



SWISS FOUNDATION OF THE
INTERNATIONAL SOCIAL SERVICE

Harmonizing Protection and Care for Children on the Move

Olivier Geissler - ISS Switzerland

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International Social Service (ISS)

- Since 1924
- Part of a global network (120 countries)
- Supports children and families separated by borders facing social and/or legal issues → extensive work on children on the move
- Ca. 30'000 treated annually
- Based on UN norms (CRC) and standards and The Hague Conventions

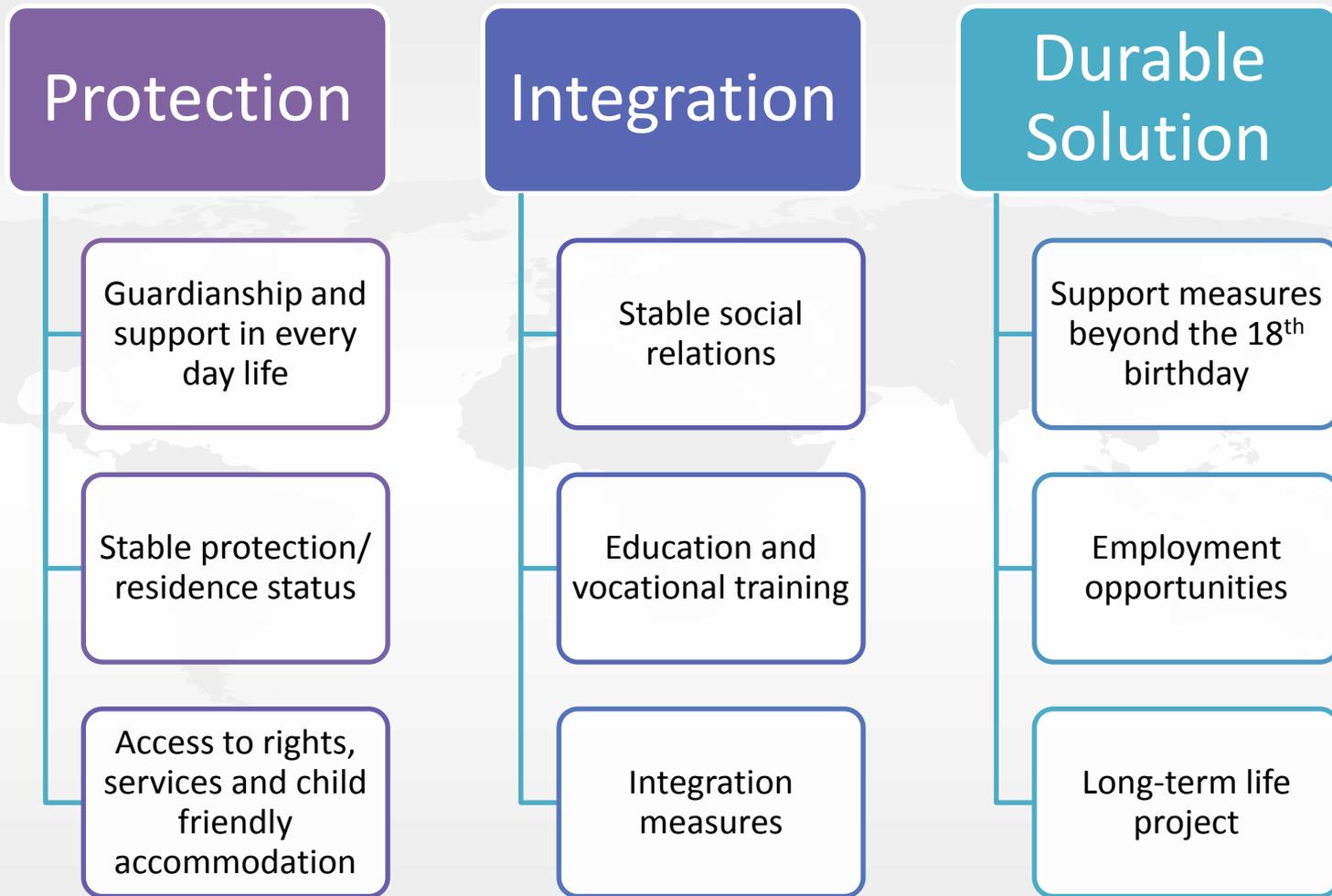


Introduction

- Children on the move (CoM): not a new but a phenomenon of increasing global importance
- **2010:** Global Movement for Children (Barcelona)
- **2012:**
 - **GFMD Mauritius:** Civil Society Days put child migration on the agenda
 - **CRC's Day of General Discussion Report** has set out principles on “The Rights of All Children in the Context of International Migration” → **widely recognized but poorly implemented**
- **2016:** the migration management crisis gives new visibility to CoM and need & opportunity to **reaffirm principles** and strengthen a **rights-based implementation** of protection of CoM



The needs of Children on the Move



... are universal



Issue: How can rights of CoM be safeguarded across countries?

Today's shortfalls of protection and care of CoM

- Int. protection is emergency relief focused, short-term and centred on 1 country
- National protection systems are fragmented in implementation of child protection and care principles
- Protection measures do not sufficiently consider the individual child's long term development and prospects
- The evolving nature of the CoM's migration experience is neglected: absence of transnational cooperation in case management and monitoring

→ Need for harmonized protection standards and transnational case management for implementing and monitoring durable quality solutions for CoM



A transnational mechanism for protection: The West Africa Network for the protection of children (WAN):

- **Since 2005:** First mechanism of cooperation between countries enabling protection and quality reintegration of vulnerable children across borders (mostly unaccompanied and separated children: young stranded migrants, child workers, street children, exploited children, trafficked children etc.)
- Links up the 15 countries of ECOWAS + Mauritania
- Transnational cooperation of CSOs and national, subregional and regional authorities
- 6'000 children have been reintegrated in a families or community setting



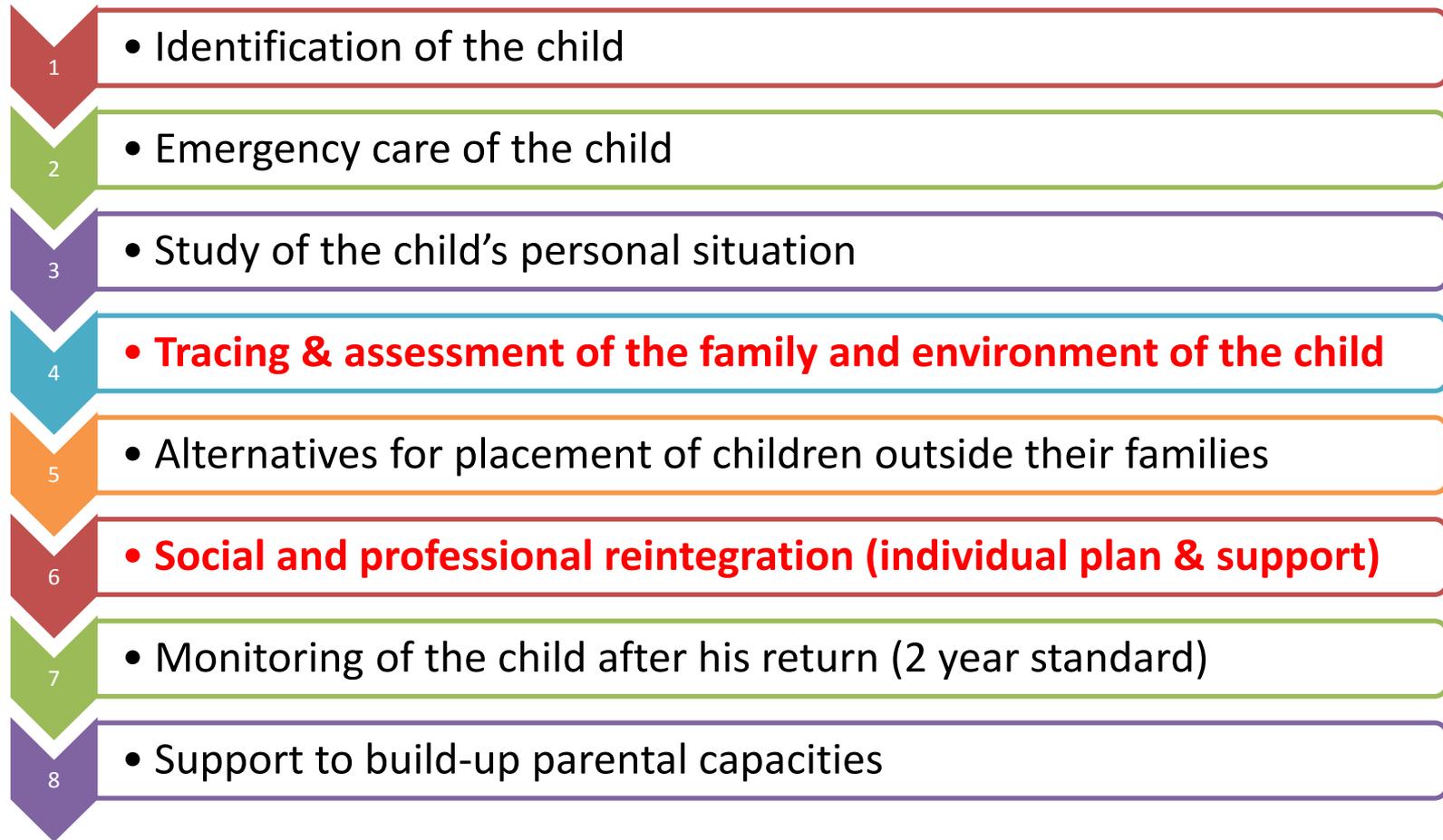
WAN Approach



- **Multilevel Approach:**
 - 1) Direct support to migrant children
 - 2) Capacity building of stakeholders
 - 3) Advocacy at national, subregional and regional levels

Common standards for harmonized procedure

8 steps to harmonized quality care for children on the move



Main achievements

- ✓ ECOWAS recognized WAN as a viable mechanism for transnational protection and care of children in West Africa
- ✓ **Harmonization of practices** and establishment of regional minimum standards for protection and reintegration of vulnerable children
- ✓ The standards developed by WAN have been validated by Member States and will be integrated in early 2016 in the ECOWAS Child Protection M&E framework and in its Guidelines for implementation
- ✓ Externally evaluated by EU & SDC and identified as a good practice



Concluding remarks

- **CoM are children first and foremost**– regardless of their migration status
- **Harmonized protection standards respecting the CRC principles** are necessary to guarantee quality care and equal treatment of CoM across countries
- **Transnational cooperation** among countries is key in finding durable solutions for the transnational phenomenon of children on the move → **transnational case management**
- Each child has the **right to a durable solution** centred on his or her best interest and capacities beyond their 18th birthday.
- States should work towards strengthening COM's **resilience** through **recognizing and enhancing their potential as actors of development** – both of their personal development and for the communities (gain and transfer of skills, knowledge, experiences, innovation etc.)



Thank you for your attention

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