ANNEX 9: Early Warning Indicators of the Six Grave Violations Against Children

All grave violations against children

Structural indicators[102]	- Pervasive armed conflict or re-escalation of hostilities/cross border insecurity/no-go areas - Presence of armed groups in areas/regions where communities (and children) live - History of recruitment and use of children and other grave violations (and level of commitment to stop them) attributed to specific armed forces/groups - External support and/or sponsorship of armed groups likely to influence armed groups support to communities as well as decisions on (and need for) forced recruitment of children - Presence of refugees and/or internally displaced persons (IDPs), including unaccompanied or separated children - Patterns of discrimination (e.g., based on a child's gender and/or other identity-based characteristics, including ethnicity, race, religion, economic status, sexual orientation, etc.). - Trafficking of natural resources - Exploitation of lootable and/or non-lootable natural resources profiting parties to the conflict and influencing duration of conflict and decisions to use children for forced child labor - Embargos, targeted sanctions, or humanitarian blockades preventing provision of essential goods or relief items/donors conditionalities for funding (as a result of sanctions) - Mobility and infrastructure (limited road and energy infrastructure, vast and diverse geography, and limited air assets) - Intercommunal clashes/grievances (land, indigenous, water, herds, hunting) and natural disasters fueling conflict - Host state strategy, willingness, and capacity to prevent grave violations against children - Consent of the government, which can lead to political and operational implications for the child protection mandate - Accountability mechanisms and measures taken against perpetrators of grave violations against children - Level of civic space for children and youth/national and community-based civil society organizations relevant for the prevention of grave violations

102 Structural indicators are key 'readers' of the mission context and conflict background, including on causes of the crisis. They enable UN personnel, prior or in the execution of their tasks, to verify macro-level conditions and patterns potentially impacting on the rights of children. Structural indicators may include international commitments and obligations as well as focus, monitorability and timelines of national policies and institutional arrangements for i.e., the respect and fulfilment of children's rights, the use of force and other key rule of law issues; national action plans against recruitment; socio-economic data predicting conflict events; consent of the government; local resource based economy relying on child labour; trafficking of natural resources; diversity and multiplicity of armed actors, including their military capacity, level of organization, modus operandi, aims and funding; capacity of national security forces and administrative institutions; mobility and infrastructures; presence of non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations involved in community engagement, child protection and humanitarian assistance.

Structural indicators *continued*	▪ Host state ratification/reporting/ domestication and implementation of humanitarian principles and relevant treaty obligations and commitments to additional standards[103]
Process/outcomes indicators[104]	▪ Child-focused and gender-sensitive legislation, policies, and measures (administrative and judicial) are adopted, implemented, and monitored to prevent and criminalize child rights' violations ▪ Action plans to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children as well as sexual violence against children by parties to conflicts adopted, regularly monitored, and updated ▪ Child-focused and gender-sensitive data and tools relevant for the prevention of grave violations against children are incorporated in national development strategies, ministerial appointments and strategies, national security protocols, parliamentary committees, and child protection codes ▪ Multisectoral reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups within the wider children community, support to family resilience and fight against stigma and discrimination ▪ Child-focused and gender-sensitive policy, training, and accountability measures for the prevention of grave violations against children (guidance, orders, complaints mechanisms, arrests, convictions) targeting armed forces and armed groups are adopted, implemented, and monitored ▪ Regular training, advice and support for security forces provided in coordination with relevant UN components in line with the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on UN support to non-UN security forces (HRDDP) ▪ Armed forces and armed groups establish child protection units and/or child protection focal points ▪ Implementation of child and gender-sensitive legal systems, community services and civil society programs (healthcare, education, sport, leisure activities, recreation, and dialogue for children) ▪ Safety and security provided in and around IDP/refugee camps ▪ Local early warning mechanisms, including Community Alert Networks (CANs) and protection and peace committees, rely on participation of communities, parents, teachers, women, and children

103 The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, the International Labour Organization Convention 182 concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Paris Principles, the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers, the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military use during Armed Conflict as well as other relevant international law and standards such as the Arms Trade Treaty (and specifically art.7 (4)) and the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas.

104 Process or outcome indicators enable UN personnel to verify efforts (process) and effects and results (outcomes) of measures taken by national actors for the prevention of grave violations, including those they are directly mandated to influence e.g., national armed forces, armed groups, national law enforcement agencies as well as political and local leaders (i.e., reported cases of children under threats; measures enhancing school participation; budget allocations).

Process/outcomes indicators *continued*	■ Measures are taken to prevent intimidation and reprisals against children and community members
	■ Measures are taken to prevent intimidation, retaliation and attacks against human rights defenders, child rights advocates and local stakeholders engaging with the United Nations
	■ Mission resources allocated for addressing child protection threats, including number of troops, mobility assets and specialized child protection expertise at HQ, sector, and unit level.
Warning signs[105] (Common to all six grave violations)	■ Military operations, training operations, search-and-arrest campaigns, and incursions in local communities by armed forces or groups
	■ Presence/operations of mercenaries and/or private military contractors
	■ Presence of improvised fighting vehicles or motorcycles in villages and communities
	■ Retaliatory behaviors against the civilian population for actual or perceived support to and collaboration with opponent groups
	■ Arrests and detention of activists or 'perceived collaborators', including children, during protest or other events or more broadly for national security reasons or for actual or alleged association with groups designated as terrorist groups
	■ Movements, checkpoints, and procedures likely to directly target or indirectly impact upon hospitals and access to humanitarian aid
	■ Incursions by parties to the conflict in or around IDP and refugee camps where children, including separated and unaccompanied children, can become target of discrimination (e.g., ethnic, religious, racial, tribal) or perceived as sympathizers of a particular party to the conflict or political group or as a potential source of insecurity[106]
	■ Children living in proximity to conflict zones, near military objectives, in military camps or in their vicinity
	■ Cross-border incidents, including exchanges of fire and incursions
	■ Intercommunal clashes/grievances (land, indigenous, water, herds, hunting)
	■ Hate speech and incitement to discrimination (including based on race, religion, or gender)
	■ Political violence, including election-related violence (e.g., political gatherings and rallies turning violent, excessive use of force by security forces in responding to protests, assassination of leaders, political orchestrations raising dissatisfaction and incitement to violence, etc.)

105 Warning signs can include indications of occurrences, behaviours, and specific situations specifically observable at the operational and tactical level and enable UN personnel to anticipate and prevent deteriorating conditions leading to grave violations against children. Warning signs contribute to information that uniformed personnel, JMAC, Child Protection, Human Rights and other key mission components and partners are tasked to detect, analyze, monitor, and report. As for structural and process indicators, warning signs can be adapted and made relevant for different mission contexts. Warning signs, if left unaddressed, can lead to conflict and severe deterioration of the human rights situation. Warning signs provide a basis to identify solutions to address threats and prevent suffering. These can include, for example, the proximity of an armed group to an urban centre or its intention to initiate hostilities; movement of troops or establishment of check points; bad or alarming news on media and open-source information; political or violent gatherings and inflamed speeches; closing of schools and blocking of humanitarian routes; proliferation of weapons and illegal mining. They can also include credible individual or group perceptions.

106 Global Protection Cluster (GPC), Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons, June 2010.

Warning signs (Common to all six grave violations) *continued*	■ Level of awareness of communities on children's rights in conflict and the impact of grave violations
	■ Communities/women/children access to technology, communication and services including critical information for early warning/reliability of informal social sources such as word of mouth from community or family members/warning signs provided by education personnel and community members/perceptions (and misconceptions) of children vis-à-vis violent threats and grave violations/
	■ Civilians seeking refuge near UN bases
	■ Level of support to armed forces and armed groups by communities
	■ Presence of community-based armed groups/communities resorting to the creation of self-defense militias
	■ 'New' or imposed beliefs, harmful practices, and religious norms, notions, and gender biased declarations targeting/affecting children
	■ Change in perception of UN presence and politicization of support and engagement/misinformation and disinformation targeting the UN presence and/or the international community more broadly.

Killing and maiming of children

Warning signs (specific to killing and maiming)	■ Deliberate targeting and indiscriminate attacks e.g., through the use of weapons, including explosive weapons, in populated areas[107]
	■ Children deprived of their liberty during armed conflict
	■ Repressive approach (stigma, detention, anti-terrorism frameworks, denial of access to justice) towards children associated with armed forces and groups (CAAFAG) in the context of armed conflict
	■ Illicit flows/import of weapons, especially light/small weapons
	■ Harmful practices towards children, including vulnerable children (e.g., children with albinism, children accused of witchcraft)

Recruitment and use of children in armed forces and groups

Warning signs (specific to recruitment and use)	■ Parties to conflict with history of recruitment and use of children
	■ Children active in armed groups' political or youth wings
	■ Closure of schools for prolonged periods
	■ Presence of terrorist and violent extremist groups, indoctrination
	■ Communities' grievances, stress, loss of livelihoods and intercommunal disputes
	■ Perceptions and fear of families, parents, teachers and communities on safety and behavior of children
	■ Families and children seeking refuge near UN peacekeeping operations presences
	■ Level of awareness of communities and local authorities on children's rights, of risks associated with the recruitment and use of children and of the impact on boys and girls

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Warning signs (specific to recruitment and use) *continued*	■ Media/online content supporting children associating with armed forces or armed groups
	■ Proximity to mining sites and other (licit or illicit) business relying on hazardous child labor
	■ armed groups interacting with orphaned, separated, and displaced children
	■ Illicit trade and import of small arms and light weapons (SALW)

Abduction of children

Warning signs (specific to abduction)	■ History of systematic abduction of children, including from specific segments of the population (e.g., religious/ethnic based) and/or geographical areas
	■ Isolated and remote areas/poor protection for children gathering areas/adolescents' spaces/schools
	■ Communities resisting 'taxes' or calls by parties to conflict for child recruitment and use
	■ Girls and boys engaging unsafe routes to fetch water, firewood, to go to school or to go to work in fields and markets
	■ Existence/history of child trafficking and criminal activities, including smuggling, extortion, and kidnapping for ransom
	■ Harmful practices e.g., child and early marriage

Rape and other forms of sexual violence against children

Warning signs (specific to rape and other forms of sexual violence)	■ Abductions in villages and communities/retaliations/revenge
	■ Arrest and detention of children
	■ Identification of intimidations and manipulations of children as triggers of abuse
	■ Trafficking rings (forced prostitution and narcotics)
	■ Girls and boys engaging unsafe routes to fetching water, firewood, to go to school or go to work in fields and markets
	■ Corruption and unethical military practices and behavior
	■ Stigmatization penalizing gender equality
	■ Harmful practices (e.g., genital mutilation, child, and early marriage)

Attacks against schools or hospitals

Warning signs (specific to attacks on schools or hospitals)	■ Increased presence of members of armed forces and/or armed groups in the vicinity of schools and hospitals ■ History of use of schools and/or hospitals for military purposes attributed to specific armed forces and/or armed groups ■ Military training in and around educational institutions ■ Schools closed due to fear of violence and climate of insecurity ■ Schools perceived as tools for propaganda or cultural indoctrination or as a symbol of the state ■ Military checkpoints/roadblocks deny children's access to schools and health facilities ■ Cases of intimidation against medical (e.g., vaccination workers) or school personnel ■ Denial of girls' rights to access health services and enjoy educational, social, and economic progress

Denial of humanitarian access for children

Warning signs (specific to denial of humanitarian access)	■ Insecurity, including active hostilities and military operations compounding access ■ Interference by parties to conflict with humanitarian partners and suppliers ■ Presence of landmines and unexploded ordnances ■ Inaccessible areas, lack of roads, floods, and natural disasters ■ Humanitarians turned back, threats, intimidations, harassment, extortions, corruption, and criminal activities ■ Presence of roadblocks and checkpoints ■ Humanitarian aid perceived as legitimizing parties to conflict or favoring areas controlled by specific parties ■ Discrimination against specific groups and geographic areas