

# RTP CP UNPOL Module 5



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## How to Collaborate on and Coordinate Child Protection in a United Nation Peace Operation

# Aim

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All UN peace operations personnel have an obligation to uphold and respect children's rights

Each component of the mission has child protection responsibilities and must mainstream and integrate child protection principles into its core activities

UNPOL staff must understand how they should interact and coordinate with various actors involved in child protection within and outside the UN system

# Learning Objectives

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**At the end of the module, learners will be able to demonstrate how to:**

- Work within UNPOL on child protection
- Work within the mission on child protection
- Work with other key UN actors on child protection
- Work with local child protection actors



# Module Overview

## **How to work within UNPOL on child protection**

Learning Activity 5.1 – Group discussion

## **How to work within the Mission on child protection**

Learning Activity 5.2 – Role-play scenario

## **How to collaborate with other United Nations actors on child protection**

Learning Activity 5.3 – Case studies

## **How to work with local child protection actors**

Learning Activity 5.4 – Case studies



## Learning Activity 5.1

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### Instructions

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You have collected information regarding the abduction of children:

1. What would you do with this information in your police service in your home country?
2. What actions would you take and who would you engage with?

Discuss the questions in pairs or small groups (5 minutes)

# Internal police reporting

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- Mechanisms in place to report to the hierarchy
- Written reports
- Written reports may be complemented with an oral briefing

# Additional coordination on child protection within UNPOL

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- The 2017 Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations provides for the designation of a **UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point** at Mission headquarters, as well as Child Protection Focal Points in field offices, to facilitate **coordination** and **information sharing**.

# Responsibilities of UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points

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- Mainstream and integrate child protection principles into the work of each UNPOL officer
- Supporting collaboration on and coordination of child protection within UNPOL
- UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points may also be UNPOL Gender and/or Human Rights Focal Points





## Learning Activity 5.1 (cont.)

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### Instructions

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Discuss and answer the following questions (5 minutes):

1. Why do you think UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point positions have been established?
2. What are the main tasks of UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points?



## UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points

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- Serve as point of contact for UNPOL on matters related to child protection
- Ensure that child protection is integrated into the work of UNPOL personnel, including in their capacity-building support to the host-State police
- Support the adoption of mission-specific directives and standard operating procedures



## UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points (cont.)

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- Provide guidance on adopting a child-sensitive approach to policing tasks
- Establish compliance with international norms and standards, including on apprehension and detention
- Provide support for the prevention of and response to violations and abuses against children
- Monitor and report on grave violations against children



## Key messages for Learning Activity 5.1

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- In addition to usual reporting procedures within a police unit, UNPOL personnel must also report to and coordinate with the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points
- Child Protection Focal Points play a critical role in coordinating information-sharing and mainstreaming child protection concerns within UNPOL, including Formed Police Units
- Upon arrival at the mission, UNPOL personnel should find out who the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points are



## Learning Activity 5.2

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### Instructions

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- Four participants will role-play a meeting to determine the best strategy to respond to the situation (10 minutes):
  - One participant plays the role of UNPOL Team Leader
  - One participant plays the role of UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point
  - Two participants play the role of regular UNPOL officers
- Other participants observing the role-play provide comments focusing on coordination with host-State actors



## Role-play: Situation

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Two UNPOL officers return from a joint patrol with the host-State police. They met with social workers who reported that earlier that day they had witnessed an attack on the children's ward at the city's main hospital.

Upon returning to the base, the two UNPOL officers meet with the UNPOL team leader and the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point.

### **Task:**

1. Conduct a debriefing
2. Suggest action to respond to this situation
3. Consider other mission components that can play a role in responding to this incident



# Components of a UN peace operation

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- Special Representative of the Secretary-General or Head of Mission
- Military component
- Police component
- Civilian components, including Child Protection component



## Components of a UN peace operation (cont.)

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### **Other civilian components:**

- Political Affairs
- Human Rights
- Justice and Corrections
- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)
- Civil Affairs
- Gender
- Protection of Civilians





## Learning Activity 5.2 (cont.)

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### Instructions

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- The same four participants will reprise their roles for the second part of the role-play (10 minutes)
- Four other volunteers will play the roles of:
  - Liaison Officer in the Military component of the mission
  - Representative of the Human Rights component
  - Representative of the Gender component
  - Representative of the Political Affairs component



## Role-play 2: Situation

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The SRSG heard about the attack on the hospital in the media and is unhappy that the information did not reach him/her earlier.

The SRSG knows that an UNPOL patrol was in the sector earlier that day and is unclear as to why the information was not immediately relayed to him/her.

The SRSG will attend a press conference in 2 hours, and requests that the Police Commissioner briefs him/her on what actions the Mission can take to address the situation.

The Police Commissioner asks your group to formulate concrete recommendations on a plan of action for the Mission to act within the next 24 hours. The Police Commissioner wants to receive this plan in 90 minutes, so that he/she can consider it before the press conference.



# Role of Child Protection Advisers

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- Point of contact for the UN peace operation
- Advise the SRSG/HoM and all mission components on child protection
- Monitor and report on the six grave violations against children
- Negotiate agreements for the release of children associated with armed forces and armed groups

# Role of Child Protection Advisers (cont.)

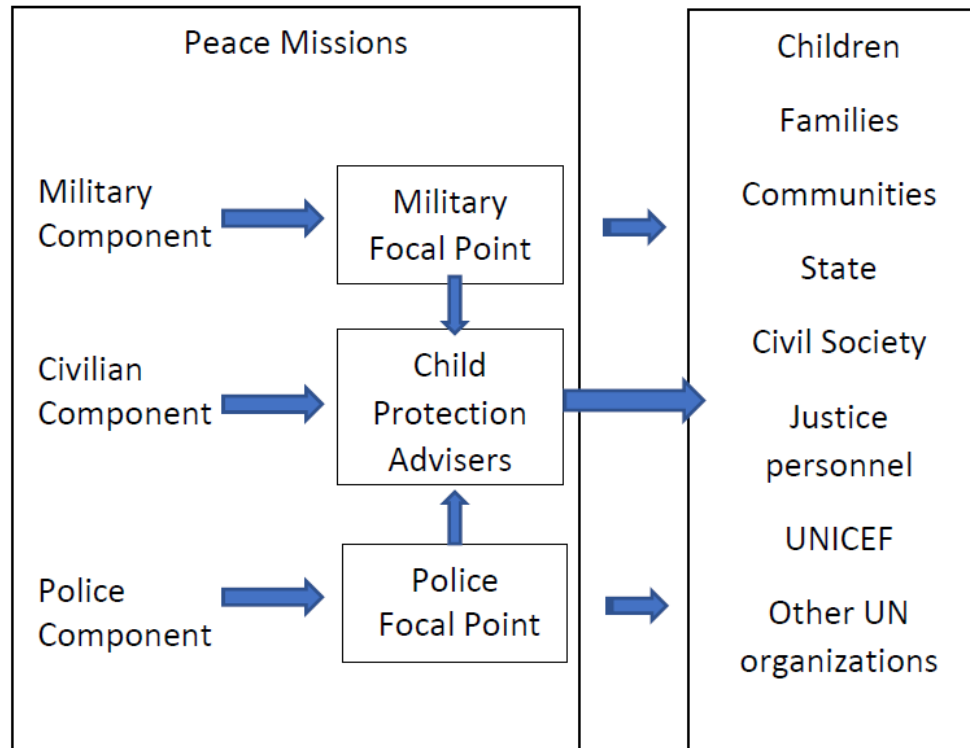
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- Mainstream and promote child protection mechanisms, and build the capacity of national institutions, military, police forces, etc.
- Coordinate with UNICEF and other relevant actors on child protection
- Advocate and promote children's rights



# Child Protection Advisers



Note that the work of these actors overlaps. Children's issues must be considered a shared responsibility



## Plenary discussion

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How would you change the coordination strategy that you initially planned, based on the evidence collected from the patrol?



## Key messages for Learning Activity 5.2

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- UNPOL personnel must report to their hierarchy
- On matters relating to child protection, UNPOL personnel should also inform the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point directly
- Child Protection Advisers are the lead in the entire mission for child protection
- UNPOL must always coordinate and collaborate with Child Protection Advisers in matters relating to child protection
- UNPOL officers should make sure to find out whether it is the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point or the individual UNPOL officers who should inform the Child Protection Advisers about child protection matters



## Learning Activity 5.3

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### Instructions

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- Discuss the five case studies in groups
- Each group will answer the different questions found in the handout (15 minutes)
- Each group will present their case study and findings



# Case study 1: A non-executive mandate

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- UNPOL is not mandated to conduct regular direct policing activities in the host country
- UNPOL should not investigate cases directly
- Coordination with the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point and with Child Protection Advisers can help
- UNPOL should focus on collaborating with the host-State police

# Case study 1: The cluster approach

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- Provides a coordination platform bringing together the UN and non-UN humanitarian organizations in the area
- Focus is on enhancing child protection coordination and response in humanitarian contexts
- UNPOL should seek to participate in meetings and activities organized by the child protection sub-cluster



## Case study 2: Harmful practices

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- Harmful practices are forms of violence that occur as cultural or traditional practices
- They may have existed for so long that they are considered as accepted cultural practices
- They include child marriage, “honour”-based violence, female genital mutilation or cutting (FGM)

## Case study 2: Harmful practices (cont.)

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- The host-State police should enforce the law that criminalizes harmful practices
- UNPOL's role is to promote international law in a way that is not judgmental
- A coordinated approach with local actors is essential

## Case study 2: UNFPA and UN Women

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- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is the UN entity leading on sexual and reproductive rights
- UNFPA leads initiatives aimed at addressing sexual violence, and it often collaborates with host-State police in carrying out these initiatives
- UN-Women provides technical and financial support, while promoting and monitoring work on gender equality across the UN system
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## Case study 3: Engaging in our work

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- Child protection work can often impact us personally in many ways
- Seeking assistance or debriefing after a particularly emotional experience is important
- Overstepping the non-executive boundary could have consequences for the entire mission
- Working in coordination with other mission components is the best way to ensure that issues are addressed

## Case study 3: UNODC

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- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is the main UN entity working on organized crime and human trafficking
- UNODC often collaborates with host-State police forces in various areas of judicial reform and capacity-building

## Case study 4: “Do no harm” principle

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- Avoid exposing people, including children, to additional risks through our actions
- The police must mitigate potential negative effects on everyone, including children
- The police should anticipate the risks and unintended consequences of their actions
- Promotes accountability towards all community stakeholders, including children



## Case study 4: UNICEF and OHCHR

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- The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the main UN entity working on all matters related to children
- UNICEF leads various areas of activity, including demining, vaccination, education, child protection and justice for children
- The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is the main UN entity working on human rights
- OHCHR facilitates policy dialogue on children's rights and promotes children's engagement and participation in United Nations processes



## Case study 5: Gender dimension

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- Girls and boys experience the impact of armed conflict differently
- Girls and boys are entitled to services tailored to their characteristics
- It is important not to reinforce stereotypes
- The police should offer children the choice between a male and a female interlocutor in their interactions with the police

## Case study 5: UNHCR and IOM

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- UNHCR serves boys and girls who are displaced, stateless, asylum-seekers or refugees in and outside camps
- IOM focuses on four broad areas: migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration, and addressing forced migrations



## Key messages for Learning Activity 5.3

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- Coordination with other UN entities enhances the impact of the peace operation
- UNPOL's non-executive mandate is often complementary to the programming and operational capacities of other UN agencies
- Coordination with UNPOL Child Protection Focal Points and Child Protection Advisers is critical to ensuring that UN peace operation actions are coherent



## Learning Activity 5.4

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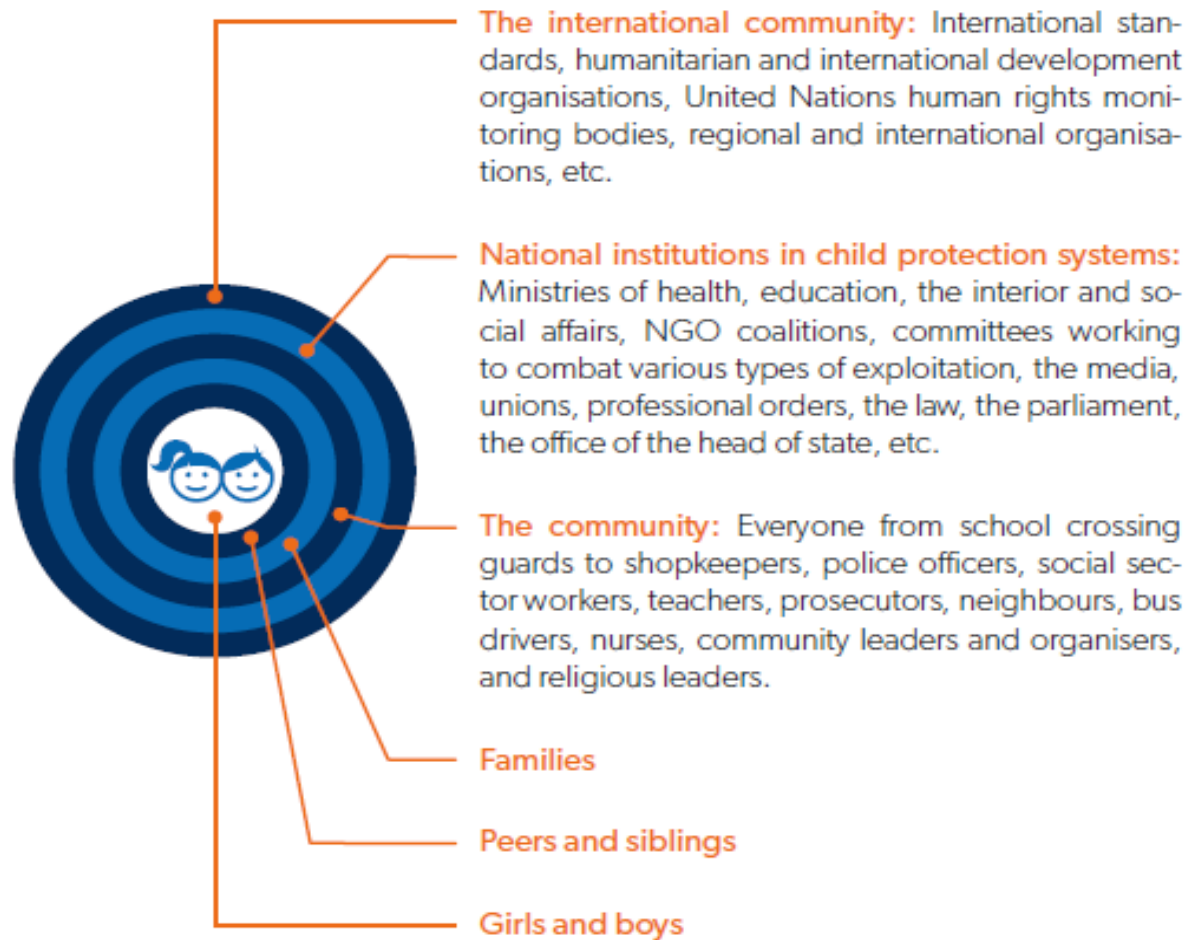
### Instructions

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Discuss and answer the following question (10 minutes):

- Who are the key players in a child protection system?

# Child protection system





## Learning Activity 5.4 (cont.)

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### Instructions

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- Discuss the four case studies in groups
- Each group will answer the different questions found in the handout (25 minutes)
- Groups will review and correct the responses of other groups (10 minutes)
- A response template is available to help you structure your answers

# Ready to learn

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- UNPOL personnel must learn about the way each category of actors operates in the host country
- The legal system differs from one country to another
- Obligations to report violations of children's rights differ
- The division of responsibility among civil society organizations, traditional and religious leaders, prosecutors, social workers and the host-State police may be very different





## Practice and institutional culture

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- Important to understand existing coordination mechanisms and resources
- There may be resistance to collaboration
- Civil society organizations, traditional leaders and religious figures may play a different role than expected
- Coordination will sometimes be systematic and sometimes ad hoc

# Specialized police service

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- Protocols and specialized police units may already be in place
- Specialized units may include police officers who are child protection experts
- National specialized units may handle cases of child victims or child witnesses of a crime
- UNPOL may be asked to support those units

## Examples of possible actions by UNPOL

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- Help establish or revise standard operating procedures, referral pathways and collaboration protocols
- Provide support to specialized police services
- Provide support to multisectoral teams
- Conduct joint training
- Promote community-oriented policing approaches
- Support communication approaches
- Take part in relevant cluster and coordination groups



## Key messages for Learning Activity 5.4

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- UNPOL officers must be aware of UNPOL's roles and responsibilities as well as those of other mission components
- UNPOL officers must understand the coordination mechanisms in place, both inside the UN family and outside
- The host-State police might procedures in place on how government and non-government actors should handle cases involving children
- UNPOL personnel should seek to understand these procedures