



Making Life Better for Children on the Move

Promising practices
for working with and
supporting children
on the move

**DESTINATION
UNKNOWN**

protect children on the move

a network led by

Terre des Hommes
International Federation

What is this publication about?

It is estimated that **50 million children** have migrated across borders or been forcibly displaced

Today, one in eight migrants is a child. 31 million children live outside their country of origin, and although accurate and comprehensive data is lacking, it is estimated that 50 million children have migrated across borders or been forcibly displaced.¹ No global data exist on internal migration, but for many countries this is an ever-increasing trend with people, including children, moving mainly from rural to urban areas.

The experience of these many different children who are affected by mobility is of course not homogenous. There are a growing number of efforts around the world by communities, governments and civil society to support children on the move. Whilst these efforts should be contextualized, important lessons can be learnt, and inspiration drawn from rights-based efforts which have made a real positive difference for children on the move. Destination Unknown shares eight such promising practices from its membership.

While migration can bring safety and lead to better access to services for many children, for others it means new risks and vulnerabilities. Children may be exposed to gender-based violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking. They may experience discrimination and stigma while being on the move or upon reaching a destination. In 2018, in less than two months, 1,995 migrant children were separated from their parents upon reaching the US borders². Between January and November 2018 alone, an estimated 2,043 people died crossing the Mediterranean³. By April 2018, despite the ongoing efforts of the Bangladeshi Government, UN agencies and civil society, over 345,000 Rohingya children in Bangladesh continue to suffer from lack of adequate shelter, nutrition, health care and education. 28% of identified victims of trafficking globally are children.⁴

The New York Declaration⁵ and the development throughout the course of 2017 and 2018 of the Global Compact on Refugees and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration brought renewed attention to and created new momentum for strengthening the protection of children on the move and their rights. In 2017, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Committee on the Rights of Migrant Workers and Members of their Families provided, through their

¹ For more on numbers and demographics of international child migration see: Uprooted - The Growing Crisis for Refugee and Migrant Children, UNICEF 2016

² <https://www.vox.com/2018/6/11/17443198/children-immigrant-families-separated-parents>

³ See: UNHCR, <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/mediterranean>

⁴ UNICEF and Inter-Agency coordination group against trafficking:

<https://www.unicef.org/wca/press-releases/children-account-nearly-one-third-identified-trafficking-victims-globally>

⁵ New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, UN GA Resolution 71/1 September 2016



Joint General Comments⁶, clear guidance to States on how to further respect, protect and realize the rights of children on the move.

Civil society organisations have been involved in all these processes, advocating for children's rights, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and irrespective of a child's migration status. A large number of these civil society organisations also provides services to children on the move and the advocacy work is based on this experience.

We believe that small actions, developed in consultation and collaboration with children themselves, can have a big impact on the lives and protection of children. With limited resources, we work with children on the move to protect them and make a difference to their lives in a world with shrinking space for civil society to intervene.

Destination Unknown is interested in sharing examples of promising practices of civil society organisations working to protect children on the move. We want to inspire other organisations so that together we can do more to support vulnerable children.



©Tdh / Odile Meylan

⁶ Joint general comment No. 3 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 22 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the general principles regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration; and Joint general comment No. 4 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 23 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on State obligations regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration in countries of origin, transit, destination and return.

About Destination Unknown

Destination Unknown is a network of over 100 organisations worldwide united to work towards better protection for all children and young people on the move. Destination Unknown is working for children and young people on the move to be able to exercise their human rights, have hope for the future and thrive in inclusive societies where they are free from discrimination. Destination Unknown envisages a world in which children on the move and other children affected by migration:

- 1 are considered **children** first and foremost and their **best interests** are a primary consideration in decisions and actions affecting them;
- 2 enjoy the right to **life, survival and development**;
- 3 enjoy the **right to move** within their state and **to leave** their state;
- 4 are **not detained** because of their or their parents' migration status;
- 5 are **not separated** from their primary caregivers (unless, exceptionally, this is in their best interests);
- 6 are **not discriminated** against;
- 7 access qualitative **child protection systems**;
- 8 enjoy the right to **express their views freely** in all matters affecting them;
- 9 and have their **views taken into consideration**.





©Tdh / Will Baxter

Destination Unknown members support children on the move in countries of origin, transit and destination. The work includes: developing services and creating opportunities to reduce the pressure for children and their families to migrate; working with children and their communities to raise awareness about risks associated with being on the move and opportunities for safe migration; offering services and protection for children along the migratory routes and assisting children to integrate in countries of destination.

Just as children on the move face a diversity of experiences, Destination Unknown members work in a myriad of ways and in many different regions. This document presents eight examples of this inspirational work undertaken by Destination Unknown members which have proven effective in reducing risks and maximising opportunities for children on the move and which make a positive difference to children's lives. All these practices could be easily expanded or replicated elsewhere. This is a flavour of the way in which Destination Unknown members work with and for children on the move to sustainably increase protection.

Mentoring unaccompanied and separated children in Switzerland, Europe

WHAT CHALLENGES DO CHILDREN FACE?

When unaccompanied children are entitled to stay in a country, their social inclusion and integration into local communities is vital. In Switzerland, many unaccompanied and separated children find it difficult to interact with the local community. Despite authorities' efforts, many children only really interact with staff at their accommodation centre and with their school teachers. Though the situation differs from region to region, in some regions, children are not provided with guardianship quickly enough and there are not enough registered foster families to support the number of unaccompanied and separated children.

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

To address this challenge, [International Social Services \(ISS\)](#) Switzerland runs an innovative mentoring project called "An extra place at your table" through which over 300 unaccompanied and separated children are connected with local mentors, individuals, couples or families. The mentors help the children with daily aspects of life, invite them to join special moments with family, spend time together doing sport and other leisure activities; and help in their search for internships, apprenticeships or housing. A real and lasting bond is often established over time: for the child, the mentors become a reference and an anchorage point in their new environment. And in some cases, the mentors become their foster families.

HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

The mentoring project helps children to integrate in countries of destination; it helps ensure that unaccompanied and separated children access their right to care, protection and development.





©Mali Lazell

“

AMIN'S STORY *

Amin meets his mentors, Marie and Pierre, by the lake on a beautiful summer's day just before the holidays. Marie and Pierre, though they know little of his past, are aware that it's possible that Amin's journey to Switzerland involved crossing the Mediterranean by boat and are hesitant to suggest a boat ride. However, they agree it's important to make no assumptions and, after a successful game designed to break the ice, they mention it to Amin who loves the idea.

They are at ease in each other's company from the start. Over time, the three build a bond and Amin confides in Marie and Pierre about his life in Eritrea, his experience in school, and

the problems he faces in the centre. Amin knows how difficult it will be for him to find somewhere to live but also knows that, for him, it will be the beginning of a new chapter. And so, with the help of Marie, Pierre, and his educator, Amin starts looking for a new home. In a few short weeks, Amin is living in an apartment with other students and often spends time with his mentors during the weekend.

Reflecting on how Amin has changed since he started his mentorship, his educator says Amin is radiant. The support of his mentors has had a positive and tangible effect on the young asylum seeker, who feels full of energy once more and has hope for the future.

For more on ISS' work see: www.solidarity-young-migrants.ch

* All names of children have been changed.

Counselling children on the move in Cambodia, Southeast Asia

WHAT CHALLENGES DO CHILDREN FACE?

In the Greater Mekong region of Cambodia, children migrate for a variety of reasons, including to escape conflict and natural disasters and to search for better opportunities for themselves and their families. In some cases, children are also victims of trafficking or end up abused and exploited either during their migration or upon reaching a destination. Receiving the right advice at the right moment and having access to counselling and protection services is crucial for these children.

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

[Child Helpline Cambodia \(CHC\)](#), which is supported by [Terre des Hommes \(Netherlands\)](#), is a professional and widely accessible counselling service, providing 24-hour free access to confidential counselling for children nationwide. CHC works in partnership with many government agencies at national and local levels as well as with civil society organisations. Although the Helpline is not focusing exclusively on supporting children on the move, children on the move often call in to ask for information, help, and advice on challenges they are facing.

Parents, family and members of the community also call CHC to ask for information on safe migration as well as to ask for advice when they believe children on the move face specific risks of violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking. In two cases that were referred from the CHC to the police in 2017, it was due to the timely intervention of the Helpline that the children were protected against trafficking.

HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

The helpline protects children against risks by providing information about opportunities for regular and safe migration. It also helps children on the move to know how and where to access protection and other services they might need.





©Tdh

“ CHANTHOU’S STORY

Chanthou was just sixteen when she disappeared from home in 2017. Her parents, distraught and fearing the worst, turned to Child Helpline Cambodia when the village authorities could not help. All they knew was that their daughter had been contacted by a woman who had offered her a good income if she were to leave the village and work for her.

CHC worked with Chanthou’s parents and gave them the support and information they needed while looking for their daughter. CHC referred Chanthou’s disappearance to an NGO partner, as well as the Provincial Department of Women’s Affairs, and the Provincial Department of Anti-trafficking and Juvenile Protection. After a few weeks Chanthou was found. After all the necessary assessments were made, she was safely returned home.

For more information about children on the move in South East Asia, see the latest publication of Terre des Hommes (Netherlands) in the region: [Open Borders? Comparative Study of the Potential Impact of the Asian Economic Community on Child Migration and Trafficking](#)⁷

⁷ Min Ma; Open Borders? Comparative Study of the Potential Impact of the Asian Economic Community on Child Migration and Trafficking; Terre des hommes Netherlands 2017.

Protecting children on the move in West Africa

WHAT PROBLEMS DO CHILDREN FACE?

Due to its geographic location, West Africa has always experienced high levels of mobility. In recent years, public attention has mainly focused on migration from West Africa to Europe. However, evidence and data indicate that for every one person moving to Europe, ten people are moving within West Africa. Child migration is very widespread among all cultures and communities, driven by historic and culture affiliations and norms, conflict and violence, climate change, poverty and household vulnerability. Many children within West Africa move unaccompanied for labour purposes and end up as labourers in artisanal mines and quarries, as sellers in the market or in domestic work. They are particularly vulnerable to the worst forms of child labour and to sexual exploitation and abuse.

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

To protect children on the move within West Africa, [Terre des Hommes \(Foundation\)](#) and its local partners run spaces called Points d'Espoir or Hope Points. They are like child-friendly spaces, though the Hope Points are designed specifically for children on the move and have a particular focus on children's protection and development. They are strategically located at points which are known to be points of passage for many children on the move, such as near border points, large markets and city centres often frequented by children.

Psychosocial activities are organized in the Hope Points, helping to establish trust and confidence between the child and the social worker. This enables the social worker and the child to analyse jointly the child's situation and to develop an action plan to address the child's concerns and any violations of his or her rights. Serious protection concerns are discussed with the child and reported to the authorities. A social worker provides the child with information, discusses options and assists the child in making his or her choices.

Representatives of governmental protection services often come to discuss their mandate with the children so that they know where to go if they need assistance and where to advise their peers to go. Specific issues are discussed with the children, including sexual and reproductive health care, protection against malaria, the right to education, and labour rights (for older children). Diaspora members and representatives of the communities of origin also regularly participate, thereby creating the necessary links for transnational protection of children on the move. Terre des Hommes is also working in partnership with national organisations of children and young people. Children and young people from these organisations often come to organize specific activities with their peers.





©Tdh / Laurent Crottet

HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

Hope Points are a crucial part of Terre des Hommes' strategy for protecting children on the move because they:

- » help children to socialize and exchange with each other and provide a space for children on the move to play and learn;
- » provide psychosocial support and help build children's life skills and competencies;
- » help children on the move to access information and advice about their safety, protection and various services they might need; as well as put them in touch with the people in charge of such services. By bringing together children and child protection actors from the children's places of origin and destination, the Hope Points help to ensure the protection of children across borders.



DEJA'S STORY

If she'd looked for it, Deja wouldn't have found her name on the birth register from fifteen years earlier. She'd never been on it. And, like many girls in her situation, Deja had also never been to school. Instead, she was working in a market in Lomé, Togo's capital, 150 kilometres away from her parents' village. She lived with her uncle and his wife, for whom she worked long hours selling tomatoes. Deja was tired and missed her parents but was afraid to complain to her uncle and his wife.

Hope Point helped Deja change that. She took part in activities which helped her build good relationships with the social workers and other children. One of the social workers convinced her uncle and his wife to allow Deja to spend less time working in the market and more time at Hope Point, where she could study informally. Terre des Hommes helped Deja to travel to her village and spend time with her parents before returning to Lomé, where she progressed a lot in mathematics and writing.

Today, Deja is 17-years-old and, with the support of WAO-Afrique, a partner of Terre des Hommes, she works for herself as wholesaler in the market. Every time she comes across other young girls working in the market she refers them to the Hope Points in the vicinity.

For more information about Terre des Hommes' work protecting children on the move in West Africa see: [The added value of Protective Accompaniment](#)⁸

⁸ Frederique Boursin, The added value of Protective Accompaniment, Terre des hommes, 2014

Providing psychosocial services for children arriving in Sicily, Italy, Europe

WHAT PROBLEMS DO CHILDREN FACE?

3,515 children crossed the Mediterranean to Italy between January and August 2018⁹. The Italian reception system is organized along two lines. For many years, the first line of the reception system only focused on identifying and registering children and responding to their most urgent needs such as accommodation and food. It was only in 2017, with the introduction of the 'Zampa' Law, that the need for a more comprehensive approach – which would consider all the rights and needs of children as soon as they arrive – was recognized.¹⁰

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

To fill in structural gaps before the Zampa law was introduced, **Terre des Hommes (Italy)** has been providing psychosocial services and referral for children in the first reception line. Since 2011, Terre des Hommes has been supporting children through psychosocial interventions as soon as they arrive. Cases needing more specialized care are also identified and referred to the necessary services with all available information, thereby ensuring a continuum of care, protection and support throughout the entire reception phase.

Prompt intervention and a continuum of care is crucial for children. According to psychologists who meet the children when they arrive, many of the children suffer from anxiety, many fear the future, some feel a sense of guilt for a loss of a friend during the trip, many fear for the lives of loved ones left behind, some suffer with post-traumatic syndromes. Many of the children report having experienced racism and humiliation in Libya. The majority of those who were detained in Libya were tortured until money was sent from home and report having been treated like an object or a slave.

⁹ UNHCR, *Desperate Journeys*, 2018, see supra note 3

¹⁰ See Law No. 47

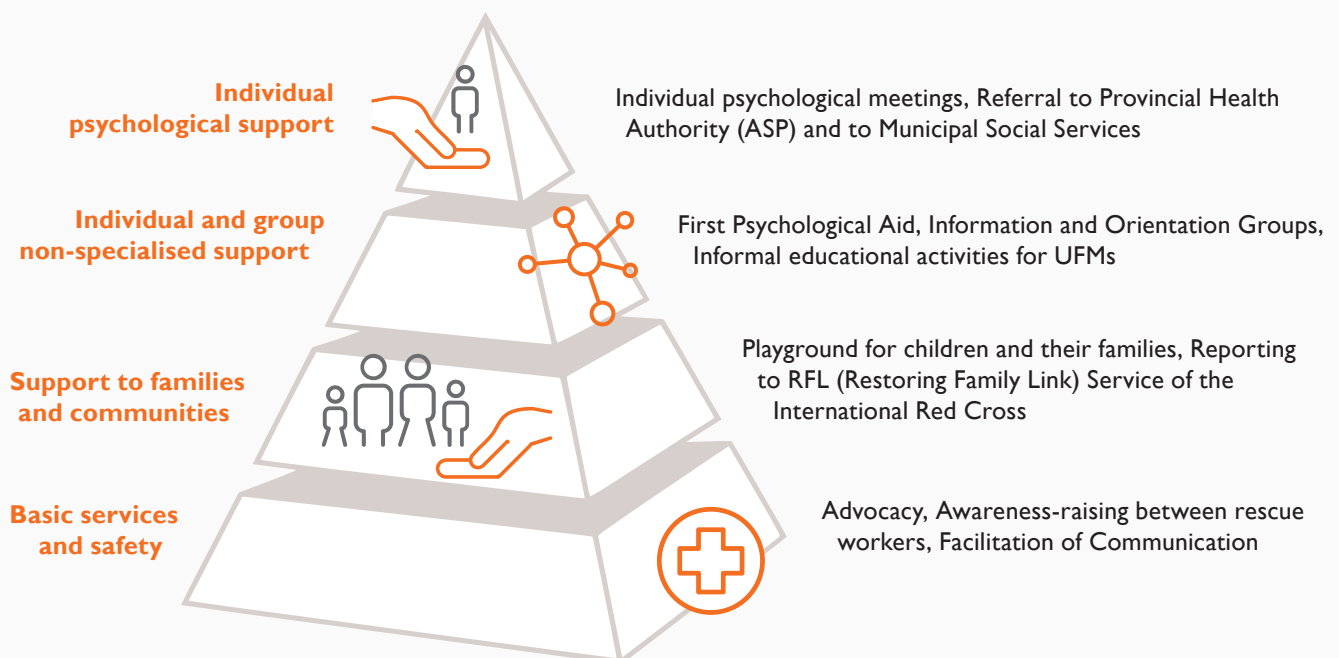


Considering the violations and distress that these children have suffered, it is crucial that the first psychosocial support they receive meets certain standards. It must:

- » give a voice to the child in deciding on activities and during the activities;
- » avoid any risk that the child feels forced and obligated to participate;
- » provide psychosocial activities tailored to the individual child;
- » observe carefully the child's behaviour and the group dynamic and use this information to propose and adjust intervention;
- » report promptly to the health and social authorities any case requiring psychiatric intervention or other specialised medical help.

The support provided using this approach, which is based on a continuity of care, support and treatment, can be determining for the child's future. The cases identified are monitored and followed over time; the psychological needs of children met, and their stories listened to. Today such services are provided to all children reaching any of the ports of Eastern Sicily.

TERRE DES HOMMES PROJECT FARO: PYRAMID OF OPERATIONS



HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

This practice enables a continuum of care. It protects children and helps them to recover from distress and trauma. In the longer-term, it helps children to integrate.

EDRIS' STORY

Edris is 16 years old. He arrived in the port of Augusta alone, after a journey of over six months, two of which he spent in Libya. He fled from his country, Somalia, after having been kidnapped and imprisoned for three months by the Islamic militia of Al-Shabaab to force him to fight alongside them.

During the first contact with the psychosocial staff at the port, Edris appeared visibly discouraged, diffident and tired. At the end of the afternoon, a group of girls from Somalia was transferred from the port to a reception centre. This for Edris was the straw that broke the camel's back. He was seen wandering around the camp's square, sighing and moaning. The team approached him and saw that Edris was trembling and was out of breath, managing only to repeatedly utter a few words: "I don't go, I don't go... It's cold... I don't have a life". He was brought to the tent of the Provincial Health Authority, which was warm and welcoming. For the staff, there were evident symptoms of an acute anxiety state - an accelerated heart-rate and breathing and momentary absences. The psychologist offered the necessary support towards emotional stabilisation.¹¹ After roughly twenty minutes, Edris was calmer and breathing normally again. It was then possible to speak with him more in-depth to verify and assess his condition and offer further support.

During the counselling, Edris said several times: "nothing has changed" and "there is no future". His condition seemed to be linked to the pain and suffering he endured in Somalia and during his journey, and then to have been exacerbated by his arrival, where he realized that his situation was still very precarious. That night, Edris agreed to stay in the Provincial Health Authority's tent, so that his wellbeing could be monitored. The following morning, a Terre des Hommes team reported the boy's case of vulnerability to the local Social Services, asking for his immediate transfer from the port to a facility which could provide him with protection and treatment. Edris was transferred the same day to a second reception facility. With a view to ensuring a continuum of care for this child, Terre des Hommes contacted the facility's manager and psychologist to share the information they had and their views on the boy's case.

For more information on Terre des Hommes (Italy)'s intervention see: [Psychosocial handbook for social workers in charge of receiving unaccompanied foreign minors](#)¹²

¹¹ 'Safety and stabilization' refers to a phased and interlinked psychosocial intervention model which helps establishing trust, a safe environment, grounding exercises etc.

¹² Giancarlo Rigon, Psychosocial handbook for social workers in charge of receiving unaccompanied foreign minors, Terre des Hommes Italy Foundation.





©Tdh / Francois Struzik

Learning from children on the move in four states in India, South Asia

WHAT CHALLENGES DO CHILDREN FACE?

India and China have the largest number of migrants living abroad among Asian countries.¹³ However, both countries are also first and foremost characterised by large numbers of people moving within their borders. In India, children are highly represented among internal migrants, migrating not only with their parents and families, but also alone. Although they do not cross borders, children on the move in India are highly vulnerable. In the past in India, efforts have been made to reduce trafficking, especially of girls for sexual exploitation and abuse. Recently, more attention is paid to child labourer migrants and children that go missing in India every year, many of whom are also thought to be trafficked.¹⁴

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

Terre des Hommes works with a network of 60 local NGOs and grassroots level civil society organisations to campaign for the protection of children on the move in 4 Indian states - West Bengal, Odisha, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh. Children on the move are regularly consulted and share their stories of mobility. Some children decided to make a CD with recordings of their stories and experiences of being on the move, so that other children could learn from their experiences. They painted pictures and developed and recorded scripts to tell their stories. Through the stories, which were written in Bengali, Odiya and Telegu (local languages) and Hindi (national language) with English subtitles, the children spoke of their experiences, what made them leave home, and the risks they faced whilst being on the move.

¹³ United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, Trends in International Migrant Stock: Migrants by destination and origin, United Nations, New York, 2015

¹⁴ See for example CRY Organization, "Missing or Sold? Child Trafficking in India," in Human Trafficking: The Stakeholders' Perspective, ed. Veerendra Mishra, 136





©Tdh

The children also talked about services that can help and protect children on the move, such as a child helpline, the Village Level Child Protection Committee and various NGOs working with children in a given place.

The CD has so far been shared with over 2,500 children in schools and child and youth clubs as a discussion starter. It has also been shared with NGOs and governmental institutions in the region.

HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

The children who helped make this CD benefited from sharing their experiences, socializing with other children and young people and reflecting together on how they could better protect themselves in similar situations in the future. The CD helped raise awareness amongst other children about risks that can come with mobility, how to mitigate them, and where to ask for help and assistance.

Supporting children to reintegrate after being returned to El Salvador, Central America

WHAT PROBLEMS DO CHILDREN FACE?

In recent years, many young people and children from Central America try to reach the United States (US) through Mexico due to increased violence in the region. The journey is full of risks and some children do not make it. With the current US administration policy, even when children and young people do reach the US border with Mexico, they are often detained and deported to their country of origin.

After deportation from the US, many children feel hopeless, frustrated and angry once back in their country of origin in Central America. Without systematic support for their reintegration and with limited economic prospects, children are at a higher risk of becoming involved in drug trafficking or being recruited into armed gangs.

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

La Asociación de Capacitación e Investigación para la Salud Mental (ACISAM), supported by Terre des Hommes (Switzerland and Germany) works with children who have been deported from the US to El Salvador. Children are usually initially reluctant to engage with the organisation. After being rejected so many times in life, they struggle to trust people and organisations. They can also feel paralysed from the fear and distress they have experienced in their past. ACISAM recognizes this and works hard to gain the trust of these young people, adopting a gradual approach, and tailoring services to the situation and needs of each individual child.

Before starting to offer these services, ACISAM conducted a participatory research with young returnees to better understand their situation and needs. Through these stories, ACISAM learnt that children and young people not only feel frustrated and lack services and support when they return to their country of origin, but they also risk further stigma and harassment within their own community. Deportation can be perceived by others in the community as a failure or indicative of being engaged in criminal behaviour as one young person explained:

"When we arrived at the airport I saw a lot of cameras. I thought wow, we are famous. But then the journalists asked me why I was deported, what crime I had committed. And another one asked me which gang I was part of. From the start they had condemned me."





©ACISAM

Based on the findings of this participative research, ACISAM decided that, in addition to providing psychosocial support to young people who have been returned, it would also help their communities and the media to understand what these children are going through and to recognize and live up to their role in supporting them. Evidence from the programme's intervention demonstrates that community members show solidarity and support to the child when they understand what pushed him or her to migrate and the violence and discrimination he or she suffered on the way to and upon reaching the US.

Some of the young people have benefited from various community support projects, such as small income generating activities. ACISAM has documented these good practices at community level and shares them with other communities which are willing to support young people. The organisation is also planning to work with media outlets, to educate them about reporting ethically about migration and advocating for the rights of children on the move.

HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

The psychosocial support provided by ACISAM, the solidarity shown by the community and the income generating activities have all helped many of the children to begin the process of dealing with and moving past the trauma they have faced in the past. As one young person said:

"Now I feel taken seriously; it gives me hope to go on. I did not believe that there were opportunities for youth here. I felt abandoned but now I realize that there is still a chance to succeed."

Helping children on the move through mobile legal clinics in South Africa

WHAT CHALLENGES DO CHILDREN FACE?

Most migrant children in South Africa come from neighbouring countries Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Botswana. Some have come with their parents or other family members. Others have come alone or have been separated from their companions. They are often at risk of abuse, exploitation and violence. Many civil society organisations in South Africa support migrant children by raising awareness about their rights as children first and foremost and by working with national authorities to ensure these rights are fulfilled in practice.

The right to access justice is critical, not only as a right in itself, but also as a step to accessing other rights. Yet, migrant children often struggle to access this right. The justice system is not always child-friendly which is a challenge for all children. Migrant children face additional barriers because they are often on the move within South Africa; hesitant to access justice because of their irregular residence status; unaware of their rights and how the system works in South Africa or held back because of language barriers or financial costs.

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

Lawyers for Human Rights in South Africa, working with CORMSA, Jesuit Refugee Service, and Johannesburg Child Welfare among others with support from Terre des Hommes (Germany), provides a mobile legal clinic for children on the move. Lawyers for Human Rights' legal advisors reach out to children and their communities, discuss migrant children's situations with them, provide information about their rights and entitlements and explain the steps they need to take to claim such rights. When a child and his or her family agrees, the mobile clinic team assists families in claiming these rights through the justice system.

The cases brought to the mobile legal clinic have been documented and together provide an important picture of the various challenges faced by migrant children in accessing justice in South Africa. In partnership with other civil society organisations, Lawyers for Human Rights is using this evidence to advocate for changes in laws, policies and practices.



HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

Through this mobile clinic, children on the move are better protected against exploitation and abuse, while the perpetrators face justice. The mobile character of the practice has proven crucial in reaching children and in establishing trust with them and their families.



©Tdh / Will Baxter

Supporting social inclusion through sports in Egypt, North Africa

WHAT CHALLENGES DO CHILDREN FACE?

Since 2013, Egypt is hosting a large number of refugees from Syria, many of them children. Uprooted from their homes, the socio-economic situation of Syrian refugees in Egypt is extremely vulnerable. Children are often the most vulnerable and many of them end up being exploited as labourers or in child marriage.

Egypt is also a country from which and through which people migrate to Europe. At the end of 2017, there were 3,700 unaccompanied and separated children registered in Egypt, 2,780 of whom were newly registered in 2017 alone. The majority of these children come from Eritrea. Other countries from which these children originate include Ethiopia, Iraq, Somalia and South Sudan.¹⁵

Many Egyptian children also live on the margins of society with limited access to rights and services. They can sometimes see migration as the only viable option for their future. Considering this context and Egypt being in a turbulent region, there is a risk of tensions. It is therefore crucial to support ongoing efforts to foster tolerance, understanding and social inclusion as well as improved access to rights and services for everyone living in Egypt, especially children.

HOW ARE DESTINATION UNKNOWN MEMBERS RESPONDING?

Leisure activities are not only a child's right, but also important for a child's development. Since many children love sport, Terre des Hommes (Foundation) is investing in sporting activities for girls and boys in Egypt, which bring together Egyptian children with refugee and other migrant children living in Egypt. Sport helps children to make friends, make connections and to communicate. Sport quickly and effortlessly becomes a way in which children play together and socialise and is therefore a great tool for social cohesion.

Sports coaches and Terre des Hommes' social workers develop sports programmes which help children develop life skills through the sporting activities. As one of the coaches explains:

"We use the activities to show the children that they can get back on their feet and still make something of the situation. Some children suffer the consequences of war or the loss of a family member. Some no longer remember their homes, but still have trouble adjusting to their new culture. The first time they take part in the activities, they are shy. It's the coaches' goal to give them self-confidence. I give additional attention and support to those who are less skilled. It helps them do better. My motto is 'You all can do it!'"

¹⁵ See UNHCR, Egypt, Operational Context 2018; available at: <http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2540>; accessed in November 2018





©Tdh / Jean-Luc Marchina

Another coach gives the example of how, through sport, he was able to discuss the consequences of violence and aggressive behaviour with children:

“During play, sometimes the children express their frustration with aggressive behaviour. On one occasion, we discussed together whether this kind of behaviour was helpful or not. We also drafted together a code of conduct, which we stuck on the wall. After a few weeks, I took the sheet down. They now stick to the rules themselves.”

This is part of the Terre des Hommes community approach to child protection in the region. In fact, the coaches are all members of the community: professional sportspeople, parents, teachers, and young people themselves, who are interested and get support to enhance their technical and leadership skills.

HOW DOES THIS HELP CHILDREN ON THE MOVE?

In the space of 1 year, 1,500 children and young people and 70 community members have participated in and contributed to these activities which strengthen children’s life skills and promote social cohesion in their community.



MUHAMET’S STORY:

“Since I was 6, I started to play football in Tal Menin, my pretty city. I was clever in playing, the ball even became my best friend who went with me everywhere. I didn’t lose it till it got lost during the war. I lost my father and my ball. We had to move to Egypt five years ago, leaving our home and our city.

I became lonely with my mother and my little brother without a team or a ball. I used to play anything that looked like a ball. I have dreamed of my ball, which I left behind in my city, in my destroyed school.

I heard about the football sport activity in the Abwab family centre supported by Terre des Hommes in a nearby stadium. I actually went to the centre and started to practice many activities, including football with other children from Syria and Egypt under the supervision of a facilitator who was a previous football player.

The facilitator helped me to recover my fitness, my technique, and my self-confidence. I became a member of the football team of Abwab centre. We then started to compete with other teams of the other family centres with other Syrian and Egyptians children. During one of the matches, somebody told me about SATUC world cup for orphans. I applied to be a player for Syria to participate in the world cup for orphans in 2017. After passing some tests, I was chosen as the best Syrian player in the required age category and represented my country in the Syrian team. We will go to Morocco to participate in the World Cup.”



©Tdh

© Destination Unknown - December 2018

Author: Mirela Shuteriqi

Editor: Caroline Horne

Design: www.emilysadler.com

CONTACTS:

info@destination-unknown.org

www.destination-unknown.org

**DESTINATION
UNKNOWN**

protect children on the move

a network led by

Terre des Hommes
International Federation