

Department of Peace Operations and
Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs

Manual for Child Protection Staff in United Nations Peace Operations



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Child protection sensitization session to school girls: UNAMID Public Information Office

Red Hand Day campaign awareness-raising activity: MINUSCA Child Protection Unit

Senior CPA engaging with armed groups: MONUSCO Child Protection Unit

Contents

	<i>page</i>
Abbreviations and acronyms	v
1. Introduction	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Objectives	2
1.3. Target audience	2
2. Role of child protection staff in United Nations peace operations	3
2.1. The need for child protection staff in United Nations peace operations ..	3
2.2. Roles and responsibilities of child protection staff	6
2.3. Defining the child protection mandate	9
2.4. Exercises	10
2.5. Additional resources	11
3. Mainstreaming the child protection mandate	13
3.1. What is mainstreaming?	13
3.2. Advocacy within the mission	14
3.3. Training for mission components	16
3.4. Organizational reform	20
3.5. Exercises	25
3.6. Additional resources	26
4. Monitoring and reporting	27
4.1. Focus of monitoring and reporting	27
4.2. Monitoring	28
4.3. Analysis and information management	34
4.4. Reporting	35
4.5. Co-management of country task forces on monitoring and reporting ..	38
4.6. Exercises	40
4.7. Additional resources	41
5. Advocacy	43
5.1. What is advocacy?	43
5.2. Elements of an advocacy strategy	46
5.3. Preparing an advocacy plan	52
5.4. Exercises	54
5.5. Additional resources	55

	<i>page</i>
6. Engaging with parties to conflict	57
6.1. Focus of engagement	57
6.2. Groundwork for engagement	58
6.3. Action plans with parties to the conflict	61
6.4. Release and reintegration of associated children	63
6.5. Managing common challenges when engaging with parties to the conflict	66
6.6. Exercises	67
6.7. Additional resources	68
7. Coordination with external actors	71
7.1. Focus of coordination	71
7.2. Mapping of relevant actors	72
7.3. Main areas of coordination	74
7.4. Exercises	77
7.5. Additional resources	78
8. Planning, monitoring and evaluation	79
8.1. Work cycle	79
8.2. Needs assessment and analysis	80
8.3. Elements of a strategic plan	82
8.4. Workplan and implementation	85
8.5. Monitoring and evaluation	87
8.6. Exercises	89
8.7. Additional resources	90
Annexes	91
1. Consolidation of protection functions in peace operations – Guidance note / Operational framework	91
2. Roles and responsibilities of mission components on child protection ..	99
3. Training evaluation form	101
4. Sample terms of reference for child protection focal points (CPFPS)	102
5. Sample directives relating to child protection	108
6. Draft UNICEF Checklist for age assessment	117
7. Sample protocol for the handover of children in custody owing to their association with armed forces or armed groups	123
8. Sample memorandum of understanding between UNICEF and [United Nations peacekeeping operation] on co-management of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism	126

Abbreviations and acronyms

CAAC	children and armed conflict
CPA	Child Protection Adviser
CPC	Community Policing Committee
CPFP	child protection focal point
CPO	Child Protection Officer
CPS	Child Protection Section
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRSV	conflict-related sexual violence
DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DDRRR	disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement
GCP	gender and child protection
HOM	Head of Mission
HRC	human rights component
HRD	Human Rights Division
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMTC	integrated mission training centre
ISF	Integrated Strategic Framework
JMAC	Joint Mission Analysis Centre
JOB	Joint Operations Base
JOC	Joint Operations Centre
MARA	Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangement
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
MRM-IMS+	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism information management system
NGO	non-governmental organization
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
POC	protection of civilians
RBB	results-based budget

SMART	specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound
SRSR	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
SSR	security sector reform
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
UNCT	United Nations country team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WPA	Women Protection Adviser
XO/2IC	Executive Officer/Second in Charge

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

1. The *Manual for Child Protection Staff in United Nations Peace Operations* is a practical guide to support child protection staff in United Nations peace operations in the substantive implementation of the child protection mandate.

2. Child protection staff play a vital role in United Nations peace operations, which include both peacekeeping and special political missions. They monitor and report on violations related to child protection, advocate with parties to the conflict to end violations, train peacekeepers and advise mission leadership on child protection concerns, among various other tasks.¹ As advisers, trainers, coordinators, enablers and advocates, child protection staff also drive implementation of the broader children and armed conflict agenda and directly impact the lives of children, families and communities.

3. In 2017, the Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Operational Support and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs adopted the *Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017 Child Protection Policy)*, which highlights the need for continuous training,² in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1261 (1999), 1379 (2001) and 1460 (2003). The present *Manual* serves as a training tool to build the capacity of child protection staff in peace operations in order to ensure effective delivery of the child protection mandate. Consultations with child protection staff and partners in early 2017 revealed that many child protection staff had never received specialized training in their areas of work. The *Manual* provides child protection staff with concrete guidance and practical tips, taking into account their unique identity as both child protection actors and members of United Nations peace operations. It complements the *2017 Child Protection Policy* and serves as a guide to support child protection staff in taking the lead for stronger delivery of the child protection mandate in the face of rising internal and external challenges, including resource, budget and mandate constraints; the changing nature of conflict; and a general lack of mandate awareness.

4. With regard to consolidation of protection functions:

“In 2015, the Secretary-General indicated that dedicated capacities on child protection would be consolidated within the Human Rights Division (HRD) of United Nations peace operations to enhance coherence in the delivery of human rights and protection mandates, with due consideration for the requirements of flexibility to respond to different mission contexts. In missions where child protection capacities are consolidated within HRDs, the CPAs shall report to the Heads of HRD and child protection staff to the CPAs. In missions where child protection capacities remain separate from HRDs, the CPAs shall continue to report to the SRSG/HOMs and child protection staff to CPA as first reporting officer. Close partnership, coordination and exchange of information related to human rights violations against children between

¹ See *2017 Child Protection Policy*, pp. 4–6, for a detailed list of responsibilities.

² See *2017 Child Protection Policy*, paras. 16.9, 20.2 and 22, and sect. D.4.

the CPAs and HRDs is routine, as well as with the MARA and Protection of Civilians (POC). The SRSG/HOMs shall at all times remain accountable for the overall implementation of the mission's child protection mandate.”³

5. The *Manual* does not provide further guidance on the operationalization of the consolidation of protection functions in peace operations.⁴ For ease of reference, the 2016 Guidance Note on Consolidation of Protection Functions in Peace Operations is included in annex 1 of the *Manual*.

1.2. Objectives

6. The *Manual* is designed to strengthen the capacities of United Nations peace operations child protection staff in fulfilling their distinct responsibility to protect and promote the rights of children in armed conflict.

7. The *Manual* specifically aims to:

- Enable child protection staff to leverage resources for child protection purposes within the mission and externally;
- Increase coherence among child protection staff operating within and across different contexts;
- Support child protection staff in tailoring approaches to their specific context;
- Familiarize child protection staff with best practices in child protection and related fields, such as human rights, humanitarian affairs and peacebuilding; and
- Positively influence other mission components regarding implementation of the child protection mandate.

1.3. Target audience

8. The primary target audience for the *Manual* is civilian child protection staff in United Nations peace operations, including national and international Department of Peace Operations child protection advisers, officers, assistants and United Nations volunteers. It is also meant as an awareness-raising tool for human rights officers and other civilian staff serving as child protection focal points (CPFPs). The *Manual* is also useful for other mission components, child protection partners and other actors working on the implementation of the *2017 Child Protection Policy* or on child protection more broadly, including regional organizations, Member States, and experts, to ensure coordination and coherence and lay the groundwork for greater collaboration and partnership in the interest of effective child protection mandate delivery. The *Manual* is to be used in conjunction with pre-existing guidance and training standards on children and armed conflict.

³ See *2017 Child Protection Policy*, para. 17, and see para. 18 for further details on staffing.

⁴ A mechanism based at United Nations Headquarters, known as the Consolidation Working Group, should be consulted for that purpose.

2. Role of child protection staff in United Nations peace operations

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, participants must be able to:

- Explain the roles and responsibilities of child protection staff in United Nations peace operations;
- List responsibilities that fall within and outside the child protection mandate;
- Describe the value added of having child protection staff in United Nations peace operations;
- Adapt their roles and responsibilities to the specific mission context.

Chapter content

- The need for child protection staff in United Nations peace operations
 - Security Council mandate
 - Value added of child protection deployments
- Roles and responsibilities of child protection staff
 - Core functions of child protection staff
 - Contextualizing roles and responsibilities
- Defining the child protection mandate
- Exercises
- Additional resources

2.1. The need for child protection staff in United Nations peace operations

2.1.1. Security Council mandate

9. In the past few decades, the international community has increasingly recognized that conflicts have far-reaching and devastating consequences for children and that the protection of children in conflict situations is both a humanitarian issue and a concern of international peace and security. In 1999, the Security Council adopted its first resolution, 1261 (1999), affirming the protection, welfare and rights of children as a matter of international peace and security.

Excerpt from Security Council resolution 2225 (2015)

[...] 15. *Recognizes* the role of United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions in the protection of children, particularly the crucial role of child protection advisers in mainstreaming child protection and leading monitoring, prevention and reporting efforts in missions, and in this regard reiterates its decision to continue the inclusion of specific provisions for the protection of children in the mandates of all relevant United Nations peacekeeping operations and political missions, encourages deployment of child protection advisers to such missions, and calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure that the need for and the number and roles of such advisers are systematically assessed during the preparation and renewal of each United Nations peacekeeping operation and political mission; [...]

10. Subsequently, the Security Council has included specific provisions requesting the inclusion of child protection advisers in United Nations peacekeeping mandates and has addressed the protection of children in a series of resolutions on children and armed conflict. Those resolutions are 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015) and 2427 (2018). The resolutions paved the way for the United Nations to establish dedicated child protection staff in United Nations peace operations worldwide.

2.1.2. Value added of child protection deployments

11. Having dedicated child protection staff enables United Nations peace operations to leverage political, security and civilian assets to better protect children in armed conflict, an essential element to fulfilling the child protection mandate and building more peaceful societies. Some benefits of dedicated child protection capacity include:

- **In-house expertise:** United Nations peace operations often face complicated child protection concerns that require a high level of technical expertise. Having in-house child protection staff ensures that the missions can systematically implement the child protection mandate, including advising senior leadership and engaging with parties to the conflict. It also enables United Nations peace operations to respond to urgent child protection requests on short notice.
- **Demonstrable impact:** With the support of child protection staff, United Nations peace operations can produce tangible outcomes for children, families and communities. For example, United Nations peace operations with child protection staff, together with partners, have secured the release of thousands of children from armed forces and groups and driven the implementation of action plans with parties to the conflict.⁵

⁵ An action plan is a written, signed commitment between the United Nations and those parties to conflict which are listed as having committed grave violations against children. See the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict (A/72/361, chap. 6).

Quick tip: Delivering a compelling and concise “pitch” about the value of child protection staff in United Nations peace operations is useful for coordination meetings, field missions and other types of gatherings. Take a moment to prepare and practice a quick synopsis, or “elevator pitch”, on the role and value of child protection staff in United Nations missions. Limit your pitch to 30 to 60 seconds, that is, the time it takes to ride an elevator. Take care to make your pitch compelling and avoid jargon. Note that in some cases you may need to make longer presentations on the topic. In those instances, you should use data and real stories to help make your point.

- **Entry point for dialogue with parties to the conflict:** Considering that virtually every State has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and supports the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child with regard to the Optional Protocol on Children and Armed Conflict, there is a particularly strong universal basis for strengthening the overall protection of children and the work of humanitarian actors, including the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF). Governments and armed forces and groups are often more willing to engage on child protection issues because of the specific vulnerability of children in armed conflict. Having dedicated child protection staff creates an important entry point for the mission to engage with those actors on broader concerns, such as political peace processes.
- **Direct link to the Security Council:** The information that child protection staff in the field collect and verify can lead directly to political actions by the Security Council through its unique Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict,⁶ including imposing sanctions against persistent perpetrators. Child protection staff also contribute to the overall strengthening of child protection in each country setting, including by adhering to and abiding by the highest international norms and standards reflected in the body of the law and guidance on children’s rights.⁷
- **Comprehensive response:** The mainstreaming of child protection requires missions to include child protection in all operational and strategic processes and activities. Child protection staff thus work with all mission components (e.g., military, police, human rights, DDR, rule of law, protection of civilians, gender), resulting in a more comprehensive response to child protection in armed conflict. Moreover, with the support of child protection staff, military and civilian personnel deployed in remote and difficult-to-access areas have been able to monitor and report on grave child rights violations and other child protection concerns to ensure appropriate responses.

⁶ Subsidiary body of the Security Council that reviews the situation of children in country-specific situations and gives recommendations to parties to conflict, United Nations actors and others. See www.un.org/sc/suborg/en/subsidiary/wgcaac.

⁷ See 2017 *Child Protection Policy*, pp. 19-21 for specific violations.

- **Sustained focus and expertise:** United Nations peace operations often have complex and shifting priorities, which may make it difficult for mission leadership and other components to focus on children. Because child protection staff focus solely on the concerns of children, they can ensure that mission staff deliver on that important mandate.

2.2. Roles and responsibilities of child protection staff

2.2.1. Core functions of child protection staff

12. Child protection staff derive legitimacy from several documents adopted at the highest levels of the decision-making structure of the United Nations. Those documents offer a valuable resource for child protection staff in understanding and communicating their roles and responsibilities. The documents are:

- Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict (see sect. 2.1.1);⁸
- Security Council resolutions setting out the mandate of United Nations peace operations;⁹
- The *2017 Child Protection Policy*.¹⁰

13. Based on those documents, child protection staff serve at least five primary functions:

- **Mainstreaming, training and providing strategic advice on child protection concerns throughout the missions:** Child protection staff are the main resource within the mission for advising and training staff on all matters relating to child protection (see chap. 3);
- **Monitoring and reporting violations against children:** Child protection staff monitor and report on grave violations that armed forces and armed groups perpetrate against children in the context of armed conflict. With UNICEF, child protection staff also co-lead the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), mandated by the Security Council, at the technical level in the relevant missions (see chap. 4);¹¹

⁸ For United Nations resolutions and reports on children and armed conflict, see <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/virtual-library>.

⁹ For mandates, reports and other resources of United Nations peacekeeping operations, see www.unmissions.org; to access relevant resources for United Nations special political missions, see www.un.org/undpa/en/in-the-field/overview.

¹⁰ The *2017 Child Protection Policy* is available at the United Nations Resource Hub, <http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/400655>, or the Policy and Best Practice Database, <https://ppdb.un.org/Policy%20Guidance%20Database/2017.11%20Child%20Protection%20Policy.pdf> (English) and [https://ppdb.un.org/Policy%20Guidance%20Database/2017.11%20Policy%20on%20Child%20Protection%20\(French\).pdf](https://ppdb.un.org/Policy%20Guidance%20Database/2017.11%20Policy%20on%20Child%20Protection%20(French).pdf) (French). Alternatively, contact your mission Child Protection Adviser for a copy.

¹¹ Note that, in addition to the regular reporting pathways to the Security Council, published reports or other information pertaining to violations against children generated from the MRM may be shared by the country task force on MRM with other reporting mechanisms as appropriate for further advocacy action, accountability and response. Human rights mechanisms provide additional reporting avenues and other opportunities at the national level.

- **Advocacy on behalf of children and advisory role to the mission leadership:** Child protection staff are a powerful voice for ensuring that the host government, the United Nations and others account for children's concerns throughout the peace process (see chap. 5);
- **Dialogue with parties to the conflict to end violations against children:** Child protection staff engage in dialogue with relevant armed forces and armed groups, including negotiating, developing and implementing action plans to end recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups, and other grave violations (see chap. 6);
- **Coordination of child protection response:** Child protection staff coordinate child protection interventions on behalf of the mission with external actors. That includes acting as an entry point to the mission for other actors, for example, local NGOs and service providers that work on child protection issues (see chap. 7).

14. Depending on the situation, child protection staff may also engage in other activities, such as capacity-building with national counterparts, legal reform and awareness-raising efforts with the wider population.

2.2.2. Contextualizing roles and responsibilities

15. Child protection capacities in peace operations differ according to context, ranging from single child protection advisers, to child protection units composed of various staff, to focal points who typically also hold other functions. Child protection advisers and child protection staff in United Nations peace operations are deployed only in MRM contexts, with some exceptions, such as in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), where there is a child protection focal point (CPFP). Monitoring and reporting violations against children is likely to look different in a context where the MRM exists versus a context where the MRM has never existed or no longer exists. That is because non-MRM contexts usually have fewer resources available for monitoring and reporting on violations against children.

16. Overall, the context, type, phase and size of the United Nations mission, as well as the role of child protection within the mission, establish some key parameters that can help child protection staff fully understand the operating environment and define or redefine their roles and responsibilities. Table 1 presents some guiding questions for consideration.

Table 1**Guiding questions for understanding the operating environment for child protection staff**

Category	Guiding question
Conflict context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the type of conflict (i.e., international armed conflict, non-international armed conflict)?¹² Who are the parties to the conflict? • What is the phase of the conflict (e.g., unstable peace, crisis, active conflict, post-conflict, peacebuilding)? • Are there mediation efforts under way by the United Nations or other external or internal actors?
United Nations mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the overarching goals and key strategic priorities of the mission? How does child protection contribute to them? • What phase is the mission in (i.e., recently established, well-established, winding down)? • What is the size of the mission? What are the mission's geographic operational divisions? What resources does it have?
Child protection within the United Nations mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a dedicated child protection capacity within the mission? Where is the child protection capacity located within the mission structure? • What is the foundation for the child protection mandate in the mission? Does the United Nations peace operation have a child protection-specific Security Council mandate? • How long has the mission had a dedicated child protection capacity? What have been the roles and activities of the child protection team until now? Have these been successful? Why or why not? • What type of political and operational support does the child protection team have?

Quick tip: Understanding the past and gaining new perspectives can help avoid misunderstandings and open opportunities for collaboration and support going forward. Talk with colleagues in the mission (e.g., political affairs, military liaison officer) and external partners to learn more about their views and experiences related to the past, current and future role of child protection staff in the mission.

¹² As defined under International Humanitarian Law. See 1949 Geneva Conventions, art. 3; and its Additional Protocol II, art. 1, respectively.

2.3. Defining the child protection mandate

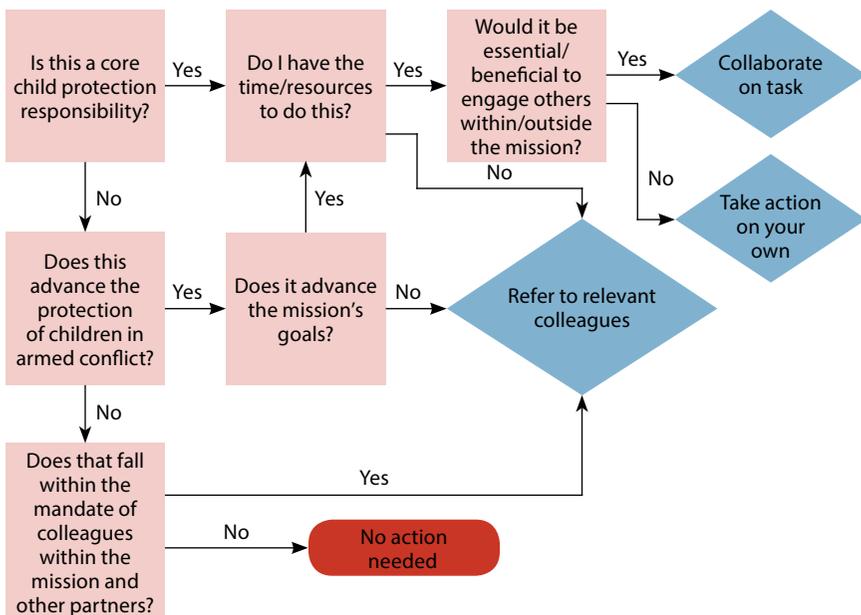
17. Governments, United Nations agencies, NGOs and, sometimes, staff within the mission, may lack awareness about who the child protection staff in United Nations missions are and what they do. As a result, they may ask child protection staff to engage in activities that either fall outside of or only marginally relate to their areas of responsibility, subject to unforeseen challenges and emerging needs, such as:

- Providing services (e.g., medical, legal or other assistance for sexual violence survivors);
- Funding programmes (e.g., funds for building a school);
- Training national and/or local actors on child protection;
- Organizing or co-organizing events with or for children; and
- Dealing with violations perpetrated against children that are not directly related to the armed conflict (e.g., domestic abuse of children).

18. Child protection staff should carefully consider such requests to determine if they should engage in such tasks and, if so, in which capacity (e.g., manager, collaborator, adviser, observer). That also requires careful consideration of the roles and responsibilities of colleagues within the mission, partners, and other actors, who may be required by mandate and/or better positioned to take action (see chap. 7).

19. Child protection staff can use the decision-making tree in figure 1, which has questions to guide staff when considering possible assignments:

Figure 1
Decision-making tree for child protection support requests



2.4. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in the present chapter.

1. In your view, what are the main benefits of having dedicated child protection capacity in your mission?

2. How do you implement or plan to implement the five core functions of child protection work in your mission:

(a) Mainstreaming, training and providing strategic advice to mission components?

(b) Monitoring and reporting grave violations against children?

(c) Advocacy on behalf of children and advisory role to the mission leadership?

(d) Engaging in dialogue with parties to the conflict?

(e) Coordinating with external actors?

3. Are there certain tasks that you have been asked to do that do not fall within your area of responsibility? If so, which ones? Are they essential? Can you delegate them? (Consider using the decision-making tree in figure 1.)

2.5. Additional resources

- Documentary movie “A Child’s Fate” (2014), available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/child-protection>.
- United Nations, *Child Protection in UN Peacekeeping: 2014 in Review* (2015); and Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Child protection in UN Peacekeeping: Volume 1* (2011), featuring stories from the field and profiles of Child Protection Advisers, available at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/child-protection>.
- United Nations, *Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations* (2017), available at <https://ppdb.un.org/Policy%20%20Guidance%20Database/2017.11%20Child%20Protection%20Policy.pdf>.
- Website of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, which includes an overview of the children and armed conflict agenda, relevant United Nations reports and resolutions, and other resources, available at <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org>.





MINUSMA Child Protection Adviser conducts screening during a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration exercise

3. Mainstreaming the child protection mandate

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, participants must be able to:

- Prepare messages to increase the mission's support for child protection;
- Propose options for mission components to engage on child protection;
- Design appropriate child protection trainings for various mission components.

Chapter content

- What is mainstreaming?
 - Defining mainstreaming
 - Mainstreaming tools
- Advocacy within the mission
- Training for mission components
 - Child protection basic training
 - Training needs assessment
 - Training development
 - Training implementation and evaluation
- Organizational reform
 - Focal points
 - Mission-wide plans
 - Policy and guidance documents
- Exercises
- Additional resources

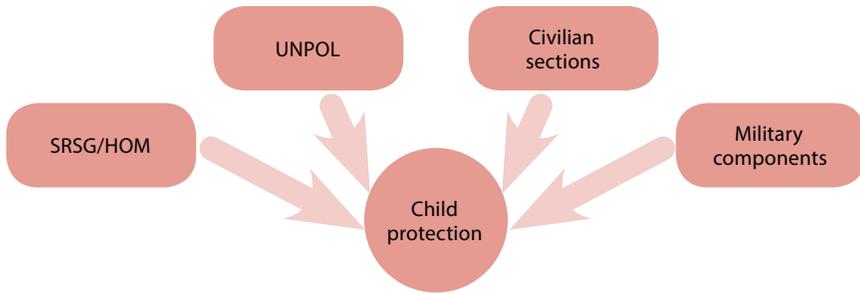
3.1. What is mainstreaming?

3.1.1. Defining mainstreaming

20. Mainstreaming is an approach for integrating the protection of children in armed conflict into all aspects of United Nations peace operations, including strategies, policies, training, and other activities. That approach allows the United Nations to use all mission staff and their different types of expertise, networks and capacities to ensure more comprehensive and better protection of children. The *2017 Child Protection Policy* clearly defines roles and responsibilities for almost all mission components (see annex 1). In that way, the Policy offers a blueprint for United Nations peace operations to systematically integrate child protection issues and validates the mainstreaming work of child protection staff.

Figure 2

Mission components showing child protection roles and responsibilities



3.1.2. Mainstreaming tools

21. Some mission staff neglect child protection concerns because they do not know their roles and responsibilities on the issue; consider it a lower ranking priority; or do not know how to integrate the issue into their work. Child protection staff play a lead role in addressing those challenges and mobilizing their colleagues in the mission. To achieve that, they should employ a combination of three tools:

- **Advocacy within the mission:** seek to influence mission leadership or specific mission components, including their specific workplans or activities, to reflect child protection concerns (e.g., by advising senior leadership or making requests for political, logistical, technical and other types of support);
- **Training mission staff:** build the capacity of mission staff so that they can better contribute to the child protection mandate (e.g., briefings for incoming staff or specialized training);
- **Organizational reform:** seek to change the mission's approaches, structures and processes so that mission staff can eventually apply a child-sensitive approach on their own (e.g., creating CPFs within components, developing mission-wide child protection plans and producing relevant policy guidance), and create tools to safeguard the institutional memory on child protection mandate implementation. Child protection advisers should therefore try to be involved in planning exercises of key sections with strong protection elements, including human rights, rule of law, judicial section, protection of civilians, political affairs, civil affairs, DDR, security sector reform (SSR), gender, HIV/AIDS, the Force, and the United Nations Police. Child Protection Advisers need to build strong relationships with those sections to ensure that child protection concerns are reflected.

3.2. Advocacy within the mission

22. Direct access to relevant strategic decision-making and management meetings is critical to ensure effective implementation of the child protection dimension of Security Council mandates. The child protection adviser supports the mission leadership to advocate for the child protection mandate and enhance visibility for the rights and protection of children. That position allows child protection staff to conduct advocacy within the

mission, including through senior management meetings, daily and thematic reports, and individual meetings. For “consolidated” missions, as per the 2016 Guidance Note in Annex 1 of the *Manual*, the head of the human rights component (HRC) facilitates direct access of the Senior Child Protection Adviser to mission senior leadership to enable performance of her or his advisory function on children and armed conflict (CAAC).

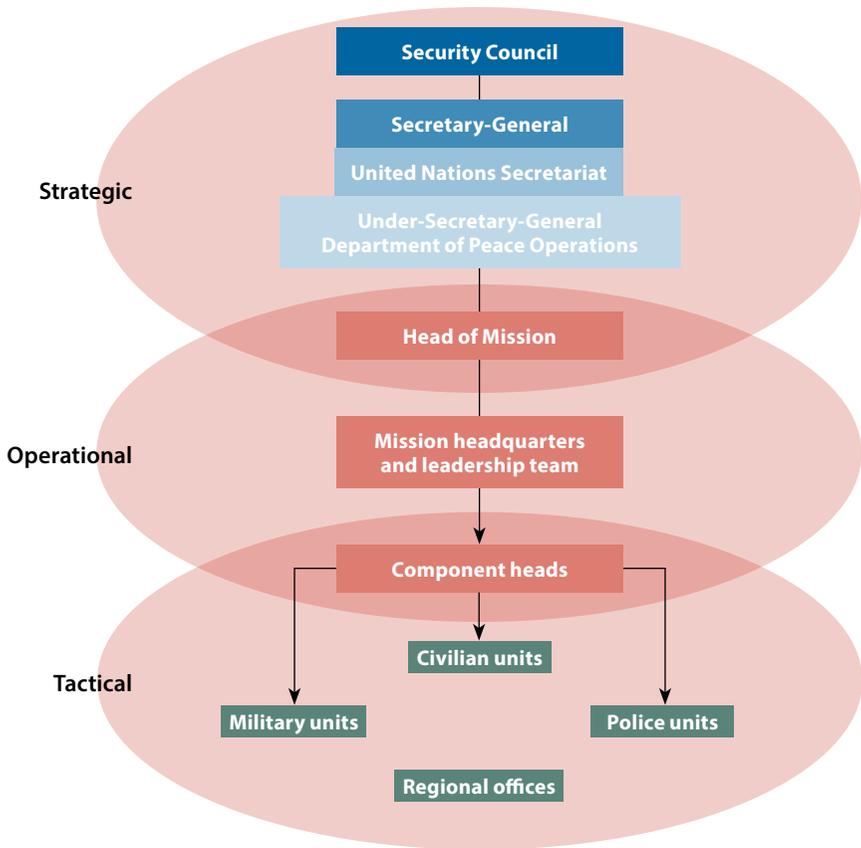
23. However, access alone does not translate into influence. Child protection staff need to know how to successfully convey their messages in an environment of multiple competing priorities and urgent requests.

24. Here are five practical tips to help child protection staff conduct effective internal advocacy:

- (1) **Make it relevant.** Some colleagues consider child protection a “soft” or marginal issue and do not grasp its relevance to political and security considerations and its relation to international humanitarian law. To overcome such misconceptions, child protection staff should make sure that the child protection issues they are tackling respond to and align with the mandate and the mission’s strategic and political priorities (e.g., peace negotiations, peace agreement implementation, protection of civilians, elections, DDR, sexual exploitation and abuse).
- (2) **Be consistent.** Having consistent messaging and speaking with one voice on child protection issues are priorities. Child protection staff should regularly remind colleagues of the mission’s child protection mandate and key messages on core issues, using the *2017 Child Protection Policy*, any mission-specific child protection implementation documents, directives or standard operating procedures and relevant Security Council resolutions as key references. They should also consider the production of child protection policy and advocacy papers to assist with internal advocacy.
- (3) **Find allies.** Despite their small numbers, child protection staff usually have working relationships with nearly every component of the mission. Where possible, they should win the support of relevant colleagues for common advocacy requests. For example, the mission leadership is more likely to grant a special flight for a field mission if several civilian components request it.
- (4) **Decentralize.** The mission structure tends to be hierarchical and concentrated at headquarters level, which is not necessarily reflective of the power structures within a country. Child protection staff should visit and engage heads of regional offices on child protection issues so that they can effectively advocate at their level.
- (5) **Leverage the strategic level.** United Nations peace operations work across strategic, operational and tactical levels, as illustrated in figure 3. While child protection staff conduct most mainstreaming efforts at the operational and tactical levels, they should keep in mind other channels allowing them to influence the strategic and political levels, including through reports submitted to the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and by working with the Office of the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Figure 3

Levels of United Nations peacekeeping operations



Source: Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support, *Mission Start-Up Field Guide for Senior Managers of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations* (2008).

3.3. Training for mission components

25. Child protection staff, in collaboration with the integrated mission training centres (IMTCs), are primarily responsible for providing child protection training and briefings to the police, military and civilian mission components. Training may range from shorter core training to longer and more specialized training. Regardless of the target audience and duration, training always requires adequate preparation and follow-up. If done well, training offers valuable opportunities to amplify the mission’s reach and impact of child protection actions.¹³

¹³ From a methodological point of view, it should be clarified that a briefing, such as a Power-Point presentation, is different from training, which is a more complex and organized effort to transfer knowledge and develop skills and attitudes that encourage behavioural change.

3.3.1. Child protection basic training

26. Child protection staff can use the standard “child protection module” included in core pre-deployment training by the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Operational Support to develop a basic training for peacekeepers and civilian mission staff (see <http://research.un.org/revisedcptm2017>, lesson 2.7). Some essential pieces of information that this training should include are:

- Definition of a child;
- What child protection is and why it is essential for the mission’s success;
- The need to adhere to and abide by the highest international norms and standards reflected in the body of the law and guidance on children’s rights;
- The impact of conflict on children, including the “six grave violations”;
- Actions that trainees are expected to take as members of the mission/component, with real examples and scenarios;
- Reporting and referral procedures;
- Dos and don’ts when interacting with children; and
- Contact details of child protection staff, including CPFs.

27. Although trainees may be familiar with some aspects of the training, child protection staff should still revisit the training materials after their deployment to ensure that trainees have fully grasped the content.

3.3.2. Training needs assessment

28. Before designing more specialized training courses or programmes, child protection staff should gather information to better understand the background, capacities and needs of the target audience for the training.

29. Suggested questions for a training needs assessment include:

- **Previous knowledge/experience:** What is the target audience’s current level of knowledge on child protection issues? Have members of the target audience ever participated in child protection training? If so, which one(s)?
- **Competencies/skills:** What are the core skills and competencies of the trainees (e.g., information gathering, analysis, advocacy/persuasive communication)? Which additional skills are needed to fulfill the responsibilities of the trainees under the child protection mandate?
- **Expectations:** What expectations does the target audience have for the training? Are they realistic?
- **Needs:** What are the perceived and actual needs of the target audience to address child protection concerns?
- **Costs:** How many trainees are there? What resources are available for the training (e.g., facilitator, venue)? Is it worth conducting a training of trainers? Would it be beneficial to collaborate with another mission component/actor on the training?

30. It is important to assess training needs before delivering trainings. Some tools for assessing training needs include surveys, self-assessments, tests, focus group discussions, individual interviews and observations from the field.

3.3.3. Training development

31. The training needs assessment allows child protection staff to develop learning objectives and content that meets the distinct needs of the target audience. To support this process, the Department of Peace Operations has developed specialized training materials on child protection for members of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force and the United Nations Police, primarily military personnel and formed police units. Besides information on the normative framework, training proposes concrete actions that United Nations police and United Nations military peacekeepers can take to implement the child protection mandate in United Nations peace operations. See table 2 for an overview of those training modules.

32. Child protection staff members can use these presentations and practical exercises when preparing training materials on the basis of the training needs assessment. They can also draw on them to develop guidelines and checklists for the United Nations Police, the United Nations Peacekeeping Force, United Nations military observers and other field staff, and share them during training.



Global Annual Specialized Child Protection Training for United Nations Military (2018), Kungsängen, Sweden
Photo: Swedish Armed Forces

Table 2 Overview of existing training modules (Departments of Peace Operations and Operational Support) for United Nations police officers and United Nations military peacekeepers (<http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/400883>)

Target audience	Learning objectives	Learning content	Training materials
United Nations Police ¹⁴	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce United Nations police officers to child protection concepts; 2. Promote a better understanding of mission child protection mandates; 3. Understand the role of child protection actors in the mission area; 4. Understand the contribution of the United Nations Police. 	<p>Modules 1–9</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children in peacekeeping contexts 2. Normative framework for child protection 3. Safeguarding children 4. Coordination with child protection actors 5. Monitoring and reporting 6. Prevention and diversion measures 7. Arrest, apprehension and detention 8. Interviewing a child from the United Nations Police perspective 9. Dos and don'ts for United Nations Police 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation • Trainers' guide and exercises • Short quiz for each module and final quiz
United Nations Peacekeeping Forces – primarily military personnel and formed police units ¹⁵	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduce United Nations peacekeepers to child protection concepts; 2. Provide child protection mission-specific tactical situations; 3. Promote better understanding of child protection mandate, and related actors inside and outside the mission. 	<p>Modules 1–6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children in armed conflict 2. Frameworks for child protection 3. Interacting with children 4. Roles and responsibilities of peacekeeping mission components and external partners 5. Military roles and tasks on child protection, part I (e.g., child protection situational awareness and considerations in military operations) 6. Military roles and tasks on child protection, part II 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation • Trainers' guide and exercises, including two scenario-based exercises • Training movie

¹⁴ Training designed primarily for pre-deployment training of individual police officers but may also be used for individual police officers and formed police units already deployed in-mission, once adapted to their specific needs.

¹⁵ Training designed for United Nations infantry battalion commanders and staff, formed police units, commanders and staff, and individually deployed personnel (peacekeeping force staff officers, military observers, military liaison officers and individual police officers).

3.3.4. Training implementation and evaluation

33. Child protection staff should invest time and energy in refining training methods and facilitation skills. Owing to high staff turnover in missions, implementing training is often an ongoing process. In missions, child protection should take the lead in training on child protection, in partnership with CPFs and the integrated mission training centres. In addition, training is an opportunity for child protection staff to form valuable working relationships with mission staff from all components.

34. Here are some practical tips for child protection staff on delivering presentations in the context of a training activity:

- **Structure the presentation.** Start the presentation with a brief overview of the module's main points and conclude with a brief summary;
- **Contextualize content.** Share facts, trends and experiences from the specific mission context and the region where trainees are deployed;
- **Involve the audience.** Be interactive, ask participants about their views and their experience, use interactive exercises and methods, particularly for longer sessions (e.g., simulations, role plays, small-group discussions with debriefing);
- **Use visual aids.** Multimedia and visual aids (e.g., photos, movies, graphs, whiteboard, etc.), reinforce key points and illustrate complex concepts;
- **Prepare handouts.** Include key information related to the presentation (e.g., trends, guidelines, checklists) and contact details of their CPF. Where possible, coordinate with the gender unit and sexual exploitation and abuse focal point to develop common tools and handouts.

35. Child protection staff should always evaluate training to improve future activities. To evaluate trainees' reactions, child protection staff should observe trainees' body language during the session, directly ask trainees about their experience, and use evaluation forms (see annex 2). Trainees' behavioural changes (i.e., whether the knowledge and skills from the training are applied on the job) are harder to measure but are essential for determining additional training needs. Monitoring and evaluation plans should gather this information (see chap. 8).

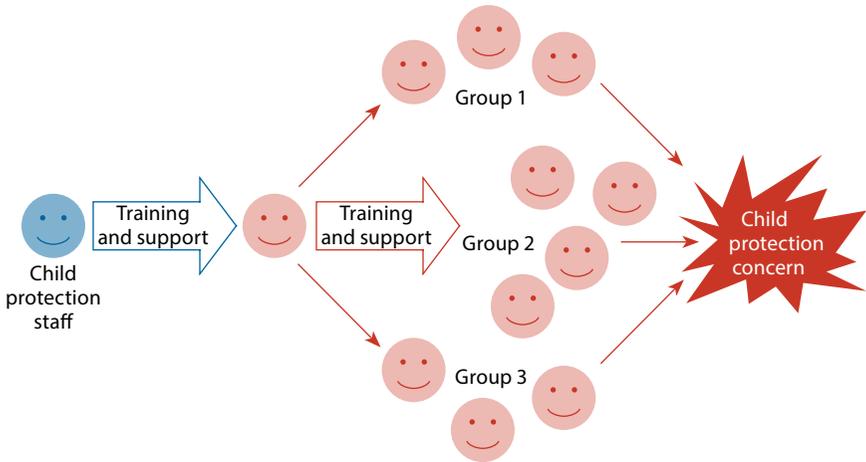
3.4. Organizational reform

36. Organizational reforms are designed to empower relevant mission staff to apply child-sensitive approaches by themselves with limited guidance from child protection staff. Child protection staff can help the mission set up systems for that purpose by creating focal points within mission components, preparing mission-wide plans and strategies, and developing mission-specific policy and guidance documents related to child protection. Organizational reform is also important to build the organization's institutional memory.

3.4.1. Focal points

37. Creating CPFs involves training child protection staff and supporting a few select individuals to assume certain responsibilities for their components (e.g., training, information-sharing, capacity-building) and serve as an interface between child protection staff and their peers (see fig. 4). As members of their component, focal points may also act as advocates for child protection issues within their component (civilian, military or police).

Figure 4
Focal points



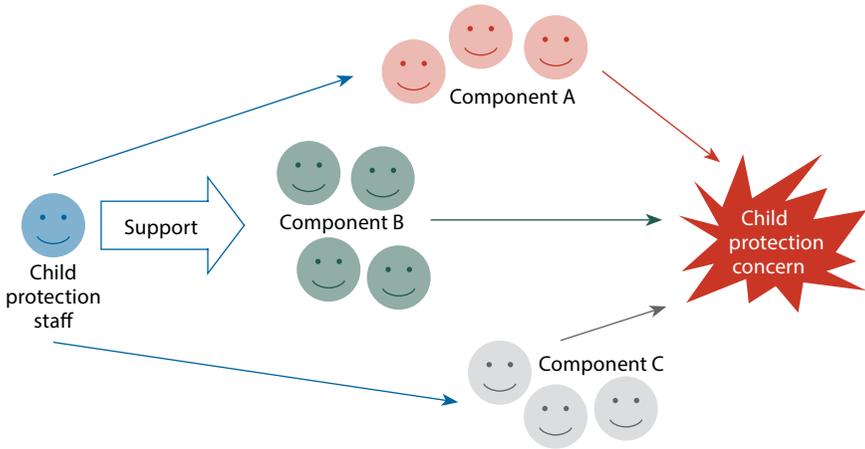
38. The *United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual* (2012) and the *2017 Child Protection Policy* require United Nations military contingents to appoint CPFPPs at mission headquarters, within United Nations battalions, and within company headquarters. Similarly, United Nations Police components should designate a police CPFPP at mission headquarters and in field offices. Child protection staff have also helped set up focal points or teams of focal points within military observer units as well as other civilian sections, in particular human rights, civil affairs, and DDR. Having focal points requires agreement with the relevant unit, clear terms of reference and regular communication between the child protection team and the designated focal point(s). Annex 3 provides a few sample terms of reference for CPFPPs within mission components.

3.4.2. Mission-wide plans

39. Developing mission-wide plans involves child protection staff motivating and supporting other mission components to collaborate on child protection issues (see fig. 5). Even in cases in which working relationships already exist, discussing and formalizing those issues is likely to increase the commitment by the parties involved. Plans can focus on child protection overall or thematic issues relating to child protection (e.g., fighting against the impunity of perpetrators of grave violations against children or prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse).

40. Developing and implementing mainstreaming plans requires child protection staff to agree with relevant mission components – as a group or bilaterally – on objectives, specific actions each partner is willing to take, support needed from the child protection team and methods for monitoring and evaluating progress. Table 3 shows a sample mainstreaming plan on illegal detention by national partners of children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups.

Figure 5
Mission-wide plans



3.4.3. Policy and guidance documents

41. Developing policy or guidance documents for missions is one of the most enduring ways to bring about organizational change (see fig. 6). It involves drawing on the highest international norms and standards reflected in the body of the law and guidance on child rights, as well as aspects of the *2017 Child Protection Policy* and applying them to the specific mission context.¹⁶

42. Possible mission-specific policy or guidance documents on child protection issues are:

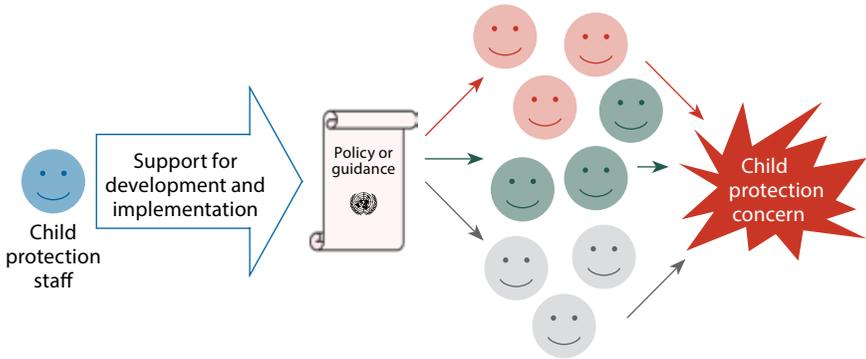
- **Directives:** for example, force commander’s directives on protection of children (see annex 4);
- **Standard operating procedures:** for example, standard operating procedures for United Nations Police or United Nations military observers relating to child protection, including reporting templates and guidance on reporting channels and referral procedures, with an updated list of contacts;
- **Terms of Reference:** for example, requirement for including CPFs in the terms of reference of joint protection or human rights missions;
- **Guidelines:** for example, appropriate conduct during interaction with children and prevention of all forms of child exploitation and child labour.

¹⁶ For a list of relevant international laws and standards on child rights, see the *2017 Policy on Child Protection*, annex H, pp. 17–18.

Table 3
Sample of mission-wide plan relating to child protection

Child protection issue	Objective(s)	Partner	Partner's actions	Support required from child protection staff	Monitoring progress
Unlawful detention of children formerly associated with armed forces/groups	No children formerly associated with armed forces/groups unlawfully detained by national police	United Nations Police	Training of national police	Technical support for child protection training given by United Nations Police	Check in once a week
		Justice, rule of law, corrections, human rights	Notify child protection team if children spotted during prison visits; Coordinate with child protection for further action	Guidance on information as necessary	Check in once a month
	Head of office	Raise issue with local authorities	Memo/briefing with key focal points	Debrief following each meeting	

Figure 6
Policy or guidance



43. Child protection staff usually work with the relevant mission component(s) on appropriate content and language during the adoption or approval process of policies and guidance. Once they are approved, the mission leadership or the head of the relevant mission component (i.e., the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Force Commander or Police Commissioner) is in charge of disseminating and ensuring implementation of and guidance on such policies, as well as follow-up. In addition, child protection staff should use field visits, training activities and appropriate meetings to share the materials and verify their effective implementation throughout the mission area. If possible, policies and guidance should include a system for measuring their impact on attitudes and practices of mission staff (e.g., surveys).

DPO Headquarters Child Protection focal point at Vancouver Principles Guidelines Workshop (2019) Ottawa, Canada
Photo: Richard Guertin, Canadian Armed Forces



3.5. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in this chapter.

1. Which of the five practical tips in section 3.2 do you believe is most effective in increasing in-mission attention and support for child protection? Why?

2. Use the following template to develop a mainstreaming plan on a specific child protection concern relevant to your mission. The plan can include advocacy within the mission, training, establishment of focal points, development of policy and guidance and other strategies. For a sample mainstreaming plan, see section 3.4.2, table 3.

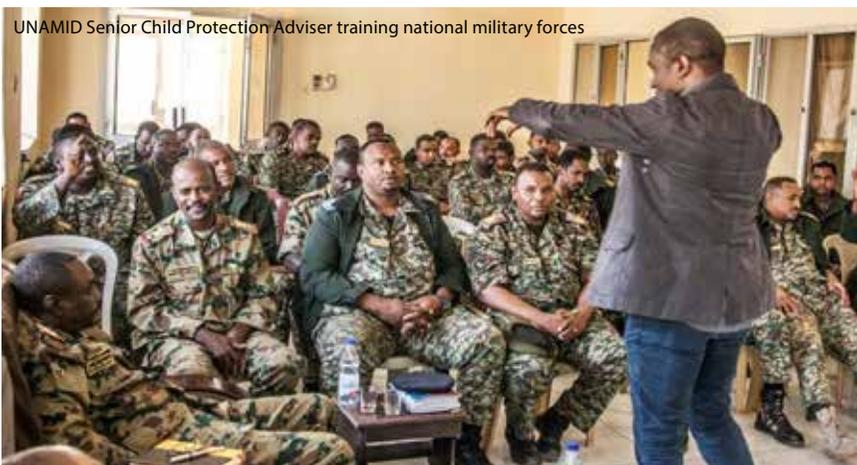
Child protection issue	Objective(s)	Partner	Partner's actions	Support required from child protection staff	Monitoring progress

3.6. Additional resources

- United Nations, *E-Guide to the United Nations Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support. A Resource for New Staff at Headquarters* (2015), which provides information on the various components of multidimensional peace operations and their functions, available at http://dag.un.org/bitstream/handle/11176/89593/e-Guide%20to%20the%20DPKO-DFS_A%20Resource%20for%20New%20Staff%20at%20Headquarters_April%202015.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y.
- Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual* (2012), vols. 1 and 2, particularly vol. 1, pp. 25–27 and vol. 2, p. 11, available at <http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/89545>.

Training

- Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, Core Pre-deployment Training Materials, for United Nations peacekeeping operations, available at <http://research.un.org/revisedcptm2017>.
- Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection for Peacekeepers (2018), which is primarily intended for military personnel and formed police units, available at <http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/400883>.
- Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection for UN Police (2017), available at <http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/400572>.
- The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative/Dalhousie University: *Child Soldiers: A Handbook for Security Sector Actors*, 3rd ed. (2017), available at www.childsoldiers.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/RDCSI_Handbook_English_3rd_Edition_Preview.pdf.



4. Monitoring and reporting

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, participants must be able to:

- Work with different mission components on monitoring;
- Explain child-sensitive interviewing techniques;
- Assess when a report is considered “verified”;
- Revise reports based on a series of quality criteria;
- Prepare for common challenges in co-managing country task forces on monitoring and reporting.

Chapter content

- Focus of monitoring and reporting
- Monitoring
 - Monitoring by other mission components
 - Verification
 - Interviewing children
- Analysis and information management
 - Child-sensitive analysis
 - Information management
- Reporting
 - Types of reports
 - Quality reports
- Co-management of country task forces on monitoring and reporting
- Exercises
- Additional resources

4.1. Focus of monitoring and reporting

44. Monitoring and reporting violations perpetrated by armed forces and armed groups against children in armed conflict are essential and central responsibilities of child protection staff. Rigorous monitoring and reporting establishes child protection staff as credible advocates for children by providing the foundation for their analysis and recommendations. Most importantly, systematic data collection supports national and international efforts to provide appropriate responses to children and communities who have suffered violations and to hold perpetrators of grave child rights violations to account in order to prevent further violations and enhance the protection of children.

45. Child protection staff are responsible for monitoring and reporting on:
- Six grave violations committed against children during armed conflict:
 - Killing and maiming;
 - Recruitment or use of children by armed forces and groups;
 - Rape or other grave forms of sexual violence;
 - Abduction;
 - Attacks against schools or hospitals;
 - Denial of humanitarian access.
 - Additional child protection priorities identified by the United Nations peace operation and/or the country task force on monitoring and reporting (e.g., detention of children for alleged association with armed groups, use of schools and hospitals for military purposes).
 - Protection issues for children related to United Nations peace operations (e.g., sexual exploitation and abuse, use of child labour by United Nations peace operations).
46. Effective monitoring and reporting involves gathering and analysing the information, identifying trends and priority needs for children affected by armed conflict, and in turn feeding the information into the mission's threat analysis and early-warning work. Staff should also follow closely the implementation of action plans and commitments made by parties to the conflict (e.g., command orders). As part of monitoring and reporting, child protection staff have a duty to refer cases to appropriate service providers for the necessary follow-up. The information collected will also be used to conduct advocacy. Monitoring should also feed into the mission's threat analysis and early warning work.

4.2. Monitoring

47. Human rights monitoring is a proactive method involving the collection, verification, analysis and use of information to address human rights problems with the ultimate goal of improving protection.¹⁷ For child protection staff, that means directly monitoring child rights violations themselves and encouraging others to do so, particularly those within the mission.

4.2.1. Monitoring by other mission components

48. Child protection staff can utilize capacities within the mission to help them gather and analyse information about the situation of children. Several mission components collect that information as part of their daily work in the field, or could do so, given adequate guidance or training (see sect. 3.3).

49. Direct access to other mission components makes it easier for child protection staff to request more information or ask for disaggregated data (e.g., by age, gender, region). Child protection staff can also more easily meet with colleagues within the mission to

¹⁷ Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), *Manual on Human Rights Monitoring* (2011), p. iii, available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/OHCHRIntro-12pp.pdf.

explain reporting needs, provide them with reporting templates or designate focal points to collect and share relevant information.

50. Suggested strategies for harnessing the mission's monitoring capacities include:

- **Conducting field missions (individual/joint)**, particularly to remote or dangerous areas where humanitarian organizations have limited access, to verify information on child rights violations;
- **Requesting specific, technical or statistical information** from colleagues (e.g., political affairs, DDR officers, joint mission analysis centres (JMACs), rule of law, human rights), such as analysis of security situation in a particular geographical area, information on armed forces and groups, statistical data on civilian casualties, and so on;
- **Reviewing public and internal reports** from human rights, gender, civil affairs, United Nations Police, the peacekeeping force and so on. (Signing up for email distribution lists may be required);
- **Making arrangements** with human rights, civil affairs, United Nations Police, military components, women's protection advisers, DDR and other relevant components to alert child protection staff of alleged grave violations against children and to collect relevant information for follow-up by child protection staff;¹⁸
- **Networking** by asking relevant mission components to help identify and reach other organizations working on issues related to child protection (see chap. 7);
- **Requesting support from mission leadership**, which is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all components with a protection or monitoring mandate contribute to child protection, particularly to the MRM.



Photo: UN Photo/Eskinder Debebe

¹⁸ For example, child protection staff can participate regularly in coordination and communication meetings within the mission, especially the Force daily security/planning briefing.

4.2.2. Verification

51. Child protection staff presence in the field increases the ability to verify alleged violations against children. The verification process involves five steps:

- (1) **Establish the source type (primary or secondary source of information).** A primary source is a testimony from the victim/survivor, perpetrator or direct witness. A secondary or supporting source includes testimony from an indirect witness (e.g., persons who have not witnessed the violations, including relatives, lawyers, community leaders, local human rights activists) or materials (e.g., medical reports and certificates, photographs, police reports, report of an independent investigation);¹⁹
- (2) **Evaluate the reliability of the source(s).** This usually involves a process of triangulation (i.e., identifying additional sources of information and assessing whether they corroborate or contradict the information). Interviews with primary sources should include questions on the details of the incident and assess the consistency of the testimony (e.g., whether the testimony is plausible, how the person knew what happened);
- (3) **Determine the need for additional sources.** Child protection staff should strive for one primary source and two secondary sources to verify an alleged incident, while always giving priority to the “best interests of the child” and the “do no harm” principles when deciding if and how to approach sources (e.g., risks of retaliation against primary sources, exposure to retraumatization or stigma).²⁰ In some situations the country task force on monitoring and reporting may require additional sources (e.g., in particularly sensitive cases) or adapt the criteria according to special circumstances (e.g., admitting police and medical reports as primary sources in lieu of testimony by the child victim/survivor, particularly in sexual violence cases);²¹
- (4) **Declare the verification status of the incident.** Child protection staff and other designated members of the country task force on monitoring and reporting determine if and when an incident is considered “verified”. Staff should also indicate in reports whether they were or were not able to complete the verification process by clarifying that incidents are “alleged” or “subject to verification” and possibly indicating the reasons for the lack of verification;
- (5) **Seek endorsement** of the country task force on monitoring and reporting co-chairs. As a final step, co-chairs of the task forces (usually the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian/Resident Coordinator and UNICEF country representative) should officially approve the information.

52. The decision-making diagram in figure 7 provides a basic overview of the steps involved in the verification process. The standards of the MRM verification should ideally apply to all monitoring conducted by child protection staff and should be consistent with the MRM Field Manual, which is available at www.mrmtools.org/mrm.

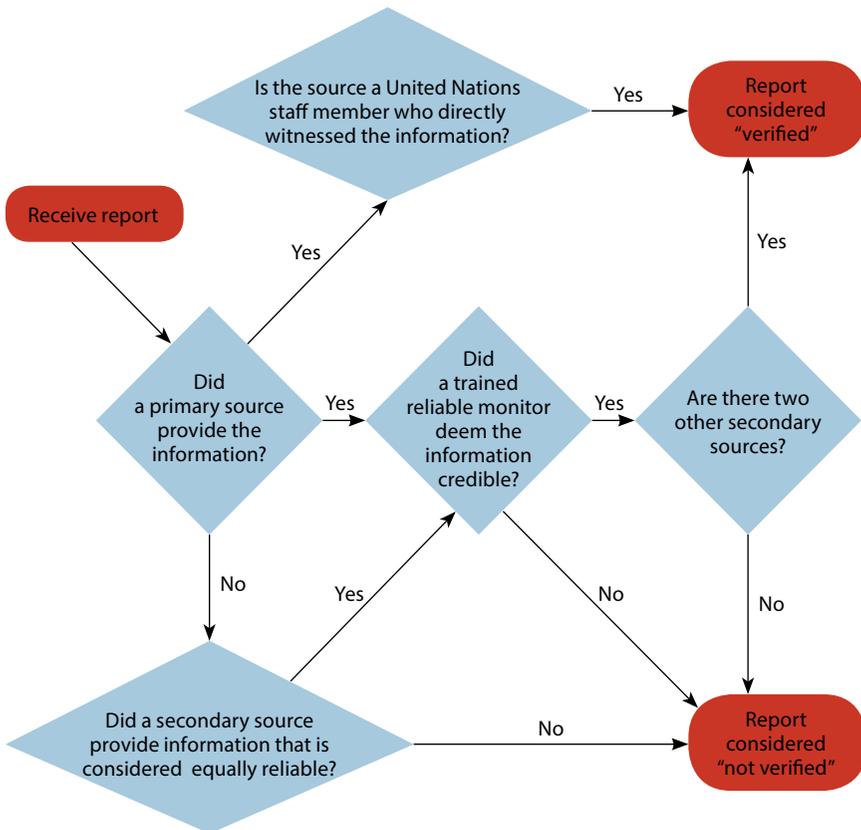
¹⁹ Media reports can alert to possible violations, but child protection staff should not use them as sources.

²⁰ Refer to the MRM Field Manual, available at www.mrmtools.org/mrm/.

²¹ See the checklist in section 4.2.3. In particular, check if the child was already interviewed and if coordination with partners was possible.

Figure 7

Verification in the context of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism



4.2.3. Interviewing children

53. As part of their monitoring activities, child protection staff should be prepared to interview children in an age-appropriate and gender-sensitive manner. Child-sensitive interviewing techniques are designed to avoid causing additional psychological harm to the child and tend to lead to more complete and reliable responses from children who have suffered violations, including sexual violence. Table 4 summarizes some essential guidance on interviewing children. Furthermore, child protection staff should periodically participate in training to improve their skills in this area. Only staff trained in child-specific interviewing techniques (i.e., civilian child protection officers in the mission or UNICEF staff) should interview children.

Table 4
Checklist for interviewing children

Checklist for interviewing children
1. Assessing the situation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will the interview cause the child/family unnecessary harm or risk?• Is the interview essential? For example, has another organization interviewed the child? If so, can you use that information instead? (If the child was already interviewed and you are unsure whether the information is sufficient, obtain a copy of the first interview and check with your supervisor before proceeding with a second interview).• Has the child received the necessary support (e.g., medical, psycho-social, legal)?
2. Preparing the interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you obtained informed consent for the interview from the child? If necessary, have you obtained the informed consent of the family/caregiver? (Be aware of potential conflicts of interest and protection problems). Have you informed the child/family/caregiver of possible risks and benefits, and that the interview will not necessarily improve the child's individual situation? What security precautions have you and others taken? Are they sufficient?• Is the selected location safe and comfortable for the child, and does it respect confidentiality?• Are you the best person to conduct the interview? Or would other colleagues/partners be preferable based on gender, cultural background, language skills, interview experience or other considerations?• Do you need an interpreter? How will that or presence of other people help/disturb the interview? If an interpreter is needed, have you adequately briefed that person, for example, on confidentiality and security matters?
3. Conducting the interview
Introducing yourself and the purpose of the interview
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have you introduced yourself, explained your mandate and the interview's purpose in plain language that a child can understand? (Avoid raising the child/caregiver's expectations about participating in the interview, such as prospects for criminal prosecutions, DDR benefits, remedies, etc.).• Have you explained what will happen with the information, for example, that the information will remain confidential except if informed consent is provided to proceed otherwise? Have you asked the child/family/caregiver for consent in using the information for reporting purposes and/or sharing the information for advocacy and case management/referral purposes? (Written consent is generally preferable; however, the interviewer may alternatively take note of the consent).• Are you explaining everything you are doing (e.g., taking notes)?
Asking about the violation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Are you asking the child primarily open questions, allowing the child to tell his/her story (e.g., "Tell me about ...")? (Avoid closed questions, which require one-word answers, or leading questions, which prompt answers).• Are you allowing the child enough time to answer questions?• Are you closely watching the child's body language for signs of distress, distraction or tiredness? What actions will you take if the interviewee becomes distressed?

Closing the interview

- Have you given the child an opportunity to ask questions and tell you about something that you have not asked, including protection concerns that the child may have and possible actions to respond to those?
- Have you thanked the child for sharing the information?
- Do you know how to reach the child/family/caregiver in case further information is needed? Do they know how to reach you?
- Have you offered referrals and decided on next steps with the child and caregiver or person the child trusts?
- Have you asked what is hoped for as the interview outcome and addressed unrealistic expectations?

4. Following up on the interview

- Have you documented the interview, making sure to use relevant forms? Have you safely stored the interview, including the informed consent received? (e.g., in the relevant database).
- Have you shared needed information with relevant actors, according to the informed consent received? (Make sure to maintain the confidentiality of the survivor/victim. That means sharing only what is absolutely necessary to those involved in the survivor/victim's care and with his/her permission).
- Have you made all necessary referrals for the child/family/caregiver, according to the informed consent received?
- How are you following up on information?
- Are you periodically giving feedback to child/family/caregiver, as appropriate?



MONUSCO Child Protection Advisers interviewing a child (2019)

4.3. Analysis and information management

4.3.1. Child-sensitive analysis

54. Data analysis involves explaining individual incidents and their connections within the larger context, including the armed conflict. That analysis makes it possible to provide appropriate responses to victims/survivors and decision-makers to take concrete steps to prevent future violations and address those that have already taken place.

55. In evaluating data, child protection staff focus on children as a category or group, conducting a so-called “child-sensitive analysis”. Some of the questions child protection staff should explore are:

- Do parties to conflict specifically target children?
- Do parties to conflict commit violations against children because of the child’s age and/or other factors (e.g., gender, ethnic or religious background, location)?
- Are children recruited by armed forces and groups? How does that affect the dynamics of the ongoing armed conflict and related violence? What effects do other grave violations against children have on the dynamics of the conflict?
- How does the presence of an armed conflict impact children living in the country/concerned area?
- Is the situation of children affected by armed conflict improving or worsening? What is the basis for your assessment?

Quick tip: In some cases, having thematic focal points within the child protection team for centralizing and analysing certain types of information can be effective. That may include focal points for juvenile justice, violations committed by a specific party to conflict, children associated with armed forces and armed groups, abductions and so on. For example, a juvenile justice focal point could centralize the information on justice received from United Nations Police and write a justice weekly report, alongside other reporting, plus biannual analytical juvenile justice reports. Talk with your supervisor about appointing thematic focal points relevant to your context.

4.3.2. Information management

56. Monitoring and reporting requires child protection staff to set up and employ systems for managing and analyzing a lot of data, including sensitive data. Those systems should enable child protection staff to:

- Store and retrieve physical and electronic data;
- Ensure data security and confidentiality;
- Receive and share information;
- Analyse data based on various criteria.

57. Those systems should also allow child protection staff to use data for both MRM and non-MRM-related purposes (i.e., for mission-related purposes).

58. Child protection staff usually need electronic spreadsheets and/or more sophisticated database management software or information management systems to store, organize and retrieve information on reported cases. A strong information management system allows staff to retrieve information by various criteria (e.g., name, type of violation, perpetrator, date of occurrence). It is also essential to ensure proper follow-up on individual cases. An effective system allows staff to identify and illustrate patterns and trends by sorting data in different types of categories and using statistical analysis. In some cases, child protection teams may find it helpful to designate focal points for the information management system to help develop and implement guidelines for inputting and retrieving data.

59. All child protection staff will soon be able to fully use the MRM information management system (MRM-IMS+),²² a secure, open-source, web browser-based global information management system for grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict. UNICEF worked with the MRM Technical Reference Group—composed of UNICEF, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Department of Peace Operations—at the global level, to develop this standardized information management system for use in countries where the MRM is activated. As of 2017, the MRM Technical Reference Group formally endorsed the MRM-IMS+ as the global MRM information management system on children and armed conflict; the MRM-IMS+ was rolled out in a beta release in six countries.

Quick tip: In some cases, child protection staff can take advantage of the information management system of other mission components or those of partners for retrieving data on grave violations committed against children in armed conflict. For example, it may be possible to use existing civilian casualty tracking systems to retrieve data on child casualties if properly collected and disaggregated. If appropriate, explore the possibility of your team using the information management system of other mission components and/or partners.

4.4. Reporting

60. Child protection staff use reports to record and analyze monitoring work and to advocate on behalf of children (see chap. 5). Reporting should follow immediately after the completion of monitoring activities to ensure that reports are timely and relevant.

4.4.1. Types of reports

61. Reporting requirements for child protection staff depend on the mission and the staff member's specific function. They usually include:

²² Timelines are pending.

- **Internal reports:** for example, daily reports, weekly updates or field mission reports, inputs to quarterly and annual workplan and results-based budget reports, as well as inputs to the reports of other components and contribution to the mission's daily situation reports/weekly reports;
- **Drafts of/inputs to reports of the Security Council and its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict through the MRM:** for example, confidential quarterly reports known as the Global Horizontal Note; the Secretary-General's annual global and country-specific reports on children and armed conflict; the Secretary-General's quarterly/periodic mission reports.²³

62. Besides those mandatory reports, child protection staff can leverage the information gathered during regular monitoring activities to contribute to other types of reports. That may include:

- **Thematic reports to public/select actors**, including relevant human rights reports on urgent child protection concerns in the mission context or a specific region (e.g., challenges in identifying girls associated with armed forces/groups, attacks against schools, exploitation and abuse of children during elections);
- **Periodic reports to public/select actors**, highlighting trends over time (e.g., progress on implementation of action plans, trends on grave violations);
- **Submissions to other reporting bodies/mechanisms**, such as human rights treaty bodies, special procedures, universal periodic reviews, commissions of inquiry, the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangement, if applicable;
- **Other forms of public or internal reporting**, such as briefing notes, flash reports, press releases and other media products, two-pagers, infographics, integration of child protection concerns into reports prepared by human rights components.

63. Public reports can raise awareness of the child protection capacity's positive impact on the ground, thereby raising the child protection staff's profile and providing a valuable tool for advocacy.

4.4.2. Quality reports

64. As part of MRM work, the Security Council requests child protection staff and partners to provide "timely, accurate, reliable and objective" information on grave violations committed against children in armed conflict. The same standard also applies to other forms of reporting by child protection staff. Table 5 provides a list of questions that child protection staff can use as a quality-control checklist for preparing reports. In addition, child protection staff should work closely with counterparts in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF and the Department of Peace Operations CFPF at Headquarters on reports to the Security Council and its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

²³ Note that Security Council resolution 2225 (2015) reiterated the Council's requests to the Secretary-General to ensure that in all his reports on country-specific situations the matter of children and armed conflict is included as a specific aspect of the report."

Table 5
Quality checklist for reports

Criteria	Questions
Overall	Does the report contain clear findings tailored to the specific target audience?
Structure	Is the report logically structured, that is, easy for the audience to follow and understand how the report reaches its conclusions?
	Where relevant, does the analysis account for the findings of the previous report(s) and build on its recommendations?
Completeness	Does the report include all requested information? <i>Check templates, previous reports and other guidance received.</i> ²⁴
	Does the report include all relevant information on violations mentioned in the report? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What happened? Who are the victims? (e.g., anonymized information disaggregated by age and gender, as well as any other pertinent variable). By whom? (e.g., anonymized information about the perpetrators, identifying the structure(s) to which they belong, with as much detail as possible on their chain of command). Where were the violations committed? When did they happen? How were they committed (modus operandi, weapons)? Why? What are the root causes? • Profile of victim and alleged perpetrator (e.g., age, gender) • Whether violation(s) are reported or verified by the United Nations or others, including any comments on credibility of sources and constraints in verification process? • Have the violations been verified?²⁵ • Has information on support/referral been offered to the child?
	Does the report acknowledge instances in which information is missing (e.g., unknown location)?
Methodology	Does the report adequately describe the methods used for gathering and verifying information?
	Does the report recognize limitations of the report's findings?
Recommendations	Does each recommendation identify its target group(s)?
	Are the recommendations reasonable?
Language/style	Does the report use objective, precise and straightforward language?
	<i>Check if the style is consistent with the previous report(s).</i>
	<i>(Continued on next page)</i>

²⁴ Some templates for MRM-related reports are included in the MRM Field Manual, Annex 10, available at www.mrmtools.org/mrm/files/MRM_Field_Manual_Annexes.pdf.

²⁵ For all MRM-related reporting, reports need to indicate what information is verified by the United Nations.

Criteria	Questions
Security considerations	Does the report avoid using personally identifiable information and other data that risk endangering people (e.g., victims, survivors, witnesses, communities, monitors)? ²⁶
Technical	Are all terms clearly explained?
	Are names and titles of people spelled correctly?
	Has the report been adequately cleared before being submitted?

4.5. Co-management of country task forces on monitoring and reporting

65. The Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peace-building Affairs – with support from the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict – jointly implement the MRM in the field, and share responsibility for managing country task forces on monitoring and reporting in-country. On the whole, co-management of country task forces requires a high level of coordination and communication between the co-chairs of the country task force (i.e., UNICEF and the highest United Nations representative in-country), at the principal level, as well as between UNICEF and the mission’s field-based child protection staff, at the technical level. Good coordination allows them to create positive synergies among the two organizations and their partners and share tasks efficiently.

66. Table 6 summarizes some of the most common challenges relating to the co-management of country task forces on monitoring and reporting—working closely with UNICEF counterparts—and recommendations for child protection staff in addressing those challenges.

²⁶ Child protection staff should include anonymous (i.e., non-personalized) information in reports to the Security Council to protect victims/survivors, sources of information and other. However, it is essential for the organization providing the information to have more detailed information (e.g., name/contact information) for possible follow-up.

Table 6**Addressing common challenges in co-managing country task forces on monitoring and reporting**

Challenge	Suggested actions
Lack of clarity on roles and responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise mission leadership to develop and sign a memorandum of understanding with UNICEF on roles and responsibilities for the co-management of the MRM, covering coordination, information-sharing, and engagement with external partners (see annex 7). • Share the memorandum of understanding with incoming child protection staff. • Work with UNICEF on developing a standard operating procedure on the co-management and joint use of the MRM database.
Poor quality of data submitted by MRM partners (e.g., MRM incident forms incorrectly or incompletely filled out, delayed submission of forms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Harmonize MRM data collection forms and MRM verification procedures with relevant partners and share. • Work with UNICEF on a capacity-building plan to retain a critical mass of trained United Nations staff and partners to collect and verify MRM information. • Request periodic training and technical missions and operational support from UNICEF, the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peace-building Affairs at Headquarters. • Consider jointly hiring with UNICEF a dedicated technical person to oversee the quality of monitoring, data collection and verification for the MRM in the mission.
Lack of trust from MRM partners and others in MRM data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share verification responsibilities more broadly among country task force on monitoring and reporting members. This might involve assigning one grave violation on which to lead, based on mandate and/or presence in the field. • Adopt common standards and procedures for MRM data collection and verification in the mission that are in line with the MRM Field Manual.
Limited use of the country task force on monitoring and reporting as a platform for advocacy and concrete action on grave violations (beyond MRM reporting requirements)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage members of the country task force on monitoring and reporting to work jointly on MRM-related projects, including advocacy on identified issues of concern (e.g., implementation of action plans, military use of schools). • Leverage the organizational priorities of the members of the country task force on monitoring and reporting. • Systematically provide updates on the MRM at relevant coordination meetings.
The transfer of responsibilities to the United Nations country team (due to downsizing/withdrawal of the United Nations peace operation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider additional staff and funding needs of United Nations agencies to absorb a transfer of responsibilities. • Consider a staged transfer of MRM-related responsibilities to members of the country task force on monitoring and reporting. • Work with OHCHR to include monitoring, documenting and reporting on grave violations in the training of national human rights NGOs to ensure long-term sustainability.

4.6. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in the present chapter.

1. Which strategies are you and your colleagues using to maximize the impact of the mission's monitoring capacities? What suggestions do you have for improvement? (See sect. 4.2.1).

Strategies	Regularly	Sometimes	Never	Suggestions for improvement
Reviewing internal reports				
Making arrangements with relevant components				
Conducting field mission(s)				
Networking				
Requesting specific, statistical or technical information				
Requesting mission leadership support to increase contributions from other components				

2. Use the quality checklist for reports (see table 5) to evaluate a recent child protection report. What changes would you recommend to make it more effective?

3. Are the roles and responsibilities of UNICEF and child protection staff in co-managing the MRM clearly delineated in your mission area? What are the practical challenges? How would you suggest resolving these?

4.7. Additional resources

Monitoring and reporting Mechanism (MRM)

- The United Nations MRM tools, including the guidelines, field manual, training toolkit, and best practices, available at www.mrmtools.org/mrm.

Human rights monitoring and reporting

- OHCHR, *Manual on Human Rights Monitoring* (2011 and 2001), available at www.ohchr.org/EN/PublicationsResources/Pages/MethodologicalMaterials.aspx.

Documentation and investigation of sexual violence in conflict

- United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict: Best Practice on the Documentation of Sexual Violence as a Crime or Violation of International Law* (2nd ed., 2017), by Sara Ferro Ribeiro and Danaé van der Straten Ponthoz, chap. 6, pp. 244–262, which focuses on sexual violence against children, including the legal framework, ethical considerations, and guidance on engaging child witnesses and survivors, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-protocol-on-the-documentation-and-investigation-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict.

Child-sensitive interviewing

- International Rescue Committee/UNICEF, *Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for health and psychosocial service providers in humanitarian settings* (2012), particularly chapter 3 on “Core Skills: Engaging and Communicating with Child Survivors”, pp. 59–86, available at www.refworld.org/docid/532aa6834.html.
- United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office, *International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict* (2017), pp. 260–262, available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/international-protocol-on-the-documentation-and-investigation-of-sexual-violence-in-conflict.
- Action for the Rights of Children, *Foundations: Working with Children*, especially in “Key Skills”, pp. 8–10, and “Identifying and Communicating with Distressed Children”, pp. 11–15, available at www.unicef.org/violencestudy/pdf/ARC_working_with_children.pdf.



MINUSCA Red Hand Day sensitization campaign (2019)

5. Advocacy

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, participants must be able to:

- Create SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound) advocacy objectives;
- Select primary and secondary target audiences;
- Compose clear and strong advocacy messages;
- Assess existing resources for advocacy;
- Prepare a comprehensive advocacy plan.

Chapter content

- What is advocacy?
- Elements of an advocacy strategy
 - Goals and objectives
 - Target audiences and allies
 - Key messages
 - Activities
 - Resources
 - Monitoring and evaluation
- Preparing an advocacy plan
- Exercises
- Additional resources

5.1. What is advocacy?

67. Advocacy for child protection staff is the process of influencing the host State's different levels of government, armed groups, United Nations entities, NGOs, donors and other actors to support and implement actions to advance the rights, well-being, and protection of children. Through advocacy, child protection staff use evidence gathered through monitoring and reporting to encourage decision-makers to bring about real change for conflict-affected children and their communities. As child protection staff members in United Nations Peace Operations are not directly in charge of policies or programmes, it is their effectiveness in influencing others to make changes that ultimately determines their success.

68. In addition, child protection staff advocate within their mission to ensure effective mainstreaming of child protection concerns (see chap. 3). Some of the tools discussed in the present chapter also apply to in-mission advocacy.

69. For both types of advocacy, child protection staff can leverage other actors, mechanisms and tools associated with the Security Council's children and armed conflict

agenda (see fig. 8). For example, the country-specific conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict can include information to help validate findings and recommendations from child protection staff. Table 7 highlights some of those mechanisms, actors and tools, and how they can reinforce the advocacy efforts of child protection staff.²⁷

Figure 8
Leveraging the Security Council Children and Armed Conflict Agenda for in-country advocacy

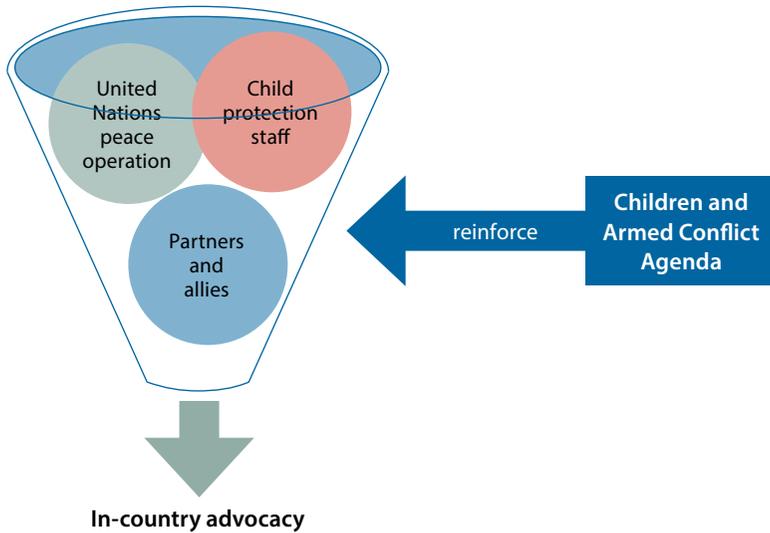


Table 7
Possible support of mechanisms/actors/tools for in-country advocacy

Mechanisms/actors/tools	How they can support in-country advocacy
Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-level and political advocacy of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, including with the Security Council, the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, the Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict, the General Assembly’s Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee), the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, Member States and regional organizations); • Mission leadership video-teleconferences, Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict field visits to mission area, and side events;

(Continued on next page)

²⁷ For consolidated missions, see the 2016 Guidance Note on the Consolidation of Protection Functions, annex 1, more specifically, part III, “Roles and responsibilities/political space”.

Mechanisms/ actors/tools	How they can support in-country advocacy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings and recommendations of the Secretary-General's annual/country-specific reports related to mission area (note: excerpts from those documents may be useful for events and meetings); • Public statements, media coverage and advocacy campaigns involving mission area; • Technical advice on advocacy strategy and tactics by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict; • Relevant publications and technical resources by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.
Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict ²⁸	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Findings and recommendation of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict conclusions; • Actions of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, such as field trips to mission areas, public statements, letters from Security Council President and so on.²⁹
Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict ³⁰	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political/financial/technical/logistical support through the Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict (or members of the group). (Note: child protection staff should consider creating such a group in their mission area if it does not already exist.)
Other international norms, including in international humanitarian law, in the field of human rights law, and standards related to children and armed conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant norms and standards (e.g., Paris Commitments and the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups,³¹ Safe Schools Declaration³²); • Findings and recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, for instance, with regard to the country reports on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.³³

²⁸ For more information, see www.un.org/securitycouncil/subsidiary/wgcaac.

²⁹ Options for possible action by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict toolkit (S/AC.51/2007/2) of 16 May 2008, available at www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/AC.51/2007/2.

³⁰ A group of Member States that regularly meets in New York to discuss issues related to children and armed conflict, and to advocate on their behalf. Similar groups also exist in a few other contexts, including in Amman, Bogota, Geneva, Kabul, Khartoum, Kinshasa and Manila.

³¹ For more information on the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (February 2007), see <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/our-work/paris-principles>.

³² For more information on the Safe Schools Declaration and current endorsements, see www.protectingeducation.org/guidelines/support.

³³ For more information on the Committee on the Rights of the Child, see www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/CRCIndex.aspx. For more information on the Optional Protocol to

5.2. Elements of an advocacy strategy

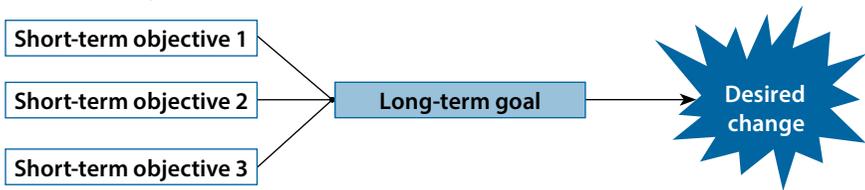
70. An advocacy strategy is a road map for staff, guiding them on how to achieve their advocacy goals and objectives. Having a plan is essential for ensuring that their work is well thought out, strategic and feasible. Elements of an advocacy strategy include:

- **Goals and objectives:** What does the strategy aim to achieve?
- **Target audiences and allies:** Whose actions does the strategy primarily aim to influence? Which actors can help support advocacy efforts?
- **Key messages:** What are the core messages of the strategy? How can staff adapt core messages to different audiences?
- **Activities:** How can staff engage their target audiences? What are possible activities?
- **Resources:** What resources (e.g., staff, funding, capacity) are available to support advocacy plans?
- **Monitoring and evaluation:** How and when can staff assess whether the strategy is working?

5.2.1. Goals and objectives

71. Child protection staff should begin by setting long-term advocacy goals, as well as shorter-term advocacy objectives to reach this goal. The long-term advocacy goals of child protection staff are generally to protect children from conflict-related violations, fight impunity and prevent future violations. Shorter-term advocacy objectives define the needed changes in policies and practices to achieve those long-term goals, as shown in figure 9.

Figure 9
Goals and objectives



72. Child protection staff can employ various techniques and tools to develop advocacy objectives. For example, they can use a “problem tree analysis” to identify solutions by breaking down the problem into its causes and effects.³⁴ Alternatively, they can use discussions with local stakeholders and experts to fully grasp the causes of a problem and

the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, see <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/mandate/opac>.

³⁴ See Overseas Development Institute, *Planning tools: Problem Tree Analysis, Toolkits* (2009), available at www.odi.org/publications/5258-problem-tree-analysis. Other recommended tools include the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs-Department of Peace Operations-Conflict Analysis and Strategic Assessment course tool (please email dpa-policy@un.org for access) and the Integrated Assessment Planning Handbook available at <http://dag.un.org/handle/11176/387407?show=full>.

ask them for possible solutions and options. Advocacy objectives may change over time, requiring staff to review and adapt them on a regular basis.

73. According to the problem tree analysis tool, objectives should be SMART:³⁵

- Specific (identifying a target audience/action);
- Measurable (defining criteria for measuring progress);
- Achievable (given the current situation, time and resources);
- Relevant (given the mission’s/child protection mandate);
- Time-bound (including the date of completion).

74. Table 8 illustrates the differences between SMART and non-SMART objectives, based on a few examples.

Table 8

Examples of SMART and non-SMART advocacy objectives

Non-SMART Objective	SMART Objective
EXAMPLE 1	
Convince donors to increase their support for reintegration programmes for children formerly associated with armed forces and groups.	Obtain donors’ budget commitment to increase reintegration programming support for children formerly associated with armed forces and groups by at least 10 per cent during the country’s upcoming donor conference.
Why is this objective not SMART?	Why is this objective SMART?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Specific: Yes, action identifies target and action. ✗ Measurable: No, it does not state desired funding increase. ✓ Achievable: Yes, possibly. ✓ Relevant: Yes, reintegration is a priority. ✗ Time-bound: No, it does not set the date of completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This objective is measurable and time-bound because it indicates by how much donors should increase funding (i.e., at least 10 per cent of their current funding) and by when (i.e., during the country’s upcoming donor conference).
EXAMPLE 2	
Stop schools from being used for military purposes.	By the end of year one, influence the host government to adopt a new law to protect schools from being used for military purposes, in accordance with the Safe Schools Declaration’s “Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict.”
Why is this objective not SMART?	Why is this objective SMART?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ Specific: No, it does not specify target audience or proposed action. ✗ Measurable: No, it does not state desired degree of change. ✗ Achievable: No, given the government’s current lack of commitment. ✓ Relevant: Yes, protection of schools is a priority. ✗ Time-bound: No, it does not set the date of completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ This objective specifies the proposed target audience/action (i.e., influencing the host government to adopt a new law), indicators for measuring progress (i.e., adoption of new law) as well as a time frame (by the end of year one). Those parameters also render the objective more achievable.

³⁵ Note that in the Conflict Analysis and Strategic Assessment course tool participants are encouraged to conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threat) analysis.

5.2.2. Target audiences and allies

75. Child protection staff should carefully select primary and secondary target audiences for advocacy purposes. Primary targets are entities that have the power to bring about the desired change, such as government authorities, non-State armed groups, donors, and programming implementing agencies. Secondary targets include entities that have the access and capacity to influence the primary targets and/or can act as messengers, such as NGOs, community leaders and diplomatic missions. It is crucial for staff to examine their own mission context to determine who their primary and secondary targets are and be prepared to change targets over time as needed.

76. Some questions that can help staff identify, select and influence advocacy targets are:

- **Power/influence:** Which actors are technically in charge of children in armed conflict issues? And which ones have decision-making power to bring about the desired change? Who can influence them?
- **Access:** Are child protection staff able to directly access this actor? Which actor(s) could facilitate contact?
- **Knowledge/attitude:** How much does the actor know about the issue? What is the actor's known level of interest on this issue? Is the actor supportive/opposed to the issue(s)?
- **Motivation:** What are the actor's motivations and pressure points? Who is the actor accountable to?

77. **Allies:** Child protection staff rarely act alone when conducting advocacy. Staff should consider a small number of allies that can bring added value to their advocacy efforts. For example, diplomatic missions in-country may have political or financial influence on the host country or local leaders may have direct contact with a host government that may be wary of "foreign influence". When selecting allies, it is important to make sure that they share similar or compatible interests and values and are able to make a valuable contribution (e.g., resources, knowledge/technical expertise, credibility).

Quick tip: Child protection staff and partners have supported the establishment of inter-ministerial committees on children and armed conflict. Such committees often create valuable advocacy opportunities and also build a sense of joint ownership among its members. They usually include high-level representatives of relevant government ministries and bodies (e.g., ministries for Children and Family Affairs, Justice, Defence, Foreign Affairs) and meet on a regular basis. Some governments use the committees to demonstrate commitment to child protection and improve internal communication and coordination.

Check whether such a committee exists in your mission area, or any similar committee where child protection issues could be raised. What is the team's relationship to the committee? If such a committee does not exist, why or why not, and do you think creating one is feasible in your mission area? Could that be an advocacy objective?

5.2.3. Key messages

78. A strong advocacy message both engages the target audience and clearly states how it can help improve child protection. There is need to leverage monitoring and reporting work to guide and inform the development of key advocacy messages, through analysis of patterns, scope, intensity, and trends. It is often useful to develop a primary or key message that applies to all audiences and also tailor secondary messages to specific targets. Child protection staff can build on language from foundational documents, such as Security Council mandates, Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict conclusions, and the *2017 Child Protection Policy*, when developing messages. At a minimum, messages should be consistent with the language from such key United Nations sources.

79. The primary message should be simple, direct, and appealing to the primary target and broader audience. To create the primary message, child protection staff can follow three steps:

- (1) **Start with a compelling statement.** Example: Armed forces and groups must release children without delay.
- (2) **Give evidence of the problem.** Example: The United Nations documented X cases of forcible child recruitment in A, B, and C provinces in the last six months. Armed force A conducted more than half of the recruitments and armed group B conducted the others. Documented evidence by the United Nations shows that both groups are using children as combatants, messengers, informants and cooks.
- (3) **State the desired change.** Example: All armed forces and groups should immediately release all children and work with the United Nations to develop action plans aimed at ceasing all future recruitment of children.

80. A secondary message aims to influence a particular target audience by making a specific request. Child protection staff should prepare secondary messages to all actors they consider as the primary target audience, as well as other important stakeholders.

81. To create a secondary message, child protection staff can follow three steps:

- (1) **Start with a statement that captures the audience's attention.** E.g., “The government is on track to meeting the terms of the agreement”; “The United Nations Secretary-General may soon remove the armed forces from the sanctions list”.
- (2) **Give evidence of specific issue(s) and how they concern the audience.** E.g., “The recent signing of the action plan is an important step. However, the United Nations has verified X cases of recruitment of children by armed forces in province A in the last six months”.
- (3) **Appeal to the audience's emotions.** E.g., “The Government must strengthen the armed forces' screening and documentation procedures to ensure that no further child recruitment takes place”.

Quick tip: In some cases, you may decide that other actors are better placed to deliver an advocacy message because they may have an existing relationship with the target audience, specific technical expertise, personal experience or other qualities that are likely to increase the impact of the message. Possible messengers include traditional chiefs, parents, teachers, commanders, diplomats or celebrities. Such actors are considered to be “secondary target audiences”. You may also consider using several messengers for one target audience to convey the message from different angles.

If you decide that somebody else should be the messenger, make sure that they are comfortable talking to the audience, and help them prepare. That may involve providing them with “talking points” and materials for distribution.

5.2.4. Activities

82. Advocacy activities can consist of bilateral meetings, organized negotiations, media events, trainings, published reports and awareness-raising campaigns. Child protection staff should plan activities to influence target audiences and should also prepare for unforeseen advocacy opportunities, for example, an unexpected side conversation with a member of the target audience at a public event.

83. Here are some points for consideration when preparing advocacy activities:

- **Timing:** Is there any planned or upcoming event/occasion that would help engage the advocacy target on child protection (e.g., visits of high-level United Nations officials; international days; or release of United Nations reports, particularly those relating to children and armed conflict)?
- **Format:** What format is the advocacy target most likely to respond to (e.g., small private meeting, large public event, reading a published report)?
- **Messenger(s):** Who should speak/convey the key messages (see sect. 5.2.2)? (Note: It may be useful for child protection staff to consult with public information officers regarding media engagement at public events.)
- **Resources:** Which resources within the mission or externally are available for advocacy (e.g., staff, funding, capacity)? What additional resources are needed (see sect. 5.2.5)?

Quick tip: Training and technical advice are subtler but often effective strategies to influence your advocacy targets in view of changing their attitudes and behaviours. In coordination with the United Nations rule of law units and other partners, child protection teams have participated in training involving a wide range of external actors such as local chiefs, judges, parties to conflict, police officers, prison staff, social workers, journalists, teachers and members of State legislatures. Such training also enables building relations with local actors, and may gain support for advocacy.

5.2.5. Resources

84. An assessment of existing resources (e.g., number of staff, funding, capacity) for advocacy indicates whether the strategy is feasible. For that purpose, child protection staff should evaluate their own resources, as well as the resources of the United Nations peace operation and partners/allies.

85. Table 9 outlines some criteria for child protection staff to consider when assessing existing resources.

Table 9

Criteria to assess existing advocacy resources

Resources	Assessment criteria
Child protection staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Number/location(s) of child protection staff available for advocacy;• Level of expertise/experience in advocacy generally/with selected advocacy target(s);• Reputation/relationship with first and secondary advocacy target(s);• Existing networks (e.g., contacts, committees, platforms);• Financial resources for advocacy.
United Nations peace operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Availability/personal motivation/suitability of mission leadership for advocacy;• Support with rooms, transport, security and logistics;• Support from other mission components for technical expertise, contacts, logistics and so on (e.g., human rights for accountability of perpetrators of child rights violations, public information officers for media coverage, United Nations Police for advocacy with the local police, civil affairs for community-based campaigns);• Potential for tying child protection advocacy with other mission efforts, in particular advocacy on protection and prevention.
Partners/allies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support with resources (e.g., funding, technical expertise, logistics, media);• Reputation/relationships with first and secondary advocacy target(s).

86. In areas where the assessment indicates insufficient resources and/or capacities for advocacy efforts, child protection staff can either scale back the effort, pool resources with other mission components, or work to develop additional resources (see sect. 8.3).

5.2.6. Monitoring and evaluation

87. Every advocacy strategy needs a monitoring and evaluation plan to measure whether the strategy is actually working. That primarily involves child protection staff developing indicators for measuring the short-term and long-term results of their planned activities, and a plan for collecting data on those indicators and reviewing the results on a regular basis (see chap. 8).

5.3. Preparing an advocacy plan

88. An advocacy plan helps child protection staff members put their strategy into action. The plan factors in all the elements from the advocacy strategy—objectives, targets/allies, messages, activities and resources—and puts them into a manageable written format, usually a table (see table 10). The plan should clearly assign staff member roles and responsibilities and time frames for carrying out planned activities. Child protection staff members can conduct a review of the plan to determine whether initial resource assessments for planned advocacy are still valid or need to be adjusted



UNMISS Senior Child Protection Adviser at workshop on drafting a comprehensive action plan with the Government of South Sudan (2019)

Table 10
Sample advocacy plan (extract)

Objective 1: To persuade the host government to adopt a new law to protect schools from being used for military purposes, in accordance with the Safe Schools Declaration, 1 July 2020—1 July 2021				
Target audience	Activities	Resources	Assigned to	Time frame
Interministerial Committee on children and armed conflict	Presentations at quarterly meetings	<i>Existing:</i> main presenter <i>Needs:</i> 1–2 co-presenters	Deputy section chief	1 July 2020– 1 July 2021 (every three months)
Ministry of Defence	Series of bilateral meetings	<i>Existing:</i> preliminary arrangement with Ministry of Defense; support from military liaison officer <i>Needs:</i> None identified yet	Section chief (with support from national officer)	1 July 2020– 1 July 2021
Parliament	Presentation on the need to adopt new law	<i>Existing:</i> main presenter; contacts in parliament (via political affairs) <i>Needs:</i> knowledge/research on parliamentary process; 1–2 co-presenters (with expertise on national law)	Deputy section chief officer	1 September– 15 October 2020
UNICEF	Hiring of consultant (to draft new law)	<i>Existing:</i> informal agreement with UNICEF; funding <i>Needs:</i> formal agreement between the Department of Peace Operations, United Nations peace operation and UNICEF	Section chief	15 October– 15 December 2020
Diplomatic/donor community	Event on military use of schools	<i>Existing:</i> host/sponsor of event; venue <i>Needs:</i> guest list; speakers	Deputy section chief	15 October 2020– 1 January 2021

5.4. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in this chapter.

1. Prepare a SMART advocacy objective for your mission area.

2. Identify a primary target audience and two secondary targets that are essential for meeting your desired objective.

Primary target audience:

Secondary target audiences:

(1) _____

(2) _____

3. Write a primary message, applicable to all target audiences, based on your advocacy objective.

4. Create secondary messages for each of your selected advocacy targets.

Target audiences	Message

5. Develop two possible activities to achieve your advocacy objective.

(1) _____

(2) _____

6. How can you better leverage the Security Council's children and armed conflict agenda to achieve your advocacy goals and objectives in your mission area?

5.5. Additional resources

- Jim Schultz, *Developing Advocacy Strategy: Nine Key Questions for Developing an Advocacy Strategy* (2011), available at http://democracyctr.org/dc_old/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Advocacy-Strategy.pdf.
- Jo Becker: *Campaigning for Children: Strategies for Advancing Child Rights* (2017).
- The OHCHR database on the Children Resource Centre allows users to retrieve country-specific information (e.g., concluding observations, reporting status, State party (country) reports), available at <https://uhri.ohchr.org/en>.
- *Save the Children's Advocacy and Campaigning Course* (2014), available by searching the Save the Children Resource Centre database at <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/library/save-childrens-advocacy-and-campaigning-course>.
- UNICEF: *Advocacy Toolkit. A guide to influencing decisions that affect children's lives* (2010), available at www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf.



MINUSMA child protection campaign, #EnfantsPasSoldats



MONUSCO Senior Child Protection Adviser engaging with armed groups (2019)

6. Engaging with parties to conflict

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, learners must be able to:

- Decide on parameters for engaging with parties to the conflict;
- Explain requisites for developing and supporting the implementation of action plans;
- Choose an approach for engaging with a party to the conflict based on its distinct motivations;
- Discuss “dos and don’ts” for supporting the release and reintegration of formerly associated children;
- Manage common challenges in engaging with parties to the conflict.

Chapter content

- Focus of engagement
- Groundwork for engagement
- Action plans with parties to the conflict
- Release and reintegration of associated children
 - Advocacy for the release of associated children
 - Dos and don’ts for the release and reintegration of associated children
- Managing common challenges in engaging with parties to the conflict
- Exercises
- Additional resources

6.1. Focus of engagement

89. The main objectives for child protection staff when engaging with parties to the conflict, including both armed forces and non-state armed groups,³⁶ are to:

- Work with parties to the conflict to develop and implement action plans to halt and prevent grave violations against children as mandated by the Security Council;

³⁶ Armed forces are “the military organization of a state with a legal basis, and supporting institutional infrastructure (salaries, benefits, basic services, etc.)” A non-State armed group is a group “that has the potential to employ arms in the use of force to achieve political, ideological or economic objectives; is not within the formal military structures of a State, State-alliance or intergovernmental organization; and is not under the control of the state(s) in which it operates.” United Nations, *Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* (2014), p. 46, available at www.unndr.org/uploads/documents/Operational%20Guide.pdf.

- Support the release and reintegration of girls and boys associated with armed forces and armed groups.

90. Such engagement does not lessen the accountability of the party or its individual members for violations they have committed. Engagement of child protection staff with non-state armed groups for the purpose of securing the release of children and commitments to halt future recruitment of children does not imply legal status, legitimacy or recognition of the involved non-state armed groups.

6.2. Groundwork for engagement

91. By virtue of Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005), which request that action plans and dialogue for their development be established, United Nations child protection actors are mandated – and have the political space – to engage with all State and non-State armed actors involved in child protection violations. Child protection staff foresee and diligently plan opportunities for engaging with parties to conflict on child protection matters (e.g., the DDR process, meetings with armed force/group). In other cases, they may engage with parties to conflict unexpectedly and without warning. For example, children may voluntarily seek protection at United Nations mission headquarters or military observer posts after having spontaneously left armed forces or groups. Alternatively, parties to armed conflict may unexpectedly reach out to child protection staff about changing their practices. Understanding the relevant parties and setting basic parameters for engaging with them in advance can help child protection staff navigate both situations.

92. Table 11 summarizes what child protection staff need to know before engaging with parties to conflict. Their preparations should include an analysis of the relevant legal framework, conflict and stakeholder analyses, and adequate consultations between relevant parts of the United Nations system, including with their counterparts in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.³⁷

³⁷ See the Secretary-General’s Executive Committee decision number 2017/59 of 5 May 2017. For conflict and stakeholder analyses, see United Nations Development Group, *Conducting a Conflict and Development Analysis* (2016), available at https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/UNDP_CDA-Report_v1.3-final-opt-low.pdf and Conflict Analysis Practice Note (Version: 13 May 2016), available at <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Conflict-Analysis-Practice-Note-13-May-2016-Version.pdf>.

Table 11

Analysis guide: points before engagement with parties to conflict

	Questions to consider	Why is this important?
Background on relevant parties to conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the applicable legal framework for this party?³⁸• What is the party's internal structure?• What is the party's formal or informal chain of command (i.e., line of authority along which orders are passed within a military unit and between different units)?• Does the party receive support from other States, including, in the case of non-State armed groups, the host State?• What are the party's motivations, interests and core values (e.g., power, public support, money, status)?• Which grave violations are they committing against children or have they committed in the past and why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To focus on interlocutor(s) that have de jure (i.e., in accordance with the law) and de facto (i.e., not formally recognized) power to make and implement commitments;• To adapt messages and approaches to each party (see sect. 6.4);• To assess options for developing and implementing action plans and other commitments to end grave violations against children.
Attitudes and policies of United Nations peace operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• What are attitudes and practices of mission leadership towards engagement with this party generally and on child protection issues specifically?• Do child protection staff need approval by mission leadership before engaging with this party?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To comply with mission policies and practices• Note: Approval is more likely to be required by mission leadership if this is a first-time engagement with a party to conflict or if this is a significant change in the nature of engagement. There are also special procedures if the party is on the United Nations sanctions list.³⁹

(Continued on next page)

³⁸ Because non-State armed groups are not operating within formal State structures, there are important differences in the applicability of certain provisions of international laws. For an overview, see ICRC, *Legal Protection of Children in Armed Conflict* (2003), available at www.icrc.org/en/download/file/10333/chil-dren-legal-protection-factsheet.pdf.

³⁹ See Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Political Affairs aide-memoire, referenced at p. 68.

Questions to consider	Why is this important?
<p>Previous experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the United Nations peace operation/its partners/other actors already engaged this party to the conflict on child protection or other human rights or humanitarian issues? What are the approaches and lessons learned that can be used to advance the dialogue on children in armed conflict? What existing channels can be used to strengthen child protection action? How can incoherence due to multiple channels of communication be avoided? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn from the experience of others and coordinate approaches within the United Nations peace operation and among partners.
<p>Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are specific objectives for engaging with this party to the conflict on child protection (e.g., adoption of action plan, release of associated children)? (See sect. 5.2.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To adapt engagement strategies to meet specific objectives.
<p>Strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What type of engagement would be best suited to meet the objectives (e.g., direct or indirect contact, level of engagement, level of confidentiality)? Do relevant partners agree on this approach? Should negotiators use a staged approach, that is, starting with less sensitive issues before moving to more contentious ones? Are there any ongoing events or processes that child protection staff could leverage to bolster engagement with parties to the conflict on child protection (e.g., ceasefire or peace negotiations, security sector reform meetings)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To ensure that engagements lead to realistic and productive outcomes that advance child protection.
<p>Risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the perceived risks at country, regional and/or global levels related to engagement with this party (e.g., security risks for United Nations/associates/affected population; risks for relations with the government; repercussions for programme delivery by humanitarian partners)? How likely/unlikely are these risks? What would be the impact? What are potential risk mitigation strategies for the presumed risks? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To weigh the value of the engagement against potential risks; To mitigate possible risks.

6.3. Action plans with parties to conflict

93. As part of the country task force on monitoring and reporting, child protection staff take a lead role in the negotiation, development, and monitoring of action plans with parties to the conflict.⁴⁰ By signing these “concrete, time-bound and verifiable” agreements, the party to the conflict commits to stopping and preventing specific grave violations against children for which it is listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General’s global annual report on children and armed conflict.⁴¹

Once a party to the conflict has signed an action plan, the United Nations is responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress and for compliance with the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict through the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. If the party fully implements the plan and ceases violations against children for at least one reporting cycle of the Secretary-General’s Annual Report, the Secretary-General removes the party from the list (“de-lists”). While it depends on each signatory party to the conflict, it is recommended that action plans be disseminated widely to increase awareness and strengthen accountability. There should be a common understanding as to whether the document will be made public (see fig. 10).

ACTION PLAN
HOW TO END THE RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT:

ONE Issue military command orders prohibiting the recruitment and use of children

TWO Release all children identified in the ranks of security forces

THREE Ensure children’s reintegration into civilian life

FOUR Criminalize the recruitment and use of children

FIVE Integrate age-verification mechanisms in recruitment procedures

CHILDRENANDARMEDCONFLICT.ORG

United Nations unicef

Quick tip: After signing action plans, parties to conflict and the United Nations frequently struggle to keep the political momentum needed for thorough implementation. To accelerate the implementation of action plans, the country task force on monitoring and reporting can work with the party on a “road map” that lists a set of specific measures needed to implement the action plan (e.g., establishment of age assessment procedures, child protection training for the party to the conflict, issuance of presidential orders prohibiting underage recruitment). The purpose of such a road map is to re-energize the implementation process by working with the party through this list of specific tasks.

⁴⁰ For further guidance on action plans, please consult the MRM tools, available at www.mrmtools.org/mrm.

⁴¹ The following five (out of six) grave violations may result in the Secretary General’s listing of a party: recruitment/use of children; patterns of killing/maiming of children; grave sexual violence against children; abduction of children; recurrent attacks/threats against protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals. Denial of humanitarian access is not currently a trigger for listing.

94. The co-chairs of the country task force on monitoring and reporting (i.e., the Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Resident Coordinator/Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the UNICEF representative) spearhead efforts to engage parties to the conflict in order to complete action plans. Child protection staff, along with other members of the country task force on monitoring and reporting, provide critical support to those efforts through advocacy, monitoring and coordination, as well as through their advisory function to mission leadership.

Figure 10

Key elements of action plans

Essential elements needed to successfully develop and support the implementation of an action plan include:

- ✓ Potential signatory parties have a political interest in action plan
- ✓ Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Head of mission conducts consistent and repeated advocacy on action plan
- ✓ Government appoints child protection focal points
- ✓ Parties to the conflict grant the United Nations unconditional access to their barracks, military training centers, camps
- ✓ Country task force co-Chairs on monitoring and reporting coordinate effectively with each other
- ✓ Consultative process on action plan involves potential signatory parties, the United Nations and other relevant actors (e.g., NGOs, affected communities)
- ✓ Context-specific action plan developed alongside an implementation plan⁴²
- ✓ Signatory parties fully understand the terms of the agreement
- ✓ Action plan commitments, once signed, are widely disseminated, if signatory parties agree
- ✓ Financial and other resources are identified and allocated to support signatory parties with action plan implementation
- ✓ Country task force on monitoring and reporting regularly monitors action plan implementation

⁴² For standard templates of action plans, see MRM Field Manual, annexes 12a–c, which focus on recruitment and use, rape and sexual violence, killing and maiming and attacks on schools and hospitals, pp. 148–168, available at www.mrmtools.org/mrm/files/MRM_Field_Manual_Annexes.pdf.

6.4. Release and reintegration of associated children

95. The parameters for engaging parties to conflict on the release and reintegration of children fundamentally differ from regular negotiations with those actors, such as peace or ceasefire negotiations. Because the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups is illegal, all efforts to negotiate their release must be unconditional and can take place at any time, including during armed conflict. The release of children may be the result of a negotiated agreement (e.g., an action plan or peace agreement), occur as part of a formal DDR process, or happen informally (e.g., spontaneous release, escape or capture of the child).

96. Child protection staff must fully grasp and convey to the parties to conflict and others the conceptual and practical differences between approaches on the release and reintegration of children and on DDR for adult ex-combatants. The United Nations Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards, notably the “Children and DDR” module, and the Paris Principles provide a fundamental set of benchmarks and guidance for child protection staff in this respect.⁴³

97. Some of the responsibilities that child protection staff should prepare for include:

- Advocating for the release of children associated with parties to conflict;
- Pre-identifying, identifying and verifying the status of children associated with armed forces and groups;⁴⁴
- Informing and/or training parties to conflict on the modalities of the release and reintegration process for children formerly associated with armed forces and groups;
- Monitoring compliance with international laws and standards of the release and reintegration process for children.

6.4.1. Advocacy for the release of associated children

98. When carrying out these responsibilities, child protection staff may directly or indirectly engage with parties to the conflict on the release of children. In either case, they should know their own parameters for engagement. It is important for staff to reflect their analysis of the armed actor’s structure, motivations and constraints in their engagement approach (see sect. 6.2). For instance, some parties to conflict do not know relevant laws and standards on child recruitment, while others are either not able or willing to respect them. Approaches for discussing child protection with each of these actors differ, as

⁴³ *Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups* (2007) (Paris Principles), available at www.unicef.org/emerg/files/ParisPrinciples310107English.pdf; United Nations, *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* (2014), available at www.unndr.org/iddrs.aspx, particularly “Module 5.30: Children and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration”, available at unndr.org/uploads/documents/IDDRS%205.30%20Children%20and%20DDR.pdf.

⁴⁴ The pre-identification and identification process usually involves commanders providing a list of children associated with their armed force or group. The verification process usually involves determining whether the identified are: 1) below the age of 18 (i.e., children); and 2) associated in some capacity with the concerned armed force or armed group as part of a confidential interview between the child protection staff and the presumed child.

shown in figure 11. However, child protection staff can combine different approaches or choose a novel approach.

Figure 11

Links between motivations for child recruitment and possible approaches for engaging parties on the release of associated children



6.4.2. Dos and don'ts for the release and reintegration of associated children

99. Though not directly managing programmes, child protection staff members are involved in almost all stages of the release and reintegration process for children. That can give them a comprehensive and fairly even-handed perspective when examining the process and its compliance with the international normative framework.

100. Table 12 presents some “dos and don'ts” for child protection staff to remember when supporting the release and reintegration of associated children.

Table 12**Dos and don'ts for supporting the release and reintegration of associated children**

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for a reference to commitments on children and armed conflict (e.g., action plan) in peace/ceasefire agreements. • Adapt advocacy messages to each armed force and group (see sect. 6.4.1). • Use monitoring activities as an opportunity to engage in dialogue with armed forces and groups on child rights and protection issues. • Familiarize oneself with the DDR process for both adults and children. • Obtain relevant pre-identification and identification forms of associated children in advance and be able to explain them to others. • Designate and train child protection focal points within the armed forces to support the identification/verification of children and sensitize their assigned units. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directly tie the release and reintegration of children to peace/ceasefire negotiations or the establishment/implementation of a national DDR process.⁴⁵ • Assume armed forces/groups understand the definition of “child” or “child soldier” and/or the relevant international legal framework. • Raise expectations among armed forces/groups regarding benefits in exchange for the release of children.⁴⁶ • Presume that the same strategies will result in the release of all children, including girls, from armed forces and groups. • Share personal information of the associated or formerly associated children to reduce the risk of stigmatization and possible reprisals.⁴⁷ • Forget that the primary responsibility for the release and reintegration of children rests with the host government.

Quick tip: DDR processes can provide valuable opportunities for child protection staff to work on institutional reforms. That can include reforms related to age assessment procedures for military recruitment, child protection training for armed forces and improving vetting procedures for security forces to screen out perpetrators of grave violations against children. You should coordinate with rule of law units to determine whether there is scope for an increased focus on child protection in current or future security sector reform work.

⁴⁵ There is a risk that peace/ceasefire negotiations can stall or break down. While it is useful to engage parties to conflict on “children and armed conflict” as part of those negotiations, child protection staff should advocate for “parallel negotiation tracks”.

⁴⁶ See the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (A/59/695-S/2005/72), in which the Secretary-General explicitly requested the United Nations to engage in dialogue with all entities whose actions have a significant impact on children, without any implications as to their political or juridical status.

⁴⁷ Respecting children’s privacy is particularly important when child protection staff are interacting with the media. See UNICEF’s Guidelines for journalists on reporting on issues related to children affected by armed conflict (2003), available at www.unicef.org/media/media_tools_guidelines.html.

6.5. Managing common challenges when engaging with parties to conflict

101. Talking with armed forces and groups about grave violations against children is politically sensitive and, in some cases, even dangerous for child protection staff and others. In particular, tracking and analysing non-State armed groups may be challenging, partly because of their greater number, diversity and oftentimes changing composition.

102. Table 13 lists some common challenges in engaging with parties to conflict and suggests actions for addressing them.

Table 13
Common challenges in engaging with parties to conflict and suggested actions for addressing them

Challenge	Suggested actions
Party to the conflict is not accessible (relevant for non-State armed groups)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasize access restraints in reports and advocacy, clearly identifying causes • Identify and support intermediaries/messengers to engage with parties to the conflict, such as NGOs or local leaders
Fragmentation/weaknesses in party's chain of command and/or splintering of factions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request support from military staff, political affairs, rule of law units, and other mission components to fully understand the party's chain of command and structure • Build relations with leaders of the concerned party, including local leaders, to obtain and follow up on commitments
Engaging with parties to the conflict designated as "terrorist" entities, which includes protecting children associated with those groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the specific parameters for engaging with the concerned party (see sect. 6.2) • Advise United Nations peace operations to encourage Governments to sign protocols for the handover of children detained for association with those groups to civilian child protection actors, as a safeguard for the treatment of children in accordance with applicable international obligations (see annex 6)
Parties to conflict refusing to engage on child protection (e.g., for fear of facing legal repercussions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish confidence-building measures (e.g., workshops, trainings) • Identify and emphasize how engagement may further the party's interest based on analysis of the party's motivations, values, interests (see sect. 6.4.1)

Quick tip: Child protection staff can advocate with parties to conflict to establish systems facilitating the release and reintegration of associated children, such as command directives for the separation of children associated with armed forces/groups, or other core child protection concerns, and establish child protection focal points. Keep in mind that those focal points can help you with the pre-identification and identification of associated children by presenting lists of children's names for age assessment.

6.6. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in the present chapter.

1. Prepare a short analysis of one party to the conflict in your mission area (e.g., structure, chain of command, motivations).

2. List three key parameters for engaging with this party (see sect. 6.2, table 11).

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

3. Based on your knowledge and/or experience, what do you consider to be the main requisites for the successful development and implementation of action plans? Are any of those particularly relevant for your mission area?

4. Which of the “dos and don’ts for supporting the release and reintegration process of children” (sect. 6.4.2, table 12) do you believe child protection staff most often neglect? Why?

5. What are the practical challenges of engaging with parties to conflict in your mission area? How can you work to resolve them?



UNAMID Child Protection Unit engaging with armed groups (2016)

6.7. Additional resources

Engaging with parties to conflict

- Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, *Humanitarian Negotiations: A Handbook for Security Access, Assistance, and Protection for Civilians in Armed Conflict* (2004), available at www.hdcentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Humanitarian-Negotiation-A-handbook-October-2004.pdf.
- Chatham House, *Humanitarian Engagement with Non-state Armed Groups. Research Papers* (2016), available at www.chathamhouse.org/sites/files/chathamhouse/publications/research/2016-04-29-NSAG.pdf.
- Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, aide-memoire, *Engaging with non-State armed groups for political purposes: considerations for United Nations mediators and missions* (2017).
- International Peace Institute, *Engaging Non-State Armed Groups on the Protection of Children: Towards Strategic Complementarity* (2012), available at www.ipinst.org/2012/04/engaging-nonstate-armed-groups-on-the-protection-of-children-towards-strategic-complementarity.
- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in collaboration with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, *Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups. A Manual for Practitioners* (2006), available at www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/HumanitarianNegotiationswArmedGroupsManual.pdf.
- UNICEF, Programme Guidance Note on Engaging with Non-State Entities in Humanitarian Action (2011), available at www.unicefnemergencies.com/downloads/eresource/docs/Remote%20Programming/2011-11-21%20-%20Programme%20Guidance%20on%20Engaging%20with%20NSE%20in%20Humanitarian%20Action.pdf.

Action plans

- Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict/UNICEF, *Field Manual: Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations Against Children in situations of Armed Conflict*, pp. 45–47; www.mrmtools.org/mrm/files/MRM_Field_5_June_2014.pdf.
- Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Action Plans to Prevent and End Violations Against Children: A Discussion Paper* (2013), available at <http://watchlist.org/publications/action-plans-to-prevent-and-end-violations-against-children/>.

DDR/children associated with armed forces and armed groups

- Child Soldiers International, *10-Point Checklist: Preventing State Use of Child Soldiers* (2012), available at www.child-soldiers.org/shop/10-point-checklist-preventing-state-use-of-child-soldiers.
- The Paris Commitments and the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007), available at <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/our-work/paris-principles/>.
- United Nations, *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Disarmament Standards and Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Disarmament Standards*, particularly “Module 5.30 Children and DDR” (2014), available at www.unddr.org/iddrs.aspx.
- See also the General Comments of the Committee on the Rights of the Child Nos. 20 (2016), paras. 79–83, 14 (2013), 15 (2013), 12 (2009), 13 (2011) and 6 (2005), paras. 54–60, all available at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/TBSearch.aspx?Lang=en&TreatyID=5&DocTypeID=11.



Workshop on drafting a comprehensive action plan with the Government of South Sudan (2019)



MONUSCO Child Protection Section Joint Mission (2019)

7. Coordination with external actors

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, participants must be able to:

- Explain why it is essential for United Nations peace operations to coordinate with external actors on child protection;
- Identify external actors that child protection staff should coordinate with;
- Plan actions to facilitate coordination with external actors on child protection;
- Recognize instances where coordination is unnecessary or could be harmful.

Chapter content

- Focus of coordination
- Mapping of relevant actors
- Main areas of coordination
- Exercises
- Additional resources

7.1. Focus of coordination

103. United Nations peace operations often rely on support from external actors to carry out the child protection mandate, particularly when it comes to programmatic responses. For example, a mission's advocacy with armed forces and groups for the release of associated children depends on child protection systems being in place to provide adequate support for released children. Child protection staff should accordingly establish strong, reliable networks and current referral pathways with external actors.

104. As part of their coordination function, child protection staff members should:

- Act as entry points for relevant actors to engage with United Nations peace operations on relevant child protection concerns;
- Create awareness among mission staff about medical, legal and other services that external actors provide for child victims/survivors of violations, and referral systems;
- Engage with relevant mission components and partners on monitoring, reporting and advocacy activities, including co-managing the country task force on monitoring and reporting (see chap. 4); and
- Work with external experts to provide technical capacity when needed within the immediate operating environment.

105. The overarching goal of those efforts is for United Nations peace operations to leverage the comparative advantages of the various actors in the field in order to advance the protection, rights and well-being of children.

106. While the present chapter focuses primarily on coordination with actors who are external to the mission, staff can also take a lead role in coordinating on child protection with other mission components as part of the mainstreaming function (see chap. 3). In addition, staff should coordinate closely with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, which leads the efforts on mainstreaming the concerns of children affected by armed conflict across the United Nations system.

7.2. Mapping of relevant actors

107. Child protection staff typically engage in various forms of coordination with national authorities, United Nations agencies, regional organizations, international and national NGOs, civil society organizations and local communities working in the areas of humanitarian assistance, human rights, security, justice and peacebuilding.

108. To identify relevant actors for potential coordination, it is useful for child protection staff to concentrate on two types of actors:

- (1) **Actors that engage in similar child protection activities as the United Nations peace operation** (i.e., monitoring and reporting grave violations committed against children and other civilians in armed conflict and advocating on their behalf). That may include local and international human rights, child rights or women’s rights organizations.
- (2) **Actors that engage in different but complementary child protection work to the United Nations peace operation** (e.g., providing legal, medical, psycho-social and other support to children affected by armed conflict; strengthening capacity of national and local institutions; implementing aspects of DDR processes). That may include government entities, as well as international and local organizations.

109. Table 14 provides examples of compelling but distinct reasons for engaging with both sets of actors.

Table 14

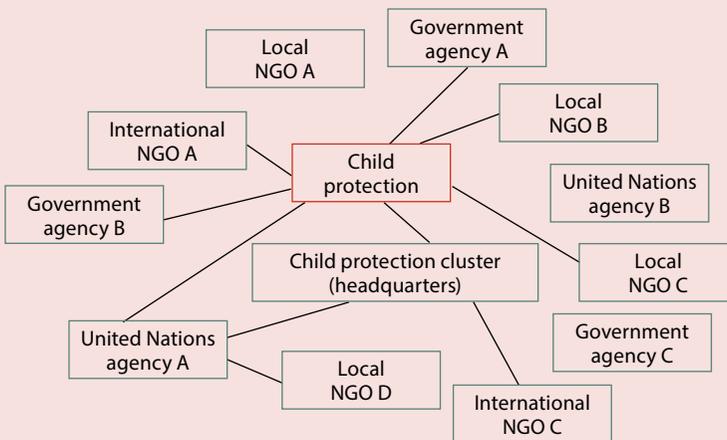
Reasons for coordination with certain types of actors

Types of actor	Reasons for coordination
Actors that do similar work (primarily human rights actors/mechanisms)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To benefit from different points of access to certain geographical areas, sources of information and advocacy targets • To avoid duplicating efforts • To avoid re-interviewing victims/survivors/witnesses • To strengthen local capacities in research and advocacy on children and armed conflict
Actors that do different, complementary work (primarily service providers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that child victims/survivors of violations can access support services • To enable service providers to share information with child protection staff for advocacy purposes, when appropriate

110. Child protection staff members should identify and familiarize themselves with all relevant external actors in their mission area to find potential areas for coordination. That involves knowing these actors:

- Mandate or mission;
- Activities (e.g., thematic focus, geographic presence/focus);
- Level of technical knowledge and resources; and
- Political, religious or other affiliations and views that may impact their child protection work (e.g., biases towards certain ethnic or religious groups, strong connections with community leaders).

Quick tip: You can create a map that includes all actors doing similar and/or complementary work in the mission area. You can use lines to mark each actor's relationship with child protection staff and between each other.



Some questions to consider for analysing the map are:

- Which external actors are child protection staff primarily interacting with? Should child protection staff reach out to additional actors for coordination because of their technical expertise, geographical reach or other factors?
- What are gaps in the work of child protection staff that coordination with external actors would help address?
- Are there relationships that child protection staff should consider expanding or withdrawing from? Why or why not?
- Should child protection staff do more to facilitate contact between certain actors and other mission components? Why or why not?
- Are relevant actors coordinating effectively among each other to ensure adequate responses and prevent violations? What can child protection staff do to improve their coordination?

111. In many contexts, child protection staff participate in existing child protection coordination structures, such as those established under the international humanitarian cluster system.⁴⁸ Moreover, child protection staff can work with colleagues in the mission (e.g., human rights, civil affairs, gender, military observers, etc.), United Nations entities (e.g., UNICEF, OCHA, OHCHR, etc.), ICRC, government counterparts and civil society actors to identify and understand other actors and mechanisms related to child protection and children and armed conflict.

112. The Department of Peace Operations, the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and UNICEF have an established partnership at headquarters level to delineate their distinct scope of work on child protection, which colleagues usually replicate at the field level. Child protection staff are generally responsible for mainstreaming child protection within missions and spearheading sensitive political dimensions of the Security Council's children and armed conflict agenda. In contrast, UNICEF leads the programmatic and response work. Appreciating their distinct roles helps promote good work relations among staff working with both organizations in the field.

7.3. Main areas of coordination

113. Strategies for United Nations peace operation coordination with external actors may differ based on the context, frequency, nature of interaction and partner(s) involved. In some cases, coordination may take place through a formal partnership structured by a memorandum of understanding or terms of reference (see annex 7). In other cases, coordination may be more ad hoc, consisting of sharing information about activities and plans or harmonizing messages for advocacy campaigns.

114. Child protection staff members should not assume that actors outside the mission necessarily understand the role and limitations of child protection staff in United Nations peace operations. For example, external actors may not know that child protection staff assume an important monitoring and advocacy role but are not directly engaged in programmatic work (see chap. 2). Likewise, staff should understand and explain to colleagues within the mission the roles of external actors as appropriate. In general, mutual respect for each other's roles and responsibilities is an important precondition for successful cooperation.

115. There are two key areas in the work of child protection staff that require increased coordination with external actors: programmatic responses as well as monitoring, reporting and advocacy on grave child rights violations. Table 15 highlights some actions that child protection staff should consider in each of those areas to improve coordination.

⁴⁸ Within the international humanitarian cluster system, UNICEF is the lead agency for the child protection area of responsibility. For further information, see <http://cpwg.net>. Depending on the context, child protection staff may benefit from participating in other coordination structures for information-sharing and advocacy purposes, such as the sexual and gender-based violence sub-cluster or the education cluster.

Table 15**Possible actions by child protection staff to improve coordination**

Coordination areas	Possible actions by child protection staff
Programmatic response (also see chap. 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with child protection coordination mechanism to clarify referral pathways for appropriate assistance and response services to children who have survived violence • Use in-mission training and meetings to inform United Nations staff of their obligation to refer victims/survivors to appropriate child protection actors and services and relevant referral pathways • Ensure that Force headquarters covers child protection through directives, tactical aide-mémoires and standard operating procedures, including guidance on required actions when encountering children in armed forces/groups or during military operations, or guidance on reporting child abuse by peacekeepers, including sexual exploitation and abuse • Encourage battalion commanders to reach out and establish communication with child protection actors in their area of responsibility to exchange information and build trust • Reach out to United Nations Police components to ensure that they integrate child protection into their work, including by advising the host State police and juvenile justice system on referral pathways
Monitoring, reporting and advocacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure effective coordination between the country task force on monitoring and reporting, when it exists, and human rights mechanisms, and with those providing services to victims/survivors⁴⁹ • Closely assess which actors to engage as allies for advocacy activities and ensure that messages are mutually reinforcing (see sect. 5.2.2) • Consult with child protection partners to identify issues to be raised with senior mission leadership at the State and headquarters level (e.g., humanitarian access concerns; reported violations) • Agree on information-sharing procedures at coordination meetings (e.g., using bilateral or smaller meetings for sharing information on particularly political or sensitive issues, or issues that may put people at risk) • Support the efforts of UNICEF and other partners to strengthen capacities of local organizations in monitoring and reporting grave violations against children and advocating on their behalf. Such local capacities are particularly needed in cases where access is difficult or when mission drawdown is imminent

⁴⁹ Standard 1 of the Child Protection Minimum Standards, available at www.unicef.org/iran/Minimum_standards_for_child_protection_in_humanitarian_action.pdf. For further guidance, see MRM tools, available at www.mrmtools.org and section 4.5 of the Manual.

Quick tip: In some instances, coordination may hinder or delay progress in achieving goals. In most other instances, coordination is indispensable to ensure a coherent and effective protection response. You should constantly evaluate the benefits of coordination against the costs or potential risks. To do that you should establish clear criteria for participating or not participating in coordination mechanisms. Criteria may include:

- **Alignment with priorities:** Does participation in this mechanism advance the priorities of child protection staff? (Note: Check the coordination mechanism's terms of reference and workplan, if possible.)
- **Contact with stakeholders:** In this mechanism, do child protection staff interact with key stakeholders (e.g., high-level government officials) who would otherwise be difficult to meet with?
- **Valuable contribution:** Do child protection staff provide a valuable contribution to the mechanism (e.g., facilitation role, information-sharing, knowledge/expertise)?
- **Feasibility:** How much time and resources do child protection staff need to invest to make participation in the mechanism worthwhile?



Joint visit to field by UNAMID Child Protection Unit and UNICEF

7.4. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in the present chapter.

1. What are the three key reasons why United Nations peace operations should coordinate with external actors on child protection?

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

2. Which external actors engage in similar and/or complementary work in your mission area?

3. Could increased coordination help address gaps in the work of child protection staff? Which gaps?

4. Should child protection staff members reach out to additional actors for coordination because of their technical expertise, geographical reach or other factors?

5. Should child protection staff members do more to facilitate contact between some of those actors and other mission components? Why or why not?

6. What coordination mechanisms are child protection staff in your mission area engaging in? How beneficial is such engagement?

7.5. Additional resources

- Child Protection Working Group, *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action* (2012), featuring standard 1: coordination, pp. 36–43, available at www.unicef.org/iran/Minimum_standards_for_child_protection_in_humanitarian_action.pdf.
- Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility Working Group, *Handbook for Coordinating Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings* (2010), available at <http://onerresponse.info/GlobalClusters/Protection/GBV/>.
- More information on resources and tools for child protection are available at www.cpwg.net.
- The Sphere Project (2011), *The Sphere Handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response*, Core standard 2: coordination and collaboration, pp. 58–60, available at www.spherehandbook.org.
- For general information on humanitarian coordination, see ReliefWeb, available at www.humanitarianinfo.org.



8. Planning, monitoring and evaluation

Learning objectives

At the end of this chapter, participants must be able to:

- Assess existing child protection needs in the mission area;
- Create a mission-specific strategy and workplan;
- Prepare a basic monitoring and evaluation plan.

Chapter content

- Work cycle
- Needs assessment and analysis
- Elements of a strategic plan
- Workplan and implementation
- Monitoring and evaluation
- Exercises
- Additional resources

8.1. Work cycle

116. There are four interlinked but distinct aspects of a child protection team’s work cycle (see fig. 12):

- Needs assessment and analysis;
- Strategic planning;
- Implementation and monitoring;
- Evaluation.

117. This work cycle enables child protection staff members to direct their resources to the most urgent needs and in the most effective and efficient manner. It encourages a culture in which staff members reflect and learn from past actions and adjust their approaches accordingly.

118. The work cycle of child protection staff members is usually closely tied to the mission’s planning process. In particular, the “mission concept”, a multi-year plan for United Nations field missions, offers strategic planning guidance for mission components based on the Security Council and other mandates. Moreover, the main source of funding for child protection staff comes from United Nations Member State contributions, the annual budget of the United Nations field mission or a results-based budget.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The results-based budget captures the high-level goals of the mission, and often combines the work of more than one component under one expected accomplishment. For more information on the results-based budget and overall mission planning, see additional resources.

Figure 12
Work Cycle



8.2. Needs assessment and analysis

119. A needs assessment and analysis provides the basis for a child protection team to select priorities, objectives and strategies in the mission area. It allows staff to understand the status quo of current child protection needs and a baseline against which to measure progress. The assessment also makes it easier for new staff members to understand the rationale for the existing child protection strategy in the mission area.

120. Child protection staff can use various methods to assess protection needs of children in armed conflict.⁵¹ The key is for the analysis to go beyond a simple description of what is happening and explore why child rights violations are happening.

121. Key aspects of a needs assessment and analysis are:

- Threats and violations or alleged violations against children due to conflict;
- Vulnerability factors for children;
- Impact of violations on affected children and communities;
- Presence/performance of protection mechanisms for children and other civilians, including accountability mechanisms;
- Operational environment.

122. Table 16 provides some questions for staff members to explore as part of the assessment and analysis. To answer these questions, staff should build on existing assessments and consult a variety of sources, such as:

- Previous and current internal mission reports;
- Public and informal reports from United Nations entities, international and local NGOs, the national government, academic and research institutes and media outlets;
- Information received from key stakeholders and experts through meetings, interviews, coordination venues, and so on, including affected children and communities.

⁵¹ For other analysis tools and methods, see additional resources at page 90.

Table 16**Sample questions for needs assessment and analysis**

Area of analysis	Possible questions
Threats/violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main violations/threats children face? Are there any patterns of violations? Where are these violations primarily occurring? Why are these violations occurring? • Who are the main perpetrators of grave child rights violations? What are the known or presumed motivations and capacities of perpetrators for committing the violations? • Which actors (e.g., commanders, government authorities) bear indirect responsibility for violations? For armed forces/groups: what is the chain of command and how well does it function (also see sect. 6.2)? • Do United Nations peacekeepers or other United Nations mission staff pose a threat and/or cause harm to children? Do peacekeepers or other United Nations mission staff commit violations against children and if so, why?
Vulnerabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are personal or communal characteristics or environmental factors that increase children's vulnerability to violations (e.g., age, gender, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, race, culture, class, previous recruitment into armed forces/groups, displacement, family separation, geographical location)?
Impact of violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the immediate and long-term consequences of specific violations (e.g., physical, psychological, socioeconomic)?
Presence/performance of protection mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are relevant existing formal and informal mechanisms (local, national, regional, international) that protect children and prevent grave violations? How effective are they? • What are the existing community-based mechanisms to protect children? How effective are they? Are they linked to outside assistance/formal services?
Operational environment <i>(Also see analysis of operational environment in sect. 2.2.2)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are political, cultural, socioeconomic and other challenges and opportunities for protecting children from conflict-related violence in the mission context (e.g., inclusion of child protection provisions in peace accords, access restrictions, security situation, gender relations, funding availability)? • Which national and international laws and standards are in place to protect children? • Who are the main stakeholders that could positively or negatively influence the protection of children in armed conflict? What are their interests? (Note: For aspects of this stakeholder analysis, also see sect. 5.2.2 and sect. 6.2)

8.3. Elements of a strategic plan

123. A strategic plan provides a valuable tool for child protection staff members to lay out priorities, objectives, and activities in the mission areas for the next three to five years. The plan can guide teams in deciding how to allocate their limited resources to achieve their goals. The plan is also a useful tool for obtaining mission buy-in and internal/external support, as well as for creating institutional memory. The following is a step-by-step guide for developing the key elements of a strategic plan.

Step 1. Identify priorities

124. The needs assessment and analysis are likely to point to a large and seemingly overwhelming number of problems and issues concerning children in armed conflict. At that stage, child protection teams must weigh in on the areas to which they believe they can make the biggest contribution. For example, priorities may revolve around behaviours or practices (e.g., impunity for violations), types of violations (e.g., attacks against schools), and/or a specific set of actors (e.g., police, parties to conflict, government authorities). The strategic plan should clearly explain the rationale for choosing certain priorities over others.

125. Here are some criteria that staff can use to identify priorities:

- **Significance of issue:**
 - Likelihood of the violation/threat occurring (e.g., pattern of violations);
 - Severity of the violation/threat;
 - Impact of the violation/threat.
- **Expected results:**
 - Expected change resulting from child protection staff involvement;
 - Identified gap that child protection staff is uniquely placed to fill.
- **Mission's (child protection) mandate/priorities:**
 - Alignment with mission's mandate and priorities;
 - Relevance for the mission's child protection mandate;
 - Significance for advancing the global Children and Armed Conflict Agenda.
- **Feasibility:**
 - Availability of resources (e.g., technical, staff, capacities);
 - Operational environment (e.g., security, political environment, access to target audiences/victims/influencers).

Step 2. Define objectives

126. Child protection staff should produce three to five specific and measurable objectives to address the identified priority issue(s) (see sect. 5.2.1). Those objectives should aim to bring about tangible changes that improve the protection of children affected by armed conflict in the mission area.

127. Some types of objectives may include:

- **Behavioural objectives:** Objectives that are geared towards changing the behaviour of a specific person or group of people, such as government authorities, parties to conflict, communities, victims/survivors (also see sect. 5.2.2);
- **Institutional objectives:** Objectives aimed at bringing about institutional reforms (e.g., laws, policies, action plans with parties to the conflict and other long-term commitments);
- **Process objectives:** Objectives that aim to create the conditions for achieving lasting behavioural or institutional objectives (e.g., access to an interlocutor, establishment of partnerships).

128. For example, a possible behavioural objective of a child protection component in a mission area where recruitment and use of children are identified as a core issue is: By 2021 (when?), reduce by 20 per cent (how much?) the number of children recruited or used by parties to the conflict (what?).

Step 3. Develop activities

129. Child protection staff can use their core functions—mainstreaming, monitoring and reporting, advocacy, engagement—with parties to conflict and coordination with external actors to identify different types of activities they will undertake to achieve their objectives. Figure 12 provides a number of activities that staff can draw on in each of the functional areas. Staff are likely to employ multi-pronged strategies to achieve an objective. They should also look at their current set of activities to see how they can adapt them to achieve evolving objectives.

Figure 12

Possible types of activities for child protection staff in each functional area



Step 4. Plan allocation of resources

130. Given the pre-identified objectives and activities, staff should revisit whether available resources are sufficient to successfully implement their plan. That includes a review of available staff capacity, as well as funding and support through other mission components and other partners. Taking time for planning resources also makes it easier for child protection staff members to justify or redirect resources in case of budgetary cuts.

131. Above all, Senior Child Protection Advisers should pay close attention to their human resource needs. Child protection teams should have sufficiently competent and diverse members to carry out the sensitive, complex core aspects of their work. For example, international staff normally depend on the support of national staff for age assessment and child interviews. In contrast, some engagements with parties to conflict or high-level authorities may require international staff to take the lead to avoid putting national staff at risk, or for other reasons.

132. Some criteria for Senior Child Protection Advisers to consider when planning staff resources are:

- Technical skills and field-based experience in child protection (e.g., use of child protection roster);
- Balance of national and international staff members;
- Gender balance, considering that girl survivors of sexual violence may prefer to speak with female staff members;
- Placement of child protection staff within United Nations mission hierarchy;
- Geographical coverage (e.g., direct access to volatile areas in order to monitor, conduct verification, report and advocate on grave child rights violations);
- Possible limitations of human rights and other mission colleagues in assuming certain responsibilities of child protection staff members (e.g., engagement with non-state armed groups for signing/implementing actions plans).

133. Furthermore, United Nations peace operations with a mission-specific Security Council mandate on child protection must have a Senior Child Protection Adviser⁵² and dedicated child protection staff, in accordance with the *2017 Child Protection Policy*. United Nations peace operations must also recruit child protection staff from the existing Department of Peace Operations and Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs child protection rosters.

134. Senior Child Protection Advisers should communicate anticipated resource needs, including the estimated costs of planned activities (e.g., workshops, travel, consultancies) to the budget officer for inclusion in the results-based budget through the established coordination mechanism in each mission.

⁵² Senior Child Protection Advisers are essential for developing the overall strategy, tools and training materials, and providing technical advice to child protection staff and focal points in the mission.

Step 5. Consider risks

135. Child protection staff should assess possible risks and define ways for mitigating them. That may include security risks, access to target audiences/victims/influencers, budget cuts, delays in staff recruitment. Depending on the likelihood and impact of the risk, staff members may need to make adjustments to their strategy.

Quick tip: Senior Child Protection Advisers may realize that they need to improve their team's knowledge and skills in order to achieve their objectives. It is important for Senior CPAs to identify the exact needs of the child protection capacity and consider options for addressing them. Some possibilities include:

- Training on roles and responsibilities of child protection staff;
- Periodic workshops or trainings on thematic issues or to learn specific skills (e.g., interviewing children, humanitarian negotiations);
- Management training/mentoring for Senior CPAs;
- Mission exchanges and visits and regional workshops to exchange best practices.

Depending on identified needs, the child protection capacity can either draw on internal resources or request support from others, from within the mission (e.g., funding, operational support), the Child Protection Team within the Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training, Department of Peace Operations and the child protection focal points within the Policy and Mediation Division, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, in cooperation with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF and other relevant entities.

8.4. Workplan and implementation

136. A child protection team's workplan translates the multi-year strategic plan into concrete activities and outputs in the area of responsibility. The plan specifies activities along timelines, resources, partners and assigned staff for each objective; it usually runs from April to March (see table 17 for an extract of a sample workplan). Senior CPAs should consult with the Department of Peace Operations and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs CFPF at headquarters and their respective office heads at field level to ensure that the plan aligns with national/regional strategies or objectives and the child protection mandate and seek approval where needed. Staff can use the team's workplan to develop individual workplans, which would be the basis for the annual performance evaluations.

137. During the implementation phase, child protection teams should monitor whether they are making progress in realizing their plans and make adjustments as needed (see sect. 8.5).

Table 17

Sample in-mission child protection team workplan (extract)

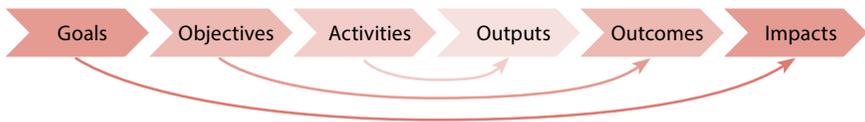
Objective 1: To eliminate reported incidents of child labour in United Nations peace operations, April 2020–March 2022 Note: The child protection team selected this as a priority due to the drastic increase in reported child labour incidents in the mission area.				
Activities	Resources (including partners)	Assigned to	Time frame	Indicators of achievement
Support development of Force Commander's directive on the prohibition of child labour	<p><i>Existing:</i> Agreement by Force Commanders, designation of one military child protection focal point for assignment, technical advice by Office of SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict</p> <p><i>Needs:</i> Samples from other United Nations peace operations (through the Department of Peace Operations focal point at Headquarters)</p>	Deputy Senior Child Protection Adviser	April–September 2020 (weekly meetings)	Force Commander's directive on the prohibition of child labour
Dissemination of Force Commander's directive	<p><i>Existing:</i> Commitment of military component to take the lead in dissemination</p> <p><i>Needs:</i> Agreement with military component regarding possible contributions of the child protection team to dissemination activities, if any</p>	Senior Child Protection Adviser	October 2020–March 2021	Number of copies of Force Commander's directive distributed
Deliver child protection training to all mission staff, with increased emphasis on the prohibition of child labour	<p><i>Existing:</i> one Child Protection Adviser, two national Child Protection Officers, two military child protection focal points</p> <p><i>Needs:</i> N/A</p>	Senior Child Protection Adviser	April 2021–March 2022	<p>Number of mission staff who completed new child protection training</p> <p>Percentage of trainees able to identify incidents of child labour by United Nations peace operations staff and report incidents to the appropriate channel (post-training quiz)</p>

8.5. Monitoring and evaluation

138. Monitoring and evaluation improves the effectiveness of child protection staff's work. Monitoring and evaluation can help child protection staff members learn from their experiences and use the lessons learned as a basis for adapting and refining their current approaches and future planning. That process allows staff members to check whether they are making progress in accomplishing their objectives, and also promotes internal accountability.

139. The strategic plan provides the foundation for monitoring and reporting. Based on the plan, staff members develop indicators that help them measure the results of their activities ("outputs"), objectives ("outcomes"), and goals ("impacts") (see fig. 13). It is also a good time for child protection staff to scrutinize selected objectives to ensure that they are really measurable.

Figure 13
Monitoring and evaluation



8.5.1. Basic monitoring and evaluation framework

140. To create a monitoring and evaluation framework, child protection staff need to develop indicators at three levels:

- **Outputs** are the direct result of activities performed by child protection staff members. Measuring outputs indicates whether they have completed activities as planned.⁵³ Examples of child protection staff outputs are:
 - Number of field missions conducted to separate children from armed forces and groups;
 - Number of monitoring missions conducted to verify allegations of grave child rights violations;
 - Number of advocacy meetings held with government Military Justice counterpart to advocate for prosecution of crimes against children; and
 - Number of child protection briefings conducted.
- **Outcomes** are the medium-term changes that occur as a result of achieving outputs, for example, staff's advocacy meetings with parties to conflict for the release of children are outputs that may result in the release of children (outcome). Measuring outcomes indicates whether there is already progress towards achieving desired longer-term changes (e.g., elimination/reduction of number of children associated with armed forces/groups). Examples of outcomes include:
 - Number of children released from armed forces or groups as a direct result of advocacy by child protection staff and partners;

⁵³ Mission staff usually track predefined outputs in the results-based budget.

- Command order issued to its members by party to conflict's leadership in order to prevent child recruitment and use and other grave child rights violations;
- Grave violations against children are monitored in compliance with the MRM Field Manual;
- Percentage of child protection-specific mandated missions with Security Council resolutions that include information on the protection of children affected by armed conflict;
- Number of mission staff members who completed child protection trainings.
- **Impact** is the long-term effect of interventions towards the achievement of a certain goal. While the most impressive sign of success, measuring direct impact is often difficult because child protection staff members work alongside other actors who are contributing to progress on the same issue. In some cases, it is also not feasible for staff to measure impact because of the amount of resources and time it requires. Examples of child protection staff impact are:
 - Change against baseline value of estimated number of girls and boys currently associated with armed forces or armed groups;
 - Improvement in children's perceived sense of protection from grave violations.

141. Staff must then select data sources for each indicator (e.g., monitoring data, feedback surveys, self-assessments, key informant interviews, perceptions survey) and provide definitions and clarifications for indicators as needed.

142. **Baseline and targets:** After defining the indicators, child protection staff should measure the baseline and set targets. The baseline indicates the starting measure for each indicator, using the appropriate definition and data sources. The target notes the desired measure that the team is seeking to achieve at a particular moment in time. For example, if a planned activities is to provide briefings on child protection to new mission staff, the baseline would be "zero" at the outset. Staff members can also set a monthly target of briefings based on expected staff arrivals.

143. **Assumptions:** The monitoring and evaluation framework should contain some critical assumptions about the project. Those factors are outside the control of child protection staff but can determine the success or failure of a plan (see sect. 8.3, step 5). For example, assumptions could include unimpeded access to certain actors/sites, the continued presence of the United Nations peace operation, a fully staffed child protection team, or willingness of parties to conflict to engage in dialogue with the United Nations. Illuminating and monitoring such assumptions can alert teams to possible disruptions to the project that other project indicators do not reflect.

8.5.2. Implementation

144. Once the monitoring and evaluation framework is established, child protection staff should set up a system for implementing it. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation enables staff to reflect on progress, identify new challenges and adapt plans as needed. Such frameworks are also an important means of maintaining internal accountability and feedback for child protection capacity and can boost staff motivation.

145. Monitoring and evaluation implementation usually involves evaluating staff on collecting and analysing data on specific indicators, as well as tasks and timelines for

implementation. In the case of child protection capacity, staff would measure outputs (e.g., number of monitoring visits, workshops) as they are being implemented. Child protection teams are advised to review outcomes at least once per year as part of their annual report. The biennial child protection adviser retreats, as well as child protection staff retreats within the mission, are valuable opportunities for collective general assessments.

146. If funding allows, child protection staff may also consider an external evaluation. Such external evaluations may look at the child protection work overall or specific aspects of the programming, such as impact of training or advocacy.

8.6. Exercises

Child protection staff can use the following exercises to apply some of the knowledge and skills developed in this chapter.

1. Develop some key elements of a strategic plan.

1a. Pick one priority area for your mission area.

1b. Select one objective in the selected priority area.

1c. Create two activities to achieve each of these objectives. Make sure these objectives are SMART (see sect. 5.2.1).

(i) _____

(ii) _____

1d. Consider what resources you would need to achieve these objectives.

2. Prepare elements of a basic monitoring and evaluation framework.

2a. Prepare two indicators for each of the objectives (outcomes) selected in exercise 1c.

Indicator for outcome (i):

(1) _____

(2) _____

Indicator for outcome (ii):

(1) _____

(2) _____

2b. What are some key assumptions of your monitoring and evaluation framework?

8.7. Additional resources

Analysis and assessments

- Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Civil Affairs Handbook* (2012), chap. 8, pp. 102–111, available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/civil_affairs_handbook.pdf.
- Global Protection Cluster, Child Protection Working Group. *Child Protection Rapid Assessment toolkit* (2012), available at www.globalprotectioncluster.org/_assets/files/tools_and_guidance/info_data_management/CPRA_English-EN.pdf.
- Overseas Development Institute, *Planning Tools: Stakeholder Analysis* (2009), available at www.odi.org/publications/5257-stakeholder-analysis.
- United Nations Development Group, *Conducting a Conflict and Development Analysis* (2016), available at https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/UNDP_CDA-Report_v1.3-final-opt-low.pdf.
- *United Nations Conflict Analysis Practice Note* (Version: 13 May 2016), available at <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Conflict-Analysis-Practice-Note-13-May-2016-Version.pdf>.

Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, *Civil Affairs Handbook* (2012), chap. 8, pp. 112–125, available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/civil_affairs_handbook.pdf.
- Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, *Planning Toolkit* (2012), available at https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/planning_toolkit_web_version_0.pdf.
- *Integration Mission Planning Process Guidelines for the Field* outline the standards for integrated strategy, planning and coordination at the country level. Available at the Policy and Practices database on the POINT intranet: <http://ppdb.un.org>.
- ICRC, *Enhancing Protection for Civilians in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence* (2012), available at www.icrc.org/eng/assets/files/other/icrc-002-0956.pdf.
- OHCHR, *Human Rights Indicators: A Guide to Measurement and Implementation* (2012), available at www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/Human_rights_indicators_en.pdf.
- UNICEF, *Child Protection Resource Pack. How to Plan, Monitor and Evaluate Child Protection Programmes* (2015), available at www.unicef.org/protection/files/CPR-WEB.pdf.

Management

- International Peace Institute, *The Management Handbook for UN Field Missions* (2012), available at www.ipinst.org/images/pdfs/handbook/management_handbook_linked.pdf.

Annexes

Annex 1. Consolidation of protection functions in peace operations - Guidance note / Operational framework

25 February 2016

Introduction

Objective and background

1. The purpose of the consolidation of protection functions is to improve the collective impact, advocacy and visibility of mission efforts to promote and protect all human rights and to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence and grave violations against children. Several reports and processes have emphasized the need for intensified efforts to work in a more coherent, less fragmented manner in order to better capitalize on points of intersection across all protection agendas. The consolidation of protection functions provides the opportunity to strengthen prevention and response mechanisms, including advocacy, community outreach, monitoring and reporting, investigations, referral and support to victims, capacity-building, and efforts to fight against impunity, among other areas.

2. The consolidation of protection functions is one of several measures proposed by the Secretary-General to improve the delivery of more coherent responses by peace operations, which includes a greater collective impact of protection responses:

*“With due consideration for the requirements of flexibility to respond to differing contexts, a dedicated capacity for specialized protection functions relating to child protection and conflict-related sexual violence will be consolidated within human rights components. The head of the component will be responsible, through the head of mission, for the implementation of those specialized mandates and ensure that the Special Representatives of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict and on Sexual Violence in Conflict have the engagement, information and support required for the delivery of their respective mandates”.*¹

Scope

3. The present guidance/operational framework applies to peace operations (peacekeeping and special political missions) with a Human Rights mandate, Children and Armed Conflict and/or Conflict-Related Sexual Violence mandates, in particular where the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Children and Armed Conflict and/or the Monitoring, Analysis and Reporting Arrangement (MARA) on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence is/are in place or is/are required to be established. This guidance note focuses on consolidation of dedicated capacities.

¹ See the Secretary-General’s report on the future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (A/70/357-S/2015/682), of 2 September 2015, para. 66,

4. The guidance/operational framework provide(s) the standard architecture for the consolidation of protection functions in future peace operations and inform(s) the roll-out plan for the implementation in existing missions.

5. Senior mission leadership and planners as well as budget focal points at Headquarters shall ensure that the consolidation does not result in any reduction in resources or attention dedicated to each of these protection mandate which remain essential to the overall mission effectiveness.

Specialized mandates

6. The mandate on children and armed conflict derives from General Assembly resolution 51/77 (1996) and subsequent General Assembly resolutions on the rights of the child. The Security Council has created mechanisms and tools to implement this mandate in resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015). Resolution 1612 (2005) created the MRM to collect timely and reliable information on violations committed against children affected by armed conflict as well as the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. Six grave violations are monitored and reported on by the MRM which is co-chaired by the highest United Nations Representative in the country and the UNICEF Country Representative. Since resolution 1314 (2000), the Security Council consistently asked for the deployment of child protection advisers in peace operations.

7. The mandate on conflict-related sexual violence derives from Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013) under the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. The resolutions call for deployment of women protection advisers to facilitate the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and request the Secretary-General to ensure that the need for, and the number and roles of WPAs are systematically assessed during the planning and review of each United Nations peacekeeping and political mission, and to ensure that these experts are adequately trained and deployed in a timely manner.

I. Accountability for the implementation of specialized mandates in peace operations

A. Special Representative of the Secretary General/Head of Mission

8. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Head of Mission (SRSG/HOM) remains accountable for the mission's implementation of the Security Council mandates on children and armed conflict (CAAC) and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV); in particular, the SRSG/HOM co-chairs the principal-level MRM Country Task Force together with the UNICEF Country Representative, and periodically convenes the Working Group on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence' at strategic level.

B. Head of Human Rights Component

9. The Head of the Human Rights Component (HRC) oversees the implementation by the Senior Child Protection Adviser (Senior CPA) and the Senior Women Protection Adviser (Senior WPA) of the CAAC and CRSV mandates, including the establishment and ongoing work of the MRM and the MARA, the timely preparations of all MRM and MARA outputs, the provision of advice to senior leadership, engagement with parties to conflict, and mainstreaming CAAC and CRSV within mission components.

10. The accountability of the Head of the HRC through the Head of Mission for the overall implementation of specialized mandates is reflected in his/her job description and forms an integral part of his/her performance appraisal. The SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict shall be invited to provide written annual inputs to the SRSG/Deputy SRSG on the implementation of specialized protection mandates by the HRC to be reflected in the performance appraisal of heads of HRCs. The written annual inputs shall also be shared with the High Commissioner for Human Rights.

11. Prior to being deployed, the Head of HRC receives a mandatory general and country-specific induction briefing on the specialized protection mandates and the distinct roles of CPAs and WPAs by OHCHR, DPKO-DFS, DPA, the Offices of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Once deployed, the Head of HRC ensures that they are adequately reflected in the work plan of the Human Rights Division (HRD) as well as in other strategic planning processes of the mission, including the results-based budget (RBB) indicators and staffing table, and of the United Nations country team (UNCT), including the integrated strategic framework (ISF) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). At the end of his/her assignment, the Head of HRC includes information on the implementation of specialized mandates in his/her end-of-assignment report.

C. Senior Child Protection Adviser and Senior Women Protection Adviser

12. Functions of the Senior CPA (and CPAs) and the Senior WPA (and WPAs) are defined by relevant Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict and conflict-related sexual violence. Specific tasks and responsibilities are outlined in existing Terms of Reference; job descriptions are updated to reflect the reporting line to the Head of HRC and relevant structural arrangements as defined in section II of the present guidance/operational framework.

13. The Senior Child Protection Adviser's main tasks include: (1) the conduct, together with UNICEF wherever possible, of dialogue with parties to conflict for the immediate release of children as well as for preventing and ending grave violations against children, including through the signing and implementation of action plans by parties to the conflict listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict; (2) the co-chairing of the country task force on monitoring and reporting at technical level, together with UNICEF; (3) the timely delivery of MRM outputs (quarterly reports/Global Horizontal Notes; contributions to the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict, the Secretary-General's country reports

on children and armed conflict, as well as other information as requested for briefings by the SRSB for Children and Armed Conflict; (4) providing strategic advice to SRSB/Deputy SRSB and other senior mission leaders on implementation of the CAAC agenda; (5) the mainstreaming of child protection within the Mission, including the training of uniformed personnel.

14. In accordance with the agreed Terms of Reference, Senior Women's Protection Adviser's main tasks include: (1) ensuring establishment and function of the MARA on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence; (2) timely, objective, accurate and reliable information generated on that basis for the Secretary-General's annual reports on conflict-related sexual violence and country-specific reports, bi-annual MARA status reports, and briefings/submissions of the SRSB on sexual Violence in Conflict to the Security Council, Sanctions Committees and Informal Experts Group on Women Peace and Security; (3) convening, on behalf of the SRSB/Deputy SRSB, the country-level Working Group on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence; (4) providing strategic advice to SRSB/Deputy SRSB and other senior mission leaders on implementation of the CRSV agenda, including on dialogue with parties to conflict, and engaging those parties for concrete and time-bound commitments and implementation plans to prevent and address CRSV; (5) and, ensuring the focus on CRSV in mission policy and activities, and that the agenda is mainstreamed in all relevant components including through provision of training for civilian, military and police.

D. Information sharing with United Nations Headquarters

15. The Head of HRC, in consultation with the SRSB/Deputy SRSB, ensures that all relevant information related to children and armed conflict and conflict related sexual violence is shared systematically with the SRSB for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSB for Sexual Violence in Conflict and keeps them informed of strategic developments, progress and challenges related to their respective mandates, including through code cables, as relevant.

16. The Senior CPA and the Senior WPA maintain ongoing communication with the Offices of the SRSB for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSB on Sexual Violence in Conflict, including providing inputs for SRSBs' briefings and other information as needed. Relevant staffs of OHCHR, DPKO and DPA are kept informed on a regular basis.

17. Relevant outputs of the Human Rights Component, including human rights public reports and human rights monthly analysis, are also shared with the SRSB for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSB on Sexual Violence in Conflict.

18. Country-specific, regional or global Video/Teleconference Calls are organized on a regular basis with all relevant stakeholders to discuss strategic issues pertaining to the implementation of specialized mandates. Periodic meetings of Heads of HRCs, Senior CPAs and Senior WPAs also provide opportunities to discuss progress and challenges in the implementation of specialized protection mandates and keep apprised of policy developments.

19. As is the case with all activities of peace operations, all matters related to child protection and conflict-related sexual violence will continue to be reported by the Mis-

sions to DPKO-DFS and DPA, in line with relevant United Nations policy and guidance and departmental directives to SRSGs.

II. Dedicated specialized capacity, structure and reporting lines

20. In missions with Children and Armed Conflict and/or Conflict-Related Sexual Violence mandates, there must be a core capacity that includes a Senior CPA and a Senior WPA supported by dedicated specialized expertise tailored to the context and the missions' mandates.

21. Regardless of their location within the human rights component, all Child Protection Officers (CPOs) and Women Protection Officers/Advisers (WPAs) have a reporting line to the Senior CPA and Senior WPA respectively, either as a first or as a second reporting officer, in order to ensure coherence in the delivery of specialized protection mandates. The Senior CPA and the Senior WPA as well as CPOs/WPAs retain their specific job titles and classifications.

A. Mission Headquarters

22. At mission headquarters, Human Rights Components include thematic sections/units called Child Protection Sections (CPS) or Units (CPUs) and Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Sections/Units, headed by the Senior CPA and the Senior WPA respectively, and comprised of dedicated specialized expertise.

23. The Senior CPA and the Senior WPA report to the Head of HRC as first reporting officer and to the SRSG or Deputy SRSG as second reporting officer.

24. Where relevant and in agreement with the Senior CPA and Senior WPA, CPOs and WPAs can be located in other sections or units of the HRC to maximize efficiency. CPOs and WPAs located in other sections or units of the HRC have a second reporting line to the Senior CPA or Senior WPA.

B. Sector and Field Offices

25. Human rights teams also comprise dedicated specialized expertise in all sector/regional offices and, where relevant, in field offices. In compliance with the reporting arrangements set forth in the OHCHR/DPKO/DPA/DFS Policy on Human Rights Integration (2011), sector and field based dedicated specialized staff in the human rights component, like other field-based human rights staff, report to the human rights team leader (first reporting officer) and to the Senior CPA or Senior WPA (second reporting officer).

26. In special political missions, in the event that there is no dedicated capacity at sector level, the Head of HRC designates human rights officers as focal points for CAAC and CRSV tasks. While reporting through to the human rights team leader as a first reporting officer and to the Head/Deputy Head of the HRC as second reporting officer, those human rights officers/focal points work under the guidance of the Senior WPA or Senior CPA for CAAC or CRSV activities, and must be adequately trained and equipped to undertake those activities which are reflected in their ToRs. HROs focal points will ensure the delivery of core mandated MARA and MRM tasks, but cannot be expected to deliver at the same level as dedicated specialized staff.

27. All CPOs and WPAs, including those located in other human rights components' sections or units at mission Headquarters and in sector/field offices, develop and implement their work plan in close coordination with the Senior CPA and the Senior WPA respectively; they participate in team meetings and annual retreats convened by the Senior CPA and the Senior WPA, and communicate on a day-to-day basis with them, keeping their first reporting officer in copy.

III. Roles and responsibilities/political space

A. Strategic engagement within the mission

Strategic engagement with senior mission leadership

28. The Head of HRC facilitates direct access of the Senior CPA and Senior WPA to the mission senior leadership to perform their advisory functions on CAAC and CRSV.

29. Advice to senior mission leadership on all relevant protection issues is consulted and based on a shared analysis in order to maximize impact.

Mainstreaming specialized mandates within mission components

30. The Senior CPA and Senior WPA, in consultation with the Head of HRC, build upon the resources and thematic work streams of human rights components in order to mainstream and expand/systematize regular CAAC/CRSV tasks (capacity-building, fight against impunity, cooperation with uniformed components, contribution to the implementation of the human rights due diligence policy, cooperation with special procedures and contribution to treaty body mechanisms, inter alia) or integrate new ones (protection of victims and witnesses, transitional justice, Rule of Law (RoL) activities within the framework of the Global Focal Point on RoL arrangement, for instance).

31. To promote mainstreaming of child protection and conflict-related sexual violence issues within the Mission, the Senior WPA and Senior CPA work closely with relevant Heads of civilian and uniformed mission components and advisers, in particular security sector reform (SSR), DDR, Joint Mission Analysis Centre (JMAC), Joint Operations centre (JOC), Military and Police Components, as well as the Senior Protection of Civilians (POC) Adviser and the Senior Gender Adviser, while keeping the POC and gender focal points of the human rights component informed.

32. The consolidation of protection functions provides the opportunity to streamline monitoring and reporting and produce comprehensive analysis of protection concerns, which in turn improves the contribution to the implementation of the mission-wide Protection of Civilians strategy. The POC focal point within the human rights component at mission headquarters consolidates HRC's data and analysis to feed into the mission Protection of Civilians mechanisms and tools.

33. In order to retain specialized gender capacity, Gender Affairs Officers no longer use the title "Women's Protection Advisers" and focus on their original mandated tasks within Women Peace and Security Agenda. The current and future posts in the Gender Units will remain as Gender Affairs Officers and report directly to the Mission Gender Adviser. Mainstreaming and capacity-building on CRSV aspects is undertaken by Women's Protection Advisers in the Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Section/Unit who will



work in close collaboration with the Gender Advisory Unit as needed. Due consideration will be given to ensuring that these WPAs have the appropriate gender analysis profile and expertise.

Clearance procedure

34. MRM and MARA outputs are cleared through existing MRM/MARA clearance procedures and are not subject to the DPKO/DPA Policy Directive on Public Reporting by Human Rights Components of United Nations Peace Operations (2008). The Head of HRC, in his/her supervisory role, reviews the content of the reports/outputs before they are submitted by the Senior WPA to the Deputy SRSG, and by the Senior CPA and UNICEF Chief Child Protection to the Deputy SRSG and the UNICEF Representative, respectively, for final clearance.

B. Engagement with United Nations and non-United Nations partners

35. The Senior CPA co-chairs the technical-level country task force on monitoring and reporting, together with UNICEF. The Senior WPA chairs the inter-agency United Nations Working Group on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence, under the supervision of the Head of HRC.

36. In coordination with the Head of HRC, the Senior CPA and Senior WPA engage with relevant counterparts, including Government authorities, the diplomatic community and donors, and civil society.

C. Dialogue with parties to conflict

37. Engagement with parties to conflict on protection issues is consulted among the senior management of the Human Rights Component, which includes the Senior CPA and Senior WPA, to identify opportunities to maximize the engagement.

38. Under the overall supervision of the SRSG/Deputy SRSG and the Head of HRC, the Senior CPA, leads, on behalf of the mission, the Security Council mandated dialogue with parties to conflict on CAAC-related issues together with UNICEF, including but not

limited to the development and implementation of actions plans to end grave violations against children and the immediate release of children.

39. Under the overall supervision of the SRSG/Deputy SRSG and the Head of HRC and in close consultation with SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Senior WPA leads the dialogue with parties to conflict on CRSV-related issues, including but not limited to the development of commitments and implementation plans to prevent and address conflict-related sexual violence.

IV. Backstopping

40. DPKO-DFS, DPA, OHCHR, the Offices of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict and the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict continue to engage with missions on relevant substantive issues in accordance with their respective roles and mandates. A working group will work further on clarifying any changes to existing headquarters backstopping arrangements for consolidated components.



Annex 2. Roles and responsibilities of mission components on child protection

Mission component	Roles and responsibilities of mission components on child protection (as specified in the 2017 <i>Child Protection Policy</i>)
SRSB/HOM	<p>Overall responsibility within the mission for child protection planning, mainstreaming, training, coordination, monitoring and reporting, and dialogue with parties to conflict.</p> <p>Direct leadership and personal involvement, alongside UNICEF representative, on key issues (e.g., establishment of the country task force monitoring and reporting, action plans, political démarches at the country level).</p>
Civilian sections	<p>Identification and implementation of specific child protection actions in accordance with their respective roles and functions. Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation/Political Affairs/Civil Affairs: Account for child protection concerns and child protection normative framework in conflict analysis and mediation efforts, and ensure that child protection considerations are part of the mission’s overall mediation and national reconciliation efforts. • DDR/SSR/Justice and Corrections/Human Rights: Ensure that mission and national strategies include provisions on release and reintegration of children from armed forces and groups and screening mechanisms for preventing the enrolment of children in security institutions. • Rule of Law, Justice and Corrections/Human Rights: Account for the rights of children in contact with the law, the criminalization of violations and abuses against children, and advocacy on legal protection for children in their work. • POC Advisers/Community Liaison Assistants/Joint Protection Teams/JOB/JMAC: Include child protection within the broader protection efforts of the mission (e.g., early warning mechanisms, community alert networks, conflict and threats analysis, unarmed civilian protection strategies).
Military components	<p>Roles and responsibilities in accordance with the <i>UN Infantry Battalion Manual</i> (2012), the <i>UN Force Headquarters Handbook</i> (2014) and the <i>Protection of Civilians Implementing Guidelines for Military Components of UN Peacekeeping Missions</i> (2015). That includes:</p> <p>Force Commanders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include child protection guidance in all strategic and operational documents for military personnel. • Ensure that military personnel under their command receive in-mission induction briefings and ongoing training on child protection. • Designate a military CFPF at mission headquarters.

<p>Mission component</p>	<p>Roles and responsibilities of mission components on child protection (as specified in the <i>2017 Child Protection Policy</i>)</p>
	<p>Battalion Commanders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint a full-time child protection officer within each battalion command group. <p>Company Commanders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designate a CPFPP within company headquarters. <p>Commanding Officers, under the guidance of the Force Commanders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform parties to the conflict about the consequences of violations and abuses against children. • Liaise between the mission and nationals not affiliated with the United Nations and/or international military forces.
<p>Police components</p>	<p>Identification and implementation of specific child protection actions in accordance with their respective roles and functions. That includes:</p> <p>United Nations Police components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate child protection in advising and capacity-building efforts for host State police and juvenile justice system. • Apply child-sensitive interviewing techniques. • Monitor child protection concerns and compliance with international norms and standards. <p>Heads of United Nations Police components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all United Nations Police officers are trained in, apply and integrate international norms and standards on children's rights into their work. • Issue appropriate guidance to inform the actions of United Nations Police officers in relation to the protection of children. • Designate a police CPFPP at mission headquarters and police CPFPPs in field offices.

Annex 3. Training evaluation form

TRAINING EVALUATION (location, date)

NAME OF WORKSHOP: _____

NAME (optional) _____

Note: All responses are confidential and will not be attributed to any individual or organization.

1. Circle the number that indicates where your opinion lies. Thank you.

- a. How would you rate the training overall? Poor 1 2 3 4 5 Excellent
- b. Was there sufficient time to discuss the ideas presented at the training? Insufficient 1 2 3 4 5 Sufficient
- c. Did you find the facilitator(s) effective? Ineffective 1 2 3 4 5 Very effective
- d. How important are child protection concerns for your daily work? Not important 1 2 3 4 5 Very important
- e. How likely are you to recommend the training to a colleague? Unlikely 1 2 3 4 5 Very likely

2. What were the most valuable aspects of the training?

3. What aspects of the training did you find to have little or no value and why?

4. What additional content would you suggest?

5. Will you use the training to inform your work? If yes, how? If no, why not?

6. Additional comments:

Annex 4. Sample terms of reference for child protection focal points (CPFPs)

Annex 4a. Sample terms of reference for military child protection focal points

TERMS of REFERENCE Military Child Protection Focal Point

1. Background

Pursuant to the *2017 Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations*, and in application of relevant Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, the [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Child Protection Section (CPS) is mandated to carry out the following activities:

- Ensure the integration, coordination and follow-up on issues related to children and armed conflict throughout the United Nations system and, in coordination with UNICEF and other stakeholders, engage in dialogue with the parties to conflict;
- Monitor and report on grave child rights violations committed by the parties to conflict and contribute to the fight against impunity;
- Mainstream child protection concerns throughout the work of mission components, and train uniformed components to prevent and respond appropriately to child rights violations;
- Liaise with the protection of civilians (POC) unit and uniformed components to support prevention activities, in order to strengthen the protection of children in armed conflict;
- Advocate with national and local authorities and raise awareness among governmental institutions, communities and civil society on child rights and child protection.

In order to ensure that all components of the mission integrate child protection concerns in their activities, particularly the military component, it is critical that a network of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] military child protection focal points (CPFPs) be established to ensure that child protection concerns are considered at all stages of the planning and process and in operational activities at the force headquarters level, as well as at sector and contingent levels.

The role of the focal point will be to:

- Serve as an interface between the CPS and [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] military component;
- Facilitate collaboration between the CPS and the [ARMED FORCES];
- Represent child protection in areas where a CPS is not deployed;
- Mainstream child protection concerns through the work of the military component to better protect children.

2. Summary of the role

Assuming the function of child protection focal point/officer (CPFP/O) will be an additional role for the military gender and protection officer at Force headquarters. That officer will be guided and supported by the mission Senior Child Protection Adviser (CPA), who is mandated to provide substantive leadership and support to ensure child protection concerns are integrated into military planning processes and activities.

The Senior Child Protection Adviser and Force headquarters CPFP/O will coordinate and work together when required to develop relevant standard operating procedures and terms of reference for the Force.

3. Key responsibilities of the Force headquarters child protection focal point

- Work with the Senior Child Protection Adviser to strengthen advice provided to the [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force Commander, senior military leadership, Force headquarters staff and commanders on all issues related to the protection of children.
- Liaise with and train military CPFPs at the sector and unit level to ensure implementation of child protection measures at the tactical level (battalion and company level).
- Establish/strengthen an alert system to transmit information received on any of the six grave violations and other child protection concerns through the chain of command and the CPS, as well as information on threats that could cause displacement, human rights violations, and so on.
- Oversee the implementation of specific directives including standard operating procedures on the handover of children associated with armed groups/national security forces captured in operations or those who have surrendered to the peace-keeping force.
- Develop guidelines on children's issues, including appropriate conduct during interaction with children and prevention of all forms of child exploitation and child labour.

4. Key responsibilities of the sector headquarters child protection focal point

- In collaboration with the sector-level Child Protection Officer/team leader, advise the sector commander on all issues related to the protection of children within the sector area of responsibility;
- Act as a liaison between sector child protection team and the sector headquarters, providing two-way communications between the Force and the civilian child protection teams;
- Follow up on the training of contingent CPFP/Os to ensure implementation of child protection measures at the tactical level (battalion and company level);
- Handle all issues related to child protection concerns within the Force at sector level, in collaboration with the civilian child protection sector-level team;

- Obtain referral mechanisms from the child protection team at the sector level for all military CPFs within the area of responsibility, to address sexual violence, children separated from armed groups, unaccompanied children, and others, and continuously consult the child protection team about response and protection activities. Ensure that all military CPFs are adequately informed about referrals;
- Inform the civilian child protection team of all child protection concerns taking place at sector level, including sharing of grave child-rights violations.

5. Key responsibilities of the battalion command group child protection focal point

- Advise the Battalion Commander on all issues related to the protection of children.
- Act as a liaison between child protection actors and the battalion.
- Handle all issues related to child protection violations, including establishment of an alert system to transmit through command channel and also to the child protection unit/section, pertaining to information received on any of the six grave violations, especially the recruitment or use of children by armed forces or armed groups, the killing or maiming of children, sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals, abductions of children and the denial of humanitarian access.
- Coordinate with military CPF at Force/mission headquarters.
- Develop and oversee the implementation of specific standard operating procedures on the handover of child soldiers captured in operations or those who have surrendered to the peacekeeping Force.
- Develop guidelines for the battalion on children's issues including detention, conduct during the interaction with children and prevention of all forms of exploitation against children including child labour and sexual exploitation.

Note: At the United Nations infantry battalion level, the responsibility for "gender and child protection" will be performed by a single officer, under the supervision of the Executive Officer/Second in Command (XO/2IC).

6. Monitoring and reporting

The CPF will work closely with the Child Protection Section within the area of responsibility and transmit information on violations to the section using established information-sharing protocols and taking into account confidentiality and sensitivity of dealing with children's issues. All reports shall be monitored by the Force headquarters focal point.

Annex 4b. Sample job description for United Nations Police child protection focal point

Job description for positions requiring official secondment from national governments of United Nations Member States

Post title and level	Police Adviser—Family and Child Protection Officer, seconded (non-contracted)
Organizational unit	TBD
Duty station	Within the mMission area according to the operational requirements
Reporting to	Police Commissioner through the established chain of command
Duration	12 months (extendable)
United Nations Core Values: Integrity, Professionalism and Respect for Diversity	

RESPONSIBILITIES:

Under the authority of the direct supervisor within the organizational structure of the United Nations Mission Police Component and within the limits of delegated authority, the Family and Child Protection Officer will be responsible for, but not limited to, the performances of the following duties:

- Maintain close liaison with all stake holders including United Nations agencies, international NGOs/NGOs and other partners to deal with gender and child protection issues/matters.
- Coordinate with military headquarters training unit to conduct training, workshops and seminars for local police and mission Gender and Child Protection (GCP) officers.
- Supervise and guide all subordinates in the unit as well as in sectors, team sites and at the Community Policing Committee (CPC) level.
- Coordinate with United Nations Police Personnel Unit on the issues of deployment of female and male police advisers to the Gender and Child Protection units in various sectors, team sites and CPCs.
- Coordinate and give professional guidance and support to the criminal investigators, if needed, at the military headquarters, sectors, team sites and CPCs.
- Keep record and maintain appropriate filing system in the unit, i.e., daily situation report (DSR), weekly, monthly, quarterly, bi-annual and annual gender reports.
- Ensure that all the reports are accordingly compiled and sent to R&R and other related Units.
- Visit sectors, team sites and CPCs to ensure effective and efficient performance of the unit pillars on the ground.
- Perform any other duties/tasks as delegated by the R&R Coordinator within the framework of mandate implementation.

COMPETENCIES:

Professionalism: Shows pride in work and achievements; demonstrates professional competence and mastery of subject matter; is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results; is motivated by professional rather than personal concerns; shows persistence when faced with difficult problems or challenges; remains calm in stressful situations. Possesses practical proven experience and outstanding expert knowledge in the technical field of work in general and in the specific areas required for the particular posts, demonstrates good judgment in the context of assignments given; able to plan own work and manage work/task priorities. Ability to apply technical expertise to resolve police related issues and challenges. Strong organizational skills. Takes responsibility for incorporating gender perspectives and ensuring the equal participation of women and men in all areas of work.

Planning and Organizing: Develops clear goals that are consistent with agreed strategies; identifies priority activities and assignments; adjusts priorities as required; allocates appropriate amount of time and resources for completing work; foresees risks and allows for contingencies when planning; monitors and adjusts plans and actions as necessary; uses time efficiently.

Communication: Speaks and writes clearly and effectively; listens to others, correctly interprets messages from others and responds appropriately; asks questions to clarify, and exhibits interest in having two-way communication; tailors language, tone, style and format to match audience; demonstrates openness in sharing information and keeping people informed. Demonstrates ability to draft/edit a variety of written reports.

Teamwork: Works collaboratively with colleagues to achieve organizational goals; solicits inputs by genuinely valuing others' ideas and expertise; is willing to learn from others; places team agenda before personal agenda; supports and acts in accordance with final group decision, even when such decisions may not entirely reflect own position; shares credit for team accomplishments and accepts joint responsibility for team shortcomings. Displays ability to establish and maintain effective partnerships and working relations in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic environment with sensitivity and respect for diversity.

QUALIFICATIONS:

Education: Graduation from Police College or Academy or other recognized law enforcement educational institution is required. Specialized training in the area of child/family protection, domestic violence investigation, community policing, victim protection or relevant is highly desirable. University degree in related field (law, law enforcement, security, criminology, sociology etc.) is desired.

Work experience: A minimum of 5 years of active experience in national law enforcement is required in one or several following areas: police management; community policing; juvenile delinquency; investigation of Sexual and Gender Base Violence (SGBV) and domestic violence; victim protection. Training and mentoring experience in the above areas is highly desirable. Peacekeeping or other international experience in the UN or other organizations is an advantage.

Languages: English and French are the working languages of the UN. For the post advertised, fluency in oral and written English is required. Knowledge of a second official United Nations language is an advantage.

Assessment for Mission Service: All candidates should be cleared through an Assessment for Mission Service (AMS) either by a Selection Assistance and Assessment Team (SAAT) deployed to a Member State or on the basis of an in-mission AMS upon arrival of the candidates. Failure to pass the in-mission assessment will result in candidate's repatriation. All repatriation related expenses in this case are to be borne by the Member State. Therefore, the Member States are strongly encouraged to request a SAAT to conduct an AMS in the Member State prior to the police personnel deployment.

Preference will be given to equally qualified women candidates.

Date of Issuance: _____

<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/sites/police>

In accordance with the Policy on Human Rights Screening of United Nations Personnel, all individuals who seek to serve with the United Nations, are requested to make "self-attestation" that s/he has not committed any serious criminal offences and has not been involved in violations of international human rights or international humanitarian law. The exact wording of the self-attestation is outlined in para. 5.2 of the above-mentioned Policy. The final decision on the selection of an individual to serve with the United Nations will also be subject to human rights screening.



Specialized train-the-trainer course on child protection for United Nations Police (2018), Entebbe, Uganda
Photo: Elisa Revert Santamaria

Annex 5. Sample directives relating to child protection

Annex 5a. Sample Force Commander's child protection directive [UN CONFIDENTIAL - RESTRICTED]

(Date)

Force Commander's [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] child protection Force directive

1. General

a. **Aim.** The aim of this directive is to set out how Force headquarters, brigades/sectors and military observers will implement plans and procedures on how to protect children during military activities within the legal framework.

b. **Situation.** [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force headquarters has been mandated by the Security Council to ensure that child protection concerns are integrated into all operations from the strategic to the tactical. Grave violations against children are being committed by actors in the [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] area of responsibility. Deliberate targeting of children, including the recruitment of boys and girls into armed groups, is frequent and directly contributes to destabilizing the population. Refinement of the Force's directive is required to further optimize its effectiveness in combating these violations setting the conditions for stability.

2. Critical information

a. **Definition of a child.** A child is anyone under the age of 18.

b. **Six grave violations of children's rights.** All Force members must be aware of the grave violations of child rights committed by parties to the conflict in the context of the conflict. Each member of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]'s military component must understand the problems faced by children and look for warning signs related to any of these grave violations. The following are considered to be grave violations of child rights and must be reported:

- (i) Killing and maiming of a child;
- (ii) Recruitment and use of a child by an armed group or an armed force;
- (iii) Sexual violence against a child;
- (iv) Abduction of a child;
- (v) Attack on schools and hospitals; and
- (vi) Denial of humanitarian access affecting children.

3. Formation/unit focal points for child protection

a. **The Force gender and child protection officer (Force headquarters focal point).** Responsible for ensuring information is communicated to the child protection section rapidly. The Force headquarters focal point is responsible for ensuring compliance with this directive by all members of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]'s military component. The Force headquarters focal point is also specifically responsible for reporting information related to the six grave violations of child rights to the child protection section.

The Force headquarters will lead in implementing this directive in G5 planning, through mainstreaming and focused operations on child protection.

b. **Local child protection focal points (local focal points).** Local focal points must be designated in each military observer team site, United Nations base/temporary operating base/company operations base/static combat deployments and each brigade headquarters. The local focal points are responsible for ensuring that this directive is complied with by all members of the [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]'s military component in their area of responsibility and contacting the Force headquarters focal point and the child protection section. Local focal points will also ensure training for their units¹ and provide remedial action where required. The local focal point is ideally also the gender focal point.

c. **Child protection section (CPS).** Is the civilian component, composed of Child Protection Advisers, who are tasked with ensuring that the mission's activities prioritize the best interests of children.

4. Everybody's responsibility: PLAN-ACT-ALERT-PROTECT

All Force members are responsible for delivery - before, during and after an operation.

a. **Plan.** The Force must take a proactive role in preventing the six grave violations against children. Not only must the Force take into account the different effects that conflict has on children, but effective contingency plans to mitigate risk. The Force must also actively plan operations to provide protection to children and simultaneously target those seeking to abuse children during conflict.

b. **Act.** Whether in the field or based in headquarters, should a risk of death, serious harm or disappearance of a child be imminent or in progress, the first duty of a member of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]'s military component is to take immediate action to protect the child, subject to usual operational considerations and rules of engagement.

c. **Alert.** After the member of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]'s military component has provided an immediate response to a grave violation by a party to the conflict, or where such a risk cannot be prevented or is not imminent, he or she must alert the local focal point, which shall then alert the Force headquarters focal point and the child protection section). In the absence of a local focal point, the brigade, sector or Force focal point must be contacted. The Force headquarters focal point must be informed and will then make a decision as to further actions in liaison with the CPS.

d. **Protect.** Aside from acting upon immediate threats and alerting, the protection of children entails recording learning accounts and employing effective plans, tactics and techniques to ensure that sustainable protection is provided by the Force to the population. Where necessary the Force headquarters will direct operations to support tactical headquarters.

¹ Training to include as a minimum: the six grave violations, Plan-Act-Alert-Protect and the reporting system.

5. Specific roles and responsibilities of the Force during military operations

a. **General.** This is a guideline of proactive child protection measures that can be taken by departments and should not be considered as an exhaustive list. All of these activities are the standard to achieve, but they must be carried out in accordance with legal and command guidance.

b. **G2—Intelligence.** Providing of information on actors in daily reports who are deliberately targeting children. Highlighting grave violation risks to the Force headquarters gender and child protection officer. Where required, providing target packs to assist tactical units in targeting those deliberately violating child rights. When required, supporting [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]’s efforts countering or gathering information on violations against children with unmanned assets.

c. **G5/G35/G3—Operations and plans.** All military operations must consider the effects of kinetic operations on children under Security Council resolution 1888 (2009). That must be mainstreamed on all operation planning and execution and, where necessary, changes made to ensure the protection of children and avoidance of committing or facilitating the six grave violations. In addition, the Force will conduct and direct lower headquarters to conduct deliberate planning to address the causes of abuse of children in the conflict. The consideration of the activity described will bring [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] within policy guidelines.

(i) **Contingency plans of military operations.** Operational planning must include contingency plans to protect children who may be affected or involved in the conflict, whether as combatants or as dependents of other combatants. Where there is difficulty or it is felt that the contingency plans cannot mitigate the risk then specialist expertise must be sought and cancellation of the operation considered.

(ii) **Targeting boards.** Where required, all commands are directed to conduct intelligence-led activities to isolate and neutralize forces or groups committing any of the grave violations. During targeting boards, provisional planning must consider the safety of children identified at the targeted location.

(iii) **G3—Execution of military operations.** During the execution of military operations the relevant commands are required to assess the likelihood of any grave violations and enact contingency plans accordingly.

(iv) **Patrolling.** Conducting deliberate patrols to dominate the ground around key areas for children such as schools or hospitals. Also having Force presence during time periods when children are most at risk (mornings, afternoons and at dusk).

d. **Info Operations.** The Info Operations cell is an enabler of non-kinetic operations from Force headquarters and should conduct influence activities that will positively influence the identified target audiences to respect the six grave violations against children and convincing actors to protect children’s rights under international humanitarian law by means of:

(i) **Key leadership engagement.** Through command-led engagement at all levels (Force headquarters, sector and tactical) understand the situation among key leaders (enemy civilian and friendly forces) to establish what their view is, allowing shaping of their behaviour to comply with this directive.

- (ii) **Leaflets.** During planning and execution of all operations, Info Operations to liaise with gender and child protection officer in order to plan for the distribution of child protection leaflets that will sensitize the population, the armed groups and national security forces.
 - iii) **Radio/other media.** Coordination and information sharing between the Info Operations cell and the gender and child protection officer/child protection section is required to spread the key messages on the six grave violations against children, through [UNITED NATIONS MISSION] Radio, local radio stations as well as other media platforms.
- e. **G7—Training of the Force** is critical to maintaining the standards that [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] has previously set.
- (i) **Mandatory training.** Each member of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]’s military component will receive training as part of induction, as directed by the Force Commander. The gender and child protection officer is responsible for the review of this training and its delivery in liaison with the child protection section.
 - (ii) **Continuation training.** The G7 is to enable focal points to train their own units. All local focal points are to maintain situational awareness of the collective knowledge of their forces with regard to child protection. They are to conduct regular seminars every two months with command personnel and also to provide remedial training where needed.
- f. **G9—All United Nations civil–military coordination** activity must consider how it may cause detrimental effect on protection of children and should enact a contingency plan accordingly. Quick impact projects, where possible, must look at specific child protection development initiatives.
- g. **G4—Support tactical units** with supplies that will allow for the treatment of children who have been subjected to grave violations.
- h. **Medical Section.** Provide contingency plans on the priority treatment of injured children and MEDEVAC. Operation contingency plans should include the medical assistance to be provided for children who were either part of the armed group or collateral damage.
- i. **Liaison Office [ARMED FORCE] conduct of military operations with the [ARMED FORCE]—Effective partnering.** Through the liaison cell in the [ARMED FORCE] develop the understanding that protecting children increases operational effectiveness and promote subsequent good practices. The key message to the [ARMED FORCE] is that protecting children optimizes their force through correct selection of recruits and enhances operational effectiveness through lawful conduct of operations. Through effective partnering and mentoring the Force must influence the [ARMED FORCE] to conduct their operations, where relevant, within the guidelines highlighted in this document.
- j. **DDR/DDRRR Liaison Offices.** Within the surrender process, specific planning needs to be in place when dealing with child soldiers. Specific staff instruction must detail how the Force deals with such surrenders and provides the correct DDR/DDRRR measures in conjunction with the child protection section. Any child surrender must be reported to the Gender and Child Protection Officer in Force headquarters.

k. **Gender and Child Protection Operations Group.** When a grave violation occurs and may have the potential to have a severe impact on the mission, the headquarters focal point will call a Gender and Child Protection Operations Group. That includes subject matter experts from other United Nations departments and members of the Force as required and its purpose is to consequence manage an issue with G3 operations, to ensure protection of civilians, including children.

l. **Military observers.** Provide information on the ground and reporting on any of the six grave violations that they witness.

m. **Military police/Conduct and Discipline Unit.** Provide investigation assistance where required or called upon by the child protection/gender and child protection officer/focal points or chain of command. Provide liaison throughout investigations and make recommendations accordingly.

6. Implementation

a. **Timings.** All branches of the [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force are to begin implementing these measures upon receipt.

b. **Seminar.** A protection of children seminar will be held within a month of publication in Force headquarters. Attendance will be required from all staff branches and child protection focal points from sectors.

7. Conclusion

a. **Amendments and review.** Any amendments are to be suggested to the points of contact. That directive will be reviewed annually.

b. **Closing remarks.** [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force has set high standards with regard to protection of children within the mission. This directive seeks to build on these standards and implement measures to successfully tackle the problem more effectively by deliberate planning to prevent violations against children. In order for this to succeed all members of the Force must be actively involved and consider protection of children carefully in carrying out their duty.

8. Points of contact

- a. Force gender and child protection officer (contact details)
- b. Child Protection Adviser/Section (contact details)
- c. G5 Info Operations planner. (contact details)

(Name, title, signature)

Force Commander

[UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION]

Annex 5b. Sample directive on the protection of schools and universities against military use

INTER-OFFICE MEMORANDUM

(Date)

To: Name, Force Commander
Name, Police Commissioner

From: Name, Special Representative of the Secretary-General (signature)

Subject: UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] directive on the protection of schools and universities against military use

Purpose

1. These guidelines aim at preventing the use of schools and universities by [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force and Police and minimizing the impact of armed conflict on the security and education of children.

General principles

2. Schools have to be havens of peace, where children are protected even in times of armed conflict. They are, however, often attacked or used for military purposes by parties to the conflict in [COUNTRY], to the detriment of children.
3. [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force and Police are requested not to use schools for any purpose. All [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] military and police personnel should avoid encroaching on the security and education of children by using the following guidelines as good practice.
4. Schools and universities that are operational should never be used in any way. This applies to schools and universities that are closed after school hours, during weekends and holidays and during vacation periods.
5. Abandoned schools and university buildings which are occupied or used by [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force and Police should be liberated without delay in order to allow educational authorities to reopen them as soon as possible. All signs of militarization or fortification of such buildings or structures should be completely removed after the withdrawal and any damage caused to the institution should be repaired quickly before handover to the authorities, to allow the return to educational use.
6. All ammunitions, unexploded ordnance or war debris should be cleared from the site.
7. The use of a school or university by a party to a conflict is not permitted and cannot provide grounds for continuation of such use.
8. Military and police personnel tasked to secure schools or universities should avoid wherever possible entering into the school premises or buildings in order not to compromise their civilian status.
9. The Force Commander and the Police Commissioner are requested to ensure the implementation and wide dissemination of this directive.

Definition of terms

Schools and universities

These are places used principally for the purpose of education. They comprise kindergartens or nursery schools, primary and secondary schools, vocational training centres and higher education institutions including universities, colleges and technical training schools. They also include all property and grounds that belongs to these institutions.

They do not however, include institutions that are dedicated to military training and education.

Use

This signifies any activity conducted within the physical space or premises of a school or a university in support of military efforts, be it temporarily or for a longer term. It includes, but is not limited to, the following: as a military barracks or base; for offensive or defensive positioning; for the stocking of arms and ammunitions; for interrogation and detention; for military training; as an observation post; as a firing or fire control position. It does not include situations where the Force and the police are present in proximity to schools and universities to provide protection to the school or ensure security.

References

- Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual* (2012), (Section 2.13, page 26);
- Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, *Draft Lucens Guidelines on the Protection of Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* (2013);
- Security Council resolutions 1998 (2011) and 2143 (2014).



Annex 5c. Sample Force Commander's directive prohibiting child labour

[UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] FORCE COMMANDER CIRCULAR ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2017 DPKO-DFS-DPA POLICY ON CHILD PROTECTION IN UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATIONS REGARDING THE PROHIBITION OF CHILD LABOUR IN UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATIONS]

To: All sector commanders
All staff officers
All military observers

From: Name, Force Commander

Subject: Force Commander's directive prohibiting child labour

Reference: Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Department of Field Support and Department of Political Affairs Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017) regarding the prohibition of child labour in United Nations peacekeeping operations

Aim: The aim of this directive is to ensure that no child works for a battalion or for any soldier of [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] Force and to contribute to the total protection of children from all forms of exploitation.

Definition: A child is any person under the age of 18 years.

1. Child labour is a violation of fundamental human rights. In response to several reported cases of use of child labour in different peacekeeping operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Field Support, and the Department of Political Affairs adopted a policy on child protection in United Nations Peace Operations, which includes provisions on the prohibition of child labour in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations aimed at ensuring that personnel of peacekeeping missions abide by international norms on child labour.

2. Child labour means work that is judged dangerous for the physical and mental development of a child (persons below 18 years). It includes all work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; interferes with their education by depriving them of the possibility to go to school, making them abandon school prematurely and working for long hours.

3. Consistent with the *2017 Child Protection Policy* mentioned above, I demand that all [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] military personnel adhere to the following instructions:

- (a) Refrain from using child labour: any work or provision of services including but not limited to washing of vehicles, polishing of shoes, messengers for selling of products, domestic servants, security guards by a person under the age of 18 years irrespective of duration, frequency, compensation or the nature of the underlying agreement.
- (b) Not allow or authorize children on United Nations premises, camps or facilities for the purpose of the provision of labour or the rendering of services.

- (c) Take all non-coercive measures including the use of access cards and control of identities to ensure that unaccompanied children do not enter [UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] premises, camps and facilities to work or procure services.
- (d) Mistaken belief in the age of a child is not a defence.

4. Compliance with this circular is mandatory: all staff officers, sector commanders, and military observers must take all necessary measures to ensure that persons working under their command are informed and abide by it.

Enforcement

Besides the responsibility of commanders to ensure compliance with this circular, the military police (United Nations and contingents), shall regularly conduct patrols and adopt other measures to ensure compliance with the provision of this directive.

[UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION], Force Commander
 (Signature, date)



Annex 6. Draft UNICEF Checklist for age assessment

Checklist

It is important to recognize that the assessment of age is not an exact science. It is a process within which there will always be an inherent margin of error and a child's exact age cannot be established through medical or other physical examinations. However, there are situations in which it is deemed that an age assessment process is necessary and in those instances the following guidelines should be upheld.

Assessments of age undertaken in the field usually consider the child's:

- Presentation and demeanour at interview;
- Account of their past history;
- Growth, physical or sexual development;
- Mental and cognitive development;
- Emotional and "abstract" thought development.

The child focal points will always ensure that the following practices are adhered to during the age assessment process.

(table on next page)

Stages	Narrative	Practice checklist
Pre-procedure	<p>Ensure that the age assessment is being undertaken because relevant actors have serious doubts about the stated age of the child; ensure that the assessment is not being initiated as a routine or standard procedure.</p> <p>Is the procedure really necessary?</p>	<p>Q. Have the factors that may indicate that the child's age is inconsistent with that which is stated been given full consideration?</p> <p>Q. Have cultural, environmental, developmental and physical factors been properly considered?</p> <p>Q. Have attempts been made to gather a picture of the child's individual circumstances and compile a social history and have these been fully considered?</p> <p>Q. Has more than one person expressed serious doubt about the child's age? Has there been due, measured and objective consideration of whether there is any possible doubt that the stated age is correct?</p> <p>Q. Has the decision to submit the child to an age assessment procedure been approved by a senior official?</p>
Principle of necessity	<p>Ensure that a plan to undertake a physical examination is a measure of last resort taking place because other attempts, for example, the gathering of documentary evidence, interviewing the child, etc., have failed to establish age.</p> <p>Is a physical examination the only method of assessing age?</p>	<p>Q. Have all alternative avenues to establish the child's age been fully explored?</p> <p>Q. Has the child been given an opportunity to respond to any doubts on the age stated by the child?</p> <p>Q. Could others involved in the child's life, a teacher, community elder, and so on, offer an indication of age?</p> <p>Q. Has documentary evidence—current and historical, country of origin—been robustly sought and considered?</p> <p>Q. Have “structural” factors been given due consideration, for example the use of different calendars in some countries such as in Ethiopia where a 13-month year can lead to confusion in relation to child's stated age?</p> <p>Q. Can others provide corroboration by anecdotal evidence or is there circumstantial corroboration?</p> <p>Q. Has an accurate social history been compiled and considered?</p> <p>Q. Has consideration been given to “family positioning”, cyclical events or other similar factors?</p>

Stages	Narrative	Practice checklist
Pre-procedure	<p>Ensure that informed consent to undertake the age assessment has been secured from the child or the guardian. It is extremely unlikely that genuine informed consent can be forthcoming at a time of “crisis” and consent should be sought only when a child has had time to recover from traumatic or unsettling episodes.</p> <p>That may take considerable time in some instances. In circumstances in which there is no consent, it cannot be used against the person and the person should be considered a child.</p> <p>Has the child given informed consent to a physical examination?</p>	<p>Q. Has there been an assessment of any trauma the child may be experiencing? Has it been ascertained that the child is in a state of well-being sufficient so that she/he can give informed consent?</p> <p>Q. Has the child agreed to the age assessment?</p> <p>Q. Has specific consent been secured for a physical examination that will be part of the age assessment?</p> <p>Q. Is it clear that the child has not been coerced, incentivized or threatened into agreeing to the assessment?</p> <p>Q. Has the procedure and the implications of the outcome been explained to the child?</p> <p>Q. Does the child understand what will happen, and if appropriate, have special communication aids been used?</p> <p>Q. Has the procedure been demonstrated to the child, if necessary?</p> <p>Q. If the child has not consented, has she/he accepted that there will be no age assessment and/or physical examination and have guarantees been sought and secured that this will not influence the perception of the child’s age?</p>
During procedure	<p>Ensure that the age assessment procedure is multidisciplinary and that it draws on a range of appropriately skilled professionals. Ensure the assessment does not rely solely on a physical examination.</p> <p>Is a range of approaches being used in the age assessment?</p>	<p>Q. Are a varied range of relevant professionals contributing to the assessment, for example, social worker, child psychologist, teacher or other educational professionals?</p> <p>Q. Are those professionals qualified in their fields, and are they experienced in their work?</p> <p>Q. Are the questions that are put to the child open-ended as opposed to leading?</p> <p>Q. Have other sources contributed to the assessment?</p> <p>Q. Have others been consulted, for example those who know the child, relatives, cultural mediators where appropriate?</p> <p>Q. Have “second opinions” been sought if appropriate?</p>

Stages	Narrative	Practice checklist
<p>Ensure that the professionals undertaking the age assessment have no vested interest and are independent from the agencies and actors that would provide services or support to the child or would in some other way acquire responsibility for the child if they are assessed as being a child.</p> <p>Are the professionals engaged in the assessment independent?</p>	<p>Q. Who employs the practitioners undertaking the assessment (social workers, police officers, medical doctors)? Are they independent from potential or actual services provided to the child?</p> <p>Q. Are the practitioners bound by a professional or ethical code that guides their work?</p> <p>Q. Have any other potential or actual conflicts of interest been considered and addressed?</p> <p>Q. Is it clear that the practitioners do not hold personal opinions that could unduly influence their assessment?</p>	<p>Q. Who employs the practitioners undertaking the assessment (social workers, police officers, medical doctors)? Are they independent from potential or actual service providers?</p> <p>Q. Is the mandate of the guardian clear and accepted by all? Can they stop the assessment if they feel it is abusive or inappropriate in some other way?</p> <p>Q. Has the child received legal advice in preparing for the assessment and will she/he have legal advice in response to the outcome of the assessment?</p>
<p>Ensure that, subject to their wishes, the child is supported and informed in a language she/he understands by a legal representative or guardian or other representative of her/his choice throughout the entire age assessment process.</p> <p>Is the child supported throughout the procedure?</p>	<p>Q. Has the child's opinion about the gender of the practitioners undertaking the assessment been sought and respected?</p> <p>Q. Do the practitioners understand the child's culture and ethnicity?</p> <p>Q. Can the practitioners and the child communicate directly in a shared language?</p> <p>Q. If necessary is a trained interpreter available who has been briefed about the assessment process?</p> <p>Q. Do the practitioners have an understanding of the culture and ethnicity of the child and can they apply this within the context of an age assessment?</p>	<p>Q. Who employs the practitioners undertaking the assessment (social workers, police officers, medical doctors)? Are they independent from potential or actual service providers?</p> <p>Q. Is the mandate of the guardian clear and accepted by all? Can they stop the assessment if they feel it is abusive or inappropriate in some other way?</p> <p>Q. Has the child received legal advice in preparing for the assessment and will she/he have legal advice in response to the outcome of the assessment?</p>
<p>Ensure that the age assessment is culturally and gender sensitive and that the practitioners undertaking the assessment are fully familiar with the child's cultural and ethnic background.</p> <p>Is the assessment sensitive to cultural and gender needs?</p>	<p>Q. Has the child's opinion about the gender of the practitioners undertaking the assessment been sought and respected?</p> <p>Q. Do the practitioners understand the child's culture and ethnicity?</p> <p>Q. Can the practitioners and the child communicate directly in a shared language?</p> <p>Q. If necessary is a trained interpreter available who has been briefed about the assessment process?</p> <p>Q. Do the practitioners have an understanding of the culture and ethnicity of the child and can they apply this within the context of an age assessment?</p>	<p>Q. Who employs the practitioners undertaking the assessment (social workers, police officers, medical doctors)? Are they independent from potential or actual service providers?</p> <p>Q. Is the mandate of the guardian clear and accepted by all? Can they stop the assessment if they feel it is abusive or inappropriate in some other way?</p> <p>Q. Has the child received legal advice in preparing for the assessment and will she/he have legal advice in response to the outcome of the assessment?</p>

During procedure

Stages	Narrative	Practice checklist
During procedure	<p>Ensure that there is no infringement of the child's dignity. Ensure the age assessment is undertaken in an environment that is safe for children and which supports their needs and is child appropriate.</p> <p>Confidentiality and non-intrusiveness</p>	<p>Q. Are the practitioners trained in recognizing and responding to the abuse of children?</p> <p>Q. Is a chaperone present during physical examinations? Note that a girl must always have a female chaperone.</p> <p>Q. Is the environment child friendly, for example a Quiet area free from adults possibly with toys, books and magazines, as appropriate?</p> <p>Q. Are children offered food and drink and allowed toilet and other breaks?</p> <p>Q. Is it a confidential environment (e.g., in a separate room)?</p>
	<p>Ensure that services and support relevant to the outcome of the assessment are provided to the child without delay.</p>	<p>Q. Is the outcome of the assessment accepted by all the relevant stakeholders in an objective manner?</p> <p>Q. Are immediate changes made where required, for example the release or transfer of a child held in an adult detention facility?</p> <p>Q. Are relevant child-appropriate referrals made, as appropriate?</p> <p>Q. Are those referrals made promptly?</p> <p>Q. Is paperwork issued recognizing, confirming or changing age status?</p> <p>Q. Does subsequent document outline that age is "assumed"?</p>
Post-procedure	<p>Where, following the age assessment procedure, doubt remains about the age of the child, ensure that this is applied to the advantage of the child.</p> <p>Doubtful cases</p>	<p>Q. Do all the relevant stakeholders accept in an objective manner the outcome of the assessment?</p> <p>Q. Do those stakeholders agree to treat the individual as if she or he is a child with due consideration of maturity?</p> <p>Q. Are immediate changes made where required, for example the release or transfer of a child held in an adult detention facility?</p> <p>Q. Are relevant child appropriate referrals made, as appropriate?</p> <p>Q. Are those referrals made promptly?</p> <p>Q. Is paperwork issued recognizing, confirming or changing age status?</p> <p>Q. Does subsequent document outline that age is "assumed"?</p>

Stages	Narrative	Practice checklist
Post-procedure	<p>Ensure the outcome and the consequences of the outcome are explained to the child as promptly as is reasonably practical.</p>	<p>Q. Is the outcome and the consequences of the assessment explained to the child in a language and in a manner she/he can understand using age-appropriate or specialist forms of communication where necessary?</p> <p>Q. Are guarantees secured that the child understands the outcome and consequences of the assessment?</p> <p>Q. Are the outcome and consequences, including any practical arrangements or changes to the child's situation, given to the child in writing?</p>
	<p>Ensure that where appropriate the child is able to challenge a decision they disagree with.</p>	<p>Q. Has the child been informed that she or he can submit new information at any time in the future and that, following this, a new assessment could be triggered?</p> <p>Q. Is there a right of appeal against the outcome?</p> <p>Q. Is the child aware of his or her appeal rights?</p> <p>Q. Does the child have a legal representative to assist her or him with the appeal and advise him or her about submitting new information?</p> <p>Q. Is the appeal procedure available to the child at no cost?</p>

Annex 7. Sample protocol for the handover of children in custody owing to their association with armed forces or armed groups

Protocol for the Handover of Children in Custody owing to their Association with Armed Forces or Armed Groups

Between

[GOVERNMENT]

and

[United Nations Country Task Force On Monitoring And Reporting]

Preamble

Noting the ratification by [GOVERNMENT] of relevant international legal instruments relating to the rights and protection of children, including:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2000)
- The Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto
- The ILO Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and its Recommendation No. 190 (1999)
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998)

Also noting the endorsement by [GOVERNMENT] of the Paris Principles on the Protection of Children from Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007);

Underlining the primary responsibility of [GOVERNMENT] to fulfil, protect and promote the rights of all children affected by armed conflict, including children recruited and used and/or abducted by armed groups, and to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of children into their communities;

Reaffirming the commitment of [GOVERNMENT] to ensure the protection of children under the age of 18 years who escaped from armed groups, were released from armed groups, surrendered from armed groups, or were captured during military operations, and find themselves in the custody of [ARMED FORCES];

Stressing that the welfare and best interests of children encountered in the course of military operations shall be prioritized at all times and the necessary attention and resources shall be provided in order to enable immediate care, including basic medical, food and psycho-social needs;

It is directed as follows:

Children in custody refers to both boys and girls under the age of 18 who come into contact with military forces after having escaped, surrendered or been released from armed groups, or having been captured during military operations and find themselves in the custody of the armed forces.

Directive 1—Appointment of focal points

[GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] shall appoint national-level and local-level focal points within for the implementation of the Protocol. [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] shall make available a dedicated hotline number to be notified of any presence of children in the custody of [ARMED FORCES]. The military commander of [ARMED FORCES] shall disseminate the hotline number to all commanding officers through a military order.

Directive 2—Notification of presence of children in military custody

Commanding officers shall immediately alert [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] focal point of the presence of children in the custody of [THE ARMED FORCES], regardless of their nationality or current location, and in any case no later than 12 hours after first contact. The commanding officer shall ensure that children are immediately separated from adults, and boys from girls. If and when possible, efforts should be made to preserve family unity, providing it is in the children's best interest.

Directive 3—Time frame for handover/access by child protection actors

The commanding officer shall facilitate the handover of children in the custody of [ARMED FORCES] to [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] in the shortest time possible and in any case no later than 72 hours after first contact. The commanding officer shall ensure that relevant child protection actors, including [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY], the United Nations child protection adviser, UNICEF and the ICRC, have full and unimpeded access to children while in custody of [ARMED FORCES].

Directive 4—Treatment of children while in military custody

Children in the custody of [ARMED FORCES] shall be treated humanely and in a manner consistent with the special status, needs and rights of children. The commanding officer shall ensure that:

- Children are provided with basic care, including food and non-food items, appropriate and safe shelter, and urgent medical care as needed, and shall be protected from any form of violence, abuse, neglect or exploitation while in custody.
- Children are asked only about their name, age, place of usual residence, family whereabouts and medical needs. No information shall be collected for the purpose of intelligence gathering. Further interviewing of a child should be done only by civilian personnel trained on child protection.
- Children's privacy is respected with a view to avoiding stigmatization or other harm owing to undue publicity or the process of labelling. No information that could lead to the identification of the child shall be made public; photos shall only be taken by for the purpose of restoring family links.

Directive 5—Cross-border arrangements

- For children encountered outside their country of origin, the same handover process and set of principles shall be utilized. Once handed over to from military authorities to civilian child protection actors in-country, [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] shall work with its child protection counterparts in the other country concerned, in collaboration with other relevant child protection actors, with the aim of cross-border repatriation, interim care and family reunification or other durable solution.

Directive 6—Preparedness, implementation and compliance

[GOVERNMENT] shall undertake a number of preparedness, implementation and compliance measures:

- Appoint a senior focal point within [ARMED FORCES] and [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] to oversee the implementation of the Protocol and to act as an interface with the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting ;
- Disseminate the contents of the Protocol to all commanding officers and relevant Government officials involved in the practical implementation of the Protocol through a military order and political directive;
- Design a detailed operational plan guiding the implementation of the Protocol, outlining roles and responsibilities for commanding officers and relevant Government officials;
- Share regular compliance reports on the implementation of the Protocol with the country task force on monitoring and reporting and inform the task force on the number of children in military custody, disaggregated by age, gender and status of the child.

Terms and conditions

[ARMED FORCES] and [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY] agree on the terms and conditions of the present Protocol with the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting . The Protocol will enter into force on the date of signing below and the duration will remain open-ended. Its contents may be revised and amended upon written agreement of all signatories. All issues of interpretation of provisions included in the present Protocol will be resolved amicably or, if needed, through diplomatic means.

Signed in [Place] on [dd.mm.yyyy]

SIGNATORY [MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS/DEFENCE]

SIGNATORY [GOVERNMENT CHILD PROTECTION AGENCY]

SIGNATORY [SRSG or RC]

SIGNATORY [UNICEF]

Annex 8. Sample memorandum of understanding between UNICEF and [United Nations peacekeeping operation] on co-management of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism

I. Purpose

1. In [COUNTRY], UNICEF and [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] have been the co-managers at the principal and technical levels of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on grave violations against children since the United Nations country task force was established in [YEAR].
2. The purpose of this memorandum of understanding is to establish well-defined roles and responsibilities for the co-management of the MRM in [COUNTRY] at the technical level, in order to avoid unilateral interpretations or misunderstandings, and to mitigate tensions and potential conflict that could negatively impact the capacity and credibility of the United Nations to deliver on the MRM.

II. Scope

3. This memorandum applies to the technical level co-managers of the MRM in [COUNTRY] (the UNICEF and [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] chiefs of child protection units), as well as to staff from both organizations in relation to the MRM, known hereinafter as “the parties”.

III. Guiding principles

4. This memorandum of understanding is guided by the following principles:
 - (a) **Best interest of the child.** In all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child will be a primary consideration. This applies to decisions regarding a specified individual child or group of children.
 - (b) **Collaborative approach.** The parties will work together in support of a common purpose: the smooth and effective functioning of the MRM. This includes sharing information and consulting each other regularly, in order to foment trust-building between the parties.
 - (c) **Transparency and presumption of good faith.** The parties will proceed with transparency in all their interactions. In case of uncertainty on the transparency of one party, it will be presumed that the party acted in good faith.
 - (d) **Flexibility for conflict resolution.** The parties will resolve differences as soon as they arise. This includes seeking common ground and being flexible in cases of disagreements. The best interest of the child and the smooth functioning of the MRM will be guiding criteria in solving disagreements.

IV. Engagement with external partners

5. As part of their responsibilities as co-managers of the MRM, the parties engage regularly with external partners, including national authorities (civilian and military), other United Nations bodies, international humanitarian and child protection actors, national NGOs and civil society organizations, diplomatic missions and donor organizations.
6. When engaging with external partners in relation to the MRM, the parties agree to:
 - (a) **Speak with one voice.** This means conveying mutually agreed messages and not providing conflicting or contradictory information.
 - (b) **Resolve technical disagreements internally.** This means not airing the disagreements in public or involving external partners in their resolution.
 - (c) **Use commonly-agreed presentations** related to the MRM in both bilateral and joint meetings with external partners.
7. The UNICEF and [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] chiefs of child protection UNITS both agree to attend MRM-related strategic meetings that require senior-level representation at technical level.

V. Information sharing

8. Information sharing is at the heart of MRM coordination. The parties agree to adopt a proactive approach to information sharing. This means not waiting for information to arrive or to be requested, but rather asking for and sharing information proactively, especially in cases in which one party has knowledge that the other party has the information.
9. The parties agree to share all MRM-related documentation and information in a timely manner and continually, including reports (evaluation, thematic, situation), data on allegations, work plans, and communications with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. When in doubt about whether information is MRM-related, the parties agree to err on the side of coordination and transparency and share it.
10. The parties agree to share all MRM-related correspondence addressed to government representatives before sending it. This will foster speaking with one voice and allow the parties to coordinate follow-up messages and response.

VI. Coordination

11. The parties agree to discuss MRM-related activities, whether for capacity-building, communication, advocacy or response, before carrying them out individually. These include, but are not limited to:
 - (a) Public events or campaigns;
 - (b) Programmatic actions;
 - (c) Dialogue with armed groups for the purposes of releasing children from their ranks and preventing grave violations;

- (d) Press releases or official statements on grave violations committed against children by parties to conflict;
- (e) Training of external partners on the MRM;
- (f) Use of MRM data for unilateral advocacy;
- (g) When in doubt about whether certain actions are MRM-related, the parties agree to err on the side of coordination and discuss them.

12. The UNICEF and [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] chiefs of child protection units agree to hold regular bilateral meetings on a monthly basis to review and resolve any MRM-related issues, including problems on technical issues such as data collection and information management, as well as strategic issues related to advocacy, response and the work of the United Nations country task force. This will allow the parties to be more effective in leading staff on the MRM and in sharing responsibilities as co-managers of the MRM.

13. The parties agree to share their responsibilities to co-chair MRM-related working groups on a rotational basis. This includes the United Nations country task force, the Joint Technical Working Group (the government forum in charge of implementing the MRM action plan) and the Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict, a network of diplomatic missions which advocates on children and armed conflict issues. This agreement includes producing a calendar of meetings with clear assignments on co-chairing and the timely production of minutes or meeting notes. The parties agree to review and sign off on minutes or meeting notes together before sharing them with the relevant working group.

14. The parties agree to facilitate information sharing between the United Nations country task force and the Joint Technical Working Group, to foster government ownership of monitoring and responses on grave violations.

15. The parties agree to engage with the principal-level co-chairs of the United Nations country task force on a regular basis, to keep them duly informed of progress and challenges in the co-management of the MRM in [COUNTRY], and also to ensure their continued commitment to the revival of the MRM in [COUNTRY].

VII. Division and sharing of tasks

Engagement with authorities and parties to conflict

16. When engaging with government authorities in relation to the MRM, the parties agree to a division of interlocutors made in relation to each party's mandate and comparative advantage, as follows (examples are not exhaustive):

- (a) UNICEF to engage with the ministry of education and the ministry of health on attacks against schools or hospitals, and with the ministry of social affairs on re-integration of children associated with armed forces or armed groups.
- (b) [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] to engage with military prosecutors and judges on the fight against impunity for perpetrators of grave violations against children.

- (c) UNICEF and [UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING OPERATION] to engage jointly with the ministry of defence and [ARMED FORCE] authorities on the implementation of the MRM action plan.

Information management

17. Information management includes management of an MRM database. The parties agree to implement a shared information management system or database for the MRM in [COUNTRY]. This will require joint consultations with UNICEF, Department of Peace Operations and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in New York regarding the roll-out of the new MRM information management system scheduled for [DATE].

18. The parties agree that the implementation of a shared database for the MRM in [COUNTRY] will mean equal, unlimited and permanent access to the database by both parties, joint management of the MRM data stored therein, and joint responsibility for the security of that data. Having equal access to a shared database will help the parties execute other shared responsibilities such as production of analysis on trends and production of MRM reporting requirements.

Data collection and verification

19. The parties are equally responsible for data collection and verification of allegations on grave violations. They will divide data collection and verification responsibilities according to their geographical presence and capacities.

20. The parties agree to use the same standards and procedures for MRM data collection and verification, including the use of a harmonized MRM incident form. That will provide them with a more solid basis on which to meet MRM reporting requirements and data analysis for other purposes.

21. The parties agree to apply agreed procedures for age assessment and for separation of children associated with armed forces or armed groups.

Response

22. The MRM action plan signed by the Government of [COUNTRY] includes four pillars: separation of children from armed forces or armed groups, prevention, response, and the fight against impunity. As co-managers of the MRM, the parties agree to divide the focus of their work on the Action Plan along these four pillars, based on their institutional mandates and comparative advantages, as follows:

- (a) [UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATION] to work on the separation of children and the fight against impunity.
- (b) UNICEF to work on prevention and response.

However, the parties will work together on engagement with armed groups as part of the recommended overall shift in focus of the MRM in [COUNTRY].

Capacity-building

23. The parties agree to develop and implement a joint capacity-building plan on the MRM in order to retain a critical mass of trained United Nations staff and partners on MRM data collection and verification.

Reporting

24. MRM reporting requirements include the global horizontal note quarterly reports for the Security Council, the [COUNTRY] contribution to the Secretary-General's annual report on children in armed conflict, and the country-specific reports on children in armed conflict issues in [COUNTRY] submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child every two to three years. The parties agree to share MRM reporting requirements as follows:

- (a) Prepare the global horizontal notes on a rotational basis.
- (b) Joint preparation of the [COUNTRY] contribution to the Secretary-General's annual report on children in armed conflict and of the country-specific reports on children in armed conflict. That means dividing the various sections of the reports between the parties.
- (c) Development of a checklist on clear sign-off procedures for all reporting requirements.

VIII. Entry into force

25. This memorandum is binding on the parties and will become effective immediately upon signature by both parties.

26. The parties agree to revise this memorandum once a year starting from the date of signature.

For UNICEF:

Chief of Child Protection

UNICEF

Date:

For MISSION X:

Chief of Child Protection

[UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING
OPERATION]

Date:

19-04812

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