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Updated Regional Framework for the Protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children

in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda

JULY 2015-JUNE 2017

I. INTRODUCTION

Background

The hopes and prospects of the world's newest nation were shattered in December 2013, when violence broke out in South Sudan's capital and quickly spread to other locations in the country. As a result of the conflict, one and a half million people have been displaced within South Sudan, and over 600,000 have fled to neighbouring countries by July 2015. As stated by the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, *"the impact of the conflict on children in the previous months has been greater than in the entire 21-year period of the second civil war"*¹.

South Sudan also hosts over 264,000 Sudanese refugees, who have fled the border region of South Kordofan and Blue Nile in Sudan from a forgotten conflict that started over four years ago.

Children bear the brunt of the conflict. Girls and boys continue to be exposed to displacement, distress, gender-based violence, recruitment into armed forces and groups, and other forms of violence, abuse and exploitation. Children have been separated from their families on an unprecedented scale. Over 34,000 separated or unaccompanied children have been registered, representing 10% of the total number of refugee children in some of the countries of asylum. With almost 70% of the refugees from South Sudan and Sudan under the age of 18, both conflicts are nothing less than a war on their children.

A Regional Approach to the Protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children

In response to this crisis, and in light of the serious impact on children, UNHCR and child protection partners jointly developed a *Regional Framework for the Protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children* (the Regional Child Protection Framework) in the first half of 2014. This Framework set a common vision for protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Sudan and Uganda. It supported a coordinated and predictable response for refugee children across the region and promoted the harmonization of activities and implementation of child protection minimum standards. The Regional Child Protection Framework was complemented by more detailed country-specific intervention plans for child protection. It was established for a one-year period (May 2014-June 2015), after which it would be reviewed and updated.

During May-June 2015, the Lutheran World Federation, Plan International, Save the Children, UNHCR, UNICEF, and World Vision, as part of the Regional Child Protection Network, conducted assessment missions to the concerned countries to review the implementation of the Regional Child Protection Framework. The findings of these missions were validated during a regional inter-agency consultation in July in Nairobi. The meeting also agreed on regional child protection priorities for the next two years, and deliberated on key bottlenecks and on adjustments required to the updated Regional Child Protection Framework.

This present document is a result of these inter-agency consultations. It updates the Regional Child Protection Framework (2014-2015) and establishes clear regional strategic priorities for the region with specific targets and indicators for the next two years (July 2015-June 2017).

¹ African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, Press Statement following mission of the ACERWC on the situation of children in South Sudan, August 2014, p.2.

II. KEY CHILD PROTECTION ISSUES

- 1. Access to asylum, reception and transit conditions.** All countries neighbouring South Sudan have opened their borders and granted access to asylum to persons fleeing violence on a *prima facie* basis. South Sudan has equally opened its borders to Sudanese on the same grounds. However, restrictions and lack of regular access of humanitarian actors to border crossing points in some countries, have put refugee boys and girls at increased risk of violence, exploitation, recruitment into armed groups and family separation. Reception centres and transit facilities for refugees are often overcrowded, resulting in poor living conditions and additional stress on children and caregivers. With delays in transfers to the refugee settlements, some children have remained for months in transit locations without adequate care and protection.
- 2. Family separation.** Over 34,000 children have been registered as unaccompanied or separated from their parents. Countries are strengthening systems for tracing, reunification, and alternative care arrangements in the best interests of children, and a regional initiative is being advanced to support tracing efforts. Nevertheless, better developed procedures to ensure effective cross-border tracing and reestablishment of family contact for refugee children are still needed. Particular attention must be paid to the application of the Best Interest procedure in light of children's rights to refugee protection, safety and security, as well as family unity.
- 3. Sexual and gender based violence (SGBV).** SGBV was mentioned repeatedly during the revision of the Regional Child Protection Framework conducted by the Regional Child Protection Network in May and June 2015. Conflict-related sexual violence has been reported in South Sudan. Girls in particular are at risk of sexual violence, child marriage and early pregnancy— including by abduction in South Sudan. The displacement and family separation during flight has exacerbated risk factors for SGBV in countries of asylum. Sexual exploitation in countries of asylum, including survival sex is also a key concern.
- 4. Access to safe education.** Education – including non-formal education – is a key strategy to protect girls and boys, strengthen resilience, and heal psychosocial distress. Nevertheless, given the huge influx of school-aged refugee children in South Sudan's neighbouring countries as well as within South Sudan for Sudanese refugees, education services are currently very strained. Violence in school, including corporal punishment, was also reported as an issue of concern.
- 5. Child labour and exploitation.** Refugee girls and boys are subjected to the worst forms of child labour, including child trafficking and hazardous work. Child labour has been a common feature for South Sudanese and Sudanese refugee children in neighbouring countries, with different types of labour affecting refugee boys (e.g. cattle herding) and girls (e.g. domestic labour). Refugee children outside of parental care, especially separated and unaccompanied children, are more at risk of exploitation. Children in host communities around refugee settlement and camp areas are also subjected to exploitation and child labour, with refugee areas and markets within them acting as a pull factor for children from host communities to access jobs and food.

6. **Barriers to access birth registration.** Ensuring full access to birth registration remains a challenge. In all countries of asylum, refugee children receive birth notifications. However, even when provisions for birth registration for refugees are envisioned in the national policies of asylum countries, many Sudanese and South Sudanese new-born refugee children do not receive birth certificates due to lack of civil registration services in the region and the lack of awareness of the importance of birth registration among the refugee population. Birth registration is more than a right, it is the means for the legal recognition of the child's existence. With no proof of age and identity, children may be deprived of access to a whole range of rights including education, and health care, and may lack the most basic protection against abuse, exploitation and discrimination.
7. **Children associated with armed forces and groups.** The civilian character of asylum has been compromised in some locations and has led to reported cases of recruitment of refugee children by armed actors. In South Sudan, UNICEF reports that over 12,000 children have been recruited into armed groups, and some of these children may now be in countries of asylum. These children require specific strategies to be identified, linked to services and referred to specialized protection services.
8. **Psychosocial distress.** The witnessing of killings, destruction of homes, and loss of family severely affects refugee children's psychosocial wellbeing and mental health. Some refugee children reported a sense of insecurity in refugee camps, based largely on incidents that took place in their countries of origin – and not in their areas of refuge. This is indicative of the ongoing level of distress some have due to their experiences in their country of origin. Additionally, difficulties in accessing food, water, education, livelihoods, recreation, and other basic services on a daily basis in refugee camps and settlements further exacerbate the level of stress amongst children and caregivers.
9. **Lack of opportunities for adolescents and youth.** Children and youth represent over 75% of refugees. Conflict has uprooted thousands of adolescents and youth people from their places of origin at a critical time in their lives, disrupting their education and curtailing their opportunities to have a self-sufficient and prosperous life. Adolescents and youth have often been mobilized to actively participate in the conflict, exposing them to violence and trauma. Investing in adolescents and youth can bring incalculable dividends not only for this population, but for the communities they belong to, and for the built-up of sustainable peace and the promotion of social reconciliation.
10. **Longer-term solutions for children.** As the fighting in the border region of Sudan has entered its fourth year, and the South Sudan conflict is to complete its second year, it is imperative to emphasize longer term solutions for children, including seeking durable solutions where they are determined to be in a child's best interest. That should include ensuring refugee children benefit from national child protection systems, the promotion of policies and frameworks that contribute to the expansion of opportunities for children, and the peaceful coexistence among host and refugee communities.

Figure 1: Refugees and host communities key protection concerns for children –Source: *Regional Review of the Child Protection Response for South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children, September 2015*²

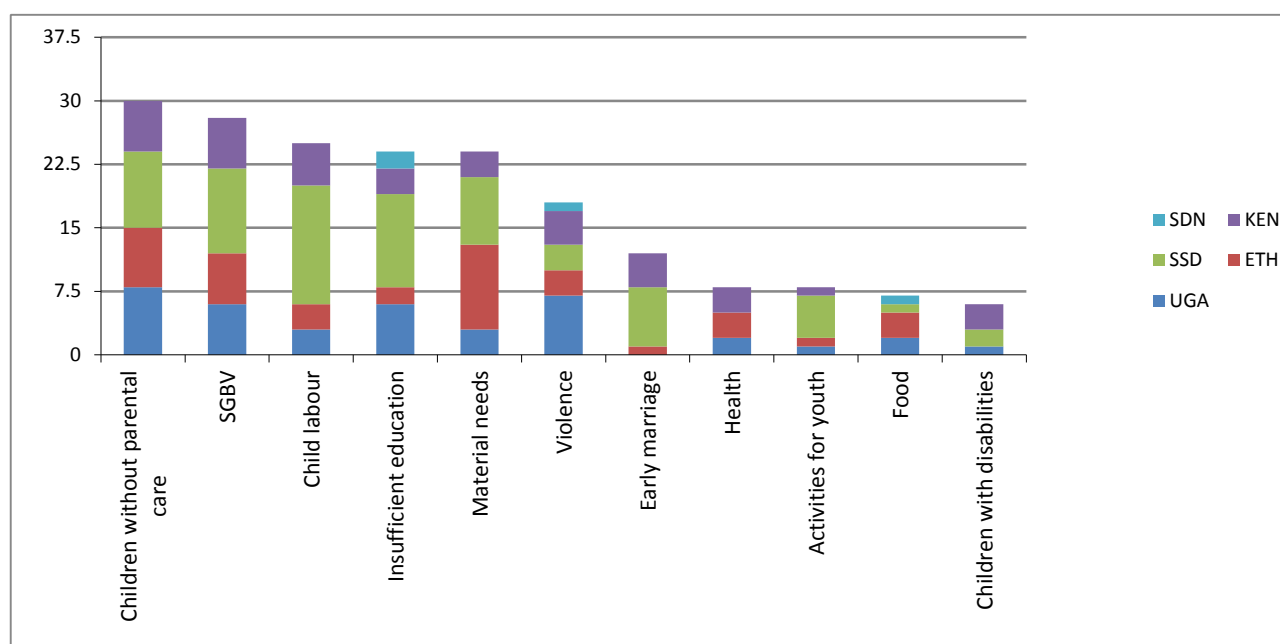
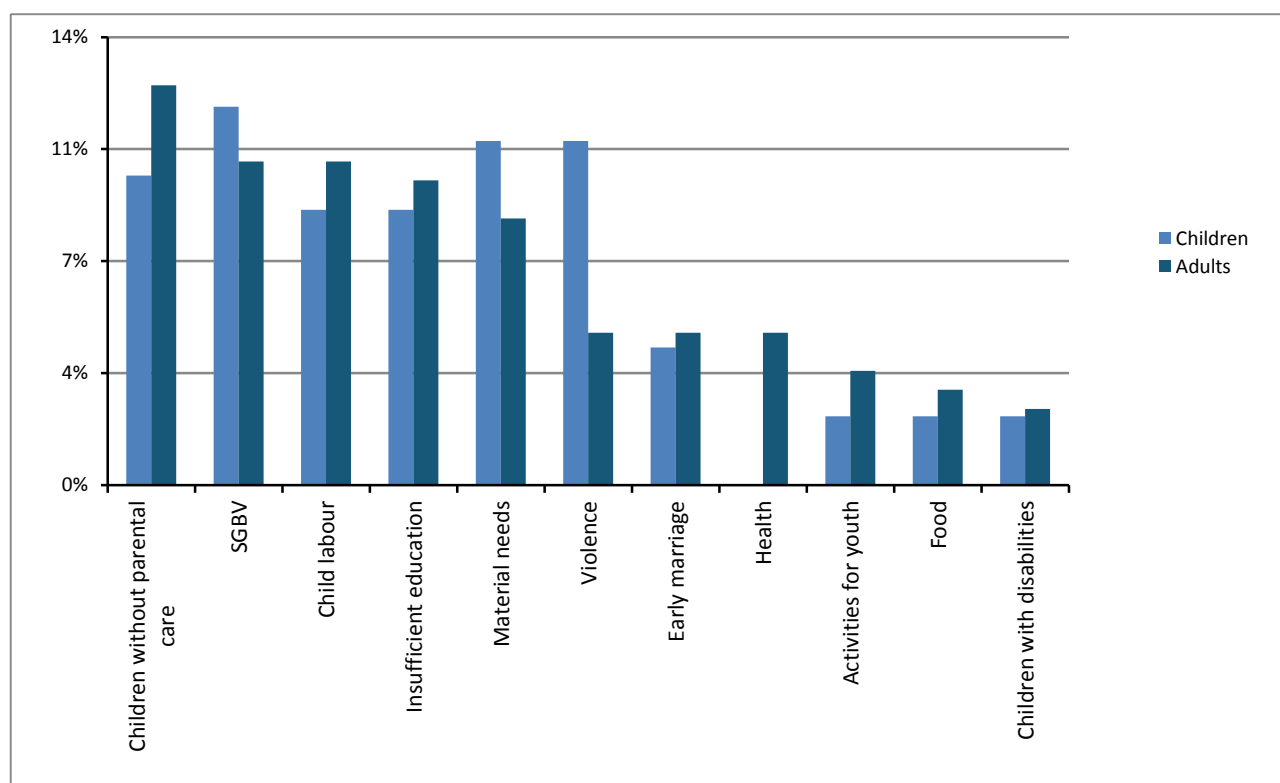


Figure 2: Refugee and host communities key protection concerns for children– Source: *Regional Review of the Child Protection Response for South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children, September 2015*³



² The *Regional Review of the Child Protection Response for the South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children*, September 2015, was prepared by the Regional Child Protection Network, based on the interagency missions conducted during May-July 2015.

³³ *Idem*.

III. STRATEGY

Goals

Refugee boys and girls face specific protection concerns both as children and as refugees. Additionally, girls are vulnerable to differentiated gender-based risks. Refugee adolescents and young people also require special attention and support as they transition from childhood to adulthood, taking on additional responsibilities and growing towards independence. Child protection and youth programming is thus a central element of the overall Refugee Protection and Solutions Strategy for the Sudan and South Sudan emergencies, including refugees across all contexts, whether in camps, settlements or urban centres.

This framework aims to enhance the protection of refugee children and youth from and in South Sudan, through six strategic goals:

1. All refugee girls and boys have been individually **registered and duly documented** with the relevant authorities.
2. Children, adolescents and youth have access to **opportunities to participate** in decisions that affect their lives and to **age appropriate procedures**.
3. Refugee girls and boys are **protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation** at home, in the community, and when receiving services, and they are empowered to contribute to their own protection.
4. Refugee girls and boys with **specific needs** are identified and prioritized, and receive ongoing, appropriate and targeted support.
5. The protection and wellbeing of refugee girls and boys is enhanced through **education**.
6. Refugee girls and boys are protected through **national child protection systems**, and through the expansion of opportunities for longer-term solutions.

The updated Regional Child Protection Framework keeps the same five components as in the previous version, but also incorporates a sixth goal that focuses on child protection systems and on solutions. The sixth goal introduces longer-term and more sustainable approaches. It represents a shift away from pure emergency response. In regards to the specific changes within each of the five goals, the Updated Regional Child Protection Framework:

- a. Places further emphasis on *birth registration*, including on the importance of procedures for late registration and registration of children born outside health facilities.
- b. Enhances the role of *child, adolescent and youth participation and for child-friendly procedures* including specific references to procedures for children in contact with the law.
- c. Stresses the importance of *community-based protection*, and initiatives based on community dialogue to address sexual and gender-based violence and other harmful practices.
- d. Includes more targeted *adolescent and youth* programming
- e. Emphasizes the importance of strengthening *case management*, and the response to cases of *sexual and gender-based violence and for children with disabilities*.
- f. Highlights the obligation of monitoring and reporting *grave violations against children* in refugee contexts, under the Security Council 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) established for Sudan and South Sudan.

- g. Narrows and prioritizes the interventions focusing on the linkages between *education and child protection*, anticipating the forthcoming Regional Education Framework for Sudanese and South Sudanese Children.

Recognizing the importance of setting up regional strategic and operational priorities, UNHCR and child protection actors have agreed to work on a specific priority area for each of the six goals, and have set up specific targets for the six priorities. These are highlighted at the end of the section for each goal below. Specific key actions and indicators are presented in Annex I.

Key Approaches

Child protection systems strengthening is the cornerstone of the protection response for children. All services should link to, and where possible strengthen existing protection services for children in the country of asylum, building upon national and community-level protection capacities. In this context, the Child Protection Regional Framework recognizes the following key approaches:

- **Knowledge, data, and evidence-based approach:** Monitoring and reporting objective information on vulnerabilities and risks, violations of children's rights, and programme activities, should systematically inform the child protection response. Information on grave violations should feed into the MRM for South Sudan and Sudan.
- **Legal and policy framework:** It is imperative to have an adequate legal and policy framework that ensures protection in all public and private spheres, and full access to basic rights by all refugee children and due mechanisms for enforcement.
- **Community participation:** The meaningful, safe participation of refugees of all ages, including children, adolescents and youth, as well as the adults that care for them is integrated at all stages of programme cycle management for child protection work. The participation of girls and women needs to be promoted and supported.
- **Protection of marginalized children:** Active outreach must be prioritized to include girls and boys who may be marginalized or excluded, such as those with disabilities or survivors of violence. All actions for children at risk and their families and caregivers build on individual and community capacities and aim at strengthening resilience.
- **Mainstreaming child protection in all humanitarian work:** Based on an analysis of the risks and needs of children, specific measures and safeguards are developed for humanitarian interventions to ensure safe and equal access to services by all children. Child-friendly feedback and complaints mechanisms are prioritized, and particular consideration is given to children with specific needs, such as separated and unaccompanied children and children with disabilities.
- **Advocacy and awareness:** An increase in the visibility and awareness of the protection threats for refugee children is essential to prompting concerted action from families, communities, service providers, governments and the international community at large. Advocacy and awareness efforts will incorporate children's views and self-identified needs at the heart of the decision-making. Interventions in these areas should also be guided on evidence and be results oriented.
- **Partnership and coordination:** Strong partnerships are the foundation of an effective response to refugee children's needs. Constructive collaboration must be supported among the host government, UNHCR, UNICEF and national and international NGOs, as well as with the refugees and host communities themselves. This requires proactive and productive coordination with all actors in the humanitarian response at local, national and regional level.

Goal 1: All refugee girls and boys have been individually registered and duly documented with the relevant authorities

Refugee girls and boys have access to *child-friendly registration procedures* that ensure individual registration and identification of their specific needs, thus supporting their access to relevant services. This includes the *full identification* of all unaccompanied and separated children, as well as other children with specific needs. All operations have a *complete profile* of children with specific needs.

Protection of girls and boys is enhanced by the *issuance of recognized documentation* including birth certificates, identity documents and other documents recognized by the relevant authorities. A system is in place for the provision of birth certificates for children born within and outside health facilities and for late birth registration. All refugee children can access education and all essential services with or without documentation.

Key outcomes:

- Refugee girls and boys are **registered** individually, including accurate and up to date information on their specific needs
- Refugee girls and boys are **registered** by relevant national authorities **at birth and receive birth certificates**

Key interventions include:

- I. Setting up mechanisms at the registration points, including child protection desks, to identify, screen, prioritize and refer children with specific needs.
- II. Training registration personnel on identifying, screening, prioritizing, registering, and referring girls and boys, with special attention to children with specific needs.
- III. Ensuring a systematic feedback loop between UNHCR and partner organizations for database information on children with specific needs.
- IV. Supporting access to birth registration for refugee girls and boys, by ensuring procedures are in place for new-borns and for late registrations.
- V. Raising awareness within the community on the importance of birth registration and on birth registration procedures.

Regional strategic priority and target:

PRIORITY 1: BIRTH REGISTRATION	STRATEGIC TARGET
Refugee girls and boys are registered at birth	By June 2017, 75% of new-born children receive birth certificates, through the strengthening of the government system and the dissemination of procedures for birth registration for new-born children

Goal 2: Children, adolescents and youth have access to opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives and to age appropriate procedures

Procedures and decisions relating to children are *informed by their age, maturity, sex, ability and social and ethnic background and individual experience*, and all children can *access age appropriate information about services*. The *capacities* of the personnel in regular contact with children *are built* to ensure they better understand children's needs and are able to communicate more effectively with children. Specific measures for children in contact with the law are pursued. Systematic mechanisms to elicit *children's feedback and participation* are established; and due weight is given to the opinions expressed by children.

Adolescents and youth are provided with opportunities to develop their full potential and agency through targeted programmes that promotes participation, resilience and self-empowerment.

Key outcomes:

- Children **understand the asylum, protection, and assistance** procedures available and are empowered to make informed decisions, provide feedback, and make suggestions within these processes according to their evolving capacities.
- Protection and assistance interventions **take into account the different needs** of girls and boys of all ages and abilities.
- **Adolescents and youth are provided with opportunities to develop their full potential**, agency, critical thinking and emotional wellbeing.

Key interventions include:

- I. Providing child-friendly information about protection and assistance services.
- II. Establishing child-friendly procedures in key sectors, including child help desks to support children, and mechanisms that elicit children's feedback and that respond to this feedback.
- III. Training personnel in regular contact with children on child protection and on communication skills with children.
- IV. Ensuring children have access to legal procedures, and promoting child-sensitive legal procedures for children in contact with the justice system.
- V. Conducting participatory assessments that consult children, adolescents, young people and caregivers, including girls and women, and ensuring that services respond to assessment information.
- VI. Establishing programmes for adolescent girls and boys and youth to promote peace and mitigate conflict, and to uphold participation, agency, resilience, and self-reliance, with host community participation when possible.

Regional strategic priority and target:

PRIORITY 2: ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH	STRATEGIC TARGET
Adolescents and youth are provided with opportunities to develop their full potential and agency, their critical thinking, and emotional wellbeing	By June 2017, 30% of adolescents and youth are engaged in meaningful activities, through the implementation of programmes that promotes participation, resilience and self-empowerment

Goal 3: Refugee girls and boys are protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation at home, in the community and when receiving services, and are empowered to contribute to their own protection

Proactive programming is in place to prevent violence against girls and boys, through communication, advocacy and targeted risk reduction measures. *Community-based structures* are involved in the identification, referral and support of girls and boys with specific needs, and in the provision of basic *psychosocial support*. Children, families and communities are actively *engaged in community-based dialogue* on how to put an end to harmful practices, with particular attention to sexual and gender-based violence, including child marriage. Children and youth have *opportunities to socialize and play*.

Key outcomes:

- **Girls and boys are safe in homes and in the community** thanks to the engagement of the community in child protection.
- Girls and boys have **opportunities and safe spaces to gather, socialize, play** and receive psychosocial support.

Key interventions include:

- I. Identifying and supporting community-based child protection and peer-to-peer mechanisms for prevention and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation of and violence against children.
- II. Conducting awareness raising and mobilization campaigns through community dialogue and behaviour change initiatives against harmful practices, with particular attention to SGBV, child marriage and child labour.
- III. Establishing or strengthening child-friendly spaces with a specific effort to reach out to the most marginalized children, and providing other opportunities for girls and boys to engage in play, social learning and recreational activities
- IV. Providing resilience and psychosocial support programmes for girls and boys, parents and caregivers.

Regional strategic priority and target:

PRIORITY 3: COMMUNITY BASED PROTECTION	STRATEGIC TARGET
Girls and boys are safe and protected in their homes and in the community thanks to the engagement of the community in child protection	By June 2017, children's access to community-based protection mechanisms has improved 50%, through the activation and strengthening of community based child protection committees, groups or structures ⁴

⁴ Progress towards the target will be set according to the baseline collected in the "Regional Review of the Child Protection Response for the South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children", September 2015. According to the report, the average number of children per child protection committee is 2,204 (607 in Uganda, 612 in Kenya, 2,244 in South Sudan, 2,667 in Ethiopia).

Goal 4: Refugee girls and boys with specific needs are identified, prioritized and receive on-going, appropriate and targeted support

Girls and boys with specific needs are identified and assessed, and their situation is monitored regularly. They and their families and caregivers participate in *appropriate programmes* that aim to strengthen their resilience, including through effective child protection case management systems which are linked to other systems such as registration. Adequate prioritization of cases is carried out as part of case management, and the capacities and management of the child protection workforce enhanced. The *Best Interests procedure* is established as the overarching framework for case management for children with specific needs, ensuring that the best interests of the child guide all decisions regarding individual children. National child protection authorities are involved in these procedures wherever possible.

Unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) are identified and supported through the provision of appropriate alternative care arrangements and family tracing and reunification services within the context of durable solutions. The regional protocol is operationalized to support on-going cross-border tracing efforts of UASC.

Girls and boys who are at risk or have experienced SGBV access safe, confidential and timely response services, and advocacy and follow up are done for the legal prosecution of such cases. *Children with disabilities* are identified and provided with adequate multi-sectoral support.

Grave violations against children are monitored and reported, information is contributed to the South Sudan and Sudan MRM, and measures are put in place to respond to the needs of affected children. Sensitive and confidential mechanisms to identify and support girls and boys associated with armed forces and armed groups are in place, ensuring as much as possible that they are linked to existing services. Where possible this should include the use of MRM information for early warning, program design, and identification of specific children for care and support services.

Key outcomes:

- Girls and boys with specific needs have multiple and on-going opportunities to be identified and to receive appropriate, timely interventions through the effective implementation of **case management** within the framework of the Best Interest procedure.
- **Unaccompanied and separated children** are in safe, appropriate alternative care arrangements, and access family tracing and reunification services to re-establish contact with family members when in the child's best interest.
- Girls and boys who have experienced or are at risk of **sexual and gender-based violence** access timely, age-appropriate, and confidential prevention and response services.
- **Grave violations against children** perpetrated by parties to conflict are monitored and reported, and information is contributed to the South Sudan and Sudan MRM as established by the Security Council, to support efforts to trigger advocacy actions and accountability measures that end and prevent these violations.
- **Children and youth with disabilities** are supported to access services and reach their potential.

Key interventions include:

- I. Setting up an effective, timely case management system for children at risk using the Best Interests procedure, with an emphasis on case prioritization and workforce development.
- II. Building the capacity of community workers on case management, referral mechanisms and psychosocial support for children.
- III. Developing procedures to support UASC including through in-country and cross-border tracing, reunification, the re-establishment of contact among family members, and through both short and longer-term alternative care.
- IV. Implementing multi-sectoral programmes with child sensitive referral pathways and specialized services to address the needs of SGBV survivors, and following up on legal prosecution of such cases when possible.
- V. Monitoring and reporting on grave violations of children's rights by armed groups or armed forces to the MRM Task Force, and ensuring the identification and provision of reintegration services to children formerly associated with armed groups or forces.
- VI. Ensuring the identification of children with disabilities, provision of multi-sectoral support, and promotion of their participation in child protection activities and programmes.

Regional strategic priority and target:

PRIORITY 4: CASE MANAGEMENT	STRATEGIC TARGET
Girls and boys with specific needs are identified and receive appropriate, timely, preventive and responsive interventions, using an effective case management system	By June 2017, 100% of girls and boys at risk receive appropriate timely services based on the Best Interests procedure, through appropriate registration and through the strengthening of the child protection workforce management and capacities

Goal 5: The protection and wellbeing of refugee girls and boys is enhanced through education

Child protection concerns are considered in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of formal and non-formal education programmes, and *education services act as a referral point and delivery mechanism for psychosocial and protection services*. Girls and boys of all ages, abilities, ethnicities and backgrounds, including children with specific needs, are able to access *quality education opportunities in protective environments*, under the national education system. Child protection actors support children to access and to remain in education.

Key outcomes:

- Schools and other education facilities act as referral points and **delivery mechanisms for psychosocial and protection services**.
- Girls and boys, including those with specific needs, access **appropriate formal and non-formal education opportunities in safe learning environments**.
- **Self-protection skills** of girls and boys are enhanced through education.

Key interventions include:

- I. Setting up coordination systems between child protection and education actors, including the establishment of complaint, reporting and referral mechanisms for children at risk or experiencing violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation within schools.
- II. Establishing safe, supportive, and confidential complaint, reporting and referral mechanisms for children at risk or experiencing abuse.
- III. Training teachers on identification, referral and psychosocial support for children at risk, and monitoring the teachers' code of conduct, including preventing sexual exploitation and abuse.
- IV. Monitoring access to education (formal, non-formal or vocational) for children with specific needs, including: children with disabilities, working children, child spouses and child mothers.
- V. Providing life-skills and self-protection messaging through schools, including on SGBV, child marriage, and child labour

Regional strategic priority and target:

PRIORITY 5: CHILD PROTECTION IN EDUCATION	STRATEGIC TARGET
Girls and boys in the school system with specific needs are identified, referred and supported, using functional referral mechanisms at the schools	By June 2017, 90% of schools have functional reporting and referral mechanisms at the school that identify, refer and support children at risk to child protection services

Goal 6: Refugee children are protected through strong national child protection systems, the promotion of social coexistence, and the expansion of opportunities for longer term solutions

Policies and frameworks governing durable solutions for refugees take into consideration the specific needs of children; the best interests of the child guide all decisions concerning children, using the Best Interest procedure (see Objective 4). *Child protection systems are strengthened* in the countries of asylum, are accessible for refugee children, and contribute to the expansion of opportunities for girls and boys. Services offered to refugee children *are inclusive and benefit children and members of host communities* to the extent possible. Initiatives that promote participation and coexistence between both communities are strengthened. *Resettlement policies* take into consideration the needs, vulnerability and bests interests of children, with particular attention to unaccompanied and orphaned children.

Key outcomes:

- **National and local child protection systems** provide a strengthened protective environment with increased access to basic child protection services to refugee children.
- Child protection programmes and systems for refugees are **inclusive and promote co-existence** among host and refugee children and their communities
- **Resettlement policies** and possible **programmes to support return** take into consideration the needs, vulnerability and best interest of the children.

Key interventions include:

- I. Promote policy reforms to ensure refugee children have full access to national child protection systems and to basic prevention and response services within their country of asylum.
- II. Enhance coordination between government departments responsible for refugees and social welfare, as well as with other relevant government and non-government child protection's actors.
- III. Build the capacity of government authorities to provide child protection services to refugee children.
- IV. Ensure that child protection programmes for refugees are inclusive and benefit the host community to the extent possible.
- V. Promote resettlement admission criteria and ensure potential return policies are sensitive to the needs and special vulnerability of children.

Regional strategic priority and target:

PRIORITY 6: NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES	STRATEGIC TARGET
Refugee girls and boys have non-discriminatory access to national child protection and social services	By June 2017, 100% of refugee girls and boys have access to national child protection and social services

IV. COORDINATION IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

At Regional Level

UNHCR will continue to convene actors at the regional level through the Regional Child Protection Network, to provide operational support to countries in the implementation of the updated Regional Child Protection Framework and to coordinate cross-border and regional initiatives. The Regional Child Protection Network is chaired by UNHCR, and is comprised by the Lutheran World Federation, Plan International, Save the Children, UNICEF, and World Vision. ICRC and Kenya Red Cross participate as observers. Membership's revision with the view of expanding participation will be considered at any time members consider appropriate.

The key functions of the Regional Child Protection Network are:

- To maintain a regional overview of and support information generation and analysis of the child protection situation.
- To clarify child protection policies and procedures, and to share tools, and lessons learned across the sub-region that can support countries on implementation.
- To promote and implement regional capacity building initiatives as part of a strategy to build a core cadre of child protection staff across agencies, including providing standardized training materials and cascade trainings when appropriate.
- To support the smooth functioning of interventions with a cross-border dimension, including family tracing and reunification for refugee children and families.
- To facilitate the coordination with other mechanisms, such as relevant cluster coordination bodies in South Sudan, and other sectoral working groups at the national or regional level.
- In consultation with countries, to provide a monitoring and evaluation framework, including agreed indicators and data collection methods, with particular emphasis on regional strategic priorities.
- To keep a wide range of stakeholders, including donors, informed of the child protection response, and to mobilize resources with emphasis on the regional strategic priorities.

At Country Level

In-country, UNHCR and child protection actors will be at the forefront of the response. Specific child protection coordination groups for the refugee response will continue to operate under the broader refugee protection coordination mechanisms established, chaired by UNHCR and national authorities, and with support from other child protection agencies. Linkages with non-refugee child protection or other relevant working groups will be in place.

Country-level refugee child protection coordination groups assume the following responsibilities:

- To develop, finalize or update context specific plans of action based on this framework, and to monitor and report progress periodically. The revision of existing strategies and action plans should aim at enhancing clear distribution of responsibilities among child protection actors.

- To ensure follow up, monitoring and oversight of child protection programmes, ensuring harmonization of standards and efficient management of human resources across the different child protection partners.
- To coordinate the development and endorsement of standard operation procedures, policies, frameworks and policies as appropriate.
- To develop specific plans for capacity building, with emphasis on enhancing the performance and management of the child protection workforce.
- To improve the coordination with the education and SGBV sectors, including with the agreement of joined strategic outcomes and actions.
- To strengthen the linkages of the refugee response with national and regional child protection national systems.
- To develop community based participation and behaviour change communication awareness raising initiatives.
- To conduct join advocacy to address gaps in child protection, including inadequate funding for child protection.

ANNEX 1: REGIONAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND TARGETS

Regional Strategic Priorities	Key Actions	Regional Strategic Indicators	Regional Strategic Targets
PRIORITY 1: BIRTH REGISTRATION Refugee girls and boys are registered at birth	1.1. Support host government to ensure refugees can access civil registration services and receive birth certificates, and that procedures are in place for late registration 1.2. Conduct information campaigns on the importance of registering new-born children with UNHCR and government authorities	# of refugee children under 12 months who receive birth certificates from national authorities / total # of refugee children under 12 months	By June 2017, 75% of new-born refugee children receive birth certificates, through the strengthening of the government system and the dissemination of procedures for birth registration for new-born children
PRIORITY 2: ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH Adolescents and youth are provided with opportunities to develop their full potential and agency, their critical thinking, and their emotional wellbeing	2.1. Develop targeted programmes that promote adolescent and youth participation, resilience, self-empowerment, leadership, and peaceful coexistence, with the engagement of youth from refugee and host community 2.2. Provision of opportunities for vocational training, dignified livelihoods, and employment opportunities for adolescents and youth	# of adolescents (aged 13-24) and youth (18-24) participating in targeted activities /total number of adolescents and youth (aged 13-24)	By June 2017, 30% of adolescents and youth are engaged in meaningful activities, through the implementation of programmes that promotes participation, resilience and self-empowerment
PRIORITY 3: COMMUNITY BASED PROTECTION Girls and boys are safe and protected in their homes and in the community, thanks to the engagement of the community in child protection	3.1. Strengthen community based protection mechanisms for prevention and identification of girls and boys with specific needs 3.2. Promote the participation of these mechanisms in refugee coordination structures 3.3. Support peer-to peer mechanism for girls and boys to enable further engagement of children in the prevention and identification of child protection concerns and children at risk	# of children's committees, groups and structures that are operational /# of refugee children	By June 2017, children's access to community-based protection mechanisms has improved 50%, through the activation and strengthening of community-based child protection committees, groups or structures

<p>PRIORITY 4: CASE MANAGEMENT</p> <p>Girls and boys with specific needs are identified and receive appropriate, timely, preventive and responsive interventions, using an effective case management system</p>	4.1. Establish child protection desks at the registration points to identify, screen, and prioritize children with specific needs, using the best interest assessment (BIA) tool	# of best interest assessment conducted/ # of children with specific needs identified	100% of girls and boys at risk receive appropriate timely services based on the Best Interest procedure, through appropriate registration and through the strengthening of the child protection workforce management and capacities
	4.2. Develop and/ or strengthen a case management system with an emphasis on case prioritization and workforce development		
	4.3. Establish mechanisms and training child protection staff on best interests' procedure according to UNHCR Best Interest Determination Guidelines	# of children with specific needs receiving a timely, appropriate support services / # of children with specific needs identified	
	4.4. Develop and widely disseminate referral pathways and standard operating procedures (SOPs)		
<p>PRIORITY 5: CHILD PROTECTION IN EDUCATION</p> <p>Girls and boys in the school system with specific needs are identified, referred and supported, using functional referral mechanisms at the schools</p>	5.1. Set up coordination systems between child protection and education actors, including the identification of child protection focal points within each school, as well as community workers that follow up on child protection issues within the education system	#of schools with functional referral mechanisms/ # of schools	90% of schools have functional reporting and referral mechanisms at the school that identify, refer and support children at risk to child protection services
	5.2. Establish safe, supportive and confidential child-friendly complaint, reporting and referral mechanisms for children at risk		
	5.3. Train teachers and school personnel on identification, referral and psychosocial support for children at risk or experiencing abuse		
<p>PRIORITY 6: NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEMS</p> <p>Refugee girls and boys have non-discriminatory access to national child protection and social services</p>	6.1. Promote policy reforms to ensure refugee girls and boys have full access to national child protection systems and to basic services within the country of asylum	# of refugee children that have access to national child protection and social services/ # number of children	100% of refugee girls and boys have access to national child protection and social services
	6.2. Enhance coordination between government bodies responsible for the refugee response and child protection, social welfare and other relevant government structures	# of protection and social services accessible by refugee children/ # number of protection and social services	

ANNEX 2: LINKAGES BETWEEN REGIONAL CHILD PROTECTION FRAMEWORK, UNHCR GLOBAL CHILD PROTECTION AND EDUCATION STRATEGIES, AND GLOBAL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Updated Regional Framework for the Protection of South Sudanese and Sudanese Refugee Children	UNHCR Global Child Protection Framework ⁵ and Education ⁶ Strategy	UNHCR Global Strategic Priorities ⁷
Goal 1: All refugee girls and boys have been individually registered and duly documented with the relevant authorities	Global Child Protection Framework Goal 4: Girls and boys obtain legal documentation	Global Strategic Priority 2: Secure birth registration, profiling and individual documentation based on registration
Goal 2: Children, adolescents and youth have access to opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives and to age appropriate procedures	Global Child Protection Framework Goal 3: Girls and boys have access to child-friendly procedures and Goal 2: Children's participation and capacity are integral to their protection	Global Strategic Priority 6: Promoting active participation in decision making of people of concern and building coexistence with hosting communities
Goal 3: Refugee girls and boys are protected from violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation at home, in the community, and when receiving services, and they are empowered to contribute to their own protection	Global Child Protection Framework Goal 1: Girls and boys are safe where they live, learn and play	Global Strategic Priority 3: Reducing protection risks faced by people of concern, in particular, discrimination, sexual and gender- based violence and specific risks faced by children
Goal 4: Refugee girls and boys with specific needs are identified and prioritized, and receive ongoing, appropriate and targeted support	Global Child Protection Framework Goal 5: Girls and boys with specific needs receive targeted support	Global Strategic Priority 3: Reducing protection risks faced by people of concern, in particular, discrimination, sexual and gender- based violence and specific risks faced by children
Goal 5: The protection and wellbeing of refugee girls and boys is enhanced through education	Education Global Strategy Action 2: Schools will protect children and young people	Global Strategic Priority 7: Promoting human potential through increased opportunities for quality education and livelihoods support
Goal 6: Refugee girls and boys are protected through national child protection systems, and through the expansion of opportunities for longer-term solutions.	Global Child Protection Framework Goal 6: Girls and boys achieve durable solutions in their best interests	Global Strategic Priority 8: Expanding opportunities for durable solutions for people of concern, particularly those in protracted situations, including through strengthening the use of comprehensive approaches and contributing to sustainable reintegration, local settlement and successful resettlement in third countries

⁵ UNHCR, A Framework for the Protection of Children, 2012.

⁶ UNHCR Education Global Strategy (2012-2016).

⁷ UNHCR Global Strategic Priorities (2016-2017).

REGIONAL DATA ON REFUGEE CHILDREN FROM SOUTH SUDAN and SUDAN

As of June 2015

700,587

Total South Sudanese refugees

Pre-15 Dec 2013

132,515

New arrivals

[Post-15 Dec 2013]

568,072

144,960

Total Sudanese refugees



34,066

Total Unaccompanied & Separated Children (UASC)

Host Country	New arrivals [Post 15 Dec 2013]	Total refugees
Ethiopia	209,510	273,143
Uganda	155,417	176,041
Sudan	157,088	157,088
Kenya	46,057	94,315
Total South Sudanese refugees	568,072	700,587
South Sudan	na	144,960
Total Sudanese refugees	na	144,960

LEGEND

- Refugee children
- Adult refugees
- Refugee camp
- Refugee settlement
- Refugee transit centre
- Refugee location
- Urban refugee location
- International boundary
- Undetermined boundary*
- State boundary

