# Standard Operating Procedures for Emergency Response to Unaccompanied and Separated Children in Jordan

## I. BACKGROUND

These standard operating procedures (SOPs) establish the roles and responsibilities of government agencies (Family Protection Department (FPD), Ministry of Justice (MOJ) and Ministry of Social Development) and UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, UNRWA) and other case management national and international agencies (IRC, IMC, JRF, IFH/NHF) regarding the working procedures for the care and protection of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) as part of the refugee response in Jordan.

These SOPs were developed as a result of a consultative process, between November 2013 to November 2014, involving participating members of the UASC Task Force (TF) under the Child Protection Sub Working Group in Jordan.

This document along with several supporting annexes form the UASC SOPs document. These SOPs will be updated every 12 months by the TF unless otherwise required due to significant changes in the overall framework related to child protection in Jordan. These UASC SOPs should be read in conjunction with the Interagency Emergency Standard Operating Procedures for prevention of and response to Gender-Based Violence and Child Protection in Jordan.

## II. TERMINOLOGY

**Separated Child**: A separated child is a child who is separated from both parents or from his/her previous legal or customary primary care-giver, but not necessarily from other relatives. This may, therefore, include children accompanied by other adult family members.[1]

**Unaccompanied Child**: An unaccompanied child is a child who has been separated from both parents and other relatives and is not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so.[2]

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[1] *Inter-agency Guiding principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, 2004.
[2] *Inter-agency Guiding principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, 2004.

**Orphan child**: An orphan is a child, both of whose parents/caregivers are known to be dead. In some countries, however, an orphan is defined as a child who has lost one parent/caregiver.[3]

**Family Tracing and Reunification**: Tracing in the case of UASC is the process of searching for family members or primary legal or customary care-givers. The term also refers to the search for children whose parents are looking for them. The objective of tracing is reunification with parents or other close relatives.[4]

**Verification**: Verification is the process of establishing the validity of relationships and confirming the willingness of the child and the family member (s) to be reunited.[5]

*"Verification must be carried out for every child. When tracing is successful, an assessment should verify that family reunification is in the best interests of the child. In cases where there are serious concerns, it may be necessary to involve the appropriate local authorities [...] local communities for any further action or future support required."*

**Best Interest Assessment (BIA)**:[6] Is the UNHCR's assessment tool for protection of individual children. Individual casework with children at risk, including unaccompanied and separated children, must be based on an assessment of protection needs with recommendations for interventions and referrals. A BIA is essential before any action affecting an individual child of concern to UNHCR is taken, unless a BID is required. Overall, a BIA should be seen as an essential element of case management and general child protection work. It supports child protection actors in any decision or action taken on behalf of a child in line with Article 3 of the Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC).

A BIA should be conducted as soon as a child has been identified to be at risk. The identification of a child at risk can happen at arrival, but more often occurs during the course of displacement through UNHCR or partners, or through community-based protection mechanisms.

**Best Interests determination (BID)**[7] describes the formal process with strict procedural safeguards designed to determine the child's best interest for particularly important decisions that affect him or her. It needs to facilitate adequate child participation and involve decision-makers with relevant areas of expertise, who can identify and balance all relevant factors in order to assess the best option. The process must be documented. UNHCR uses this procedure for particularly important decisions affecting the child that require stricter procedural safeguards in order to identify his or her best interests (cf. page 10 when BID is required).

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3  *Inter-agency Emergency Standard Operating Procedures for prevention of and response to Gender-Based Violence and Child Protection in Jorda*n, 2013
4  *Inter-agency Guiding principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, 2004
5  *Inter-agency Guiding principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children*, 2004
6  UNHCR, *Guidelines on the Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child*, 2007
7  UNHCR, *Guidelines on the Formal Determination of the Best Interests of the Child*, 2007

Alternative Care:[8] Alternative care is the care provided for children by caregivers who are not their biological parents. This care may take the form of informal or formal care. Alternative care may be kinship; foster care; other forms of family-based or family-like care placements; residential care; or supervised independent living arrangements[9] for children.

## Key Guiding Principles

- **Best interests of the child**: Decision making regarding care arrangements and family reunification should always be guided by a holistic and comprehensive assessment of the child's situation and what will be in his/her best interests. It should be conducted by competent and trained child protection staff.
- **Preventive Care for Children**: "Support efforts to keep children in, or return them to, the care of their family or failing this, to find another appropriate and permanent solution."[10]
- **Family-based care**: Family-based care is preferable to the use of residential care, particularly over the long-term.
- **Community-based care**: The core approach of alternative care in emergency and refugee settings is 'community-based.' Refugee children should be cared for within the refugee community not with host country caregivers to prevent loss of their refugee status and identity.

## Standard case management principles for SOPs[11]

- Promote the child's best interest
- Ensure the safety of the child
- Comfort the child
- Ensure appropriate confidentiality
- Involve the child in decision-making
- Treat every child fairly and equally (principle of non-discrimination and inclusiveness)
- Strengthen children's resiliencies

## Key Relevant Rights of Separated and Unaccompanied Children

- The right to non-discrimination (art. 2 and art 22 for refugees CRC)
- The right to life and survival (art. 6 CRC)
- The right to health and development (art. 6 CRC)
- The right to a nationality, legal identity and birth registration (art. 7CRC)
- The right to not be separated from their parents (art. 9 CRC)
- The right to participate in decisions about their future ( art. 12 CRC)

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8   United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, Article 29 (b) & (c), 2009

9   In the context of Jordan, the independent living arrangements are called "supervised groups", with the support of a mentor from the community.

10  United Nations Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, Article 2 (a), 2009

11  Inter-agency Emergency standard operating procedures for prevention of and response to Gender based Violence and Child Protection in Jordan, 2013

## III. OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of the Standard Operation Procedures (SOPs) are to:

i.   Standardise and summarise procedures for UASC that all organisations working with UASC should adhere to; ensure compliance with the internationally agreed standards described in the Inter Agency Guiding Principles on Unaccompanied and Separated Children;[12] and ensure compliance with relevant national laws and procedures.

ii.  Clarify roles and responsibilities of agencies working within the spirit of complementarity and cooperation so that each member knows the role for which the agency stands accountable for in the process of (i) case management through Best Interest Procedures (BIA/BID) and follow-up; ii) family tracing and reunification (iii) alternative/interim care arrangements ; and (iv) durable solutions.

iii. Ensure that UASC receive the care and protection they need.

## IV. PROCEDURES

The detailed procedures for each step for responding to separated and unaccompanied children are described below.

### 4.1 Prevention of Separation

Prevention of separation within Syria is currently not within the scope of these SOPs. However, there are separations occurring within Jordan that needs to be addressed as described in the table;

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[12] *Inter-agency Guiding Principles for Unaccompanied and Separated Children , 2004*

## 4.1 PREVENTION OF SEPARATION

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Further separation or long-term separation can be prevented through identification of UASC. | Awareness-raising Protection monitoring and outreach on: identification and referral of UASC (including prevention of secondary separation) to other sectors, government officials and communities | IMC/NHF/JRF/IRC UNHCR/ IRD/ SCJ and Mercy Corps UNRWA and Tdh | Countrywide (as per the referral pathway) |
| Targeting of humanitarian interventions in a way that does not create secondary separation | Advocate for a sensitive programme planning and implementation to ensure that provision of services and assistance does not promote secondary (further) separation | As above | As above |
| Family separation can occur during medical evacuation at the border | Advocate with and support to border officials to ensure medical evacuation does not take place without consideration of measures for ensuring family unity | UNHCR | Countrywide |
| | Awareness raising with agencies providing medical care to refer cases of UASCs to case child protection management agencies | IMC/NHF/JRF/IRC UNHCR/UNICEF | Countrywide |
| UASC might face greater challenges in accessing Jordan | Ensure immediate referrals of UASC wanting to enter to Jordan to UNHCR for advocacy purposes | IMC/NHF/JRF/IRC UNHCR/UNICEF / UNRWA | Countrywide |
| Children become UASC when parents or main caregivers move to another location within or outside Jordan including return to Country of Origin | Target Community structures (including districts meeting, refugee committees, CSC, etc.) with training and awareness raising on the need to maintain family unity. | IRC, IMC, JRF, IFH, UNHCR, the CPWG through the Amani Campaign | Countrywide |
| | Continue protection monitoring and outreach activity, to identify UASC and report to UNHCR BID supervisor for required follow-ups ( as above) | IRC, IMC, JRF, IFH, UNHCR, Mercy Corps, IRD, Care International | Countrywide |

## 4.2 IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL OF THE UASC

| ENTRY POINTS FOR IDENTIFICATION | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| **At registration/ verification sites** Identification during the Registration[13] process | Documentation of the UASC identified in registration interview | UNHCR Registration team (office and outreach teams) | Identification takes place country wide and UNHCR has the following registration centers: • Amman • Irbid • Raba Sarhan • Refugee Camps • EJC |
| | Electronic sharing of the UASC list with case management agencies. • UNHCR direct implementation country wide • IRC in Zaatari and Azraq camp • IMC in Irbid and Zarqa , Mafraq, Jerash, Ajlun, Ramtha, Balqa • JRF in Amman and in the South through CBOs' • NHF in KAP and Cyber City | UNHCR Registration/CP Focal Points | Country wide |
| **At reception areas:**[14] Identification during reception of newly arriving refugees in camps | Receiving referrals. Conducting Best Interest Assessment | IRC/UNHCR | Refugee Camps |
| **During provision of services** (hospitals, schools, CFS, YFS, WSS, etc.) | Referring identified UASC / missing children requests to UNHCR or UNRWA for the Palestinian children | All the partners | Country wide |
| Protection Monitoring, Community outreach and active identification | Register cases and communicate with the relevant UNHCR CP area focal point to ensure registration of the UASC status in the ProGres, case management and implementation of BIA/BID as required | IRC/UNHCR | Refugee Camps |
| | | JRF/UNHCR | Amman |
| | | IMC/UNHCR NHF/UNHCR | Ramtha, Mafraq, Irbid, Jerash, Ajloun, Balqa & Zarqa KAP and Cyber City |
| | | UNHCR | Country wide |
| Child Protection and other refugee committees | Identification and referral of the UASC to UNHCR CP/Registration by applying the standard case management principles (page 3) | All organisations supporting protection committees | Country Wide |

[13] *'Registration' here is referring to UNHCR Registering a person as a refugee, rather than 'registration' of a child for family tracing (a term often used in family tracing and reunification programmes).*
[14] *Registration, protection unit, monitoring unit, verification unit, return office, etc.*

## 4.3 DOCUMENTATION OF THE UASC

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---------|---------|------|-------|
| Basic bio data of all identified UASC is documented on the UASC Tracking Sheet | 1. All identified UASC are documented on one central UASC Tracking Sheet[15]/ ProGress and referred to case management agencies. | UNHCR CP and registration | Country wide |
| | 2. Case management agencies update UASC Tracking Sheets[16] and send them back to UNHCR (adding any new identified cases) | Child protection case management agencies | Country wide |
| All the UASC documented on the Best Interest Assessment (BIA)[17] benefit from case management | • Document child's case using the BIA Form (including taking photos if not available)<br>• Complete the Consent Form for all children<br>• Keep UASC Tracking Sheet updated with cases each agency has been allocated.<br>• Share copies of BIA and other relevant documents with UNHCR weekly. | Child protection case management agencies | Country wide |

[15] UASC identified through UNHCR Registration that require referral to case management agencies will be referred through the UASC Tracking Sheet (copying UNICEF if it is a UNICEF partner) or spread sheets that have the same fields as the UASC Tracking Sheet: (Separation status; Individual ID Number and any Ration Card Number, Full name (four if possible), Date of birth (DD/MM/YY), Sex, Current address and telephone number (where possible), Full names of any caregivers, Date and location of registration)

[16] CP IMS/ RAIS will be used

[17] A BIA should be conducted as soon as possible after UASC are identified as refugee families may change location often and so any delays could result in loss of ability to locate the child and or caregivers.

## 4.4 CASE MANAGEMENT FOR THE UASC

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---------|---------|------|-------|
| Undertake all stages of case management as outlined in the national SOP which can be found at<br><br>http://data.unhcr.org/s yrianrefu- gees/working_ group.php?Page=- Countr y&LocationId=107&Id=3 5<br><br>Cases of Domestic violence is indicated and the unaccompanied or separated child needs to be removed from his current care arrangement | Take necessary direct action on the case including developing an individual care plan which should be included in the BIA and reviewed/ approved by the case worker' supervisor.<br><br>Make required referrals using the **Interagency Referral Form.**<br><br>**BIA is conducted and clear recommendation for follow up should be noted** | UNHCR | Country Wide |
| | | IMC | Irbid, Ramtha, Jerash, Ajloun, Mafraq, Zarqa and Balqa |
| | | IRC | For UASC in Zaatari Camp<br><br>For UASC in Azraq Camp |
| | | UNHCR/JRF | Amman/ South |
| | | UNHCR/NHF | KAP and Cyber City camps |
| | | FPD and Juvenile Courts | Country wide |

### Service Provision

Aside from the specific services of family tracing and reunification, alternative care placement and determination of the best interests of the child that will be outlined in these SOPs, the UASC may need other support services required by other children at risk to be tailored to their specific needs. These services are outlined here in summary and more detail is included in the national SOPs.

- **Protection**, including legal aid, at reception centres upon arrival in country and safe shelters
- **Best interests determination**, please refer to the section 4.7 on BID panel (in complex cases, prior to family reunification)
- **Registration at UNHCR**, which documents their separation and care arrangement status
- **Education**,[18] including non-formal[19] and informal education[20]
- **Health, including physical and mental health**
- **Tailor made assistance** and support to foster caregivers or supported independent living in line with applicable referral pathways.

**Psychosocial services** including life skills, child and youth friendly spaces, to support separated and unaccompanied children and the families

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[18] Formal education: Certified education services provided by the Ministry of Education public schools (grades 1-12)

[19] Non-formal education: Certified education services following MOE's NFE curricula (2 years course). The eligibility of students to NFE includes those who have missed more than 3 years of school or have never been enrolled in formal education in Jordan. When completed 2 years of NFE, the participants will receive a certificate, which equals to a public school 10th grade completion

[20] Informal education: Educational activities that range from recreational activities to literacy numeracy, and life skills sessions. These educational activities are not certifiable by the Ministry of Education and not specifically bound to certain age or target group

## 4.5 FAMILY TRACING OF THE UASC

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cross-border and in-country | Referring to UNHCR CP focal points when tracing is needed; providing any updated information that may help with tracing process | Case management agencies | All locations |
| | UNHCR traces the family through its system[21] | UNHCR | For in country and cross-border tracing |
| | Referral to ICRC if UNHCR tracing is unsuccessful | UNHCR | For in country and cross-border tracing |
| | Establishment and maintenance of family links | UNHCR<br><br>Case management agencies | All locations |
| | Feedback on any action taken to case management agencies within 24 hours | UNHCR | All locations |

UNHCR child protection case managers directly contact parents, relatives when phone numbers are provided. UNHCR ensures an open line of communication with parents. When facing difficulties of contacting them, or support is needed for any formal process/documentations with the authorities UNHCR offices are contacted for their support. In very limited number of cases where needed, legal AID could communicate with the embassies of other countries for support

## 4.6 FAMILY VERIFICATION

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Standard and simplified verification | Verify through completion of **Child Verification Form** and **Adult Verification Form** and taking other necessary steps following the outcome of this process (after review and approval by the supervisor). | All agencies described below for the different types of tracing | All locations |
| | Verification following prior arranged reunification or tracing by the child / family with agency support | Case management agencies | As described in case management section |
| | Verification following tracing by UNHCR | UNHCR | All locations |
| | Provide information that may support verification upon request. | UNHCR | All locations |

All actors involved in the case shall alert each other if there are any situations that require a Best Interests Determination prior to family reunification in complex cases. Reunification processes which may involve departure from camps or the country (to the urban setting, to a third country, to Country of Origin) should be conducted/approved by UNHCR.

### 4.7 Family Reunification

Family reunification must be documented on the Family Reunification Form. All movement of children, which involves bail out process, inter-camp transfer, traveling or return, should be coordinated with UNHCR

**4.7 FAMILY REUNIFICATION**

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Manage family reunification including preparation of the child and adult, transportation and paperwork. | • Prepare the child and family members for reunification using the Preparation of Child and Caregiver Checklist.<br>• Completion of Family Reunification Form.<br>• Ensure that the bailout procedures are followed for children leaving the camp to be reunified with family<br>• Follow any processes described in the Guidance Note on the Transportation of Unaccompanied Children. | Case management agencies in coordination with UNHCR as required<br><br>For bailout procedures, UNHCR<br><br>coordinates directly with SARD | All locations |

### 4.8 Best Interests Determination[22]

Best Interests Determination (BID) describes the formal process with strict procedural safeguards designed to determine the child's best interests for particularly important decisions affecting the child.

A BID for UASC is required before any decision or action affecting the life of a child in the following situations:

1. **Temporary care arrangements** for all refugee unaccompanied children
2. **The identification of durable solutions** voluntary repatriation; local integration or resettlement
3. **The possible separation of a child from her/his parents** (or person holding custody rights by law or custom) against their will if competent authorities are unable or unwilling to take action
4. **The identification of durable solutions or care arrangements**, where the custody situation remains unresolved & national authorities are unwilling or unable to adjudicate on the custody
5. **Prior to family reunification in complex cases**: e.g. where there are doubts about the relationship between the claiming caregiver and the child, or where there are signs of a history of abuse within the family, after long-term separation and when there is evidence of false documentation and when the legal custody is suspect.

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[22] See Annex/Addendum for more information on BID and UNHCR Guidelines: Determination of the Best Interests of the Child (2007) UNHCR

## 4.8 BEST INTERESTS DETERMINATION

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Case management | Completing the Best Interests Determination Report Form and submitting to BID supervisor at least 1 week prior to regular BID panel;[23] presenting cases to the panel, following- up on recommendations of the panel, prioritisation of cases.<br><br>Urgent cases in need of ad hoc BID panel, completing the Best Interests Determination Report Form and submitting to BID supervisor at least 48 hours prior to BID panel | Case management agencies | All locations |
| Supervision | Ensuring implementation of BID standards, convening and coordinating BID panels. BID reports prepared by caseworkers of case management agencies should be reviewed by the caseworkers' supervisors prior to the submission of the BID report to the UNHCR BID supervisor. The UNHCR BID supervisor should endorse the BID report prior to the BID panel | UNHCR BID supervisor in camps and urban settings | Camp based panel held in Zaatari and Azraq. Urban panel held in Amman for Amman and the South and in Irbid for Irbid including KAP and CC |

[23] BID panel meetings take place on Thursday in both Amman and Zaatari camp

### 4.9 Temporary and long-term alternative care arrangements

Alternative care arrangements shall start concurrently with tracing activities. BIA should be completed for all the cases (unaccompanied and separated children).

## 4.9 TEMPORARY AND LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE CARE ARRANGEMENTS

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Assessment/ Screening of current informal care arrangements for Separated Children (kinship care) | Completion of the **BIA** to establish if current care is safe and stable | Child protection case management agencies | As described under case management |
| | **For safe and suitable care arrangements**, provide legal advice to caregivers on formalisation through Shariah court. Refer to UNHCR for legal advice if formalisation is requested. | Case management organisations (initial counselling) UNHCR legal advice | Countrywide |
| | **For unsafe / unsuitable care arrangements**, conduct **BID** (see above in which BID is required, paragraph 3). | Child protection case management agencies to prepare the BID report And UNHCR to call for a BID panel meeting | As above |
| | Refer to FPD if child needs to be removed against will of current caregivers due to violence, abuse or neglect | FPD | Country wide |

## 4.9 TEMPORARY AND LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE CARE ARRANGEMENTS

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| For all Unaccompanied children in need of care arrangement | Completion of the BIA to establish the need for assigning a foster care arrangement for Unaccompanied Children | Child protection case management agencies | As above |
| Screening of spontaneous care arrangements for Unaccompanied Children | For safe and suitable care arrangements, completion of the Foster Parent / Mentor Screening Form and Reference Check and Foster parent/Mentor profile form | Child Protection Case Management Agencies | |
| | Formalise care arrangements through BID procedures[24] | BID Panel | Countrywide |
| | Formalise care arrangements through court | Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Justice | Countrywide |
| | **For unsafe / unsuitable care arrangements**, conduct BID procedures | Child protection case management agencies to prepare the BID report Participation of the Behavioural monitors and UNHCR to call for a BID panel meeting | As above |
| Placement of UAC in temporary hosting family | Conduct BIA and match the child with a prospective foster parent / mentor through review of profiles. | Case management agencies (IRC/IMC/NHF/JRF/UNHCR) | Placement of UAC in hosting family |
| | Place child with host family for up to three weeks | Case management agencies (IRC/IMC/NHF/JRF/UNHCR) | |
| | If placement lasts more than 3 weeks, then formalise care arrangements as per process described above (BID and formalisation through court)[25] | BID panel, MOSD and MOJ | |
| Placement of child in formal foster care/ Supervised Group living | Identification of prospective foster parents / mentors by completing the Foster Parent / Mentor Screening Form and Reference Check. | Child protection case management agencies | As above |
| | Approval of prospective foster parent / mentors | BID Panel | Country-wide |
| | Complete the Foster Parent / Mentor Profile Form | Child protection case management agencies | As above |
| | Conduct BIA and match the child with a prospective foster parent / mentor through review of profiles. Conduct BID | Child protection case management agencies | As above |
| | Approval of the care placement through BID | BID Panel | Country-wide |
| | Formalisation of care placement through court | Ministry of Social Development and Ministry of Justice | Country-wide |

## 4.9 TEMPORARY AND LONG-TERM ALTERNATIVE CARE ARRANGEMENTS

| PROCESS | ACTIONS | WHO? | WHERE |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Completion of the Alternative Care Placement Form and Alternative Care Agreement. | Case management agencies | As above |
| On-going monitoring of all care arrangements for all Unaccompanied and Separated Children (UASC) | Monitoring SC care arrangements through completion and monitoring / updating of the care plan throughout the above process  Monitoring of UAC care arrangements | Child protection case management agencies  Child protection case management organisations under supervision of MOSD/ MOJ/UNHCR | As above |

[24] Please refer to the procedures for formalizing the alternative care for Refugee Unaccompanied and Separated children
[25] Please refer to the Procedures for formalizing alternative Care for Refugee Unaccompanied and Separated children

### Types and timelines for alternative care

Every child will benefit from a BIA as a minimum requirement, BID will be completed as explained above.

**The following types of alternative care are available for UASC:**

1. Formalisation of existing family care arrangements
   - This includes existing family care arrangements for separated children (also known as 'kinship care') and unaccompanied children living in informal foster care
   - These arrangements should be maintained when found to be in best interest of the child (that is safe, stable and suitable)
2. Placement of the child into care of family member
   - If in the best interests of the child, the child may be placed with a family member who is willing and capable of providing care arrangement for the child
   - It will usually be in a child's best interests to be placed with a family member unless protection concerns are identified
3. Temporary hosting
   - Hosting families will be identified to provide temporary care for children who are unaccompanied. This arrangement is to provide emergency care for unaccompanied children who arrive in camps, while relatives are traced or alternative caregivers can be identified, so that children can be accommodated in family based care rather than temporary shelters
   - Hosting families will be pre-screened and selected using standard criteria to be able to host children for a temporary period of time. If the care arrangement continues for more than 3 weeks then procedures for formal foster care for unaccompanied children will be implemented
4. Formal fostering
   - Foster families will be selected from among the refugee population (Syrians in the case of Syrians, Iraqis in the case of Iraqis) or for a

specific child from among the child's existing social network.

- Foster families will be screened to develop a pool of standby hosting parents
- Foster families can be used for those UAC who cannot be reunified with parents or family members or UASC for whom their current care arrangements are not in their best interest
- For individual children, the foster family must be matched with the child[26]
- Formal foster arrangements must be reviewed by BID and forwarded by MOSD for MOJ's approval. A foster family will be provided with temporary guardianship for a child. The family will be responsible to provide care for the child. Further, the family will be able to take day-to-day decisions regarding medical care, school enrolment, legal decisions etc. MOSD will supervise this arrangement and must authorise international travel during this period
- A review of the care arrangements will be conducted after 6 months by BID panel. Long-term legal guardianship may be transferred to the foster family on a case by case basis based on the BID Panel recommendation. Such an arrangement must always be in child's Best Interest. At this stage, the family may apply for a passport for the child to travel with them

5. Supervised Group Living

This could to be the best option for UAC for whom family based care is not possible and who are accustomed to significant independence. The appropriateness of this type of care arrangement will be carefully considered on a case by case basis and should only be considered for boys 15 years old or older. This option is not appropriate for adolescent girls who should be placed in family in the current context. Child headed households where the head of the household is an adolescent boy may be placed under the supervision of a community mentor where placement in foster family is not possible.

- This arrangement involves maximum 3 adolescent boys living in tent/caravan (for camps) or apartment (in communities(, supported by a 'mentor'
- The mentor should be someone who lives nearby and who could visit the place every day
- The case worker will select and screen and match the 'mentor' using the same process as for foster families, including using criteria, checking their references and providing training
- Placement would be approved/formalised in same process as foster families
- A case worker from the case management agency would provide on-going support to the mentor
- Supervision of this arrangement will be provided by the MOSD Behavioural Monitors
- For legal purposes, the unaccompanied children while in supervised group

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[26] The matching process takes into consideration both the child and the foster family's background, which include cultural customs, religious beliefs, place of origin, tribes (etc.) to ensure the placement of the child within the family will be in the best interests of the child.

living should remain under the supervision of the MOSD Behavioural Monitors. In addition, significant decisions (e.g. legal and major medical related) will be made by the MOSD Behavioural monitors. Mentors will be given responsibilities for the daily decisions of the child (e.g. school enrolment) based on recommendations by case worker, and approved by BID panel.

### 4.9 Monitoring/Follow up

Follow-up visits are designed to:

- Provide support and guidance to both the child and the caregiver on developing and maintaining a healthy and protective relationship
- Monitor and detect any problems arising between the child and the caregiver or if the care plan is being followed as planned
- Ensure the child and the family are accessing services and community resources in line with the care plan
- Frequently, update the child and the caregiver on the progress made towards long-term care solutions, specifically around family reunification
- Monitor for and mitigate the risk of abuse, neglect, violence or exploitation of the child
- Update the child and the caregiver on the family tracing efforts and exchanging information on the issue which might have emerged since the last visit

Monitoring visits for the first three months for the case worker should be for:

- Separated children at least 1 visit per month during this period
- UAC at least 2 visits per month and phone call every month (2 weeks after the home visit)

If protection concerns are identified, monitoring should be more regular as per the recommendations of the BID and care plan.

Following the 12 week period, the monitoring may be reduced to every 12 weeks thereafter, unless there are protection concerns and no further pending referral actions that are more urgent than the 12 week monitoring timeframe allows for.

If it is not possible to:

- Trace the child's relatives after two years of active tracing
- Or the relatives are located and after mediation are unwilling or unable to take the child
- Or the child is unwilling to be reunified with the relatives

Then the Caseworker will need to prepare and present a BID report to the BID panel (See 4.7) to guide the consideration of long-term care options available to the child. This process should follow the BID Guidelines[27] and Handbook for the Implementation of BID procedures.[28]

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[27] UNHCR, Guidelines: Determination of the Best Interests of the Child, 2007
[28] UNHCR, Field Handbook for the Implementation of UNHCR BID Guidelines, 2011

For unaccompanied children or separated children placed in formal fostering the initial placement order will be for maximum of 6 months. The caseworker must provide written reports to the designated MOSD Behavioural Monitor after 3 months and facilitate a home visit to the child after 6 months.

After six months the care arrangements must be reviewed by the BID panel and returned to MOJ for extension of the placement order. At this point the length of placement will be at the discretion of the court, based on recommendation from the BID panel. A written report must be provided to the MOSD Behavioural Monitors at 9 and 12 months during the first year. After the first years, the frequency of the written should set in the individual care plan.

### 4.10 Case Closure of UASC

The child's case may be closed when most of the following have been achieved:

a. The child has been placed in long-term care and this care arrangement has been formalised

b. A minimum of 2 years have gone by since the placement and approval of the BID panel

c. Follow up has been conducted as a minimum every 12 weeks

d. All specified elements of the permanency plan have been implemented

e. The long-term caregiver is satisfied that they no longer need support with the placement

f. The child has fulfilled all necessary integration criteria. The child is:
   i. protected from abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect
   ii. engaged with education and / or training activities
   iii. receiving any necessary health care
   iv. Actively participating in social activities
   v. Expressing willingness to remain in the long-term care placement

Or

- A permanent plan has been developed and implemented involving supported independent living, small group homes or foster care, and the child has turned 18 and received services for a minimum of 12 months to support their independent living.

Or

- A child turns 18 whilst in interim care and has received services for a minimum of 12 months to support their independent living.

Or

- The child dies, and all necessary investigations in to cause of death have been conducted and concluded.

Or

- The child is reunified and reintegrated in her or his family after successful tracing

Or

- Resettlement or departure to a third country, voluntary or spontaneous return

Or

- The child cannot be found or contacted for 6 con