

Who are Children on the Move?

According to the [FXB Principles](#), the term *Children on the move* (COM) refers to children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers. *Other children affected by migration* refers to children remaining in the country of origin after their parents have migrated, and to children living with their parents in the destination country.

Protection and care of COM: ISS' actions over the years

- 1926: ISS Study on *Problems of children during the process of migration*;
- Casework: support to unaccompanied minors at the core following WW, including family reunification;
- Training to and close co-operation with International Refugee Organisation (now UNHCR);
- 1987-88: ISS Guide on Unaccompanied children in emergency situations;
- Casework and specialised ISS members (see inter alia: [ISS West African Network](#), [ISS USA](#) in Northern Triangle, and [DCI/ISS Italy](#));
- 2016: Motion of ISS International Council on the protection and care of COM as core activity of ISS;
- 2017: [ISS International Manual](#) (available in Eng/Spa);
- 2017-now: International advocacy and standard setting: e.g. ISS actively participated in the [Initiative for Child Rights in the Global Compacts](#); contributed to shaping the [CMW-CRC Joint General Comments NO. 22 + 23](#); and is part of Working Groups of the UN Migration Network;
- 2018: Participation in the Global Compacts in Marrakech in Morocco;
- 2018-2022: Training Course - MOOC [Caring for Children moving alone](#).

ISS Technical assistance projects: some examples

Mexico (2019-2021), Collaboration with UNICEF Mexico

- Objectives: assessment of situation in view of the development of a National Strategy for child protection and alternative care & implementation of quality alternative care for COM;
- Outcomes: Roadmap for the implementation of a reform of the system, composed of a mapping and diagnosis report with recommendations.

Morocco and North Africa: 2 projects

Enfants et jeunes sur les routes migratoires entre l'Afrique de l'Ouest et du Nord (2021-2033), Consortium led by Helvetas, Terre des Hommes, and GIZ

- Objectives: consolidate child protection systems & responses for COM;
- Implementation in 20 countries.

Hijra wa Himaya (2019-2022), Collaboration with UNICEF Morocco and Moroccan government

- Objectives: develop Standard Operating Procedures for BIA-BID processes for COM, capacity building of stakeholders;
- Implementation in three regions (Tangier, Oujda, Rabat).

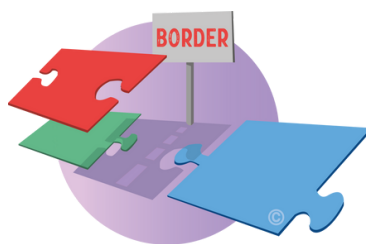
ISS in essence:

- Is a professional and specialised **global network** founded in 1924 with 132 members in 125 States;
- Has been serving the needs of children and families **for 100 years**;
- Contributes to **law and policy development and advocacy efforts**;
- Maintains a **long-standing and close cooperation** with the Hague Conference on Private International Law (**HCCH**) and its Central Authorities (**CAs**);
- Hosts the [International Reference Centre for the Rights of Children deprived of their family \(ISS/IRC\)](#), a program of the ISS General Secretariat based in Geneva, with a mission **for more than 30 years** to equip child protection, alternative care, and adoption professionals across the world with up-to-date research, publications, training, and technical assistance projects;
- Is always at the forefront of **implementing international standards and raising awareness about children's rights** through its direct cross-border case management and advocacy efforts.

Elements to consider for cross-border case-management

By publishing the Manual [Children on the Move - From protection towards a quality sustainable solution: a practical guide](#), ISS advocates for the treatment of every child as a child – with full respect of their rights – under all circumstances. This requires greater collaboration between States and their respective Child Protection Authorities, agencies and organisations, and the establishment of effective transnational referral processes for the protection of COM.

States need to place every child at the centre of the decision-making process and tackle the challenges with the following commitments: provide COM with **individualised, child-centred, sustainable and quality solutions**; develop and follow **harmonised care standards** to ensure **quality and continuity of transnational care**; establish adequate case **monitoring and follow-up** mechanisms across borders.



ISS Casework services may include:

- Social evaluation report in the country of origin or a third country;
- Family tracing and maintaining contact with the family;
- Family reunification;
- Assisted voluntary return;
- Provide necessary referrals to competent authorities;
- International family mediation;
- Legal and administrative assistance (e.g. legal advice in the asylum seeking procedures, acquisition and transfer of official documents).

ISS Technical assistance and advocacy may include:

- See above ISS Technical assistance projects;
- Dissemination of information to professionals (e.g.: newsletter, comparative studies, and thematic publications);
- Training of professionals (e.g. MOOC);
- Support in national law and policy reforms;
- Active participation in expert consultation groups;
- Work with UN and regional treaty bodies.

For the development of a well-connected, transnational network of child protection professionals, ISS' manual proposes an eight-step procedure:



- 1. Arrival, detection and identification:** detecting and identifying COM and address vulnerabilities, immediate protection and care needs;
- 2. Immediate support and care** to meet the child's immediate physical and psychological needs. Care measures need to be in line with international standards and any form of detention must be prohibited;
- 3. Assessment of the child's situation** aiming to collect all necessary information to determine steps 4-7;
- 4. Temporary integration and quality care arrangements** in the host country. Establish an individual support plan that assures quality care, personal development during their stay. The child's legal situation in the host country will need to be determined swiftly, including adopting measures to avoid statelessness;
- 5. Evaluation in the country of origin:** locating and evaluation the child's family and community for an eventual family reunification in the country of origin;
- 6. Determination of a sustainable solution** in the child's best interests in the country of origin, the host country or a third country;
- 7. Implementation of the sustainable solution** through an action plan to implement the sustainable solution, with the child's participation;
- 8. Monitoring and follow-up** through support in agreement with the child, to ensure continuity of development, well-being and adequacy of the life protect.

How does the HCCH 1996 Child Protection Convention apply to the protection and care of COM?

Arts. 6, 11 and 12 note the application to some COM profiles.

Art. 3 foresees different protection measures.

The co-operation mechanisms foreseen by Arts. 30-36 can help determine sustainable quality solutions via thorough assessments in the country of origin, host or transit country. When it comes to implementing cross-border placements, the Contracting States need to comply with the mechanisms foreseen in Arts. 33 and 23 (1).

ISS calls for a wider ratification of/accession to the HCCH 1996 Child Protection Convention, and awareness raising of its provisions among Contracting States as tools to find concrete solutions for COM via strengthened co-operation and communication among different stakeholders within a State and between States.

Guiding international standards:

- [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#)
- [HCCH 1996 Child Protection Convention](#)
- [UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children](#)
- [CMW-CRC Joint General Comments NO. 22 + 23](#)
- [2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants](#)
- [Global Compacts for Migration & on. Refugees](#)
- [Recommended principles to guide actions concerning children on the move and other children affected by migration](#)
- [ISS Submission for the Joint General Comment \(first and second\)](#)
- [Recommendations for protecting, promoting, and implementing the human rights of children on the move in the proposed Global Compacts.](#)

ISS documents:

- [Children on the move: From protection towards a quality sustainable solution \(2017\)](#).
- [Manuel de prise en charge des mineur-e-s non- accompagné-e-s en Suisse](#)
- [Procédures et standards de prise en charge de la CEDEAO pour la protection et la réintégration des enfants vulnérables concernés par la mobilité et des jeunes migrants](#)