

# Module 6



## How to Monitor and Report Violations of Children's Rights

### Learning Activity 6.1

#### Monitoring violations of children's rights

#### Case Studies

##### Case Study 1 – Democratic Republic of the Congo

You have recently arrived at the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) as a UNPOL officer. One day, you are patrolling with your host-State police colleague near Bunia, when some residents in one village approach you and inform you of violations committed by an armed group that passed through the village the previous year. They claim that the rebels abducted several children from the village and that the children were never heard from again. The residents said that they have heard rumours about a mass grave some sixty kilometres away, and they think their children might have been killed and buried there.

The village residents ask for your help to locate the mass grave and investigate whether their children are buried there. They also want justice for this crime. They ask for your advice.

Questions:

1. What violations against children have been committed in this case?
2. What advice would you give to the residents?

### Case Study 2 – South Sudan

You are stationed in Juba as a UNPOL officer in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). One morning, a village chief you know from the western part of the country visits the capital. He comes to the United Nations office and requests to meet with you. You invite him in for tea and he tells you about an incident that happened yesterday in his village. A group from the South Sudan Defence Forces came to the village and took 15 boys, aged between 11 and 17 years. The leader of the group said that their military barracks needed repairs and that they would keep the boys for a few days to help them with the work, then return them to the village. When the boys' parents protested, one father was beaten with a stick, and the boys were taken away.

The village chief says that he knows where the barracks are located. He fears reprisals for his village if he complains. He asks for your advice and assistance.

Questions:

1. What violations against children have been committed in this case?
2. What advice would you give to the village chief?

### Case Study 3 – Mali

You have recently arrived in Timbuktu as an UNPOL officer deployed in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). You are in the eastern part of the country patrolling by vehicle with a UNPOL colleague; the host-State police are in another vehicle in front of you. About halfway through the patrol, the lead vehicle comes to a halt and you see a girl stumbling into the middle of the road. She is bleeding and her clothes are ripped. You all get out of your vehicles, and the two female colleagues from the host-State police talk to the girl and manage to calm her down.

Once the girl, who looks about 14 years, has calmed down, she tells you that, about an hour ago, she was assaulted and raped by two men in uniform. A group of armed men had suddenly arrived in her village and started shouting at everyone demanding money. She says that she is very worried about her younger sister because she is not sure if she was able to escape. The village is about one kilometre away.

You and your colleagues consult to decide what to do.

Questions:

1. What violations against children have been committed in this case?
2. What advice would you give to the host-State police?

#### **Case Study 4 – Colombia**

You have recently arrived in Bogota as an UNPOL officer deployed in the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC). You are travelling towards the capital on your way back from a meeting in the north-western part of the country. Just when you arrive near Medellin, the street is suddenly blocked by a group of approximately 200 people who appear to be shouting political slogans. The demonstrators seem to be very angry. Many are carrying protest signs and people are standing at the back of several vehicles accompanying the mob towards Bogota.

At that moment, you receive a call on your mobile phone. It is the local police asking for your advice about this demonstration, especially as there are clearly many children of all ages in the crowd. The local police remind you about an incident that you had heard about on the news last night, in which a 16-year-old girl was accidentally killed by the host-State police during a raid on a group involved in smuggling goods towards the north.

Questions:

1. What current and potential future violations against children can you observe in this case?
2. What advice would you give to the host-State police?

## Learning Activity 6.2

### Reporting violations of children's rights

#### Case Studies

##### Case Study 1 – Mali

A new civilian staff member has just joined the Political Affairs Section of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) in Bamako. One day, an adolescent boy approaches him and offers to clean his UN vehicle every day if the staff member pays for his school fees. He says that he does this also for other UN staff living in the neighbourhood. The boy tells the staff member that he would be helping him to continue his education and improve his life, as his father is very poor and cannot afford the school fees.

The next morning, a UNPOL officer who lives in the same building as the civilian staff member sees the boy cleaning the car of the new civilian colleague and overhears them discussing about the payment for this daily service.

##### Simulation exercise:

1. The UNPOL officer who witnessed the scene and overheard the discussion reaches out to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Invite two participants in the group to volunteer to simulate the phone conversation between the two UNPOL colleagues, whereby the UNPOL officer reports the case to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Each volunteer has 2 minutes to prepare for the simulation. The phone call can last a maximum of 5 minutes.
2. The other participants should observe the scene without intervening and pay attention to the content of the oral report.
3. After the phone call is completed, the other participants should summarize the main information provided and write it down in point form.
4. They should then determine whether any relevant information was not mentioned by the UNPOL officer in the telephone report, and complement the written report with the missing information, if any.
5. Finally, participants should brainstorm to answer the following two questions:
  - (a) *What should the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point do after this call?*
  - (b) *Why is it prohibited for UN personnel to employ children during their deployment in the host country?*

### Case Study 2 – Democratic Republic of the Congo

Over the past two months, there have been almost daily attacks in the northern part of Ituri province in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. You are stationed in Bunia, the capital of Ituri province, as a UNPOL officer deployed in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO). This morning, you and military observers in the mission set out to patrol the affected regions together with colleagues from the United Nation’s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the World Food Program (WFP). In recent weeks, OCHA and the WFP have been trying to deliver vital humanitarian assistance to the population living in this area, without success. However, the leader of one of the armed groups active in the area recently agreed to grant safe passage to deliver humanitarian assistance to the local population. Children constitute the majority of the population living in this region.

When you arrive near the town of Aru, the convoy is stopped. Armed women and men block access to the area. Negotiations fail as they refuse to let civilians access humanitarian assistance.

#### Simulation exercise:

1. The UNPOL officer who took part in the convoy reaches out to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Invite two participants in the group to volunteer to simulate the phone conversation between the two UNPOL colleagues, whereby the UNPOL officer reports the case to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Each volunteer has 2 minutes to prepare for the simulation. The phone call can last a maximum of 5 minutes.
2. The other participants should observe the scene without intervening and pay attention to the content of the oral report.
3. After the phone call is completed, the other participants summarize the main information provided and write it down in point form.
4. They should then determine whether any relevant information was not mentioned by the UNPOL Officer in the telephone report, and complement the written report with the missing information, if any.
5. Finally, participants should brainstorm to answer the following two questions:
  - (a) *What should the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point do after this call?*
  - (b) *Since denial of humanitarian access is considered one of the six grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict, what do you think will happen?*

### Case Study 3 – Central African Republic

You are a UNPOL officer in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) stationed in Ndélé. One of your tasks is to visit the local prison and the police stations to monitor the conditions of detention of those deprived of their liberty in these facilities.

This morning, you met with your national counterparts at the local police station to give a brief training on child-sensitive interviewing techniques. At the end of the session, you ask if you could take the opportunity to visit the premises since you were already there. The host-State police tell you that it is late, and it would not be possible to visit today. You insist and, after much discussion, they allow you to visit the detention cells, which all appear to be empty. But you hear a strange sound and go to the other end of the corridor, where you find two boys handcuffed on the floor in a locked closet. They seem to be around 14 years old.

#### Simulation exercise:

1. The UNPOL officer who visited the police station meets with his colleague, the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Invite two participants in the group to volunteer to simulate the meeting between the two UNPOL colleagues, whereby the UNPOL officer reports the case to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Each volunteer has 2 minutes to prepare for the simulation. The meeting can last a maximum of 5 minutes.
2. The other participants should observe the scene without intervening and pay attention to the content of the meeting.
3. After the meeting is completed, the other participants should summarize the main information provided and write it down in point form.
4. They should then determine whether any relevant information was not mentioned by the UNPOL officer during the meeting, and complement the written report with the missing information, if any.
5. Finally, participants should brainstorm to answer the following two questions:
  - (a) *What should the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point do after this meeting?*
  - (b) *Since depriving children of their liberty is not considered as one of the six grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict, what do you think will happen?*

### Case Study 4 – Colombia

A UNPOL officer recently deployed in the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia (UNVMC) is stationed in a town near a camp for internally displaced persons. The town is fairly large, and since the officer is new, he does not yet know his way around.

One evening, the officer leaves the UN compound on foot to go to his place of residence in a street nearby. A young woman approaches him and tells him she lives in the camp. She says that she noticed that he is new in town and offers to show him around if he buys her dinner and a drink. She looks like she is between 16 and 18 years old, but the officer does not ask her age.

The officer decides to accept the offer and they walk around the town together for an hour. The young woman tells him that she has lost her parents and that she is very poor. They sit down at a small outdoor restaurant where they have some fried chicken and beer. The officer pays for the food and drinks. He then walks the young woman back to the camp entrance and kisses her. She promises to come back to see him the next day.

Meanwhile, another UNPOL officer sees the new colleague kissing the girl.

#### Simulation exercise:

1. The UNPOL officer who saw the new colleague kissing the girl reaches out to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Invite two participants in the group to volunteer to simulate the phone conversation between the two UNPOL colleagues, whereby the UNPOL officer reports the case to the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point. Each volunteer has 2 minutes to prepare for the simulation. The phone call can last a maximum of 5 minutes.
2. The other participants should observe the scene without intervening and pay attention to the content of the oral report.
3. After the phone call is completed, the other participants should summarize the main information provided and write it down in point form.
4. They should then determine whether any relevant information was not mentioned by the UNPOL officer in the telephone report, and complement the written report with the missing information, if any.
5. Finally, participants should brainstorm to answer the following two questions:
  - (a) *What should the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point do after this call?*
  - (b) *Should there be consequences for the new UNPOL colleague? Why?*

## Learning Activity 6.3

### Following-up on violations of children's rights

#### Case Studies

##### Case Study 1 – Central African Republic

During a visit to a local police station, a UNPOL officer discovered two boys who were handcuffed on the floor in a locked closet. The UNPOL officer reported the case to his/her hierarchical supervisor, the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point and the Child Protection Adviser.

The day after the incident, the UNPOL officer and the Child Protection Adviser meet with the new chief of the police station where the incident occurred. The new police chief was not in charge when the incident happened and wishes to collaborate with UNPOL to improve the situation.

##### Questions:

- 1- Now that the case has been reported, what should the UNPOL officer advise the new police chief of the Host-State police to do?
- 2- What are the follow-up actions the UNPOL officer can take at his/her level?

##### Case Study 2 – Mali

Two UNPOL officers witnessed two host-State police colleagues tend to the needs of a girl after she was assaulted and raped by two men in uniform. One UNPOL officer reported the case to his/her hierarchical supervisor, the UNPOL Child Protection Focal Point and the Child Protection Adviser.

The day after the incident, the UNPOL and the Child Protection Adviser meet with the two host-State police officers who took care of the girl. The two host-State police officers seek advice from UNPOL to review their approach on this type of incident involving children. They specifically ask for advice on core principles that should guide their approach.



**Questions:**

- 1- Which core principles would you advise the host-State police to consider in such incidents involving children?
- 2- Why do you think it is important for the host-State police to consider these core principles seriously?