

Communicating with Unaccompanied Foreign Minors

How UN agencies engage with newly arrived migrant and refugee children in Italy

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Abstract

This paper provides an overview of the communication practices that UN agencies working on the migration response in Italy have adopted in their work with newly arrived unaccompanied migrant children. These include IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR. The aim is to present the different objectives and methodologies of each agency's intervention under an overall framework. This is built both around the agencies' respective areas of technical expertise and their commitment towards the principles expounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which are applied here in the context of refugee and migrant foreign minors. Recommendations on how to strengthen these practices are offered.

Keywords: unaccompanied minors, refugee, IOM, UNHCR, UNICEF, communication, media, participation

Communicating with Unaccompanied Foreign Minors

How UN agencies engage with newly arrived migrant and refugee children in Italy

Valentina Baú¹

Introduction

It is estimated that, between January 2015 and December 2018, 57,519 minors arrived in Italy without a carer (Immigrazione.it 2017; Italian Ministry of Interior 2018). The majority of these were adolescents between the age of 15 and 17 (IOM 2019). Unaccompanied foreign minors travelling to Italy through the Mediterranean route were 1,680 in 2019 (Italian Ministry of Interior, 2019).

Based on the definition provided in Article 2 of the European Directive 2003/86, 'unaccompanied minors are third-country nationals or stateless persons below the age of eighteen who arrive in the territory of the Member States unaccompanied by an adult responsible for them whether by law or by custom, and for as long as they are not effectively taken into care of such person, or minors who are left unaccompanied after they have entered the territory of the Member States.' To reflect more accurately this definition, the term Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) is now frequently replaced in the field of migration with that of Unaccompanied or Separated Children (UASCs). In the context of this paper, we adopt the terminology of UAMs to follow the terminology adopted in the European Law.

This paper provides an overview of the communication practices that UN agencies working on the migration response in Italy have adopted in their work with newly arrived unaccompanied migrant children. These include IOM, UNICEF and UNHCR. The aim is to present the different objectives and methodologies of each agency's intervention under an overall framework. This is built both around the agencies' respective areas of technical expertise and their commitment towards the principles expounded in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which are applied here in the context of refugee and migrant foreign minors.

It begins by providing an understanding of children who travel alone: how they are defined and what the range of circumstances that characterise their situations typically is. Some of the international obligations that countries should uphold to both protect and empower children are briefly introduced, and the reception system regulated by the Italian Government for migrant and refugee children described. After recognising the importance of foreign minors' information needs and their right to contribute to a discussion on issues that concern them, the work of the three UN agencies that operate in the area of migration in Italy is presented. This is done by focusing both on the different objectives that each agency's communication practices are built on (also based on their mandate), and on the approach adopted. In the end, concluding reflections and a number of recommendations are offered, based on the experience presented here, for other organisations that are engaging with UAMs in their work.

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Forming an understanding of unaccompanied foreign minors

Accorinti (2016) states that minors no longer migrate only as a result of war and persecution; they now often do so as part of an economic project. Yet, researchers have found that the migratory patterns of UAMs are very different from those of adults. In particular, children appear to be unable to define a work strategy (including illegal work), and neither their culture nor any other process of belonging seem to provide them with collective representation (as explained by Suarez 2008, cited in Accorinti 2016, 27). Giovannetti (2017) adds that 'the final destination of [their] journey is often the result of several factors and circumstances (i.e. means of transportation used or people met on the way) more than a conscious and specific choice' (4).

Mostly, children arrive to Italy with the main objective of improving their living conditions. This migratory project comes with the intention of integrating in the host community and taking advantage of the available opportunities for employment. Another important goal is to provide financial support to their families in other parts of the world (Piazza et al. 2019).

At the same time, children who have been forced to leave their country of origin have done so, very often, as a result of conflict and other forms of human rights violations. Unaccompanied children fleeing war, in particular, suffer much more significant mental health harm than minors who are accompanied by a carer. Hence, they have been found to be the most vulnerable group of refugees. Nevertheless, they are also recognised positively for their resilience in relation to the adversities they have survived (Thommessen et al. 2013).

Overall, Giovannetti (2017) outlines four different profiles for unaccompanied foreign minors:

- children escaping conflict and persecution
- those who choose to emigrate for economic reasons (here, families often play an important push factor role)
- children attracted by Western lifestyle, which they regard as more existentially fulfilling than the mere economic gains (this is typically a smaller group)
- minors who are influenced to leave by changes in their social context, which is being de-structured by emigration and often involves the departure of family members.

These categories of minors are developed from the ambitions and factors that typically push people to migrate; they include 'violence and armed conflicts, better job opportunities, the desire to gain access to higher standards of living conditions, or else to follow the example of friends and relatives who previously emigrated to third countries' (Giovannetti 2017, p.3). Giovannetti (2017) explains that "UAMs migration towards Italy [in particular] has been enhanced by the positive image of the country, the so-called 'social construction' of Italy in the collective imagination, on the grounds of the feedback of relatives and acquaintances living in the country, and the information conveyed by the mass media' (3).

The categories outlined above remind us also of the importance of considering the individual circumstances of unaccompanied foreign minors. Anthropologist Luca Jourdan (cited in Ricucci and Maher 2018, 21), for example, warns us that maintaining the definition of a child as someone under the age of 18 is not helpful when designing interventions targeting children who come from contexts in which life expectancy is often around the age of 40.

Protecting children who travel alone: the Italian reception context for UAMs

As Novara et al. (2016) emphasise, it is important to recognise that the issues faced by these children are very different from those faced by accompanied minors. Under the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child, of which Italy is a signatory, all children have the right to protection regardless of their ethnic, cultural and religious background; arrangements regarding their procedures for international protection or family reunification are then laid out by country governments. In the case of the Italian Government, it is the Directorate General of Immigration and Integration Policies within the Ministry of Labour, which establishes such procedures (Novara et al. 2016).

When a minor is not accompanied by a family member, they are left without the protection and guidance that the adult family typically offers; this exposes them to risks of abuse and exploitation. However, based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, it is the right of every minor to live in a supportive environment, in which he/she is protected and cared for, and where his/her potential for development is nurtured (Rania et al. 2018).

Certain European countries, including Italy, have stipulated that all migrant children, regardless of their legal status, must receive equal care to that afforded to children locally. Therefore, based on the Italian law, all unaccompanied foreign minors have the right to assistance and protection: they cannot be expelled nor detained, and they must be provided with a residence permit (Rania et al. 2018). In other words, regardless of whether or not the child puts forward a request for international protection, he/she cannot be returned to their country and is instead taken into the care of the host government and social services².

With the aim of following the principles expounded in the Convention, the Italian reception procedures for UAMs take place on two different levels. When a child travelling alone is identified, they enter the initial reception phase. This involves their placement in a “bridging” child-dedicated structure called AMIF³ where he/she can be immediately safe. In AMIF centres, managed by the government, an assessment takes place to determine the actual situation of the child; whether any connection with family members can be established, and what an appropriate integration path could entail. Procedures to verify their age may also ensue, if deemed necessary. In the second phase of reception, the minor transits into a different hosting structure named SIPROIMI⁴: managed by individual municipalities through social services, the care offered in these centres is aimed primarily at facilitating the child’s social inclusion by providing cultural and linguistic mediation, Italian language classes, guidance in school enrolment, career advice, vocational training, access to services (including healthcare) and counselling (Rozzi 2018). It is in this phase that the child’s needs can best be met, when a more customised integration and care plan is recommended for the timeframe until he/she reaches the age of majority (Novara et al. 2016). While all children are also assigned to legal guardians (tutors), only some of them may be placed with private families.

² See Law no.47/2017 for details on the provisions adopted by the Italian Government to safeguard children in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

³ This name originates from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), which was set up by the European Union for the period 2014-20 to promote the efficient management of migration flows by country members.

⁴ ‘Protection System for Beneficiaries of International Protection and for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors’. Prior to December 2018, which saw the passing of a new ‘Security Decree’ (enacted as Law no.132/2018) that regulates the area of migration in Italy, SIPROIMI centres were known as SPRAR (‘Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees’) centres.

Up until 2018 (the year in which this study took place), as Rania et al. (2018) pinpoint, the reality was that, due to the large number of arrivals that took place in previous years and to the overall complexity of the Italian reception system, some children frequently remained in the first phase of reception (AMIF) until they reached the age of 18.

At the same time, the SIPROIMI level is characterised by a higher level of complexity. The dynamics and practices related to a child's vocational and educational path, and the intersection of these with both international and local legislations, create a testing situation that a number of organisations have to devise means to respond to. Different actors find themselves cooperating within this infrastructure, with the aim of assisting children from very diverse and challenging circumstances in transitioning into adulthood with adequate support (Ricucci and Maher 2018)

The information needs of UAMs and their right to participate

It is paramount that children fleeing war and persecution are given immediate information on how to apply for asylum. This information provision should also occur in a language and manner that is clear to them, in order to give them the best chance to make an informed decision on whether or not they want to engage with the asylum procedures. A recent study conducted by UNHCR and the Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents (the Italian body tasked with safeguarding the rights of children) with UAMs in Italy showed that more than 80% out of approximately 200 respondents wanted more information on how to apply for international protection. When children were given adequate details about the process, the same study found that they were less likely to flee the reception network (Breen 2019).

Similarly, it is a crucial and very sensitive task to discuss with children the dangers of abuse, trafficking and exploitation they may be exposed to. This process of information provision requires specific skills and competence that avoid causing further harm while understanding the child's situation and offering support (IOM 2018).

Enhancing the capacity of all stakeholders responsible for assisting unaccompanied migrant children, from first arrival and registration to placement in dedicated facilities (e.g. humanitarian operators, local authorities, reception staff at local, regional and national level) is fundamental to empower them to recognise and address children's needs and vulnerabilities, in line with the relevant legal frameworks and with the best interest of the child as primary consideration. The capacity, means and support available to these stakeholders impact the identification and activation of adequate protection, family reunification, integration or other suitable pathways (IOM 2018, 6).

At the same time, information is critical to UAMs in order to facilitate their journey of integration into their new community. This is a complex process that is meant to begin with their arrival and has the objective of guiding children in their path towards full autonomy. Some of the key aspects of this journey, besides acquiring new language skills, relate to accessing the education system and developing familiarity with the new social and cultural environment (Save the Children 2018).

One of the four fundamental principles established by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is a child's right to participation. This is a crucial right as it enables the transition of

children from passive actors to active agents. This right is based primarily on the ability of and the opportunity given to children to freely express their point of view, and therefore play an active role in the decision-making processes related to issues that concern them. Within this context, both the State and all institutional actors involved are responsible for facilitating this practice with the aim of providing children with the opportunity to express themselves and be listened to (UNHCR 2019).

Methodology

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with representatives from UNICEF (1 participant), IOM (2 participants) and UNHCR (2 participants) at the end of 2018. These are the main UN agencies that operate in Italy to assist unaccompanied foreign minors. The responsibilities of the staff members from each agency who participated in this study fall, at different levels and in various capacities, within the area of assistance to UAMs.

Participants were asked broad questions in relation to the type of information exchanged with UAMs, what channels are in use and how child participation is built into their interventions. The analysis conducted identified a set of variables that can be applied across the work of all agencies. These are presented in the table below (Table 1), which provides a snapshot of the instruments and approaches adopted by individual agencies at each level. The next section expands on specific variables and offers more information on the communication process. Findings are useful both to capture the current work that is being done by agencies in communicating with unaccompanied foreign minors, and to identify challenges and future opportunities.

	UNHCR	IOM	UNICEF
Information Delivery	Indirect – Through the Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents, AMIF and SIPROIMI staff	Indirect – Through AMIF staff (lawyers, counsellors, educators, cultural mediators)	Mixed – Some indirect work done through partner NGO InterSos
Overall aim	To support the Ministry of Interior in strengthening the child reception system	Support in information provision to UAMs	Skills building of UAMs
Primary information provided to UAMs	Related to asylum seeking procedures	Related to risks of trafficking and exploitation, and to the process of family reunification	Related to legal pathways and social inclusion
Aim of child participation in the communication process	For information delivery	For information delivery	For information collection and for information delivery
Information collected from UAMs	N/A	N/A	Opinions, doubts, aspirations, concerns
Channels used to collect/deliver information	Face-to-face, brochures, video	Face-to-face, images, comic strips	Face-to-face, dedicated Facebook platform, peer-to-peer, brochures, written guidance
Approach to child participation	Activities are based on the agency's tool of Listen & Learn	Activities are developed through the approach of <i>Participatory Learning in Action</i>	Activities take place in <i>participatory labs</i> designed by the agency. Participation is also encouraged through Facebook-based engagement

Table 1. Variables in UN agencies' communication with UAMs

The process of communication

Once unaccompanied foreign minors are hosted in AMIF and SIPROIMI centres, there are a number of information needs that have to be met in order to facilitate their integration in society, ensure that they remain safe from threats they can be exposed to due to their vulnerable status, and follow a course of action in which their rights are upheld. As shown in Table 1, UN agencies (and their partners) aim to tackle some of the primary information needs that refugee and migrant children have. This is done via two processes.

Mediated communication



Image 1. Page from UNHCR Guide for UAMs

Specific media channels are employed by agencies primarily to deliver information. A child-friendly brochure has been produced by UNHCR in the form of a 'guide' to assist the work of reception centres' staff in delivering clear information to children on the steps of the asylum seeking process. A video has also been produced more recently to detail the process visually. All materials are produced by the agency either in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Interior or in consultation with the Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents, the body responsible for the implementation of the principles established by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Italy. IOM makes use of images and comic strips presented in PowerPoint slides to convey difficult notions on work exploitation. These visual materials help in providing practical examples of what does not conform with the Italian Labour Law. UNICEF utilises Facebook to provide

a dedicated online platform for UAMs called *U-Report on the Move*. This is based on the use of polls to understand the views or uncertainties that children hold at different points in time; results are then used by the agency to address the misconceptions or knowledge gaps that have emerged through the polls, and targeted information is "returned" to them via the Facebook platform. Announcements to promote social and cultural events organised in UAMs' host communities are also posted on this space, to encourage association and integration. Besides this online medium, an *Orientation Guide* has also been produced (with partner NGO InterSos); this is a publication that has been designed for children to understand complex topics concerning the Italian reception and integration process.

Face-to-face communication

IOM follows the Participatory Learning in Action approach in the design of its face-to-face communication activities with unaccompanied foreign minors, to ensure that the delivery of crucial information passed on by both the agency's and the reception centres' staff is grounded in a learning process that is based on the active participation of the learner. The activity design has been further refined in collaboration with Save the Children Italy, another partner in the agency's work. The starting point is the experience of the children, either in the context of their own country or in other possible scenarios they have faced; from there, the

facilitators guide the activity by responding to their input and progressively building a dialogue in which concepts around exploitation as well as more administrative notions on labour are broken down into a more discernible form.

The interviewees from this agency explain the benefits that they believe derive from this type of activities:

Concepts are repeated a number of times; it is not just about sharing a piece of information once and then moving on. We ask questions on the same topics over and over; we really try to understand whether they have grasped the meaning of what is being discussed; we introduce examples so that they understand what stage they are at in relation to access to work. It is a method that allows us to go back to the main topic multiple times; it facilitates concepts retention and at the same time it places value on their skills and input, as we make use of what they are saying directly in each exercise. I believe that this method of conveying information by placing value on each child and their individual experience has an impact at many different levels. They do not simply receive the information: they also create a bond with one another.

(IOM respondent 1)

These formative participatory activities are very useful. The fact that they are not based on a one-way transfer of information means that we can actually get the children involved and encourage them to share their experience. This is also interesting for other kids because they can see what the situation of those who come from other countries might be, as they often tend to segregate themselves into groups. And the moment they begin to interact, both with us and with the others, we really listen to them.

(IOM respondent 2)

The table below (Table 2) provides a step-by-step example of an activity implemented by IOM-trained facilitators on the topic of work exploitation. The agency emphasises how this exercise encourages a discussion based on the differences in background and in opinion of the participants. It also involves a direct exchange between participants themselves. This is an important element as it places importance on the concept of 'listening' to the children, which is also one of the principles outlined in the UN Convention.

Discussion points	Format
Children are asked to talk about their dreams for the future and their life project (in Italy but also elsewhere).	Children exchange their views and aspirations in small groups.
Children are asked what 'work' means to them, and what they believe some of the formal or accepted arrangements are in this area are. Key points that are addressed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether minors are allowed to work - what the working hours typically are - whether they have any direct or indirect 	Children exchange their views and aspirations in small groups. This is followed by a discussion with the larger group. At times, and depending on the group, other communication avenues are utilised, such as drawing or writing.

experience of working (perhaps from family members or friends) - how work rights may differ from context to context.	
A shared understanding of 'work' is negotiated and agreed upon.	Facilitated large groups discussion.
Facilitators introduce the main notions around 'work' in the Italian reality, ensuring connection is drawn with points arisen in the previous discussion.	Information is conveyed in very simple terms, highlighting the age limits in the Italian law as well as the differences with other practices that may pertain to other geographical contexts.
Facilitators address the topic of work exploitation. The word exploitation is not used directly (difficult concept to understand in certain contexts). Questions around when a job is going well and is acceptable, and when it becomes a negative experience are posed.	Interactive group discussion, facilitated also through the use of images on slides that refer to specific work-related situations.
Information is provided on what is regarded as work exploitation in Italy and on how this area is regulated by the national Law.	Questions from the group are answered.

Table 2. Steps of IOM activity with UAMs on work exploitation

Other face-to-face formative activities such as *World Café* and *Managing Opinion* are implemented with foreign minors in a group format. The first one is designed to deepen the understanding of children on specific topics, and the latter is geared around testing their understanding.

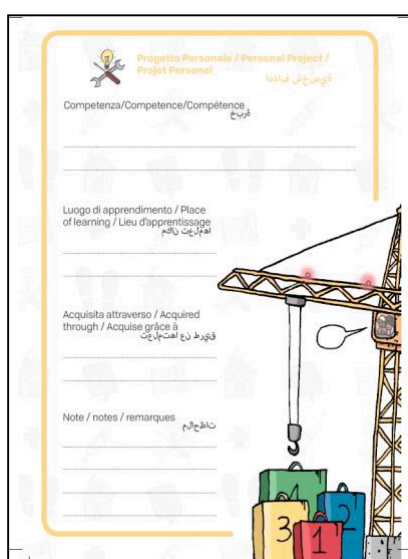


Image 2. Page from UNICEF Young Pass

UNICEF Participatory Labs involve discussion groups on specific topics, related games, and print materials that complement what is discussed and help minors solidify the knowledge gained through the activities. In particular, one of the ways that UNICEF adopts in order to engage with UAMs is the use of the *Young Pass*. This is a pedagogical print tool developed with partner NGO InterSos, which is meant to document the children's individual pathways from their arrival in Italy. It includes sections related to legal and health information, education and competencies gained, and steps defined to achieve personal goals. Through a one-on-one conversation in which the facilitator explains how the Young Pass is to be used, children are encouraged to add their personal information to their individual Passes.

This is done primarily in order to facilitate their thinking process in beginning to shape their own life project.

UNICEF is the only agency that also adopts a methodology of peer-to-peer communication through their U-Report Ambassadors. These are refugee or migrant minors residing in one of the reception centres dedicated to UAMs, who volunteer to promote the tool of U-Report among their peers in the centre. Their involvement also extends to collaborations with the agency in the design and content development of the polls that are disseminated through U-Report, for which the Ambassadors provide crucial feedback. They also participate in meetings with the various government and local government institutions in order to support the advocacy work taken forward by the agency.

Also, UNHCR has strengthened its focus on child participation and is providing training to relevant staff on the design of activities based on this mode. Their publication *Listen & Learn* (UNHCR 2012) has provided the foundations for the Italian unit to develop child-centred activities that encourage and value children's expression and views throughout the learning process. An interesting example is offered through an initiative implemented in 2018 to support the Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents in the training of legal guardians. Through a series of workshops held with UAMs and structured on the Listen & Learn method, the children have developed a module that has become part of the training for future guardians. This educational resource is key in providing legal guardians with an understanding of the reality of refugee and migrant minors and it is taught directly by the children.

One of the interviewees from UNHCR explains how the role of the agency in Italy has evolved in recent years, and how the need to reflect this in their approach is also necessary:

In my view, both working directly with the children and working with partners who have direct contact with the children is important. Our Protection Unit has grown considerably over the past two years [*as a result of the frequent boat arrivals*]. It is all a work in progress. I only have a positive outlook towards what is happening [*in relation to new activities being introduced*], because everything is new; it is a new approach, and all the agencies and other organisations are more or less moving in the same direction. As a matter of fact, we are increasingly trying to coordinate our work, also with a clear awareness of the importance of applying a participatory approach to what we do. Hence, we both coordinate our work with that of other agencies, and we ourselves strive to adopt the elements of listening and participation in all the activities we plan. It is true that there are a number of activities that are really new, and for those ones it might take time to get the message across, especially with our partners, but I am very positive about the outcome. [...] Participation is an essential element for the Best Interest of the Child [UN Convention] and it is also one of the main principles in child protection: if we do not guarantee participation, it is hard to claim that we are working effectively on this. Hence, it is everyone's "best interest" to engage with minors and to ensure there is an element of empowerment in all the activities we implement with them.

(UNHCR respondent 1)

In order to explore more avenues for participation, in 2017 the agency also provided support to the Italian Authority for Children and Adolescents in the organisation of a participatory photography project, which gave the opportunity to a number of UAMs residing in reception centres in Rome to express themselves through photographs (UNHCR 2019).

Challenges in communication

UNHCR regards the application of participatory methods as an area that can be further improved, building a dialogue that is specific to each background, rather than designed around a general understanding of the situation of UAMs. Interviewees from this agency have pointed out the difference in the delivery of activities with groups of refugee and migrant children who had experience in interacting and providing input, in contrast with those coming from a more isolating reality in which they were never given the opportunity to contribute their views.

Both UNHCR and IOM emphasise the crucial role played by cultural mediation, and the need for agencies to strengthen this competence in staff in order to deliver messages more effectively. This could be key also in the design of media content. As Thommessen et al. (2013) also expound:

The individual needs of unaccompanied refugee minors should [...] be considered when determining how best to intervene. Groups of unaccompanied refugee minors are highly diverse and individual experiences, cultural backgrounds and belief systems influence the way in which psychological distress and interventions are perceived by the individual (9).

The agencies also recognise specific topics that are very difficult to discuss with UAMs, such as sexual orientation and sexual violence for UNICEF, and trafficking for IOM. In order to address the latter, IOM avoids large group settings and does not refer to the topic directly. Instead, facilitators tell third parties' stories to groups of maximum three children, which convey the reality of trafficked minors through real experiences. This is done in order to avoid stigmatisation towards those who have undergone this type of exploitation, or to prevent someone who is a current victim to feel as if they were being scrutinised.

On the whole, the challenging task of communicating with unaccompanied foreign minors is illustrated effectively through the words of one respondent from this study:

Especially for minors who have arrived after a very harsh journey, their level of trust towards others is incredibly low. Establishing a trustworthy relationship with them is very difficult. And even when you manage to, the relationship deteriorates when they see that the processes you have talked to them about may take longer than they expected. Therefore, I believe that this is not just about communication: it is also about the personal experience of each child.

Media channels to explore

The agencies have expressed interest in experimenting with new types of media in their communication with unaccompanied minors, should new funding and partnerships become available. UNICEF and IOM have talked about the potential that culturally-appropriate animations could have in delivering sensitive messages to this target group. UNICEF has also discussed the likely impact of an edutainment programme in this area, tackling particularly the fears and uncertainties of newly arrived UAMs in their journey of integration, and what solutions and services they can find in their host communities. UNHCR

emphasises the helpfulness of video as a tool to pass on effectively notions around international protection and the complex procedures for asylum.

Concluding thoughts and recommendations

The challenges of the communication-based interventions that UN agencies implement when working with unaccompanied foreign minors reflect the complex situation of the children they work with. Their effort is mindful of the vulnerability of this group and of the importance of incorporating the principles established by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in their communication practices.

The selection of channels and the design of the media content and face-to-face activities implemented with unaccompanied foreign minors must be done in consideration of the significance of the information conveyed, and the role that such information plays in the lives of its recipients. Reflecting on communication practices and processes in this area is critical to not only continue to meet children's communication needs effectively, but also to improve existing strategies and approaches.

From the analysis of the information collected through this inquiry, the following short recommendations are useful for organisations that engage directly in communicating with UAMs:

- Allocate resources in the design of interventions that are tailored to the diverse circumstances of migrant children – Consider the different profiles from Giovannetti (2017; see above);
- Engage in research around the use of specific media channels with UAMs, in order to identify and adopt those that are most effective in conveying the messages each intervention is built on – Consider children's experience and / or predisposition with media channels;
- Strengthen competences around cultural mediation and ensure that trained staff members engage effectively with children at all stages – Consider developing a module on participatory communication for all staff working with UAMs;
- Work with cultural mediators in developing more targeted media content – Consider assessing cultural mediators' media literacy and enhancing their skills in this area;
- Build a trustful collaboration with partners who are direct implementers of the activities that have been designed for minors – Consider co-developing a monitoring mechanism that staff from partner organisations feel ownership of and assist them in conducting accurate reporting of the activities' implementation and outcome, including obstacles encountered.

Communicating with newly arrived migrant and refugee children involves novel practices that UN agencies in Italy have begun to strengthen as a response to the expansion of the migratory movement that has been unfolding across the Mediterranean, and which has seen a large number of children travelling alone. Documenting and reflecting on these experiences is crucial to continue building interventions that effectively meet children's communication and information needs.

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