perpetrators only. Interventions with opportunities for dialogue, exchange of experiences and reflection among parents (e.g. family-based sessions, support groups, mental health sessions), and those that involved joint parent and child sessions and provided opportunities to practice new skills, were identified as contributing to effectiveness. Some studies also suggested that offering multi-sectoral support (including medical, psychosocial, reintegration, legal, case management, etc.) contributed to interventions' effectiveness. Activities that included refugees/IDPs and host communities (training, awareness-raising sessions, implementation of communal projects) show some evidence of improved community cohesion.

REDUCING CHILD LABOUR AMONG CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

11 studies reported a decrease in **child labour**, while eight found no change. These interventions targeted refugee and migrant child workers, usually in host communities. Interventions reporting improvements tended to have a clear focus on combating child labour. They typically involved simultaneous activities such as child protection surveillance, advocacy on policy/legal reforms, workforce strengthening, awareness-raising or educational support. Livelihoods components were generally ineffective.

Cash transfers:



13 studies



55 studies examined the impact of interventions on violence against children.

Reducing child labour:



11 found a decrease 8 no change



ENHANCING THE CARE OF CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

Thirty-three studies examined impacts on the **care of children on the move** of which 28 reported positive shifts and ten reported no change on at least one indicator. The majority of initiatives focused **on reunification of unaccompanied and separated children** in emergencies, and on **alternative care arrangements** for child refugees and asylum-seekers in more stable contexts. Interventions that provided effective family tracing and reunification services focused on strengthening workforce capacity and case management systems, and community surveillance capacity, which led to improved identification of cases. Training and financial support for foster families proved successful in strengthening emergency foster care for separated children in crisis contexts. Limited evidence indicates that group therapy and efforts to build trust and relax security measures may reduce 'disappearances' from reception facilities into more harmful situations. The REA found tentative evidence that boosting caregivers' psychosocial well-being through direct interventions and economic-strengthening support enhanced their capacity to care for children.

ENHANCING PSYCHOSOCIAL WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN ON THE MOVE

The studies in this REA reported on a range of **psychosocial interventions** such as creative arts, play, group therapy, and counselling, the majority of which were provided through safe/child-friendly spaces in refugee or IDP camps, and/or host communities. Of 48 studies of interventions with MHPSS components, 37 reported positive changes, seven no change on some indicators, and one a deterioration in aspects of children's psychosocial wellbeing. Indicators measured included: reducing children's anxiety, depression and aggressive behaviour, and increasing hope for the future. Engaging family members was often associated with stronger positive outcomes for children's well-being. Psycho-education, cognitive behavioural therapy, and joint sessions for youth from refugee, migrant and host communities (including community planning) helped children build resilience, improved integration, and increased their hope for the future.

What factors contribute to or hamper programme effectiveness?

The studies examined in this REA highlighted a number of factors that contributed to positive outcomes. These included:

- **A supportive political environment** for policy and system reforms, and a **supportive policy environment** for community-level initiatives. Conversely, policy barriers such as prohibitions on adult refugees working undermined efforts to promote the protection of children.
- **Ownership of initiatives** – at national level, by politicians and civil servants who felt a mandate to drive reform, and at local level, by community stakeholders such as local leaders, teachers, community child protection networks and focal points, and youth committees.

Care of children on the move:



Psychosocial well-being:





- **Adequate financial resources.** Limited resources were frequently highlighted as a key obstacle to effective implementation. System-strengthening activities, such as workforce training programmes, highlighted the importance of sufficient funding in other elements of child protection and associated services to ensure that referrals and case management lead to children at risk of harm being supported. Lack of funding was commonly cited in community protection capacity strengthening initiatives as a serious constraint on their ability to fulfil protective functions.
- **Work across different levels of the socio-ecological model with effective relationships between different agencies and actors.** Evaluations generally praised initiatives that worked at policy, system and local level, and with multiple actors and agencies, which had the potential to achieve a greater overall impact and to achieve more sustainable change. To do so, direct activities need to be replicable and systems for learning lessons put in place so they can inform policy. This was most common with child labour and trafficking initiatives, as well as in some safe migration programmes.
- **Skilled and committed staff and volunteers** were critical, particularly in initiatives working directly with children, where ability to develop rapport was essential. Evaluations also highlighted the importance of facilitators having good communication skills, and the value of training in specialist skills such as psychosocial care.

Factors hampering positive impacts included:

- **Overambitious goals for relatively short projects**, particularly for initiatives that aimed to change deeply entrenched norms (e.g., around GBV or violence against children) or to develop alternatives to child labour.
- **Insufficient cultural grounding**, which led to missed opportunities for designing and implementing effective initiatives.
- **Discriminatory gender norms** which, particularly in contexts of insecurity, limited girls' access to opportunities such as safe spaces.
- **Challenging socioeconomic contexts**, resulting from high levels of unemployment and poverty, or restrictions on refugees' right to work, undermined efforts to strengthen livelihoods as a means of addressing child protection violations among children on the move. The studies reviewed made little comment on how these challenging contexts could be addressed, beyond measures to support refugee adults' right to work.



Photo: © UNHCR/David Azia



What social welfare or child protection systems are effective interventions linked to?

In 32 initiatives that focused on strengthening child protection systems, **system reform** was at the core of the intervention. These initiatives worked mainly with ministries of social welfare (most commonly), the police and justice system, and labour departments. Initiatives working with border or immigration departments were much less common, and the studies of these initiatives generally did not report on their linkages with social welfare or other child protection agencies. A total of 40 studies reported activities linked to **social welfare or child protection systems**. This was most common in multi-component initiatives working at different levels (e.g., direct services to families and children, or workforce training). Linkages to the social welfare system were the most common, followed by specialist child/youth services (sometimes with a specific mandate related to migrant or refugee children), and the police or justice system. Only three initiatives worked with schools to strengthen protection of children.³ MHPSS initiatives, social and behavior change communication (SBCC) aimed at violence prevention, and cash transfers were more likely to be run as standalone activities with limited reported linkages to social welfare or child protection systems.



A total of **40** studies reported activities linked to social welfare or child protection systems.

Evidence gaps and recommendations for addressing them

Several cross-cutting gaps and weaknesses emerge from our analysis:

- **Lack of counterfactual.** Only 20 studies (less than a quarter) included a counterfactual, while 15 involved a pre-post intervention comparison. Relatively few studies compared impacts on participants and non-participants or reported substantial reflection on how far findings were attributable to project activity. This is an important limitation in terms of understanding ‘what works’.
- **Limited quantitative data on the scale of change.** Although many studies used mixed methods, the quantitative data involved largely comes from project reports. Few studies present data on the scale of change (effect sizes), and of those that do, few discuss whether changes were statistically significant. Despite this, many of the quantitative studies (for example, of violence prevention) shows large-scale changes in attitudes or reported behaviour, of up to 30 percentage points.
- **Understanding the relative impact of different activities in multi-component initiatives, and of multiple activities compared to single activity initiatives.** No RCTs compared the relative impact of different activities. Qualitative performance evaluations tended to provide more insights into the effectiveness of particular components and to comment on the synergies (or lack of them) between different workstreams.

³ This is very likely to underestimate the extent of efforts to protect children on the move carried out by schools – a consequence of only including studies that provided sufficient detail on child protection activities and outcomes to enable us to draw conclusions.



- **Understanding which interventions have lasting effects, and why.** Given the tight time frame for this assignment, we did not focus on the analysis of lasting effects. That said, our tentative findings suggest that livelihood interventions achieved some lasting impact on skills, even if participants were not always able to generate substantial incomes with those skills. Studies undertaken in emergency contexts were often ‘real-time’ evaluations undertaken to improve implementation and so were not oriented to examining the longevity of impacts.
- **Understanding the impacts of policy and legal reforms on children’s lives.** Assessments of policy and legal reform typically reported on whether new laws or policies had been developed, or international or inter-departmental coordination strengthened. They did not examine the impact of these changes on the lives of the children or families they were intended to benefit.
- **Lack of insights into emerging innovative practices.** Interviews with child protection specialists in the four commissioning agencies highlighted a lag between on-the-ground innovation and documentation and analysis of impact. The studies reviewed here reflect this delay, which means that emerging approaches are under-represented.

We also observed a number of specific gaps. Some of the most striking are as follows:

- **Context-related emphases** (few studies of protection of children on the move in the wake of disaster-related displacement, compared to conflict-related displacement).
- Gaps related to **specific aspects of migration or refugee journeys** (no studies reported on efforts to provide protection to **children in transit**, and only three reported on initiatives with **returnees**; very few reported on the effects of reforms on children’s experiences at borders).
- Gaps related to **social groups** (very few studies specifically mentioned children with disabilities, or LGBTQI adolescents and young people). Few explicitly mentioned working with ethnic or religious minorities, though we believe these numbers were under-reported, given that minorities are often particularly affected by conflict and thus likely to be displaced. No initiatives explicitly addressed statelessness.
- **Limited depth of evidence on specific strategies.** For some types of interventions, we found under three studies, making it hard to draw robust conclusions. These include issues such as cross-border cooperation, approaches to workforce strengthening other than training (e.g., secondments, social work degrees) and to ending xenophobic discrimination.
- **Evidence on what works to reduce specific protection violations.** The mostly commonly reported outcomes were in the areas of psychosocial wellbeing, violence against children, and care of unaccompanied children. Relatively few studies reported on changes in child marriage or protection from trafficking.



- **Evidence of children’s active involvement in initiatives.** Other than a few initiatives that intentionally engaged young people as change agents, few studies discussed how children’s perspectives had been incorporated into project design or implementation, or how their views were taken into account in processes designed to protect them. We did not seek studies probing these issues, which may account for their under-representation, but were struck by this gap while analyzing insights.

Suggestions for strengthening the evidence base

In these suggestions for expanding the evidence base beyond that synthesized in this REA, we are seeking to balance approaches that would generate breadth, depth and comprehensiveness with potential feasibility.

1. **Undertake additional bounded evidence assessments to complement this one.** This should include two main sets of studies: the substantial academic, policy and advocacy literature that analyses the effects of existing policies intended to protect children on the move to identify implementation strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and potential entry points for change; and insights from overview studies that point to good practice, but without citing detailed empirical evidence.
2. **Embed impact assessments more systematically in project design.** This could be achieved in a relatively cost-effective manner through progressively rolling out initiatives and services, and comparing areas receiving services with those that have not yet received them, thus also allowing for tweaks to improve project design.
3. **Make greater use of agencies’ internal monitoring and case management data** (with appropriate anonymization) to understand the impacts of initiatives with a shorter time lag, and complementing this with interviews with staff who are familiar with implementation processes, challenges and facilitating factors.
4. **Undertake more thematic evaluations or studies, within or across agencies,** to fill key gaps. Potential topics include the impact on children of efforts to promote a broader protective environment for people on the move (for example, efforts to promote integration and reduce xenophobia, or to reduce community violence). Another potential focus could be on effective coordination with health and education systems – an area identified by interviewees but where we found little evidence. Synthesizing insights from emerging practices and innovations would be another valuable area of focus.
5. **Invest more in:**
 - a) **understanding whether impacts have been sustained,** and where they have, what factors have contributed to their persistence;
 - b) **understanding the impacts of policy reforms and system-strengthening activities** on the lives of children on the move;
 - c) **granular analysis of the differential effects of initiatives on different groups** of children on the move.



Photo: ©UNHCR/Ivor Prickett

INTRODUCTION





1.1 Background and context

The number of people on the move is now growing faster than the world population (UN News, 2019). ‘People on the move’ comprise refugees and asylum seekers, internally displaced people (IDPs), international and internal migrants, and returnees.

Of these, an estimated 50 million are children on the move, with or without family members (UNICEF, n.d.(a)). Disaggregating the data shows that approximately 13 million are child refugees, 936,000 are asylum-seeking children, and 17 million children have been forcibly displaced inside their own countries (Bhabha and Abel, 2019; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2020a). While conflict continues to be a leading cause of internal displacement and refugee movement, recent estimates indicate that disasters such as floods, storms and droughts are important causes of displacement in South and South-East Asia, and contribute to displacement in all other regions (UNICEF, 2020a). Estimations suggest that weather-related hazards cause more than 87 per cent of all displacements globally; moreover, the effects of climate change and the increasing populations in areas exposed to storms and floods will put more people at risk of displacement in future (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), 2019).

Children are among the most vulnerable groups of migrant and displaced populations, facing risks to their survival, health and education, and more likely to experience violence, exploitation or abuse. Children experiencing violence “often find themselves running alongside violence on their journeys, rather than leaving it behind them” (United Nations, 2019, p. 15), while those primarily displaced by other factors face new risks. In addition to their age, the very fact of being displaced – often without documentation, and unable to speak the language of their destination – combined with economic need increases vulnerability to abuse and exploitation and, often, xenophobic discrimination (ibid.). Many of these risks vary by age and gender, with boys and girls facing different levels and types of risks in terms of violence, trafficking, child labour and child marriage (United Nations, 2019), while children and adolescents with disabilities, and adolescents and youth who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning/intersex (LGBTQI) face discrimination that overlays and intersects with these risks. Moreover, children who move on their own often lack safe and regular options to reunite with family members (UNICEF, n.d.).

“.....

‘People on the move’ comprise:
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.....”



The context and nature of movement affects these risks. For example, migrants in transit are exposed to sexual and gender-based violence (GBV), forced labour, extortion and exploitation, among other abuses (IOM, 2020); while economic deprivation among refugees and internally displaced people increases the likelihood of engagement in hazardous or exploitative child labour and, in some contexts, of forced and early child marriage (United Nations, 2019). Education is disrupted (sometimes for long periods of time) and affects learning outcomes of children on the move. Where emergency education services are provided, they are often of low quality (Nicolai et al., 2020) and many children never return to formal schooling (ibid.). All of these risks are likely to be amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic (see Box 1).

Policies and laws that outline the rights of children on the move, and the quality of services and programmes aimed at supporting their rights and well-being, all influence the level of protection afforded to different groups of children in different contexts of movement. Global frameworks play a key role. The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and the Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees contain several provisions and legally binding obligations on children's rights in the context of international migration in the countries of origin, transit, destination and return (UNICEF, 2017). The Global Compact on Refugees – signed by United Nations Member States in 2018 – has specific provisions relating to the identification and referral of children (including unaccompanied and separated children), best interests assessment and/or determination, and appropriate care arrangements and other services (United Nations, 2018a). Similarly, the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration – also signed by Member States in 2018 – promotes the principle of the best interests of the child at all times as a primary consideration in all situations concerning children in the context of international migration, including unaccompanied and separated children. It also calls for governments to use immigration detention only as a measure of last resort and to end the practice of child detention in the context of international migration (United Nations, 2018b).

While children on the move are rightly recognized as vulnerable to a multitude of protection risks, it is vital also to recognize their agency and resilience. Unaccompanied and separated children, especially adolescents, have often had to negotiate multiple dangerous and challenging contexts, and to be responsible for their own survival. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes children's right to have their opinion taken into account on matters that affect them – a key principle that must inform action to protect children on the move, alongside other key principles such as acting in the child's best interests.

Although policy implementation is still inconsistent, there is a growing consensus about minimum standards that should apply to children on the move. For example, it is broadly accepted that: children should not be subject to detention; that migrant and refugee children should be included in educational and child protection services in their host countries; and that unaccompanied and separated children should be the focus of dedicated measures (Bhabha and Abel, 2019).



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes children's right to have their opinion taken into account on matters that affect them...



Overall, the protection risks facing children on the move are increasingly recognized, and policies and legal frameworks to better prevent and respond to these risks are evolving. At the same time, evidence on what works and what does not work in protecting children on the move has not been synthesized across a range of groups (refugees, internally displaced children, migrant children, returnees, children moving with and without families, and in different settings). For this reason, a group of United Nations agencies – the International Labour Organization (ILO), IOM, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) – commissioned this Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) to help fill this gap.

1.1.1 About this review

The key research questions this REA aims to answer are as follows:

- What interventions have been effective in protecting children on the move?
- What are the implementation factors that make these interventions effective or that hamper effectiveness (such as context, design features such as targeting, and specific inputs or outputs)?
- What kinds of social welfare and child protection systems are effective interventions linked to?

The report maps the main areas covered by the literature and identifies gaps, as well as summarizing insights from the literature reviewed. It examines 89 studies of 84 initiatives that aimed to enhance the protection of children on the move, either as a sole focus or as part of wider efforts to enhance child protection.⁴ All studies were published between 2005 and 2020 and include low-income, middle-income and high-income countries. Thirty-nine studies evaluated projects supported by UNICEF (15), ILO (6), IOM (6) or UNHCR (11); one joint project was supported by UNICEF, IOM and UNHCR.

It is important to note that this review cannot fully answer the question of ‘what works’. This would require a longer review, inclusion of a wider range of literature, greater consultation with practitioners involved in developing innovative practices and, in particular, more studies comparing activities undertaken with a counterfactual. We discuss how a more comprehensive picture of ‘what works’, how and why, could be developed in Section 5.

While none of the studies examined discuss the COVID-19 pandemic or other pandemics, where possible, we draw out the implications of our findings and conclusions for the specific additional challenges generated by the COVID-19 pandemic (see Box 1).

⁴ There were multiple studies of five initiatives. There were also four examples of multi-country evaluations or studies. For these we included the country studies and synthesis reports (where available) as separate studies, as they all contained unique information.



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BOX 1: Implications of COVID-19 for protection of children on the move

Through its impacts on health, its economic impacts, and its direct and indirect impacts on the protection of refugees and migrants, the COVID-19 pandemic is already magnifying the vulnerability of children on the move and is likely to significantly hamper efforts to reduce the risks they face (United Nation, 2020). Though data are scarce – particularly on the spread of COVID-19 in refugee and IDP camps – it is clear that crowded conditions make physical distancing impossible, limited water undermines advice to wash hands regularly, and both massively increase the risk of someone contracting COVID-19 (United Nations, 2020). The 10 countries facing the greatest risks around COVID-19 are home to 17.3 million internally displaced people (United Nations, 2020). Lack of

documentation, discrimination against foreigners and language barriers may also deter some adults and children from seeking health care, and can limit their access to critical information (Mixed Migration Centre, 2020).

Although children are less likely to become seriously ill than older age groups, as other health crises have shown, they are affected by the impacts on their families and on wider society. These may include reduced adult capacity to care for young children, an increased care burden on older siblings (usually girls), pressures on children to generate income, and (where a parent/carer is hospitalized or dies) the need for alternative care (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019). ▶





◀ BOX 1 (cont'd)

Confinement of families in very small spaces has been widely documented as leading to increased violence against children, as well as gender-based violence (UNHCR, 2020); where lockdown orders are violently enforced, police violence is an additional risk. Closure of child-friendly spaces and schools is likely to have harmful effects on children's mental health, as well as affecting their learning and development. All of these effects are exacerbated by one of the most commonly cited impacts of COVID-19 on migrants – a reduction in adults' work opportunities and income (Mixed Migration Centre, 2020) which may lead to increased pressure on children to work, and increased risk of human trafficking (IOM, 2020b). At the same time, restrictions on mobility can make it more difficult to access child protection services.

Border closures may delay family reunification (UNHCR, 2020) and may close off safe and legal routes. This could mean migrants and refugees being unable to complete journeys (Mixed Migration Centre, 2020), and/or increase the use of irregular alternatives, with inherent risks to survival and vulnerability to exploitation and abuse. Stricter border controls may also increase the risk of trafficking (ILO, 2020). They may also lead to concentrations of people in camps where COVID-19 and other diseases may easily spread. Workforce reductions – whether border and immigration officials, police and justice officials or social workers – may lead to delays in processing refugee and asylum claims, with particularly harmful consequences for children in immigration detention.

Restrictions on travel and closure of borders can also contribute to stigmatization of people on the move and/or from certain ethnic groups as virus carriers, and to increased discrimination and xenophobia (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2020). There is a risk of increased detention, refoulement, deportation, and mass expulsion of families and children on the move without proper consideration of their rights or safety (UNICEF, 2020b).

The studies reviewed in this REA emphasised the important role of face-to-face activities in providing information, changing attitudes and behaviour especially around: unsafe migration and trafficking risks, violence against children and prevention of child labour. Likewise, they highlighted the vital role that community-based child protection structures and effective social services play in intervening to prevent and refer children at risk of protection violations. Physical distancing limits all these activities with the risk that instances of violence, abuse and exploitation are less likely to be detected and action is less likely to be taken. At policy level, the pandemic is likely to delay the implementation of protective policies and legislation, as government capacity is absorbed with COVID-19 prevention and mitigation measures. The economic shocks resulting from COVID-19 are likely to put pressure on public sector budgets, potentially over a long period (OECD, 2020) and reduce resources available to support the rights and wellbeing of children on the move.





1.2 Definitions and conceptual framework

Table 1 outlines the key definitions used in this report.

Table 1: Definitions

Term	Definition
Children on the move	“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” (Inter-agency Working Group on Children on the Move, cited in IOM, 2011)
Unaccompanied or separated children (UASC)	“Children separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives”. Unaccompanied children are defined as “children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult, who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so” (Inter-agency Working Group on UASC, 2004, cited in Williamson et al., 2017). A contextualised definition of “unaccompanied and separated children” should reflect local understandings of customary care and family relationships. All actors should consistently use the same definition and ensure that affected populations understand it in the local language and within cultural norms (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019, p. 160)
Child protection	Child protection is the “prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children” (The Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, 2019, p. 19)
Child protection systems	“Formal and informal structures, functions and capacities that have been assembled to prevent and respond to violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children. A child protection system generally includes the following components: human resources, finance, laws and policies, governance, monitoring and data collection as well as protection and response services and care management. It also includes different actors – children, families, communities, those working at subnational or national level and those working internationally ... It is the outcomes of these interactions that comprise the system” (UNICEF et al., 2013, p. 3).
Child protection systems strengthening	“Whole system strengthening considers the effective functioning of all components in relevant state and non-state sectors and at all levels of the system in order to prevent and respond to violence against children [or other protection objectives]. Whole system and whole institution strengthening, combined with multisectoral collaboration, is almost always more effective than narrow policy changes, short-term projects and vertical programming. Interventions that are developed wholly outside the system, or in sectoral isolation, may struggle to achieve scale-up and sustainability and have limited reach” (World Health Organization (WHO), 2018, p. 16)



As the definitions indicate, this REA uses a broad definition of children on the move, to include children engaged in a variety of forms of migration, regular and irregular, and displaced by a range of factors, including conflict, disasters, climate change, community violence, or political repression. It covers both the period of movement and subsequent settlement or return.

1.2.1 Conceptual framework

This REA explores evidence on the impact of a range of interventions that aim to enhance the protection of children on the move. It focuses on intervention with a direct impact, either at the level of policies and systems, or through provision of services and support to children and families. In Figure 3 and throughout the report, interventions are grouped into two main categories: those aiming to achieve changes in policies and systems; and those working with children and families directly to improve protection of children on the move.

The column on the left of Figure 3 summarizes the key types of interventions discussed in this report – those on which we found evidence. The middle column shows some of the factors that mediate the effectiveness and impact of interventions. Reflecting a decision early on in the process to focus on studies with evidence of impact, a large number studies of mediating factors were excluded – particularly those related to children’s identity, skills and resources. However, we recognize that these have an important influence on children’s experience of movement and thus on the likely effectiveness of interventions. The middle column also summarizes different kinds of environmental and programmatic factors that influence the impact of interventions. These are discussed at the end of sections 3 and 4 and summarized in Section 5. The column on the right summarizes the expected outcomes of the initiatives discussed, focusing on those for which the studies reviewed provide some evidence. These are deliberately phrased as positive outcomes, as per the objectives of the projects examined. In sections 3–5, we discuss the evidence of how far initiatives have been able to achieve their objectives and what can be learnt about factors supporting and hindering effective impacts.



Figure 3: Study conceptual framework



INTERVENTIONS

Policies & systems:

- **reforms to laws and policies** related to child protection, migration and displacement
- **system strengthening activities:** workforce capacity, procedures, resources, community-level support

Services and support to families and children:

- economic strengthening (eg., cash transfers, skills development)
- raising awareness of unsafe migration
- improving care (including family tracing and reunification, alternative care)
- social & behaviour change initiatives to reduce gender-based violence (GBV), violence against children (VAC) and xenophobia
- Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), social support and integration activities



MEDIATED BY:

- **experience of movement** and context of intervention (camp, settlement, reception facility, host community, etc.)
- **children's identity** (age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, LGBTQI, etc.)
- **children's skills and resources** (financial, language, social connectedness, psychosocial)
- **political environment** - positioning towards different groups of children on the move
- **policy environment** - eg., extent of right to work, harmonization with international laws
- **quality and availability of services and support** (eg., resourcing, staff training, commitment)
- **programme design** (eg., length, scale, funding)
- **socioeconomic environment** (eg., levels of poverty, violence)



EXPECTED OUTCOMES AT DIFFERENT LEVELS:

Child:

Increased knowledge of safe migration & rights, freedom from violence, exploitation and abuse; mental health & psychosocial wellbeing; sense of social integration

Family:

Increased knowledge of safe migration; reduced perpetration of and greater capacity to protect children from violence, abuse and exploitation; improved quality of care; enhanced livelihoods

Community:

Strengthened capacity to prevent/ respond to VAC & GBV, child separation & risky movement; reduced community-level violence

System:

Strengthened skills, procedures and resources to protect children on the move

Policy:

Introduction/ implementation of child-friendly policies, harmonisation with international commitments





1.3 Methodology

This REA took place between March and June 2020. It involved a comprehensive search for relevant documents, screening of studies according to key inclusion and exclusion criteria, and assessment of studies for quality and relevance. As such, it used systematic principles, tailoring these to the time available for the assessment.

Search strategy. Annex 2 details the academic databases and search engines used, and the websites hand searched. We also reviewed more than 114 documents shared with us by the four commissioning agencies, and requested documents unobtainable in the public sphere from them. We conducted interviews with key staff from each of the four agencies to identify key issues and knowledge gaps that the review should consider and, in some cases, this led to further documents for consideration.⁵ Time constraints meant we were unable to snowball comprehensively from policy reviews and overviews, or from the bibliographies of the sources retained.

1.3.1 Assessment for relevance, methodological transparency and rigour

All studies found were assessed against inclusion and exclusion criteria. Key criteria included that studies must: discuss the impact of an intervention or compare intervention approaches focusing on or including children on the move; report on child protection outcomes; and have been published since 2005 in English, French or Spanish (see *Annex 2 for full details*). This led to 149 studies being retained.

These 149 studies were then further assessed for methodological transparency, rigour and relevance. We used a bespoke assessment tool (*see Annex 2*) developed specially for this review to assess quality and relevance of the studies found, in order to ensure that insights from performance evaluations – the most common type of evaluation within the four agencies' activities – could be properly reflected. Standard evidence quality assessment tools would have led to most such performance evaluations being excluded. (*See Box 2 for more detail on the different insights from different types of studies.*)

⁵ These interviews also identified potential leads and contacts for further investigation. Time constraints, however, prevented us from following up these leads.



BOX 2: Different insights from impact and performance evaluations

To ensure that this REA drew on learning from the four commissioning agencies, it included both performance evaluations (the dominant type of evaluation conducted by each agency) and impact evaluations. Evidence reviews and assessments typically only or primarily include impact evaluations.

Impact evaluations focus on what worked and what did not, and why, and are generally intended to identify design features or implementation processes that contribute to good outcomes. By contrast, performance evaluations probe the relevance and effectiveness of an initiative or agency's intervention in a certain context, with impact forming only one aspect of the assessment. They make much more extensive use of project documentation than impact assessments but beyond this, rarely include a comparison

between baseline and endline data. They rarely involve discussion with non-beneficiaries or a 'control group' to enable understanding of how far changes observed are attributable to the project versus other factors. Impact data are often presented in less detail than in impact evaluations.

Performance evaluations, by contrast, draw more extensively on interviews with key informants both inside and outside implementing agencies, and often include a more sophisticated discussion of institutional factors and processes that contributed to, or hampered, project outcomes. These two types of evaluation thus give insights into different issues; together they provide a more diverse set of insights into what works to improve the protection of children on the move than would either type of evaluation on its own.



Studies were classified as scoring high (22–26 points), medium (16–21 points) or low (15 points or less). To enable us to concentrate on the most insightful studies, we excluded low-scoring studies, leaving us with a total of 89, of which 21 were high-scoring and 64 were middle-scoring.⁶ Of these 89 studies, 56 were evaluations and 33 were research studies – defined as studies that explored the effects of a policy or process or compared different approaches to enhancing the well-being of children on the move but were not based on a formal evaluation. Studies were coded and analyzed using EPPI-Reviewer; coding captured details of the intervention, study methodology, outcomes and factors influencing outcomes.

Quality control. In order to complete the REA in the time allocated, most inclusion/exclusion decisions were made by one member of the research team. All borderline studies were flagged for a second opinion. Studies were coded by the research team; as different team members analyzed sets of studies to write up particular review sections, some adjustment of coding took place.

⁶ Three studies rated with a borderline score of 15 were included after consultation with the management group.



1.3.2 Limitations and challenges

The need to complete the review within three months meant that we had to carefully adapt our approach, and so may have missed some relevant studies. In particular, the omission of snowballing from publications found, and the lack of time to hand search the publications of key authors, may have prevented the team from finding certain relevant studies. For instance, it meant we were unable to search for primary studies of initiatives identified in good practice reviews. This may mean that some promising emergent practices have been missed. However, our searches were reaching saturation point (i.e., were repeatedly identifying the same documents), so we are confident that the review represents a good sample of the relevant literature.

In order to make the review manageable, we only examined studies that assessed policy reforms and programmes that aimed to improve the situation of children on the move, and/or compared different approaches to addressing the challenges they face. This meant we were not able to include analyses of policies and programmes that did not discuss reforms or provide evidence of their impact. There is a huge literature assessing existing policies and programmes, and making recommendations as to how they could better protect children on the move, but without empirical analysis of the implementation of different approaches.

Other issues encountered include challenges in identifying how far initiatives actually worked with or pertained to children on the move. Few studies disaggregated their reporting in this way. This was particularly the case for community-based initiatives such as those working with both returnees and the wider population; in initiatives serving refugees and host populations; and in emergency contexts where the level of displacement was not always clear. When in doubt, we made judgements based on what could be discerned from the text, but excluded any study of initiatives that had no data on the protection of children on the move.

Framework for analyzing change. We initially used a framework of ‘positive change, no change, negative change’ to classify programme impacts but found this unsuitable given that most studies did not aim to measure change, but rather to explore the kinds of changes an initiative brought about and, in some cases, the processes or design features that led to these changes. Almost all studies noted some positive direct or indirect shifts towards enhanced child protection and thus, other than for the relatively few quantitative impact assessment studies with counterfactuals (20), we found this framework to fit poorly. Nonetheless, we have mapped evidence of positive change and challenges or weaknesses across all outcomes, adapting framing where necessary given the nature and framing of evidence. An [evidence gap map](#) provides a visual summary of the volume of evidence and its overall distribution in terms of positive outcomes, mixed outcomes and no evidence of change.



1.4 Structure of the report

The remainder of the report is structured as follows. Section 2 provides an overview of the studies and interventions examined. Section 3 discusses insights concerning reform of policies and systems to protect children on the move, while Section 4 presents evidence on the impacts of initiatives working directly with children and families on the move. Both sections present evidence then discuss the factors that have contributed to or hindered change. Section 5 summarizes evidence for each of the research questions, discusses the overall strength of evidence, and concludes with some reflections on how the evidence base could be strengthened.





Photo: © IOM/Uygar Emrah Ozesen

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES AND *initiatives*





This section provides an overview of the key dimensions of the initiatives and studies reviewed. For further details of each study, see Annex 1.

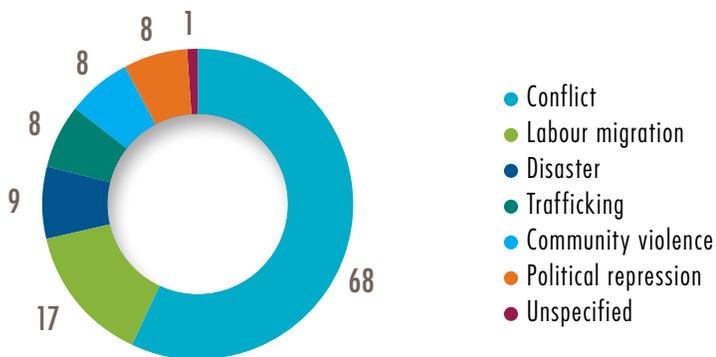
2.1 Drivers of movement and geographical distribution of studies

2.1.1 Drivers of movement

The interventions reviewed responded to a range of drivers. Figure 4 shows the main drivers of movement identified for each intervention (recognizing that movement decisions are often complex and driven by multiple factors). It highlights the significance of conflict as a driver – mentioned in 68 of the studies in this review. The term ‘labour migration’ – the next largest group – captures children who move largely due to poverty, in search of work.

Over half the studies (49) examined interventions responding to children moving between low- or middle-income countries (LMICs), with the rest fairly evenly split between those supporting the protection of children moving from LMICs to high-income countries and those responding to internal migration in low- or middle-income countries.

Figure 4: Drivers of movement





2.1.2 Geographical distribution and contexts of intervention

Figure 5 shows the geographical distribution of the interventions reviewed. It shows the strong concentration of studies in two regions: sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. Within sub-Saharan Africa, studies from East and Central Africa are relatively well-represented, though West and southern Africa much less so. Figure 6 highlights the extent to which studies are dominated by initiatives in Lebanon and Jordan, which together account for more than a quarter of the initiatives reviewed. Other than Egypt, no studies discussed efforts to improve the situation of children on the move in North Africa, despite this region’s importance in journeys to Europe. Figure 7 also shows the distribution of intervention contexts. Activities taking place in host communities were the most common, followed by those in refugee and IDP camps and settlements.

Figure 5: Regional distribution of interventions



Figure 6: Global distribution and context of interventions

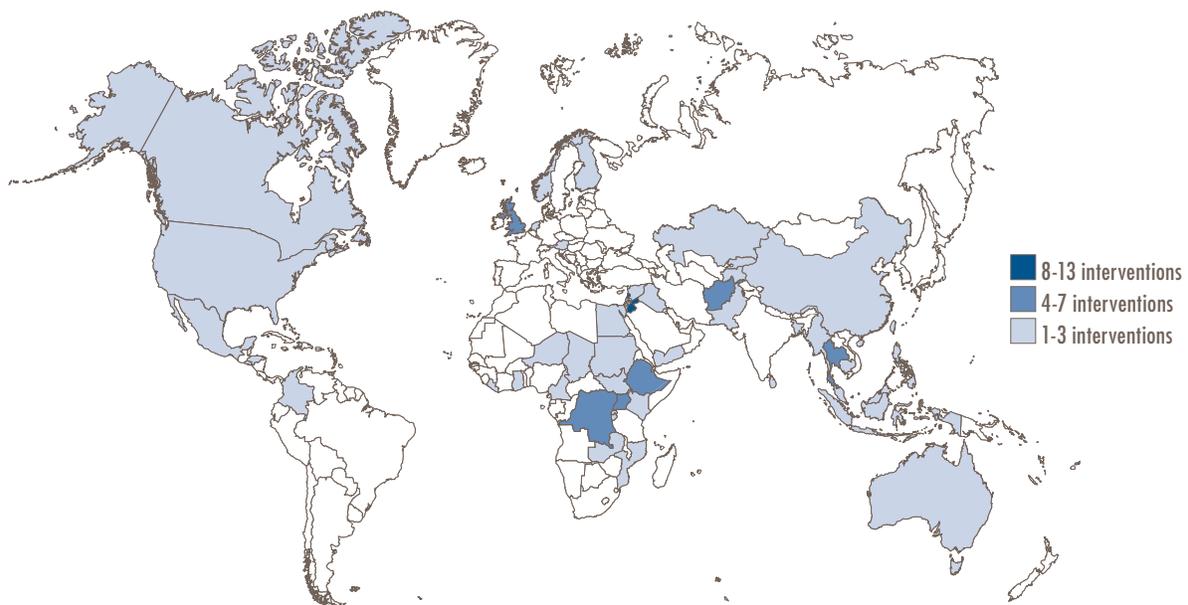
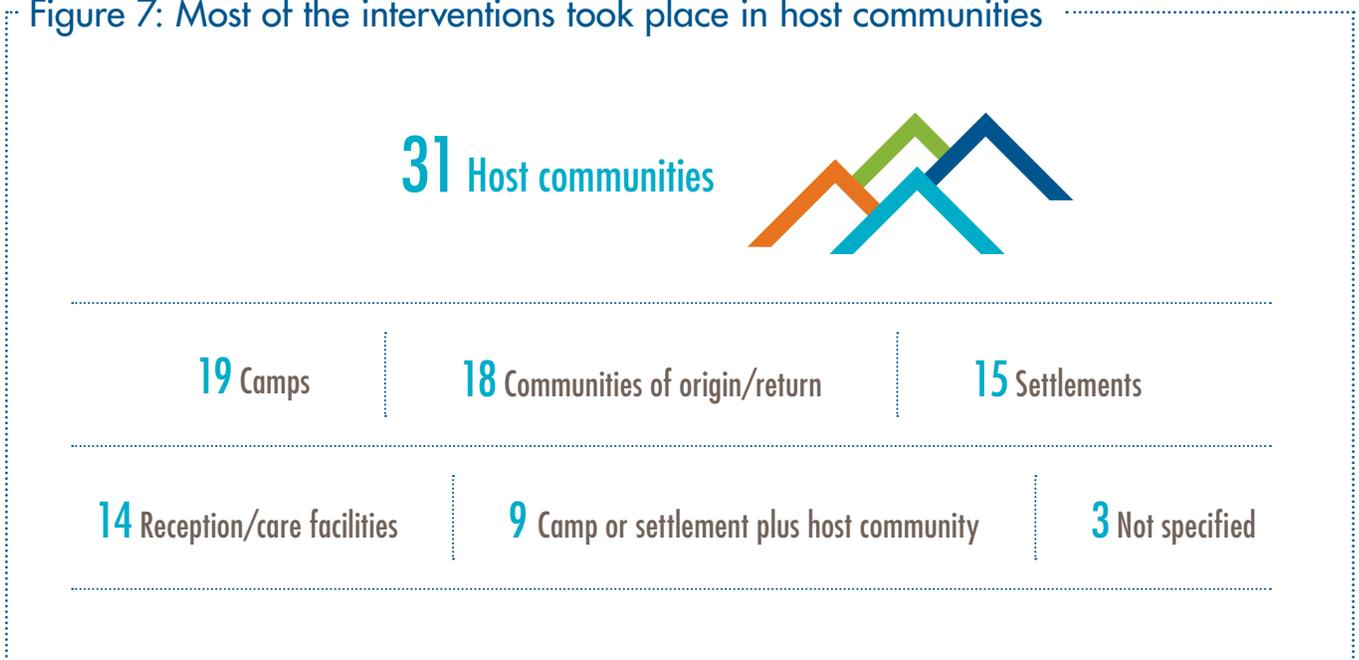




Figure 7: Most of the interventions took place in host communities



2.2 Target groups



The next set of figures show key information about the groups of children targeted by these interventions, by category of children and by age and gender.

As Figure 8 shows, the vast majority of initiatives targeted refugee children; more interventions targeted children moving with families, though interventions with unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) were still common. This emphasis on refugees is consistent with the large number of studies that identified conflict as a driver of movement and the substantial number of initiatives in refugee camps and settlements. It is notable, however, that the single most common context of interventions was within host communities, with initiatives explicitly aiming to support both host communities and refugees, or refugee integration.



Figure 8: Distribution of studies by category of children

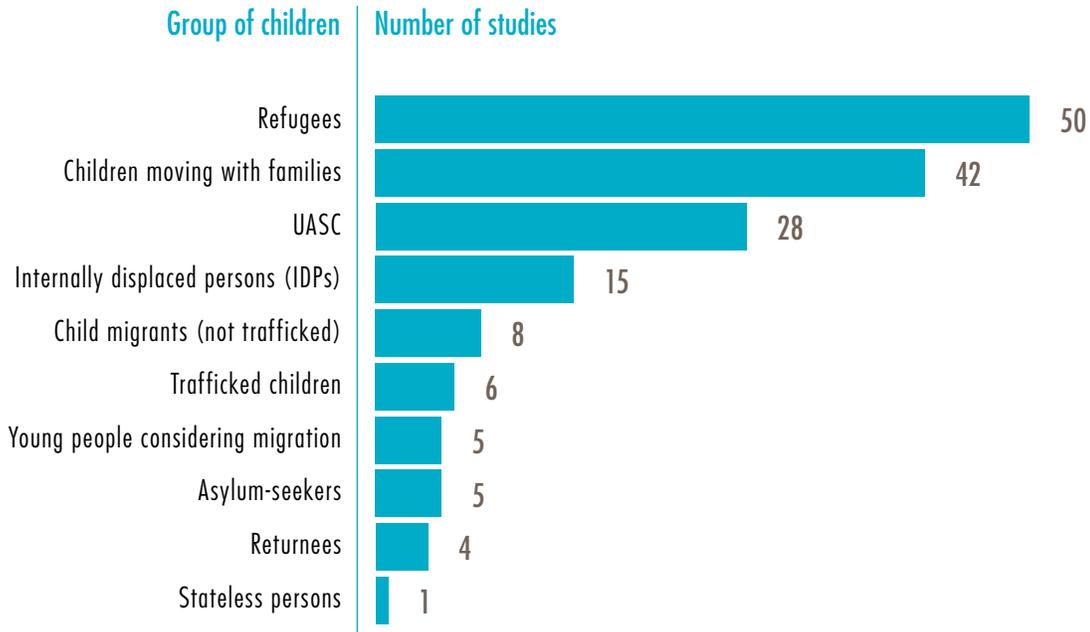
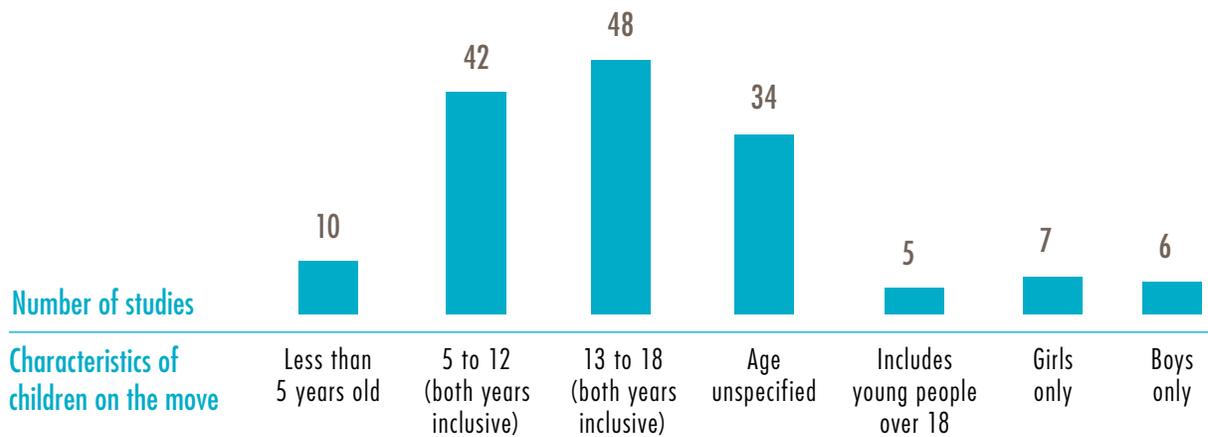


Figure 9 shows that most initiatives that specified a target age group aimed to improve the situation of adolescents aged 13–18, closely followed by interventions targeting children aged 5–12, while only a few (10) targeted children under five (10). However, over a third of the studies did not specify the ages of their target group. Only a few initiatives worked with children of one gender, with roughly equal numbers targeting only girls or boys.

A quarter of the interventions targeted parents/caregivers (22/89). The number of interventions working with other stakeholders (e.g., police or social workers) is discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.



Figure 9: Age and gender distribution of children targeted by interventions



2.3 Types of activities undertaken

The interventions involved a range of activities, with many projects having multiple components. Figure 10 shows that service provision (including any direct activities with children and families) was the most common activity, followed by training. No projects involved policy reform only, though service provision activities were often small scale within policy and advocacy-oriented initiatives. Indeed, over half the direct service activities served 5,000 people or less (see *Section 4* for more detail). Most initiatives were relatively short term: 37 studies assessed initiatives that lasted for a year or less, and another 33 examined projects lasting between one and three years.

Figure 10: Main types of activity

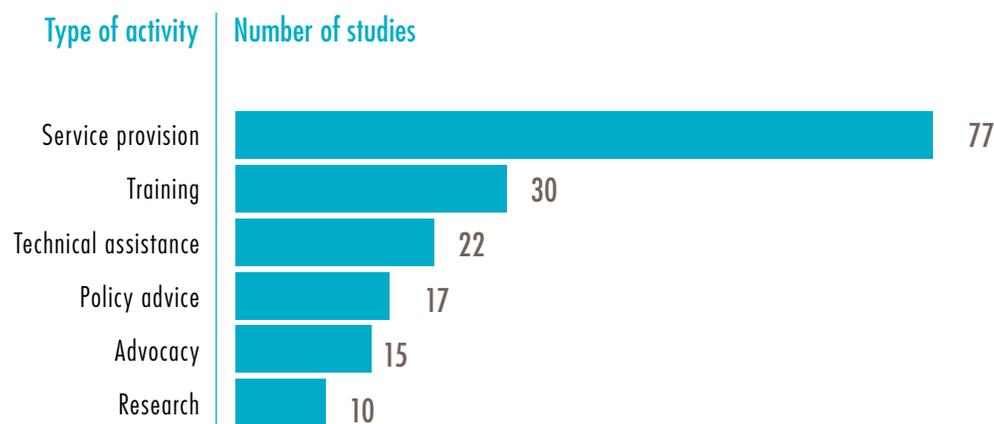
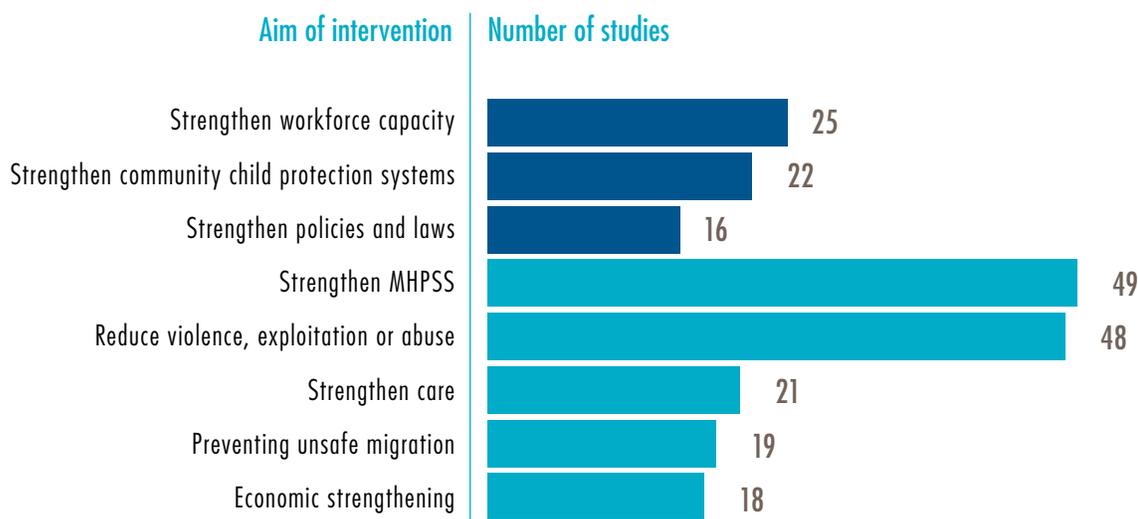




Figure 11 provides an overview of the main objectives of the activities undertaken. It shows that initiatives to improve mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) for children on the move, and to reduce violence, exploitation or abuse, were the two most common types of intervention, followed by initiatives to strengthen workforce capacity.

Figure 11: Objectives of interventions



2.4 Methodological overview

Table 2 summarises the key dimensions of these studies: type of study, research design and data collection methods. It is notable that only 20 studies involved a counterfactual: 10 studies involved randomized control trials (RCTs) and 10 used quasi-experimental designs. These were all studies of interventions working directly with children or families. In addition, 11 used a pre-post design without a control group. While other studies (particularly performance evaluations) use triangulation of sources as a means of probing the impact of initiatives, the lack of data clearly attributing changes to project activity is a weakness of many of these studies, and one that is well-recognized in studies of the impact of child protection initiatives (e.g., Wessells, 2009). Table 2 also shows that gender disaggregation is not mainstreamed throughout all studies, and is more common in data collection than analysis.



Table 2: Key methodological information

Number of studies (n=89)	
Type of study	
Evaluation:	56
<i>Impact evaluation</i>	24
<i>Performance evaluation</i>	32
Research study	33
Study design	
Randomized control trial (RCT)	10
Quasi-experimental	10
Pre-post comparison	15
Other	55
Types of primary data collected	
Quantitative only	15
Qualitative only	26
Mixed	48
Methods	
Project documentation/ literature review	49
Survey	48
Interviews	62
Focus group discussions	46
Participatory learning methods	9
Observation	16
Gender-disaggregated analysis	
Data collection was sensitive to gender	66
Analysis is disaggregated by gender	34
TOTAL	89

Note: Numbers in each category do not always sum to 89 if studies used multiple methods or approaches.



We now turn to the main findings of the review in terms of what works to protect children on the move, and why.



Photo: © UNICEF/UN0219832/Al-Faqir

STRENGTHENING CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS TO PROTECT CHILDREN *on the move*





This section explores evidence on the effectiveness of interventions aimed at strengthening child protection systems to protect children on the move, focusing on three main areas:

- strengthening policies, laws and procedures
- strengthening workforce capacity
- strengthening community protection systems.⁷

Of the 89 documents reviewed, 26 studies (just under a third) focused on strengthening child protection systems to varying degrees and scored moderately on relevance and quality. Of these, 22 were evaluations (an overwhelming majority – 19 – were evaluations of United Nations-led projects). None of the sources reported negative outcomes; rather, they all elaborated on the enablers of project success and the barriers, especially relating to implementation, that prevented some of the outcomes from being achieved.

A range of contexts and child protection issues were covered, including child labour, emergencies relating to conflict or hazards, refugee migration, child trafficking, and concerns for unaccompanied and separated children. Countries of intervention were low- or middle-income (with the exception of the Netherlands) and included: Mexico and Colombia (Latin America); Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Thailand (South, Central and East Asia); Jordan, Lebanon and Yemen (Middle East); Ethiopia, Djibouti, South Sudan, Rwanda and Zambia (sub-Saharan Africa).

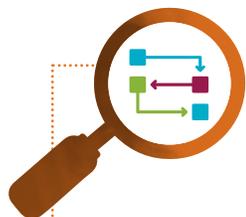


Countries of intervention were low- or middle-income (with the exception of the Netherlands).

⁷ A few of the initiatives examined also addressed some of the other elements of child protection systems strengthening as defined by Davis et al. (2012), such as mapping of different elements, creating political space, strengthening mapping and assessment, strengthening monitoring and evaluation (M&E), developing effective service models, and developing emergency-sensitive systems. None of these studies discussed efforts to increase budgets of child protection systems – a critical gap undermining many of the initiatives we examined.



3.1 Strengthening laws and policies to protect children on the move



KEY FINDINGS

- Sixteen studies discussed policy initiatives and related outcomes to protect children on the move. All reported some degree of positive change, while also highlighting factors that undermined change processes.
- Policy and reform initiatives were analyzed in the context of specific groups: child migrant labourers, unaccompanied and separated children (due to internal displacement or refugee migration), and trafficked children.
- Broadly, child labour policies were strengthened through revisions, preparations of lists of hazardous child labour for incorporation into labour regulations, drafting of protocols for child labour inspection, and the development of national action plans against the worst forms of child labour across countries in South and Central Asia, the Middle East and Latin America.
- Reforms relating to unaccompanied and separated children and to trafficked children were strengthened through improved identification and registration practices, adoption bans, amendments to laws, and child-sensitive administrative and legal procedures.
- Evidence on system strengthening efforts, cross-border issues, case management, access to key documentation/assistance/alternatives to detention, and children's participation in policy design all noted the advantages of progressive policy changes and procedures and activities that led to the changes. These include improved procedures, changes to laws, enactment of new policies, policy mapping exercises, improved information management systems, and regional exchanges of information on good practices to ensure improved migration.
- The focus on upstream policy development helped in achieving positive outcomes in national policymaking. Having child protection system strengthening as an explicit goal in the projects and aiming to effect changes across the system as a whole, as well as particular components within it, was also considered an important enabling factor for sustained protection outcomes. Stakeholder engagement – through targeted workshops with government officials – was also found to be instrumental in raising the profile of child protection in respective policy arenas and with respect to different child migrant groups.
- Across the board, internal political economy factors, governance challenges, weaknesses in information management tools, and political relations with neighbours compromised progress on strengthening the policy and legal landscape within countries.



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Sixteen studies explored policy issues and related outcomes to protect children on the move. Of these, 15 were evaluations of United Nations-led projects and one – Meyer et al. (2017) – was a research study. United Nations agencies, including the ILO, UNICEF, UNHCR and IOM, both individually and jointly, have significant policy influencing mandates and include (to a considerable degree) in their project portfolios activities that inform policy changes and bring key stakeholders together to develop and reform policies and laws. Table 3 summarizes the main emphases of studies of policy and system reform.

Table 3: Overview of initiatives that aimed to strengthen policies

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Child labour policy	4	0	4	Migrant child labour, refugees, children moving with families
Policies on UASC	11	0	11	UASC, children in communities of origin, internally displaced children, refugee children
Policies on trafficking	4	0	4	Trafficked children

3.1.1 Child labour policies

Four studies focused on national child labour policies in relation to child migrant labourers. Wark and Ieumwananonthachai (2010), Bayda et al. (2013) and Garcia Moreno and Quispe (2012) examined these policies in Thailand, Central Asia (Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan) and Mexico respectively. Chiodi (2018) provided evidence on the integration of Syrian refugee children in national child labour policies in Lebanon and Jordan.

In Thailand, the ILO and International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) designed a project on ‘supporting national action to combat child labour’ (2006–2011), with a central goal of assisting the government, employers’ and workers’ organizations and civil society groups in their activities to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (Wark and Ieumwananonthachai, 2010). A primary component of the project was to strengthen national efforts to reform policy and legal frameworks that influence the prevalence of child labour. Policy revision at national level and related resource allocation were two key outcomes achieved by the project, which also succeeded in bringing child migrant labour issues to the forefront of policy discussions.



The final evaluation by Wark and Ieumwananonthachai (2010) found that the ILO/IPEC role was “instrumental” in both the revision of the national policy and plan to eliminate the worst forms of child labour (2009–2014) and its formal approval by the Thai Cabinet in 2009 (despite political unrest and changes in leadership). Organizing regional workshops, issuing policy directives, creating multi-sector working groups, and establishing provincial centres for women and child workers were among the positive actions undertaken to operationalize the plan. Its very existence was also, in the authors’ view, a reasonable guarantee that child labour, including migrant labour, would remain on the national agenda after project closure and act as an effective benchmark of national efforts.

Garcia Moreno and Quispe (2012) pointed out that the most important progress towards policymaking in Mexico was the preparation of a list of hazardous child labour for incorporation in the Federal Regulations for Workplace Safety, Hygiene and Environments. During the evaluation, this was considered an “important step towards adapting national laws and regulations to international standards”. The project also supported the drafting of a protocol for child labour inspection in the agricultural sector, where child migrant workers are engaged in large numbers.

Bayda et al. (2013) considered the most valuable outcome of the project on child labour in Tajikistan to be the development of a national action plan on the worst forms of child labour (2013–2020). During the evaluation period, it was in the final stages of being agreed by line ministries and the government more widely. An inter-agency coordination council to coordinate and lobby for child labour protection across key stakeholders was also being created.

Chiodi (2018) presented evidence on the integration of child refugees with existing national child labour policies in the project on reducing child labour among Syrian refugees hosted in Lebanon and Jordan. In the independent cluster evaluation for the ILO, the author attributed positive project outcomes to linkages between the countries’ regular national systems, structures and projects on eliminating child labour and national and international efforts around the Syrian refugee response. The National Action Plan on eliminating the worst forms of child labour in Lebanon was revised in 2016 to include efforts to end child labour among Syrian refugee children.

3.1.2 Policies on unaccompanied and separated children

Eleven documents examined policies on the protection of UASC (including children displaced due to internal conflict/hazards or forced international displacement). These included Boothby et al. (2009a, 2009b), Bugnion de Moreta (2017); Brown and Copland (2013a, 2013b), Brown and Perschler (2013), Chames et al. (2016), Galloway et al. (2014); Hamilton et al. (2017); Meyer et al. (2017), and Schenkenberg et al. (2018). Each of these initiatives was considered effective to varying degrees.

Boothby et al.’s (2009b) evaluation of the Sri Lankan government’s post-tsunami response stressed that the ban on the adoption of children affected by the tsunami was initiated following concerns by the United Nations that children were at risk.



The adoption ban was accompanied by another initiative to register unaccompanied and separated children. Further policy efforts spearheaded by a national partnership (of actors including the Department of Probation and Child Care Services, National Child Protection Authority, UNICEF, Save the Children and other leading humanitarian organizations, including the Children’s Christian Fund and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs)) included the development of foster care, child-friendly administrative and legal procedures, and care for victims of abuse through support to “safe houses” (places that aimed to protect children from further abuse, neglect or exploitation).

Boothby et al. (2009b) was also the only document that highlighted efforts to strengthen policies and laws in the areas of violence against children and GBV – in this case, in the context of Sri Lanka’s 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami response. The authors mentioned the role of UNICEF and NGOs in continuing to lobby and engage with government and civil society actors to bring about changes in the policy response to abuse and exploitation. The National Action Plan for Children was designed – through UNICEF support – to align national laws with international conventions on child rights. UNICEF also worked to ensure that services were being delivered through the project in line with the Domestic Violence Act (August 2005). During the early response phase following the tsunami, GBV was also addressed through support to women’s and children’s police desks, which were established at police stations to reinforce systems for violence prevention and response, and for referring incidents of trafficking and sale of children to the Department of Probation and Child Care Services, the National Child Protection Authority, and the police.

In response to the conflict in South Sudan, Brown and Copland (2013b) found that UNICEF support helped to establish systems for identification, documentation, tracing and reunification, including the development of the Child Act and the 2007 Policy on Children without Caregivers by the Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare – a policy to prevent separation and support reunification with family, wherever possible, and without constructing new large-scale institutions. According to the authors, these efforts led to longer-term systems being strengthened. Brown and Perschler (2013), in their evaluation of experiences in multiple countries, found that the mapping exercise on child protection systems rolled out by UNICEF was a successful step towards plans for long-term system strengthening by governments and partners in several countries.⁸



Photo: © ILO

⁸ Pakistan, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Haiti, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the State of Palestine, Sudan and South Sudan.



Meyer et al. (2017) created a child protection index for their study on measuring changes in system strength and in child protection outcomes over two points in time in the refugee camp in Kiziba, Rwanda, and found evidence of some strengthening of child protection systems. They mentioned signs of improvement with respect to procedures (including percentage of children born and registered; unique identity card for adolescents; and family tracing outcomes and alternative care options for UASC). Assessment of some policy-related indicators reflected stability between the two time points: existence of standard operating procedures for violence against children and adolescents; best interest assessments for vulnerable and victimized children; functioning best interests determination panels; and measures to address statelessness (ibid.).

3.1.3 Policies on trafficked children

Four sources discussed policies and outcomes relating to trafficked children. These included Bugnion de Moreta (2017), Chames et al. (2016), Hamilton et al. (2017) and Hassan (2019).

Chames et al. (2016) note that in Zambia, the joint project by UNICEF, IOM and UNHCR on 'protecting migrant children from trafficking and exploitation' (2013–2016) put forward as its first objective the updating of laws relating to vulnerable children and the establishment of mechanisms for enforcement. Through United Nations support, a comprehensive law review exercise was undertaken by a range of key stakeholders, with representation from relevant ministries and departments in a technical working group. Following the review, this group proposed changes to the Immigration and Deportation Act to align with international conventions and standards in terms of the age of children and to replace the term 'deportation' with 'repatriation' (ibid.). Additional propositions included an appeals process for migrants against decisions taken by the immigration department, application for bail, continued residence in Zambia while victims' cases were pending, and adding minimum and maximum sentences for human smuggling. Even though the amendments were awaiting parliamentary approval during the evaluation period, the Immigration Department had already started altering its standard operating procedures to reflect the proposed changes and made provisions for alternatives to detention for trafficked children (ibid.).

Bugnion de Moreta (2017) – in an evaluation of the project to support the governments of Yemen, Djibouti and Ethiopia's coordination efforts to protect and promote the rights of vulnerable and trafficked children along the Gulf of Aden migration route – found the most evident contribution to be the incorporation of the child protection clause in the new legislation that countries had passed (e.g., Proclamation 909/2015 of 17 August 2015 in Ethiopia, Loi n° 133/AN/16/7ème L of 24 March 2016 in Djibouti). The author further stated that the project increased governments' knowledge and awareness of protection issues faced by children, and that this was linked directly to the passing of the laws.



While the preceding sections highlighted evidence of policy changes and developments relating to specific groups of children (migrant labourers, UASC and trafficked children), several policy efforts apply more broadly, regardless of the context in which children move (see Table 4). These broader efforts are discussed in the following sections.

Table 4: Overview of broader policy initiatives

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Cross-border policies	3	0	3	UASC, refugee children, trafficked children
Case management systems	9	0	9	UASC, internally displaced children, refugee children, trafficked children
Access to key documentation; assistance; alternatives to detention; participation	6	0	6	UASC, internally displaced children, refugee children, trafficked children

3.1.4 Cross-border policies

Three sources – all evaluations – reported some outcomes relating to this area (Bugnion de Moreta, 2017, in the context of migration management in the Gulf of Aden; Chames et al., 2016, in relation to trafficking in Zambia; and Wark and Ieumwananonthachai, 2010, in the context of migrant child labour in Thailand). Bugnion de Moreta (2017) evaluated some of the regional activities conducted as part of the IOM-supported migration management project between Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen. The authors explained that the newly created Regional Committee on Mixed Migration had meetings with representatives from various countries and governments of the region, including other governments that were not directly involved in the project. Recommendations from the fifth and sixth committee meetings dealt directly with child protection and governments appeared keen to apply these to their national legislation and strategies. However, the evaluation noted that this was still not an example of regional collaboration, as the information exchange at regional level was only helping to implement national priorities but not yet leading to actual cross-border or regional collaboration between governments.



Chames et al. (2016) reported positive results from the joint border monitoring missions conducted in 2013 by Zambia. These missions helped the Office of the Commission of Refugees and UNHCR to observe actual immigration practices and procedures related to vulnerable children and persons of concern along the border with the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and surrounding areas. They also helped to identify and assess current reception, processing and referral systems for vulnerable children and persons of concern and to gather qualitative and quantitative data on border crossing flows, the interventions required for persons of concern, and training needs of local staff. Two mission reports, with findings and recommendations, were produced, which were useful in planning training of newly recruited government officials.

Wark and Ieumwananonthachai (2010) found that support for information sharing and joint activities strengthened networks and networking on child migrant issues and, more importantly, on issues related to the prevention of trafficking and the worst forms of child labour. Re-establishing the Mekong coordination and Thai coordination networks provided an institutional basis for continuing actions such as regular information sharing and coalition building, to support the implementation of government agreements, and to strengthen cross-border networks and advocacy to protect child migrants from the worst forms of child labour in Thailand. There were several tangible outcomes from the stakeholder dialogue and networking. First, there were plans for developing a management system for the Rhong Klau market in Thailand, where many Cambodian child labourers and street children earned a living. Government and civil society groups discussed dividing the management work among them to improve child labour monitoring in the market, including registering working children and tracing their families, in collaboration with their employers. Second, mechanisms for safely repatriating children from the Lao People's Democratic Republic were agreed in accordance with bilateral memorandums of understanding. Among the decisions, deported children were not to be placed in shelters for long periods. The authors found that cross-border activities with Lao People's Democratic Republic and Cambodia were more vigorous than with individuals and organizations in Myanmar, as a result of deteriorating political relations with the Thai government at the time.

3.1.5 Case management systems

Only nine documents (all evaluations) discussed the establishment, strengthening and implementation of case management systems. These include Agriteam Canada Consulting Ltd. (subsequently referred to as 'Agriteam') (2019), Boothby et al. (2009b), Brown and Copland (2013a, 2013b), Brown and Perschler (2013), Bulosan and Sadat (2017), Chames et al. (2016), Hamilton et al. (2017), and Wark and Ieumwananonthachai (2010).

Most evaluations discussed the weaknesses of case management systems and consequently the inability to clearly demonstrate outcomes of programming and to follow up on care arrangements systematically. In South Sudan, for instance, Brown and Copland (2013b) highlighted that the development of administrative data needed for case management had been problematic. Brown and Perschler (2013) highlighted that it was difficult to obtain data about the extent of follow-up, but of the countries they studied, the DRC, Pakistan and South Sudan were far from compliant with these guidelines.



Only **9** documents (all evaluations) discussed the establishment, strengthening and implementation of case management systems.



There was evidence of information management tools being used in different ways with varying results (Brown and Perschler, 2013; Brown and Copland, 2013a, 2013b; Chames et al. 2016). These included a GBVIMS (gender-based violence information management system), CPIMS (child protection information management system) and immigration management systems. In the case of GBVIMS, Brown and Perschler (2013) stated that international NGOs were able to use the system to create reliable, disaggregated data and analyze trends in reporting, which then helped inform programmatic changes. In Somalia, the authors mentioned that GBVIMS was being integrated with CPIMS to strengthen case management. Overall, the evaluation found that CPIMS software can be customized and serve as an effective tool in case management. However, it also mentioned the need for considerable investment in training and capacity building and adaptation to the local context before data are entered to produce comprehensive data across caseloads and support individual case management. Even though UNHCR also has another case management system, ProgRes (profile global registration system), to provide a common source of information about individuals to facilitate protection of persons of concern, none of the documents reviewed that dealt with refugee migration discussed the application of this tool. This is a notable gap.

Chames et al. (2016) found the upgraded version of the New-Zambia Immigration Management System (NZIMS) with a border management module to be effective overall and especially in improving: access to accurate, live data; analysis of cross-border movements; more timely submission of periodic reports from border controls to headquarters; quicker resolution of issues at borders requiring headquarters' input; and accountability of immigration officers. Key informants interviewed by the authors mentioned some specific benefits of the system, including: detection of fraudulent passports; viewing of the 'immigration history' of individuals; and making it easy to detect those who have been 'blacklisted' or who are perpetrators of human trafficking; and making it easier to generate detention warrants. Immigration officials used the system to monitor their daily operations and check details on individuals. For example, one informant explained, "if someone comes into the country with a lot of children, it can alert other borders. It therefore contributes to security and protection of children." A few respondents raised concerns that some of the busier borders were not using the system and that there was no way to share information among the borders that were using it. They also reported other challenges with the system, in that data were not disaggregated by age or migration type, so officials were unable to determine how many migrating or refugee children passed through the borders or were intercepted. However, one respondent mentioned that junior officers could not access disaggregated data in order to protect confidentiality, but shift leaders and officers in charge had access to such data.



3.1.6 Access to key documentation, assistance, alternatives to detention, and participation

We explored further evidence on strengthening policy and laws relating to children on the move in the areas of: birth registration/access to key documentation; access to legal assistance; alternatives to detention; linguistic and intercultural mediation; and the extent of inclusion of migrant children's own perspectives in shaping policy changes.

Only three sources – two evaluations by Brown and Copland (2013a, 2013b) on Pakistan and South Sudan respectively, and the study by Meyer et al. (2017) – discussed improvements in birth registration and access to key documentation by children on the move. In the case of Pakistan, Brown and Copland (2013a) found that UNICEF had established – at community level – a model of protective spaces known as Protective Learning and Community Emergency Services, which brought children and adolescents of both sexes, and women, into a protective structure and offered a range of services including birth and adult identity documents. Of the nearly 1,200 children without birth registration, just over 500 (around 44 per cent) were helped to register, and around 280 children (23 per cent) received certificates. In South Sudan, the same authors found evidence of an area-based approach to programming that included joint work by the protection and health sectors in piloting birth registration (in 12 states) and reduction in early marriage (in 3 states). The two sectors collaborated on advocacy with the government to establish a birth registration system, bringing the civil and vital registration teams together with the health system to promote free birth certification. However, no actual results were reported in the evaluation.

Only one source, Galloway et al. (2014), mentioned the provision of legal assistance. They explained that Dutch reception centres enabled unaccompanied and separated children to receive legal assistance concerning asylum and the Residency Regulation on Human Trafficking. Also, an alternative perspective was provided for legal support: filing a complaint or returning to the country of origin instead of contacting the travel agent or trafficker. The authors further mentioned that the children did not receive any legal aid regarding their placement in protected reception.

Only one source, Chames et al. (2016), discussed interventions on and outcomes relating to alternatives to detention. It referred to a regional conference in Lusaka on the Protection of Children on the Move (2015), which brought together 72 delegates (social welfare, immigration and police officials) from Angola, DRC, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. They discussed specific challenges where regional cooperation could be instrumental in responding to situations involving migrant children in mixed migratory movements and, importantly, reviewed good practices in the region to implement alternatives to detention for migrant children. Evaluation respondents stated that the conference provided a good opportunity to network and share experiences on best practices. Despite this, participants raised concerns about the implementation of decisions across borders in a context where child protection-related legislation was not harmonized. They perceived this conference as a 'one-off' event rather than the beginning of efforts to develop greater harmonization.



Chames et al. (2016) also found that training of officials undertaken through this project contributed to change in attitudes and practices towards detention of migrant children in Zambia. Officials from the provincial and national departments of Immigration, Correctional Services and Police reported that, after the training, many fewer vulnerable migrant children were placed in detention centres or prisons, and that the Department of Immigration had dropped cases against children and referred them to protection services instead.

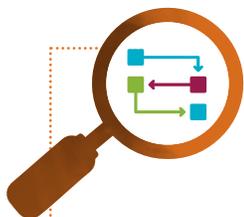
In terms of linguistic or intercultural mediation, only one document, Boothby et al.'s (2009b) evaluation of Sri Lanka's post-tsunami response, found evidence of linguistic mediation, but with negative impacts. The poor translation of the inter-agency guidelines on UASC led to only children who had lost one or both parents being registered as unaccompanied or separated under new government policy, creating a protection gap for other children. Children's own perspectives were missing in all the documents relating to strengthening policy and legal frameworks to protect children on the move. This evidence assessment highlights the lack of inclusion of their perspectives as a clear gap that needs dedicated attention.



We now turn to the second critical area for strengthening child protection systems: strengthening workforce capacity at various levels and among a diverse range of actors.



3.2 Strengthening workforce capacity to protect children on the move



KEY FINDINGS

- Twenty-four initiatives aimed to strengthen workforce capacity to improve the protection of children on the move. These initiatives spanned all low- and middle-income regions, with an emphasis on emergency contexts (16 of the 24 studies).
- Training was the single most common intervention, and the only approach examined in any depth in these interventions. Other capacity-strengthening activities included: co-development and implementation of plans and pilot initiatives; secondments of experienced staff to ministries and departments to help identify and address gaps in systems and services; the production of toolkits and training materials; and, in emergency contexts, training of other humanitarian agencies, their staff and implementing partners in child protection issues.
- Factors contributing to the effectiveness of training included: tailoring training to specific role-holders rather than making the same training compulsory for all staff, regardless of role, and training higher-ranking staff as well as frontline officers (otherwise, superiors responsible for decision making may not 'buy-in' to a new way of working). Detailed training spread over multiple months, and involving continued support and mentoring from project staff, generally increased effectiveness. Several studies highlighted the importance of training being nested within broader capacity-strengthening efforts. Ownership by the organizations receiving and implementing training was also vital.
- Capacity-strengthening activities focused on child protection network members included training in the use of tracking apps, as well as broader sensitization to GBV and child protection issues. Evaluations recommended more advanced training in communication skills to enable awareness raising and negotiation, and enable members to prioritize cases. Practical and logistical issues such as funding for operational costs, transport to make referrals, and declining motivation over time were reported as barriers by some initiatives.

Twenty-four studies explored initiatives that aimed to strengthen workforce capacity to improve the protection of children on the move. These spanned all low- and middle-income regions, with an emphasis on emergency contexts (16 of the 24 studies).⁹ Twenty-one studies reported on impacts.

⁹ None took place in a high-income country. During the assessment phase of this review, we found some studies of workforce strengthening initiatives but were ultimately unable to include them as they did not focus on the outcomes of interest.





Table 5 shows the distribution of initiatives and findings: it indicates that training was both the most common approach and the one where impact data was most often lacking. In these cases, most evaluations recommended investment in generating clearer evidence around impact, not simply of the numbers of individuals trained.

Table 5: Approaches to workforce capacity strengthening

Approach	Positive change	Mixed findings	Insufficient data on impact	Total number of studies	Key groups of children on the move
Training	11	5	5	21	Refugee children, internally displaced children, migrant child labourers, UASC
Production of training materials and guidelines	2	0	0	2	Children at risk of trafficking; refugee child labourers
Secondment	1	0	1	2	Refugee children, children at risk of recruitment into armed forces
Social work degree courses	3	0	3	3	Refugee children; internally displaced children; at-risk children in host communities
Study visits	1	0	1	1	Children at risk of unsafe migration
Co-development of plans and pilot initiatives	1	0	1	2	Migrant child workers, children at risk of trafficking
Training other humanitarian actors	2	0	0	2	Refugee and internally displaced children in camps



Most interventions had an explicit focus: strengthening staff capacity to prevent or respond to violence against children or GBV; protecting children from the worst forms of child labour; or strengthening awareness of and capacity to respond to unaccompanied child migrants' and refugees' protection needs. General measures to strengthen child protection capacity were less common. The initiatives reviewed worked with varied groups, all of whom played some role in the delivery of services intended to prevent or respond to protection violations faced by children on the move.

Figure 12 shows the distribution of workforce stakeholder groups targeted by these initiatives, and indicates that ministries of Social Welfare and social workers, alongside the police and justice system, were the two workforce groups that interventions most commonly aimed to support.

Figure 12: Distribution of studies by stakeholder group



The depth of discussion of outcomes varied considerably, from studies that had simply asked a small number of respondents whether training was useful or if they had applied their learning, to those that conducted detailed surveys with trainees, such as Hamilton et al. (2017), or conducted in-depth interviews (e.g., Bernath, 2014). The importance of improving monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of training interventions overall received relatively little attention. One exception is Chiodi's (2018) evaluation of action to tackle the worst forms of child labour in Lebanon, Jordan and Syria, which highlights the common weakness of training data – focusing on numbers of workshops held or number of attendees rather than learning retained and applied.



As Table 5 shows, training was the single most common workforce capacity-strengthening intervention, and the only approach examined in any depth in these studies. Training covered a range of topics, including case management, reporting and referral systems, data management, children's rights (including specific rights under international laws on children on the move), child protection, gender-sensitivity and GBV, and basic psychosocial support skills training for social workers.¹⁰



Training was the single most common workforce capacity-strengthening intervention, and the only approach examined in any depth in these studies.

Despite being a common element of project plans aiming to tackle child labour, training of labour inspectors was one of the most delayed elements of the interventions examined (Zivetz and Nasr, 2019; Garcia Moreno and Quispe, 2012). However, where such training took place (e.g., in Jordan, see Chiodi, 2018), it was seen as valuable and effective. The evaluation of UNICEF's work to strengthen the child protection system in Myanmar highlighted the organization's efforts to promote coordination and alignment between Department of Social Welfare staff and agencies with responsibility for action to combat trafficking (Hamilton et al., 2017). This study highlighted the need for increased efforts to harmonize these systems, so that the child protection system could more effectively address a wider range of protection risks.

A subset of training initiatives aimed to increase the gender-sensitivity of key officials. For example, CARE's Jordanian Community Development Support Programme (oriented to supporting both host communities and Syrian refugees) included training for Ministry of Social Development social workers on gender-sensitive case management. Agriteam's (2019) evaluation found that almost all Ministry of Social Development representatives surveyed felt that they had a new understanding of gender-related topics, particularly GBV or case management, and 80 per cent reported applying newly learnt practices in their case management processes. In particular, they reported finding training in gender-sensitive interviewing techniques relevant, and had adjusted their interviewing style and case management forms to more fully recognize, capture and/or address the different needs of women and men, girls and boys (Agriteam, 2019, p. 19). The proportion of female social workers who reported adopting gender-sensitive practices (86 per cent) was notably higher than that of male social workers (71 per cent).

In most cases, gender-sensitivity training focused largely on effective response in cases of GBV. Examples include the Norwegian Refugee Council's (NRC) training activities in Liberia, and UNICEF initiatives to prevent GBV and violence against displaced children in post-tsunami camps in Sri Lanka and Indonesia. The evaluation of the NRC project found that police appreciated the detailed practical advice and support on interviewing techniques and filling out case forms. The evaluation found less appreciation of the training among Ministry of Justice staff, who felt that some recommendations (e.g., in camera trials for child survivors) had a poor cultural fit. This said, there is some evidence to support the effectiveness of this training – as administrative data show an 82 per cent increase in the provision of relevant documentation to the courts over the project period, to which NRC training may well have contributed (Bernath, 2014).

¹⁰ In some cases – particularly the initiatives providing training to labour inspectors – the content of the training is not specified.



Boothby et al.'s (2009a, 2009b) evaluations of UNICEF's role in child protection in tsunami responses found that police training and deployment played an important role in preventing violence in IDP camps, though at times this was undermined by delays in equipment and transportation needed for them to fulfil their roles.

Three studies briefly mentioned the potential of social work degree courses in strengthening workforce capacity. These suggested that agencies' investments in these courses were valuable; however, in the case of Myanmar, the course needed reorientation to become more practical (Hamilton et al., 2017). Brown and Copland (2013b) found that the Juba University social work course in South Sudan, supported by UNICEF and other partners, was seen as a positive contribution towards building social worker capacity, but that a more detailed evaluation of the initiative was needed. As with the initiative in Myanmar, an emerging challenge was the linkages between theoretical and practical elements; Brown and Copland (2013b) also highlighted the need for greater gender parity among the student body.¹¹

Zivetz and Nasr's (2019) evaluation of a programme to eliminate the worst forms of child labour in Lebanon hints at the importance of stable working relationships, of clear expectations among host agencies and secondees, and of seconded staff having the required capacity in projects providing secondments and technical assistance as a form of capacity strengthening. Similarly, Brown and Copland (2013b) mention that placing a child protection specialist within the child protection unit of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) significantly influenced the child protection agenda from within and led to SPLA's support for implementation of the project. Beyond these two studies, the impacts of secondments are not discussed explicitly among the studies reviewed, and are primarily highlighted as an explanation for challenges. Analysis of the impact of approaches such as secondment and sustained technical assistance for the development and implementation of workforce capacity-strengthening plans is a notable gap.

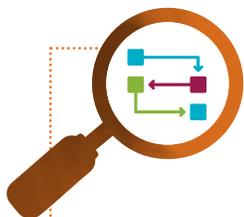


Photo: © IOM/Ingy Mehanna

¹¹ The third study – Boothby et al., 2009a – flagged but did not discuss UNICEF investment in a social work degree course in Aceh, Indonesia.



3.3 Strengthening community child protection systems



KEY FINDINGS

- Twenty-two initiatives, 12 of which took place in the context of emergencies, aimed to promote stronger community-level child protection systems.
- Most of these helped build the capacity of local child protection committees and networks to prevent or respond to trafficking and unsafe or exploitative migration, violence against children, or to report violations such as children's involvement in the worst forms of child labour. Activities involved setting up and/or training local child protection committees and focal points, with two examples of workplace monitors.
- All studies reported some degree of positive change in local engagement with and alertness to child protection issues, and in willingness to take action in the case of concerns.
- Several studies observed the absence of good-quality data on the effectiveness of efforts to strengthen community-based protection systems. Funding and sustaining focal points or child protection network members' commitment to monitoring reporting and referral were also reported as key barriers to strengthening community child protection systems.



Photo: © UNHCR/Patrick Brown

Twenty-four initiatives, 15 of which took place in the context of emergencies, aimed to promote stronger community-level child protection systems. These projects took place in South or Central Asia (five initiatives), South-East Asia (four initiatives), the Middle East (four initiatives) and sub-Saharan Africa (ten initiatives). One synthesis study discussed evidence from all major low- and middle-income regions (Brown and Perschler, 2013). Twelve initiatives were financially supported by United Nations agencies.

Studies of 18 of these initiatives reported on community child protection capacity, with 17 observing increased local engagement with and alertness to child protection issues, and in willingness to take action in the case of concerns. None reported no change, though several observed significant constraints that affected the real level of implementation and effectiveness. Several studies such as Brown and Perschler's (2013) synthesis and Holzaepfel and Morel-Seytoux (2014) observed the absence of good-quality data on the effectiveness of efforts to strengthen community-based protection systems, a finding echoed by Wessells' (2009) review. Table 6 provides an overview of this evidence.



Table 6: Overview of evidence on strengthening local child protection capacity

Issue	Evidence of positive change	Significant challenges	Total number of studies	Targeted groups of children on the move
Community child protection capacity	17	3	18	Children in refugee camps, UASC, children at risk of trafficking or unsafe migration
Workplace monitoring capacity	2	0	2	Migrant and refugee child labourers

Most of these initiatives worked to build the capacity of local child protection committees and networks to prevent or respond to trafficking and unsafe or exploitative migration, and violence against children, or to report violations such as children's involvement in the worst forms of child labour. Most activities were community-based and involved setting up and/or training local child protection committees and focal points.

These evaluations found that, at their most successful, community child protection committees were actively identifying and referring cases of violence, abuse or exploitation to village or camp authorities and/or to the relevant services. In some cases, projects had set these structures up, while in others they had revitalized or built on existing structures. Where these operated effectively, they led to increased referral of children facing protection violations. Brown and Perschler's (2013) synthesis of insights on child protection from UNICEF's emergency programming highlights positive examples from all eight countries studied of community-based child protection networks and committees taking effective action on issues as varied as reporting child abuse, preventing early marriage, and assisting with family reunification. The evaluation found no relationship between the governance context, country's income level, and the effectiveness of these networks. It also suggests that training from international NGOs may have contributed to their effectiveness in some cases.

Similarly, an initiative working with Palestinian refugees in southern Lebanon in camps and informal settlements (O'Leary et al., 2015) provided activities such as training and coaching, social work/case management, family visits, stakeholder visits, meetings and networking, events, and youth micro-projects. This initiative was successful at involving a range of community members in protecting children (e.g., referring children to child protection services or case managers when needed).

Two initiatives worked with people in positions of authority in their communities, such as village leaders, teachers and health workers, to strengthen their capacity to protect children and other vulnerable social groups. In one case, the Safe Migration and Reduced Trafficking (SMART) project in Cambodia, this involved training these individuals to inform them of safe and legal migration pathways and trafficking risks, which enabled



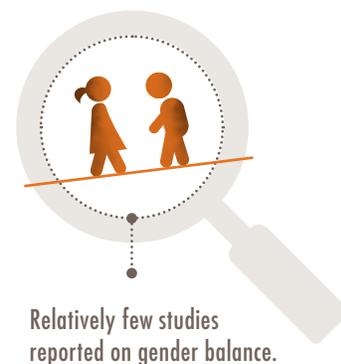
them to advise others (Mauney, 2015). One of the elements of the ILO/IPEC-funded child labour programme in Thailand involved training for teachers, health workers and village leaders to enable them to report suspected violations of child labour laws (Wark and Ieumwananonthachai, 2010). The evaluation praised the sustainability of this strategy, though it does not actually report the number of cases identified by these stakeholders.

One evaluation examined the role of family centres as community-level structures to promote child protection in Gaza (Wilson, 2018). These centres provide case management and referral pathways, as well as psychosocial support services to Ministry of Social Development and/or other service providers, to children within and outside IDP camps. Community-based child protection committees worked with them to identify and refer children for services. This evaluation was one of very few to discuss the inclusion of children with disabilities as centre users, but did not discuss any specific protection needs or additional risks they faced, or how these were amplified among IDPs, refugees, and host communities. These centres were externally funded, with limited linkages to community-based organizations (CBOs) or child protection committees; most closed after funding ended.

Two initiatives undertook workplace-based activities to monitor and report child labour. In the ILO/IPEC initiative in Thailand, youth volunteers were recruited to act as watchdogs who would report workers' rights violations to an NGO – Labour Protection Network – which would then liaise with the authorities. This enabled violations affecting migrant workers (who were otherwise too scared to report abuses) to be brought to the notice of the labour inspectors and other relevant government departments (Wark and Ieumwananonthachai, 2010).¹² Two studies (MacFarlane et al., 2019 and Rubenstein et al., 2015) also discussed pilot initiatives (in Ethiopia and DRC respectively) using SMS messaging to report cases of unaccompanied and separated child migrants and to aid family unification (see Section 4.5).

Overall, these evaluations found examples of strong commitment among child protection committees to taking action, even where this involved challenging people in positions of power. For example, Debert et al. (2019) report examples of child protection committee members in refugee camps in Bangladesh challenging individuals involved in drug trafficking and in the forgery of marriage certificates to allow child marriage.

Relatively few studies reported on gender balance. Of those that did, Debert et al.'s (2019) evaluation of Plan International's programme in Rohingya refugee camps found community-based child protection committees to be gender-balanced and representative of their communities. Holzaepfel and Morel-Seytoux's (2014) evaluation of a United States Department of Labour-funded programme in refugee camps in Chad also found that women were well-represented on GBV committees, though less so on other committees such as vigil committees, which may also have had a bearing on child protection.



¹² The other was Chiodi (2018), but this evaluation did not report on the effectiveness of workplace monitoring mechanisms.



One initiative – the community-based child protection networks established in IDP camps in Pakistan following floods – intentionally focused training for male members, in recognition of men’s role as perpetrators of GBV and violence against children, and thus their role in building sustainable solutions (Brown and Perschler, 2013).

3.4 Enabling factors and barriers to strengthening systems to protect children on the move



This section discusses what the reviewed studies reveal about factors that enabled or hindered progress on outcomes relating to strengthening child protection policies and laws, workforce capacity, and community child protection systems. None of these studies found that approaches were ineffective per se; rather, they highlighted barriers and challenges that undermined impact.

3.4.1 Enabling factors

Three main factors that enabled progress in strengthening child protection policies and laws included the following.

Combining upstream policy development with community-level action: Bayda et al. (2013), for example, explained that the ILO/IPEC’s approach in Central Asia of using a combination of upstream policy-related interventions with downstream service-oriented activities at the community level was an important factor in determining the project’s progress. Brown and Copland’s (2013b) evaluation of UNICEF’s child protection programming in South Sudan arrived at a similar conclusion. However, in the ILO/IPEC project, the evaluation considered that the community-level activities deserved a greater level of investment and a longer time frame for implementation.

System-strengthening goals: Having child protection system strengthening as an explicit goal in the projects and aiming to effect changes across the system as a whole, as well as within particular components, was also considered an important enabling factor for sustained protection outcomes. Brown and Perschler’s (2013) evaluation stressed that a strategic approach to system strengthening in the continuum of pre-crisis, crisis and post-crisis, in combination with social change interventions, was crucial to successful implementation. However, in their view, more guidance was needed on applying the United Nations Child Protection Strategy in fragile and conflict-affected states. Capacity building (discussed in Section 3.2) was considered another major contributory factor.



Stakeholder engagement: This was found to be instrumental in raising the profile of child protection in respective policy arenas. Bugnion de Moreta (2017, p. 12), for instance, mentioned that “targeted workshops with government officials, both at the national and local contributed to creating a certain level of recognition of unaccompanied and separated child migrants as an issue that required solutions”. Chiodi (2018) and Garcia Moreno and Quispe (2012) arrived at similar conclusions.

Factors that contributed to stronger workforce capacity and community-level protective capacity included the following:

Tailoring capacity building to specific job roles: This approach served better than making training compulsory for all staff, regardless of role (Agriteam, 2019; Chames et al., 2016). Chames et al.’s (2016) study of the United Nations Joint Programme for Protecting Migrant Children from Trafficking and Exploitation in Zambia highlighted the importance of training higher-ranking staff as well as frontline officers to ensure that those in more influential job roles ‘buy in’ to new ways of working. One ingredient found to be important for training in child protection to be effective and sustained in the long term was attitude change among staff. The authors probed this and documented shifts in border officials’ attitudes, from focusing on the illegality of certain forms of migration to the need to protect vulnerable migrants.

Additional positive training features: Those that were detailed and long-lasting (carried out over seven months in the case of NRC’s programme in Liberia) (Bernath, 2014), or involved continued support and mentoring from project staff (Bulosan and Sadat, 2015) were found to be particularly positive contributory factors. Some evaluations also highlighted the importance of repeat training, in part because staff were starting from a low initial level of knowledge or awareness, and partly due to high staff turnover (Brown and Copland, 2013b; Schenkenberg et al., 2018). Repeat training was also important to ensure that training sessions were not overcrowded and that staff had access to the equipment they needed (e.g., computers for training in a new migrant data management system) (Chames et al., 2016).

Several studies highlighted the importance of **training being nested within broader capacity-strengthening efforts**. These include: increased operational budgets (discussed in numerous studies); provision of transportation to visit children and families referred to child protection systems in order to investigate crimes against them (Bernath, 2014) or to report violations (Cozens, 2013); and adequate structures to which children experiencing protection violations can be referred (Chames et al., 2016).



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Staff may also need incentives to stay with specialist child focused units (such as Gender and Child Protection desks within the police) (Bernath, 2014). Hamilton et al.'s (2017) study of UNICEF's work to strengthen Myanmar's child protection system highlights the importance of parallel strengthening in other relevant services, such as education and training, without which a case management approach can feel irrelevant, discouraging staff from applying new approaches or practices learnt during training.

High degree of ownership: Wessells' (2009) review of community-based child protection systems indicates that the single most important influence on their effectiveness is the degree of ownership, which underpins a sense of collective responsibility to prevent and respond to child protection violations. In this review, some of the strongest examples of ownership came from camp contexts, where child protection committee members felt empowered to challenge practices such as child marriage (Debert et al., 2019; Brown and Copland, 2013b). Ownership also influenced the effectiveness of training. For example, in the case of UNICEF-supported training within the academies of the armed forces in Colombia and South Sudan, Brown and Perschler's (2013) evaluation found that this had "served to shift understanding and practice in child protection and [is] reputed to have reduced protection violations. The significant factor in both countries is the degree of ownership of the training materials by the armed forces themselves" (ibid., p. 56).

3.4.2 Factors hindering effectiveness

The following factors that hindered progress on strengthening policies and laws were highlighted in the studies reviewed.

Political economy factors: These played a key role in determining the degree of project effectiveness, especially in terms of outcomes on strengthening national policies and laws. In Thailand, for instance, Wark and Ieumwananonthachai (2010, p. 5) found that "frequent changes in political leadership made it more difficult to identify and build a consistent relationship with politically backed individuals in government leadership" who could ensure faster changes to policies on child labour protection. Similarly, Garcia Moreno and Quispe (2012) found that even though the ILO project in Mexico promoted spaces for the discussion of a national policy on child labour, it was unlikely that the policy would materialize before the project ended because presidential elections were scheduled for that year, and this process contributed to "institutional paralysis". Chames et al.'s (2016) evaluation of the joint agency anti-trafficking project in Zambia mentioned the highly political and slow nature of the national law reform process as a key barrier. The reform process led by the project was further slowed by changes in the Constitution and a presidential election. As a result, bills favouring protection of trafficked children were drafted through project support, but had not been tabled before Cabinet and Parliament at the time of the evaluation.



Political relations with neighbours: In projects related to cross-border migration, trafficking and displacement, political relations with neighbouring countries played a critical role. Wark and Ieumwananonthachai (2010) note that the conflict between the Thai and Cambodian governments resulted in less government-to-government cooperation on cross-border issues influencing migrant child labour and trafficking. For example, Cambodian government officials cancelled their participation in project-sponsored meetings during the 2008–2009 conflict, creating a vacuum in cross-border decision-making and action.

Governance challenges: Governance challenges also contributed to weaker national policy implementation. Issues reported in the documents reviewed included decentralization to local governments and related administrative reform without adequate transfers and ownership of responsibilities taking place at the local level, and the lack of state capacity in general to implement the reforms. These challenges were further exacerbated by human and financial resource constraints. Bayda et al. (2013) found that administrative reform without related transfer of responsibilities was a major challenge to strengthening the child protection policy environment in both Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. The process of decentralization that began in Kazakhstan in 2012 led to several changes over the course of the ILO/IPEC project. The Department of Labour Protection within the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection changed jurisdiction. From 2013, the department on Child Rights Protection of the Ministry of Education and Science was abolished, and protection responsibilities were meant to be transferred to local authorities. The authors noted there was a high risk that child labour issues would be overlooked through such changes.



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Weaknesses in data and information management systems: These weaknesses meant that child protection services under new policies or laws could not be adequately delivered. This was the case across contexts in the documents reviewed. For instance, Boothby et al. (2009b) found evidence of discrepancies in the data on the number of child abuse cases being reported. The likely under-reporting meant that fewer cases than required by law were being dealt with by the police and probation officers following the tsunami in Sri Lanka. This failure deprived children of the full set of services that would otherwise have been available to them through integrated service mechanisms. In South Sudan, Brown and Copland (2013b) found evidence of weak administrative data systems, especially the CPIMS. The lack of disaggregated data prevented evidence-based planning and proper monitoring of results and outcomes. Brown and Perschler (2013) similarly found weaknesses in case management for beneficiaries of programmes (e.g., separated children, survivors of GBV). Chiodi (2018), in her evaluation of child labour policy reform affecting Syrian refugees in Lebanon and Jordan, found the lack of operationalization of the National Child Labour Database to be a significant implementation gap affecting service providers.

Wider **contextual factors** mentioned in the evidence base include consideration of **national security priorities** and the extent of **civil society engagement** in project design. Bugnion de Moreta (2017) mentioned that the conflict in Yemen prevented the country from adopting child-sensitive legislation on trafficking even though the project helped achieve this change in Ethiopia and Djibouti. Considering policy initiatives in light of wider national security priorities and environments, especially in the area of mixed migration, was also important during project design and implementation, with United Nations agencies needing to ensure that key government ministries and departments were on board with their work to address trafficking and irregular migration issues in Zambia (Chames et al., 2016).

Barriers or challenges to strengthening workforce and community child protection capacity identified in these studies were primarily the converse of those mentioned in the previous section. They included the following:

Frequent staff turnover, meaning that training needed to be frequently repeated. As one NGO training provider reported (of police and medical staff assigned to a refugee camp): “They come, they are trained, they know what to do... then in 3–4 months, they will go” (Glass and Doocy, 2013, p. 19).



Limited training and supplies. One study highlighted the need for more advanced skills development training for child protection network members to enable more effective communication and awareness raising, and to enhance prioritization of cases (Debert et al., 2019). Debert et al. (2019) and Cozens (2013) also highlighted the need for greater provision of information, education and communication (IEC) materials to spread awareness of child protection networks and focal points. Cozens' (2013) evaluation of a War Child project in the DRC found that only 32 per cent of respondents had been involved in child protection activities – mostly one-off awareness-raising events. **Practical, logistical issues** such as funded transport to training sessions were also barriers in some cases (Chiodi, 2018).

Funding presented a significant constraint both to different elements of the social service and justice workforce, and to community child protection mechanisms. For example, the youth child protection networks established by War Child in Goma, DRC, identified lack of funding for transport to take referred children to the relevant authorities as a key challenge. War Child had hoped to alleviate this through \$40 grants to youth protection networks to generate income, but Cozens (2013) found that these were not covering costs. By contrast, Ferro's (2019) study of community psychosocial support for children in Mozambican communities hosting displaced populations found that referral pathways were being maintained after the end of the project, despite funding being discontinued. Community members and leaders were now aware of protection violations, such as trafficking, child marriage and abuse, and continued to report them.

Sustaining commitment on the part of focal points or child protection network members to monitoring, reporting and referral: These challenges reflected the fact that these roles were usually voluntary, and role-holders had to juggle with other priorities, including work. While some focal points highlighted the compatibility of their role with other responsibilities, MacFarlane et al. (2019), Bimé and Ranz (2010) and Rubenstein et al. (2015) all noted that lack of remuneration contributed to declining commitment to performing child protection roles, while Wilson (2018) noted that it limited the activities of some community child protection committees. MacFarlane et al. (2019) recommended that focal points should not have other village leadership duties, to enable them to devote the time needed to fulfil protection roles. Sustaining commitment goes beyond addressing issues related to remuneration in the authors' view. Several studies highlighted the fact that focal points perceived they were sharing information into a 'vacuum' and a frequent lack of tangible follow-up as contributing to declining commitment (MacFarlane et al., 2019; Rubenstein et al., 2015, Bimé and Ranz, 2010).



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CHILD AND FAMILY-LEVEL *interventions*





In this section we discuss evidence of the impact of the following kinds of activities working directly with children and families:

- initiatives promoting safe migration;
- economic-strengthening programmes for families, children and young people on the move;
- programmes to reduce violence against children on the move
programmes to strengthen the care of children on the move;
- interventions to support the psychosocial well-being of children on the move.

Compared with the studies of system strengthening discussed in Section 3, relatively more of these studies discussed change from a baseline level or compared with a non-participant group, thus enabling us to analyze the proportion of studies that reported positive change, no change, and (in a few cases) a worsening situation.

The scale of interventions is shown in Table 7. Ten interventions reached less than 500 beneficiaries. Most of these very small-scale interventions (80 per cent) were experimental initiatives implemented in high-income countries targeting unaccompanied migrants, child refugees, child asylum seekers, child migrants, and children moving with their families. These interventions mostly focused on mental health and psychosocial well-being and on reporting cases of unaccompanied and separated child migrants, and achieved positive outcomes overall (e.g., MacFarlane et al., 2019; Meyer et al., 2018; McDonald et al., 2012; Stewart et al., 2018; Rubenstein et al., 2015). Most interventions reached between 101 and 500 beneficiaries, and had mixed impacts on different areas of child protection, targeting a variety of children on the move. Positive outcomes were observed in areas including: parenting programmes (Betancourt et al., 2020; Puffer et al., 2017); integration of refugees and the host community (Chames et al., 2016); reduced perpetration of violence against children (Research and Evaluation Metrics, 2017); mental health (Khawaja and Ramirez, 2019); and reduced child marriage (Stark et al., 2018). A few interventions of this same scale found mixed outcomes (Eyber et al., 2014 and Metzler et al., 2014 on child-friendly spaces). A total of 15 interventions reached between 1,001 and 5,000 children on the move. All but one of these were implemented in LMICs, with mixed outcomes in a variety of child protection areas (e.g., Battistin, 2016, on child labour in Lebanon; Boothby et al., 2009a, on preventing violence post-tsunami in Indonesia).



Interventions reaching more than 5,000 beneficiaries were all implemented in LMICs. Most of these programmes reached more than 80,000 beneficiaries and were mainly implemented by United Nations agencies and international NGOs, indicating positive outcomes on a variety of child protection areas. Most of these large-scale interventions implemented cash transfers in humanitarian settings (e.g., Gaunt, 2016; Giordano et al., 2018; Lehmann and Masterson, 2014; UNHCR, 2019). Others implemented a combination of upstream policy development with community-level action (Brown and Copland, 2013b); and multi-sectoral or multi-component approaches (Governance Systems International (GSI), 2019; Van der Veen et al., 2015). As this section will show, large-scale interventions achieved positive outcomes, but they also faced challenges, particularly when they set ambitious goals in short time frames.

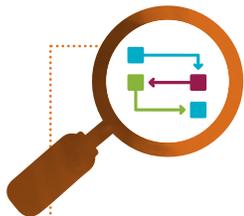
Table 7: Scale of interventions

No. of beneficiaries	No. of studies	Countries	Target groups of children on the move
Less than 500	10	Finland, the Netherlands, UK (3), Ethiopia, USA, Norway, DRC, Canada	UASC, child refugees, child asylum seekers, children moving with families, child migrants
101–500	20	USA (2), Zambia, DRC, Netherlands, Lebanon (3), Malaysia, Chad, UK, Australia, Iraq, Jordan, Thailand (2), Austria (2), Ethiopia, China	Child refugees, children moving with families, internally displaced children, trafficked children, UASC, child migrants
501–1,000	4	Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, DRC, Afghanistan, Ethiopia	Child refugees, children moving with families, internally displaced children, UASC, child migrants
1,001–5,000	15	Burundi, Lebanon (2), Indonesia, Afghanistan (3), Iraq, Mozambique, Colombia, Myanmar, Egypt, Jordan, Ethiopia (2), Colombia, Netherlands, Jordan	Returnee children, child refugees, internally displaced children, UASC, children moving with families, child migrants, trafficked children
5,001–20,000	6	Bangladesh, Ghana, Haiti, Solomon Islands, Honduras, Thailand, Palestine	UASC, children moving with families, child refugees, trafficked children, returnee children, young people considering migrating, child labourers, internally displaced children
20,001–80,000	4	Lebanon, Liberia, Cambodia, Uganda	Refugee children, children moving with families, UASC
+80,000	7	South Sudan, Jordan (4), Uganda, Lebanon (3), Egypt	UASC, children moving with families, refugee children, host population, internally displaced children

Note: A total of 24 additional studies did not specify or were unclear regarding the scale of interventions.



4.1 Initiatives promoting safe migration



KEY FINDINGS

- Although 18 studies had objectives related to promoting safe migration, only 9 involved community-level components and provided evidence of impacts. Most (7) found positive effects on improved knowledge of safe migration and the risk of migration.
- These interventions provided information through different methods (media campaigns, training, conversations and coaching).
- Initiatives that promoted conversations among youths in communities of origin were shown to be successful, as youths had an opportunity to raise awareness with each other about risks of irregular migration and safe alternatives.
- One study showed that coaching of UASC by mentors increased their awareness of the risks of trafficking, particularly when rapport and regular interactions were established.
- Two studies evaluated anti-trafficking interventions, identifying positive impacts on increased awareness by community members. These studies did not measure the effect of these activities on children.
- Only two studies reported on children's and young people's intention to migrate, including youth in communities of origin. One found that in contexts of high poverty and community violence, interventions did not change young people's intention to migrate overall.



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Most of the evidence (seven studies) reported positive increases in awareness of migration risks and ways of migrating safely, while one study indicated no change. These interventions targeted vulnerable origin and transit communities, unaccompanied and separated children in destination countries at risk of child trafficking, children and youths in their home country at risk of trafficking, and children and youths considering migration (see *Table 8*). Interventions involved the provision of information through various mass media and face-to-face methods. Countries of intervention include the Netherlands, Egypt, Cambodia, El Salvador, Honduras, Cameroon, Ghana and a multi-country IOM intervention in the Gulf of Aden (Bugnion de Moreta, 2017).



Table 8: Overview of initiatives promoting safe migration

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Knowledge of safe migration/risk of migration	7	1	7	UASC, refugees, trafficked children, parents/caregivers, returnees
Intention to migrate safely	2	0	2	Children in communities of origin, parents/caregivers, social workforce, public sector authorities

In an IOM project in Ethiopia, community conversations were, in part, successful at improving knowledge of safe migration and risks of migration. According to focus group discussions (FGDs) with participants, the conversations contributed to making youths more aware of the risks of irregular migration. In Djibouti, the study indicated that the project was successful in raising awareness among transit communities about recognizing unaccompanied child migrants as particularly vulnerable and in need of protection (Bugnion de Moreta, 2017).¹³ In Honduras, sessions with volunteers who provided information to children and youths in communities with high migration flows enabled some participants to take informed decisions about whether to migrate or not (Universalis, 2017). In Egypt, children and youths participating in training sessions reported increased awareness about the risks of irregular migration as well as safe and regular alternatives. The project also implemented a mass media campaign designed to create a wave of awareness among at-risk youth across diverse locations (Hassan, 2019). Similarly, in Cambodia, a mass media campaign improved awareness among youths about unsafe migration (Mauney, 2015).

In the Netherlands, a government-funded project supported mentors at reception centres to provide coaching to unaccompanied and separated children at risk of human trafficking. The project aimed to make these children aware of the risks of exploitation and to offer them an alternative (filing a complaint or returning to their country of origin). The study indicated that the project increased participants' awareness of human trafficking and led them to break existing contact with traffickers; however, none chose to return to their country of origin (Galloway et al., 2014).

¹³ Logistical challenges meant that these findings could not be triangulated at village level in transit communities.



Two studies reported outcomes on raising awareness to prevent child trafficking. In Cameroon, the ILO, in collaboration with local councils, implemented alert committees whose mission was to sensitize communities and create awareness about the ills of child trafficking and child labour. The study found that in general, alert committees succeeded in increasing awareness in the target communities, although outcomes for children were not assessed (Bimé and Ranz, 2010). In Ghana, the IOM engaged and trained key leaders and government structures in six locations to understand the dangers associated with child trafficking and other child protection issues. Sensitization and awareness-creation activities were also organized in all communities. The study shows that 18 per cent of adults increased their awareness about child trafficking. However, it did not report outcomes of these activities for children (IOM, 2013).

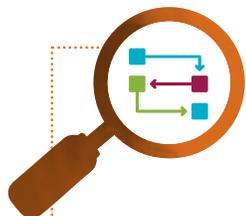
Only two studies reported on children's and young people's intention to migrate. In Cambodia, a CARE project sharing information on safe migration through multiple mechanisms (community meetings, individual advocacy meetings and school lessons) was reported by students, teachers, administrators and government authorities to have increased knowledge of safe migration among the general population in the target area (Mauney, 2015). One key informant at the commune level estimated that 80 per cent of community members migrated safely and legally after gaining knowledge through the intervention. Students shared that among their friends and families, it was now common to talk about how to migrate safely. The project also used posters and pocket cards to share emergency numbers, and photos of passports (to demonstrate what labour migrants need to move legally). Key informants and participants exposed to all these channels reported that increased numbers of people intending to migrate would seek information before doing so (*ibid.*). This study highlights the importance of accessible, user-friendly information. Roth and Hartnett's (2018) study of a community-based youth programme in El Salvador that provided information about migration risks as well as supporting positive youth development activities found that these had no impact on adolescents' intention to migrate. The authors attributed this to high levels of poverty and community violence, which the project was unable to address. This study shows that push and pull factors may outweigh the potential risks of migration contemplated by youths.



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4.2 Economic-strengthening interventions for children and families on the move



KEY FINDINGS

- Twenty studies reported outcomes on economic-strengthening interventions for children and families on the move. Of these, 12 show evidence on cash transfers, while 8 show evidence on skills training and entrepreneurship programmes targeting adults and young people on the move.
- Studies of cash transfer programmes targeting refugee households in humanitarian settings examined a variety of child protection outcomes in areas such as children's experiences of violence, social inclusion and integration, family separation, etc. The evidence suggests mixed results, which were most positive in terms of reducing child labour and children's experience of violence.
- The factors that supported or hindered positive impacts on child protection included the design of the programme (size and duration of transfers and provision of cash alongside other activities and services), the characteristics of the household, and contextual factors such as gender norms.
- Interventions that aimed to reduce child labour through boosting adults' entrepreneurship skills had limited impact, in part due to project design issues or enterprises' inability to provide a significant enough income source.
- Most skills training initiatives for adolescents and young people on the move were successful in increasing access to training. However, these were only moderately successful in supporting livelihood development due to lack of work opportunities in refugee and IDP camps.
- Offering additional support beyond vocational/skills training (e.g., mental health support, referral systems for job placement, vocational training courses, reintegration-related services) appeared to be a successful strategy to achieve child protection outcomes.





In this section we discuss economic-strengthening interventions that had an effect for children and families on the move, including cash transfers and skills training and entrepreneurship programmes (see Table 9).

Table 9: Overview of economic-strengthening interventions for children and families on the move

Issue	Improvement in child protection outcomes	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Cash transfer programmes ¹⁴	11	1	12	UASC, child refugees and their households
Skills training and entrepreneurship programmes focusing on adults and young people on the move	4	4	8	UASC, returnees, child refugees moving with families, internally displaced children, youths from host population, parents/caregivers

4.2.1 Cash transfer programmes

Twelve studies report evidence on cash transfers in humanitarian settings, showing outcomes in areas including labour outcomes of parents/caregivers, child marriage, children's experience of violence, social inclusion and integration, psychosocial well-being and mental health, and family separation.¹⁵ Studies focus on outcomes observed on child refugees and their families, particularly in Lebanon and Jordan, with two studies in Colombia and Egypt.

In terms of adult labour outcomes, one study suggests that cash transfers can motivate male parents/caregivers to look for jobs with better employment conditions. For example, receiving the multipurpose cash assistance in Lebanon was correlated with a lower probability of working in hazardous conditions or having a work injury among the employed in the target population. However, labour outcomes for women are mixed.

¹⁴ These numbers reflect that almost all cash transfer initiatives achieved positive outcomes on some child protection indicators and none in others, with the exception of Battistin (2016), which found no change on child labour or child marriage.

¹⁵ There is a large literature on the impacts of cash transfers on education. Seven of these studies reported on education outcomes (Chabaan et al., 2020; Foster, 2015; Gaunt, 2016; Giordano et al., 2018; Lehmann and Masterson, 2014; Research and Evaluation Metrics, 2017; UNHCR, 2019), which is outside the scope of this REA.



For example, Research and Evaluation Metrics' 2017 study of Oxfam's temporary cash assistance in Lebanon found that some female head of households reported that the cash enabled them to quit the work they were doing to search for new employment. In contrast, female beneficiaries of multipurpose cash assistance provided by UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) in Lebanon left the labour force and avoided low-paying and often hazardous jobs that they would have otherwise had to take up. Indeed, 67 per cent of working-age women in the same study reported that, as a result of receiving cash, they could prioritized household chores and childcare (Chaaban et al., 2020).

The evidence on the effects of cash transfers on child labour are mixed. A greater number of studies in this review observed that cash transfers may have reduced child labour, as the cash allowed children to go to school instead of having to work (Chaaban et al., 2020; De Hoop et al., 2018; Gaunt, 2016; Grasset, 2019; Lehmann and Masterson, 2014; UNHCR, 2019), although one evaluation indicated that beneficiaries may have under-reported child labour due to fears of losing programme benefits (De Hoop et al., 2018). Lehmann and Masterson (2014) found that the UNHCR winter cash assistance in Lebanon had a positive effect on reducing child labour, as 10 per cent of households in the control group had to send children to work, compared to 4 per cent in the treatment group. The study of UNHCR's (2019) cash transfer programme in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region (including Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt) found that they decreased participants' engagement in the worst forms of child labour, including survival sex. Three studies found that cash transfers did not have a significant impact on child labour, probably because the amount of cash was not enough to cover households' needs (Battistin, 2016; Foster, 2015; Giordano et al., 2018). Foster (2015) indicated that almost 10 per cent of beneficiary households reported engaging in some form of child labour. Giordano et al. (2018) found that UNHCR's cash in Jordan did not influence whether families sent their children to beg in the street, while 3 per cent of households reported relying on child labour despite the cash assistance. These mixed findings mirror those of the wider literature on cash transfers and their effects in terms of protection outcomes for refugees (e.g., see Hagen-Zanker et al., 2017; Harvey and Pavanello, 2018).

Studies show mixed impacts on child marriage. Battistin's (2016) evaluation of the multipurpose cash assistance programme in Lebanon found that it did not affect negative coping strategies, such as child marriage, in part because the level of cash received was insufficient, echoing Foster's (2015) outcomes on the same programme. Indeed, Foster (2015) suggests that levels of child marriage could be under-reported. A review of the outcomes of multipurpose cash assistance interventions also suggests that cash may reduce/delay child marriage in a variety of settings (Harvey and Pavanello, 2018). However, international evidence increasingly suggests that cash transfers alone only have a limited effect on child marriage where social norms upholding the practice are sticky (Plank et al., 2018) (see Box 3).



BOX 3: Strategies for reducing child marriage among children on the move

Seven studies reported insights on reducing child marriage among children on the move. These examined: a life skills programme for adolescent girls with parallel sessions for parents; an emergency response combining support to child protection committees with awareness-raising materials; and cash transfers.

Stark et al. (2018) examined a life skills and safe spaces programme for South Sudanese and Sudanese adolescent girls in refugee camps in Ethiopia. After one year, the study found a decrease in reports of child marriage among girls in the intervention group who reported being married or living with a man at baseline. According to key informants, many girls who were living with partners left these relationships during the intervention. Brown and Copland (2013b) report that discussions of child marriage in child-friendly spaces in South Sudan was important in raising adolescents' awareness of the risks involved. By contrast, distributing comic books with information about the risks of child marriage in IDP camps in Pakistan appeared to have no effect on adolescents' attitudes and intentions (Brown and Copland, 2013a), possibly reflecting adolescents' lack of agency over marriage decisions. In these situations, empowerment interventions such as those described by Stark et al. (2018) play an important role.

Kranges (2013) evaluated a War Child UK intervention in Afghanistan, which provided psychosocial support to children in IDP settlements. The study found that gender norms uphold the acceptance of child marriage in the community. Girls participating in child-friendly spaces indicated their negative perceptions about child marriage and their wish for this practice to stop, although the study does not indicate whether those views were attributable to girls' participation in the intervention. Girls indicated that, if they were being married at a young age, they would report it to community leaders, highlighting the importance of sensitizing and training such leaders in child protection.

Two studies reported that child protection committees prevented some instances of child marriage by approaching families and/or camp leaders (Brown and Copland, 2013b; Debert et al., 2019), indicating the importance of strengthening community-based surveillance and protection systems.

Studies of cash transfers to refugees (Battistin, 2016; Foster, 2015; UNHCR, 2019) found mixed impacts on child marriage, as shown in Section 4.2.1.



Looking at children's experience of violence, the evidence suggests positive effects. In the MENA region, UNHCR's cash transfers reduced children's risk of exposure to violence, abuse and neglect, particularly among unaccompanied and separated children, who reported that cash allowed them to move to more physically secure areas, led them to experience fewer incidents of violence, and allowed them to pay for their own food and transport, thus rendering them less susceptible to exploitation by others (UNHCR, 2019). Foster (2015) found that receiving multipurpose cash assistance in Lebanon reduced protection insecurity of children (encompassing physical abuse, feelings of being physically unsafe, social cohesion, and fighting inside and outside the home).



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Also in Lebanon, evidence from Oxfam's temporary cash assistance programme found that beneficiaries felt less fear outside their homes when they could afford their rent, as landlords stopped mistreating their children to push them to pay (Research and Evaluation Metrics, 2017). Children's reduced experiences of violence in the household could be explained by reduced stress from parents/caregivers, as they were more able to meet basic needs (Research and Evaluation Metrics, 2017; UNHCR, 2019). Foster (2015) found that the multipurpose cash assistance reduced psychosocial issues experienced by parents/caregivers by 2.3 per cent, an outcome that was likely felt by children. Male heads of households receiving Oxfam's temporary cash assistance described experiencing less stress and anxiety because of the cash, which translated into them being calmer with their children, and meting out less punishment and verbal abuse (Research and Evaluation Metrics, 2017). In Jordan, the most commonly reported impact of UNHCR's cash transfers was that the money helped to reduce stress and improved psychological well-being (Gaunt, 2016).

Only two studies looked at the effects of cash transfers on the psychosocial well-being of children on the move, and the outcomes are not clear. Foster's (2015) study in Lebanon showed that the cash increased psychosocial well-being of children, but girls reported feeling isolated and disempowered almost twice as often as boys, the reasons for which were not explored. By contrast, De Hoop et al. (2018) found that UNICEF's multipurpose cash transfer in Lebanon improved children's psychosocial well-being, with girls benefiting from more time to play and study. Syrian refugee children indicated feeling equal to others at schools since their families could afford school materials, school uniforms and transport. Caregivers shared that their children felt encouraged to study and thought about the cash transfer as their own salary, which gave them pride. However, the same study also found no changes in participants' self-esteem compared to non-participants. The wider literature suggests that cash transfers improve mental health of parents/caregivers and that of their children, but in the case of refugees fleeing conflict, poverty and uncertainty may affect mental health outcomes (Hagen-Zanker et al., 2018; Harvey and Pavanello, 2018).



Effects may be greater when cash is combined with additional services. In Colombia, the multipurpose cash transfer targeting Venezuelan refugees combined cash with the provision of case management, established child friendly spaces (CFS) in key locations (e.g., shelters, migration centres) where psychosocial support activities for children and adolescents were provided, and held community awareness events about child protection. Case managers reported that the programme allowed families to provide better care and reduced recruitment to armed groups, as well as reducing child labour, physical violence and sexual violence (Grasset, 2019). The cash also allowed parents to provide a safer environment for their children (e.g., parents were able to rent a flat instead of sleeping in the streets, which also enabled family reunification) and better childcare (e.g., parents were more able to spend time with their children).

In terms of social inclusion and integration, the outcomes are mixed. Some studies suggest positive results. Lehmann and Masterson (2014), evaluating UNHCR's winter cash transfer in Lebanon, found that refugee beneficiaries perceived a reduction of hostility towards them from the Lebanese community in the previous six months since they were receiving the cash transfer. The authors attributed this to an increase in refugees' demand for local goods and services, increasing spending and monetary transfers to Lebanese households. However, these improved relationships might have only taken place between refugees and those Lebanese with whom refugees had an economic relationship, as the study found that most beneficiaries spent 65 per cent of their cash transfers on food. These findings echo those of the Research and Evaluation Metrics (2017) and Sloane (2014) evaluations of Oxfam's cash assistance programme in Lebanon and Jordan respectively. Both studies described that refugees used part of the cash transfer to pay their debts, which helped them to preserve and strengthen networks with neighbours, shopkeepers and landlords. However, receiving cash can also exacerbate existing tensions between refugees and hosts. The Research and Evaluation Metrics (2017) evaluation reported that some Syrians (9 per cent of the sample) perceived that the cash created tensions within the Lebanese community. When asked to elaborate, five respondents referred to tensions between neighbours, and one suggested jealousy from Lebanese who considered that Syrians were benefiting from more assistance than they were.

The above studies suggest certain factors that hinder or support positive outcomes. The design of cash transfers was an important factor mediating effects on children:

- The **size of the cash transfer** matters. Most studies suggest that the cash was not enough to cover increasing living costs or prevent families resorting to negative coping mechanisms such as child labour (Foster, 2015; Gaunt, 2016; Giordano et al., 2018; Lehmann and Masterson, 2014), particularly where the transfer is the household's only source of income (Gaunt, 2016). However, transfers can and do improve living conditions and reduce the financial burden on children and their households. For example, UNHCR and WFP's monthly transfers of \$175 allowed parents/caregivers to decide which members of the household would work or stay to look after children (Chaaban et al., 2020). The multipurpose cash assistance in Lebanon (Foster, 2015) allowed children (particularly those from vulnerable groups) to attend school more regularly.



Most studies suggest that the cash was not enough to cover increasing living costs or prevent families resorting to negative coping mechanisms such as child labour



- One study (UNHCR, 2019) in the MENA region suggests that **conditional cash transfers** were more effective in addressing child labour compared to unconditional transfers, as the cash was conditional on school attendance. The other studies did not compare conditional and unconditional transfers.
- **There is tentative evidence that the duration of transfers is important.** One study (Chaaban et al., 2020) compared the impact of receiving cash transfers over different periods of time. Households that received transfers for longer periods (more than 12 months) found longer-term positive outcomes, such as women choosing to withdraw from hazardous jobs to prioritize childcare.
- There is some evidence that **interventions that combine cash with other child protection activities/services** achieved better outcomes for children and reduced their vulnerabilities (Grasset, 2019). In Lebanon and Tanzania, receiving multipurpose cash assistance in isolation from other interventions did not reduce child labour (UNHCR, 2019; Tanzania Cash Plus Evaluation Team, 2018). These findings echo the wider literature, which shows that effective implementation of 'cash plus' components has contributed to more successful and sustainable cash transfer programme outcomes (Roelen et al., 2017).

The characteristics of the household could hinder the effects of cash on child protection. For example, UNHCR's (2019) study in the MENA region found that children in female-headed households and who had recently arrived in the host country were at greater risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation than other children. Boys were more susceptible than girls, particularly because older boys were more likely to be sent to work.

Other external factors, particularly context, hindered success. Gender norms mediated the effects of cash transfers, particularly on child labour. Parents/caregivers in the studies by Gaunt (2016) and UNHCR (2019) in the MENA region indicated that they did not consider the work of their older male children as child labour, as it was considered appropriate for them to contribute to their households. UNHCR's (2019) study also noted that abuse and exploitation of girls is more difficult to identify, as girls are involved in domestic chores, which is not considered as child labour by some households. None of these interventions involved norm change/awareness-raising activities, reflecting gaps in the current practices of humanitarian cash transfers and their effects on children.



4.2.2 Skills training and entrepreneurship programmes

Studies of three initiatives that examined efforts to reduce child labour through boosting adults' entrepreneurship skills found limited impact (Annan et al., 2013; Bimé and Ranz, 2010; Jones et al., 2014). In some cases this was due to project design problems: for example, an initiative in Cameroon to reduce child trafficking through entrepreneurship development among youths and parents of children at risk excluded the illiterate population (families whose children were most vulnerable to trafficking) and the grants provided to youths to set up businesses were too low. Nor were micro-finance institutions brought on board to offer tailored financial services relevant to micro-entrepreneurs (Bimé and Ranz, 2010). Similarly, a combined awareness-raising and microfinance initiative with returnee communities in Burundi had no impact on child labour, as it did not provide a significant enough income source. The parenting skills component was, however, associated with reduced family violence (Annan et al., 2013). Evidence from an income-generating programme by Save the Children for unaccompanied Somali children and their foster families in the Dadaab refugee camp complex in Kenya found that foster parents reported satisfaction with the project and their capacity to care for their foster children better. However, the study was unable to measure impact on unaccompanied children in the care of foster families, as additional funding was not factored into project design (Jones et al., 2014).

Seven studies reported on skills development initiatives among young refugees and host communities, returned child migrants and internally displaced children (girls formerly associated with armed groups and armed forces). Three identified improvements, while four found mixed results. Interventions were implemented in Jordan, Lebanon, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and the DRC.

Evaluations of five initiatives reported that interventions were, to varying degrees, successful in increasing access to training for young people (Agriteam, 2019; Bimé and Ranz, 2010; Bulosan and Sadat, 2015; Chiodi, 2018; Cozens, 2013). In one case – CARE's Jordanian Community Development Support Programme – this represents the results of sustained efforts in engaging both refugee and host community parents to facilitate girls' attending classes and internships. In the case of War Child UK's programme in Afghanistan, only a quarter of the returned young migrants deported from Iran were able to access vocational courses, such as tailoring, motorbike and mobile repair, and house painting. This low percentage reflects difficulties in identifying beneficiaries who lived in remote areas, lack of trainers, and lack of interest to participate (Bulosan and Sadat, 2015).



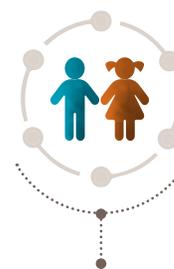
Photo: © ILO



Evaluations of two of these initiatives reported that some participants were generating some income – for example, some of the refugee and local adolescent girls in Jordan who attended courses such as tailoring or hairdressing were given equipment and established small home-based businesses (Agriteam, 2019). Similarly girls formerly associated with armed groups and armed forces who took part in War Child UK and Don Bosco’s programme in the DRC reported learning tailoring skills, earning money, and feeling a sense of hopefulness for the future (Cozens, 2013). However, in two initiatives (Cozens, 2013; Agriteam, 2019), participants also mentioned that their earnings were relatively small, and that courses had not enabled participants to get jobs, due to general lack of work opportunities in the camps and host communities. Two studies (Chiodi, 2018; Bulosan and Sadat, 2015) did not discuss impacts on participants’ subsequent employment or entrepreneurship, or on their vulnerability to protection risks. One study – of combined life skills and vocational skills training – reported only on skills learnt, but not on how young people subsequently used them (Van der Veen et al., 2015).

In the case of life skills programmes targeting girls, Stark et al. (2018) examined the efficacy of a life skills and safe spaces programme in reducing adolescent girls’ experiences of interpersonal violence in a refugee setting in Ethiopia. Each session focused on improving key skills such as communication, friendship-building, and awareness of GBV and sexual and reproductive health. The study found that the intervention was not significantly associated with reduction in exposure to sexual violence, other forms of violence, transactional sex, or greater feelings of safety. However, it was associated with more gender-equitable attitudes around rites of passage (adolescents’ beliefs about the highest grade girls should complete in school, acceptability for girls to work outside the home after marriage, appropriate age at marriage and first birth) and helped participants identify social support. The evaluation of Don Bosco’s intervention (a faith-based organization) in the DRC found that life skills sessions lacked a strategy for helping girls to set and achieve small personal targets or encouraging initiative-taking. As a result, girls did not show confidence about their future plans (Cozens, 2013).

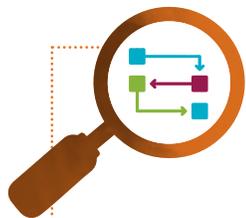
Offering additional support beyond vocational/skills training also appeared promising. For example, although the project by War Child UK in Afghanistan could not prevent some beneficiaries returning to Iran to find employment, developing technical skills combined with mental and emotional support reduced the number of children who crossed the border to Iran for a second time (Bulosan and Sadat, 2015). The ILO child labour project in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon also sensitized parents and youths about the dangers of child labour, and on alternative sources of income through a referral system for job placements, career opportunities and vocational training courses. It also provided counselling and art therapy, health services and educational activities to improve children’s health and well-being (Chiodi, 2018). Also, War Child UK and Don Bosco in the DRC combined vocational training with reintegration-related services, so that each girl received support appropriate to her circumstances (Cozens, 2013). The study observed successful cases where girls’ lives were transformed, but others where girls’ reintegration was not satisfactory and doubtful in the longer term. The study did not assess the frequency or patterns of these different results due to inadequate beneficiary-related M&E systems.



Offering additional support beyond vocational/skills training also appeared promising.



4.3 Interventions to reduce violence against and exploitation of children on the move



KEY FINDINGS

- There were 55 studies on interventions to reduce violence against children on the move. The evidence shows positive effects on: improving knowledge, attitudes and norms related to violence against children on the move (16 show improvements and 2 no change); reducing reported perpetration of violence against refugee children (16 studies show improvements and 6 studies reported no change); and improving access to support for survivors (16 studies reported improvements and one no change).
- Making use of multiple, user-friendly IEC materials, and facilitators skilled in working with people with low literacy were effective in changing attitudes and norms on violence against children. Similarly, directly raising awareness of harmful norms contributed to change. In contrast, where gender norms were 'stickier', change was more difficult to achieve.
- Support groups, psychosocial and mental health sessions, and awareness-raising sessions with parents/caregivers helped reduce perpetration of violence against children by raising awareness of the harms that violence can cause and providing a space for people to reflect. However, when projects covered too many topics in too few sessions and/or when parents/caregivers did not have an opportunity to practise their new acquired skills, positive outcomes were not reported.
- All interventions apart from one found improvements in support for survivors through strengthening child protection surveillance and reporting capacity, child-friendly spaces, and multi-sectoral support.
- Studies of interventions that offered combined activities with child refugees/ internally displaced children and children from host populations found positive change in the host population's attitudes and reported levels of community violence. The evidence on child-friendly spaces as a means of reducing community violence and discrimination is mixed, and a gap in the literature.
- Evidence on the impacts of initiatives to reduce child labour was mixed, with policy-level changes not necessarily being strongly linked to effective change on the ground.





Table 10 provides an overview of the studies reviewed with respect to reducing violence against children on the move.

Table 10: Overview of impacts of interventions to reduce violence against children on the move

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Knowledge, attitudes and norms related to violence against children and GBV	16	2	18	Unaccompanied children, children moving with families, internally displaced children and other stakeholders such as parents/caregivers, teachers, and the wider community
Reported perpetration of violence (parents) or experience of violence/GBV (children)	16	6	20	Parents/caregivers, refugee children
Access to support for survivors	16	1	17	UASC, children moving with families, internally displaced children, trafficked children
Community violence, discrimination and xenophobia ¹⁶	3	1	4	Refugee children, hosts, child migrants
Child labour and trafficking	11	8	19	Children moving with families, internally displaced children, trafficked children, child migrants (not trafficked)

¹⁶ The study under 'no change' found an increase in community violence (Meyer et al., 2018).



4.3.1 Activities to change attitudes and norms on violence against children and GBV

Twenty-six studies reported change in knowledge, attitudes and norms about violence against children and GBV. Of these, 23 presented evidence of improvements (increased knowledge, less support for violence against children and GBV), while five found evidence of no change on some indicators. These studies covered all world regions and various stakeholder groups: unaccompanied children, children moving with families, internally displaced children and other stakeholders such as parents/caregivers, teachers, and the wider community. Activities varied, including: dissemination of information and sensitization (Cozens, 2013; Ferro, 2019; Hassnain, 2013; Wilson, 2018); group non-formal education (Bernath, 2014; Glass and Doocy, 2013; Okello et al., 2018); child/adolescent-friendly spaces (Brown and Copland, 2013b); and sports and games (Perschler and Brown, 2013).

Interventions that used social and behaviour change communication to raise awareness on GBV and violence against children reported positive results. For example, the evaluation of the radio-based community awareness campaign implemented by War Child UK and Don Bosco in the DRC observed that norms tolerating physical and sexual abuse waned as parents/caregivers and the community became aware that they should denounce such cases. Parents and school staff were also more aware of the harm that beating children can cause and fewer parents reported giving their children heavy work (Cozens, 2013). Likewise, UNICEF-supported information dissemination through community-based groups (e.g., male child protection committees in Pakistan and Afghanistan) contributed to an increase in parents' understanding of violence against children and GBV (Brown and Perschler, 2013).

Meyer et al. (2017), evaluating an initiative in Rwanda, found that it achieved positive outcomes through implementing awareness-raising activities designed by adolescents to work with parents/caregivers. The study found a significant reduction in caregiver-reported acceptability of child maltreatment, specifically physical abuse, between 2013 and 2015. For example, the proportion who endorsed beating a child who refused to work declined from 33 per cent to 22 per cent, and the proportion who endorsed beating if the child was not caring for siblings fell from 22 per cent to 14 per cent.¹⁷

Group non-formal education also achieved some change in knowledge and social norms related to violence against children and GBV. Girls and young women in Liberia who participated in the NRC training programme indicated contemplating other life choices beyond depending on their husbands, and a change in their attitudes about accepting violence inflicted by men. Male teachers observed that participating in training sessions helped them to change attitudes around having sexual encounters with their students and made them want to gain their students' respect (Bernath, 2014).



Interventions that used social and behaviour change communication to raise awareness on GBV and violence against children reported positive results.

¹⁷ All percentages are rounded.



In South Sudan, girls participating in information and awareness sessions offered by UNICEF indicated greater reflection around early and forced marriage, although the study noted that more knowledge on rape issues was needed (Brown and Copland, 2013b). In Uganda, the Start Awareness Support Action (SASA!) community-based violence prevention model was implemented in two refugee settlements (mostly working with Congolese refugees, including adolescent boys and young men) by the NGO Raising Voices, leading to reduced support for GBV (Glass and Doocy, 2013). In Uganda, Mercy Corps and its international NGO partners implemented a multi-sectoral assistance programme targeting vulnerable South Sudanese refugees and host communities. The study found that the awareness-raising sessions led to 84 per cent of targeted beneficiaries, including youths, being able to identify at least two or more forms of sexual and gender-based violence, compared to 38 per cent at baseline (GSI, 2019). CARE's use of volunteer-conducted mentorship sessions targeting South Sudanese men and women (including adolescents aged 10–18) in a camp in Uganda had similarly positive results (Okello et al., 2018).

Support groups also increased parent and caregiver knowledge. One study evaluated a face-to-face support group for Zimbabwean and South Sudanese parents in Canada and found that support group sessions allowed parents to gain knowledge, discuss disciplining children, and define child abuse (Stewart et al., 2018). In Mozambique, IOM and UNICEF implemented psychosocial support groups for parents and caregivers of internally displaced and refugee children. The evaluation found that parents reported being more aware of their children's rights (e.g., to go to school, to play and rest, and to be protected from exploitation and abuse) and noted that their relationships with their children improved because they were more attentive to their children's needs and rights (Ferro, 2019).

Child-friendly spaces were used by UNICEF and international NGOs to communicate knowledge on violence against children or GBV to parents and children. For example, in child-friendly spaces in Domiz refugee camp in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, parents' knowledge of violence against children and GBV and of community mechanisms of support and referral improved over time (Metzler et al., 2014). Evidence from Jordan suggests that children aged 10–12 who attended activities and sessions at child-friendly spaces increased their knowledge on violence and support mechanisms more than children who had not attended (50 per cent and 39 per cent respectively). However, there was no difference in increased knowledge of such mechanisms among older children (13–18 years) (Metzler et al., 2015). In Ethiopia, children attending child-friendly spaces indicated greater knowledge and awareness of protection risks and vulnerabilities, in particular of sexual violence and rape (Metzler et al., 2013). There is also some evidence that where facilitators in child-friendly spaces challenged gender stereotypes by making sports available to girls and boys, this helped to promote gender equality more broadly (Brown and Perschler, 2013) – an important factor underpinning reduced GBV.



One study highlights the positive impact of youth activism. Youth committees such as those formed as part of CARE's Jordanian Community Development Support Programme raised awareness of issues around cyber-bullying, GBV, child safety, child marriage, emotional violence and family protection. However, participants' improved ability to take collective action for community initiatives (particularly GBV and gender-focused themes) was not fully measured due to missing data in phase one (Agriteam, 2019).

The studies reviewed identify various factors that influenced the impacts of these interventions. The duration of interventions was an important factor for success. Overall, longer-term interventions of around three years reported greater improvements in shifting harmful social norms (Brown and Copland, 2013b; Bernath, 2014; Cozens, 2013).

Making use of multiple, user-friendly IEC materials, and facilitators skilled in working with people with low literacy, were highlighted as important for making messages more accessible and playing an important role in changing attitudes (Brown and Perschler, 2013; Chiodi, 2018; Okello et al., 2018; Stewart et al., 2018). It is important not to underestimate challenges in communicating around taboo or sensitive issues – for example, Cozens' (2013) evaluation of War Child's programme in eastern DRC found that despite awareness raising on GBV and violence against children, girls' knowledge of child protection and child rights was limited to only basic needs of food, clothes or shelter. Only one girl (the only girl who was attending school) mentioned the right to be protected against violence and was aware of the programme's Child Protection Network. Engaging the community as facilitators and agents of change through capacity building, rather than passive recipients of messages, was also identified as important (Debert et al., 2019).

Including men and boys in training and awareness sessions was also identified as an important factor in reducing the likelihood of backlash against women and girls and/or implementing staff (Bernath, 2014; Feintuch, 2018; Glass and Doocy, 2013). The attitudes of implementing staff are also important. For example, men participating in group training resisted the GBV programming when they perceived that staff regarded them only as perpetrators (Glass and Doocy, 2013). Ultimately, interventions that did not address social norms related to violence against children or GBV did not achieve outcomes in other related areas such as reporting experiences of violence against children or GBV among children (e.g., Meyer et al., 2018), as we discuss later in this section.

Directly raising awareness of harmful norms was an important factor contributing to change. For example, a UNICEF initiative in Afghanistan and Pakistan promoted positive social norms on gender relations around domestic violence and GBV (Brown and Perschler, 2013). In contrast, where gender norms were 'stickier', change was more difficult to achieve. For example, Meyer et al.'s (2018) study of a UNHCR intervention in Uganda found that most caregivers were unable or unwilling to acknowledge the existence of sexual violence against adolescents, which also influenced reporting levels. Thus, ensuring effective knowledge and understanding of violence against children and of GBV needs to be accompanied by interventions that tackle harmful gender norms among parents/caregivers.



4.3.2 Reducing perpetration of violence against children

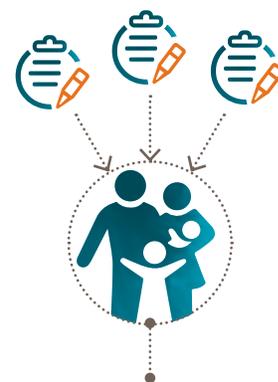
Three studies indicate a reduction of perpetration of violence against children among parents who took part in parenting skills sessions (Annan et al., 2013; Sim et al., 2014) and support groups (Stewart et al., 2018). This positive finding is consistent with the wider literature on parenting interventions (Marcus et al., 2019; WHO, 2018).

Annan et al. (2013) found that returnee parents in Burundi participating in a combined village savings and loans association and parenting skills project reduced their perpetration of violence against children by 30 per cent, while the savings component was highly effective in delivering basic financial services and increasing food consumption. The evaluation indicates that stronger results could have been achieved with fewer topics per session and opportunities for caregivers to practise their newly acquired skills directly with children during those sessions. The sessions were attached to savings group meetings and attempted to reach a large number of caregivers in a group setting, which made it challenging to include direct caregiver–child interaction. Parenting and family skills training was also successful in an International Rescue Committee (IRC) intervention in Thailand. After the intervention, caregivers reported a 16 per cent decrease in use of a hard object to beat their children. Caregivers also described decreasing or stopping use of harsh punishment such as beating, shouting or swearing at their child, having learnt about how harsh punishment can negatively affect their child’s development (Sim et al., 2014).

One study evaluated a face-to-face support group for Zimbabwean and South Sudanese parents in Canada. Peer and professional mentors provided information on culturally accepted methods of disciplining children, while participants shared ideas on the strategies they found useful with their own children (Stewart et al., 2018).

More evidence exists about experiences of GBV across all groups of children on the move. Twelve studies report reduced experiences of violence or GBV, while five report no change. In addition to the approaches described in previous sections, studies examined psychosocial and mental health sessions (Betancourt et al., 2020); life-skills sessions (Stark et al., 2018); and infrastructure investments (provision of semi-permanent shelters and streetlights) (Okello et al., 2018).

Taking part in psychosocial and mental health sessions for parents/caregivers and children shows positive results in reduced perpetration of violence against children as reported by children. Bhutanese refugee children in the USA who participated in the study by Betancourt et al. (2020) reported fewer family arguments and showed fewer depression symptoms and behaviour issues compared to children in the control group. This intervention involved home visits with joint sessions for parents and children. However, children in the treatment group did not report significant improvements in healthy parenting outcomes compared with children in the control group. In the case of life skills sessions, studies report no change on reported experiences of violence against children and GBV towards children and adolescents (Karlsen, 2012; Stark et al., 2018).



Three studies indicate a reduction of perpetration of violence against children among parents who took part in parenting skills sessions.



For example, in Ethiopia, the intervention was not significantly associated with reduction in exposure to sexual violence, other forms of violence, transactional sex or feelings of safety (Stark et al., 2018). The lack of results could be explained by contextual factors (see below).

Studies report mixed effects for awareness-raising activities. In the State of Palestine, awareness-raising sessions with parents/caregivers at UNICEF family centres reduced experiences of violence against children, with 31 per cent of children reporting fewer experiences of violence from parents, and some reporting parents/caregivers no longer beat them at all (Wilson, 2018). However, in Rwanda, awareness-raising activities had limited impact. In Meyer et al.'s (2017) study of Kiziba camp, Rwanda, adolescents continued reporting high levels of exposure to violence and abuse at home and in the community at the project endline (27 per cent reported experiencing psychosocial abuse at least once in the past year, 24 per cent reported experiencing physical abuse and 4.8 per cent reported experiencing sexual abuse). Adolescents reported parental neglect, child labour, and physical and sexual abuse as major risks (ibid.).

One evaluation reported outcomes on the provision of infrastructure investments, including providing semi-permanent shelters to refugee families and installation of street lights in Uganda. Study respondents who benefited from semi-permanent structures with lockable doors, windows and walls indicated a significant reduction of break-ins that resulted in burglary and sexual assault. Respondents observed that shelters provided more protection against theft, fire, extreme weather, mosquitoes and GBV compared to temporary tents. Installing lighting in spaces used by women and girls, such as water points and health facilities, also increased security. The study found that where lights were installed, freedom of movement increased and incidence of GBV reduced. Respondents reported feeling less scared to access water points at night due to lights in the settlements (Okello et al., 2018).

4.3.3 Promoting access to support for survivors

Sixteen studies reported on access to support for survivors of GBV and sexual exploitation; 15 found improvements, while one identified no change. Interventions served all main groups of children on the move: unaccompanied and separated children, children moving with families, internally displaced children, and trafficked children. Access to support services for survivors was provided through strengthening child protection surveillance and reporting capacity (Boothby et al., 2009a; Galloway et al., 2014, IOM, 2013); offering support through child-friendly spaces (Eyber et al., 2014; Metzler et al., 2015); and multi-sectoral support (Brown and Perschler, 2013; Okello et al., 2018). Initiatives spanned multiple regions.



Studies report mixed effects for awareness-raising activities.



One study shows that system-strengthening interventions have been effective in improving access to support services. In Indonesia, in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, UNICEF supported established integrated service centres for survivors of abuse and exploitation in Aceh province as well as scaling up at district level. It also set up children's desks in all district police offices, child-friendly legal procedures and diversion programmes, and a separate children's court in three districts. The evaluation found that the programme provided a more consistent and higher standard of care and treatment than previous programmes, with an increase in the proportion of survivors whose cases were brought to court, while follow-up monitoring of cases increased by 67 per cent (Boothby et al., 2009a).

Interventions that offer multi-sectoral support have proved effective. For example, UNICEF and partners provided 39,000 GBV survivors with multi-sectoral support (including medical, psychosocial, reintegration and legal) as part of emergency responses in Somalia, Myanmar and Pakistan. Among 3,000 survivors, 56 per cent received treatment within 72 hours of the incident (Brown and Perschler, 2013). Multi-sectoral support can also be provided through a case management approach, as Okello et al. (2018) show. This identified GBV survivors among newly arrived refugees in camps in Uganda, offering a package of psychosocial, legal, medical and material support. The evaluation found that this case management approach increased self-efficacy of survivors to seek support and deterred potential offenders from perpetrating abuse again. Activities to improve coordination in prevention/response to violence against children or GBV have been supported at national and community levels, particularly by United Nations agencies. For example, in Pakistan, UNICEF established protective spaces (known as Protective Learning and Community Emergency Services, PLACES) and trained child protection committees. Together they were able to identify and refer cases to child protection units at district level (for tracing/reunification, alternative care, services/benefits for children with disabilities, etc.).

Only one evaluation found no change – an evaluation of child-friendly spaces in Jordan that referred survivors to support services and institutions. The evaluation found that caregivers and children faced barriers to accessing resources in the community, including those that could provide survivor support. These barriers included: fears of what family or friends would say or do should they find out; lack of belief that people would take the problem seriously; lack of money for transportation or services; and lack of trust in services/persons (Metzler et al., 2015). Eyber et al. (2014) also highlight the effects of a generally insecure environment in deterring children from reporting violence.



Interventions that offer multi-sectoral support have proved effective.



4.3.4 Addressing community violence, discrimination and xenophobia

The evidence on discrimination and xenophobia is limited. Only two studies (Mercy Corps, 2015; Chames et al., 2016) discuss evidence on any of the following indicators: attitudes and behaviour of the host population; and experiences of children on the move and their families of reduced discrimination and xenophobia.¹⁸

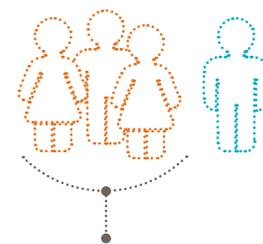
In terms of changing host population attitudes, Mercy Corps offered training for participants (Jordanians and Syrian refugees) in interest-based negotiation strategies and proposal writing, conducted community activities that brought together Syrians and Jordanians, and selected and implemented communal neighbourhood improvement projects. Participants – Syrians and Jordanians – reported more accepting attitudes towards the other community as a result of these activities (Mercy Corps, 2015).

Two studies identified reduced discriminatory behaviour and improved experiences of children on the move and their families. Mercy Corps (2015) observed these outcomes among females in particular. Women were more positive about improvements in personal relationships between Syrians and Jordanians at the local level than men were. They cited community-friendly spaces (combined playgrounds and gathering places) as the reason for improvements, since mothers could socialize while their children played together. In contrast, men did not report changes in personal relations between the two communities, although a few indicated that relationships had improved since the year before. One explanation is that men had less chance to participate in social interactions, either at home or in public spaces such as playgrounds, because they were expected to be at work.

Similarly, Chames et al.'s (2016) study of the joint United Nations agency project in Zambia found that awareness-raising sessions reduced discriminatory behaviour and improved the experiences of child migrants and refugees. Children and youth (migrants, refugees and hosts) indicated that these events helped educate and share information to overcome prejudice, build respectful relationships and encourage more community integration. Participants also reported that anti-stigma and discrimination campaigns encouraged migrant and refugee learners to return to school without fear.

Two studies discussed the effects of interventions on community violence; these worked with the families of refugees and community leaders, including youth. Both studies found that conflict management activities reduced community violence. The evaluation of the Mercy Corps (2015) intervention in Jordan indicated that communities benefiting from project activities saw a decrease in their support for and use of violence, while communities without such activities experienced an increase in support for the use of violence during the same period.

Similarly, a project implemented by Search for Common Ground (2014) in Niger with Malian refugees contributed to reductions in community violence through activities such as capacity building, participatory theatre, awareness raising (radio programmes) and



The evidence on discrimination and xenophobia is limited.

¹⁸ The mixed evidence on the role of cash transfers in promoting social integration is discussed in Section 4.2.1.



community activities (training sessions). The evaluation found that 66 per cent of camp managers reported a decrease in conflicts and a positive change in how people deal with their differences. Key informants reported that project activities had helped reduce conflicts in the camps by creating relationships between families through their children participating in football matches, cultural days, health sessions and other activities. Participants believed that the participatory theatre, for example, made an important contribution to raising awareness of peaceful conflict resolution in people's daily lives, with 98 per cent indicating they were well-equipped to manage conflicts and rumours; 84 per cent of respondents declared that there were no conflicts in their camp, compared to 66 per cent at baseline. Refugee leaders, especially young people, appeared committed to continuing to promote a culture of peace.



Photo: © IOM/Mohamed Aly Diabaté

Three evaluations of child-friendly spaces examined children's sense of being protected, with mixed findings. For example, refugee children aged 12–17 in Ethiopia reported lower levels of protection concerns (relating to attacks, abduction, sexual violence) at follow-up compared to children not attending child-friendly spaces (Metzler et al., 2013). Attending child-friendly spaces appears to have provided a greater sense of protection for children and youth. Similarly, in Iraq, attending child-friendly spaces led to a reduction in older children's protection concerns (including not being able to return home, kidnapping, and being separated from friends) compared to an increase for those not attending (Metzler et al., 2014). However, these studies do not provide clear explanations of the pathways of these outcomes, and other studies show quite different results. In Jordan, girls attending child-friendly spaces mentioned additional concerns related to peer bullying, while older children (aged 13–18) reported marked increases in concerns, on average, from baseline to endline (Metzler et al., 2015).

4.4 Child labour and child trafficking

The evidence on the effectiveness of interventions combating child labour and/or child trafficking shows mixed outcomes: 11 studies found improvements, while 8 found no change. All valuations reported weaknesses and challenges alongside successes, covering initiatives in the Middle East (Lebanon, Jordan, Syria), East Africa (Burundi); Central Africa (Cameroon); Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan), Latin America (Mexico) and South-East Asia (Thailand). Those in the Middle East focused on refugees, the others on child migrants and/or children at risk of trafficking.

All these initiatives involved components at multiple levels, including policy and legal reforms, workforce strengthening, household economic strengthening, strengthening surveillance and reporting, awareness raising, and facilitating children's school attendance (Bayda et al., 2013; Wark and Ieumwananonthachai, 2010; Zivetz and Nasr, 2019). Typically these initiatives successfully achieved their policy and legal reform objectives, though it is less clear how far these translated into changes on the ground.



Effectiveness was undermined by lack of clear roles and responsibilities, limited ownership by local and national authorities (Bimé and Ranz, 2010) and, in some cases, lack of guidance from United Nations agencies to institutionalize policies they helped to set up (Zivetz and Nasr, 2019).

Five studies suggest that sensitizing parents and communities about the dangers of child labour and trafficking helped increase commitment to protecting children from the worst forms of child labour. For example, workshops in an ILO project in Jordan and Lebanon led to widespread awareness among parents of alternative sources of income, through a system of referrals for job placements and vocational training courses. In both countries, adult and child participants considered themselves ‘agents of change’ with ‘a role to play’ in the fight against child labour. However, the evaluation was unable to assess the wider effectiveness of such activities (Chiodi, 2018).

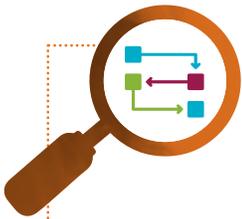
As discussed in Section 3.3, supporting community monitoring capacity also proved important in identifying children involved in harmful work and/or at risk of trafficking (Bimé and Ranz, 2010; Wark and leumwananonthachai, 2010). After the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia, UNICEF provided guidance on preventing the abuse and exploitation of children also helped police and social workers assist in community-level identification of cases, and deployed social workers and police at key transit points to monitor unaccompanied children without documentation travelling out of Aceh province (Boothby et al., 2009a). Those without appropriate documentation were returned to their province. As a result, no formal cases of child trafficking were reported during the emergency response. Wark and leumwananonthachai’s (2010) evaluation highlighted the sustainability of mobilizing existing operational structures (e.g., school teachers, village leaders and health care workers) rather than hiring teams of data collectors. They also recommended including law enforcement agents and others who would encounter children in situations of labour exploitation in the course of their regular work and would be able to refer them to social services.

Interventions that focused on the economic strengthening of households to prevent child labour had mixed results, as sections 4.2.1 (cash transfers) and 4.2.2 (skills training) showed. In some initiatives, limited impacts reflected avoidable design problems (e.g., training that required participants to be literate and thus excluded the families of children at greatest risk of trafficking, or failing to provide suitable micro-finance services for micro-entrepreneurs) (Bimé and Ranz, 2010). Where households had access to significant alternative income sources, reported child labour declined (Section 4.2.1). Elsewhere, initiatives had limited impact on child labour, as the incomes generated were insufficient substitutes for children’s work (Annan et al., 2013). Recognizing challenges in running effective economic-strengthening components, two initiatives to reduce child labour (Bayda et al., 2013; Garcia Moreno and Quispe, 2012) did not involve components to boost family livelihoods. The design guidelines for a multi-level initiative to reduce child labour in Thailand, with an emphasis on migrant communities, specifically advised against including an income-generating component, though a few demonstration initiatives were ultimately included.



Despite limitations of economic-strengthening activities, in combination with awareness raising and support to re-enter school, the evaluations concluded that the initiatives reviewed contributed to withdrawing children from work or even preventing them entering work. Typically, these direct activities were small scale (targeting around 500 children or less); they were generally considered to be under-funded with overly ambitious timeframes for implementation (Wark and Ieumwananonthachai, 2010; Zivetz and Nasr, 2019). The sustainability of these initiatives is unclear, given pressing poverty levels and legal restrictions on adult refugees working in many contexts (Bayda et al., 2013; Chiodi, 2018; Garcia Moreno and Quispe, 2012).

4.5 Strengthening the care of children on the move



KEY FINDINGS

- Thirty-three seven studies discussed outcomes related to care of children on the move, of which 28 found improvements and ten recorded no change on at least one indicator.
- Much of the evidence is focused on efforts to reunite children with direct or extended family members through effective family tracing and reunification services, and strengthening foster family capacity to provide interim care. Studies of interventions to improve caregiver capacity provide limited insights into outcomes for children; however, interventions that included training of foster carers or parenting skills sessions for caregivers strengthened knowledge of effective care. There is also evidence that provision of financial resources and psychosocial support strengthens caregiver capacity to care for children on the move.
- There are key gaps in the evidence related to family tracing and reunification, including data measuring the rate of secondary separation and the factors that drive it, as well as what works to ensure successful and sustained reintegration of children after return.

Photo: © ILO





4.5.1 Effective family tracing, reunification and reintegration

Table 11 provides an overview of evidence on initiatives to promote more effective family tracing, reunification and reintegration. Interventions that led to improvements in effective family tracing and reunification successfully strengthened case management systems, facilitating the identification of children requiring support, and speeding up processes of tracing and reunification. Central to this were improvements in the identification and processing of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) through augmenting frontline staff capacity – by providing extra resources, hiring additional staff, and providing training in case management and family tracing and reunification. In Indonesia, Boothby et al. (2009a) found that after increased government investment in the hiring and training of 240 new social workers (who prior to the tsunami worked on a voluntary basis) and providing more women and children’s assistance desks in police stations, the number of children being processed increased by 186 per cent, while 71 per cent were diverted from jail (up from 33 per cent prior to the activation of the women and children desks). The creation of 19 children’s centres enabled the Inter-Agency Tracing Network to identify 3,000 UASC, of which 2,500 were successfully reunited with direct family members or known neighbours (ibid.). By contrast, in Sri Lanka, the effectiveness of women’s and children’s police desks in identifying UASC and other child protection cases was limited due to delays in receiving UNICEF-donated resources (such as motorbikes) as well as delays in the collection and compilation of child protection survey data (Boothby et al., 2009b).

Table 11: Strengthening the care of children on the move

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Effective family tracing, reunification and reintegration	12	8	15	Separated children in crises contexts, children in IDP and refugee camps, unaccompanied child migrants and child labourers, children at risk of trafficking
Provision of interim or alternative care	13	2	15	UASC in crises contexts, children in IDP and refugee camps, unaccompanied children after moving to high-income countries, children associated with armed groups and forces
Caregiver capacity to provide effective care	16	3	19	Children moving with families in crises contexts, children in IDP and refugee camps and settlements, families living in host communities, providers of interim or alternative care

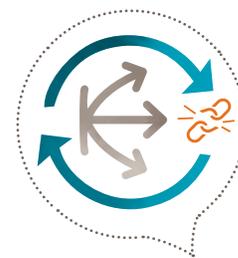


In Bangladesh, staff working in a Rohingya refugee camp received regular training on case management, child protection in emergencies, and family tracing and reunification, and caseworkers had an average workload of 24 cases – in line with the suggested global standard of 25 (Debert et al., 2019). Notably, caseworkers were surprised to find that none of the 99 UASC identified requested family tracing or reintegration services. The authors outlined some possible, though unconfirmed, reasons for this, including age (some adolescents may not have felt a strong dependence on their biological caregivers), preference on the part of the child, their biological parents or their foster carers that they stay in their foster home rather than return to Myanmar, and the initial lack of family tracing and reunification services offered in the camp (which may have meant that UASC and families were not well-informed about the service).

Interventions with mixed outcomes on tracing and reunification identified certain weaknesses in case management systems. For example, Brown and Copland's (2013b) evaluation of UNICEF's response to children in emergencies found that in South Sudan, data flow between the central and local levels – where much of the tracing took place – was weak and limited the effectiveness of tracing and reunification efforts. Meyer et al.'s (2017) study reported no improvements to family tracing and reunification and found that case management services were no longer operational in the Kiziba refugee camp (Rwanda).

Two of the three interventions that included the development of community surveillance systems led to improvements in the identification of children in need of tracing and reunification services. Reporting of UASC by community focal points increased in communities in Ethiopia (MacFarlane et al., 2019) and the DRC in a trial of the effectiveness of SMS-based reporting (Rubenstein et al., 2015). The latter study found that regular, sustained training of community focal points was crucial in clarifying the inclusion criteria for cases of UASC, while MacFarlane et al. (2019) reported that community focal points expressed feelings of making a contribution to their community through their work, but that the initiative's sustainability rested largely on remuneration of participants. Similarly, Bimé and Ranz (2010) found that the ineffective implementation of a community alert system in Cameroon resulted in no improvement of family tracing and reunification due to the abandonment of roles by activists who did not receive any benefits for their work, and a lack of clarity on the ownership of the process.

The evaluation of UNICEF's global response to protect children in emergencies found that sharing information via communication mechanisms such as radio, SMS messages, comic books, community theatre and community meetings enabled refugees and migrants to take decisions such as reducing child separation from families (aided by radio messaging in the DRC, Haiti and Pakistan) and identification of children under 18 for release from the armed forces in Myanmar (after radio messaging that encouraged children to identify themselves) (Brown and Perschler, 2013).



Interventions with mixed outcomes on tracing and reunification identified certain weaknesses in case management systems.



4.5.2 Return and reintegration of unaccompanied and separated children

There is limited discussion of the return and reintegration stage of reunification within the evidence reviewed. Boothby et al. (2009b) and Brown and Copland (2013a) note that lack of available follow-up data on children who had been successfully reunited with direct or extended family members severely limits understanding of the rate and reasons for secondary separation¹⁹ in conflict and disaster contexts. Studies that reported positive impacts on the return and reintegration of children included interventions with both psychosocial support activities and livelihood skills training. Frontline staff in Afghanistan reported that the psychosocial training they received greatly improved their capacity to support the reunification of child labourers and children seeking employment with their families upon their deportation from Iran (Bulosan and Sadat, 2015). They found that boys were often reluctant to return to their families and felt ashamed that they had been unable to provide an income, but with psychosocial support they showed greater interest in returning and reintegrating.

Cozens (2013) found that an intervention by Don Bosco in the DRC to support the reintegration of separated girls at risk of recruitment, or who had previously been affiliated with armed groups, had mixed outcomes. While girls and their parents reported improved behaviour and increased interaction, many girls were clearly unhappy in their homes. The study found that the intervention failed to empower the girls with information; prior to reunification, girls were not made aware of how long their training with the organization was going to last or when they were going to return to their families. Girls and parents also demonstrated limited knowledge of children's rights and child protection services available in their communities.

The evidence presents mixed effectiveness of livelihoods training in facilitating reintegration of returning children and indicates that it is crucial to consider the utility of training provided and whether it is suitably tailored to the beneficiaries' context. In the DRC, Don Bosco provided livelihoods training for girls to prevent secondary separation and recruitment; however, the strong focus on tailoring led to a saturation of the market, resulting in low numbers of girls entering employment (Cozens, 2013). For children released from the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and other armed groups in South Sudan, the UNICEF-supported project implemented by Vétérinaires Sans Frontières Suisse was effective in supporting children's livelihoods. Brown and Copland's (2013b) study of a pilot group found that after 14 months, all of the children were either in some form of education or training; they concluded that for rural areas, the project was effective and sustainable, but would need to be adapted for urban settings. In Afghanistan, War Child UK's intervention provided vocational training to 19 per cent of the 200 re-integrated adolescents deported from Iran, but difficulties included reaching beneficiaries living in remote areas, availability of trainers, and low interest among potential adolescent participants (Bulosan and Sadat, 2015).

¹⁹ After children are reunited with family members, they may become separated again due to a number of factors such as poverty, protracted conflict, violence, or family conflict.



4.5.3 Interim or alternative care arrangements

Table 12: Overview of impacts of interventions to provide interim or alternative care for children on the move

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Foster care	7	0	7	Separated children in crises contexts, children in IDP and refugee camps, unaccompanied children after moving to high-income countries
Institutional care (shelters, transitional accommodation, reception facilities)	5	2	7	Unaccompanied children in high-income countries, children associated with armed groups or forces, returning children
Independent living arrangements	0	1	1	Girls vulnerable to recruitment or associated with armed groups or forces
Informal guardianship	1	0	1	Unaccompanied children in host communities

Table 12 provides an overview of evidence on alternative care for unaccompanied or separated children on the move. Much of the evidence focuses on the use of short- or longer-term foster care for unaccompanied or separated children. Kalverboer et al.'s (2015) study compared the reported experience of unaccompanied children in the Netherlands in different forms of alternative care, finding that children in foster care were more likely to report feeling supported, to have Dutch friends, and to be able to make future plans than children living on campuses. Rip et al.'s (2020) study of unaccompanied children in foster care in the Netherlands reported that the main factors contributing to successful placements were: cultural similarities between foster families and children's country of origin (with similarities in language particularly important); and a supportive caregiver environment where children felt respected and not controlled. Strengthening the capacities of foster carers to provide effective care for children in crises contexts through financial support and training was a common focus (see Section 4.5.4 on effective care).



The use of independent living arrangements for children previously associated with armed groups in the DRC, or those vulnerable to recruitment – while successfully used for boys in the same context – was only successful for girls in one in three cases. Cozens' (2013) study therefore concluded that independent living was not culturally feasible for vulnerable girls in the DRC context; however, it did not provide any further detail. In Colombia, Perschler and Brown (2013) found that boarding houses within schools, or internados, functioned well as short- to medium-term protective environments for children at risk of exposure to landmines, recruitment by armed groups, or illegal forms of child labour. The evaluation reported that UNICEF's provision of material support to boarding schools (in the form of mattresses and bunk beds) proved essential due to high demand for places. Though capacity was strengthened, children were generally required to sleep two to a bed and reported feelings of loneliness (ibid.).

Brown and Perschler (2013) reported that emergency responses carried out by UNICEF in Haiti, Pakistan, South Sudan and Sri Lanka, which prioritized tracing and reunification, also led to longer-term impacts on national standards for alternative care and the promotion of alternatives to institutional care for unaccompanied and separated children. In the Netherlands, Galloway et al. (2014) found that relaxing the security measures in institutional accommodation for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children reduced 'disappearances' from the facility and children's risk of contact with traffickers by reducing tensions, opposition, and eagerness to leave among unaccompanied children.



Photo: © UNICEF/UNI286344/Akacha



4.5.4 Caregiver capacity to provide effective care for children on the move

Table 13: Overview of impacts of interventions to strengthen caregiver capacity to provide effective care for children on the move

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Targeted groups
Caregiver knowledge	12	1	13	Parents living with children in IDP or refugee camps and settlements, and in host communities; and foster carers
Caregiver resources (financial, material)	7	2	8	Parents living with children in IDP or refugee camps and settlements, and in host communities; and foster carers
Caregiver psychosocial well-being	13	4	14	Parents living with children in IDP or refugee camps and settlements, and in host communities

Table 13 provides an overview of initiatives to increase caregivers' capacity to care for children on the move. The studies evaluated provide limited evidence of how activities to strengthen caregiver capacity affect outcomes for children. Interventions that improved caregivers' knowledge of effective care mainly focused on developing **positive** parenting skills, including positive disciplinary practices (discussed in Section 4.1) and awareness of discriminatory and neglectful behaviour (Feintuch, 2018; Betancourt et al., 2020; Debert et al., 2019; McDonald et al., 2012; Stark et al., 2018). In Ghana, an IOM-supported anti-trafficking intervention included sensitization of caregivers to risk factors for child trafficking, which led to reports of improved knowledge and undertaking of parental responsibilities to care for and protect children (IOM, 2013). Ferro (2019) indicated that the involvement of community leaders in this sensitization, and their role in encouraging children to participate in psychosocial activities, was a key contributing factor to the effectiveness of an IOM-supported intervention for IDPs in Mozambique.

There are indications that strengthening the psychosocial well-being of caregivers both improves their capacity to provide effective care and increases intervention impacts on children's psychosocial well-being (discussed further in Section 4.6). Parents of children who attended child-friendly spaces often showed indications of reduced stress (Metzler et al., 2014, 2015, 2019), and a parenting programme with components on developing positive coping strategies also led to improved psychosocial well-being and resilience among caregivers (Feintuch, 2018). Where interventions did not directly involve caregivers in psychosocial activities, some studies identified this as a significant limitation and recommended better engagement with family members (Ferro, 2019; Universalia, 2017).

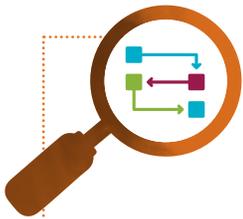


There are indications that strengthening the psychosocial well-being of caregivers both improves their capacity to provide effective care and increases intervention impacts on children's psychosocial well-being.



Much of the evidence on provision of financial and material resources to strengthen care is focused on supporting foster families' capacity to provide interim care for separated children (Boothby et al., 2009a, 2009b; Debert et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2014) and offers few insights into outcomes for children. Boothby et al. (2009a) suggested that the focus on supporting foster families in the wake of the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia did not address the root causes of secondary separation, and recommended that interventions advocate for the identification and provision of financial support to vulnerable families to reduce the need for foster families in emergencies. There is evidence that cash-based interventions for refugees living in host communities contribute to improved overall well-being of families, housing environment, and food quality, and create more time for children to play and study (see Section 4.2; see also Gaunt, 2016; De Hoop et al., 2018). In Buramino refugee camp in Ethiopia, reports of unmet basic needs increased over time for parents of children who were not enrolled in a child-friendly spaces initiative; among those who were enrolled, their situation did not change, indicating that the initiative may have prevented a deterioration for those children (Metzler et al., 2013).

4.6 Psychosocial well-being



KEY FINDINGS

- While 49 interventions included objectives on psychosocial well-being, 38 studies presented findings on mental health outcomes for children. Of these, 37 reported improvements, 7 reported no change on certain indicators, and 1 reported a deterioration (Meyer et al., 2017; see Table 14).
- Studies of interventions that led to improved psychosocial well-being included child-friendly spaces, creative art, play, cognitive behavioural therapy, group and individual counselling, and mentoring.
- Positive psychosocial outcomes for younger children were often linked to having freedom to play and access to recreational activities, feeling safe and protected, being able to discuss their concerns; for adolescents, cognitive behavioural therapy and strong ties with family and community, including being engaged in community development plans, helped build resilience and improve integration.



Photo: Gaelle Marcel, Unsplash



Table 14: Improving children's psychosocial well-being

Issue	Improvement	No change	Total number of studies	Contexts of intervention
Child-friendly spaces	10	3	10	Children moving with families, in IDP or refugee camps, settlements, and in host communities, children living with families in origin/return communities
Parenting programmes	4	0	4	Children living with families in IDP settlements, and in host communities
Counselling	3	0	3	Unaccompanied children and children living with families in IDP or refugee camps, settlements, and in host communities, unaccompanied children in interim care facilities
Group art/play therapy	6	2	6	Children living with families in IDP camps or settlements, child migrants living in host communities, unaccompanied children living in care facilities, children associated with armed groups or forces
Cognitive behavioural therapy/psycho-education	5	1	5	Children living with families in refugee settlements and host communities, unaccompanied children in host communities and institutional care facilities
Mentoring	3	1	4	Children living with families in refugee camps, settlements, and host communities, unaccompanied children living in host communities
Community engagement and participation in decision-making	3	1	4	Children living with families in refugee camps, children living in host communities

4.6.1 Child-friendly spaces

Much of the evidence from IDP and refugee camp and settlement contexts focuses on the effectiveness of child-friendly spaces, family centres, and new or re-energized children's clubs in improving children's psychosocial well-being. Child-friendly spaces and children's clubs – where activities commonly included recreational group activities, creative arts and crafts (including art therapy), group discussions, and drop-in information sessions – were generally associated with positive psychosocial outcomes for children. Outcomes measured by studies included reduced anxiety and depression,



Child-friendly spaces and children's clubs were generally associated with positive psychosocial outcomes for children.



increased optimism for the future, and positive coping strategies, as attendees were able to develop social networks, report care and protection concerns, and (in some cases) access individual or group counselling (Boothby et al., 2009b; Brown and Copland, 2013a, 2013b; GSI, 2019; Hermosilla et al., 2019; Kranges and Zia, 2013; Madfis et al., 2010; Metzler et al., 2013, 2014, 2015, 2019; Van der Veen et al., 2015). As a participant in an IDP camp in Pakistan put it:

“

I was stressed and didn't want to talk to anyone. Now I am controlling my emotions and taking things positively.

”

- Young female participant in UNICEF Protective Learning and Community Emergency Services (PLaCES) programme in Pakistan (Brown and Copland, 2013a, p. 31)

Studies of child-friendly spaces often reported greater attendance and positive outcomes for younger children than older children and adolescents (Brown and Perschler, 2013; Metzler et al., 2015; Hermosilla et al., 2019; O'Leary et al., 2015;), and greater improvements on psychosocial indicators for boys than girls. Positive outcomes for girls were often limited by access to and inclusion in child-friendly spaces and associated activities. For example, in South Sudan, activities at UNICEF-supported child-friendly spaces benefited boys by promoting positive ways for children to spend their time and build social networks; however, girls felt they were excluded from activities such as football due to organizers' assumptions that it was an activity for boys only (Brown and Copland, 2013b). In Ethiopia, relatively advantaged girls such as those with a supportive family environment were more likely to attend child-friendly spaces than disadvantaged girls. They also exhibited limited intervention impacts compared to boys, though this may have reflected girls' better psychosocial well-being prior to attendance (Metzler et al., 2013). There were similar findings from other safe spaces programming, such as Kurtz's (2016) evaluation of the Mercy Corps Advancing Adolescents programme, which ran workshops for Syrian and Jordanian youth and found that positive outcomes for social inclusion, cooperation, and friendship between refugee and host communities were largely driven by male participants. The study suggested this is probably linked to adolescent girls' limited interaction with the wider community outside the safe spaces created by the programme, which prevents them developing social networks.

The studies reviewed provided limited insights into the longer-term impacts of child-friendly spaces on children's psychosocial well-being and the extent to which positive outcomes were sustained. Metzler et al.'s (2019) study in a refugee settlement in Uganda found no indications of sustained impacts beyond the project period.



This also raises the issue of the sustainability of interventions after the initial implementation period. After the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka, Boothby et al. (2009b) found that children’s clubs supported by local organizations were much more likely to remain active than those primarily supported by international actors. Similarly, village committees were established in the Solomon Islands to continue running safe spaces set up by Save the Children following the 2007 tsunami, and many former local facilitators went on to form child development committees and children’s clubs (Madfis et al., 2010).

Multi-sectoral approaches also achieved improvements. The ILO intervention in Lebanon to withdraw children from labour (including Syrian refugees and Lebanese street children) provided educational, psychosocial, nutritional and livelihood services. The evaluation found that after the intervention, children indicated feeling greater trust, protection, personal security, and self-confidence (Chiodi, 2018). Another multi-sectoral intervention was Save the Children’s programme in Haiti (after a hurricane) and the Solomon Islands (after a tsunami). This provided safe spaces for internally displaced children, with education and psychosocial support comprising team-building and trust-building games, healing arts and crafts, games to build self-esteem, as well as drama and role play. By the end of the programme, 80 per cent of children showed improved capacity to form relationships, were able to enter new social situations, and showed trust, respect and desired companionship most of the time, demonstrating confidence in themselves and their surroundings (Madfis et al., 2010).

4.6.2 Community engagement and improving integration

Improved psychosocial well-being of refugee and migrant children was also linked in some cases to strengthened ties with their communities – either their own or the host community. Interventions that provided the opportunity to engage in community planning contributed to children’s sense of hope and optimism for the future. Four studies found that where activities brought together refugees or migrants and children from the host community, interventions also improved social inclusion, integration and community cohesion (Chames et al., 2016; Kurtz, 2016; Mercy Corps, 2015; Panter-Brick et al., 2018). Interventions such as the joint United Nations agency project to protect vulnerable migrant children from trafficking in Zambia, which helped build social networks outside children’s own community through sensitization workshops and recreational activities, aided integration between refugees and the host community and had positive impacts on children’s resilience:



Improved psychosocial well-being of refugee and migrant children was also linked in some cases to strengthened ties with their communities – either their own or the host community.

“.....

As refugees, we have been through a lot. Activities like these help to clear the mess in our heads. They bring hope and faith. Even if you don’t get away, you can still think I have a brother, a Zambian brother.

.....”

- FGD child beneficiary (Chames et al., 2016, p. 33)



For children living in host communities, building resilience, self-efficacy, and developing positive coping strategies also helped with the integration process and strengthened social inclusion (Khawaja and Ramirez, 2019; Tam et al., 2020). Two studies of a mentoring initiative in Austria for unaccompanied refugee children (Raithelhuber, 2019a, 2019b) found positive outcomes for young people’s social capital, in that their ‘godparents’ from the local community provided them with emotional support and encouraged them to pursue their goals (see Section 4.5.3 on provision of interim or alternative care).

4.6.3 Group therapy, counselling, and play therapy

Studies only reported on interventions that used cognitive behavioural therapy and psycho-educative learning in high-income countries. These led to positive outcomes for unaccompanied children in host communities and alternative care settings, helping them to manage emotions, stress, and symptoms of trauma, and build resilience (King and Said, 2019; Khawaja and Ramirez, 2019; Meyer DeMott et al., 2017; Tam et al., 2020). For unaccompanied children living in transitional housing, evidence of positive outcomes is limited to factors which improve children’s experience, rather than measuring indicators of psychosocial well-being. Garoff et al. (2019) did not find indications of improved mental health among unaccompanied children in Finland after a group mental health intervention, but did find improvements in social interaction, trust, and communication between staff and children.

“

It was fun to sit and eat with friends ... I would recommend participating in the group for others ... There was trust ... we could talk with adults about important things ... This is not like when you are joking with friends.

”

- Adolescent participant (Garoff et al., 2019, p. 13)

Studies on counselling and play and arts therapy come from a wider range of contexts. In Gaza, internally displaced children who attended family centres showed improvements in their psychological status, self-efficacy, and social and life skills; however, those who accessed individual or group counselling showed greater psychosocial improvements than those who only took part in art and life skills development activities (Wilson, 2018). Among rural migrants to urban Ethiopia, a psychosocial intervention consisting of creative arts therapy and group and individual counselling sessions led to improved mental health outcomes for adolescent girls but had no impact on adolescent boys’ psychosocial well-being (Jani et al., 2016). That study attributed these results to the differing mental health challenges faced by male and female participants, underlining the need for gender-sensitive tailoring of interventions.



Interventions that used play therapy as a psychosocial activity showed evidence of positive impacts on younger children and adolescents. In Colombia, adolescents previously associated with armed groups or forces took part in play therapy,²⁰ with results showing that for boys and girls alike, this served as a psychological release, improving self-esteem and confidence, relationships with family and the opposite sex, and supporting peaceful resolution of problems and greater engagement in community decision-making (Perschler and Brown, 2013).

4.6.4 Supporting parents and caregivers

The evidence indicates that the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for displaced children is often linked to caregiver psychosocial well-being and provision of effective care. In Jordan (Metzler et al., 2015), Iraq (Metzler et al., 2014) and Uganda (Metzler et al., 2019), attendance at child-friendly spaces led to improved psychosocial outcomes for children, and caregivers also showed reduced stress. Boothby et al. (2009b) found that children associated well-being with having a peaceful family, time to play, their material needs met, and having non-alcoholic caregivers.

A parenting programme that worked with displaced Burmese families in Thailand led to improvements in adolescent-reported family functioning and caregiver–adolescent communication (Puffer et al., 2017) (see Section 4.3.2 for discussion of impacts on violence), while in Honduras, the Universalia (2017) study of UNICEF’s work with returnee migrant families suggested that psychosocial improvements for children were limited due to a lack of engagement with family members, and recommended that strengthening family protection be prioritized in contexts where family disintegration is common. The study also suggested that in contexts of protracted crises, spreading psychosocial sessions out over a number of months is more likely to lead to positive outcomes for children’s well-being than multiple sessions over a short period. Two studies assessed the feasibility and effectiveness of parenting programmes for refugee families living in the USA (Betancourt et al., 2020; McDonald et al., 2012). The findings indicate that working with family members in the home or in a culturally appropriate setting to improve communication, promote positive parenting practices, and reduce resettlement pressures (such as learning to navigate the education system) can reduce children’s anxiety and improve social skills (McDonald et al., 2012), reduce child depression, and reduce behaviour problems (Betancourt et al., 2020). There is also some evidence that multipurpose cash transfers for refugee families can contribute to improvements in caregivers’ and children’s psychosocial well-being (see Section 4.2; see also De Hoop et al., 2018; Foster, 2015).

²⁰ *Colombia*: a modified version of football based on the values of non-violence, peaceful coexistence, gender equity and ethnic diversity.



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4.7 Factors contributing to or hindering effective programmes working directly with children and families

The effectiveness of the interventions reviewed was affected both by contextual factors and factors related to project design and implementation. Many of the project-related factors are common to good programming practice and not specific to child protection or children on the move. By contrast, the contextual factors reflect specific issues affecting refugees or IDPs and humanitarian emergency contexts.

4.7.1 Factors supporting effectiveness

PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Most initiatives reviewed in this section aimed to share information, raise awareness, and promote social and behaviour change communication, whether about safe migration, violence against children, child labour or family reunification. The following factors emerge as particularly important in the studies of communication initiatives reviewed:

- **Sharing user-friendly messages through multiple channels** (community theatre, SMS messages, radio, family visits, community meetings, etc.), targeted to different audiences (girls, boys, adolescents, caregivers, men, etc.) and using a variety of interactive methods (games, songs, stories), played an important role in changing attitudes or increasing knowledge on child protection (Mauney, 2015; Universalis, 2017). However, no studies compared the relative impact of different types or combinations of communication in terms of knowledge and behaviour change.



- **Engaging trusted public figures** was effective in IOM's mass media campaign in Egypt (Hassan, 2019). More commonly, providing sufficient training and time for mentors and facilitators to develop rapport with children and young people was another successful strategy, as in a UNICEF project working with returnees in Honduras (Universalia, 2017), IOM's unsafe migration prevention project in Egypt (Hassan, 2019), and the initiative in reception facilities in the Netherlands (Galloway et al., 2014). Children were more likely to trust a familiar face when discussing sensitive topics such as the intention to migrate. Mobilizing community leaders and people in positions of authority also proved important in efforts to reduce trafficking and unsafe migration in Ghana and Cambodia respectively (IOM, 2013; Mauney, 2015).

Beyond communication, important structural elements of project design that favoured effectiveness include:

- **Engaging the community as facilitators and agents of change** through capacity building, rather than passive recipients of messages (Debert et al., 2019). Some initiatives included youth committees working on activities they had identified as priorities for community development and intra-community relations (Mercy Corps, 2015), and the localization of children's clubs that had been put in place following emergency responses (Madfis et al., 2010).
- **Ensuring that social workers and other staff working with children on the move are well-trained and able to develop rapport with children.** This emerges from multiple studies (including some of those considered for this review, but ultimately not included as they were insufficiently intervention-focused) as being critical for supporting children's psychosocial well-being and for protecting them from engagement in risky behaviour, journeys or livelihood strategies.
- **Multi-sectoral support** (e.g., medical, psychosocial, legal, etc.), **simultaneous child protection activities** (child protection surveillance, advocacy on policy/legal reforms, workforce strengthening, etc.) or activities at **multiple levels and/or with multiple stakeholders** were generally considered to contribute to programme effectiveness. However, the evidence that studies drew on was not always clear, as no studies examined the relative effectiveness of 'bundled' as opposed to single activities.

4.7.2 Factors hindering effectiveness

Many of the factors noted here are discussed in only one or two studies. Nonetheless, they give pointers that have broader resonance.

PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Some of the issues flagged in the studies reviewed include:

- **Overambitious goals for relatively short projects**, particularly for initiatives that aimed to change deeply entrenched norms (e.g., about GBV or violence against children) or to develop alternatives to child labour (Bayda et al., 2013; Chiodi, 2018; Annan et al., 2013).



- **Insufficient staff training.** Van der Veen et al.'s evaluation of UNICEF's psychosocial programming in Jordan (2015) highlights that staff working on child-friendly spaces are often insufficiently trained to help children with common psychosocial challenges related to displacement and witnessing or experiencing violence, or to address multi-causal challenges such as child labour or child marriage. The evaluation suggests more training and a more strategic consideration of task-shifting so that social workers are not required to undertake work for which they are not best suited.
- **Insufficient cultural grounding,** which led to missed opportunities for designing and implementing effective initiatives. For example, Jones et al.'s (2014) study of a pilot livelihoods project to support foster family care of unaccompanied and separated Somali children in a refugee camp in Kenya recommended that efforts to strengthen family tracing and reunification build on traditional mechanisms, including clan-based family tracing and care for separated children. Similarly, Boothby et al.'s studies (2009a, 2009b) of post-tsunami tracing, reunification and foster care efforts in Sri Lanka and Indonesia recommend a greater appreciation of practices within different communities for maintaining family linkages and care of children.

CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

- **Gender norms,** particularly in contexts of insecurity, limited girls' access to opportunities such as safe spaces. That said, many such programmes have been run in emergency contexts – where necessary undertaking multiple visits to families to allow them to take part (IRC, 2018). Some parenting programmes have also integrated gender equality-focused modules to challenge norms that undermine girls' and boys' development and protection in different ways (Marcus et al., 2019). Both would contribute to ensuring that gender norms do not prevent girls accessing valuable developmental experiences.
- **Challenging socioeconomic contexts,** resulting from high levels of unemployment and poverty, or restrictions on refugees' right to work, undermined efforts to strengthen livelihoods as a means of addressing child protection violations among children on the move. The studies reviewed made little comment on how these challenging contexts could be addressed, beyond taking measure to support refugee adults' right to work. Studies from contexts aiming to reduce risky migration or trafficking, in part through livelihood projects, again gave few insights as to how economic development could more effectively be supported. One possible implication is the need for better coordination with business development specialists, who may be able to help small-scale entrepreneurs develop more productive livelihoods.



5

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CONCLUSIONS





5.1 Strength of evidence

This REA has synthesized findings from 89 studies of interventions to protect children on the move, which met thresholds for relevance and methodological transparency. These studies, from all world regions, include children moving in different circumstances – as refugees or internally displaced, as voluntary migrants, through trafficking, on their own, or with family members. The studies discuss initiatives in a variety of contexts – refugee and IDP camps and settlements, host communities, and in communities of origin, and a few with returnees, though this group is under-represented. They span a range of approaches and work at multiple levels: legal and policy reform; system strengthening; with parents; and directly with children.

Many initiatives focused on specific protection issues such as improving the quality of care of children on the move, reducing children’s experience of violence or their involvement in child labour, or promoting mental health and psychosocial well-being (the single most common intervention). While the interventions examined were diverse, there were clusters of different approaches (e.g., family tracing, provision of cash transfers, legal reform), enabling us to draw some tentative conclusions about promising practices, and the factors that contribute to or undermine efforts to protect children on the move. We now summarize these conclusions. Recognizing that a three-month REA can only present pointers to ‘what works’ and why, we then outline evidence gaps and discuss how the evidence base can be strengthened.



5.1.1 Research question 1: What interventions are effective to ensure the protection of children on the move?

All 89 studies were included on the basis of providing insights relevant to this question. Despite gaps and challenges in the evidence base, which will be outlined further in Section 5.2, we have been able to synthesize evidence on a range of strategies to protect children on the move (see Table 15).

Table 15: Summary of insights on positive practices to protect children on the move

Issue	Insights on effective practices or design to protect children on the move
<p>Child protection systems <i>Policy and legal reform</i></p>	<p>All studies of policy or legal reform processes indicated progress, even if reforms were not complete at the time of evaluation, given the slow pace of change, and factors leading to delays such as leadership changes or administrative reforms. In the short-to-medium term, government agencies were able to overcome obstacles by incorporating these progressive reforms into their ways of working. Existing motivation or attitudinal shifts on the part of government officials resulting from participation in policy reform projects or training were key drivers of change. Linkages between countries' regular national systems, structures and projects on child protection and national and international efforts around humanitarian/refugee responses helped ensure that children on the move were protected by national-level institutions as well as humanitarian actors</p>
<p><i>Workforce training</i></p>	<p>Workforce training was most effective when sustained over time, repeated frequently to take account of staff turnover, and when carried out alongside wider system-strengthening efforts (including operational budgets) that enabled staff to put new learning into practice. Tailoring training to post-holders' roles, and involving decision-makers as well as frontline staff also increased trainees' ability to implement new practices.</p>
<p><i>Community-level system strengthening</i></p>	<p>Community-based child protection mechanisms were often hampered by lack of operational budgets, remuneration of volunteers, and a perceived lack of follow-up action after referral, which undermined ongoing commitment in some initiatives. Where they had a sense of ownership and collective responsibility, they were effective in challenging entrenched interests to address child protection violations.</p>
<p>Preventing unsafe movement</p>	<p>Seven studies found positive change in children's knowledge of migration and trafficking risks and/or in their intention to migrate using safe pathways; one found no change. Effective initiatives used good quality information sharing and behaviour change methods, with multiple IEC materials, community conversations, and messages delivered by trusted facilitators or public figures. These were insufficient to deter unsafe migration among adolescents living in poverty or communities with high levels of violence.</p>
<p>Household economic strengthening <i>Cash transfers</i></p>	<p>Most of the 13 studies of cash transfers found mixed impacts on child protection outcomes, with some evidence of an association between improvements in living conditions, and reduced financial stress, better psychosocial well-being for adults and children, and reduced violence against children. Evidence on their impact on child labour was mixed, though more studies found cash transfers lead to a reduction in children working than the opposite. A small number of studies suggested that receiving cash for longer periods (more than 12 months) and combining cash with other child protection activities/services achieved better protection outcomes.</p>
<p><i>Skills training and entrepreneurship promotion</i></p>	<p>The studies reviewed found little evidence that skills training is particularly effective in reducing protection violations. It is most likely to be effective when combined with broader entrepreneurship support, and/or efforts to facilitate adult refugees' and migrants' employment (e.g., through addressing policy barriers).</p>



◀ Table 15 (cont'd)

Issue	Insights on effective practices or design to protect children on the move
<p>Reducing violence against children on the move</p>	<p>Fifty-five studies examined impact on violence against children, of which 48 reported positive changes and nine reported no change. The most common approach was social and behaviour change activities with families and communities. In these initiatives, engagement of facilitators skilled in working with people with low literacy using multiple, user-friendly IEC materials, were highlighted as playing an important role in changing attitudes. In GBV-focused projects, effective interventions directly raised awareness of harmful norms, and engaged men as partners in change rather than perpetrators only. Interventions with opportunities for dialogue, exchange of experiences and reflection among parents (e.g., family-based sessions, support groups, mental health sessions), that involved joint parent and child sessions and provided opportunities to practice new skills were identified as contributing to effectiveness. Some studies also suggested that offering multi-sectoral support (including medical, psychosocial, reintegration, legal, case management, etc.) contributed to interventions' effectiveness. Activities that included refugees/IDPs and host communities (training, awareness-raising sessions, implementation of communal projects) show some evidence of improved community cohesion.</p>
<p>Child labour and child trafficking</p>	<p>Eleven studies reported a decrease in child labour, while eight found no change. Interventions reporting improvements tended to have a clear focus on combating child labour. They typically involved simultaneous activities such as child protection surveillance, advocacy on policy/legal reforms, workforce strengthening, awareness-raising or educational support. Livelihoods components were generally ineffective.</p>
<p>Strengthening care of children on the move</p>	<p>Thirty-three studies examined impacts on the care of children on the move of which 28 reported positive shifts and ten reported no change. Interventions that provided effective family tracing and reunification services focused on strengthening workforce capacity and case management systems, and community surveillance capacity, which led to improved identification of cases. Training and financial support for foster families proved successful in strengthening emergency foster care for separated children in crisis contexts. Limited evidence indicates that group therapy and efforts to build trust and relax security measures may reduce 'disappearances' from reception facilities into more harmful situations. Interventions that strengthened caregiver capacity increased their knowledge of children's rights and positive parenting skills through awareness campaigns and parenting sessions. The REA found tentative evidence that boosting caregivers' psychosocial well-being through direct interventions and economic-strengthening support enhanced their capacity to care for children.</p>
<p>Enhancing psychosocial well-being of children on the move</p>	<p>The studies in this REA reported on a range of psychosocial interventions, such as creative arts, play, group therapy, and counselling, the majority of which were provided through safe/ child friendly spaces. Of 48 studies of interventions with MHPSS components, 37 reported positive changes, seven no change on some indicators and one, a deterioration in aspects of children's psychosocial wellbeing. Indicators measured included: reducing children's anxiety, depression and aggressive behaviour, and increasing hope for the future. Engaging family members was often associated with stronger positive outcomes for children's well-being. Psycho-education, cognitive behavioural therapy, and joint sessions for youth from refugee, migrant and host communities (including community planning) helped children build resilience, improved integration, and increased their hope for the future.</p>



All of the studies reviewed refer to specific points within a child’s migration journey and to specific contexts; they do not compare the effectiveness of different approaches with children at different points in a journey, or in different contexts (e.g. camp, host community, etc.). Therefore we cannot draw conclusions about whether a particular approach is more effective in particular contexts or with particular groups of children. A case study approach would enable comparison between these different contexts.

Although we cannot draw conclusions about the relative effectiveness of different strategies with different groups of children on the move, we have mapped the distribution of studies of particular approaches and outcomes. This provides pointers as to the emphases in the literature reviewed, with respect to the use of different strategies in different contexts and with particular groups.

5.1.2 Research question 2: What factors contribute to or hinder success?

Studies of all types, working with all groups, in all regions, and across varied kinds of initiatives discussed factors that contributed to or hindered effectiveness in protecting children on the move. In sections 3.4 and 4.7 we presented detailed analysis that emerged from our review of the studies. Rather than repeat this analysis here, we focus on some of the key elements underlying positive change, drawing on a framework distilled from Davis et al. (2012) and UNICEF et al. (2013). We discuss what evidence there is of the presence or absence of these elements in the interventions reviewed (see Table 16).

Table 16: Factors underlying successful reform of child protection systems

Factor	Evidence of role in interventions reviewed
Supportive policy environment	<p>The policy environment could be either a supportive or a hindering factor. Some of the policy reform projects discussed factors contributing to a supportive policy environment, such as high-level political champions committed to promoting the rights of children on the move, and supportive relationships between different government departments, civil society and international actors. Some studies also found a disconnect between external agencies’ engagement with policy reform and the support they provided to institutionalize and implement the policies they had helped to set up. The lack of a political economy analysis within the documents prevented us from further understanding the key motivations of actors within government to spearhead reforms.</p> <p>The initiatives that highlighted how the policy environment could hinder efforts to protect children on the move focused on limitations on refugees’ rights, such as the right to work. Policies such as frequent transfers of staff within public sector agencies also hampered efforts to increase awareness among the workforce of children’s rights and needs and gender issues.</p>





◀ Table 16 (cont'd)

Factor	Evidence of role in interventions reviewed
Financial resources	Under-funding was highlighted as a challenge across numerous initiatives. Within the public sector, limited budgets undermined the effectiveness of training (as staff could not put new learning into place) and of approaches such as case conferencing, which depend on other elements of the system functioning well. Under-resourcing was highlighted in initiatives strengthening community child protection systems, as a critical constraint to their sustainability, and their ability to function (for example, to make referrals). Under-resourcing also contributed to over-ambitious project plans, and sometimes to relatively small-scale practical initiatives in comparison with policy reforms.
Skilled and committed staff and volunteers	Studies of initiatives delivering services to children and families on the move highlighted the importance of skilled, empathetic and committed staff, who could build rapport with children and young people. These might be social workers, police or border officials, staff or volunteers in child-friendly spaces, or community mentors. The critical issues highlighted were the importance of effective training at all levels, and of resourcing throughout the system to enable people to carry out their roles effectively.
Ownership	These studies highlighted the importance of ownership at two main levels – in terms of national policies and policy reforms, and in community-level initiatives. The most effective community-level initiatives engaged adults and young people in developing messages and delivering interventions; in GBV projects they engaged men as partners.
Coordination between different actors	Relatively few studies outside evaluations of actions in humanitarian emergencies discussed the role of coordination either as contributing to or hampering effectiveness. In emergencies, coordination between humanitarian agencies and with national government and civil society was highlighted as vital for effective child protection. Our interviews highlighted the importance of coordination as a key part of a well-functioning child protection system, but few evaluations of community-level initiatives (particularly those promoting psychosocial well-being and aiming to prevent violence through social and behaviour change communication) commented on the strength or weakness of coordination.
Work across different levels of the socio-ecological spectrum	Working across different levels of the socio-ecological model was one of the most commonly identified factors contributing to success. This was particularly common in projects with policy reform objectives, which often also included workforce strengthening and community-level service delivery, in the areas of preventing child labour and trafficking, strengthening care of children on the move and, in some cases, violence prevention. Community-level projects, such as those on psychosocial well-being, and some of the social and behaviour change initiatives aimed at violence prevention, were less likely to involve components with multiple stakeholders and at multiple levels.
Context-sensitivity	Few studies commented positively on context-sensitivity of interventions, though arguably the investment in community-level protection systems and training of frontline social service workforce and police could be seen as factors contributing to context-sensitive approaches. Two studies recommended greater efforts to build on pre-existing local systems for family tracing, reunification and alternative care for separated children.
Children's perspectives taken into account	Very few studies reported the implementing organization(s) having consulted with children or developing initiatives in collaboration with displaced or migrant children.
Use of evidence and data	The primary area of activity where studies highlighted the importance of accurate evidence and data was in relation to family tracing and reunification, where challenges in sharing of data and maintaining accurate information were reported as significant constraints to family reunification. One study of efforts to prevent child trafficking also highlighted challenges in maintaining common immigration databases to track movements of unaccompanied children. One gap in the studies examined was commentary on the value of formative research in developing effective interventions to support the protection of children on the move.



5.1.3 Research question 3: What social welfare or child protection systems are effective interventions linked to?

A key challenge in answering this question arises from the fact that 32 of the interventions focused on strengthening child protection systems; rather than interventions being linked to child protection or welfare systems, reform of these systems was at the core of the intervention. They worked mainly with ministries of social welfare (most commonly), the police and justice system, and labour departments, depending on their objectives. Initiatives working with border or immigration departments were much less common, and the studies of these initiatives generally did not report on their linkages with social welfare or other child protection agencies.

Of the 89 studies reviewed, 40 reported that activities were linked to social welfare or child protection systems. This was most common in multi-component initiatives working at different levels (e.g., direct services to families and children, or workforce training). Among all areas of activity, linkages to the social welfare system were the most common, followed by specialist child/youth services (sometimes with a specific mandate related to migrant or refugee children), and the police or justice system. Only three initiatives worked with schools to strengthen protection of children.²¹

Linkages to the social welfare or child protection systems were less commonly reported in the following types of direct service provision initiatives (see *Table 17*).

Table 17: Types of initiatives with limited linkage to social welfare or child protection systems

Issue	Common characteristics of activities that may explain limited linkages
Mental health and psychosocial wellbeing (MHPSS) initiatives	Activities frequently run in child-friendly spaces in camps as part of emergency responses Pilot experimental initiatives run by researchers, often with NGO linkages
Violence prevention initiatives	Community-based social and behaviour change initiatives (e.g., parenting education programmes, GBV awareness-raising initiatives) often run by NGOs with permission from local or camp authorities but without clear links to child protection system
Cash transfers	Delivery mechanisms were mostly run by humanitarian actors rather than by national social protection and welfare systems

By contrast, initiatives focused on improving the care of children on the move were more likely to be linked to social welfare ministries and/or specific child or youth services. For example, strengthening family tracing and reunification in emergencies was linked to the development of government social service case management capacity and police desks for women and children (Boothby et al., 2009a; 2009b).

²¹ This is very likely to underestimate the extent of efforts to protect children on the move carried out by schools – a consequence of only including studies that provided sufficient detail on child protection activities and outcomes to enable us to draw conclusions.



5.2 Evidence gaps and limitations

As the evidence presented in sections 3 and 4 and the synthesis in Section 5.1 show, this REA has brought together a variety of evidence in response to the three research questions and highlighted a number of evidence gaps. However, there are also a number of limitations, some of which reflect decisions taken to make the review manageable in a three-month period. This section presents our analysis of the main cross-cutting evidence gaps, and possible contributory factors. Section 5.3 concludes with recommendations to address some of these weaknesses and ways that they could be overcome to generate a more comprehensive evidence base on what works to ensure the protection of children on the move.

5.2.1 Cross-cutting evidence gaps

Several cross-cutting gaps and weaknesses emerge from our analysis.

Lack of counterfactual. Only 20 studies (less than a quarter) included a counterfactual, while 15 involved a pre-post intervention comparison. Relatively few studies compared impacts on participants and non-participants or reported substantial reflection on how far findings were attributable to project activity. This is an important limitation in terms of understanding ‘what works’. The studies that incorporated a control group or other counterfactual were dominated by mental health and psychosocial interventions: half the RCTs were conducted on mental health interventions; the others were parenting skills interventions, a cash transfer programme, a savings and loan programme, and an adolescent girls’ empowerment programme. Among the quasi-experimental studies, studies of child-friendly spaces predominated, followed by cash transfers and mental health initiatives.

Limited quantitative data on the scale of change. Although many studies used mixed methods, the sources of the quantitative data largely comes from project reports. Few studies present data on the scale of change (effect sizes), and of those that do, few discuss whether changes were statistically significant. Despite this, many of the quantitative studies (for example, of violence prevention) show large-scale changes in attitudes or reported behaviour, of up to 30 percentage points.

Understanding the relative impact of different activities in multi-component initiatives, and of multiple activities compared to single activity initiatives. No RCTs compared the relative impact of different activities. Qualitative performance evaluations tended to provide more insights into the effectiveness of particular components and to comment on the synergies (or lack of them) between different workstreams. We recommend that impact evaluations and research studies focus more explicitly on synergies, and on probing the relative effects of different components.



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Understanding which interventions have lasting effects, and why. In recognition of the tight time frame for this assignment, we had to make choices about which topics to extract data on. We deprioritized extracting data on when evaluations or research studies were undertaken and thus the analysis of lasting effects. The studies of livelihood interventions indicate some lasting impact on skills even if participants were not always able to generate substantial incomes with those skills. It should be noted that the studies undertaken in emergency contexts were often ‘real-time’ evaluations undertaken to improve implementation, rather than retrospective learning studies, and so were not oriented to examining the longevity of impacts.

Understanding the impacts of policy and legal reforms on children’s lives. Assessments of policy and legal reform typically reported on whether new laws or policies had been developed, or international or inter-departmental coordination strengthened. They did not examine the impact of these changes on the lives of the children or families they were intended to benefit.

Lack of insights into emerging innovative practices. Interviews with child protection specialists in the four commissioning agencies highlighted a lag between on-the-ground innovation, and documentation and analysis of impact. The studies reviewed here reflect this delay, which means that emerging approaches are under-represented. One example of this lag is in innovations in information management systems, such as UNHCR’s ProgRes,²² which underpin case management. Ways of addressing this well-recognized lag across a range of areas could include analysis of data from management information systems where appropriate, and analysis of processes and factors contributing to impact in a series of case studies.

²² Thanks to Amanda Melville of UNHCR for this insight.



We also observed a number of specific gaps. Some of the most striking are as follows:

- **Geographical biases** (few studies from southern Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America, and none from North Africa, despite extensive migration in these contexts).
- **Context-related emphases** (few studies of protection of children on the move in the wake of disaster-related displacement, compared to conflict-related displacement).
- Gaps related to **specific aspects of migration or refugee journeys** (no studies reported on efforts to provide protection to **children in transit**, and only three reported on initiatives with **returnees**); very few reported on the effects of reforms on children's experiences at borders.
- Gaps related to **social groups** (very few studies specifically mentioned children with disabilities, or LGBTQI adolescents and young people). Few explicitly mentioned working with ethnic or religious minorities, though we believe these numbers were under-reported, given that minorities are often particularly affected by conflict and thus likely to be displaced. No initiatives explicitly addressed statelessness.
- **Limited depth of evidence on specific strategies.** For some types of interventions, we found less than three studies, making it hard to draw robust conclusions. These include issues such as cross-border cooperation, approaches to workforce strengthening other than training (e.g., secondments, social work degrees) and to ending xenophobic discrimination. Very few studies examined the effectiveness of institutional care in low- or middle-income contexts; while this may reflect a strong focus on family reunification and foster care in emergencies, experiences of children who are accommodated by institutions may be being overlooked.
- **Evidence on what works to reduce specific protection violations.** The mostly commonly reported outcomes were in the areas of psychosocial wellbeing, violence against children, and care of unaccompanied children. Relatively fewer studies reported on changes in child marriage or protection from trafficking.
- **Gaps related to children's active involvement in initiatives.** Other than a few initiatives that intentionally engaged young people as change agents, very few studies discussed how children's perspectives had been incorporated into project design or implementation, or how their views were taken into account in processes designed to protect them. We did not seek explicitly extract data on children's involvement in project design, but were struck by this gap while undertaking analysis. This overall impression should be probed further.



5.2.2 Factors contributing to gaps observed

The gaps and emphases outlined reflect the findings of the 89 studies reviewed. To recap, these were primary studies (with a few syntheses of multi-country primary studies), included because they discussed interventions that aimed to promote the protection of one or more groups of children on the move. A key inclusion criterion was that studies reported on outcomes related either to strengthening of laws, policies and systems that affect children on the move, or to protection of children from violence, abuse or exploitation. To make this assessment manageable within the allotted three months, a number of choices were made in agreement with the management group, all of which may have contributed to the emphases and gaps observed.

Types of studies included. As agreed with the management group, we included impact evaluations, performance evaluations, and research studies that probed the effectiveness of particular approaches. All involved primary data collection, and/or presented empirical data on which their conclusions were based. Two important categories of publication that we were unable to include were overviews/good practice reviews that did not provide empirical data on impact, and studies that highlighted the weakness of existing arrangements but had not assessed the impact of alternatives. These are important additional sources of information that would give a more complete picture of promising ways of promoting the protection of children on the move.

Foci of studies. To be included, studies had to report on child protection outcomes and/or on outcomes related to child protection systems. A lack of discussion of child protection outcomes was one of the most common reasons for excluding studies. One effect of this is to reduce the number of studies that discuss the wider protective environment for children on the move (e.g., by reducing community violence, or which aim to improve livelihoods among families on the move, but do not report on specific outcomes for children). Another set of studies of interventions aiming to support both children on the move and children in host communities were excluded because they did not specify what proportion of the children served by the interventions could be considered 'on the move'. Both these types of studies have potentially relevant insights for a longer-term and deeper evidence assessment.

Variable levels of detail concerning interventions and outcomes. The inclusion criteria for all studies required sufficient description of the intervention to be able to accurately categorize activities, and sufficient discussion of outcomes to be clear that a study reported on child protection indicators (whether at system level or at the level of children and families). Nonetheless, there was considerable diversity in the depth of discussion. One reason for this was the inclusion of 32 performance evaluations, for which assessing impact is only one of several objectives, and where impact data was typically presented in less detail, making it hard at times to fully appreciate the extent of changes observed or the reasons for these changes. Several studies also presented relatively little detail on the activities undertaken (this was particularly so with evaluations from emergency contexts, which often drew on implicit understanding among humanitarian actors about what particular activities involve). In some cases this hampered our analysis.

89 primary studies reviewed:



strengthening of laws



policies/systems



child protection



5.3 Suggestions for strengthening the evidence base

In suggesting ways to strengthen the evidence base beyond those synthesized in this REA, we are seeking to balance approaches that would generate breadth, depth and comprehensiveness with potential feasibility.

1. **Undertake additional bounded evidence assessments to complement this one**, drawing on two main sets of studies: first, analyses of the effects of existing policies intended to protect children on the move (where there is not necessarily evidence of recent reform) to identify implementation strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and potential entry points for change (there is a substantial academic, policy and advocacy literature on these issues, which could easily be tapped); and second, synthesis of insights from overview studies that point to good practice, but without citing detailed empirical evidence.
2. **Embed impact assessments in project design**. This could be achieved through progressively rolling out initiatives and services, and comparing areas receiving services with those that have not yet received them, thus also allowing for tweaks to improve project design.
3. **Make greater use of agencies' internal monitoring and case management data** (with appropriate anonymization) to understand the impacts of initiatives with a shorter time lag, and complementing this with interviews with staff who are familiar with implementation processes, challenges and facilitating factors.
4. **Undertake more thematic evaluations or studies, within or across agencies**. UNICEF's Global Evaluations on Child Protection in Emergencies and on Strengthening Child Protection Systems are potential models that could be adapted to draw on a wider range of evidence. Potential topics include the impact on children of efforts to promote a broader protective environment for people on the move (for example, efforts to promote integration and reduce xenophobia, or to reduce community violence). Another potential focus could be on effective coordination with health and education systems – an area identified by interviewees but where we found little evidence. Synthesizing insights from emerging practices and innovations would be another valuable area of focus.
5. **Invest more in:**
 - a. **understanding whether impacts have been sustained**, and where they have, what factors have contributed to their persistence;
 - b. **understanding the impacts of policy reforms and system-strengthening activities** on the lives of children on the move;
 - c. **granular analysis of the differential effects of initiatives on different groups of children on the move**.

The long-term presence of United Nations agencies in many contexts of migration and displacement means they are potentially well-placed to support analyses of this kind.



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Interviews undertaken

Sitnour Babiker, UNHCR

Noela Barasa, UNICEF

Saskia Blume, UNICEF

Miranda Fajerman, ILO

Nicholas Grisewood, ILO

Heather Komenda, IOM

Amanda Melville, UNHCR



Annex 1: Summary of studies reviewed

Table A1: Summary of studies reviewed

Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Agriteam (2019) Final Evaluation of Jordanian Community Development Support Programme	None	Jordan	Syrian refugee and host population adolescents and young people/ women	Qualitative – focus group discussions and key informant interviews	Promote social cohesion; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen system	Social services workforce training; economic strengthening activities; entrepreneurship training	Young women were not always able to apply skills training to develop businesses. Social worker training was considered to enhance participants' skills in handling GBV sensitively. Youth committees played an important role in raising awareness about GBV and VAC.
Annan (2013) Final Evaluation: Uwaruka Rushasha (New Generation). A Randomized Impact Evaluation of Village Savings and Loans Associations and Family-Based Interventions in Burundi	None	Burundi	Returnee families	RCT; participatory component with children	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Economic strengthening (microfinance); parenting skills intervention	Participants reported significantly less use of harsh discipline than non-participants (30 percentage point difference in aggregate measures). No significant impact on child labour.
Battistin (2016) Lebanon Cash Consortium (LCC) Impact Evaluation of the Multipurpose Cash Assistance Programme	None	Lebanon	Refugee families	Quantitative; quasi- experimental	Reduce use of coping strategies leading to child protection violations	Economic strengthening	No impact on child labour or child marriage



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Bayda et al. (2013). Evaluation of ILO/IPEC project on Combating Child Labour in Central Asia – Commitment becomes Action (PROACT-CAR Phase III)	ILO	Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan	Child labour, including migrants	Primary and secondary qualitative data analysis	Strengthen child protection policies and systems	Policy and legal reform; workforce strengthening	Development of a national action plan on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (2013–20) in Tajikistan but administrative reforms without related transfer of responsibilities affected Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan's capacity to improve the child protection policy environment
Bernath (2014). Evaluation of the Norwegian Refugee Council's GBV Programme in Liberia 2009-2014	None	Liberia	Returnee families	Qualitative -key informant interviews	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Workforce strengthening via long-term training and short workshops	Increased reporting of GBV; increased capacity among police to handle GBV sensitively; increased referrals and use of court system; increased awareness of sexual abuse among teachers.
Betancourt (2018). Family-Based Mental Health Promotion for Somali Bantu and Bhutanese Refugees: Feasibility and Acceptability Trial	None	USA	Refugee parents of children aged 7-17	Quantitative; quasi-experimental	Promote mental health	Home visits providing information and discussion with refugee families	Improvements in some mental health indicators among children (reduced stress, depression); some evidence of reduced reports of conduct problems (esp. for Somali respondents); no impact on reported caregiver-child relationships, though changes were significant for Bhutanese refugees.
Bimé and Ranz (2010). Evaluation of the project, Poverty Reduction Among Communities Vulnerable to Child Trafficking Through the Promotion of Decent Work in Cameroon	ILO	Cameroon	Communities vulnerable to child trafficking, women and children living with HIV/AIDS	Primary qualitative data and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Economic strengthening to reduce drivers of trafficking	Entrepreneurship, awareness-raising, community-driven micro projects, microfinance, strengthening surveillance.	The entrepreneurship component was only moderately successful because the training excluded the illiterate population and grants for youths were insufficient for their proposals. The alert system that was set up by the programme supported the identification of cases of child trafficking. In general, awareness was increased in the various target communities by members of the alert committees



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Boothby et al. (2009a, 2009b). Evaluation of UNICEF's programmes in Sri Lanka and Indonesia in response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami	UNICEF	Sri Lanka	Internally displaced, unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) from the tsunami	Mixed methods evaluation	Strengthen child protection policies and systems; interim care arrangements; community-level protection.	Policy and legal reform; community-level capacity building; resources to caregivers	Combination of a safe house mechanism to protect children and case conferencing was found to be effective in promoting long-term family care alternatives but compliance with post-tsunami care legislation by local authorities was an implementation challenge
Brown and Copland (2013a). Evaluation of UNICEF programmes to protect children in emergencies: Pakistan country case study	UNICEF	Pakistan	Internally displaced, UASC	Mixed methods evaluation	Strengthen child protection policy/ system, strengthen mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS); empowerment and skills development	Policy advice, technical assistance, training, service provision, advocacy	Improvement in birth registration, social service workforce capacity, Increased community capacity to prevent/respond to child protection concerns, Effective reunification, family tracing. The weakest area concerns interim care arrangements for children and ensuring effective follow-up and case management of separated children. Ideally, interim care arrangements should be followed up every 12 weeks until a decision is made about permanency of the placement.
Brown and Copland (2013b). Evaluation of UNICEF programmes to protect children in emergencies: South Sudan country case study	UNICEF	South Sudan	Internally displaced, UASC, children moving with families, children affiliated with armed groups	Mixed methods evaluation	Strengthen child protection policy/system; strengthen MHPSS	Policy advice, technical assistance, training, service provision, advocacy	Improvement in child protection policy and social workforce capacity. Mixed outcomes in family tracing and reunification. The focus on livelihoods should be sustained and should continue to engage children released from armed forces/armed groups together with other vulnerable children.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Brown and Perschler (2013) Evaluation of UNICEF programmes to protect children in emergencies: Synthesis report	UNICEF	Various	Internally displaced, UASC, refugees, returnees, children moving with families, children affiliated with armed groups	Mixed methods evaluation	Strengthen child protection policy/system; strengthen MHPSS	Policy advice, technical assistance, training, service provision, advocacy	Improvement in child protection policy, social workforce capacity and use of interim care arrangements, Increased community capacity to prevent/respond to child protection concerns. The evaluation recommends investments in medium term, systematic capacity-building of government and national NGO partners in child protection in emergencies, with an emphasis on data management and quality programming.
Bugnion (2017) External Evaluation of the "Strengthening Regional Multi-National Coordination for Increased Protection of Vulnerable and Trafficked Migrant Children Travelling Through the Gulf of Aden Migration Route" Project	IOM	Ethiopia, Yemen, Djibouti	UASC	Mixed methods evaluation	Strengthen child protection policy/system	Policy advice, technical assistance, training, service provision, advocacy	Improvement in child protection policy, social service workforce capacity and use of interim care arrangements. to act as deterrent to irregular migration, alternative conditions should exist. Reintegration assistance is one such factor, but should be coupled with local development initiatives (so that there is no social fracture within the community), where other development actors work on local development initiatives and IOM oversees reintegration assistance.
Bulosan (2015). Strengthening case management of unaccompanied minors and facilitating family re-integration in Western Afghanistan: End of project evaluation	None	Afghanistan	Unaccompanied child labourers deported from Iran, returning to communities of origin	Primary qualitative data and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Strengthen family reunification; reintegration of returnees; reduce drivers of unsafe migration/trafficking	Strengthening social service and police workforce capacity, MHPSS for returnees, interim care, livelihood skills training, awareness-raising in communities about risks of trafficking	Improved capacity of social workers to respond to psychosocial needs of returnee child labourers, improved attitudes of police towards unaccompanied children, successful reunification and reintegration of returning child labourers through psychosocial support and provision of livelihood skills development. Increased awareness in communities of origin of the risks of trafficking and unsafe migration.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Chaaban et al., (2020) Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance in Lebanon: Impact Evaluation on the Well-Being of Syrian Refugees	None	Lebanon	Forced displacement due to conflict, Syrian children and families living in host communities in Lebanon	Primary quantitative survey data	Improving well-being and resilience of refugee children and families	Multi-purpose cash transfer	Improvements in adult psychosocial well-being, no evidence of impacts on rate of child labour, which was already low at baseline. No impact on child labour.
Chames et al. (2016), Evaluation of United Nations joint project, Protecting Migrant Children from Trafficking and Exploitation	Joint (IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF)	Zambia	Migration, trafficking and forced displacement of children, UASC	Primary qualitative data and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Strengthen child protection policy and systems; workforce capacity; increase awareness of trafficking and exploitation; MHPSS	Awareness-raising campaigns in host communities, review of Zambian child protection law and policy	Increased social service and law enforcement capacity to respond to UASC and prevent child trafficking, including indications of more positive attitudes towards UASC. Community sensitization campaigns, workshops and recreational activities for UASC, child migrants, and youth from host community improved social inclusion and community cohesion. Reduced stigma and discrimination in participating communities; however, intervention also needs to be implemented in surrounding communities
Chiodi (2018), Cluster evaluation of ILO-supported programmes to prevent child labour among refugees and host communities in Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria	ILO	Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria	Host community and Syrian refugee youth	Primary qualitative data and secondary quantitative and qualitative analysis	Strengthen child protection policies and systems – relating to child labour; reduce drivers of child labour; sensitization to risks of child labour and trafficking	Law and policy reform; workforce capacity building; community capacity strengthening; awareness-raising campaigns on child labour and trafficking; provision of livelihood training and support to reduce drivers of child labour.	Memo prohibiting child labour in agriculture under the age of 16 in Lebanon, which was particularly impactful in targeting Syrian refugee children. Training of fieldworkers and NGOs on child labour prevention and risks of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL). Capacity building of counsellors to reach vulnerable children. Establishment of children's centres and monitoring mechanisms in workplaces. Children withdrawn from WFCL, at-risk children prevented from entering WFCL. Evidence of attitude change among employers, increased awareness among general public and government.



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Cozens (2013). Supporting the protective environment for girls in Goma, Eastern DRC	None	DRC	Returning girls associated with armed groups and forces and girls vulnerable to recruitment	Primary qualitative data and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Strengthen return and reintegration of girls associated with armed groups and forces; reduce drivers of unsafe migration and exploitation	Provision of interim care, psychosocial support, livelihood skills training, sensitisation of communities of origin	Some evidence of improved community and parent awareness of violence against children and GBV and how to report cases to child protection services. Mixed evidence on effective reintegration of girls, a notable lack of information provided by local implementing organisation to girls and families to support their return. Provision of tailoring skills training not effective due to saturation of the market.
De Hoop (2018). "Min Ila" cash transfer programme for displaced Syrian children in Lebanon (UNICEF and WFP): Impact evaluation endline report	UNICEF	Lebanon	Forced displacement due to Syrian conflict, refugee children living with families in host communities in Lebanon	Primary qualitative and qualitative data, collected via interviews, focus group discussions and interviews Primary	Economic strengthening of refugee households	Cash transfer	Evidence of improved psychosocial well-being of children on some indicators (depression, optimism for the future, confidence). Some respondents believed that there was a decrease in child labour associated with the cash transfer because children were now going to school instead of working.
Debert (2019). External evaluation. Plan International UK's DEC funded response to the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh. Phase II May 2018- June 2019	None	Bangladesh	Forced displacement due to violence, separated Rohingya refugee children and children with families living in camp and settlement settings	Primary qualitative data and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data	Strengthen social service; workforce capacity; care of separated children in camp and settlement settings	Provision of emergency alternative care, and strengthening of foster carer capacity, social service workforce strengthening, creation of safe spaces in camp settings	Improved capacity of foster carers to provide emergency alternative care for separated children, strengthened frontline staff capacity to respond to cases of separated and unaccompanied children in emergencies.
Eyber (2014). Evaluation of the effectiveness of child-friendly spaces in IDP camps in eastern DRC	None	DRC	Internally displaced children	Mixed methods	Psychosocial services and promotion of well-being	Establishment of child-friendly spaces (CFSs)	Reduction of mental health difficulties. CFSs can continue to provide a safe space for children as well as to act as drivers of broader community mobilization beyond the initial emergency response.



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Feintuch (2018), Global evaluation of IRC's Families Make the Difference Parenting Programme	None	Several	Internally displaced/ refugee children/parents and caregivers	Mixed methods (primary and secondary quantitative and qualitative)	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Parenting programmes – strengthening care	Improvement in caregiver knowledge. The programme is feasible in post-conflict and protracted conflict/displacement environments. It is unsuccessful in new conflict areas with transient populations. Programmes in camps face fewer barriers to implementation than in urban or rural areas. Outside camps, partnerships can mitigate logistical challenges. Reaching more men has additional benefits for families and communities but needs greater effort.
Ferro (2019), <u>Evaluation of Strengthening Protection for Vulnerable Populations and Improving Access to Psychosocial Support to Displaced Children in Emergency Settings in Mozambique</u>	IOM	Mozambique	Internally displaced children	Qualitative	Reduce drivers; strengthen child protection policy/system; reduce violence, exploitation or abuse; strengthen psychosocial support	Psychosocial services	Improvement in caregiver knowledge of effective care and increase in financial resources to support care. Improvement in mental health status. The involvement of community leaders and parent sensitization and information sharing was crucial to success. Information sharing and good communication were also essential to ensure beneficiaries' buy-in.
Foster (2015), <u>Impact of Multipurpose Cash Assistance on Outcomes for Children in Lebanon</u>	UNHCR	Lebanon	Refugee children	Mixed methods quasi-experimental study	Economic strengthening	Multipurpose cash assistance	Improved mental health.
Galloway et al. (2014), <u>Between control and support. Protection of minor asylum seekers at risk: the Dutch case</u>	None	Netherlands	Asylum seekers, UASC	Mixed methods	Strengthen care and mental health; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Protected reception, access to legal assistance	Most children who entered Protected Reception applied for asylum, with a small group of trafficked victims requesting a temporary residence permit. After two years, the authors found evidence of decreases in the influx of risk groups at and the number of disappearances from the reception centres.



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Garcia Moreno and Quispe (2012), Evaluation of Stop Child Labour in Agriculture: Contribution to the prevention and elimination of worst forms of child labour	ILO	Mexico	Child labourers (including migrants)	Qualitative	Strengthen child labour policy; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Preparation of list of hazardous child labour, labour inspection protocols	Improved policy. The most important outcome was the preparation of a list of hazardous child labour for incorporation in the Federal Regulations for Workplace Safety, Hygiene and Environments.
Garoff et al. (2019), Development and implementation of a mental health intervention for unaccompanied minors	None	Finland	Refugees asylum seekers, UASC	Mixed methods	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Group-based mental health intervention for unaccompanied refugee children	Symptom measures showed no statistically significant changes on the mental health variables studied. However, staff members and unaccompanied minors reported increased trust and communication, and participating staff members felt empowered to facilitate groups independently. The group model promoted social interaction and built trust among those in the accommodation units.
Gaunt (2016), UNHCR cash assistance: improving refugee lives and supporting local economies	UNHCR	Jordan	Refugees, children moving with families, parents/ caregivers, child labourers	Mixed methods	Reducing harm and exploitation; economic strengthening	Monthly cash assistance, winterization cash, and cash for health	Reduction in mental health difficulties. The programme is cardless, pinless, and cash withdrawal is fraud-proof. This process enables refugees to protect their dignity and use the cash directly for the most needed items, such as rent, utilities, etc. Moreover, cash is injected into the local economy, benefiting the Jordanian host community.
Giordano et al. (2017), Synthesis evaluation of cash-based interventions	UNHCR	Jordan	Refugees, children moving with families	Pre-/post-evaluation using quantitative and qualitative tools	Economic strengthening	Cash assistance	No change in child labour outcomes.
Glass et al. (2016), Evaluating the effectiveness of GBV prevention programmes with refugees in Uganda	UNHCR	Uganda	Refugees	Qualitative	Workforce strengthening and reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	GBV prevention programme and awareness campaign	Improvement in workforce strengthening.



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Grasset (2019), Multi-purpose Cash Transfer 'Plus': Maximising impact on children through cash-based programming	None	Colombia	Refugees, children moving with families	Pre-/post-research study using quantitative and qualitative tools	Economic strengthening	Multi-purpose cash assistance	Improvement in caregiver resources for effective care, effective reunification and family tracing, improvement in mental health.
Greaves et al. (2019), Shelter in a storm: A case study exploring the use of psychosocial strategies in non-formal refugee education in Lebanon	None	Lebanon	Refugees	Qualitative research study	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS; skills development	Psychosocial support to students by 2 teachers who are refugees	Improvement in mental health. Primarily employing teachers who come from the same population as the learners seems to assist teachers in establishing trust with displaced children, thereby creating effective educational safe spaces, where children can begin to process the experience of displacement and start to acquire the skills necessary for them to negotiate the complexities of life in a new country.
GSI (2019), Endline assessment for multisectoral assistance to South Sudanese refugees and Ugandan host communities	None	Uganda	Refugees, host communities	Endline assessment using mixed methods	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS; economic strengthening	Protective education, psychosocial support through CFS, cash assistance	Improvement in caregiver knowledge of effective care, improved access to information, vocational skills training, improvement in mental health. The choice of implementing consortium partners is critical in such multisectoral programmes, where no single organization is competent in all areas.
Hamilton et al. (2017), Formative evaluation of UNICEF strategy and approach to child protection system building	UNICEF	Myanmar	Refugees, host communities, trafficked children	Formative evaluation using mixed methods	Strengthen: child protection policy, workforce, community child protection capacity, and care of children on the move	Technical assistance, training, advocacy and case management services	Improved community level capacity to prevent/respond to child protection concerns. Improvement in children's/ parents'/caregivers' knowledge of how to access child protection services. Improved mental health. There are significant indications that the Case management System functions more effectively in areas with an NGO partner supporting Department of Social Welfare with case management work.



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Hassan (2019), Positive Alternatives for Egyptian Youth At-Risk of Irregular Migration (PLAYA) Final External Evaluation	IOM	Egypt	Trafficked children or at risk of being trafficked, youth considering migration	Qualitative external evaluation	Strengthen child protection policy; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; empowerment and skills development	Direct assistance (e.g., health, legal, psychosocial counselling, shelters, hotlines) and voluntary return services. Technical assistance, training, advocacy	Multi-stakeholder involvement under different activities proved to enhance the overall quality of delivered services and enabled wider coverage and coherence between different target groups.
Hassain (2013), Evaluation of the Community Based Education Project for Children in IDP Settlement, Kamar Kalagh, Herat (2012-13)	UNICEF	Afghanistan	IDPs, parents/ caregivers	Mixed methods performance evaluation	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Life skills/literacy training project for IDP children	Improvement in caregiver knowledge of effective care, social norms and caregiver relating to violence against children/ GBV. No stakeholders' analysis was done to identify and involve the primary stakeholders during project planning, limiting the potential for solid and participatory M&E).
Hermosilla et al. (2019), Child-friendly spaces impact across five humanitarian settings: a meta-analysis	None	Jordan, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Iraq	IDP, refugee	Mixed methods research study	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Child-friendly spaces	Reported violence against children reduced. CFS can provide – albeit inconsistently - a protective and promotive environment for younger children. CFS show no impact with older children and in connecting children and carers with wider community resources.
Holzaepfel et al. (2013), Evaluation report: Evaluating the effectiveness of gender-based violence prevention programs with refugees in Malaysia	UNHCR	Malaysia	Refugees, asylum-seekers	Qualitative evaluation	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Training, GBV programmes	Reduced acceptance of GBV and violence against children. Reduction in mental health difficulties. Refugees were aware of most of the domestic violence services provided by NGO implementers. Increased understanding that GBV, child sexual abuse and rape can affect men and boys.



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Holzaepfel et al. (2014), Evaluation report: Evaluating the effectiveness of gender-based violence prevention programs with refugees in Chad	UNHCR	Chad	Refugees, asylum-seekers	Qualitative evaluation	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Training, GBV programmes	Improvement in community capacity to prevent/respond to child protection concerns. Improvement in children's/ parents'/caregivers' knowledge of how to access child protection services.
IOM (2013), IOM internal evaluation of the project: Technical support to the Government of Ghana to address child trafficking and other child protection abuses in the Ketu South, North and South Tongu Districts of the Volta Region	IOM	Ghana	Trafficked children or at risk of being trafficked	Qualitative evaluation	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Training, advocacy	Improved community capacity to prevent/respond to child protection concerns and caregiver knowledge of effective care. Improvement in birth registration. Future programming should consider sponsoring durbars as a means to ensure higher attendance for key activities.
IOM (2019), Strengthening responses to child trafficking and modern slavery: A Pilot Project to support foster carers looking after Albanian and Vietnamese unaccompanied children	IOM	UK	Trafficked children or at risk of being trafficked, unaccompanied and separated children, refugees, asylum seekers	Pre/post mixed methods evaluation	Strengthen care of children on the move	Training	Improved caregiver knowledge of effective care. Many foster carers and professionals, reported that foster carers have limited experience online platforms, which negatively affects their access to information. Opportunities to consult on the phone/in-person were recommended by the carers and the research team.



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Jani et al. (2016), Reducing HIV-related risk and mental health problems through a client-centred psychosocial intervention for vulnerable adolescents in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia	None	Ethiopia	Child migrants	Pre/post mixed methods research study	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Research	The psychosocial intervention was associated with increased knowledge and uptake of HIV and sexual health services among both male and female migrant adolescents and with reduced mental health problems among female adolescents. Mental health problems varied significantly for male and female adolescents, suggesting that future interventions should be tailored to address their different needs and would benefit from intensive follow-up.
Jani (2017), Reunification is not enough: assessing the needs of unaccompanied migrant youth	None	USA	Unaccompanied and separated children	Mixed methods research study	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen care for children on the move	Research	Improved caregiver knowledge of effective care. Sponsors and families rarely read information provided – the study recommended telephone calls to help them learn where to find relevant information or about local services.
Jones et al. (2014), Lessons from introducing a livelihood project for unaccompanied children into an existing child protection programme in the Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya	None	Kenya	Unaccompanied and separated children	Qualitative research study	Strengthen care of children on the move; livelihoods strengthening	Research	Improvement in care arrangements. Increased knowledge of effective care by caregivers as well as financial resources. No measurable impacts on child protection.
Kalverboer et al. (2015), Unaccompanied minors in the Netherlands and the care facility in which they flourish best	None	The Netherlands	Unaccompanied and separated children	Mixed methods study with qualitative and quantitative data	Strengthen care of children on the move	Research	Unaccompanied children in foster care were more likely to report feeling supported, have Dutch friends, and to be able to make future plans than minors living on campuses. In contrast, unaccompanied children in small living units and small living groups often miss affectionate bonds, care, support and stability in their lives. Minors in campuses most often expressed feeling lonely and sad and being excluded from the Dutch society.



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<u>Karlsen (2012), Save the Children Emergency Response to the Ivorian Refugee Crisis in Liberia</u>	None	Liberia	Unaccompanied and separated children, children moving with families	Desk review, primary qualitative data collection - Interviews, group discussions etc. observation	Strengthen care of children on the move; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Referral system for vulnerable children, network of foster families for unaccompanied children, and safe spaces for play and learning.	Increase in children's access to child protection services and inputs. Community based structures were set up, including coordination with relevant local, county and national-level stakeholders. Agreements were established to move a rights-based agenda forward in the future. No changes in children's reported experiences of violence and GBV.
<u>Khawaja and Ramirez (2019), Building Resilience in Transcultural Adolescents: An Evaluation of a Group Program</u>	None	Australia	Children moving with families, refugee children	Quantitative survey	Strengthen care of children on the move; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy	The study observed an overall improvement in participants' wellbeing and resilience associated with the acculturation process. However, this improvement was not influenced by the format of the intervention, gender, visa status (refugee versus migrant), or duration of stay in Australia.
<u>King and Said (2019), Working with unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people: cultural considerations and acceptability of a cognitive behavioural group approach</u>	None	United Kingdom	Unaccompanied and separated children, refugee children	Quantitative using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire	Strengthen care of children on the move; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Group sessions discussing three topics: physical health needs; emotional wellbeing; and resilience-building	Group sessions allowed participants to receive empirically grounded support for a range of emotional needs while having their mental health needs reviewed as appropriate.



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<u>Kranges and Zia (2013), Project Evaluation Report: Emergency Psychosocial Support for Conflict Afflicted Internally Displaced Children and their families in Herat Province, Afghanistan</u>	None	Afghanistan	Internally displaced children	Document review, key-informant interviews and focus group discussions	Reduce drivers of migration; strengthen care of children on the move; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS; empowerment and skills development	Establishment of child-friendly spaces, awareness raising on child protection issues, life-skills education and psychosocial support, establishment of referral mechanisms	Participants improved their awareness on how to deal with child protection issues by saying they will report to community leaders, the police or the government. The child friendly spaces generated interest among the children and parents.
<u>Kurtz (2016), Advancing Adolescents: Evidence on the Impact of Psychosocial Support for Syrian Refugee and Jordanian Adolescents</u>	None	Jordan	Host community and Syrian refugee young people	Randomized impact evaluation	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Mentors implement educational and skills building training in safe and familiar locations in the community	Participants demonstrated higher levels of trust for people in their community and of people of other nationalities and religions, and reported an increase in the number of friends outside of their own community. Youth in the treatment group were more likely to indicate greater access to safe spaces and feeling safe in their community compared to the control group.
<u>Lehmann and Masterson (2014), Emergency Economies: The Impact of Cash Assistance in Lebanon</u>	UNHCR	Lebanon	Syrian refugees	Randomized impact evaluation	Economic strengthening	Cash transfer	Refugee population observed a reduction of hostility from the host population since receiving the cash transfer. Positive effects were also observed on reducing child labour, as 10% of households in the control group had to send children to work, compared to 4% in the treatment group.
<u>MacFarlane et al. (2019), Community-based surveillance of unaccompanied and separated children in drought-affected northern Ethiopia</u>	IOM	Ethiopia	Drought-related separation	Analysis of project records	Strengthen community protection systems for UASC	Community-based reporting via SMS	Approach seen as effective but greater linkage to assistance for UASC required; stipends may be needed to maintain focal points' motivation over time.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
<u>Madfis et al. (2010), Emergency safe spaces in Haiti and the Solomon Islands</u>	None	Haiti and the Solomon Islands	Natural hazards that resulted in internal displacement	Child and parent surveys and observation tools	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Provision of a safe designated area where caring adults supervise daily and structured activities, adapted to the cultural context and type of emergency	Children reported learning how to resolve conflicts and reconcile differences in the safe spaces, and that games and activities helped create friendships. Over the 6 weeks, the children became more communicative, cooperative and accepting of others. Positive change in four measures: children's resilience, behaviour and the way they felt about themselves, learning, and return to normalcy. The sample size was too small to test for statistical significance.
<u>Mauney (2015), Safe Migration and Reduced Trafficking SMART: End of project evaluation report</u>	None	Cambodia	Unsafe migration and trafficking	Desk review, qualitative data collection, and analysis of project's baseline and periodic reports	Strengthening community child protection and systems	Volunteers promoted safe migration; awareness raising (through posters, Easy Cards, radio, TV, community discussions, etc)	By project end targeted local authorities demonstrated increased knowledge and capacity to understand and deliver the project's key messages and refer when appropriate to services. Community members were also more empowered to make informed choices about safe migration and report cases of trafficking.
<u>McDonald et al. (2012), Cultural adaptation of an evidence-based parenting programme with elders from South East Asia in the US: co-producing Families and Schools Together - FAST</u>	None	USA	Political refugees (Hmong minority) in the USA	Randomized control trial	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Parents are coached to lead family activities and, to play responsively with one child. Opportunity for parents to socialise with other parents	Parents reported statistically significant improvements in child anxiety, child social skills and family adaptability, with no changes in externalizing or family cohesion.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Mercy Corps (2015), Seeking Stability: Evidence on Strategies for Reducing the Risk of Conflict in Northern Jordanian Communities Hosting Syrian Refugees	None	Jordan	Syrian refugees living in host communities	Mixed methods quasi-experimental evaluation	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Training for Syrian and Jordanian participants in negotiation strategies, proposal writing, and conducting community activities	Residents in communities where Mercy Corps was conducting conflict management activities saw a decrease in their support for and use of violence, while communities that did not participate showed an increase in support for the use of violence during this period.
Metzler et al. (2015) Evaluation of Child Friendly Spaces: Jordan Field Study Report	None	Jordan	Syrian refugees living in host communities	Mixed methods using quasi-experimental design and focus group discussions (FGDs)	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Activities consisted of drawing, handicrafts, puzzles, games, storytelling, singing, drama, life skills sessions and informational videos.	Caregivers of children aged 6–9 years reported that attending CFSs helped support children's well-being and maintain the level of reported developmental assets (e.g. positive values, social competencies, positive identity, empowerment) over time. Among children aged 10–12, the study found modest impacts of CFSs on well-being; caregiver reports suggest no impact other than a weakening of resilience, an effect not found among children who did not attend CFS.
Metzler et al. (2013), Evaluation of Child Friendly Spaces: Ethiopia Field Study Summary Report	None	Ethiopia	Somali refugees in Ethiopia living in camp	Quasi-experimental design survey, FGDs and interviews with participants	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Functional literacy and numeracy skills; some engagement in psychosocial activities	All children showed improved psychosocial well-being after several months in the camp, whether or not they participated in the CFS programme. However, young girls with greater 'developmental assets' (such as positive values and identity, familial and community sources of support, and a commitment to learning) at baseline were more likely to have attended CFS.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Metzler et al. (2014), Evaluation of Child Friendly Spaces: Iraq Field Study Report	UNICEF	Iraq	Syrian refugees living in Domiz refugee camp in the Kurdistan region of Iraq	Survey data collected with caregivers and children	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Activities included music, sports, drawing, storytelling and folklore, drama, English sessions, dance, health awareness and psychosocial support	The CFS was mainly used by younger children. Caregivers reported more gains in developmental assets for children attending the CFS than non-attenders. Attending the CFS had little impact on reducing children's troubling thoughts and feelings, negative coping strategies for children, or linking to child protection structures and services within the camp. Attending the CFS promoted a reduction in protection concerns for older children over time.
Metzler et al. (2019), Short- and longer-term impacts of Child Friendly Space Interventions in Rwamwanja Refugee Settlement, Uganda	UNICEF	Uganda	Conflict in DRC. Congolese refugees in Rwamwanja refugee settlement	Quantitative methods comparing baseline and endline; and comparison between CFS attenders and non-attenders	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Traditional song and dance, art, storytelling, organized sports, unstructured free play, some literacy and numeracy; peer-to-peer supported group discussions	The CFS programme was found to be well utilized by younger children, but less so by older children. CFS assessed to meet higher quality standards had greater impact on promoting children's developmental assets and protecting psychosocial well-being than CFS assessed to meet lower standards.
Meyer DeMott et al. (2017), A controlled early group intervention study for unaccompanied minors: Can Expressive Arts alleviate symptoms of trauma and enhance life satisfaction?	None	Norway	Unaccompanied asylum seeking children	Quantitative methods comparing treatment and control groups	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	10 sessions over 5 weeks, an expressive arts intervention carried out by facilitators following a pre-set session guide (EXIT – Expressive Arts in Transition).	The study showed some differences in the trajectories of mental health complaints, life satisfaction and expectations during a 25 month follow-up, with more positive outcomes for the intervention group. The differences were most modest for mental health and most evident for life satisfaction and hope for the future. At the end of the follow-up, boys in the treatment group had higher life satisfaction and hope for the future than boys in the control group.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
<u>Meyer et al. (2017), Measuring impact through a child protection index: Time 1 & Time 2 studies Kiziba Camp, Rwanda</u>	UNHCR	Rwanda	Humanitarian setting, refugees in Kiziba camp	Mixed methods, including key informant interviews (KIs), adolescent and caregiver surveys, and FGDs at three different points	Strengthen child protection policy and systems	Implementation of set of policies and frameworks	Some areas of the system showed effectiveness, including a range of policies and procedures designed to prevent child protection risks, and provision of services including adolescent clubs and committees, sports and recreational activities, and technical and vocational activities. There was a significant reduction in caregiver reported acceptability of child maltreatment, specifically physical abuse, from 2013 to 2015.
<u>Meyer et al. (2018), Measuring impact through a child protection index: Time 1 & Time 2 studies Kiryandongo and Adjumani refugee settlements, Uganda</u>	UNHCR	Uganda	Humanitarian setting, refugees in Kiryandongo and Adjumani settlements	Mixed methods, including KIs, adolescent and caregiver surveys, and FGDs at two different points	Strengthen child protection policy and systems	Implementation of set of policies and frameworks	Improvements in child protection system strength did not appear to have significant impacts on reduction of violence or resulted in higher levels of psychosocial well-being in the time period under study. Changes in caregivers' attitudes were not translated into a greatly reduced experience of violence among children.
<u>O'Leary et al. (2015), Community-based child protection with Palestinian refugees in South Lebanon: Engendering hope and safety</u>	None	Lebanon	Palestinian refugees in South Lebanon living in camps and illegal gatherings	Survey to measure a hope scale and in-depth case studies with children and their families	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Training and coaching, social work/case management, family visits, stakeholder visits, meetings and networking, events and youth micro-projects	While hope scores for the intervention group increased over time, they decreased significantly over the same time period for the comparison group.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
O'Shaughnessy et al. (2012), Sweet Mother: evaluation of a pilot mental health service for asylum-seeking mothers and babies	None	Asylum seeker mothers and their babies	UK	Mixed methods, including reflective infant-led session evaluations, CARE Index video microanalysis, and reflective FGDs	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Two-hour weekly group with mothers and their babies led by two psychologists	Mothers reported feelings of "togetherness" including the opportunity to come together with women and babies in the same situation, sharing meals together, sharing cultural ideas about parenting, and sharing experiences of stress – notably their relationship with the Home Office. Confidentiality was reinforced regularly. Keeping confidence and feeling safe enabled women to ask questions about parenting that may otherwise have been left unasked and unanswered
Okello et al. (2018), Evaluation of lifesaving shelter, protection and health support for South Sudanese refugees in Uganda	None	South Sudanese refugees in Uganda	Uganda	Mixed methods, employing systematic review of documents and Most Significant Change (MSC) technique	Strengthen care of children on the move; reduce violence, exploitation and abuse;	Provision of semi-permanent living shelters, mapping of GBV hotspots, provision of solar lights, use of community-based facilitators (CBFs) to disseminate information and make GBV referrals	Overall, the semi-permanent shelters provided are addressing the safety and dignity needs of persons with special needs and their household members. The case management approach employed by CARE to identify and support GBV survivors was highly effective in encouraging survivors to seek support.
Panter-Brick et al. (2018), Insecurity, distress and mental health: experimental and randomized controlled trials of a psychosocial intervention for youth affected by the Syrian crisis	None	Youth affected by the Syrian crisis	Jordan	Randomized control trial comparing treatment youth and wait-list controls over 2 programme implementation cycles	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Provision of psychosocial support to war-affected youth	Medium-to-small effect sizes for all psychosocial outcomes, namely Human Insecurity, Human Distress, and Perceived Stress, and 2 secondary mental health outcomes. No programme impacts for pro-social behaviour or post-traumatic stress reactions. Beneficial impacts were stronger for youth with exposure to 4 trauma events or more.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Perschler and Brown (2013), Evaluation of UNICEF programmes to protect children in emergencies: Colombia country case study	UNICEF	Children living in migration areas prone to gang violence and child returnees	Colombia	Document review and key informant interviews	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Two interventions: <i>Golombiao</i> (and <i>Retorno a la Alegria</i> . <i>Golombaio</i> , a sport-based approach that promotes peaceful co-existence and conflict resolution and gender equality among young people aged 14–25. <i>Retorno a la Alegria</i> aims to strengthen the skills and self-esteem of younger children and their families.	The most significant changes were found in family relations, peaceful resolution of problems, relationships with people of the opposite sex, focusing time on studies, engagement in what happens at municipal level and developing friendships, self-esteem and a positive outlook. However, in relation to the goal of ‘keeping myself away from gangs and armed groups’, the change had been relatively low. <i>Golombiao</i> was highly valued by girls and boys and parents, and by the sectors engaged in preventing recruitment. In FGDs, adolescents identified many useful lessons learned, including respect for others, gender equality and the importance of dialogue in resolving problems. Girls and boys both mentioned the way in which it challenges gender stereotypes.
Puffer et al. (2017), The impact of a family skills training intervention among Burmese migrant families in Thailand: A randomized controlled trial	None	Burmese migrant families displaced in Thailand	Thailand	Randomized control trial	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; promotion of well-being	Parenting programme	The strongest effects were on parent–child relationship quality and family functioning, while there were mixed results on changes in discipline practices.
Raithelhuber (2019a), Rearranging Differential Inclusion through Civic Solidarity: Loose Coupling in Mentorship for “Unaccompanied Minors”	None	Unaccompanied refugee children	Austria	Semi-structured interviews, FGDs and observation	Strengthen care of children on the move	Mentoring initiative	Positive outcomes for young people’s social capital, who felt that their ‘godparents’ from the local community provided them with emotional support and encouraged them to pursue their goals.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Raiithelhuber (2019b), 'If we want, they help us in any way': how 'unaccompanied refugee minors' experience mentoring relationships	None	Unaccompanied refugee children	Austria	Semi-structured interviews and observations	Strengthen care of children on the move	Mentoring initiative	Positive outcomes on social networks. Also, young people experienced mentoring as a form of support that was not only instrumental, but also informational and emotional.
Research and Evaluation Metrics (2017), Final Evaluation report for the Temporary Cash Assistance Project in Bab Al Tabbaneh	None	Refugee children and their families	Lebanon	Document review, secondary data analysis of baseline, endline and post-distribution monitoring, and FGDs	Economic strengthening	Cash transfers	Beneficiaries felt less fear outside their homes when they could afford their rent as landlords stopped mistreating their children to push them to pay. Children's perceived reduced experiences of violence in the household. Male heads of households experienced less stress and anxiety because of the cash, which translated in being calmer with their children, with less punishment and verbal abuse.
Rip et al. (2020), An explorative study into the fostering experiences of unaccompanied refugee children, their foster carers and social workers	None	Unaccompanied and separated boys	Netherlands	Qualitative research study	Strengthen care of children on the move	Foster placement	Improvement of interim care arrangements. Participants were satisfied with the foster placement. However, some children also reported negative experiences during their placement or felt uncomfortable, but still rated the placement as successful. Children and carers valued the cultural similarity of the foster placement.
Ritchie and Gaulter (2020), Dancing towards Belonging: The use of a dance intervention to influence migrant pupils' sense of belonging in school	None	Children moving with families, child migrants (not trafficked)	UK	Qualitative research study	Strengthen MHPSS	Dance intervention	Findings indicated that participation fostered opportunities for pupils to connect with one another, to feel safe to build confidence and engage meaningfully, all factors that have been linked with 'sense of belonging'. The study gives strength to the use of dance to support the psychological well-being of newly arrived migrant pupils.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
<u>Roth and Hartnett (2018), Creating reasons to stay: Unaccompanied youth migration, community-based programs, and the power of “push” factors in El Salvador</u>	None	Young people considering migration	El Salvador	Quantitative research study	Reduce unsafe migration	Community violence prevention activities	The project could not really affect the high levels of community violence or lack of economic opportunities hence limited impact on young people’s intention to migrate. It did help them de-escalate in cases of interpersonal conflict.
<u>Rubenstein et al. (2015), Community-based surveillance to monitor trends in unaccompanied and separated children in eastern DRC</u>	None	UASC, IDPs	DRC	Mixed methods research study	Strengthen community child protection capacity; strengthen care of children in the move	Mobile phone-based community surveillance system	The pilot results suggest that implementing a mobile phone-based surveillance system in a humanitarian setting may be feasible and cost effective and fills a critical gap in the measurement of UASC in emergencies. A longer pilot to better understand how the system performs over time is recommended.
<u>Schenkenberg et al. (2018), Evaluation of UNICEF’s response to the Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh</u>	UNICEF	Refugees	Bangladesh	Mixed methods evaluation	Workforce strengthening; strengthening child protection policy; prevention/reduction of harm	Policy advice, service provision, advocacy	Improved social service workforce capacity. While child-friendly spaces provided a safe space to children and adolescents, UNICEF’s scale-up was insufficient to ensure adequate coverage. Systems developed did not sufficiently address GBV. The limited capacity of NGO partners on the ground hampered effectiveness.
<u>Search for Common Ground (2014), Enhanced Information and Communications for Non-violence among Malian Refugees in Niger: Rapport Evaluation Finale</u>	None	Malian refugees living in a refugee camp in Niger	Niger	Qualitative research study	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Information and communications programme	Reported reduction of conflict within the camps and improved family relationships. Participants in theatre activities reported increased awareness of peaceful resolutions to conflict.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Sim et al. (2014), Building Happy Families: Impact evaluation of a parenting and family skills intervention for migrant and displaced Burmese families in Thailand	None	Burmese refugee families living in host communities	Thailand	Randomized controlled trial	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse	Parenting programme	Caregivers reported stopping or decreasing use of harsh punishment such as beating, shouting, or swearing at their child.
Sloane (2014), The Impact of Oxfam's Cash Distributions on Syrian refugee households in Host Communities and Informal Settlements in Jordan	None	Syrian refugees living in host communities and informal settlements	Jordan	Semi-structured interviews	Economic strengthening	Cash transfer	No impact on child labour. Improved social cohesion at the community and household levels; however, some evidence of decreased social cohesion between host communities and refugees.
Stark et al. (2018), Preventing violence against refugee adolescent girls: findings from a cluster randomised controlled trial in Ethiopia	None	Refugee children and their families living in a refugee camp	Ethiopia	Randomized controlled trial	Reduce violence, exploitation and abuse; skills development	Parenting programme and life skills and safe spaces programme for adolescent girls	No change in girls' reports of experience of any form of violence. Decreased incidence of child marriage.
Stewart et al. (2018) Supporting refugee parents of young children: "knowing you're not alone"	None	Canada	Refugee parents living in two Canadian provinces	FGDs and interviews	Strengthen MPHSS and social support	Face-to-face support groups	Results demonstrated that this intervention increased participants' social support by: providing information, enhancing spousal relationships, and expanding engagement with their ethnic community. This pilot intervention decreased refugee new parents' loneliness and isolation, enhanced coping, improved their capacity to attain education and employment, and increased their parenting competence.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
Tam et al. (2020), A Resilience-Based Intervention Programme to Enhance Psychological Well-Being and Protective Factors for Rural-to-Urban Migrant Children in China	None	China	Rural-to-urban migrant children in China	Randomized controlled trial	Strengthen MPHSS and social support	Weekly sessions in schools during regular school hours	In the intervention group, migrant children reported a higher increase in social resources, cultural adaption self-efficacy, making positive sense of adversities, resilience and self-esteem relative to the control group.
UNHCR (2019), Summary of Findings: Impact of Cash Based Interventions (CBI) on Protection Outcomes	UNHCR	Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt	Beneficiaries of cash-based interventions living in host countries	Quantitative (household (HH) survey data), qualitative methods (FGDs), desk reviews and KIs	Economic strengthening	Distribution of cash transfers	Cash transfers reduced negative coping strategies by reducing HH stress, decreasing engagement in the worst forms of child labour like survival sex, and diminishing the risk of exposure to violence, abuse and neglect, thereby increasing the safety of children. Reductions in child labour, including the total number of hours worked.
Universalia (2017), Evaluación de la implementación de la estrategia Retorno de la Alegría para la recuperación psico-afectiva de los niños, las niñas y los adolescentes en el contexto de la situación humanitaria de la niñez migrante en Honduras	UNICEF	Honduras	Children living in communities with high levels of migration and return children	Mixed methods using FGDs, interviews and survey	Reduce violence, exploitation or abuse; strengthen MHPSS	Therapy sessions to children using interactive methods (songs, storytelling, games, drawing)	Sessions with volunteers who provided information to children and youths in communities with high migration flows allowed some of the beneficiaries of those sessions to take informed decisions about migrating or not. Psychosocial improvements for children were limited due to a lack of engagement with family members.
Van der Veen et al. (2015), Evaluation of UNICEF's Psychosocial Response for Syrian Children in Jordan 2013–2014	UNICEF	Jordan	Refugee children in camps and host communities	Mixed methods drawing on project management data, focus groups and KIs	Promote psychosocial well-being	Providing support through child-friendly spaces and strengthening community child protection capacity	Attending child-friendly spaces had a significant effect on children's emotional well-being. The evaluation highlighted the need for more in-depth training for CFS staff who were not equipped to deal with the range of child protection violations and challenges they encountered.



Publication details Author, year, Title	UN agency involvement	Country of intervention	Target groups	Methodology of study	Main child protection objectives	Main activities	Summary of key outcomes
<u>Wark and leumwananonthachai (2010), Support for the National Plan of Action to Combat Child Labour and its Worst Forms in Thailand</u>	ILO	Thailand	Migrant working children; trafficking	Project data and interviews	Strengthen child labour and anti-trafficking policy and systems	Providing technical assistance for policy reform and workforce strengthening and funding 4 small demonstration projects	Policy reforms were seen as effective; demonstration projects provided workable models of ways of withdrawing children from work, including developing workplace-based child labour surveillance.
<u>Wilson (2018) Evaluation of Family Centres as Community Level Service Delivery Mechanisms Reaching Vulnerable Children in Gaza, June 2015 to October 2017</u>	UNICEF	Palestine	Displaced children	Data from project documents, interviews and FGDs	Promote psychosocial well-being and the functioning of community-level child protection committees	Supporting Family Centres which provide child protection and psychosocial support services to vulnerable families and children	Case management approach was generally effective despite some data challenges; community child protection committees highlighted the need for more training to function effectively.
<u>Zivetz and Nasr (2019), Phase II Ending Worst Forms of Child Labour Among Syrian Refugees and Lebanese Host Community</u>	ILO	Lebanon	Refugee and host community working children	Data from project documents and KIIs	Strengthen policies to prevent child labour	Policy reforms, strengthening the capacity of the labour inspectorate and awareness-raising activities with families	Policy reforms were undertaken. Activities to withdraw children from work were mostly very small scale and not well linked to policy and system activities.



Annex 2: Evidence Gap Map

The Evidence Gap Map provides a visual summary of the volume of evidence and its overall distribution in terms of positive outcomes, mixed outcomes and no evidence of change.

Click for the Evidence Gap Map:





Annex 3: Methodology

Search process

Searches took place in English, French and Spanish as follows:

Search strings and databases

The following search strings were used:

For SCOPUS and journals:

- separated (child* OR adolescen*) AND evaluat* AND Protect*
- separated OR alone OR orphan OR unaccompanied OR separated AND children AND evaluat* AND "child protection"
- unaccompanied (child* OR adolescen*) AND evaluat* AND Protect*
- refugee AND evaluat* AND "child protection"
- refugee AND evaluat* AND child
- traffick* AND evaluat* AND "child protection"

For Web of Science

In Web of Science we are including a search string that identifies low- and middle-income countries in order to ensure they are sufficiently represented in documents found.

- TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection") AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(impact OR evaluat* OR assess* OR interven* or program* OR project OR initiative) AND TS=(Protection from violence OR exploitation OR abuse OR safety OR maltreatment) AND TS=(GS countries*)
- TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection") AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(impact OR evaluat* OR assess* OR interven* or program* OR project OR initiative) AND TS=("supported placement" OR law OR legislation OR legal OR "capacity strengthening" OR "capacity building" OR contact OR "alternative measures" OR education OR "alternative education" OR social protection OR psychosocial OR placement OR host OR fostering OR guardian*) AND TS=(GS countries*)
- TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection") AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(impact OR evaluat* OR assess* OR interven* or program* OR project OR initiative) AND TS=("alternative detention" OR birth registration OR birth certification OR family tracing OR "keep families together" OR combat OR reduce xenophobia OR discrimination OR information OR "child friendly law enforcement" OR "child friendly border control" OR safe spaces OR media OR dialogue) AND TS=(GS countries*)
- TS=(Family unit OR family reunification OR separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(Adolescen* or girl OR boy OR child OR teen* OR youth) AND TS=(impact OR evaluat* OR assess* OR interven* or program* OR project OR initiative)
- TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection") AND TS=(GS countries*)



- seasonal (family) migration OR unaccompanied migrant child* OR "street connected migrant children" AND "child protection mechanism" AND evaluat*
- unaccompanied (child* OR adolescen* OR minor*) AND "community based" OR "child protection mechanism" AND evaluat*
- unaccompanied (child* OR adolescen* OR minor*) AND mental health OR MHPSS AND evaluat*
- TS=(design OR feedback) AND TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection")
- TS=(design OR feedback) AND TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection")
- TS=("safe and legal pathways" OR safe migration) AND TS=(separated OR unaccompanied OR accompanied OR migra* OR refugee OR *displace OR cross-border OR internal) AND TS=(child* OR adolescen*) AND TS=(evaluat* OR impact OR intervent*) AND TS=(protect* OR "child protection")

* search string used to capture low and middle income countries is TS=(Africa OR (sub-Saharan Africa) OR (North Africa) OR (West Africa) OR (East Africa) OR Algeria OR Angola OR Benin OR Botswana OR (Burkina Faso) OR Burundi OR Cameroon OR (Cape Verde) OR (Central African Republic) OR Chad OR (Democratic Republic of the Congo) OR (Republic of the Congo) OR Congo OR (Cote d'Ivoire) OR (Ivory Coast) OR Djibouti OR Egypt OR Equatorial Guinea OR Eritrea OR Ethiopia OR Gabon OR Gambia OR Ghana OR Guinea OR Guinea-Bissau OR Kenya OR Lesotho OR Liberia OR Libya OR Madagascar OR Malawi OR Mali OR Mauritania OR Morocco OR Mozambique OR Namibia OR Niger OR Nigeria OR Rwanda OR (Sao Tome) OR Principe OR Senegal OR (Sierra Leone) OR Somalia OR (South Africa) OR (South Sudan) OR Sudan OR Swaziland OR Tanzania OR Togo OR Tunisia OR Uganda OR Zambia OR Zimbabwe OR (South America) OR (Latin America) OR (Central America) OR Mexico OR Argentina OR Bolivia OR Brazil OR Chile OR Colombia OR Ecuador OR Guyana OR Paraguay OR Peru OR Suriname OR Uruguay OR Venezuela OR Belize OR (Costa Rica) OR (El Salvador) OR Guatemala OR Honduras OR Nicaragua OR Panama OR Caribbean OR Antigua OR Barbuda OR Barbados OR Cuba OR Dominica OR (Dominican Republic) OR Grenada OR Haiti OR Jamaica OR (Kitts and Nevis) OR (Saint Kitts and Nevis) OR (Lucia) OR (Saint Lucia) OR (Vincent and the Grenadines) OR (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) OR (Vincent) OR (Trinidad and Tobago) OR Albania OR Armenia

OR Belarus OR Bosnia OR Herzegovina OR Bulgaria OR Croatia OR (Czech Republic OR Kosovo OR Latvia OR Lithuania OR Macedonia OR Moldova OR Montenegro OR Serbia OR (Slovak Republic) OR Slovakia OR Ukraine OR Asia OR (Middle East) OR (Southeast Asia) OR (Indian Ocean Island*) OR (South Asia) OR (Central Asia) OR (East Asia) OR Caucasus OR Afghanistan OR Azerbaijan OR Bangladesh OR Bhutan OR Burma OR Cambodia OR China OR Georgia OR India OR Iran OR Iraq OR Jordan OR Kazakhstan OR Korea OR (Kyrgyz Republic) OR Kyrgyzstan OR Lao* OR Lebanon OR Mongolia OR Myanmar OR Nepal OR Oman OR Pakistan OR Russia OR (Russian Federation) OR Indonesia OR Malaysia OR Philippines OR Sri Lanka OR Syria OR (Syrian Arab Republic) OR Tajikistan OR Thailand OR Timor-Leste OR Timor OR Turkey OR Turkmenistan OR Uzbekistan OR Vietnam OR West Bank OR Gaza OR Yemen OR Comoros OR Maldives OR Mauritius OR Seychelles OR (Pacific Islands) OR (American Samoa) OR Fiji OR Guam OR Kiribati OR (Marshall Islands) OR Micronesia OR (Northern Mariana Islands) OR Palau OR (Papua New Guinea) OR Samoa OR (Solomon Islands) OR Tonga OR Tuvalu OR Vanuatu OR LMIC OR (South-East Asia) OR Balkans OR (low-income countr*) or (middle-income countr*)

For Google Scholar:

- Include all in text: "unaccompanied" "child" "migran" "migration" "protection" "intervention" "evaluation" [2010-2020]
- Include all in text: "child" "protection" "displaced" "impact evaluation" [2010-2020]
- Include all in text: "child" "protection" "migration" "family" "reunification" "intervention" "evaluation" [2010-2020]
- Include all in text: "cross border migration" AND "child protection" [2010-2020]
- Include all in text: "protection" "programme" "impact" "evaluation" "children on the move" [2010-2020]
- Include all in text: "child*" "migrant*" "protection*" "program*" "impact evaluation" "in transit" [2010-2020]
- Include all in text: "child*" "protection" "migrant*" "traffick*" "intervention" "impact evaluation" [2000-2020]
- Include all in text: "child*" "migrant*" "protection*" "intervention*" "impact evaluation" "alternative care" [2005-2020]
- Include all in text: "child*" "protection*" "intervention" "impact" "evaluation" "displaced children" [2005-2020]
- Include all in text: "psychosocial" "child" "migrant" "protection" "intervention" "impact evaluation" [2005-2020]



Hand searches

The following websites and journals were hand searched:

UN system and agencies

- Child Protection Working Group (CPWG)
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)
- ILO
- IOM
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict
- UNHCR
- UNICEF
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
- United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)
- World Health Organization (WHO)

Bilateral and multilateral institutions, donors and lenders

- African Union (AU)
- Agence Française de Développement
- Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
- Bureau of Population, Refugees, Migration, United States Department of State
- Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)
- Department for International Development (DFID)
- Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
- Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL)
- European Commission (including European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations (ECHO))
- Global Affairs Canada (formerly CIDA)
- Inter-American Development Bank
- Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)
- OECD

- Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance
- Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA)
- Pan-American Health Organization (PAHO)
- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)
- Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
- Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
- United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
- World Bank

Evidence repositories

- Campbell Collaboration
- Child Rights Information Network (CRIN)
- CPC Learning Network
- DAC Evaluation database
- Eldis
- EPPI Centre
- Evidence Aid
- GSDRC
- Open Grey
- 3ie Development Evidence Portal

NGOs

- CARE International
- Catholic Relief Services
- Child Frontiers
- Coordination des ONG pour les droits de l'enfant
- Danish Refugee Council
- International Medical Corps
- International Rescue Committee
- Mercy Corps
- Norwegian Refugee Council
- Oxfam
- Plan International
- Save the Children
- Search for Common Ground
- War Child
- Women's Refugee Commission
- World Vision
- Women Without Borders



Research institutes and centres

- ALNAP (Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in humanitarian action)
- Children & Armed Conflict Unit, University of Essex
- Consejo Latinoamericano de Ciencias Sociales
- Institute of Development Studies
- Institute of International Education (IIE)
- Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion
- Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC)
- International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)
- International Development Research Centre (IDRC)
- Ipsos
- Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales
- Migration Policy Institute
- Mixed Migration Centre
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
- Reliefweb
- Resource Center for Unaccompanied Children
- SERENA
- Sussex Centre for Migration Research
- West Africa Regional Platform on Children's Mobility

Civil society organisations and movements

- African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN)
- Amnesty International
- BBC Media Action
- Child Workers in Asia
- ECPAT
- Equal Access
- Global Movement for Children
- Human Rights Watch
- Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts
- International Bureau for Children's Rights
- International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect (ISPCAN)
- Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children

- Keeping Children Safe Coalition
- No Lost Generation
- Oak Foundation
- Population Council
- Population Media Centre
- Sin Fronteras
- Stop Child Trafficking

Journals

Cross-cutting:

- OECD Journal

On children:

- Child & Family Social Work
- Child Abuse & Neglect
- Children
- Children and Youth Services Review
- Journal of Child and Family Studies
- Journal of Family Social Work
- Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies

On migration:

- International Journal of Migration Health and Social Care
- International Migration
- Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies
- Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health
- Journal of International Migration and Integration
- Journal on Migration and Human Security
- Journal of Migration and Refugee Issues
- Journal of Refugee Studies
- Oxford Monitor on Forced Migration

Screening, inclusion and exclusion criteria

Table A2 outlines the criteria used to assess whether studies should be included in the REA. It is based on the PICOS framework, which makes explicit criteria related to Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcomes, and Study.



Table A2: Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Domain	Include	Exclude
Population	UASC or children (<18) moving with families where protection concerns arise. Protection concerns may be related to context (e.g., humanitarian emergency, forced migration, disaster), pathway (e.g., legal, irregular), reason for migration or displacement (e.g., forced displacement, seeking work, marriage, etc.)	Children moving without protection concerns (e.g., children of highly skilled workers migrating with families). Children moving temporarily for education (except where there are protection concerns)
Who?	No geographical restriction	
Where?	Humanitarian crises (e.g., conflict, disaster) and non-crisis contexts (economic migration, trafficking), recognizing that they are often linked	
Intervention	Interventions focusing on strengthening the protection of children from abuse, exploitation or maltreatment and supporting/ restoring family environment as appropriate. These may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – strengthening national and community-level child protection systems – strengthening care of UASC/ restoring family environment – prevention of violence against children including GBV – preventing unsafe migration – efforts to reduce xenophobia and discrimination 	Interventions without protection-focused components
Study design and methodology	Include studies with clear description of methodology	Exclude those without
Outcomes	Include studies reporting outcomes related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – family unity – protection of children from abuse, exploitation or maltreatment – systems for protecting children on the move 	Biomedical outcomes – and any other outcomes not related to child protection will be excluded
Publication date	Since 2005	Studies published before 2005
Publisher	Academic or grey literature	
Type of document	Evaluations (involving primary data collection), reviews of evaluations or evidence-based good practices, descriptions of programmes (for additional context). Impact and performance evaluations	Case studies/ project descriptions, advocacy or policy briefs, studies not involving assessment of an intervention (e.g., only assessing current policies, not efforts to change them), theoretical or conceptual pieces
Language	English, French, Spanish	Other languages



These criteria were simplified into a rapid screening tool, which we used when reading study abstracts or skim-reading studies without abstracts. Where researchers were unsure, these studies were examined by another team member in order to come to an informed inclusion/ exclusion decision.

Table A3: Screening questions

Topic	Question	Yes	No	Unclear
Study	Was the study published in 2005 or later?			
	IF NOT, THEN EXCLUDE			
Intervention	Does the study concern a policy, programme, project or other intervention?			
	IF NOT, THEN EXCLUDE			
	Does the intervention aim to improve the protection of children on the move? ²³			
	IF NOT, THEN EXCLUDE			
Methodological transparency	Does the study clearly describe its methodology?			
	IF NOT, THEN EXCLUDE			
Outcome (will likely require reading of full text)	Does the study report on outcomes in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – family unity – protection of children from abuse, exploitation or maltreatment – strengthening systems for protecting children on the move? 			
	IF NOT, THEN EXCLUDE			

²³ Refer to UNICEF definition of Children on the Move, Table 1.



Assessment tool

This assessment tool was developed following a rapid scoping of existing quality assessment tools for qualitative, quantitative and mixed-methods studies, such as DFID's (2014) 'How to' Note, *Assessing the Strength of Evidence*, Hong et al.'s (2018) Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool, the UK Government Cabinet Office's (2003) *Quality in Qualitative Evaluation: A framework for assessing research evidence*, the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme's checklists (no date), the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods²⁴ and the DAC Quality Standards for Development Evaluations (OECD, 2010).

We tested three different types of studies – a performance evaluation, an impact evaluation using an RCT, and a research study examining the effects of a set of initiatives using a tool based on DFID's *Assessing the Strength of Evidence* 'How to' note, as used by recent evidence assessments, such as those on migration and livelihood projects²⁵ and on conflict prevention interventions.²⁶ We found the tool to work reasonably well in capturing the strengths and weaknesses of the RCT, moderately well for the qualitative impact assessment, and very poorly for the performance evaluation. In all cases there were a number of questions with limited relevance or applicability. The test took around 1.5 hours for three documents – an unfeasibly long time frame for a rapid evidence assessment.

Given the weak fit of this approach, we developed a bespoke tool, which draws on the UK Cabinet Office Qualitative Evaluation Assessment tool, as well as advice provided by 3ie to the study team for a previous review (also captured in Levy et al. 2020), and guidelines on acceptable loss to follow-up between baseline and endline provided in the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (Hong et al., 2018). This tool (see Table A.2.4) was refined in discussion with the Rapid Evidence Assessment Management Group before implementation. Our initial tests indicated that this tool would take around 20 minutes to use per study, though in practice some assessments – particularly of performance evaluations, where information was more scattered – took longer.

²⁴ The Maryland Scientific Methods Scale, What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth, <<https://whatworksgrowth.org/resources/the-scientific-maryland-scale>>, accessed 6 July 2020.

²⁵ Fratzke, Susan, and Brian Salant, *Understanding the Impact of Livelihood Opportunities and Interventions on Migration Patterns*, Rapid Evidence Assessment, DFID, London, 2018, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/685188/Migration-Livelihoods1.pdf, accessed 6 July 2020.

²⁶ Cramer, Christopher, Jonathan Goodhand and Robert Morris, *Evidence Synthesis: What interventions have been effective in preventing or mitigating armed violence in developing and middle-income countries?*, Department for International Development, London, 2016, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/555756/effectiveness-conflict-prevention-interventions1.pdf, accessed 6 July 2020.



Table A4: Quality and relevance assessment tool

Dimension	Question	Score / 26
Depth	How deep is the discussion of child protection outcomes? Score 3 for substantial – discussed in depth/ one of main foci, 2 for moderate, 1 for limited discussion – just a few lines on outcomes	Max 3
	How clear is the description of the intervention? Score 3 for substantial – discussed in depth/ one of main foci, 2 for moderate, 1 for limited discussion – just a few lines	Max 3
Research/ evaluation question	Is there a clear research/ evaluation question? Score 1 for Yes, 0 for No	Max 1
Research design	For quantitative studies, does the design involve any comparison or counterfactual? For qualitative studies, does the design involve any comparison or triangulation? Score 1 for Yes, 0 for No	Max 1
Sample	How clearly described and adequate is the sample? Score 1 point for clear description Score 1 point for an adequate sample at baseline (quantitative studies: at least 50 people per treatment group for RCTs and at least 100 per treatment/ control group for quasi-experimental methods at baseline; at least 30 respondents or 6 focus groups in qualitative studies). ²⁷ Score 1 point for adequate sample at endline (in studies with 2 time points) i.e., loss of no more than 20% of respondents in studies < 1 year, and 30% of respondents in studies of >1 year. ²⁸ This means that studies with 2 time points have the potential to score 1 point higher.	Max 3
Ethical issues	Is there evidence of attention to ethical issues? Score 1 for Yes, 0 for No	Max 1
Transparency about tools used	Does the article/ report use standardized tools available for download or included in the report? Score 2 for Yes, 1 if the topics discussed are outlined but tools are not attached, 0 for No Note: we will search for annexes if the report mentions that the tools are contained in a separate annex document.	Max 2
Transparency about weaknesses	Does the report flag any limitations to the methodology, its implementation or the analysis? Score 1 for Yes, 0 for No	Max 1
Significance of weaknesses	Do any limitations (identified by the authors or the assessor) substantially affect the credibility of the findings on child protection issues? Score 0 for significant effect, 1 for some effect, 2 for limited effect	Max 2
Gender sensitivity	Score 1 for 'yes' to each of: Was data collection sensitive to gender (normally this means it will have been collected from men and women/ boys and girls unless there are reasons for single gender data collection)? Is the analysis disaggregated by gender? Does the study consider how gendered power relations affect outcomes?	Max 3
Analysis	How well has the approach to analysis been described? Score 3 for considerable detail, 2 for moderate detail, 1 for very little or no discussion	Max 3
	How clear are the links between data, interpretation and conclusions – i.e., how well can the route to any conclusions be seen? Score 3 for very clear, 2 for moderately clear, 1 for not very clear, 0 for no evidence cited to back up conclusions	Max 3

²⁷ These criteria are taken from Levy et al. (2020) and advice provided by 3ie to ODI on a previous systematic evidence gap map.

²⁸ This is drawn from the Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool (Hong et al., 2018).

**Overall assessment:**

- High score: 22–26 points
- Moderate score: 16–21 points
- Low score: 15 or fewer points

To enable meaningful analysis of the strongest studies, those in the moderate and high-scoring groups were retained and those in the low-scoring group discarded with three exceptions: one study of an SMS-based surveillance system for identifying unaccompanied children (Rubenstein et al., 2015), which provided insights into an innovative approach but where the types of data reported were not amenable to the questions in the assessment tool; Bimé and Ranz (2010), which was retained because it provided important insights on sensitization and awareness to avoid child labour and trafficking in Cameroon among communities vulnerable to child trafficking; and Garcia Moreno and Quispe (2012), which discussed the impact of efforts to prevent and eliminate child labour as a result of internal migration, but did not provide detail of its methodology and analysis approach.



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