

MODULES 1–3

Takeaways

MODULE 1 – LESSON 1

- A child is anyone under the age of 18 years
- Children face specific risks during armed conflict
- The nature of conflict has changed and severely affects children
- There are six (categories of) grave violations against children
- Protection needs of boys and girls may differ

MODULE 1 – LESSON 2

- Child protection is a team effort, and everyone has a role to play
- Component responsibilities differ, but are complementary
- Coordination is essential
- Reporting is crucial to triggering action
- The military component should establish Child Protection Focal Points at Force Headquarters, sector/brigade, battalion and company levels
- Child protection information requirements and mechanisms for sharing information with the civilian Child Protection staff should be established

MODULE 2 – LESSON 1

- All mission work must respect and promote international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law
- The Security Council has issued several mutually reinforcing mandates that protect children and establish priorities for missions
- DPO and other United Nations policies establish binding rules by which all staff must abide, including rules to protect children

MODULE 2 – LESSON 2

- Peacekeeping personnel must know the legal instruments on child protection and the mission's mandate
- Military personnel have a legal obligation to protect children
- Officers and troops must be trained on child protection, the child protection mandate, the mission context, and the six grave violations against children in the mission area
- All military operations must be in full compliance with international humanitarian law and the rules of engagement of the mission



MODULE 3 – LESSON 1

- Peacekeeping personnel should be aware of how their own cultural background can influence their dealings with children and local communities, in order to avoid disrespectful or harmful behaviour
- Military personnel must abide by the relevant codes of conduct and other ethical standards when dealing with children in their mission areas
- Bear in mind the United Nation’s zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and the prohibition of child labour
- Always keep the following guiding principles in mind when interacting with children, and coordinate and work with the experts:

“Do No Harm” and the “Best interest of the Child”

MODULE 3 – LESSON 2

- Know your roles and how you can contribute to child protection:
 - Direct role: prevent violations and mitigate threats
 - Support role: gather information, support the Child Protection Section/Unit, provide security to civilian Child Protection staff
- Military components have directives/SOPs on child protection – apply them
- Create orders and SOPs to address information requirements, handover of children, etc.
- Child protection is an integral part of practically every patrol activity
- Protection involves a combination of actions to reduce vulnerability and risk
- Assess the child-specific indicators in your operational environment
- In all your actions and orders, consider the best interest of the child

MODULE 3 – LESSON 3

- Protection of children is an integral part of the overall mission mandate
- Rules of engagement provide the authority to use force, if deemed necessary, to protect children
- The handling of children associated with armed forces and armed groups is complex and requires training
- Bear in mind two key considerations:
 - Take action to address child protection threats
 - Inform child protection actors of violations
- Hand over children associated with armed forces/groups to child protection actors as soon as possible

MODULE 3 – LESSON 4

- The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point has a key role to play in mainstreaming child protection in the military component
- Interaction with the mission Child Protection staff is essential



- Timely information flow is vital to be pre-emptive in protecting children
- The Force Commander's Directive on Child Protection is a tool to provide comprehensive direction to the Force – it must be re-issued, monitored and evaluated on a regular basis

MODULE 3 – LESSON 5

- Each level (sector/brigade, battalion, unit, temporary operations base, UNMO team site) should have its own specific tactical child protection documents
- Child protection documents must be relevant to the specific area of responsibility and the role of the unit
- Documents are only the basis for effective child protection; military personnel must be trained, rehearse and implement procedures
- Report all child protection concerns/observations and establish mechanisms to generate situational awareness

