
Module 4:

COORDINATION WITH CHILD PROTECTION ACTORS

OVERVIEW

Since 2001, the protection of children in conflict has increasingly been included in peacekeeping mandates making it mandatory for each component of the mission to take children into account within their respective core activities. This module presents the various actors involved in child protection within and outside the UN system, as well as their coordination issues.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Be aware that the protection of children is a shared responsibility of the mission, UN, government and NGO actors
- Understand coordination on child protection in UN peacekeeping missions including the role of the UN Police
- Understand the role of Child Protection Advisors (CPAs) and the UN Police Child Protection Focal Points
- Know how to identify and refer children's cases to relevant actors within the child protection community

ACTIVITIES

- PowerPoint Presentation
- Group work around case studies
- Debriefing
- Quiz

LEARNING HANDOUTS

- Case Study 1
- Case Study 2
- Case Study 3
- Case Study 4

FACILITATION TIME

2 hours

TRAINER'S NOTES

SLIDE 1: Learning Outcomes

 As we have seen in previous modules, peacekeeping mandates have increasingly included child protection concerns. Each component of the mission has responsibilities in child protection and must consider child rights issues within its respective core activities. All peacekeepers – police, military and civilians – must be aware of their responsibilities and receive training in child protection that enables them to fulfil their role in the mission.

 For the mission to effectively and timely implement its child protection mandate, each component must also be aware of the roles and responsibilities of other components and understand coordination mechanisms. In this module, we will present the various actors involved in child protection within and outside the UN system, as well as their coordination mechanisms.

SLIDE 2 – YouTube video – The Power of Teamwork – URL: <https://youtu.be/4duPBWzf46E>

 You can select a video of your choice for this exercise. The above link gives you an example, however, you may want to present something specific to your context.

 Play the short video and explain why this video was chosen. While it is funny it clearly highlights the need for cooperation and coordination when it comes to complex situations. Child protection in peace operations cannot be done by single actors alone. Close cooperation is essential to achieve the greatest effect, especially under the challenging circumstances in post conflict environments.

SLIDE 3: Coordination with other child protection actors



SHORT EXERCISE ON INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

 In plenary, ask participants the following question:

 What are some of the UN agencies and other international actors that have roles to play in child protection?

 Write down the following categories on flipcharts or on the board. Use one sheet or one area of the board for each category, leaving enough space for writing in each category:

Within Mission	United Nations and Non-governmental actors	National and local government actors

 Ask learners to come to the flipcharts or board and write down as many organizations as possible.

 Give participants 10 minutes to write their answers. Then, use the following possible answers to complete the lists. Please note that the list is not exhaustive and is only for reference. It does not have to be cited in plenary with everyone.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

Within the UN Mission	Within Country United Nations and Non-governmental actors	National and local government actors
UN Police Focal Point on Child Protection; Child Protection Advisor; Human Rights Section; Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) Section; Civil Affairs Section; Justice & Corrections Section; Military Component; Security Sector Reform (SSR) Section; Conflict Related Sexual Violence Section; Conduct and Discipline Unit; Rule of Law Section; Gender Section; Public Information Section; Military Component.	UNICEF; UN Secretariat; UNDP; UN Women; UN OCHA; UNHCR; WHO; UNODC; INTERPOL; ICRC, Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies; Save the Children; World Vision; Oxfam; Norwegian Refugee Council; War Child; Local NGOs; International Labor Office (ILO).	African Union (AU); European Union (EU); Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD); International Criminal Court and Special Tribunals; International Labor Organization; Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

 All these organizations have a role to play in child protection.

 Here are some examples of child protection activities undertaken by the various components of a UN peacekeeping mission:

- ❖ *Special Representative of the Secretary General / Head of Mission*: Provides leadership role in child protection policy and advocacy. S/he is responsible for placing the needs of children on the political and peace agenda in the host country.
- ❖ *Heads of Components, including Police Commissioner*: Also have an advocacy role at the strategic level and a role to ensure that child protection policies are adequately considered by their respective components.
- ❖ *Political Affairs Section*: Responsible for ensuring that children's issues are considered in any peace negotiations/agreements and other political processes.
- ❖ *Human Rights Section*: Responsible for ensuring the promotion and protection of all human rights in the mission, including children's rights.
- ❖ *UN Military*: Responsible for the physical protection of civilians, including children.
- ❖ *UNPOL*: Responsible for capacity-building, training and mentoring of the Host State police, including on child protection, and can play a role in Security Sector Reform (SSR).
- ❖ *Corrections*: Responsible for assisting the Host State in reforming its corrections and prison sector. For example, by ensuring that detention facilities are in line with international standards and that the rights of children in detention are upheld. This includes adequate physical structures for detention but also children's rights to medical care, education and recreation.
- ❖ *DDR Section*: Responsible for ensuring that any Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program considers the needs of boys and girls associated with armed groups.
- ❖ *Justice & Corrections Section*: Responsible for assisting the Host State in reforming its legal and judicial systems, including making laws and the judiciary more responsive to the rights and needs of children.
- ❖ *Civil Affairs Section*: Implement community projects for children to support peacebuilding efforts.
- ❖ UN Children's Fund (UNICEF): main UN agency working on all children issues (www.unicef.org).
- ❖ UN Secretariat: includes headquarters child protection experts and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (www.childrenandarmedconflict.un.org).
- ❖ United Nations Development Program (UNDP): in some countries, working on police reforms (www.undp.org).
- ❖ UN Women: working on preventing sexual and gender based violence, economic empowerment, and strengthening young women's leadership (www.unwomen.org).

- ❖ UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA): humanitarian aid coordination (www.unocha.org).
- ❖ UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): main UN agency on refugees (www.unhcr.org).
- ❖ UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC): working on organized crime and human trafficking (www.unodc.org).
- ❖ INTERPOL: working on human trafficking (www.interpol.int).
- ❖ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): working on family tracing and reunifications (www.icrc.org).
- ❖ International NGOs: service providers to UN agencies, governments and others on child protection, health, education, etc.
- ❖ African Union (AU), European Union (EU) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD): inter-governmental bodies with child protection components (<http://acerwc.org/>, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/fundamental-rights/rights-child/index_en.htm, <http://igad.int/>).

 It is important to note that all these actors have interrelated activities. Children's issues must be considered in all of them.

SLIDE 4: Coordinating with actors of the child protection system

 In their mandate, UNPOL must cooperate with actors at different levels. First, within the mission; second, within UN agencies and non-governmental actors; and third, with national and local government actors.

 All these actors will be interacting with one another and with the UN peacekeeping mission and its agencies. This coordination will sometimes be orderly, following established protocols, and sometimes ad hoc.

 As UN Police Officers, you will have to interact with some of these actors in your duties, either directly or while advising the Host State police, for various reasons such as:

- Referral of cases;
- Follow up on cases;
- Coordination or facilitation of various activities;
- Developing networks;
- Collecting information;
- Etc.

 It is important to identify and understand the system of coordination in your area of deployment and to identify if there is a Standard Operating Procedure or Multi-Sectoral Agreement already in place.

 It will be important to keep an open mind while coordinating with different actors as coordination can be challenging in some situations.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

 Ask the following question to learners in plenary:

 In your view, what can make coordination difficult?

 Take a few answers from learners. Then complete the discussion using the possible answers provided below.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

- Different personality;
- Different opinion, views, cultural background;
- Miscommunication;
- Sensitivity of the subject;
- Language barriers;
- Lack of time, sense of urgency;
- Misconception;
- Competition.

 Inevitably, all these factors will have an influence on the coordination between different actors. As UN police officers, you will be confronted with these negative influences. To overcome difficulties in coordination, it will be important that you focus on building good relationships, putting aside prejudices, being flexible, taking the role of conciliator, understanding the difference of opinions and being able to propose alternative solutions while keeping in mind one of the UN's core values: respect for diversity.

PLENARY DISCUSSION

 Ask the following question to learners in plenary:

 Thinking of any post-conflict country you may know, please describe which actors should be involved in the following case:

“A 13-year-old boy is stealing some fruits in the market and gets caught by the merchant, who brings him to the police station.”

 Take a few answers from learners. Then complete the discussion using slide 8 to provide examples of actors that can be involved in cases involving children in any country at different levels.

Explanation:

Main key actors

 Regarding the results of this discussion, refer to the plenary discussion in the beginning of the module on key actors in the mission, within country and add Host State police actors.

Coordinating within the mission

 The Coordination within the mission will be done mainly through the **UN Police Focal Point on Child Protection** and the **Child Protection Advisors** which will coordinate with other Sections depending on the case.

- Special Representative of the Secretary General;
- Police Commissioner;
- DDR Section;
- Human Rights Section;
- Civil Affairs Section;
- Conflict Related Sexual Violence Section;
- Justice & Corrections Section.

 The Coordination within UN agencies will be **primarily between the mission and the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF)**, the main UN agency working on all children issues. Similarly, coordination among the members of the Child Protection Working Group, which includes UN actors and International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO) working with children, is also planned on a regular basis.

Other actors within the UN agencies and INGO are

- UNICEF ;
- UNHCR ;
- WHO ;
- UN Women ;
- International Labor Organisation (ILO) ;
- Save the Children;
- World Vision;
- Oxfam;
- Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

Coordinating with national and local government actors

Depending on which mission you will be deployed, **the Host State police** will have, in most cases, internal protocols to handle cases involving a child. It is important to identify these protocols and **any specialized police units** to be able to advise and support referral of cases involving children. Such specialized units will include police officers who are experts in child protection, know the national child protection system well and are thus better equipped to handle cases involving children.

Depending on the specific police service, one or more specialized units will handle cases of violence against children, cases of juvenile offenders and cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

These are some examples of specialized units in the national police of conflict and post-conflict countries:

❖ **Juvenile Police Unit, Afghanistan:**

This unit of the Afghan National Police is responsible for investigating all crimes committed against children and by children, and is under the command of the Criminal Investigations Department. The unit was created under the influence of the international community.

❖ **Family Support Units, Liberia and Sierra Leone:**

The Liberian Police Force and the Sierra Leone Police have both created Family Support Units that handle cases of domestic violence and other crimes related to women and children after the establishment of UN peacekeeping missions in these two countries.

❖ **Family and Child Protection Unit, Sudan:**

The Sudan Police Force created this unit in 2007. It is responsible for investigations and providing psycho-social support to children and their families.

❖ **Special Protection Unit, South Sudan:**

The South Sudan National Police Service created this unit in 2015 to improve investigations in cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

❖ **Brigade de protection des mineurs, Côte d'Ivoire:**

The national police of Côte d'Ivoire have a unit for the protection of minors that handle cases involving children.

While the names, composition and responsibilities of these units will vary from one country to the next, you are likely to find such a unit in the Host State police of the mission area you will be deployed to. It is important to learn about such units early in your deployment to know where to refer cases involving children.

Sometimes specialized units have been created by law or by a directive of the Host State's police management, but have not yet been operationalized or are not properly functioning. As UN Police, you may be asked to support the operationalization or the capacity building of such units.

If there is no specialized unit, it is possible that during your deployment, UNICEF or the CPA will advocate for the creation of a child protection specialized unit. Many of these units have been created following UN peacekeeping missions and advice given to host governments on international child protection guidelines. The UNPOL Reform and Restructuring Unit is also working on the organisational development of the Host State police.

In some cases, the informal child protection actors within the community will also be involved (i.e. family, kinship network, community social worker, traditional leader, etc.).

Other actors of the national child protection system

Other actors of national child protection systems include government actors, justice institutions, local authorities, civil society organizations, etc.

Brainstorm with participants which national actors belong to the 4 "categories".

- Examples of **government actors** include:
 - Ministry of children affairs / women's affairs / social affairs
 - National police
 - Corrections services: juvenile detention and rehabilitation centers
 - Ministry of education: schools, teachers, etc.
 - Ministry of health: nurses, doctors, etc.
 - Social workers
 - National child protection network
- Examples of **justice actors** include:
 - Juvenile courts
 - Juvenile judges
 - Juvenile prosecutors
 - Diversion mechanisms and community support structures
- Examples of **local authorities** include:
 - Local chiefs
 - Local child protection committees (at village or district level for example)
 - Traditional and religious leaders
- Examples of **civil society organizations** include:
 - Local NGOs working on children's issues, individually or as part of a child protection network
 - Orphanages and shelters

SLIDE 5: Child Protection Advisors (CPAs)

Peacekeeping missions that have specific provisions on child protection as part of their mandate have Child Protection Advisors (CPAs) deployed in the mission. CPAs serve as interfaces between the peacekeeping mission and child protection actors on the ground. They fulfil the crucial role of advising the peacekeeping mission and the SRSG/Head of Mission (HoM) in particular in ensuring that relevant child protection issues are addressed in all stages of the peace process and that all key actors and mechanisms within the mission adopt a child conscious approach to their respective mandate. They are deployed as experts on child protection and advise the mission on the needs and rights of children. They serve as focal points on all child protection issues.

The 2017 DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection specifically requires that the CPAs monitor and report on the six grave violations against children. CPAs also negotiate agreements for the release of children associated with armed forces or armed groups, train UN peacekeeping personnel on child protection and advocate for the rights of children in the host country. CPAs work closely with UNICEF, other UN agencies, the host government, NGOs and other actors.

Child Protection Advisors (CPAs):

- Advisor and expert for child protection within the UN mission
- Mission focal point for monitoring and reporting on six grave violations
- Liaison with other child protection actors and coordination mechanisms such as the Child Protection Working Group
- Mission lead on dialogue with parties to conflict for release of children associated with armed forces and armed groups and other violations
- Mainstream child protection within mission components and build the capacity of national institutions, military, police, etc. on child protection
- Advocate for the protection of children and the respect for children's rights within the mission

Some UN peacekeeping missions do not have a specific child protection mandate and therefore no Child Protection Advisors. In the absence of a child protection component, the human rights component has a general mandate on the promotion and protection of human rights, and will therefore be responsible for child protection and child rights.

SLIDE 6: UN Police Child Protection Focal Point¹

¹ Source: DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy in Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017)

☞ The protection of children in situations of armed conflict is an inherent priority within the broader obligations of the UN to protect civilians and put human rights at the center of peace and security efforts. Protecting children affected by armed conflict is a collective responsibility that requires a collective response: Child Protection should be a priority across the Departments and across missions.

☞ Furthermore, the new Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations introduced a provision to ensure that all UN Police officers are trained in, apply and integrate international norms and standards on children’s rights into their work. In addition, the policy insists on the establishment of a designated police child protection focal point at mission headquarters and police child protection focal points in field offices to facilitate coordination and information sharing with CPAs and child protection staff.

UN Police Focal Point on child protection:

- Point of contact on child protection for all UN Police within the mission
- Ensure that child protection is integrated into the work of UN Police, including within the mentoring and advising activities, as well as in the capacity building efforts in support of the Host State police
- Support the adoption of mission-specific directives and standard operating procedures to inform the actions of United Nations police officers
- Provide guidance on child sensitive interviewing techniques and community-oriented policing
- Advocate for compliance with international norms and standards, including those in relation to the apprehension and detention of children
- Provide support for the prevention and response to violations of children’s rights and abuses against children, including SEA



GROUP WORK ON CASE STUDIES

Time required: 45 minutes

5 minutes	For introduction of activity and instructions
15 minutes	For group work
25 minutes	For group presentation and discussion

 We will now look at four case studies that illustrate some coordination situations you may face during your deployment.

 Divide the learners into four groups. Each group will have 15 minutes to read the case study which have been assigned to them and answer the questions.

 Distribute one case study to each group.

Case Study 1

In your area of responsibility in Liberia, it has come to your knowledge that rape of a virgin is a “tradition” associated with witchcraft. It is believed by some that raping a virgin will give the perpetrator protection from any disease. This phenomenon is reported to have increased since the outbreak of the Ebola virus. This has become a growing problem and several young girls have been recently raped in this context.

The Liberian National Police plans a visit to a community where three young girls have been raped to address the issue. They want to organize a meeting with the community to explore prevention options. They are asking you to accompany them and for your advice on which actors to invite to the meeting.

Questions:

1. Which actors would you recommend inviting to the meeting?
2. How do you report this child protection issue internally in the UN peacekeeping mission and what coordination efforts do you make?

Case Study 2

You are on patrol in a village in your area of responsibility in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo with your colleagues from the Congolese police. You meet the head of the village and take time to discuss security issues with him. He informs you that there is a rumor that children in nearby villages have been abducted recently by a militia. Children in this village often stay out alone late at night, go fetch water at a nearby well outside the village and travel unaccompanied to school over considerable distances every day.

The chief has informed the local commander of the Congolese armed forces but the commander dismissed his worries as unfounded rumors. The chief is still worried and he asks you for your help.

Questions:

1. What do you tell the chief?
2. How do you address the situation and who do you contact in the UN peacekeeping mission?

Case Study 3

One UNPOL officer is visiting a police station in Abidjan to provide training on investigative techniques to officers of the Ivoirian national police. During the lunch break, the UNPOL officer is discussing with the station commander, who informs him that a 12-year-old girl has been raped the day before. The rape was reported by the girl's mother and she accused their neighbor of committing the crime. The suspect is at the police station for an interview and the police station will inform the police's child protection unit as soon as possible.

During the discussion, the UNPOL officer develops a strong interest for the case; the girl who has been raped is the same age as his own daughter and the rape was especially violent. The next day, the UNPOL officer visits the juvenile prosecutor responsible for that area to inform her about the case and urge her to take immediate action.

Two days later, the police officer from the child protection unit who has been assigned to the case learns from the prosecutor that she has already been made aware of the evidence and has issued an arrest warrant for the suspect. The officer from the child protection unit tells her that they are still investigating and that the arrest is premature. He is not pleased that someone has by-passed him to report the case to the prosecutor.

Questions:

1. What are the impacts of the UNPOL officer's actions?
2. What could the UNPOL officer have done differently?

Case Study 4

You are working as UNPOL in Haiti and your duty station is Cap-Haitien. During your deployment, the Haitian National Police (HNP) is undertaking an operation to remove unauthorized street vendors from several locations in the city.

Your colleague from the HNP wants your advice on the strategy proposed by his commanding officer, as he thinks children's issues have not been taken into consideration. He explains to you that there are many children living on the street in the city, involved in begging or working on the streets as shoe shiners, fruit vendors, etc. He is afraid that the operation will meet resistance by street vendors and that street children may be arrested without reason and affected by any violence that may result from the police operation.

Questions:

1. What actors can you advise your national colleague to involve in discussions before the police operation?
2. What advice will you give the HNP regarding the treatment of street children in the operation?



After 15 minutes, ask the learners to come back in plenary. Each group designates one presenter who will read the case study aloud and summarize the group's answers to each question. After each presentation, ask other learners to comment on the answers of the group presenting.



Use the possible answers below to complement the discussion after each presentation. The answers listed are for guidance and groups may have phrased their own answers differently. The important aspect is that the correct answers go in the same direction as the ones provided.

POSSIBLE ANSWERS:

Case Study 1:

1. Which actors would you recommend inviting to the meeting?

In this case it is important to be as inclusive as possible. You will invite the local chief and other local authorities, traditional and religious leaders, teachers from the community's school, parents, local medical personnel, and any other relevant actor.

You should also invite the Child Protection Advisor responsible for that area, as well as the local UNICEF office and relevant child protection NGOs operating in the area.

2. How do you report this child protection issue internally in the UN peacekeeping mission and what coordination efforts do you make?
 - You will have to report this issue to the Child Protection Advisor assigned to that area. This is a serious issue that is putting young girls at great risk. You will also report to the Child Protection Advisor that the incidences of the crime have been increasing due to the Ebola virus outbreak.
 - You will discuss with the Child Protection Advisor and organize a meeting with him/her and the team from the Liberian National Police to discuss the best strategy to address this issue prior to the community meeting.

Case Study 2:

1. What do you tell the chief?

You can tell the chief that you take his concerns very seriously and that you will report the matter to the mission and take action. However, you should not make promises you cannot keep, for example promising the chief that UN peacekeepers will guard the village every night. You can also tell the chief that you will visit the village again in the next few days to follow up with him.

2. How do you address the situation and who do you contact in the UN peacekeeping mission?

You report to your UNPOL supervisor and you also inform the Child Protection Advisor responsible for the area, as this is a serious concern and is one of the six grave violations. You can inform other actors that are responsible for coordination with the Congolese army, for example UN OCHA. You also follow up in the coming days to ensure that the actors you have informed have taken action.

Case Study 3:

1. What are the impacts of the UNPOL officer's actions?
 - His actions have led to the premature issuance of an arrest warrant by the prosecutor, before the Ivorian national police could investigate the case properly. This may lead to problems with the investigation.
 - The UNPOL officer has damaged his trust and relationship with the Ivorian national police's child protection unit.
2. What could the UNPOL officer have done differently?

The UNPOL officer should have waited for the police station to inform the child protection unit of the case, and then discussed the case with the child protection police officer. They could then have examined the evidence together and reported the case to the prosecutor jointly.

Case Study 4:

1. What actors can you advise your national colleagues to involve in discussions before the police operation?
 - The HNP should contact local actors of the child protection system before the operation to discuss child protection issues with them. These will include NGOs and community organizations working with street children, social workers from governmental or non-governmental organizations and other relevant institutions.
 - The HNP should organize consultations with children living on the street, through coordination with relevant institutions working with them, to understand the point of view of those children and the challenges they face.
2. What advice will you give the HNP regarding the treatment of street children in the operation?
 - The HNP should include a child protection aspect in the strategy that will specify special procedures to deal with children during the operation, in line with international standards in the treatment of children by law enforcement agencies, including a specific strategy to ensure that children living on the street will be protected by the police against any violence resulting from the operation.
 - The HNP officers who will take part in the operation should have clear guidelines on the goals of the operation and understand that children living and working on the street are not committing any crime just by living on the street. The goal of the operation should therefore not be to arrest children without a reason.

SLIDE 7: Conclusion



Play the video: This is Samira (available in several languages). Following the video, you can take the opportunity to introduce the final slide and ask learners if they have questions on the content of this module.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEaNwDtQRwI>

SLIDE 8: Questions



Ask learners if they have questions on the content of this module. It is important to allow sufficient time to answer all questions.

SLIDES 9: Key Messages



The key messages slides summarise the important take away that connect with the objectives of the module as described at the beginning of the session. Ask learners what the key messages are before showing the slide with the possible answers. It will help them synthesise and integrate the key concepts taught throughout the module and it will help you in assessing their learning and concentrate on gaps or inaccuracies.



Ask the following questions in plenary. Encourage learners to discuss. Then, complete the discussion with the suggested answers presented in the next slides.



What are the key messages of this module?

SLIDES 10. 11: Key Messages

The key messages are:

1. UN Police must be aware of its roles and responsibilities on child protection and how it relates to their work.
2. Understand coordination mechanisms within the UN system and at the national level.
3. Identify the actors involved in child protection upon arrival in the mission area and know who is doing what.
4. Child Protection Advisors act as the primary interface on child protection issues between the mission and external child protection actors.
5. The UN Police Child Protection Focal Point facilitates coordination and information sharing with CPAs and child protection staff.

 Distribute the end of module quiz to learners and give them 10 minutes to answer the questions. Then distribute the answers for self-correction or ask learners to work in pairs and correct each other's answers.