REINFORCEMENT TRAINING PACKAGE ON CHILD PROTECTION FOR THE UNITED NATIONS MILITARY

Trainer’s Guide
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Abbreviations

The following abbreviations may be used in the field.

AOR  Area of responsibility
CAAFAG  Children associated with armed forces or armed groups
CAN  Community Alert Network
CCIR  Commander’s critical information requirements/request
CDT  Conduct and Discipline Team
CIMIC  Civilian-Military Cooperation Unit/civilian-military cooperation
CLA  Community Liaison Agent
COS  Chief of Staff
CP  Child protection
CPA/O/S/U  Child Protection Adviser/Officer/Section/Unit
CRC  Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRSV  Conflict-related sexual violence
DDR  Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DMS  Director of Mission Support
DOS  Department of Operational Support
DPA  Department of Political Affairs (renamed DPPA)
DPKO  Department of Peacekeeping Operations (renamed DPO)
DPO  Department of Peace Operations
DPPA  Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
ERW  Explosive remnants of war
FARDC  Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
(Arméed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo)
FHQ  Force Headquarters
FJOC  Field Joint Operations Centre
FPU  Formed police unit
FRAGO  Fragmentary order
G2  Military intelligence at Sector Headquarters
G3  Operations at Sector Headquarters
HC  Humanitarian Coordinator
HOFO  Head of Field Office
HOM  Head of Mission
HOMC  Head of Military Component
HOPC  Head of Police Component
HQ
HRDDP
IAG
ICC
ICCP
ICTR
ICTY
IHL
IHRL
ILO
IMTC
INFO OP
JMAC
JOC
KLE
M23
MAC
MHQ
MILOB
MINUSCA
MINUSMA
MOB
MONBATT
MONUC
MONUSCO
MRM
NGO
OCHA
OHCHR
OIOS
OLA
OMA
OPAC
OPCON
OPORD

Headquarters
Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces
Illegal armed group
International Criminal Court
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
International Committee of the Red Cross
International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
International humanitarian law (law of armed conflict)
International human rights law
International Labour Organization
Integrated Mission Training Centre
Information operations
Joint Mission Analysis Cell
Joint Operations Centre
Key leader engagement
23 March Movement (Democratic Republic of the Congo)
Mine action centre
Mission headquarters
Military observer
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
Mobile operating base
Mongolia Battalion (UNMISS)
United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (replaced by MONUSCO)
United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
Monitoring and reporting mechanism
Non-governmental organization
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of Internal Oversight Services
Office of Legal Affairs
Office of Military Affairs (DPO)
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict
Operational control
Operational order
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPSC</td>
<td>Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</td>
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<td>OSRS/CAAC</td>
<td>Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>PCC</td>
<td>Police-contributing country</td>
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<td>PKI</td>
<td>Peacekeeping intelligence</td>
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<td>POC</td>
<td>Protection of civilians</td>
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<td>POW</td>
<td>Prisoner of war</td>
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<td>QIP</td>
<td>Quick-impact project</td>
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<td>RC</td>
<td>Resident Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Sexual exploitation and abuse</td>
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<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard operating procedures</td>
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<td>SPLA</td>
<td>Sudanese People’s Liberation Army</td>
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<td>SRSG</td>
<td>Special Representative of the Secretary-General</td>
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<td>SSR</td>
<td>Security sector reform</td>
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<tr>
<td>STM</td>
<td>Specialized training materials</td>
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<td>TAM</td>
<td>Technical advisory mission</td>
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<td>TCC</td>
<td>Troop-contributing country</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOB</td>
<td>Temporary operating base</td>
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<td>U2</td>
<td>Military intelligence</td>
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<td>UNAMID</td>
<td>African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur</td>
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<td>UNCT</td>
<td>United Nations country team</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
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<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees</td>
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<td>UNBAM</td>
<td>United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual</td>
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<td>UNIBATT</td>
<td>United Nations Infantry Battalion</td>
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<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<td>UNIFIL</td>
<td>United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMISS</td>
<td>United Nations Mission in South Sudan</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNMO</td>
<td>United Nations military observer</td>
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<td>UNPOL</td>
<td>United Nations police</td>
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<tr>
<td>UXO</td>
<td>Unexploded ordinance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WFP</td>
<td>World Food Programme</td>
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<td>WHO</td>
<td>World Health Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>WPA</td>
<td>Women Protection Adviser</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZAMBATT</td>
<td>Zambia Battalion (MINUSCA)</td>
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</tbody>
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Introduction

Background


2. In 2008, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) – renamed the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) in 2019 – included a child protection training module in its Core Pre-deployment Training Materials as part of the mandatory curriculum.

3. In 2018, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (known informally as C34) affirmed, in its report A/72/19:

   “...the importance of continuing to ensure that all peacekeeping personnel receive adequate training on child protection and child rights in order to strengthen the protection of children in conflict and post-conflict situations. The Special Committee notes with appreciation the efforts to update training programmes and materials, all of which are critical to ensuring that there is an effective and comprehensive response, including preventive measures, with respect to child protection. The Special Committee welcomes the launch of the child protection pre-deployment training modules developed by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF, encourages the continued development of specialized training modules on child protection for all categories of peacekeeping personnel, requests the Department to make them available and encourages troop-contributing and police-contributing countries, as well as all regional and national peacekeeping training centres, to make full use of them, as appropriate” (para. 269).

4. In resolution 2143 (2014), the Security Council,

   “Recommends that Member States include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, as well as in military guidance as appropriate;
recommends further that United Nations entities and United Nations peacekeeping
troop and police-contributing countries undertake targeted and operational trainings for
the preparation of United Nations mission personnel including troop and police
contingents on their contribution in preventing violations against children so as to give
all mission personnel the ability to effectively recognize, report and respond to
violations and abuses committed against children and to successfully support child
protection activities for better implementation of their respective mandates” (para. 20).

Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection, 2014

5. Following the request of the C34 in 2012, DPKO surveyed six peacekeeping missions on
child protection training needs and received over 500 replies from actively serving
peacekeepers. With this critical input from the field, training materials were developed in
close consultation with child protection actors, as well as all members of the C34. A total of
37 Member States participated in the workshops accompanying the development process.

6. The resulting materials included:
   (a) An updated child protection lesson in the Core Pre-deployment Training package;
   (b) Specialized training materials on child protection;
   (c) A film on child protection.

The materials were designed for pre-deployment and in-mission training of United Nations
peacekeepers, both military personnel and formed police units. The materials are available
at the Peacekeeping Resource Hub web page: https://research.un.org/en/peacekeeping-
community/pre-deployment

Updated Child Protection Training Materials

7. The above-mentioned training materials were reviewed and updated in 2018 and 2020 to
ensure compliance with the latest United Nations child protection policy and guidelines for
United Nations military peacekeepers. The updated materials include new scenarios based
on current challenges in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the
Congo and South Sudan. Specialized training materials on child protection were developed

Purpose

8. Child protection is more than a subset of the protection of civilians (POC) mandate. While
many of the concepts of civilian protection and the basic information on the rules of
engagement apply, the child protection mandate entails some very specific tasks that
military personnel need to undertake in addition to the physical protection of children.
Those tasks are mandated by the Security Council and usually include, but are not limited
to, supporting the implementation of a monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM) on grave violations against children, the implementation of action plans to end those grave violations, and the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes.

9. The training materials are aimed at introducing child protection concepts and providing mission-specific tactical child protection situations for discussion among military and police contingent leaders and staff. The materials are intended to promote a better understanding of the missions’ child protection mandates, the work of actors in and outside of the missions who contribute to the protection of children, and the work of actors who are integral to the coordination of child protection.

10. The training materials include exercises to encourage peacekeepers to consider their behaviour towards children, and the difference between child protection activities and community outreach activities. The training materials also focus on the roles and responsibilities of every peacekeeper to successfully implement the child protection mandate. Scenario exercises – based on real situations from UNMISS, MINUSCA and MONUSCO – provide the opportunity to apply the knowledge acquired in these training modules.


11. The 2020 Reinforcement Training Package on Child Protection for the United Nations Military comprises three modules, nine lessons and several scenario exercises. The training materials can be delivered over the course of five days and are organized as follows:

**Module 1: Conceptual Framework**

**Lesson 1.1: Children in Armed Conflict**
Examines the impact of armed conflict on children and identifies the six grave violations that guide United Nations peacekeeping mandates.

**Lesson 1.2: Roles and Responsibilities of Mission Components and External Partners**
Identifies the various actors within peacekeeping missions, the roles of civilian Child Protection Advisers, military Child Protection Focal Points, and internal and external child protection actors who coordinate with the military on issues related to child protection.

**Module 2: Legal Framework**

**Lesson 2.1: Legal Framework**
Examines the legal framework for peacekeeping operations, including international law, Security Council resolutions, United Nations peacekeeping policies, mission rules of engagement and the use of force directive that guide all mission mandates.
Lesson 2.2: Child Protection Framework
Examines the guiding framework on child protection, including international law, Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflicts and mission mandates, the framework and guiding principles of the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Operational Support (DOS) and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA).

Module 3: Operational Framework
Lesson 3.1: Interacting with Children
Examines the ethical obligations of military peacekeepers when interacting with children in the mission area.

Lesson 3.2: Military Component Child Protection Roles and Tasks
Examines the roles and tasks of military personnel with regard to child protection, situational awareness and child protection considerations in military operations.

Lesson 3.3: Military Component Child Protection Action and Response
Examines rules of engagement with regard to child protection, reviews the grave violations that peacekeepers are most likely to encounter in the field mission context, as well as responses and appropriate actions when encountering child soldiers.

Lesson 3.4: Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point
Examines the roles and responsibilities of the military Child Protection Focal Point at Force Headquarters and the application of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

Lesson 3.5: Military Child Protection Focal Points in Sectors, Units and Team Sites
Examines the roles and responsibilities of the military Child Protection Focal Points at sector, unit and team site levels, and the implementation of Force Headquarters directives.

Scenario Exercises
Provide opportunities for learners to engage in various scenarios (e.g., military occupation of a school, offensive operations) involving the roles of military Child Protection Focal Points and the military component.

Important Considerations for Peacekeeping Training Centres, Commanders, Course Directors and Trainers

12. This training package is not a course. National trainers will need to design the course and adapt the training materials to the needs of their audience. The scenarios are based on critical situations that actually occurred in the field, as well as mission information on child protection, protection actors and relevant mechanisms.
13. No single set of training materials can cover the entire complex and vast range of child protection challenges and possibilities. Therefore, troop-contributing countries (TCCs) should design courses according to the specificities of the particular area of operations in which battalions or formed police units will be deployed. The same rationale applies for the training of force-level staff officers, military observers and military liaison officers. National military training systems are requested to analyse the package and tailor the modules to their own needs. Mission operation documents such as the mission concept, the force concept of operations, operation orders, directives, rules of engagement, directives on the use of force and other documents deemed necessary (e.g., country maps) should be obtained by national trainers to supplement the scenarios and course materials.

14. With regard to previous skills, experience and knowledge, all military personnel undertaking this training must be proficient in basic operational tasks (individually and collectively). As such, it is expected that a battalion staff officer is fully capable of performing the tasks of a staff officer before undertaking the training on child protection (just as it is expected that a driver is fully capable of driving a vehicle under certain weather and terrain conditions).

15. Learners must have already undertaken the core pre-deployment training as a pre-requisite to this child protection training. The Core Pre-deployment Training Materials cover fundamental United Nations principles, concepts and ideas related to field mission structure and functioning, which should be well understood by learners before they undertake the child protection training. Any training designed by Member States should encompass the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials followed by any specific child protection training materials for military personnel. The Core Pre-deployment Training Materials are available from http://research.un.org/revisedcptm2017.

16. The present training package places emphasis on understanding mission coordination among the components (i.e., military, police and civilian). Therefore, it is highly recommended that the national peacekeeping institution in charge of training invite civilian child protection actors to participate in the training, and in particular, in the scenario discussions. Those civilians may come from existing United Nations country teams, United Nations agencies (e.g., United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), DPO Child Protection Office) or from international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (such as Save the Children).

17. The materials, especially the scenarios, are based on real experiences at specific missions. Since the training materials cannot be classified and there is a considerable amount of sensitive information in the situations depicted, the scenarios in the handouts may refer to Missions X, Y and Z so as to preserve the anonymity of the missions.
Instructor Profile

18. This training course would be best presented and delivered by instructors who have mastered the child protection training package and the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials and who have preferably undertaken a Training of Trainer course on the pre-deployment materials. Specific knowledge of the particular mission where the unit is to be deployed is advisable, with preference to instructors who have participated in targeted United Nations peacekeeping operations, as they would be able to bring a practical understanding and experience of a mission into the discussions. Instructors should be familiar with facilitating scenario exercises.

Training Characteristics

19. Training for United Nations infantry battalion (UNIBATT) commanders and staff, formed police unit commanders and staff, and individually deployed personnel (e.g., force staff officers, military observers and military liaison officers) may vary according to national particularities and resources. However, there are fundamental training characteristics that must be respected in preparation for deployment to a peacekeeping mission:

(a) Training should be realistic: all necessary efforts shall be undertaken to replicate possible real situations that the battalion might face on the ground;
(b) Training should be mission-specific: the operational reality of the specific mission must be incorporated into the training environment;
(c) Training methodology should be based on practice.

Acknowledgements

20. DPO Division of Policy, Evaluation and Training would like to thank the training personnel from the various national peacekeeping training institutions and field missions who provided feedback during the drafting process. The Division would also like to thank Member States for their generous financial support, which enabled broad consultations for the training materials.

21. The content of this training package was developed with the assistance of relevant substantive experts in DPO, with special support from the Office of Military Affairs in DPO, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC), United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Save the Children, and the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldier Initiative.
Symbols Used

Note (for Trainer)
Background information

Speaking points
Main points on the topic; ideally, the speaking points should be presented in the trainer’s own words

Learning activity/Discussion
Activity or discussion that is strongly recommended

Handout (for Learners)
Handout to be given to learners

Film/Video
Film/video suggested as a core activity
Lesson 1.1

Children in Armed Conflict

The Lesson

Starting Module 1: Conceptual Framework and Lesson 1.1

OVERVIEW

By the end of the three modules of this training course on child protection, learners should be able to:

identify violations, understand the framework, take appropriate action

Module 1 looks at the child protection conceptual framework in United Nations peace operations. Lesson 1.1 will focus on the specific impact of armed conflict on children, the reasons why conflicts disproportionately affect children, and the violations and threats against children that peacekeepers are likely to encounter in mission areas. Learners will also learn to identify the six grave violations against children.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Define “child” and explain why children are most at risk during armed conflict;
• Describe the relationship between children and armed conflict, and protection of civilians;
• Summarize the changing nature of conflict and its impact on children;
• Describe the six grave violations against children;
• Explain gender concerns and the vulnerabilities that boys and girls face.

ACTIVITIES

1. Film: A Child’s Fate, and discussion
2. Case Study: Testimonies from a boy and a girl

HANDOUTS (FOR LEARNERS)

1. Six Grave Violations against Children
2. Case Study on Gender: Testimonies from a Boy and a Girl
Welcome to the training on Child Protection for United Nations Military Peacekeepers. Over the following days, you will learn about the child protection mandate and what it means for you in your daily operations as a military Child Protection Focal Point.

Child protection is defined as the prevention of and response to abuse, neglect, exploitation and violence against children. You, as peacekeepers, have a specific role to play in child protection, and you must know how to engage with children when you encounter them in the course of your operations.

The training is structured around the following three modules and nine lessons:

**Module 1: Conceptual Framework**
- Lesson 1.1: Children in Armed Conflict
- Lesson 1.2: Roles and Responsibilities of Mission Components and External Partners
Module 2: Legal Framework
- Lesson 2.1: Legal Framework
- Lesson 2.2: Child Protection Framework

Module 3: Operational Framework
- Lesson 3.1: Interacting with Children
- Lesson 3.2: Military Component Child Protection Roles and Tasks
- Lesson 3.3: Military Component Child Protection Action and Response
- Lesson 3.4: Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point
- Lesson 3.5: Military Child Protection Focal Points in Sectors, Units and Team Sites

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

This lesson will focus on the specific impact of armed conflict on children. You will learn why conflict disproportionately affects children, and become familiar with the common violations and threats that you, as peacekeepers, are likely to encounter in your mission areas. You may encounter children used as child soldiers, raped, torn from their families or maimed. A firm understanding of the impact of conflict on children will help you to be more alert to the protection needs of, and threats and violations against, children in armed conflict.
SLIDE 3: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- Define “child” and explain why children are most at risk during armed conflict;
- Describe the relationship between children and armed conflict, and protection of civilians;
- Summarize the changing nature of conflict and its impact on children;
- Describe the six “grave violations”;
- Explain gender concerns and the vulnerabilities that boys and girls face.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Upon completion of this lesson, learners will have a better understanding of the critical importance of child protection in peacekeeping operations today.

Lesson 1.1 comprises five learning objectives. By the end of the lesson, learners will:
- Understand who is a child (Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 1);
- Understand what makes children especially vulnerable during conflict, and their unique protection needs;
- Examine the changing nature of conflict and the impact that current conflict situations have on children;
- Identify the six grave violations against children, as defined by the Security Council, and discuss their role as peacekeepers in addressing and reporting those violations; and
- Consider the similarities and differences among concerns relating to girls and boys in times of armed conflict.
SLIDE 4: WHO IS A CHILD?

Who is a Child?

Article I of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states:
“A child means every human being below the age of 18 years...”

For all United Nations peacekeepers and personnel, a child is any person under the age of 18 years

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: In peacekeeping operations, every person under 18 years old should be treated as a child.

Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

“A child means every human being below the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

The simplified and common understanding of that definition is that a child is a person below the age of 18. For United Nations peacekeepers, a child is any person under the age of 18 years.

In some cultures, and according to the laws of some host States in which we are deployed, a child enters adulthood once he/she gets married, becomes a parent or earns his/her own income. Maturity is defined by the social role a person assumes, rather than by age. However, peacekeepers must adhere to the internationally accepted definition of a child, as stated above. When in doubt, apply the highest standard of protection, and assume that the person is a child.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: This film was made to support this training course. Children are particularly vulnerable to grave violations and threats during armed conflict and peacekeepers have a responsibility to protect them.

The film, A Child’s Fate, is intended to engage learners in a discussion on child protection. Learners will understand the gravity of the situation faced by children in conflict zones around the world; and that they, as peacekeepers, play a vital role in protecting children. The film will also bring peacekeepers to consider the protection needs of children in conflict situations.

You are about to watch a 12-minute film developed by DPO and entitled “A Child’s Fate”. It depicts the horrors that children are exposed to in conflict. It issues a call to action and explains why peacekeepers must take action. The film also shows how every mission component has a role to play in child protection. Finally, it introduces the child protection specialists deployed in peacekeeping missions.

As you watch the film, reflect on the following questions, which we will discuss subsequently:

- What threats do children face during armed conflict?
- Why are children more at risk than adults during armed conflict?

Show the film, A Child’s Fate (https://youtu.be/gNFnRlGPzSM).
SLIDE 6: CHILDREN ARE VULNERABLE

Children are Vulnerable

- What threats do children face during armed conflict?
- Why are children more at risk than adults during armed conflict?

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Group Discussion
Ask the questions on the slide and facilitate discussion among the learners.

POSSIBLE RESPONSES

- While many children prove remarkably resilient when faced with extremely difficult circumstances, in general, children are disproportionally affected by armed conflict owing to the following reasons:

1. **Children can be more easily influenced and may not fully understand the consequences of their actions.**
   For example, children may be lured into joining an armed force or armed group, thinking they will be obtaining “employment” or protection from violence. Children have also been used as “suicide bombers,” carrying explosives hidden in their bags or clothing, without knowing it.

2. **Children depend on family, community and government structures for protection and care.**
   Those structures are generally destroyed or have collapsed during conflict. That is why displaced or unaccompanied children are at greater risk of exploitation or abuse during conflict.
3. **Children are still growing/in the process of development.**

Violence from armed conflict poses several risks to the healthy development of children. For example, denial of access to basic services, including adequate nutrition, has a more serious long-term effect on children, particularly babies and younger children, than on adults. Traumatic and other negative experiences and influences during conflict (such as indoctrination) carry more consequences for children than adults.

**SLIDE 7: THE NATURE OF ARMED CONFLICT IS CHANGING**

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**Key Message:** Today’s conflicts disproportionately impact children.

- Let us explore some of the characteristics and trends that define armed conflict today:
  - There are few international conflicts these days; most conflicts today are internal conflicts – independence struggles, separation struggles, ethnic and/or religious struggles, civil war within the borders of one country;
  - Such conflicts often spill over into other countries – causing waves of refugees or internally displaced persons or the spread of armed groups – and, in turn, affect the entire immediate region;
One key dynamic of conflict that impacts children today is the deliberate action on the part of armed groups to achieve a strategic advantage – using grave measures, such as launching attacks on villages and raping civilians and children. In addition, the frequency with which children are abducted and/or recruited for use as child soldiers is alarming;

War takes place in and around villages; schools and hospitals serve as easy targets, making civilians and children especially vulnerable.

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**KEY MESSAGE:** The consequences and impact of conflict on children can be placed into two categories of concern: peace and security; and humanitarian and development.

Let us look more closely at the impact of war and conflict on children. The consequences of conflict on children can be divided into two categories of concern:

- Peace and security
- Humanitarian and development
Peace and security impacts include physical threats, exploitation and abuse. Examples of such impacts are the killing of children in shelling and crossfire situations, injury to children by landmine and explosive remnants of war, rape of and sexual violence against children, detention and torture of children, and acts that constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity. United Nations peace operations play a key role in addressing the peace and security concerns of children.

Humanitarian and development impacts may involve food distribution, water points, refugee camps for shelter, temporary schools, medical facilities, among others. Those matters are normally addressed by international or local humanitarian and development agencies. Cooperative work and effort from all relevant actors are needed in order to fully respond to the devastating effects of conflict on the lives of children. That will be explored in more detail in lesson 1.2 and module 3.

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**SLIDE 9: THE SIX GRAVE VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN**

**The Six GRAVE Violations Against Children**

- Killing and maiming
- Recruitment and use
- Rape and other sexual violence
- Abduction
- Attacks on schools or hospitals
- Denial of humanitarian access

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** These six (categories of) grave violations against children are considered the most atrocious. All peacekeepers must know of and be able to recognize these violations.
The six grave violations against children during armed conflict were pinpointed owing to their nefarious nature and severe consequences on the lives of children, and the fact that they can be monitored and quantified.

The six grave violations against children in armed conflict are indeed heinous breaches of international law (the legal basis for asserting action in response to such breaches will be covered in module 2.) Reports on these grave violations are submitted to the Security Council and the alleged perpetrators can be brought to justice and sanctioned.

Peacekeepers are expected to report and act on these violations. You, as peacekeepers, must therefore be fully aware of them and be able to recognize them appropriately.

**SLIDE 10: DEALING WITH THE SIX GRAVE VIOLATIONS**

**Key Message:** The six grave violations identified by the Security Council require specific attention by peacekeepers.
After broad consultations within the United Nations, the Security Council identified six categories of acts that warrant priority attention. When conducted by armed forces or armed groups in a conflict, these acts constitute grave violations. Peacekeepers must be aware of and be able to recognize these grave violations. Let us examine each one of them in detail.

**SLIDE 11: KILLING AND MAIMING**

- **Key Message:** Killing and maiming are acts that result in the death of or serious injury to a child or children.

- Killing and maiming are acts that result in the death of or serious injury to a child or children, including scarring, disfigurement or mutilation.

    Although often intentional, maiming can also result from wounds caused by bullets in a crossfire or detonation of landmines. In warfare today, hundreds of thousands of children are often killed and injured during military operations from crossfire, aerial bombardment and shelling. One worrying trend is the increase in suicide attacks and the use of children to carry them out, which has led to the death of or serious injury to several children.
Some 10,000 people are killed or injured by unexploded ordnances (UXOs) annually; and more than 40 per cent of the casualties are children.

Examples
1. Sometimes children are maimed deliberately. Between 1999 and 2002, during the civil war in Sierra Leone, the rebels instituted a policy of cutting off the hands, legs and arms of captured soldiers and civilians, including children. The limbs of hundreds of children were amputated or children were used to carry out the maiming of others.

2. Over the past three years, there has been a troubling increase in grave violations perpetrated against children in several countries:
   - Iraq, 2017: 279 children killed (143 boys, 84 girls, 52 children of unknown gender); 438 children maimed (270 boys, 143 girls, 25 children of unknown gender);
   - Myanmar, 2017: 296 children killed and maimed (including 169 boys, 62 girls, 36 children of unknown gender);
   - Afghanistan, 2017: 861 killed, 2,318 injured (including 251 girls);
   - Syrian Arab Republic, 2019: 897 children killed, 557 maimed;
   - Yemen, 2018: 395 children killed, 1,052 maimed.

Provide or solicit other examples, if time permits.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Recruitment and use of any person below 18 years by an armed group or armed force in any capacity is prohibited.

- Tens of thousands of boys and girls are recruited and used by armed forces or groups in conflict situations in over 20 countries around the world. As a military peacekeeper, you are likely to encounter children, or “young soldiers”, carrying guns and wearing uniforms. However, it is important for you to know that children – boys and girls – are assigned wide-ranging functions in armed forces or armed groups. Recruitment and use of children by armed forces or groups is prohibited.

A child associated with an armed force or group refers to any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to [...] fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes (see Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups, 2007).

It is important to understand that armed groups may use children for a number of functions. For example:

- Direct combat on front lines;
- Intelligence operations, as spies;
- Reconnaissance, as scouts (especially as children are seldom viewed with suspicion);
- Decoys or saboteurs;
- To man checkpoints;
- Communication purposes, as couriers or messengers;
- Other – as porters, cooks, cleaners, etc.;
- Enslavement or sexual purposes, as sex objects or “bush wives”

The abbreviation CAAFAG is often used to refer to a child associated with an armed force or armed group, while “child soldier” is the more commonly used term. The key point is that one does not have to carry a weapon to be a child soldier.

The term “child soldier” should be used in a broad sense, as defined in the slide. Throughout this training course, we will use the term “child soldier” to refer to children recruited or used by an armed group/force in any capacity.

Provide or ask learners for examples of situations involving child soldiers, if time permits.
Key Message: Sexual violence against children is one of the most horrific violations. Although young girls are especially vulnerable to sexual violence in times of conflict, boys are also at risk.

Rape and other forms of sexual violence during armed conflict are prohibited under the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols. Such acts may constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, torture and genocide.

Children who experience sexual violence suffer from psychological trauma and health consequences, including sexually transmitted infections such as HIV/AIDS, and early pregnancies. Victims of rape and their children may experience rejection by their families.

GIRLS
The risk of sexual violence increases dramatically with the increase in the number of armed forces and groups, and the breakdown of law and order. Moreover, poverty and joblessness can create extremely perilous conditions for girls, including trafficking for sexual exploitation. Girls and their children are particularly vulnerable to all forms of exploitation, including prostitution and trafficking; they need special protection.
**BOYS**

Boys may also be victims of sexual violence in conflict, and boys may face trauma as witnesses or perpetrators of sexual violence. They may be forced to commit rape, either directly by their commander or indirectly through peer pressure.

**Examples**

1. **Bacha Baazi** (dancing boys) is a practice in Afghanistan that is a form of sexual slavery and child prostitution, in which boys are sold to wealthy or powerful men – including military and political leaders – for entertainment and sexual activities.

2. The United Nations confirmed 249 victims of sexual violence during armed conflict in 2019. Both government forces (126 victims) and armed groups (123 victims) were responsible for the violations. Some 102 government elements were subsequently arrested. Among the 123 cases attributed to armed groups, 22 girls were used for sexual slavery and 101 girls were raped.

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**SLIDE 14: ABDUCTION**

*Abduction*

_The unlawful removal, seizure, capture, apprehension, taking or enforced disappearance of a child, either temporarily or permanently, for the purpose of any form of exploitation, including:_

- Recruitment
- Information gathering
- Forced labour
- Sexual purposes
- Other

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** In times of conflict, children are particularly vulnerable to abduction.
The image on the slide shows liberated girls awaiting treatment for their injured feet at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Kitgum, Uganda. The girls were forced to work as porters and domestic slaves for Lord’s Resistance Army in northern Uganda.

Abducting children is illegal under international law; it may constitute a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions and amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes.

In times of conflict, children are often abducted from their homes, schools and refugee camps. Children may be forcefully abducted, either temporarily or permanently, for a range of purposes from recruitment by armed forces or armed groups, forced labour, sexual slavery to trafficking across borders.

Examples
1. One of the most notorious situations involving widespread abduction of children, over the past 10 years, took place in northern Uganda, where the number of abductions was estimated to have reached 25,000 or more. Tens of thousands of abducted children were made to serve the rebels. During the two-decade-long conflict, girls and young women were vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse, not only at the hands of the rebels, but by government soldiers as well.

2. In Nigeria, Boko Haram has abducted some 2,000 children since 2013. The girls in captivity were raped and/or became “wives” of Boko Haram members. Many of those girls bore children as a result of sexual violence inflicted.
SLIDE 15: ATTACKS ON SCHOOLS OR HOSPITALS

Notations (for Trainer)

**Key Message:** Attacks on schools and hospitals are considered grave violations owing to the specific impact they have on children.

- Under international humanitarian law, schools and hospitals are protected civilian objects, and therefore benefit from the humanitarian principles of distinction and proportionality.

  In recent conflicts, schools and hospitals have come under increasing attack in efforts to discredit the Government or to instil fear in the population. Armed groups, including government troops, also use schools as bases or storage areas, thereby denying education to children. Teachers, nurses and doctors may also come under personal attack in order to make the institutions less effective. Abductions also take place in schools.

  Conflict has compounded the effects. Short-term loss of education may lead to the loss of several key years of education, which could significantly affect future employment prospects for children.
Examples
1. In 2019, in the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Nations confirmed that hospitals and schools had been bombed and, in many cases, specifically targeted by government forces.

2. In the Kasai region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, some 1,000 attacks on schools and hospitals by members of armed groups were reported in 2017.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Children are the first to perish from famine and disease; denial of humanitarian access to children is a grave violation.

Denial of humanitarian access to civilians, including children, and attacks against humanitarian workers assisting children are prohibited under the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Additional Protocols and may amount to crimes against humanity and war crimes. Moreover, humanitarian access to civilians is a principle of customary international law.

Humanitarian access is crucial in situations of armed conflict where civilians – including children – are in desperate need of assistance. Denial of humanitarian
access includes blocking the free passage or timely delivery of humanitarian assistance to persons in need, including children, as well as deliberate attacks against humanitarian workers. Humanitarian access is usually denied or hampered by parties to the conflict for security or political reasons. In many parts of the world, humanitarian assistance is sometimes interrupted because of ongoing fighting.

It is estimated that, in current conflicts around the globe, 80 million children are denied humanitarian assistance.

Examples
1. In 2019, more than 1,800 instances of denial of humanitarian access were documented in Yemen. That represented a dramatic increase from the figures recorded for 2018, and involved restrictions of movement within the country, interference with the delivery of humanitarian assistance, violence against humanitarian personnel, assets and facilities, and restrictions of movement into the country.

2. In Somalia, in 2019, instances of denial of humanitarian access included threats and violence against humanitarian personnel and assets, abduction or detention of personnel and beneficiaries, entry restrictions, disruption and looting.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Girls and boys are often more vulnerable to certain kinds of threats and violations based on their distinct gender roles within their societies.

Violence against civilians, particularly sexual violence, is a prevalent feature of current conflicts. In situations of armed conflict, women and girls, and often men and boys, are tortured and sexually abused with impunity. Sexual violence is used as a weapon of war to humiliate, terrify and intimidate the victims and their loved ones. Without male relatives, husbands and friends to protect them, women and girls are often at increased risk of physical assault and vulnerability to sexual and other forms of violence.

Girls may be assigned various roles within an armed group, including that of fighters. Girls are often sexually abused and may be forced to be the “wives” of commanders and soldiers. Often the girls become pregnant and bear the soldiers’ children. That makes it particularly challenging to identify girls during disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) efforts. Girls may be easily overlooked and mistaken as soldiers’ wives or dependents, especially because many are too embarrassed or afraid to speak up. They may also have different needs in the reintegration process owing to their different experiences. Peacekeepers should therefore pay special attention to the distinct needs of girls in DDR efforts.
Peacekeepers should be keenly aware of the gender differences relating to girls and boys.

For example:

- In many refugee and internally displaced persons settings, women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual violence because they usually have to leave the camp on a daily basis in search of firewood for cooking.

- Boys tend to be more often targeted for alleged association with armed forces or armed groups, which may put them at risk of physical attack, as well as illegal detention and torture.

**SLIDE 18: CASE STUDIES: GENDER**

**Case Studies: Gender**

- Testimonies from a girl and boy
- Consider some of the factors that can increase the risk of a child being recruited by armed forces/groups during armed conflict
- Reflect on the differences in the experiences of girls and boys associated with armed forces/groups

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

Activity: Comparison of testimonials (10 minutes)

**INSTRUCTIONS**

Hand out the testimonies of the boy and girl, and display slides 19 and 20. Have a male learner read the boy’s testimony aloud and a female learner read the girl’s testimony aloud. Facilitate a 5-minute open-group discussion, solicit views/comments from about five to seven learners. If necessary, note the responses on a flip chart. You can use the discussion questions below to solicit responses.
AIM
Learners should think about the specific vulnerabilities that girls and boys face in situations of armed conflict.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
- Understand the factors and risks that contribute to the recruitment of children by armed forces or armed groups
- Understand that one child may be affected by multiple violations, so that trauma is exacerbated
- Understand the different experiences of boys and girls associated with armed forces or armed groups

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
Discuss the testimonies taking into account the following questions:
1. Which factors put Jacques and Jasime at risk during the conflict?
2. How has the fact that they were children at the time of the conflict increased their vulnerability?
3. How do the experiences of Jacques and Jasime differ owing to their different gender roles?

The following responses highlight some of the factors that put children at risk during conflict:

SUGGESTED RESPONSES

Vulnerability factors
While Jacques appears to have joined the armed group “voluntarily”, the loss of his parents and the ensuing lack of protection, food, and housing put him in an extremely difficult and possibly life-threatening situation. Children lack the maturity to make an informed decision as to whether to join an armed force or group and can be more easily influenced than adults. The recruitment of all children – whether they are forced to join or are driven to join by other factors, is prohibited under international law.

Jasime was taken because she was a young girl who could be given to a soldier as a wife, to reward him. Girls are especially chosen for this. Becoming pregnant then increases their dependency on the soldier. As can be seen in this case, the girl has nowhere/nobody else to turn to. She is stigmatized and will not be able to go back to her community or the community of her husband’s family.

Traumatic experiences – like the ones experienced by Jacques and Jasime – can have more severe and long-term effects on children as they are still in the process of physical and intellectual development.

Gender differences
The threats and violence that girls and boys face during and after conflict are often different based on their distinct gender roles within their societies. Jacques, like many boys, was mainly used by the armed group for fighting and support tasks. Girls
may serve various purposes within an armed force or armed group, including as active combatants, and are often at greater risk of sexual violence, used as sex slaves, or forced to be the “wives” of commanders and soldiers. Some girls become pregnant and bear the soldiers’ children. Girls may easily be overlooked and mistaken as soldiers’ dependents. This role makes it particularly challenging to identify girl victims during formal disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) efforts. It is especially crucial that peacekeepers pay special attention to the distinct needs of girls during the DDR process.

The consequences for girls can be long-lasting and particularly difficult. In some cases, communities shun rape victims and children born of rape. Jasime refers to her abductor, the soldier, as her husband; this illustrates one of the difficulties of accessing girls during the DDR process. The stigma associated with sexual violence and the fear of rejection by their family and community is such that many girls are too embarrassed or afraid to speak up. At the age of 16, Jasime now has to take care of her baby on her own.

Why are children most vulnerable during armed conflict? Why do children need special protection in conflict and post-conflict settings?
[This was already discussed after the film, A Child’s Fate.]

While many children prove remarkably resilient when faced with extremely difficult circumstances, in general, children are disproportionately affected by armed conflict owing to the following reasons:

1. **Children can be more easily influenced and may not fully understand the consequences of their actions.**
   For example, children may be lured into joining an armed force or armed group, thinking that they will be obtaining “employment” or protection from violence. Children have also been used as “suicide bombers”, carrying explosives hidden in their bags or clothing, without knowing it.

2. **Children depend on family, community and government structures for protection and care.**
   Those structures are destroyed or have collapsed during conflict. That is why displaced or unaccompanied children are at greater risk of violence, exploitation or abuse during conflict.

3. **Children are still growing/in the process of development.**
   Violence in armed conflict poses several risks to the healthy development of children. For example, denial of access to basic services, including adequate nutrition, has a more serious long-term effect on children, particularly babies and younger children, than on adults. Similarly, traumatic and other negative experiences (such as indoctrination) and influences during conflict carry more consequences for children than adults.
Provide the following examples to illustrate gender differences, if necessary to supplement examples in the previous optional exercise.

- **Differences in the experiences of girls and boys affected by armed conflict**

  In refugee and internally displaced persons settings throughout the world, women and girls are more vulnerable to sexual violence because they usually have to leave the camps on a daily basis in search of firewood for cooking. For example, in Darfur, women and girls often walk several kilometres away from the camps to find a few branches to bum. That makes them prime targets for militia groups, national military or police forces and others who act in a climate of impunity.

  In Afghanistan, most victims of anti-personnel mines and other explosive remnants of war are boys between the ages of 8 and 15. In Afghan society, boys usually assume roles that require them to be outdoors, such as herding cattle. Boys also tend to be targeted for alleged association with armed forces or armed groups, which may put them at risk of physical attack as well as illegal detention and torture.

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**SLIDE 19: TESTIMONY OF A BOY**

Testimony of a Boy

Jacques was recruited into the insurgent group Mayi-Mayi when he was 10 years old.

“I remember the day I decided to join the Mayi-Mayi. It was after an attack on my village. My parents and my grandfather were killed and I was running. I was so scared. I lost everyone. I had nowhere to go and no food to eat. In the Mayi-Mayi, I thought I would be protected, but it was hard. I would see others die in front of me. I was hungry very often, and I was scared. Sometimes they would whip me, sometimes very hard. They used to say that it would make me a better fighter. One day, they whipped my [11-year-old] friend to death because he had not killed the enemy. Also, what I did not like was to hear the girls, our friends, crying because the soldiers would rape them.”

Testimony of a Girl

Jasime was recruited by the insurgent group Mayi-Mayi in South-Kivu, when she was 12 years old. She is now 16 and has a four-month-old baby.

“When the Mayi-Mayi attacked my village, we all ran away.... The soldiers captured all the girls, even the very young. Once with the soldiers, you were forced to "marry" one of the soldiers.... If you refused, they would kill you.... They would slaughter people like chickens.... Wherever we were fighting, along the way, they would take the women and girls working in the fields.... They would take young girls, remove their clothes, and then would rape them.... My "husband" did not beat me too often.... But one day, he was killed in an attack. I felt I was in danger and I should leave. On the way, as I was pregnant, I had my baby. I was alone in the bush, without medication. I still have pain from this. Then I went to my "husband's" village, but his parents rejected me and my child, after taking all my belongings. They blamed me for his death. I wanted to go home, but it is so far away, I was afraid the Mayi-Mayi would find me and capture me again.”

SLIDE 21: TAKEAWAYS

Takeaways

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

Summary

Takeaways from Lesson 1.1:
- A child is anyone under the age of 18 years.
- Children face specific risks during armed conflict.
- The nature of conflict has changed and severely affects children.
- There are six (categories of) grave violations against children.
- Protection needs of boys and girls may differ.
References (1/2)

- United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2020/487), June 2020
- United Nations, DPKO (Integrated Training Service), Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials, 2017
- International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition, Landmine Monitor 2020, November 2020
References (2/2)

- United Nations, UNDDR, Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) 2014 (see chapters 5.20 on “Youth and DDR” and 5.30 “Children and DDR”)
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

-Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
Lesson 1.2

Roles and Responsibilities of Mission Components and External Partners

The Lesson

Starting Lesson 1.2

For an interactive start to Lesson 1.2, ask learners:

Why is child protection considered a cross-cutting responsibility?

Overview

Lesson 1.2 covers the roles and responsibilities of different mission components working with external partners on child protection. The different components bring different capabilities in support of child protection; they must be aware of their responsibilities and must receive child protection training that would enable them to fulfil their role in the mission. External partners, host-country entities and the mission working together will ensure that impact on the ground is optimal. Everyone has a role to play. The discussion engages learners in the mandate from the outset.

Learning Objectives

• Recognize that protecting children in armed conflict is a shared responsibility;
• Describe the roles and responsibilities of the mission components with regard to protecting children;
• Explain the coordination mechanisms in a mission.

Activities

• Group discussion: Child Protection Coordination – Foreign Child Soldier (slide 15)
As discussed in lesson 1.1, peacekeeping mandates have increasingly included child protection. Indeed, most peacekeeping missions have full-fledged human rights, protection of civilians, conflict-related sexual violence, as well as child protection mandates, which address “protection” in different ways.

Each component of a mission has responsibilities and a role to play and must consider child protection within its core activities. All peacekeepers – military, police and civilians – must be aware of their responsibilities and must receive child protection training that would enable them to fulfil their role in the mission.
Key Message: All mission components have a role to play in child protection: some have a direct role, others an indirect one. Only by working together can the child protection mandate be achieved.

Understand the general role of the various mission components in protecting children, and peacekeepers’ responsibilities with regard to child protection, including the roles played by key mission components and external actors.

Understand the coordination mechanisms in a mission and how the military can coordinate with those actors to ensure an appropriate response to child protection concerns.
**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Each mission has a different structure. The structure of a mission reflects the tasks mandated by the Security Council and the operational context in the host country.

Let us begin by looking at the general structure of a multidimensional United Nations peacekeeping operation and the different components that you will encounter in the mission. Then we will discuss the key functions of some of the various mission components and external actors, and the specific roles that they play in promoting child protection.

We will also discuss the collective responsibility of all actors towards a comprehensive mission response through child protection activities, and the importance of coordinating action on child protection.

The aim of this slide is to demonstrate the complexities of a multidimensional mission that comprises a large number of actors, and requires substantial coordination, liaison and information-sharing. Emphasize that this is a sample structure; depending on different country-specific requirements and operational environments, mission structures will vary. The following slides focus on different mission components. The role of the military component will be discussed in more detail in module 3.
Point out the main components of a mission: civilian, military and police, as well as the United Nations country team.

Refer to the slide for the titles of officers and see the list of abbreviations that may be used in the field.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The Field Office reflects the mission headquarters in terms of structure and function.

In addition to the mission headquarters, which is normally located in the capital city, the mission will deploy field offices to other parts of the mission area, such as provincial capitals. The field office usually has representatives from the key functions within mission headquarters, such as the Head of Office (political), civil affairs and a Regional Administrative Officer representing the Director of Mission Support (DMS) and logistics.

A mission may have a number of field offices. The military component, whose force headquarters (FHQ) is located with the mission headquarters, will likely have its sector or brigade headquarters located with a field office, thereby enabling the mission components to work closely together.
In the same way, the police component will have representatives, not only at mission headquarters, but also at the regional level. It is essential that the Field Office and the military and police components work together to achieve the mission objectives. We will see how this works in relation to child protection later on.

SLIDE 5: CHILD PROTECTION ADVISERS

**Child Protection Advisers**

- **Points of contact** on child protection within peacekeeping mission
- **Advise** mission leadership on child protection
- **Mainstream** the child protection mandate across mission components/sections
- **Liaise** with Protection of Civilian Advisers and uniformed components on prevention activities
- **Conduct training** on child protection for civilian and uniformed components
- **Monitor and report** on the six grave violations against children
- **Co-chair** the Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting
- **Engage in dialogue** with parties to the conflict
- **High-level advocacy** for child protection needs
- **Coordinate** with UNICEF and other relevant actors

*Note: a Child Protection Unit may be a stand-alone mission section or may be embedded within the Human Rights component*

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Child Protection Advisers (CPAs) provide guidance and advice to mission leadership and components on all matters pertaining to child protection.

It is very important that the trainer be familiar with the distinct roles of the civilian Child Protection Adviser and the military Child Protection Focal Points, and their lines of communication and coordination.

While all peacekeepers have a responsibility to protect children, many peacekeeping missions have Child Protection Advisers, who take the lead as experts on this matter and advise the mission on child protection requirements. Child Protection Advisers are civilians; they advise all the mission components, particularly the Head of Mission (HOM), and work closely with the military component.
The Child Protection Advisers are your first point of contact; you will work with the Child Protection Adviser in your sector.

The Child Protection Adviser advises all mission components on matters pertaining to the protection of children in the mission area. They can ensure that all mission components play their role.

In addition to advising mission leadership on child protection concerns and mainstreaming the child protection mandate into mission activities, Child Protection Advisers co-chair the monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM), monitor and report on the six grave violations against children, engage with parties to conflict on addressing grave violations against children – including negotiating the release of child soldiers –, train peacekeeping personnel, and internal/external mission actors on child protection, and advocate for child protection in the host country.

Child Protection Advisers work closely with UNICEF child protection specialists and other relevant United Nations agencies, NGOs and government authorities or organizations on these activities.

The DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017) specifically requires the Child Protection Adviser to be responsible for reporting on child protection issues and activities undertaken by the peacekeeping operation in the mission area. Also, the Child Protection Adviser collates information and reports on grave violations committed against children to the Security Council.

Missions that have a child protection mandate may have a Child Protection Section headed by a Senior Child Protection Adviser, or the Senior Child Protection Adviser and child protection staff may be embedded as a team within the human rights component.

Verify which peacekeeping missions have Child Protection Advisers. Share relevant information with learners (see http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping).
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The military component must establish military child protection duties at all levels (force and sector headquarters, battalion, military observer team sites).

- With increasing demand on the military for child protection, and in order to ensure that all mission components – particularly the military component – integrate child protection into their activities, it is critical that a network of military Child Protection Focal Points be established to ensure that child protection is taken into account at all stages of planning and in operational activities at Force Headquarters, sector and contingent levels.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point must interact almost daily with the mission Child Protection Section for advice and support, to maintain situational awareness and to keep the Section up to date on the activities of the military component. This key relationship must be nurtured. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point must also ensure that child protection is mainstreamed at Force Headquarters.

- The roles and responsibilities of the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point and the Child Protection Focal Points at sector and battalion levels will be discussed in module 3.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message**: Child protection is a shared responsibility; each mission component has a role to play.

The following are examples of activities that peacekeeping components may carry out to protect children and promote their rights in armed conflict. The list is not exhaustive. Define the various components listed on the slides, as necessary.

1. **Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) and/or Head of Mission (HOM)**: Play a leadership role in political advocacy; responsible for placing child protection in the political and peace agenda of the country.

2. **Political Affairs**: Political issues are usually very difficult to resolve in post-conflict situations. No conflict is ever really resolved without effectively addressing the political/diplomatic dynamic. That is therefore an essential mission task. Key support for child protection is usually best demonstrated by adopting a child-conscious approach to all political processes – for example, by engaging in dialogue with parties to the conflict to end grave violations of child rights.
3. **Human Rights**: Some key roles of the human rights component in support of child protection include: monitoring and reporting violations against children, and illegal arrest and detention of children as identified during routine visits to detention centres; contributing to investigations by Child Protection Advisers on crimes committed against children in the context of armed conflict.

4. **Women Protection Adviser (WPA)**: Informs and advises Heads of Mission on sexual violence against women in line with the conflict-related sexual violence mandate.

5. **Civilian Protection Adviser**: Coordinates mission response in civilian protection, working closely with Child Protection and Women Protection Advisers.

6. **Civil Affairs**: Among others, supports capacity-building of local authorities and civil society, advising and training civilian officials to ensure that institutions and their officials understand human rights principles and how they apply to governance in a State; establishes conflict-management mechanisms to encourage community reconciliation; liaises with local communities and authorities on behalf of the Mission; coordinates with and facilitates the work of partners; gathers information and monitors the situation on the ground; and conducts analyses, including on civilian protection.

7. **Security Sector Reform (SSR)**: Helps to ensure protection of children and young people, for example, in the context of a weapons collection programme, or reform of national security forces. Security Council resolution 2151 (2014) was the first stand-alone resolution on security sector reform; operational paragraph 6 of the resolution encourages Member States, when undertaking security sector reforms, to mainstream child protection in military training, operating procedures, and guidance.

8. **Rule of Law/Judicial**: When present, this component contributes to the development of comprehensive strategies related to rule of law and reform of the justice system. Among other responsibilities, it provides advice and training to those working in the justice system; monitors developments in the justice sector and promotes the rule of law, which makes enjoyment of human rights possible, combats impunity, and prevents violations and discriminatory practices in relation to justice.

9. **Corrections**: This component deals with the operational aspects of the prison system. It provides advice on the development of policy and procedures, emphasizing the importance of alignment with international human rights standards relating to detention, and on rehabilitation of police cells and prisons; coaches and mentors national corrections officers, including on proper treatment of detainees. In recent missions, this component has been an integral part of the Rule of Law Unit.
10. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR): Among other things, ensures that special attention is given to children and women during the demobilization of armed forces and armed groups, and that a dedicated programme is in place for their support and reintegration.

11. Mission Support: Provides all types of field support to mission entities and components, including logistics support to ensure the safe transport of children, and material support for the refurbishment of childcare facilities.

Since child protection is a shared responsibility, the Child Protection Adviser usually coordinates with the human rights, political affairs, rule of law/judicial components, as well as United Nations Police, DDR, SSR and military observers.

**SLIDE 8: CIVILIAN COMPONENT**

**Key Message:** The civilian component consists of a substantive pillar and a mission support structure.

Define the various components showing on the slides, as necessary. Highlight the four sections on the left (civilian protection, child protection, women protection and gender).
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: The police component has a key child protection role and works alongside national police structures.

- The core mandate of United Nations Police is to build institutional capacity in post-conflict environments. The police can assist with child protection in the following ways:

1. Advocacy and awareness among local police;
2. Advise, mentor, guide and train local police on child protection issues, including how to deal with victims, witnesses and perpetrators;
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The peacekeeping mission works together with a number of actors on child protection, including the United Nations country team, host government actors, international and regional organizations, NGOs and the diplomatic community.

Although you, as peacekeepers, have specific and very important roles to play in child protection (which will be discussed in more detail in module 3), it is important to understand that your role is limited. You will encounter children who have no access to schools or clean drinking water, and you will want to help them. But, it is important to understand that you cannot do everything and that there are other actors who specialize in providing certain services.

Coordination is essential in order to share information on child protection needs and ensure an adequate response. For example, while peacekeeping missions may report a case of sexual violence against a girl, humanitarian child protection actors are equipped and able to provide the girl with timely and life-saving services, including medical, psychosocial and legal assistance.

External actors include members of the United Nations country team, such as UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), government actors, as well as the diplomatic community.
Contact and follow-up with external actors on child protection should be handled by or done in close consultation with Child Protection Officers whenever possible. The Child Protection Section or the child protection team within the human rights component can help to identify and facilitate contact with the most relevant actors.

It is essential that child protection specialists with this particular knowledge and expertise follow up on delicate cases and situations (e.g., risks of traumatization, witness protection, etc.), and refer cases to the relevant specialized actors, who are part of the specialized child protection network.

Let us now examine these external actors in more detail.

**SLIDE 11: UNITED NATIONS COUNTRY TEAM**

![UN Country Team Diagram]

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Know your United Nations partners and their role in child protection.
It is important for peacekeepers to be familiar with UNICEF and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes that are part of the United Nations country team with child protection mandates and roles. It is not necessary to mention in detail the roles and responsibilities of each entity, although a quick overview (if time permits) would be helpful. UNICEF is one particular organization with which peacekeepers will coordinate.

UNICEF is mandated by the General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, help to ensure that their basic needs are met and expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF leads child protection coordination on the ground through the child protection area of responsibility. UNICEF has a very different mandate from the peacekeeping mission. While the goal of protecting children is the same, the approach is very different. Complementarity is important in the mission area. Peacekeeping missions have the advantage when it comes to negotiating with armed groups, but UNICEF is better equipped to trace family and reunite children with their families. Therefore, it is essential that UNICEF receive relevant information from peacekeepers in the field in a timely manner. In addition, the mission must make sure that it is represented at the coordination cluster meetings so as to be informed about what is happening.

It is important for you, as peacekeepers, to understand that each entity plays a unique role in child protection. Remember that many of these actors have been in the field long before you arrived and they will be there long after you leave. They are a good source of information about the local context.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Know the NGOs in your area of responsibility and their capabilities.

You will encounter non-United Nations and non-governmental child protection actors in your area of deployment. Slide 12 shows a few of them.

Civil society groups, local charities and clinics are often an important asset in areas where national or local government institutions lack capacities. Military units are often deployed in areas where State authority is weak or non-existent and should work with these entities to ensure children affected by conflict are provided with medical care and assistance where local capabilities exist.

Non-governmental entities play significant roles in promoting child protection in the mission area. Save the Children and other NGOs have specific capacities to protect children and can sometimes respond to violations which have occurred. (Provide other relevant examples.)

Close coordination with these entities is important. As mentioned earlier, contact and follow-up with these actors on child protection matters should be handled by or done in close consultation with Child Protection Advisers whenever possible.
Peacekeepers have started to cooperate with NGOs and help them with their programmes. It is important to not indiscriminately support an NGO, but rather to work with legitimate NGOs.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Working with and supporting the host country’s authorities and entities is essential in order to build national child protection capacities.

The protection of civilians, including children, is primarily the responsibility of the host Government; however, in armed conflict or post-conflict areas, owing to weak or unwilling government authority, or – in worst-case scenarios – absence of any governance, it may not be so. In such cases (e.g., in Somalia, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo), the United Nations and the international community, under the authority of the Security Council mandate, step in and assume the responsibilities of protection.
Close coordination with Government (at mission headquarters level), local authorities (at provincial and Head of Mission levels) and other governmental organizations is required, and the local police need to be involved. Local authorities have the most relevant information, especially with regard to local culture and customs, and their voice is most heard in such situations. For that reason, close coordination with local authorities is very important for raising awareness among the local population, advocacy, monitoring, ensuring adequate legislative amendments from a child protection perspective, and ensuring protection and promotion of child rights.

Long-term sustainability and local ownership are related and important. The United Nations and the international community cannot assume responsibility forever, and the host country must be empowered to assume its responsibilities. When the mission closes, the local authorities will have to assume those responsibilities. Therefore, close association with local governmental agencies is important from the outset.

**SLIDE 14: CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATION**

**Key Message:** The military component is often the first point of contact with children in need of protection. By working effectively with the mission Child Protection Adviser, UNICEF and other actors, the impact on children’s safety and well-being will be significant.
Review and familiarize yourself with the slide carefully before presenting it. The arrows indicate the flow of reporting.

As mentioned earlier, each mission component has a role to play in protecting children and promoting their rights. Child Protection Advisers, serving as experts, are responsible for collecting information on violations against children, referring cases to and securing a response from the mission, an NGO or the United Nations country team.

The flow of information between the military Child Protection Focal Point and the civilian Child Protection Advisers must be secure.

Therefore, if a violation against children is observed, the unit must report it through the chain of command utilizing the military child protection focal point network. The chain of command must then channel the information to the military Child Protection Focal Point, who then reports it to the nearest civilian Child Protection Adviser.

Once informed of a child-related incident, the Child Protection Adviser liaises with UNICEF, the relevant child specialist actor and possibly the Government (e.g., advocacy with the Government or armed forces for the release of a child held in detention). UNICEF will usually provide assistance to the child or the family.

See slide for an example of coordination with UNICEF.

UNICEF often traces the family and ensures that the child receives assistance (e.g., in an interim care centre).

Lastly, the Child Protection Adviser verifies the information, transmits it to the MRM, and reports the violation to Headquarters in New York through the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General includes MRM-verified information on violations in his report to the Security Council, which can take action through sanctions, referral to the International Criminal Court or other accountability measures.

Example (UNMISS): In Jonglei State, South Sudan, the different tribes had abducted many children during the inter-communal conflict. United Nations military liaison officers found children living with the Sudan People’s Liberation Army (SPLA) away from their villages/towns, because the soldiers and the children were from the same tribe. Although the soldiers were taking care of the children, it was not a good situation for the children - they needed to be at home with their families. The United Nations military liaison officers informed the mission child protection team of the situation; the child protection team then informed UNICEF, which initiated the family tracing process. Together, the child protection team and UNICEF drew the Government’s attention to the need for the children to be returned to their families. The Government willingly cooperated as family reunification was part of the
Comprehensive Peace Agreement. UNMISS child protection team arranged for helicopters to take a child protection specialist and a UNICEF expert to the village to identify the children and bring them back to Bor, where UNICEF arranged for them to be placed in an interim care centre, as their families had not yet been identified. It was better for the children to be in the care centre, than to live with SPLA soldiers in their barracks. After one week, the children were reunited with their families.

**SLIDE 15: CHILD PROTECTION COORDINATION – FOREIGN CHILD SOLDIER**

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Although you may not always see the end result of your child protection action, remember that the military component’s child protection action on the ground really matters. Working with your civilian partners is essential.

**Group Discussion**

This is an interactive build-up scenario to help learners understand child protection coordination.

**ASK** the question, solicit responses, then **EXPLAIN** and **INFORM** learners of the possible action. Present the scenarios in dialogue with the learners.
The most important lessons to be learned are:
1. Child protection is a team effort;
2. Child protection responsibilities differ but are complementary;
3. Coordination is essential for optimal child protection;
4. Reporting incidents through the chain of command is crucial to triggering an appropriate response.

**QUESTION 1**

**Ask:** You are with the United Nations Military in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and find out that the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) has captured and detained two children from the 23 March Movement (M23), which FARDC claims is from Rwanda. What would you do?

**Explain:** As soon as possible, report the information. The military Child Protection Focal Point will then inform the civilian Child Protection Adviser. Depending on the mission’s relationship with FARDC, you, the military officer, can request that the children be handed over to a Child Protection Officer.

**Inform:** Some missions (e.g., MONUSCO) have standard operating procedures (SOP) for the handover and detention of children. This will be dealt with in a subsequent module.

**QUESTION 2**

**Ask:** Assume that the children stay with FARDC. What happens next?

**Explain:** The Child Protection Adviser will inform UNICEF, which will find an interim care centre for the children, as well as the Director of Mission Support (DMS) and the military component. The Child Protection Adviser will arrange for the handover of the children to social workers, and their transportation to the interim care centre. You, the military officer, might be asked to assist in the process with FARDC.

**QUESTION 3**

**Ask:** The children are now in the interim care centre. What happens next?

**Explain:** The children need to be reunited with their families. UNICEF will inform the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), which will set about tracing the children’s family in their country of origin (in this case, Rwanda). Once the families have been identified, the mission might be requested to transport the children to Rwanda: the Child Protection Adviser would be responsible for facilitating the process for the mission, but the military might be asked to provide protection and security along
Lastly, the Mission is responsible for monitoring and reporting grave violations against children to headquarters. If the children were indeed initially recruited by M23, the mission would have to report it. Together with UNICEF, the Child Protection Adviser will draft a report for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General/Head of Mission to send to headquarters in New York to be included as MRM-verified information in the Secretary-General’s annual report on children and armed conflict. The information will eventually be reported to the Security Council, which may take action against the perpetrator (e.g., sanctions against a Government, referral of the case to International Criminal Court, among others).

SLIDE 16: TAKEAWAYS

**Takeaways**

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

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Child protection is a shared responsibility, and everyone has a role to play.

Each mission component has a role to play in protecting children and promoting their rights. While most peacekeeping missions have Child Protection Advisers serving as experts, child protection is a shared responsibility.
The roles of military and civilian mission staff differ; UNICEF’s role is complementary to the role of the mission.

If all actors are coordinated, the appropriate response can be implemented.

It all starts with your report of a situation that is inappropriate for children.

The military should establish Child Protection Focal Points at all levels (headquarters to at least company level). This would facilitate coordination and information-sharing between the military and civilian child protection actors. With the support of the Child Protection Adviser, the military component should establish child protection information requirements. This would enable military units, at the tactical level, to collect and share information with internal (mission) and external child protection actors, and facilitate a cohesive approach within the force to collect information for child protection purposes.

External child protection actors include UNICEF, other United Nations agencies, such as UNHCR, relevant international and national NGOs, national ministries (e.g., social affairs, health, education and youth), and other institutions.

**Summary**

**Takeaways from Lesson 1.2:**

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

- United Nations, DPKO-ITS, Core Pre-deployment Training Materials (Lesson 2.7: Child Protection), 2017
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

 Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
Legal Framework

The Lesson

Starting Module 2: Legal Framework and Lesson 2.1

OVERVIEW
Module 2 provides an overview of the legal framework governing the work of United Nations peace operations and authorizing the child protection mandate and key policies that United Nations mission personnel must respect. Lesson 2.1 conveys the key aspects of the legal framework governing peace operations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• Identify the key components of international law governing mandated tasks in United Nations peace operations;
• Understand core legal concepts and norms;
• Clarify what the legal framework enables or obliges peacekeepers to do and what it prevents peacekeepers from doing.

ACTIVITIES
• Case 1: Help wanted (slide 7)
• Case 2: Plan of attack (slide 13)
• Case 3: “Go back home” (slide 16)
• Case 4: Irresponsible command (slide 20)
• Video: Military and human rights (slide 24)
• Case 5: Mandate interpretation (slide 25)
• Case 6: A new armed group (slide 32)
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Module 2 begins with an overview of how international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, guide the work of United Nations missions.

The term “international law” commonly refers to the body of law that governs relations between States, and between States and international organizations. These training materials consider international law as a combination of binding obligations (“hard law”) and non-binding instruments (“soft law”). Binding obligations refer to rules that are legally binding and that all States must apply, such as treaty law (i.e., conventions, protocols, agreements) and customary law.

The areas of international law most relevant for the work of peacekeepers are the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international criminal law and international refugee law.

Dedicate at least 120 minutes (2 hours) to the presentation of the material, including the interactive discussion of the cases (see slides 7, 13, 16, 20, 25, 32).
SLIDE 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Identify the key components of international law governing mandated tasks in United Nations peace operations.

Understand core legal concepts and norms.

Clarify what the legal framework enables/obliges peacekeepers to do, and what it prevents peacekeepers from doing.
The Charter of the United Nations Charter – the “United Nations Constitution” – is at the top of the hierarchy of norms governing peace operations, followed by the fundamental norms of international law. The Security Council is bound by the Charter to respect those norms. For instance, the Council cannot issue a mandate to a peacekeeping mission to attack civilians, hire children for hazardous work, or push back refugees to places/countries where their lives may be at risk, since that would entail breaches of the fundamental norms of international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law.
SLIDE 5: PEACEKEEPERS’ RESPONSIBILITIES

- International Human Rights Law
- International Humanitarian Law (IHL)
- International Criminal Law
- International Refugee Law

Peacekeepers’ Responsibilities

All personnel serving under the United Nations must respect, at all times, the tenets of international human rights, humanitarian, criminal and refugee law. Furthermore, all personnel have a duty to ensure protection against violations of these fundamental norms and to promote them in their daily interaction with other actors, including the forces of the host State and any armed groups with whom they may engage under their mandate.
Before showing the slide, ask learners:
Who is entitled to human rights, and whose responsibility is it to protect human rights?

Answer: Every human being is entitled to enjoy human rights, and State authorities are primarily responsible for upholding human rights.

Human rights are universal. Everyone is entitled to the same fundamental rights. Some groups may have specific needs or may be particularly at risk of discrimination and rights violations. Specific rights protections are given to those groups (e.g., children, women, indigenous people, persons with disabilities).
International human rights law always applies, including during armed conflict and other national emergencies, because that is when human rights are most under threat. Human rights especially relevant to peace operations include the right to life, the right not to be tortured, the right not to be discriminated against, the rights to food, water, health and education.
First and foremost, States must respect the human rights of everyone and protect their populations from threats/violations by private actors (e.g., by diligently arresting and prosecuting perpetrators of rape). Armed groups with effective control over a territory also have an obligation to respect and protect human rights. The United Nations considers armed groups that commit atrocities, such as summary execution, rape, torture or looting, to be engaging in human rights abuses and violations.
United Nations policy requires that United Nations and mission personnel respect the human rights of all in their work. For example, the United Nations shall not discriminate on the basis of religion in its hiring practices (right to religion or belief), nor use excessive force that may result in serious injury or death (right to life).

Human rights cover a wide range of areas and are also enjoyed by children. Children may exercise civil and political rights such as freedom of expression, and economic, social and cultural rights, such as the right to education, are particularly important for their development and well-being.

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**SLIDE 7: CASE 1: HELP WANTED**

Case 1: Help wanted

A political opposition party calls on entire families to attend peaceful protests. The Government prohibits the protests and sends in its army to disperse the demonstrators.

A local army commander asks UN Forces to provide additional troops to help disperse the demonstrations and "restore law and order".

*Is the United Nations allowed to provide such help?*

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Learners may discuss this case in plenary or, if time permits, in small groups.

- Key points to emphasize:
  - Peaceful political protests are protected by the right to peaceful assembly and to freedom of expression. A Government prohibiting such protests and sending in its army to disperse the protesters would be violating human rights. Children’s rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of expression are guaranteed under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
• The United Nations shall not aid and assist human rights violations. A United Nations mission therefore shall not support national forces that are violating human rights, even if the mission has a general mandate to assist in maintaining law and order. In order to manage the risks of aiding in violations by others, the United Nations has put in place the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on United Nations Support to non-United Nations Security Forces (HRDDP), which sets out the procedure to assess and mitigate risk before any security support is provided (see slides 8 and 9).

• In such situations, the United Nations Force Commander should raise concerns with relevant counterparts in the host State’s army about possible human rights violations. If the mission has a protection of civilians mandate, it is legally entitled to take measures to physically protect (civilian) demonstrators from any violence directed against them by the host State’s forces (although, in practice, this would require consultation with mission headquarters, which could take time).

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SLIDE 8: HUMAN RIGHTS DUE DILIGENCE POLICY ON UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT TO NON-UNITED NATIONS SECURITY FORCES

The United Nations cannot provide support to non-UN Security Forces:
• if there is a real risk of the receiving entities committing grave violations of international humanitarian, human rights or refugee law, and
• the relevant authorities fail to take the necessary corrective or mitigating measures

Protects and promotes credibility, impartiality and the legal interests of the mission.

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Photo on slide: MONUC providing transport to national army units in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
Upon realizing that some national army units that had received United Nations support where violating human rights, the Security Council made further support by MONUC conditional upon the army’s compliance with human rights. The Human Rights Due Diligence Policy (HRDDP) was established against the backdrop of MONUC’s conditionality.

The Policy is binding on the entire United Nations (not only peacekeepers). It was established by the Secretary-General, and the Security Council has repeatedly endorsed it.

According to the Policy, support to non-United Nations security forces cannot be provided:

- Where there are substantial grounds for believing there is a real risk of the receiving entities committing grave violations of international humanitarian, human rights, or refugee law; and
- Where the relevant authorities fail to take the necessary corrective or mitigating measures.

All United Nations entities that are contemplating or already providing support to non-United Nations security forces must therefore conduct an assessment of the risks involved in providing (or not) such support. The assessment should in particular consider the risk of the recipient entity committing grave violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law, or refugee law. Furthermore, the United Nations must consider whether there are any mitigating measures that can reduce the risk of violations (e.g., enhanced training or suspending support to offending units).

The Policy serves to ensure that the United Nations does not support or collaborate with host-State elements that are involved in grave violations of human rights, or of international humanitarian or refugee law, and to protect the United Nations from added legal liability for inadvertently aiding in violations committed by others. Maintaining its distance from State forces involved in grave violations also protects the reputation and perceived impartiality of the United Nations.
Any support provided by the United Nations to non-United Nations security forces must adhere to the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy. Support by peace operations includes conducting joint operations, planning, sharing of intelligence, training, capacity-building, mentoring, technical cooperation and financial support.

The following areas are exempt from Policy assessment:

- Training and engagement on international humanitarian law and human rights,
- Mediation-related support (e.g., transporting officers to peace negotiations),
- Medical evacuation.

The Policy also covers support provided to regional organizations, for example, African Union peace and security operations, such as the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).

Missions have established task forces and standard operating procedures (SOPs) to help assess risks, coordinate engagement with supported entities and develop measures to mitigate the risks. The mission will work with host-State partners to bring the risk of violations down to an acceptable level. However, where support recipients continue to commit grave violations, the mission may temporarily suspend or withdraw its support.
The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) remains the neutral guardian of international humanitarian law in conflict areas throughout the world.

International humanitarian law (IHL) must be respected by all parties to armed conflict, including the national forces in an international armed conflict. In a non-international armed conflict, state military forces and non-state armed groups must abide by international humanitarian law.

International humanitarian law regulates the conduct of hostilities. For example, it requires parties to conflict to minimize, to the extent possible, harm to civilians not participating in the hostilities. It also outlaw certain means of combat in order to reduce unnecessary suffering by civilians or combatants; for example, the prohibition of the use of chemical or poisonous weapons of warfare. International humanitarian law provides special protections for those who are not, or no longer, engaged in the hostilities, including civilians.

The 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols spell out the basic principles of international humanitarian law. Today, their authority is universally accepted and most of their provisions are regarded as customary international humanitarian law that is binding on all parties to conflict, regardless of whether they are a Party to the Conventions and Protocols.
States must respect international humanitarian law and ensure that others respect it as well. For example, in accordance with its obligation to ensure respect for international humanitarian law, a State has the duty to prosecute and punish members of a non-State armed group who commit serious violations amounting to war crimes.

Since impartiality is a central principle of peacekeeping, United Nations military forces are generally not a party to conflict. However, international humanitarian law may apply temporarily to them as long as they engage as combatants in armed conflict, as is also recognized in the Secretary-General’s Bulletin on observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law (ST/SGB/199/13). For example, a United Nations force carrying out an offensive operation against an armed group that poses a grave threat to civilians.

SLIDE 11: PROTECTED PERSONS UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

- Civilians not directly participating in hostilities
- Medical and religious personnel of armed forces
- Wounded, sick and others hors combat
- Prisoners of war & interned armed group fighters
- Peacekeepers (unless engaged in hostilities)

Ask learners: Who is a civilian in the two photographs?
The armed herder on the right may be a civilian who is only armed to protect himself and his cattle from marauders. In many mission settings, armed civilians are a common sight; because a person is carrying a weapon like an assault rifle does not necessarily mean that they are participants in hostilities between militarily organized parties to conflict. Children (assuming the herder is younger than 18 years of age) can also be active participants in hostilities. However, once they have been captured, have surrendered or are no longer engaged in hostilities, they are entitled to special protection and must be treated as victims of a grave violation and helped to reintegrate (see lesson 2.2 for more details).

Under international humanitarian law, any person who is not/no longer directly participating in hostilities shall be considered a civilian, unless he/she is a member of an armed force or armed group. In case of doubt, the individual or group of individuals shall be considered civilians and afforded the protection owed to civilians, until determined otherwise. Civilians may be in possession of arms without necessarily being combatants. Under international humanitarian law, civilians who are in possession of arms, for example, for the purpose of self-defence and protection of their property, but who have not been, or are not currently, engaged in hostilities are entitled to protection.

Members of armed forces or armed groups who are hors de combat (out of action) also enjoy protection under international humanitarian law. Notably, those who are no longer able to continue fighting because they are wounded or sick shall not be attacked, but rather collected and medically cared for.

Prisoners of war (POWs) and interned or detained armed group fighters enjoy special protection. They must be treated humanely in all circumstances and must not be subjected to any humiliating and degrading treatment. Unlike regular soldiers who become POWs, captured rebel fighters may be prosecuted for participating in armed conflict. However, prosecution must be done before “a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples” (see common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions).

Peacekeepers, regardless of whether they are military, police or civilian, are protected under international law. Directing attacks against them may amount to a war crime.
In the conduct of hostilities, parties to conflict must abide by basic principles to minimize harm to civilians and civilian objects, such as homes, hospitals, places of worship, etc.

The protection of civilians in the conduct of hostilities builds on three basic principles of international humanitarian law:

- **Distinction**: In order to ensure respect for and protection of the civilian population and civilian objects, parties to conflict must, at all times, distinguish between civilians and combatants, and between civilian and military objects. Operations may only be directed against military objects; and indiscriminate attacks that do not distinguish between civilians and combatants are prohibited. An example of violation is shelling an entire village with heavy artillery without distinguishing between military targets and civilian homes.

- **Precaution**: In the conduct of military operations, constant care must be taken to spare civilians and civilian objects. All feasible precautions must be taken to avoid and, in any event, minimize incidental loss of civilian life, injury to civilians and damage to civilian objects. Examples of violations include:
  - Not making an effort to verify that the target is actually a military target before launching an assault;
- Soldiers taking positions too close to civilians, thereby placing them at risk of being caught in crossfire.

- Proportionality: Incidental loss of life and damage to property owing to attacks must not be excessive in relation to the concrete and direct military advantage that is expected to be gained. This means that, when deciding to attack a target, consider whether the damage to civilians and civilian property would be excessive in relation to the military advantage that would be gained. Proportionality is not an issue if the target is a purely military one and no civilians are nearby. An example of violation is bombing a school and killing dozens of children when the target is to kill one soldier who established a fighting position in the school compound.

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SLIDE 13: CASE 2: PLAN OF ATTACK

**Case 2: Plan of attack**

- An armed group regularly attacks local civilians. The fighters of the group live in a village among civilians, including children, of the same ethnicity. The fighters do not always wear uniforms or carry weapons openly. The village has a hospital where many wounded fighters are treated.
- The host State’s army is planning to launch armed operations against the group in the village.

The army asks the UN Mission for advice on how to conduct its operation in line with IHL rules.

Learners may discuss this case in plenary or, if time permits, in small groups.

Key points to emphasize:

- The armed group is committing a serious violation of international humanitarian law by attacking civilians; its fighters are violating the principle of precaution, because they have positions close to civilian homes; and they fail to distinguish themselves because they do not wear uniforms.
- The State authorities have the duty under international human rights and humanitarian law to protect the population in its territory from such violations. Pursuing an operation to neutralize the group would be in line with this duty.

- Regarding advice from the mission: The mission would normally encourage the State security forces to conduct the operation. However, the operation must be conducted in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law, so as not to place other civilians at risk of death or injury.

- Although the armed (enemy) group fails to respect international humanitarian law, State forces are obliged to respect both humanitarian and human rights law.

**Principles that the State forces should consider include, in particular:**

- Precaution to minimize harm/injury to civilian villagers and civilian objects. In practice, State forces should gather intelligence to know exactly where the armed group fighters are positioned and where civilians live. They should also consider how civilians not engaged as fighters in the group can be evacuated from the village so as to avoid incidental harm to them.

- Distinction between civilians and military targets. In practice, the State forces could surround the village, demand that the armed group surrender; failing that, they should give civilians a chance to evacuate before launching their operations. Those exiting the area would have to be carefully screened to ensure that no armed group fighters are escaping. It must be borne in mind that the hospital, although it treats wounded fighters, is not a military target; indeed, hospitals enjoy special protection. The State army shall not attack the hospital. Wounded fighters in hospital are also protected persons and cannot be targeted (e.g., they must not be shot at in the hospital beds). However, the State army can surround the hospital and move in to detain the wounded fighters, but must continue to provide them with the necessary medical care. The State army must plan for that contingency.

- Proportionality to ensure that civilian losses do not outweigh (i.e., are not excessive in relation to) the military advantage to be gained. State forces should not use explosive weapons that have a large and imprecise impact radius in their operations (e.g., large mortars or heavy artillery), as they may incidentally kill a disproportional number of civilians.
Within their ambit of application, both international human rights and humanitarian law regard any form of sexual violence during conflict, including rape and enforced prostitution, as serious violations. Individuals responsible for those violations may also incur criminal responsibility for war crimes or crimes against humanity. Women enjoy special protection in detention. Human rights law requires, among other things, that women be detained separately from men.
When Governments are unwilling or unable to protect their citizens, individuals may suffer such serious violations of their rights that they are compelled to flee their country and seek refuge in another country. Since the Governments of their home countries no longer protect the basic rights of their citizens, it is the international community that must ensure that the basic rights of those seeking refuge in another country are respected.

The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees is the foundation of international refugee law. The term “refugee” under the Refugee Convention refers to any person who has fled their country owing to a “well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion”. Individuals suspected of war crimes or crimes against humanity are excluded from refugee status.

A person fleeing a country where an armed conflict is taking place may qualify for refugee status in another country only if specific requirements are met: notably, evidence of the individual’s “well-founded fear of being persecuted”). Regional instruments have expanded the scope of the definition of “refugee”. Under the Organisation of African Unity 1969 Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (African Refugee Convention), a refugee is any person who, owing to “events seriously disturbing public order in either part of the whole of his country of origin”, such as armed conflict, seeks refuge in another country.
The Latin American 1984 Cartagena Declaration on Refugees expanded the concept of a refugee to include persons who have fled their country because their lives, safety and freedom have been threatened by generalized violence, internal conflicts, among others, “which have seriously disturbed public order” in their country.

Refugees are generally civilians, therefore the mission has a duty to provide protection to refugees under its protection of civilians mandate. In addition, peace operations are often tasked with creating conditions conducive to the voluntary, safe, dignified and sustainable return or local integration of refugees and internally displaced persons.

SLIDE 16: CASE 3: GO BACK HOME

The host State’s army is forcing refugees to go back to their home countries. The refugees will be imprisoned in their home countries for “having left the country illegally”. In the prisons, woman and girls are often raped by the guards.

Learners may discuss this case in plenary or, if time permits, in small groups.

Key points to emphasize:

- One of the fundamental principles of refugee law is the prohibition of refoulement (i.e., non-refoulement). This principle states that no one shall be returned to a country where there is substantial grounds for believing that they would face a real and personal risk of persecution, torture (including rape as a form of torture) or other grave human rights violations.
- Under international law, refoulement of refugees may amount to deportation - as a crime against humanity (if widespread or systematic) and as a war crime (if committed in the context of an armed conflict).

- In this case, the host State’s army is committing grave violations. The United Nations mission shall not assist in such operations. Instead, the mission should raise concern by reporting the issue to UNHCR. In line with the “One United Nations” principle and their role to promote respect for international law, United Nations military commanders should echo such concerns in their engagement with counterparts in the host State’s army.

**SLIDE 17: RIGHTS OF REFUGEES**

The rights of refugees are set out in the 1951 Refugee Convention that most States are party to; those rights are also guaranteed by international customary law which all States must respect.

International refugee law also contains important provisions to protect children. For instance, with regard to elementary education, refugee children must receive the same treatment as the host State’s children.
Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are people who have been compelled to leave their place of habitual residence owing to armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, natural or human-made disasters that have threatened their lives and safety. Unlike refugees, they have not crossed an international border, but have remained in their own country. The protection of internally displaced persons and other affected populations in their own country is primarily the responsibility of national authorities as they are civilians. Unlike refugees, internally displaced persons do not enjoy special legal status under international law. However, the international community has a role to play in promoting and reinforcing efforts to ensure protection, assistance and solutions for internally displaced persons. UNHCR generally considers internally displaced persons to be persons of concern under its mandate, and the mission often makes special efforts to protect internally displaced persons’ sites under its protection of civilians mandate. United Nations military will often be tasked with securing the perimeter of camps housing internally displaced persons, while United Nations police may work with the local police to ensure law and order within the camp.

Internally displaced persons maintain all their human rights as citizens of the country, such as the right to vote in elections. Therefore, the State must make arrangement for all eligible persons to be able to vote at the site of their displacement.

In 1998, the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons issued the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. The principles, which have been repeatedly endorsed by the international community of States,
reflect, and are consistent with, the binding legal obligations set out in international humanitarian and human rights law.

Leading the way at the regional level, in 2009, the African Union adopted the Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention). The Convention reinforces States’ obligation to protect internally displaced persons.

SLIDE 19: INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW

Some violations of international human rights, refugee law and humanitarian law are considered so grave by the international community of States that they are regarded as international crimes. Those are war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

All States have a duty to prosecute and punish such crimes if they are committed within their territory. The international community may set up international tribunals and courts to prosecute and punish international crimes. For example, in response to international crimes committed during conflicts, the Security Council set up the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in 1993, and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) in 1995. The International Criminal Court, established in 2002, is the first and only permanent international court with jurisdiction to prosecute individuals for international crimes committed in States that have accepted its jurisdiction (more than
120 States so far), and in places that are referred to the Court by the Security Council (e.g., Darfur, Libya, among others).

Military personnel should be aware of the following three categories of international crimes that are within the International Criminal Court’s jurisdiction:

War crimes: Violations of the provisions of the Geneva Conventions of 1949; also breaches of other sources of international humanitarian law may entail war crimes on the part of the individuals who commit such crimes during an armed conflict;

Crimes against humanity: Inhumane acts committed by State authorities or non-State armed groups in a widespread or systematic manner against any civilian population, such as murder, rape, torture, among others. Such crimes are typically the outcome of an underlying policy to commit the crimes and/or elaborate planning at a high level of authority;

Genocide: In accordance with the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Genocide Convention), committing acts, such as killing, causing serious bodily or mental harm to or imposing measures on members of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group with the “intent, to destroy, in whole or in part, the group, as such” may amount to genocide. The killing of some individuals because of their religion or race does not constitute genocide. It is the “intent to annihilate the entire group, either in a specific area or globally” that determines the international crime of genocide.

The historic example that precipitated the concept of genocide as an international crime was the Holocaust, the result of Nazi Germany’s attempt to annihilate the entire Jewish population of Europe.
SLIDE 20: CASE 4: IRRESPONSIBLE COMMAND

Case 4: Irresponsible command

• The military systematically looted a city, and soldiers raped hundreds of women and girls.
• The military commander troops never ordered her troops to commit such atrocities. However, she knew about them and did nothing to stop the troops under her command.

Has she committed an international crime?

Key points to be emphasized:

- Military commanders must have command responsibility; they cannot close their eyes to grave violations committed by their subordinates.
- Regardless of whether a commander has ordered soldiers to carry out an act, commanders will be held responsible for all international crimes committed by the troops under their command and for failing to prevent or repress the commission of such crimes (see slide 21).
- United Nations military commanders should consider invoking the principle of responsibility in a peer-to-peer dialogue between military professionals may have a significant positive impact and may enhance human rights and humanitarian compliance on the part of national forces.
As demonstrated by case 4 (slide 20), command responsibility is an important principle for military commanders. Indeed, a military commander can incur criminal responsibility for grave international crimes by simply doing nothing to prevent the commission of the crime, even without actively participating in the crime.
The rules that apply specifically to peace operations will be discussed in the rest of this lesson (2.1).
Every peacekeeping operation begins with the adoption by the Security Council of a resolution to establish the mission. The Council seeks to establish a mission with the consent of the host State. Depending on the mission's mandate and role, the Council will want to obtain the consent of the parties to the conflict.

The Security Council resolution defines the mandate of the mission, that is, the tasks assigned to it, including any explicit authorization to use force. Mandates and/or tasks, differ from mission to mission. The range of mandated tasks differs between peace operations based on the conflict environment, challenges on the ground and other factors. Security Council mandates may also set cross-cutting thematic tasks for all missions, for example, prevention of conflict-related sexual violence.

Resolutions that authorize the deployment of a peace operation also establish the maximum strength of the uniformed components (i.e., military and police). The Security Council mandate is typically established for a fixed period (usually one year), after which it may be renewed. At this stage, the Council will review the authorized strength of the mission and make any adjustments it deems necessary.
Before presenting the slide, show the United Nations training video on military components and their work to protect human rights (8 minutes).

Based on real mission examples, the video shows how military components contribute to upholding human rights, protecting civilians and preventing conflict-related sexual violence.

The video is available in English at http://webtv.un.org/search/military-human-rights-cooperation/6214386490001/?term=2020-12-05&sort=date; and in French at http://webtv.un.org/search/composantes-militaires-%E2%80%93-coop%C3%A9ration-en-mati%C3%A8re-de-droits-de-l%E2%80%99homme/6214384098001/?term=2020-12-05&sort=date&lan=french.

More and more, peace operations are placed in situations in which there is no firm peace to be kept, and with the expectation that their presence will protect the most vulnerable. Therefore, multidimensional peacekeeping missions are regularly assigned protection mandates. Although specialized civilian staff, including Human Rights Officers, Civilian Protection Advisers, Women Protection Advisers and Child Protection Advisers, work on these mandates, they nonetheless remain whole-of-mission responsibilities to which the United Nations must contribute.
Protection mandates may overlap as they complement and reinforce each other:

- The human rights mandate seeks to protect the entire population and the full range of human rights. The mission advocates peaceful means, such as reporting to Headquarters, and other advocacy or capacity-building measures, to advance this mandate;

- The protection of civilians mandate is more limited, in that it is only concerned with physical violence and protects civilians only (as opposed to detained fighters, for example). However, it goes deeper than the human rights mandate because it authorizes the mission to use force where necessary to protect civilians;

- The child protection mandate focuses on the six categories of grave violations against children in armed conflict, namely, killing and maiming, recruitment or use, rape and other grave sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access. See module 1 and lesson 2.2 for more details;

- The conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) mandate requires the existence of a nexus between sexual violence and conflict (e.g., domestic violence would typically not be covered).

Provide examples of how protection mandates overlap or differ:

- If State authorities order the closure of a newspaper criticizing the Government, that would be a violation of the human rights to freedom of expression, media and information. However, the protection of civilians mandate is not triggered unless there is physical violence. For example, if State agents physically assault journalists, the mission may intervene under its protection of civilians mandate, which includes the use of force, where necessary;

- If an armed group traffics underage girls for purposes of child prostitution (commercial sexual exploitation) in order to finance its armed activities, that would amount to abuse under the human rights mandate. The mission must take action under its protection of civilians mandate to protect the girls. Such sexual violence against children is of grave concern to both the child protection and the conflict-related sexual violence mandates.
The discussion of this case should show that the mission’s protection of civilians mandate determines its action:

**Civilians:** The population of the town are civilians who are not participating in hostilities (see definition, discussed above, under international humanitarian law). If the three 16-year-olds are indeed armed fighters, then they are not civilians, but rather combatants in the conflict. However, as children (under 18 years), they deserve special protection because they are victims of a grave violation against children, namely recruitment and use. Moreover, maybe they are being wrongly accused of being fighters in an armed group, therefore the mission has a duty to protect them, in any case;

**Threat of physical violence:** The local community faces constant threat of physical violence owing to the presence of an armed group committing crimes against humanity. The threat of physical violence does not have to be imminent (i.e., about to happen). The captured 16-year-old children also face a risk of physical violence (i.e., summary execution by lynching);

**Protection without prejudice to the responsibility of the host State:** The mission should first assess whether the local police can manage the situation. However, it is likely that the local police cannot deploy officers with the necessary strength and urgency. Therefore, the mission must act;
All necessary measures: Under its protection of civilians mandate, the mission may use force, if deemed necessary, to protect civilians. Using graduated force, it would first seek to show authoritative physical presence to contain the situation. The mission may also apprehend and temporarily detain the teenagers (including for purposes of protecting them).

However, the protection of civilians mandate does not give the mission prosecutorial or judicial powers. These remain the sovereign prerogative of the host State. Instead, the mission would seek to promptly hand over the children to the local authorities, provided that the authorities can guarantee that they will be treated humanely. The mission has 96 hours to carry out a risk assessment and hand over the detainees (see DPO/DPPA/DSS, revised Standard Operating Procedures: The Handling of Detention in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Missions, 2021). If the teenagers were indeed used in armed conflict, they should be referred to a reintegration programme, which the mission’s Child Protection Unit and UNICEF can usually arrange (see lesson 1.2, slide 14: Child protection coordination, and subsequent lessons for details).

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SLIDE 26: PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS MANDATE: “TAKE ALL NECESSARY ACTION”

Protection of Civilians Mandate: “Take all necessary action”

- Includes military, civilian and police action
- Does not replace the sovereign responsibilities of the host State
- Authority to use deadly force (as a last resort) to protect civilians under threat
- Must comply with IHRL and IHL as spelled out in the rules of engagement

The protection of civilians mandate is the strongest protection mandate in the sense that it authorizes “all necessary measures”, including the use of deadly force, to be taken as a measure of last resort.
This authority can be invoked where the host State is not willing or is unable to protect civilians on its own.

Any action to protect civilians, including the use of force, must comply with human rights principles and with international humanitarian law, if United Nations military forces use combat-level force. The military component’s rules of engagement will provide details specific to the mission.

SLIDE 27: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Guidance as to when and how the mission may use force can be found in the rules of engagement applicable to the military component and the directives on the use of force by the police component.


The rules of engagement not only cover “force” in the narrow sense of the word (i.e., kinetic force), but also forcible measures such as detention, searches and seizures of materials.
Rules of engagement commonly cover:
- Use of force
- Use of weapons systems
- Authority to carry weapons
- Authority to detain, search, disarm
- Reactions to civil actions or unrest

Troop-/Police-contributing countries are not permitted to modify the rules of engagement according to national interpretation(s), nor to impose any caveats on the authorizations on the use force contained in the rules of engagement without formal consultation with United Nations Headquarters and the express written agreement of DPO.

Troop-contributing countries must prepare and train personnel on the rules of engagement of United Nations military peacekeepers.

SLIDE 28: USE OF FORCE BY PEACEKEEPERS

Use of Force by Peacekeepers

**Authority to Use Force**
- Self-defence
- Defence of mandate, including freedom of movement
- Protection of civilians
- Other mandates given by the Security Council

**Limits on Use of Force**
- Generally minimal use of force: IHRL/policing rules
- Military can escalate to combat-level force when necessary: IHL/military rules
The rules of engagement set out when the mission has authority to use force, and the mission always has the authority to use force in self-defence. The use of force beyond self-defence is defined in the mandate. Multidimensional missions may be authorized to use force in defence of the mandate, including for purposes of asserting their freedom of movement. Furthermore, missions are generally mandated to use all necessary means to protect civilians against physical violence. In some cases, the mandate may further extend the mission’s authority to use force. Some mandates may give authority to use force to neutralize armed groups in support of the host State.

The rules of engagement and the directives on the use of force establish limitations on the use of force. Under the directives on the use of force, uniformed police may use force within the limits of international law enforcement and human rights standards.

The rules of engagement for the military limits the use of force to the minimum necessary to achieve the aim. However, military personnel may resort to combat-level military force when necessary to effectively implement mandates authorizing the use of force. In such situations, military peacekeepers are bound primarily by the international humanitarian rules governing the conduct of hostilities.

Missions have a responsibility to make full use of their authority to use force to the extent that is appropriate and necessary to effectively implement their mandate. United Nations Blue Helmets (peacekeepers) may be held accountable and face disciplinary measures and criminal sanctions under the jurisdiction of their home country if they use excessive force beyond what international human rights or humanitarian law permit. It should be pointed out, however, that findings of use of excessive force have rarely, if ever, been made against United Nations peacekeepers. Rather, there may be instances in which peacekeepers fail to use the force necessary to protect the mission or civilians. Since all United Nations troops are under the command of the Force Commander, any failure to follow lawful orders issued by the Force Commander would constitute insubordination, which is subject to the jurisdiction of the respective contingent’s home country.
DPO has established guidelines on the use of force by the military, which also shape the rules of engagement of the specific missions. The guidelines emphasize that missions should use the minimum force necessary to achieve their objective. In particular, the use of firearms and other potentially lethal weapons may only be used to protect persons from physical violence, and not solely to protect mission property. This is a deliberate policy decision that serves to:

- Avoid escalation of violence;
- Avoid the possibility of military components become participants in armed conflict;
- Minimize the risk of harm to civilians that any escalation of force entails.

United Nations police (UNPOL) must never go beyond the minimum force necessary to carry out their duty, United Nations military may apply combat-level force whenever it has the authority to use force and such force is necessary. For example:

- The military component may deploy helicopter gunships to protect civilians living in a city that is being attacked by an armed group;
- United Nations forces may launch a military assault to dismantle an armed group’s heavily guarded, but illegal, roadblocks in order to defend its mandate and assert freedom of movement.
When using this level of force, United Nations military forces must respect international humanitarian law, including the fundamental principles of distinction, precaution and proportionality.

United Nations internal regulations are binding on United Nations infantry battalions and other peace operations personnel. The Secretary-General issues policies containing basic principles that are applicable to all United Nations staff (see, for example, the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy discussed in slides 8 and 9); while DPO and DPPA adopt policies specifically for peace operations. The details for implementing the policies are laid out in guidelines, standard operating procedures or mission-specific guidance.

The following slides present two particularly important DPO policies that establish binding rules on how United Nations personnel, in particular uniformed personnel, should handle issues relating to peacekeeping intelligence and human rights violations.
Also, with a view, in particular, to better protecting the mission and civilians from security threats, United Nations peace operations may collect, process and share peacekeeping intelligence. However, this work is subject to strict rules that are laid out in DPO Policy on Peacekeeping Intelligence and underlying peacekeeping intelligence (PKI) guidelines. Some guidelines are based on international human rights standards; others have been established by the United Nations to protect the independence and impartiality of the missions.

Intelligence gathering must fully respect human rights. For example, United Nations personnel shall not physically abuse captured armed group fighters or deny them water, food or necessary medical care as a means of forcing them to provide information.

Clandestine activities are outside the boundaries of peacekeeping intelligence and shall not be undertaken as they undermine the reputation of the mission and may place United Nations personnel at risk. United Nations policy defines clandestine activities as:

“the acquisition of information or intelligence conducted in such a way as to assure secrecy or concealment of the activities, because they are illicit and/or
are inconsistent with the legal framework, principles, policies and mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations”.

For example, United Nations staff must never hack into the database of a government authority or a non-governmental organization in order to seek information.

However, the limitation on using non-clandestine means to seek information does not mean that the mission has to reveal its sources to the host State or others. On the contrary, all mission personnel are required to apply particular care not to expose any sources or potential sources of information to harm. Before approaching human sources, careful assessment must be carried out to determine whether contact with the United Nations would place the source at risk and whether confidentiality can be ensured. For example, United Nations military observers (UNMO) decided not to ask villagers about armed group activity in the region, because they were aware that armed group informants were closely watching the village, and anyone merely suspected of providing information to the United Nations could have been subject to reprisals from the armed group. When interviewing sources, military observers should always ensure confidentiality, for example, by meeting sources away from their place of residence.

United Nations peacekeeping intelligence activities must be fully autonomous and independent of all aspects of any national intelligence system or other operations, and must maintain their exclusively international character. The mission’s independence and perceived impartiality may be compromised if United Nations personnel are viewed as being an intelligence arm of the host Government or third States. Information may be shared with State authorities but must be subject to the conditions and limitations of international human rights law. In particular, the United Nations shall not invite the provision of any information if there is a real risk that such information was obtained under torture or other serious human rights violations.

Similarly, the United Nations shall not share information with intelligence actors if there is a real risk that such information would be used to further violations of international human rights or humanitarian law. For instance, the United Nations Mission shall not share the location of an armed group with the army of the host country if such information would incite an airstrike, conducted without regard to civilian casualties, in contravention of international humanitarian law principles of distinction, precaution and proportionality.
Case 6: A new armed group

To obtain information about a new armed group, United Nations military observers are considering approaching children who work for the group as porters and cooks. They do not intend to pay the children for any information provided.

Is this course of action allowed?

Learners should discuss in plenary whether this course of action is allowed under United Nations rules.

DPO Guideline on Acquisition of Information from Human Sources for Peacekeeping Intelligence specify that missions must never recruit children as sources of intelligence, because they cannot give free and informed consent to assume the grave risks involved in an informant’s role. Paying children for military information may also violate the prohibition from recruiting children for military activities under international human rights and humanitarian law.

As United Nations mission personnel you may be required to observe, monitor and report on developments that have an impact on the human rights situation, including ceasefire and human rights violations, abuses against children associated with armed forces or patterns of conflict-related sexual violence. You should actively identify issues by reaching out to all sectors of society.

Peacekeepers must promptly record and share with the Human Rights component all allegations of violations received or observed for follow-up. Child Protection Advisers/Officers will deal with cases specifically involving grave violations against children. Formal mechanisms such as standard of procedures (SOP) will address such information-sharing.

Respect for the principle of confidentiality must always be maintained; names of victims and witnesses should not be included in reports with broad circulation.

Based on referral systems established by the mission or United Nations agencies, victims must be promptly referred to appropriate providers of medical assistance, psychosocial support and protection.
In some cases, intervention such as raising an urgent concern with the party concerned or more robust action under the protection of civilians mandate may be appropriate.

**Summary**

**Takeaways from Lesson 2.1:**
- All mission work must respect, promote and protect international human rights, humanitarian and refugee law.
- The Security Council has issued several mutually reinforcing mandates that protect children and establish priorities for missions.
- DPO and other UN policies establish binding rules by which all staff must abide, including rules to protect children.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
The Lesson

2.2

Child Protection Framework

Starting the Lesson 2.2

For an interactive start to lesson 2.2, ask learners:

Why do peacekeepers have a legal and moral obligation to protect children?

OVERVIEW

This lesson will explore the child protection framework that applies to all United Nations peacekeepers. The discussions should engage learners from the outset.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Understand the legal obligation, mandate and authority to protect children;
• Understand the main guiding frameworks on child protection:
  • The international legal framework for the protection of children in armed conflict;
  • Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, and child protection provisions in peacekeeping;
  • DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017);
  • The Paris Principles and the Vancouver Principles.

ACTIVITIES

• Child Protection Framework scenario exercise
• Optional group discussions
HANDOUTS (FOR LEARNERS)
1. Excerpts from Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict (slides 15 and 16)
2. Paragraphs on child protection in Security Council resolutions (Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Central African Republic) – (slide 18, also used in Module 3)
3. Child Protection Framework scenarios
4. UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive (slide 21)
5. Convention on the Rights of the Child
6. ICRC, Legal Protection of Children in Armed Conflict (Factsheet 2003)
7. List of references
In this lesson, we will explore the Child Protection Framework that applies to all United Nations peacekeepers. Children are entitled to special protection and care under international human rights and humanitarian law.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** It is imperative that military Child Protection Focal Points understand the legal framework on child protection in order to promote the obligations and the authority of military personnel to protect children.

The legal framework on child protection is vast. There is not enough time to cover all the legal issues in detail in this presentation. Provide a general overview of the legal provisions so that learners obtain a basic understanding. While learners will not be called upon to act as lawyers, they must be aware of the legal frameworks that guide child protection and the legal obligations of United Nations peacekeepers.

In this lesson, you will develop a thorough understanding of the main guiding frameworks for child protection:

1. The international legal framework for the protection of children in armed conflict, which includes international human rights law, international humanitarian law, and conventions and protocols on child protection.
3. The DPO-DOS-DPPA framework, which includes DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations, as well as other policies and...
guidelines such as the Human Rights Due Diligence Policy, civilian protection policies and guidelines, the United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM) developed by DPO, DOS and DPPA.

4. Guiding principles such as the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (2007), and the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers (2017).

**SLIDE 3: OVERVIEW OF FRAMEWORKS**

**Key Message:** The legal framework on child protection can be divided into three pillars: the international legal framework, the Security Council framework and the DPO-DOS-DPPA framework.

- The slide presents an overview of the child protection frameworks for peacekeepers. We will explore each one in this presentation.
**Key Message:** International humanitarian law is intended to limit suffering during conflict by specifically prohibiting attacks against civilians. This also applies to peacekeepers.

International humanitarian law is also known as the law of war or the law of armed conflict.

1. International humanitarian law applies in times of armed conflict – both international and non-international (i.e., internal) – armed conflicts.

2. International humanitarian law comprises a set of rules aimed at limiting the negative impact of armed conflict and reducing suffering during wartime. The parties to conflict must, at all times, distinguish between the civilians and combatants. Attacks may be made only against military object and must be consistent with the principle of proportionality. Torture and other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment or punishment are prohibited at all times and in all circumstances.

3. International humanitarian law protects persons who are not/no longer participating in hostilities, such as civilians, wounded persons, prisoners, medical personnel and humanitarian workers.
4. International humanitarian law restricts the means and methods of warfare; the use of certain weapons, such as incendiary weapons (i.e., weapons that cause a fire), is not permitted, because they can cause undue suffering.

5. The main rules of international humanitarian law can be found in the Geneva Conventions (1949) and their Additional Protocols (1977).

SLIDE 5: PROTECTION OF CHILDREN UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

**Protection of Children under International Humanitarian Law**

- Children shall not be the objects of attack;
- Children are entitled to special protection, care and aid;
- Children must be evacuated from besieged or encircled areas;
- If detained or interned, children must be held in separate quarters from adults;
- Prohibitions apply to recruitment of children, participation of children in hostilities, the death penalty for children under 18 years of age.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** International humanitarian law contains specific provisions to safeguard children during conflict.

- **Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions (art. 77)** sets out the principle of special protection for children: “Children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of indecent assault. The parties to the conflict shall provide them with the care and aid they require, whether because of their age or for any other reason.” These provisions apply in both international and non-international (i.e., internal) conflicts as customary humanitarian law.
**Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions (art. 4)** stipulates that: “Children shall be provided with the care and aid they require,” and lists special measures devoted exclusively to children.

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**SLIDE 6: WHO IS BOUND BY INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW?**

**Who Is Bound By International Humanitarian Law?**

- States and organized armed groups;
- United Nations peacekeeping forces;
- UN military personnel who violate IHL are subject to prosecution in their national courts.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** All parties to a conflict are bound by international humanitarian law. That law also applies to United Nations military components.

All parties to conflict are bound by the rules of international humanitarian law. The law applies once a conflict has begun, and equally to all sides, regardless of who started the fighting. International humanitarian law also applies to United Nations forces if they are actively engaged in hostilities as combatants, and to the extent and for the duration of their engagement.

The obligations of United Nations peacekeeping personnel under international humanitarian law are stated in the Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/1999/13 of 6 August 1999, on observance of United Nations forces of international humanitarian law.
Particularly for training courses with contingent commanders, trainers should consider handing out a copy of the Secretary-General’s bulletin, which is available from [http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instree/unobservance1999.pdf](http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/instree/unobservance1999.pdf).

**SLIDE 7: INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW**

- Applies to all human beings in times of both war and peace;
- Human rights are universal;
- No one can take away a person’s human rights;
- Human rights are interdependent and equally important;
- Human rights are legal and internationally guaranteed.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Human rights is at the core of United Nations peace operations.

International human rights law applies in times of both war and peace, and to all human beings.

The universality of human rights is highlighted in the Charter of the United Nations, which commits Member States to promote and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, colour, sex, language or religion. The United Nations Charter is a binding international treaty.

No one can take away a person’s human rights. A person’s human rights may be violated – and they often are – but this doesn’t mean that they have been taken away from the person concerned.

Human rights are interdependent and indivisible. This means that the realization of one human right is linked to the realization of the others. For example, in order to be
able to express their political opinion by voting, citizens must have access to adequate and relevant information.

Over time, human rights have come to be protected by domestic laws, national constitutions and international law. Human rights are established in international law, therefore they are legal and internationally guaranteed.

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**SLIDE 8: PROTECTION OF CHILDREN UNDER INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW**

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Under international human rights law, children are entitled to special protection in times of conflict.

- Children are entitled to special protection and care under international human rights law.

  The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in 1989, outlines the fundamental rights of children, including the right to protection from economic exploitation and harmful work, all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, and physical and mental violence. Children are entitled to special protection in times of war. The Convention is one of the most widely ratified human rights treaties.
There are three Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child: one outlaws the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, one prohibits the involvement of children in armed conflict, and one focuses on a communications procedure, through which children can report violations of their rights.

The Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC), adopted in 2000, obligates States Parties to take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not reached the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities (art. 1). It prohibits non-State armed groups from recruiting or using in hostilities, under any circumstances, persons under the age of 18 years, and obligates States Parties to take measures to prevent, prohibit and criminalize such practices (art. 4).

Any voluntary recruitment into armed forces of individuals under the age of 18 must include sufficient safeguards.

In times of conflict, those safeguards usually cannot be ensured. Peacekeepers encountering a child (anyone under 18 years) in national armed forces or non-State armed groups must report it as a violation.

**SLIDE 9: ROME STATUTE OF THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT**

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

- There is **NO impunity** for those who commit violations against children;
- Impunity means exemption or freedom from punishment, harm, or loss.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: There is no impunity for those who commit violations against children. Peacekeeping missions play a key role in reporting and documenting such violations.

Impunity is defined as the “exemption or freedom from punishment, harm, or loss”. Perpetrators of crimes against children WILL BE punished.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998) has established conscripting or enlisting into national armed forces or using children under the age of 15 years in hostilities as a war crime.

The participation of children between 15 and 18 years in hostilities is prohibited by the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC) and is deemed a grave violation, but it does not constitute a war crime.

SLIDE 10: THE CASE OF THOMAS LUBANGA DYILO

The Case of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo

Thomas Lubanga Dyilo was found GUILTY of forcibly enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years. Lubanga was the first war criminal convicted by the International Criminal Court and sentenced to 14 years imprisonment on 10 July 2012.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The International Criminal Court plays a key role in seeking justice for war crimes and crimes against humanity, including the recruitment and use of children in hostilities.

- On 26 January 2009, the International Criminal Court opened its first trial in the case against Congolese warlord Thomas Lubanga Dyilo. Lubanga was the first person charged in the Democratic Republic of Congo case as well as the Court’s first detainee. The trial marked a turning point for the Rome Statute, the International Criminal Court’s founding treaty, which entered into force only in 2002. The Lubanga proceedings included the first test of formal victim participation in an international criminal trial. The case also highlighted the gravity of recruitment, enlistment and conscription of children. As the alleged leader of the Union of Congolese Patriots (UPC) and the commander-in-chief of its military wing, the Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo (FPLC), Lubanga was accused of enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years and using them to actively participate in hostilities from September 2002 to 13 August 2003.

- For more information, see:
  1. [http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/cases/thomas-lubanga-dyilo](http://www.coalitionfortheicc.org/cases/thomas-lubanga-dyilo)
  2. [http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/situations and cases/situations/situation_icc_0104/related cases/icc_0104_0106/Pages/democratic republic of the congo.aspx](http://www.icc-cpi.int/en_menus/icc/situations and cases/situations/situation_icc_0104/related cases/icc_0104_0106/Pages/democratic republic of the congo.aspx)

- Another significant case was that of Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia, who, in 2012, was indicted, tried, and found guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity by an international criminal tribunal – the Special Court for Sierra Leone –, including for enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years and using them in active and direct participation in hostilities. He was sentenced to 50 years’ imprisonment.

- For more information, see [http://www.rscsl.org/Taylor.html](http://www.rscsl.org/Taylor.html)
SLIDE 11: OTHER RELEVANT CONVENTIONS

Other Relevant Conventions

- **International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182 (1999):**
  - Prohibits and eliminates the worst forms of child labour, including forced and compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict.

- **Mine Ban Treaty (1997) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2008):**
  - Bans the use of mines and cluster munitions;
  - Offers specific provisions for risk education, and gender- and age-appropriate victim/survivor assistance for affected individuals (including children) and communities.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** These conventions also provide specific provisions aimed at protecting children and prohibiting specific weapon systems that disproportionately impact them.

- In addition to international human rights and humanitarian law and the Statute of the International Criminal Court, other conventions also protect children.

The International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 (1999) on the worst forms of child labour established “forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in hostilities” as one of the worst forms of child labour.

Mines and explosive remnants of war pose a substantial threat to civilians, especially children in post-conflict areas, such as serious injuries and maiming. The Mine Ban Treaty (1997) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2008) prohibit the use of those weapons and contain specific provisions for risk education, and gender- and age-appropriate victim/survivor assistance for individuals and communities affected by explosive remnants of war.
Key Message: Peacekeepers must uphold and protect children in line with international child protection standards.

National laws differ from country to country. One point that often causes confusion, especially among military peacekeepers, is the relationship between national and international laws, and how to respond if the two systems of law are in conflict. In such cases, international laws and standards supersede national laws.

Ask learners:
How old should one be to join your national armed forces?

Many of you may have been 17 years. Does that mean that you were child soldiers? Note that, under national laws, the army may be able to recruit individuals under the age of 18; however, under international law, an army shall not use soldiers under 18 years in active or direct combat.

Ask learners:
Should you report violations of international laws if they contradict national laws?

Absolutely!
Even if the age of adulthood in the country is 15 years, peacekeepers must report violations against children, i.e., persons under 18 years;

Even if under the country’s laws, the minimum age of service is 15 years, peacekeepers must monitor and report any child soldier, i.e., a person under 18 years.

**SLIDE 13: SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION**

**Key Message:** Security Council resolutions are legally binding on Member States, peacekeeping missions and peacekeepers.

The Security Council has adopted resolutions that spell out peacekeepers’ obligations on child protection. Security Council resolutions are legally binding documents by which all peacekeepers must abide.
Key Message: The establishment of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC) in 1996, and Security Council resolution 1261 (1999) are considered key milestones that enhance the protection of children in conflict.

In 1996, Graça Machel, an expert appointed by the Secretary-General, prepared a ground-breaking report (A/51/306) on the horrific impact of armed conflict on children, and called upon the international community to take action.

In 1997, upon the recommendation of General Assembly resolution 51/77, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict was established as the global advocate for children in armed conflict.

In 1999, the Security Council (resolution 1261 (1999)) recognized that the protection of children in armed conflict situations was an international peace and security issue and decided to include it on its agenda going forward. Since then, the Security Council includes specific language on child protection in mission mandates and has also decided to deploy Child Protection Advisers in peacekeeping missions.
Depending on their future roles in the mission, some learners may be interested in learning more about Security Council resolutions and the MRM. Refer them to the Child Protection Adviser in the mission or the UNICEF Child Protection Specialist, and recommend the Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection and the suggested references.

Security Council Resolutions – Children and Armed Conflict (1)

**Resolution 1261 (1999):** Child protection is a *concern for international peace and security*. All peacekeepers *must be trained* on child protection;

**Resolution 1612 (2005):** Peacekeeping missions *must monitor and report* on grave violations against children. Armed groups/forces committing those grave violations will be *listed* in the Secretary-General’s annual reports on children and armed conflict (the “Shame List”);

- Peacekeepers *have the responsibility to monitor and report on the six grave violations.*

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Security Council resolutions define specific responsibilities for Member States and peacekeeping missions, including training on child protection for all peacekeepers, and monitoring and reporting the six grave violations.

- Security Council resolution 1261 (1999) recognized that the situation of children in armed conflict was a concern for international peace and security, as evidenced by the prevalence of child soldiers, and condemned the six grave violations against children in armed conflict.
Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) established an elaborate monitoring and reporting mechanism to track the six grave violations against children. Parties to conflict who commit any of the six grave violations, namely recruitment or use, killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction, attacks against schools or hospitals, denial of humanitarian access, will be listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General’s annual reports on children and armed conflict.

This public naming and shaming have led many armed forces and armed groups to sign action plans with the United Nations to stop the recruitment and use of children as soldiers. The peacekeeping missions support the implementation of the action plans.

For example, action plans have been signed by FARDC – the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, SPLA – Sudan People’s Liberation Army (South Sudan), CMA – Coordination of Azawad Movements (Mali), MPC – Central African Patriotic Movement (Central African Republic), SAF – Sudanese Armed Forces (Sudan), as well as various armed groups in Sudan. For information on action plans, see http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org.

The responsibility of peacekeepers is to monitor and report on these grave violations and support the implementation of action plans through screening of troops, capacity-building, among others.

Handout: Excerpts from Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Military peacekeeping components must ensure that child protection is fully emphasized in in-mission training, standard operating procedures (SOP) and military guidance.

The criteria for listing in the Secretary-General’s reports have been expanded to include sexual violence against children, killing and maiming of children, attacks on schools and hospitals, and abduction of children.

On 7 March 2014, the Security Council adopted resolution 2143 (2014) on protection of children in armed conflict, and reiterated the importance of child protection training for United Nations peacekeepers (para. 20):

“Recommend that Member States include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, as well as in military guidance as appropriate; ... that United Nations entities and United Nations peacekeeping troop and police contributing countries undertake targeted and operational trainings for the preparation of United Nations mission personnel, including troop and police contingents on their contribution in preventing violations against children so as to give all mission personnel the ability to effectively recognize, report and respond to violations and abuses committed against children and to
successfully support child protection activities for better implementation of their respective mandates”.

The latest Security Council resolutions 2225 (2015) and 2427(2018) also stress the need for mandatory pre-deployment child protection training for peacekeepers.

**Key Message:** Military peacekeepers play a key role in the monitoring and reporting mechanism.

The diagram (slide 17) shows how the monitoring and reporting mechanism works.

Military peacekeepers are crucial to the reporting process. They play an important role as “the eyes and ears” of the mission on the ground. When peacekeepers see or hear about the commission of any of the six grave violations, it is their duty to alert the civilian Child Protection Advisers and Officers in the mission, who will investigate the information and include it in their reports to the Head of Mission.
The mission’s reports on violations are then sent to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC), for inclusion in the Secretary-General’s annual report to the Security Council.

Based on these reports, the Security Council can determine which parties to the conflict are committing grave violations, and take measures against the perpetrators, including sanctions.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Understand the child protection mandate. What are the specified and implied tasks for the military component?

- Slide 18 contains an example of a child protection mandate in Security Council resolution 2531 (2020) on the situation in Mali. We will examine the child protection mandate in detail in Module 3.

But you can already see here that child protection involves more than the physical protection of children; it entails disarmament, demobilization and reintegation, monitoring and reporting, and other activities by which military peacekeepers support the implementation of the child protection mandate.
Handout: Paragraphs on child protection in Security Council resolutions on Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

Mention to learners that this handout will also be used in the exercise in Module 3.

SLIDE 19: DPKO-DFS-DPA POLICY ON CHILD PROTECTION IN UNITED NATIONS PEACE OPERATIONS

DPKO-DFS-DPA Policy on Child Protection in UN Peace Operations

- Designate a Child Protection Focal Point at mission HQ, and Child Protection Officers at Battalion and Company levels (military);
- Ensure that all peacekeeping personnel are trained on child protection (military, police and civilian components);
- Monitor and report on grave violations against children;
- Engage in dialogue for action plans on grave violations;
- Advocacy on child protection issues;
- Role and function of Child Protection Advisers;
- Collaborate with United Nations and non-UN actors.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations defines the scope and core responsibilities of missions and peacekeepers with regard to child protection.

- Child protection responsibilities of peacekeeping missions and peacekeepers are outlined in the DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations, which was adopted in June 2017. The Policy will be discussed in more detail in Module 3.

The purpose of the Policy is to strengthen, institutionalize and streamline DPO’s engagement in children and armed conflict, on the basis of specific provisions of Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict.
The Policy defines the scope of DPO’s engagement in the protection of children affected by armed conflict and applies to all peacekeeping personnel.

The Policy states, inter alia, that:

- Principles and obligations on child protection are mainstreamed and integrated across all operational decisions, activities and processes of United Nations peace operations, including considerations in relation to child protection in core mission planning and mandate implementation documents, and in the overarching documents guiding the work of the military, police and civilian components (para. 11);

- All personnel in a peacekeeping mission contribute to the protection of children (para. 5).

- It defines the core child protection responsibilities of peacekeeping personnel, including dealing with violations such as sexual exploitation and abuse, child labour, detention, use of schools by armed groups, and providing support to non-United Nations security forces.

**SLIDE 20: MISSION-SPECIFIC GUIDANCE**

Mission-specific Guidance

- Mission guidelines on child protection
- Force Commander’s directives/ guidelines on child protection for the military component
- Concept of operations (CONOPS), plans and orders
- Rules of engagement
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Mission-specific guidance, including the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive, operational and tactical orders and SOPs, supports peacekeepers’ child protection activities.

- In addition to international legal instruments and mandates contained in Security Council resolutions, there are mission-specific documents on child protection. The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive must be disseminated to the military component.

  Battalion commanders, unit commanders and staff officers should refer to the mission-specific documents when making decisions about their activities in the field.

  In carrying out their activities, peacekeepers should address their questions about the application of these instruments to their commanding officers and/or the mission’s legal adviser. If necessary, they may refer their questions to United Nations Headquarters.

- See also other key operational documents, such as the concept of operations and rules of engagement, in the Core Pre-deployment Training Materials package. Explain to learners that rules of engagement, including directives on the use of force, will be addressed during the scenario discussions in Module 3.

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**SLIDE 21: UNMISS MILITARY GUIDELINES**

**UNMISS Military Guidelines**

- Know to identify who is a child and the six grave violations;
- Know how to implement plans and procedures during military operations;
- Know the specific roles and responsibilities of the Force;
- Know how to report violations;
- Recognize the warning indicators of possible violations against children:
  - Presence of children
  - Gender ratio in a village
  - Military use of schools
  - Presence of military/weaponry
  - Movement of unaccompanied children
  - Changes in movement patterns, etc.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** All missions with a child protection mandate and a military component should develop specific guidance on child protection for military personnel.

- Some missions have specific guidelines on child protection. See slide 21 for guidance based on UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

**Handouts:**
- UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive;
- Paragraphs on child protection in Security Council resolutions on Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic.

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**SLIDE 22: PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES ON CHILDREN ASSOCIATED WITH ARMED FORCES OR ARMED GROUPS (THE PARIS PRINCIPLES)**

Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (The Paris Principles)

- **Guide international interventions to:**
  - Prevent recruitment or use of children;
  - Facilitate the release and reintegration of children associated with armed groups/forces;
  - Ensure the most protective environment for children.

- **Provides definitions and overarching principles for engagement with children associated with armed groups or armed forces;**

- **Addresses the specific situation of girls.**

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NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Paris Principles are a set of principles and guidelines intended to prevent and minimize the impact of the recruitment of children by armed forces and armed groups. The protection and needs of girls are emphasized.
The Paris Principles aim to guide interventions for the protection and well-being of children, with the following objectives (para. 1.11):

- Prevent unlawful recruitment or use of children;
- Facilitate the release of children associated with armed forces/groups;
- Facilitate the reintegration into society of all children associated with armed forces/groups;
- Ensure the most protective environment for all children.

The Paris Principles provide a framework for child protection and bring together ideas and approaches, which have been used successfully across the globe.

They recognize that there is usually a significant number of girls among children associated with armed forces or armed groups. For a range of reasons, however, these girls are rarely provided with assistance. While there are commonalities between the circumstances and experiences of girls and boys, the situation for girls can be very different in terms of the reasons and manner in which they join the armed forces or armed groups, the potential for their release, the effects of their experience on their physical, social and emotional well-being, and the consequences on their ability to reintegrate into community life (para. 4.0).

They also cover children in other situations, including refugee and internally displaced children, and children and justice mechanisms.
SLIDE 23: THE VANCOUVER PRINCIPLES ON PEACEKEEPING AND THE PREVENTION OF THE RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers

- Aim to prioritize and operationalize child protection within United Nations peace missions to ensure that peacekeepers are prepared to prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers;
- Specify actions that Member States should take with regard to training and planning, and the conduct of their national forces in peacekeeping;
- Contribute to monitoring and reporting, prevention, early warning, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, protection and care of children, including in detention.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Vancouver Principles aim to ensure that peacekeepers receive specific training on dealing with issues related to the recruitment and use of child soldiers, so as to enhance military capability to support child protection.

The Vancouver Principles are a set of political commitments endorsed by Member States to prioritize and further operationalize child protection in United Nations peacekeeping, and to ensure that, in the context of peacekeeping operations, peacekeepers are prepared to prioritize the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

The Principles specify the actions that Member States may undertake with regard to training, planning and the conduct of their national police and military forces, in a peacekeeping context:

- Prioritize the prevention of the recruitment and the use of child soldiers in the strategic and operational planning of all peacekeeping operations;
- Appoint child protection focal points throughout mission command structures, both military and police, to support the development of an international standard;
• Contribute to monitoring and reporting, prevention, early warning of violations, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, protection and care of children, including in detention.

SLIDE 24: CHILD PROTECTION FRAMEWORK

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: The child protection framework (slide 24) provides the legal authority and establishes the legal and moral obligation of peacekeepers to protect children in peacekeeping missions.

Slide 24 outlines the framework that protects children’s rights. It is based on international humanitarian and human rights law and refers to specific United Nations documents and mandates on child protection.

Although these are different types of documents, peacekeepers are bound by all of them.

This comprehensive legal framework gives peacekeepers the authority and the responsibility to act and respond to child protection violations that they encounter on the ground.
SLIDE 25: TAKEAWAYS

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

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** All peacekeepers have a legal and moral obligation to protect children.

Military peacekeepers have a legal obligation to protect the rights of children.

In order to effectively protect children, officers and troops must be trained on child protection, and must be fully aware of the child protection mandate and the context of the mission, and of the common grave violations against children in their areas of responsibility.

Mission-specific directives and guidelines related to child protection must be key aspects of pre-deployment and in-mission training. Peacekeepers must also understand and correctly apply rules of engagement and guidance on the use of force, if they encounter child soldiers. International laws and other legal provisions presented in this training course apply to all peacekeepers.
Summary

Takeaways from Lesson 2.2:

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

SLIDE 26: REFERENCES (1/3)

References (1/3)

- United Nations, DPKO (Integrated Training Service), Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials, 2017
SLIDE 27: REFERENCES (2/3)

References (2/3)

- 1949 Geneva Conventions and their 1977 Additional Protocols
- International Labour Organization (ILO), Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182), 1999
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998

SLIDE 28: REFERENCES (3/3)

References (3/3)

- Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (The Paris Principles), 2007
- The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers, 2017
- International Criminal Court, Lubanga Case (https://www.icc-cpi.int/drc/lubanga)
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

-Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
-Handout: List of references
-Also encourage learners to conduct additional personal research to gain a more detailed and in-depth understanding of child protection mandates.
The Lesson

Starting Module 3: Operational Framework and Lesson 3.1

For an interactive start to lesson 3.1, ask learners:

Why is the way/manner you interact with children in the mission area important?

OVERVIEW
Module 3 will show how the child protection frameworks discussed in Module 2 translate into standard operating procedures and actions of the military component in the field. The topics covered in this module are important in the context of the child protection training that troop-contributing countries provide in preparation for deploying their forces to United Nations peacekeeping missions. Learners should gain an understanding of why these topics are important, and how they can affect their peacekeeping duties in the mission.

Lesson 3.1 covers interaction with children. It should be conducted in a group discussion format so as to engage learners in the subject matter from the outset and ensure the broadest possible participation by all learners.

The trainer’s role is to share knowledge, experience, personal views and opinions on the topics, using an adult-education technique. In this way, learners will be able to express their views based on their own cultural perspectives, understand that there may be different interpretations of a situation, and become aware of United Nations rules and regulations that apply to United Nations missions.

Distribute the presentation to learners at the end of the discussion.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explain how culture affects a peacekeeper’s attitudes and behaviours towards children;
- Discuss the United Nations code of conduct related to children, and the consequences of misconduct;
- Explain the guiding principles on dealing with children;
- Recognize the ethical obligations of peacekeepers in protecting children.

ACTIVITIES

Group Discussions
1. Sexual exploitation and abuse: prevention and response (slide 11)
2. Interaction with children: child protection or community outreach? (slide 16)
3. Scenario: Supporting an orphanage (slide 19)

Case Studies
- Four case studies on what to do when dealing with child (slides 20–23)

HANDOUTS (FOR LEARNERS)
2. When Interacting with Children – Dos and Don’ts (slides 24-25)
An appropriate subtitle for this module would be “Culture, Attitude, Behaviour, Code of Conduct, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”.
SLIDE 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- **Explain** how culture affects a peacekeeper’s attitudes and behaviours towards children;
- **Discuss** the United Nations code of conduct related to children, and the consequences of misconduct;
- **Explain** the guiding principles on dealing with children;
- **Recognize** the ethical obligations of peacekeepers in protecting children.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** All peacekeepers must be aware of and be able to apply the established guiding principles when interacting with children in the mission area.

Peacekeepers have a very clear mandate and authority when it comes to child protection in the mission area. Ethical obligations, attitudes and behaviours can play a major role in how peacekeepers implement the child protection mandate. This module covers the basic tenets guiding peacekeepers’ interactions with children in the mission area.

In this lesson, learners will consider their own cultural backgrounds and attitudes towards children, and how they may impact their behaviours towards children in the mission area.

It is important that they understand the importance of pre-deployment training and preparation of troops in relation to child protection in United Nations missions. Key elements can be found in DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017), including the United Nations standards of conduct, zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse (one of the most sensitive and important topics in peacekeeping operations) and the prohibition on child labour.
Finally, peacekeepers must keep in mind certain key elements when interacting with children in mission areas. Those include understanding the differences between child protection activities, outreach and community engagement, and everyday interactions with children, and what is appropriate behaviour for peacekeepers in each of these situations.

SLIDE 3: CULTURE, ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOUR

Culture, Attitude and Behaviour

- Cultural background and attitude play a major role in peacekeepers’ interactions with children and other civilians;
- Behaviour that may be acceptable during peace time may lead to dangerous situations in times of conflict;
- Peacekeepers should always consider the (potentially harmful) consequences of their actions when interacting with children.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** What is culturally acceptable when interacting with children in one’s country of origin may not be acceptable behaviour in the mission area.

Culture background – values and beliefs – can be a major influence on a peacekeeper’s attitude and behaviour towards children and civilians, in general. Being aware of the cultural differences between the peacekeepers and the local population in mission areas is important to ensure that peacekeepers always demonstrate respectful behaviour towards the populations they are protecting. In addition, it must be understood that behaviour that may be acceptable during peacetime may lead to dangerous situations in conflict settings.
Ask learners to think of examples where cultural interactions may differ (e.g., communication between men and women, young and old, with colleagues/persons in a position of authority, and so on).

Peacekeepers may not always be aware of the (potentially harmful) consequences of their actions when interacting with children. It is therefore important to adhere to the United Nations standards of conduct and the “Dos and Don’ts” outlined in this lesson.

### Key Message:

Three guiding principles are at the core of peacekeepers’ standards of conduct; they must be promulgated and enforced by commanders at all levels.

The following guiding principles summarize the core values of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security. They are universal standards applicable to all peacekeeping personnel – civilian, military and police – and must be borne in mind by every peacekeeper:
1. Highest standards of efficiency, competency and integrity must be upheld:
   - Respect local laws, customs and practices;
   - Treat host country inhabitants with respect, courtesy and consideration;
   - Act with impartiality, integrity and tact;

2. Zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and child labour;

3. Accountability of those in command and/or leadership who fail to enforce the standards of conduct.

SLIDE 5: DIFFERENT SITUATIONS, DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Peacekeepers’ primary child protection role in the mission is to ensure a safe and secure environment for children.

In everything that peacekeepers do, in every interaction with children and communities, peacekeepers must uphold the United Nations standards of conduct. Let us now focus on the nuances of your interactions with children in the mission area.
Zero tolerance
Red denotes activities that the United Nations does NOT tolerate. Any peacekeeper who engages in these activities will face severe consequences: sexual exploitation and abuse of children, and the use of children for purposes of labour (to be discussed in more detail subsequently).

Peacekeepers are prohibited from having any sexual interaction with anyone under 18 years.

Positive interactions with children
At the other end of the spectrum are activities that peacekeepers should undertake to protect children from violence, exploitation and abuse. These are the core activities of the child protection mandate aimed at helping and protecting children who may be in danger (to be discussed in more detail subsequently).

A distinction must be made between child protection activities, which are integrated into our usual security activities, and community outreach activities, which are intended to build confidence in the communities.

1. Child protection activities: When we integrate child protection into our usual security activities, such as when we patrol an area, we are undertaking child protection activities. Other child protection activities include monitoring and reporting grave violations, assisting with the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, helping a child soldier to leave an armed group, accompanying Child Protection Advisers into the field to visit barracks or to verify reported grave violations.

2. Community outreach and engagement activities: Peacekeepers undertake many activities which might benefit children, but which are not considered child protection activities, such as organizing a soccer tournament for children in the local village. Peacekeepers are encouraged to work with the community to build confidence and foster acceptance of your presence in an area. These activities can be categorized as community outreach and engagement activities, often referred to as “winning the hearts and minds”. Quick-impact projects (QIPs) are activities that are often planned by military components in coordination with other actors (e.g., UNICEF, or other entities). Outreach activities differ greatly from your child protection role.

3. Everyday interactions: Peacekeepers have everyday interactions with children. These include encounters with children at the market, in the street, etc. In these situations, you need to be aware of local customs and of the fact that you are wearing a uniform, and behave in accordance with the United Nations standards of conduct.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Sexual exploitation and abuse are Category I violations, that is serious misconduct for all United Nations personnel, and subject to disciplinary measures.

The Secretary-General gave the following definitions in his bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (ST/SG/B/2003/13):

- **Sexual exploitation:** any actual or attempted abuse of a person’s vulnerability, differential power or trust for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another person.

- **Sexual abuse:** the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
Examples of sexual exploitation and abuse include:

- Sexual activity with children (persons under the age of 18): mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defence;
- Any sexual relationship between personnel providing humanitarian assistance and protection and beneficiaries of such assistance;
- Provision of any help or aid, such as food, clothing, lodging, in exchange for sexual favours;
- Threatening to withhold any help or aid in exchange for sexual favours;
- Purchasing sex from prostitutes, even in host countries where prostitution is legal;
- Forcing a boy or girl to engage in sexual acts;
- Rape;
- Trafficking in persons for prostitution;
- Procuring prostitutes for others.

**SLIDE 7: ZERO TOLERANCE FOR SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE**

Zero Tolerance for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

**Prohibited:**
- Any act of sexual exploitation and abuse
- Using children to coordinate sexual activities with adults
- Other forms of sexual exploitation and abuse

*Ignorance of a child’s age is NO DEFENCE*

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Sexual activity with any person under 18 years is prohibited and constitutes serious misconduct; ignorance of a child’s age is no defence.
Ask learners what they consider to be acts of sexual exploitation and abuse?

The following are PROHIBITED:

All acts of sexual exploitation and abuse: Kissing, touching, oral sex, penetrative sex, exposing your genitals, groping, taking pornographic photographs of children, purchasing sex from prostitutes, forcing a child (boy or girl) to engage in sexual acts, rape, trafficking of persons for prostitution, procuring prostitutes for others. DO NOT hug or touch a child, even to comfort them. There is no grey area.

Using children to coordinate sexual activities with women: Peacekeepers are prohibited from using children for the purpose of coordinating sexual encounters with women. Examples include giving a child food in exchange for finding girlfriends; sending a child to arrange sexual encounters with women. Such activities are illegal and prohibited under any circumstances.

Other forms of sexual exploitation and abuse: Ask learners to give examples of other forms of sexual exploitation and abuse. Those include taking photographs of naked children, exposing oneself to a child, sending sexually explicit text messages (“sexting”), sharing pornographic images with children online, among others.

Ignorance of a child’s age is NO DEFENCE: Mistaken belief or not being aware of the age of a child IS NOT a defence for sexual exploitation and abuse.
Key Message: All peacekeepers have a duty to report any suspected or observed misconduct, including sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Reporting process**

- Military personnel must report misconduct through the chain of command; you may also report misconduct directly to the Conduct and Discipline Team (CDT);
- All complaints and information on actual or alleged misconduct (for all categories of personnel) is channelled to the Conduct and Discipline Team;
- Direct reporting to the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) is possible. All reports are confidential. Most missions have sexual exploitation and abuse focal points.
- You can report misconduct in full confidentiality and you are protected from retaliation.
- The Team reviews and assesses information to determine whether allegations of misconduct are credible.
- The Team is responsible for tracking and follow-up of allegations.
• The Team recommends notification and investigation of misconduct in accordance with applicable procedures.
• The Team informs the Head of Mission through the Chief of Staff (component heads are informed as appropriate).

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Sexual exploitation and abuse have an impact on the United Nations, the mission, fellow peacekeepers and victims.

The consequences of (actual or alleged) sexual exploitation, sexual abuse or other misconduct can be dramatic and risk hindering the implementation of the political and operational mandate of the mission. The occurrence of such incidents compromises the reputation of the United Nations, in both the international arena and the host country. The duty of care of the peacekeepers could be deemed a vain statement; the United Nations could be accused of failing to take responsibility for the suffering of victims and of fostering a climate of impunity for such acts by its personnel. That could, in fact and very concretely, put the security of all peacekeepers at risk; open the way for all kinds of allegations against the mission and the Organization; and render the implementation of the mission’s mandate more difficult.
Peacekeepers are accorded certain immunities and privileges through various United Nations legal frameworks. These privileges and immunities are granted by the Secretary-General as part of the contract covering the performance of official duties and upholding the interests of the United Nations. Depending on the employment category (formal military contingent, United Nations military observer, civilian police, or other), immunities and privileges apply differently. Nonetheless, all peacekeepers are liable to disciplinary action for misconduct and, in serious cases, criminal proceedings for violation of the standards of conduct.

SLIDE 10: SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE – CONSEQUENCES FOR THE PEACEKEEPER

**Consequences for the Peacekeeper**

- Disciplinary action
- Repatriation
- Termination of contract
- Criminal proceedings
- Financial liability

**Key Message:** Peacekeepers face severe consequences for sexual exploitation and abuse, including disciplinary action, dismissal, repatriation, and possible criminal proceedings.

As already mentioned, sexual exploitation and abuse are considered major violations of the United Nations standards of conduct; the United Nations has a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. Slide 10 shows some of the possible personal consequences for misconduct, depending on severity.
Overview of the scope of the issue: Between 1 January and 31 December 2019, a total of 138 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse involving personnel in peacekeeping and political missions, other United Nations system entities and non-United Nations forces authorized by a Security Council mandate were reported:

- 80 allegations against personnel deployed in peacekeeping and special political missions, involving one or more victims and one or more alleged perpetrators;
  - Of those, 49 allegations involved military personnel, 6 involved police or other government-provided personnel, and 25 involved civilian personnel, with a total of 92 victims;
  - Of those, 24 allegations were related to sexual abuse, and 56 to sexual exploitation. The proportion of allegations of sexual abuse was the lowest recorded since 2010.

For more detailed information, see https://conduct.unmissions.org.

Consequences: United Nations investigations are administrative in nature. If a peacekeeper is alleged to have committed a crime, such as rape, the matter is referred to the appropriate Member State for a criminal investigation, following a preliminary assessment of the allegation by the United Nations. The United Nations can take only limited action against uniformed personnel (e.g., repatriation and barring from future service), and relies on Member States to take disciplinary and/or criminal action against such personnel. The consequences of misconduct are also determined by the privileges and immunities that the peacekeeper enjoys. Uniformed personnel are liable to disciplinary action for misconduct, and even criminal proceedings for violations amounting to criminal acts under their national code of conduct.

Follow-up on substantiated allegations involving police and military personnel, prior to 2017:

- The United Nations took administrative action in respect of 25 military personnel and 2 police personnel, resulting in repatriation on disciplinary grounds, and the barring of those personnel from participating in future field missions. The matters were also referred to the relevant Member States for appropriate disciplinary and criminal accountability measures;
- In 2017, Member States informed the United Nations of action taken in connection with 21 substantiated allegations recorded in 2017 or earlier (two in 2010, one in 2011, two in 2012, two in 2013, one in 2014, five in 2015, six in 2016 and two in 2017). The measures ranged from administrative action to imprisonment.
Details of measures taken by the United Nations and Member States on allegations of misconduct reported between 2010 and 2017 can be found at https://conduct.unmissions.org.

SLIDE 11: SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Prevention and Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• What makes children in conflict areas vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Explain the measures you can take as a Contingent Commander to ensure that the peacekeepers under your command do not commit sexual exploitation and abuse.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What possible impact can sexual exploitation and abuse have on your contingent and the mission?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Peacekeepers are responsible for their own behaviour; commanders are accountable for order and discipline.

**Group Discussion**

Divide learners into groups and allow them 15 minutes to discuss the points on slide 11 in relation to sexual exploitation and abuse. Each group should develop a presentation of its responses. One group should give its presentation in the plenary, and the other groups should add points to it.

Start the discussion by asking learners:

Now that you understand the definitions of sexual exploitation and abuse, how can United Nations contingent Commanders prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse?
Possible response:
Children in conflict areas are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse for a number of reasons, including but not limited to: poverty, unaccompanied, orphaned, homeless (e.g., street children), living in an internally displaced person or refugee camp without adult supervision, illiterate or poorly educated, no social networks, drug/alcohol addiction, etc.

The contingent Commander is accountable for the good order and discipline within the unit. The Commander can implement preventive and enforcement measures. For example:

Preventive actions:
- Ensure that conduct and discipline are adequately addressed during pre-deployment training;
- Lead by example. Remember that all eyes are on you; if you are seen misbehaving, your troops will likely follow suit;
- Follow up on allegations, rumours and complaints; you must ensure that these are looked into, even if for the purpose of clearing your troops from suspicion;
- Provide welfare and recreation facilities – your country is being reimbursed for funds for this purpose;
- Address issues relating to conduct, stress and performance before they lead to instances of misconduct;
- Ensure that all personnel receive in-mission induction training upon deployment;
- Seek support by utilizing the training structures of the mission (e.g., the Integrated Mission Training Centre);
- Advocate for upholding the United Nations standards of conduct and emphasize the positive impact of doing so;
- Emphasize in your daily interaction with troops that misconduct will not be tolerated and will be sanctioned.

Enforcement actions:
- Ensure that the personnel under your command are aware of the various reporting mechanisms available in the contingent and in the mission, and remind them of their duty to report all cases of misconduct;
- Commanders are required to support investigative bodies in the event of misconduct;
- Commanders and Officers must communicate to their troops and enforce preventive measures, such as mission-wide curfews and off-limit locations.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** No sexual activity with anyone under 18 years of age!

- Note, in particular:
  - Exchange of money, employment, goods, assistance or services for sex is strictly prohibited.
  - Use of children or adults to procure sexual services for others is prohibited.
  - Knowledge of the age of the child is not relevant; ignorance of the age of the child is no excuse, nor does it not matter if the child consents to the act.
  - Instruct all soldiers under your command accordingly.
SLIDE 13: ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CHILD LABOUR

Zero Tolerance for Child Labour

SLIDE 14: ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON CHILD LABOUR

Zero Tolerance Policy on Child Labour


• Use of children under the age of 18 for the purpose of labour or other rendering of services is strictly prohibited;

• Children are not allowed on the premises, in camps or in facilities of any UN peace operation for the purpose of labour or rendering of services.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** All peacekeeping personnel are prohibited from using children for purposes of labour or rendering any services.

Most States have laws prohibiting child labour. Nonetheless, throughout the world, children can be seen, in large numbers, toiling in sweatshops, hauling concrete, tilling fields, gathering garbage or peddling shoes. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that there are at least 10 million children working in Africa alone.

The DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations was updated in 2017 to include the prohibition of child labour (superseding the 2011 DPKO-DFS Policy on the prohibition of child labour in UN Peacekeeping Operations). According to the Policy, the use of children by United Nations peace operations or their personnel for purposes of labour or rendering other services is strictly prohibited. This rule applies regardless of the minimum age of employment in the host country, and irrespective of compensation (in the form of salary, food or other benefits).

A “child” is anyone below the age of 18 years. Peacekeepers are strictly prohibited from using any person under the age of 18 years for labour purposes. Therefore, you cannot have anyone under the age of 18 working for you as a cook, cleaner, driver, or doing your laundry. That would be considered child labour. In addition, children are not allowed on United Nations premises or facilities to perform any tasks or render any service. For example, in many cultures, it is common for girls and boys to set up/work in stalls to sell milk or vegetables, clean shoes, wash cars or cut hair, etc. Such stalls are prohibited inside the camp, and must not be allowed outside the camp.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** In today’s complex and often volatile peacekeeping environments, it is necessary to distinguish between child protection activities and community outreach activities in your interactions with children.

It is important to distinguish between the child protection activities that are part of the mission’s mandate, and other activities that support the mission’s presence by contributing to “winning the hearts and minds” of the local population.

Let us first look at the mandated tasks, which are priority areas of work in child protection, then we will discuss the nuances in your interactions with children.
SLIDE 16: CHILD PROTECTION OR COMMUNITY OUTREACH?

### Child Protection or Community Outreach?

Categorize the following activities under *Child Protection or Community Outreach*

1. Helping a child who escaped from an armed group.
2. Building a school.
3. Providing security to a Child Protection Adviser investigating a case of sexual violence against children.
4. Advising the armed forces of the host State not to use schools for their operations.
5. Organizing a soccer tournament for local children.
6. Reconnaissance to identify threats to children.

### NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Group Discussion**

Conduct the discussion with the large group or divide learners into small groups, depending on time. Allow 5 minutes for small group discussions, then have the groups take turns reporting their answers. See answer key below and provide explanations as necessary.

### Answer key

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
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</table>
| 1 | Helping a child who escaped from an armed group | **Child protection**  
(Peacekeeping force should coordinate with CPA/CPU and use the agreed referral pathways to refer the child to designated child protection actors) |
| 2 | Building a school | **Outreach**  
(Good practice to inform CPA/CPU) |
| 3 | Providing security for a Child Protection Adviser investigating a case/allegation of sexual violence against children | **Child protection**  
(Role of peacekeeping force, at the request of CPA/CPU) |
### Responses – Key Issues

- **Child Protection Activities**
  - Helping a child who escaped from an armed group.
  - Providing security to a Child Protection Adviser investigating a case of sexual violence against children.
  - Informing the armed forces of the host State not to use schools for their operations.
  - Reconnaissance to identify threats to children. Done in conjunction with/at the request of the CPA/CPU. Always alert and share information with the CPA/CPU for follow-up action.

- **Community Outreach Activities**
  - Building a school.
  - Organizing a soccer tournament for local children.
  - Provide military escort to UN agencies/partners – when requested.
  - Act of kindness with good intentions – always consider the possible negative consequences for children. It is good practice to inform the CPA/CPU before conducting such activities.

### Key Message:

*Military peacekeepers have the most significant impact when they focus on child protection activities, rather than on outreach activities for children.*

- Review the answers to the questions, differentiating child protection, outreach, community engagement and other activities.

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**Notes (For Trainer)**

- Review the answers to the questions, differentiating child protection, outreach, community engagement and other activities.
Give a few examples, then ask learners to provide other examples.

**RESPONSES**

**Child protection activities are part of peacekeepers’ mandate**

1. Helping a child who has escaped from an armed group is a key task of military personnel to provide security and respond to violations against children. Make sure to immediately refer the case to the CPA/CPU for prompt specialist action.

2. Child Protection Advisers may request accompaniment when investigating cases of sexual violence or other grave violations. This is part of your role as a peacekeeper and an important child protection activity.

3. Recruitment of children is a grave violation, as is sexual violence. Responding to these violations is a key child protection activity; such cases should be immediately referred to the CPA/CPU for action.

4. Attacks on a school is another grave violation under international humanitarian law. The use of a school by a military group makes it a legitimate target and prevents the education of children. It is the peacekeeper’s responsibility to inform counterparts in the national armed forces to vacate the school. Peacekeepers should also alert the CPA and coordinate with CPA/CPU for follow-up actions.

5. Mainstreaming child protection into your regular military activities is the most efficient way for you to contribute to the child protection mandate (more on this in Module 3, lesson 2).

**Outreach and community engagement activities support the mission’s presence**

1. Building a school would be considered an outreach/community engagement activity as it contributes to development of a country and would usually be done by development actors in coordination with the relevant national authorities. For example, a local community approaches the mission to request assistance with building/repairing a school. Considering it a way to build confidence and enhance acceptance, the mission may decide to submit a project proposal to the Quick-Impact Project (QIP) Review Committee. In this case, it is important to remember that the primary aim is not to protect children, but to create goodwill and enhance acceptance thereby facilitating implementation of the mission’s mandate.

   However, support to a local community should never be an isolated act and should be done in coordination with the relevant stakeholders, including competent local authorities and development partners. This will ensure that the school is a priority for the area, that it does not duplicate other efforts, and that it will be sustained by the State (resourced with teaching staff and equipment).
While such a project has the potential to benefit the education of children in that community, it does not constitute a child protection activity under the mission’s mandate.

2. Other examples of outreach and community engagement activities include:
   - Organizing a soccer tournament;
   - Assisting other United Nations agencies in their outreach work, such as distributing food, constructing/repairing schools or buildings, distributing Christmas gifts to children (as in Haiti).

3. What other examples can you think of when the United Nations military forces might help the community?

4. Scenario: Imagine you are on a long-range patrol and come to a remote village with no medical facilities. A mother approaches you and asks for help because her child is ill.
   Response: If you can, it is your responsibility to provide immediate assistance to the mother and child. Often, you will not be able to do so, which can be frustrating.

   However, what you can do is refer the case to the Child Protection Adviser, who is the focal point in the mission for child protection matter and who has access to a vast network of local child protection specialists. If it is not possible to reach the Child Protection Adviser/Unit, other civilian/child protection actors may be contacted (e.g., Human Rights Officers, Civilian Protection Coordinators, UNICEF).

   Alternatively, you may inform an NGO, such as Doctors Without Borders, which might be present in the country and can go to the village to provide medical services. Whatever course of action you take in referring a case to a child protection specialist, it is critical to coordinate with/report the matter to the mission’s civilian Child Protection Adviser.

5. For all of the situations that you will encounter in the course of your duties, although you may have good intentions to help the children and communities, it is imperative that you consider the possible (negative) consequences of your action, and go through the appropriate channels.
Key Message: Although you may take action in good faith, they could have unintended consequences; always consult with the mission’s civilian Child Protection Adviser/Officers.

- Close proximity and relationship with locals, in particular children, could put children at risk of harm. A military peacekeeper interacting closely with a child, even with good intentions, could render that child a target for harm.

Examples:
- A military peacekeeper who allows a boy to have access to the mission compound or car may render the boy a target for use as a spy;

- Military peacekeepers assisting with supplying a local orphanage with surplus food and medical supplies, may render the orphanage a target for rebel groups seeking medicine and food (just as providing such supplies to children may make them targets).

Slide 18 shows the key guiding principles to be borne in mind when interacting with children in the mission area:
1. **Do no harm.** Always consider whether your interaction could have an adverse effect on the child/children you want to help.

2. **Best interest of the child.** Always ask yourself, what consequences your action may have on the child/children, when you plan and conduct operations, in particular civil-military activities. If you are not sure, ask the mission’s Child Protection Adviser.

3. **Coordinate and work with experts.** Every organization/component in the country has expertise in a specific area. E.g., peacekeepers provide security, support government institutions; other organizations specialize in providing aid to local communities, and so on. It is natural that you want to do more to help, and the way to do so is by working in coordination with other United Nations and non-United Nations actors on the ground.

**SLIDE 19: ACTIONS ILLUSTRATED**

**Actions Illustrated**

**Good intentions can backfire**
- Example: supporting an orphanage

**Good practices**
- What UN peacekeepers can do

**Key Message:** Even well-intended outreach activities can do harm!
Scenario Discussions

These examples are based on real events. Read/have learners read aloud, the first two examples and highlight the guiding principles that were breached.

Read the good-practice scenario and lead a discussion on what the United Nations military can do.

Example 1: Orphanage 1
The peacekeepers at one mission wanted to support a local orphanage that was run by a priest. They organized a fundraiser, collected money among themselves and their families at home and gave the money to the priest for the orphanage. Unfortunately, the orphanage was not registered with the Government. There was no accountability for what the money was used for. What is worse, the orphanage never conducted proper family tracing of the children that it accepted. The orphanage was later accused of being involved in the trafficking of children to the neighbouring country.
Result: Despite the best intentions, harm was done.

Example 2: Orphanage 2
United Nations peacekeepers from a particular country wanted to support the local orphanage in a conflict area. The orphanage took in children from all ethnic groups; they were very poor children. The United Nations military peacekeepers thought they could help the orphanage by giving the children gifts. However, not all factions in the area liked the troop-contributing country. One night, the orphanage was attacked; the owner and two nurses were killed.
Result: Good practice was not followed; all actions must be channelled through the appropriate coordination mechanisms

Good practice: how the United Nations Military can help
In South Sudan, United Nations Military in the mission area wanted to help a remote village by providing seeds to grow grain crops. South Sudan is affected by regular flooding and food shortages. However, UNMISS’ mandate does not include providing food to the local community. Other organizations present do that and may not appreciate the mission duplicating their work.
Good practice: Work/coordinate with local organizations and experts on actions that are not part of your specific mandate.

What can the United Nations Military do?
The mission partnered with a local NGO to supply the seeds. The name of the NGO was printed on the bags of seed and the mission arranged for transportation and assisted with the distribution of the seeds. Note that, although this was not a child protection activity per se, the peacekeepers’ assistance helped the community and benefited children. In conduct of all activities in the mission area, United Nations personnel must consider the “Do No Harm” principle.
CASES STUDIES

After reviewing the basic tenets relating to the different situations, ask learners to discuss the four cases/scenarios (slides 20-23).

Depending on time and preference, conduct these discussions with the entire group or divide learners into smaller groups. Allow 10 minutes for discussion, then have the groups present and discuss in plenary.

The trainer must be familiar with the DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations, which covers sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as child labour.

Some questions have clear answers; for others, it is important for learners to express their views/comments based on their own culture and experience, and to learn from the experience of others.

All answers are welcome and can be useful for discussion and pedagogical purposes.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Slide 20 - This may be a case of sexual exploitation and abuse. As a peacekeeper, you have an obligation to report your observation.

**Case 1:** The scenario in slide 20 is based on actual incidents in the field, whereby peacekeepers have sexually exploited girls and women in exchange for food or money. The United Nations has a zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse.

**Appropriate response**
Intervene if you can. Ask the officer what he is doing. If you see/suspect any type of inappropriate behaviour, report the incident to the appropriate person. You have an obligation to report an incident that could be a potential violation, even if you are not sure. If the situation is not clear, as in slide 20, seek advice from the Conduct and Discipline Focal Point. Children should not be on United Nations premises; you have an obligation to report the presence of children in/near the United Nations compound.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Slide 21 – The United Nations prohibits any form of child labour.

**Case 2:** Allowing a child to perform any task or render any service, with or without compensation, constitutes child labour. It would imply that you are condoning child labour and exploiting the boy’s vulnerable situation.


The use of children by United Nations peace operations or their personnel for purposes of labour or other rendering of services is strictly prohibited, regardless of the minimum working age for child stipulated under national law in the mission area of operation, and irrespective of compensation (in the form of salary, food or other benefits) (para. 31).

**Appropriate response**

Explain to the boy that United Nations personnel do not employ children. It is also important to understand that giving money, no matter how small the amount, to children may lead to the expectation that UN peacekeepers can solve their economic problems and to dependency. You should hire an adult to do work for...
you. If you want to help children with their education, you should inform the appropriate persons or agencies. Sharing information or contributing to United Nations funds, agencies or programmes is a more appropriate way to assist.

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**SLIDE 22: CASE STUDY 3 – WHAT TO DO?**

**Case Study 3 – What to Do?**

You and some other peacekeepers are playing soccer during your off-duty hours. Some children are watching your game and ask if they can join you.

**What should you do and why?**

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Slide 22 - Know your environment. Make sure that allowing children to participate in such activities does not have unintended consequences.

**Case 3:** It very much depends on the situation. In some host countries, peacekeepers are not perceived as impartial. A child who is seen as having access to you could be targeted or used as a spy. There have been cases of children seen with peacekeepers who were subsequently tortured by armed groups and forced to gather intelligence from peacekeepers.

**Appropriate Response**

Your primary consideration must be “do no harm”. You must consider the possible consequences on the children if they are seen playing soccer with peacekeepers. You should tell the boys that you are on duty and children cannot play soccer with you at that time. If you would like to engage with the children in the community, work with a local NGO to organize tournaments. Seek guidance from the Child
Protection Adviser in the mission, and bear in mind that different cultures may view and respond to a situation differently.

**SLIDE 23: CASE STUDY 4 – WHAT TO DO?**

You have been deployed to MONUSCO as a Company Commander and you want to familiarize yourself with your area of responsibility since it is a new environment.

You are aware that an armed group has been terrorizing villages in the area, but you don’t know which ones.

While on a familiarization patrol, two youths offer to take you to their village and serve as your guides and interpreters.

What should you do and why?

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Slide 23 – Using children as guides constitutes child labour and is prohibited; such action may also place the children at risk of harm.

**Case 4:** While there may be many good reasons for you to accept the boys’ offer, you must not. The provision of goods and services by children to United Nations peacekeepers is prohibited, irrespective of whether you pay for the service or not. In this case, the use of children by a military peacekeeper has bigger implications. They may be at risk of harm if they are seen helping you; or may be targeted in the event of an attack. Moreover, the definition of a child soldier includes children used as porters, spies, or for other functions. Therefore using a child for any purpose is contrary to the United Nations principles and would weaken the credibility of the United Nations. This also holds true for using children as interpreters.

**Appropriate Response**

Thank the child for his offer, but refuse. Ask an adult to show you around.
### SLIDE 24: INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN – DOS and DON’TS (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Know your peacekeeping mission’s mandate and role in protecting children. There are actors who can help, where the missions cannot (education, health, food, etc.)</td>
<td>Be discouraged if you cannot immediately help. If you report concerns, the responsible agencies can ensure that children are helped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider other options for community outreach aside from building schools and playing soccer</td>
<td>Engage in activities that may place children at risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with NGOs and local communities if you want to engage in community outreach activities with children</td>
<td>Be discouraged if you think the mission should do more. Your contribution to security is critical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SLIDE 25: INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN – DOS and DON’TS (2)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider the possible consequences of your actions on children. If you have doubts, ask the CPA</td>
<td>Casually spend time or interact with local children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain to a child who wants money or work that you are not allowed to give money or work to children</td>
<td>Give money or food to or use children for any services or labour (e.g. cooking, cleaning, washing cars, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report through the chain of command and to the CPA/CP focal points if you see relevant incidents</td>
<td>Have any sexual contact with children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Slides 24 and 25 – Work closely with experts, do no harm, and always keep in mind the best interest of the child.

- Peacekeepers should respect children’s rights at all times and strictly adhere to the United Nations standards of conduct. Remember that, although some situations may not appear harmful at first, they may ultimately cause harm to the children or their families. Keeping in mind the “Dos and don’ts” of interacting with children can help you, as a peacekeeper, make the right decision when confronted with these situations. rg

Ensuring the safety and well-being of the children should be your priority. The “best interest of the child” principle should guide all your interactions with children.

If time permits, the trainer may initiate/lead a short discussion on United Nations military personnel working with NGOs and humanitarian organizations.

- Report incidents/observations through the chain of command and to the Child Protection Adviser/Child Protection Focal Points.

☐ Handout: Dos and Don’ts when interacting with children

SLIDE 26: TAKEAWAYS

- Peacekeepers should be aware of how their own cultural background can influence their dealings with children and local communities, in order to avoid disrespectful or harmful behaviour.

- Peacekeepers must abide by the relevant codes of conduct and other ethical standards when dealing with children in their mission areas.

- Bear in mind the United Nation’s zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and the prohibition of child labour.

- Always keep the following guiding principles in mind when interacting with children, and coordinate and work with the experts: Do No Harm and the “best interest of the child”.

Reinforcement Training Package on Child Protection for United Nations Military
**Takeaways from Lesson 3.1:**

- Peacekeepers should be aware of how their own cultural background can influence their dealings with children and local communities, in order to avoid disrespectful or harmful behaviour.
- Peacekeepers must abide by the relevant codes of conduct and other ethical standards when dealing with children in their mission areas.
- Bear in mind the United Nation’s zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and the prohibition of child labour.
- Always keep the following guiding principles in mind when interacting with children, and coordinate and work with the experts:
  - **Do No Harm and the “best interest of the child”**

**References (1/2)**

- United Nations, DPKO (Integrated Training Service), Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials, 2017
- United Nations, Report of the Secretary-General on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (A/74/705), February 2020
References (2/2)

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
Lesson 3.2

Military Component Child Protection Roles and Tasks

The Lesson

Starting Lesson 3.2

For an interactive start to Lesson 3.2, ask learners:

How can the military component contribute to effective child protection?

OVERVIEW

Lesson 3.2 provides an overview of the child protection roles and tasks of the military component. The discussion engages learners from the outset.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Describe the guidance framework on child protection at the operational and tactical levels;
• Explain the child protection roles and tasks of military peacekeepers;
• Explain why peacekeepers need to develop situational awareness;
• Apply the guidelines for monitoring and reporting by military peacekeepers.

ACTIVITIES

• Group discussion: Situational awareness (slides 14 and 15).

HANDOUTS (FOR LEARNERS)

1. DPKO/DFS Terms of Reference – United Nations Military Child Protection Focal Point (slide 9)
2. Monitoring and Reporting – Dos and Don’ts (slides 18 and 19)
The main guiding frameworks that outline the legal obligations of peacekeepers with regard to protecting children were discussed in module 2. In this module, you will see how these frameworks are operationalized into standards of procedures (SOPs) and actions of the military component in the field.
SLIDE 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

- **Describe** the guidance framework on child protection at the operational and tactical levels;
- **Explain** the child protection roles and tasks of military peacekeepers;
- **Explain** why peacekeepers need to develop situational awareness;
- **Apply** the guidelines for monitoring and reporting by military peacekeepers.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

- This lesson (3.2) will cover operational guidance, roles and tasks of military peacekeepers, situational awareness, and monitoring and reporting, in more detail.

  The next lesson (3.3) will focus on child soldiers and rules of engagement.

  The final two lessons (3.4 and 3.5) will focus on the responsibilities of military Child Protection Focal Points at the operational and tactical levels, and the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.
Key Message: Protection of children is a specific and explicit task mandated by the Security Council.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: The deployment of Child Protection Advisers is mandated by the Security Council.

In Module 2, we looked at the child protection mandate issued by the Security Council with a view to understanding it. Slides 3 and 4 provide examples of the language used in mandates on child protection, and children and armed conflict.

In resolution 2502 (2019) relating to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Security Council emphasizes that the protection mandate is to be implemented without prejudice to the responsibilities of the host country, and may include actions against bodies or authorities of the host State if they are the perpetrators of violations.

In resolution 2531 (2020) on Mali, the Security Council specifically requests the mission to provide specific protection for women and children affected by armed conflict. The language in this and other mandate resolutions indicates a clear requirement by the Security Council for the peacekeeping mission to use resources for protection purposes, including protection of children. The implications of this language will be discussed in lesson 3.3 on the application of the rules of engagement.

SLIDE 5: SUPPORTING MANDATE IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH ACTION

Supporting Mandate Implementation through Action

- **Action**: Provide physical protection for children
- **Action**: Support separation of children from armed forces/groups with the CPA
- **Action**: Protect civilians
- **Action**: Support DDR
- **Action**: Gather and share information
- **Action**: Monitor and report the six grave violations
- **Action**: Support action plans to release child soldiers
- **Action**: Support CPA in accessing various places (e.g., military barracks)
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The military component supports the child protection mandate through specific and implied tasks. Based on a mission analysis, the military component will identify a number of implied child protection tasks at the operational level, such as providing security for Child Protection Advisers.

Slide 5 outlines the child protection tasks that may be stated in mission mandates. The Security Council mandated the tasks showing on this slide to MONUSCO.

**Children and Armed Conflict/Child Protection:** While the protection of civilians mandate may be used to encompass all types of protection issues (including conflict-related sexual violence, child protection, and human rights), all military Child Protection Focal Points in missions have a specific child protection/children and armed conflict mandate. (Note that individual civilian teams/units/sections/components lead each individual protection mandate.)

The child protection mandates for MINUSCA, MINUSMA, MONUSCO, UNMISS, and others, include the requirement to monitor and report on the six grave violations against children (explained in Module 2).

Where missions are mandated to support the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the specific concerns of girls and boys are also included.

Some Governments or armed groups have signed Action Plans with the United Nations to end violations such as the recruitment and use of children, or sexual violence against children. In these contexts, it is the role of the mission to work closely with the Government or armed group to ensure the implementation of the Action Plan.

What does this mean for military components? The military supports the implementation of the child protection mandate. Action by the military include, but is not limited to, providing physical protection for children; gathering and sharing information on the six grave violations; supporting the separation of children from armed groups and armed forces; and providing security for Child Protection Advisers when they visit the military barracks of armed forces/armed groups to screen troops, engage in dialogue and negotiations, and so on.
**Key Message:** Military Child Protection Focal Points contribute to this framework. At the operational level, peacekeepers are expected to support the development and implementation of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

- The Security Council mandates peacekeeping policies and guidelines for the military component, and plans and orders for the mission. All provide directions to military formations on how to implement the child protection mandates in peacekeeping missions at three levels: strategic, operational and tactical.

1. **Strategic level** – the Security Council authorizes the child protection/children and armed conflict mandate for the peacekeeping mission.

Guiding documents:

Rules of engagement are developed by DPO and tailored specifically to each mission. They provide detailed directions and rules on the use of force in implementing the protection mandates;

The United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM) is a comprehensive tactical guide for military components on how to employ infantry battalions at the tactical level. It includes guidance on child protection;

General Force Headquarters standard operating procedures.

2. **Operational level** - The mandate is translated into an operational framework, which includes an integrated mission plan and a concept of operations for the mission as a whole and a concept of operations for the military component; these are implemented through plans and operational orders. These documents usually contain specific provisions on child protection. To support the implementation of the child protection mandate and to facilitate coordination among the military and the mission’s internal and external child protection partners, the Force Commander issues specific guidance, usually in the form of a Force Commander's Child Protection Directive. The Force Headquarters SOP also provides guidance on child protection.

3. **Tactical level** - Commanders at the sector and unit levels will provide orders and guidance to subordinate units to ensure the Force Commander's Child Protection Directive is implemented at this level, and that the protection of children is given priority and attention when planning and conducting protection-related operations. Other key guidance documents for the military component include the rules of engagement, the Handbook on the Protection of Civilians, unit level SOPs, directives on conduct and discipline, among others.

The mission’s mandates only become effective when they are translated into the mission plan, the concept of operations, orders and directives of the military component, for the tactical execution of the task.

This is what is meant by mainstreaming child protection into the work of the military: applying a child protection lens and incorporating child protection concerns at all levels of military engagement – at the strategic, operational and tactical levels. This is how the military contributes to the protection of children on the ground.

It also means understanding the other mandated tasks, such as protection of civilians, protection from conflict-related sexual violence, support to DDR, and all other enabling tasks relating to child protection. For example, in protecting civilians from conflict-related sexual violence, the military must consider the protection concerns of the boys and girls that they may encounter.

If the military is providing support to DDR, it must take into account the separation of children from armed groups, and also consider the gender-specific needs of both
Girls and boys in this process. Also, when the military is conducting situational awareness, it must report on specific violations committed against children.

**SLIDE 7: MILITARY COMPONENT AND CHILD PROTECTION**

**Military Component and Child Protection**

- Ensure child protection is mainstreamed into planning and conduct of protection activities
- Ensure that threats to children and children’s vulnerabilities are identified and plans are developed with these in mind
- Identify and establish a military child protection network within the military component
- Issue specific child protection directive(s) and guidance for military personnel

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Child protection, in particular physical protection against threats to children, is a key role of the military component.

- The military component deployed in missions that have a protection of civilians mandate has the primary task of ensuring a safe and secure environment. This includes protecting mission staff, other United Nations personnel, humanitarian partners, and NGOs.

  This security role specifically includes the mandated task of protecting all civilians under imminent threat of physical violence.

  If a mission has a specific child protection mandate, civilian Child Protection Advisers and military Child Protection Focal Points will be deployed to it. In such missions, child protection is a mandated task for the military component, therefore, child protection must be understood by all members of the force, and mainstreamed into daily its operations, in particular child protection activities.
Furthermore, commanders and staff at all levels should ensure that threats to children and their vulnerabilities are identified, and plans and orders are developed to provide effective protection on the ground, working in concert with other protection partners.

One of the mechanisms employed in missions today is a military Child Protection Focal Point network at the operational and tactical levels.

Force Commanders and tactical commanders must issue specific guidance on child protection, in the form of a Force Commander's Child Protection Directive and a tactical-level SOP.

**Key Message:** It is a command responsibility at all levels to ensure the establishment and utilization of the military Child Protection Focal Point network.

With the increase in child protection demands on the military, and in order to ensure that all mission components, in particular the military component, integrate child protection into their activities, it is critical that a network of military Child Protection Focal Points be established. The focal points should ensure that child protection is
considered at all stages of the planning process and in operational activities at Force Headquarters, as well as at sector and contingent levels.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point must maintain almost daily communication with the Child Protection Section at the mission to obtain advice and support, maintain situational awareness, and to update the Section on the military component’s activities. This is a key relationship that needs to be nurtured. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point must also ensure that child protection is mainstreamed in Force Headquarters.

It is a command responsibility to ensure that military Child Protection Focal Points are nominated at every level – force, sector, battalion, team sites, mobile operating bases, etc. – and that the military Child Protection Focal Point network is established and utilized.

The roles and responsibilities of the Child Protection Focal Points at Force Headquarters, sector and battalion levels and the function of the military Child Protection Focal Point network will be covered in lessons 3.4 and 3.5.

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**SLIDE 9 FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT – KEY TASKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point – Key Tasks</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Coordinate with mission Child Protection Section</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Child protection advice and mainstreaming</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Commander</td>
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<tr>
<td>• All staff functions</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Operational guidance to sector and units</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establish/strengthen Alert System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Train sector and unit focal points on Child Protection Directives/SOPs</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Handover of children associated with armed groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Interactions with children</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sexual exploitation/abuse, child labour</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is the key interlocutor between the Child Protection Section and the Adviser and the military component.

Refer to the handout, DPKO/DFS Terms of Reference - United Nations Military Child Protection Focal Point.

The Child Protection Focal Point should mainstream Child Protection at Force Headquarters, working with the Force Commander and all military staff, and using the necessary tools, such as the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive. Child protection must be an integral element in planning and operations; when drafting orders or planning an activity, the military must always consider their impact on children and how to protect them.

Providing operational guidance involves drafting and operationalizing documents such as the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive, as well as providing advice during the planning and execution of an operation. It also involves maintaining close liaison with the operations and other branches involved in activities (such as the Civilian-Military Cooperation Unit) to keep up-to-date on any planning so as to be able to provide timely advice. Such guidance is also provided to sector headquarters, units and UNMO team sites.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point will establish/strengthen the Child Protection Alert System to transmit information received on the six grave violations against children, other child protection concerns, threats that could cause displacement, human rights violations, etc. through the chain of command and to the appropriate section, including the Child Protection Section. Emphasis on the Alert System is to enable proactive action.

Training is a continuous process in the mission, including induction training on arrival, as well as “top-up” or capacity-building training to ensure that all personnel is aware of and understands the relevant child protection SOPs, including those relating to the handover of children associated with armed groups, peacekeeper interaction with children, and dealing with exploitation and child labour. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point should ensure that all peacekeepers complete their training, and should also support the training activities by making them relevant, accurate and interesting to the extent possible. Close liaison with and the involvement of the Child Protection Section in training activities is strongly recommended.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: It is good practice to identify child protection concerns when carrying out usual military tasks.

Ask learners: With regard to mainstreaming child protection, give examples of child protection activities to be considered when planning and executing your peacekeeping tasks.

Slide 10 shows some peacekeeping tasks that are likely to involve aspects of child protection. When carrying out these tasks, peacekeepers should look out for and report any grave violations.
Key Message: All military peacekeepers should understand the threats to and the vulnerabilities of children. They must always “wear their child protection lenses” when in the field.

With regard to mainstreaming child protection: In slide 11, usual military tasks are in green; and in blue are some relevant issues that troops on the ground may have to consider, provide responses to, and report on through the military Child Protection Focal Point network.

These tasks are likely to involve aspects of child protection, therefore peacekeepers must look out for and report any grave violations or indications that such violations are being committed. Suggest some other relevant issues that the military formation conducting protection activities should consider.
**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Use of the protection resources/tools showing in slide 12 is considered best practice. They are implemented and utilized by missions in order to better understand threats and vulnerabilities and to prioritize resources.

Note: Learners may have experienced utilizing the protection resources/tools used in other missions. Ask them to share their experiences.

Missions are being innovative in their efforts to understand the operational environment and prioritizing their tasks. Here are some examples of resources/tools that missions have employed.

1. **Joint Protection Teams** may be composed of several elements of the mission, for example, Civil Affairs Officer, Human Rights Officer, Child Protection Adviser, police and military personnel. The protection team would visit an area and interact with locals to determine the protection needs so as to provide adequate responses. Battalions may not only be part of the team, but may also provide physical protection to the team.
2. **Must-Should-Could Matrix** may be one output of such visits, along with other sources of information, including local authorities. The matrix is a priority list indicating which villages, and therefore, which children must, should, could be protected. This should inform the allocation of resources.

3. **Community Liaison Agent (CLA):** When patrolling, peacekeepers must be able to communicate with the local community and the people they are expected to protect. The Community Liaison Agent, who acts as an interpreter, is a national of the country and understands the customs, but is not from the immediate local area (and is thus “impartial”). The CLA can assist in communicating with the villagers in a culturally sensitive way, and in listening to and understanding their views regarding threats to children. MONUSCO has at least one CLA for each patrol base.

4. **Community Alert Network (CAN):** This key innovation is a system whereby a village is provided with a mobile phone and United Nations mission phone numbers to call in the event of an emergency. MONUSCO has built cell phone masts specifically to extend coverage to villages at risk; that enables the mission to respond more rapidly. During the mission-specific pre-deployment training, peacekeepers will most likely be informed of the measures used in the assigned mission. Further details would be in the mission SOPs and the technical advisory mission (TAM) reports.

A Technical Advisory Mission (TAM) serves to explore a Member State's capacity to fully take advantage of space-based information. As an inter-institutional fact-finding mission, it is officially requested by the respective national government and is carried out by a team of experts. Typically, TAMs are one-week-long missions. The expert team meets with key disaster management and development authorities in the Government, United Nations organizations, regional and international organizations or initiatives and private entrepreneurs to discuss the use of space-based information for risk and disaster management in depth and to subsequently make recommendations on improvements.
SLIDE 13: SITUATIONAL AWARENESS – UNDERSTANDING THE OPERATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Situational awareness involves not only who/what poses a threat to children, but also understanding why children are vulnerable and what protection actors, in concert with communities, are doing to reduce risk.

To kick start the discussion and stimulate learner participation (e.g., for question 1 on slide 13), ask learners what they think they should know about threats by an armed group.

Determining who is vulnerable and what threats exist requires understanding the operational environment. Situational awareness is key to child protection. The planning process for understanding the operational environment is set out in the specialized training materials for military Staff Officers, but let us briefly go over a few important things to consider:

1. **What are the threats against children in your area of responsibility?**
   Each area of responsibility is different, and you need to identify the threats that are specific to your area. More specifically, Who is a threat to children? What are their tactics? Why are they doing it? When they are doing it (day, night, market days, etc.)? Where are their bases? Where are they most likely to strike?
2. **What are the Government and the community doing about it?**
   Some action may have already been taken and you need to know about it, in particular since the Government has the primary responsibility for protection. In addition, the villagers may have already developed a protection plan.

3. **What are other actors - mission partners, such as United Nations agencies, international organizations, NGOs and local community groups - doing about it, and how can you all work together?**
   Other child protection actors are likely to be aware of the situation and are already providing or preparing to provide support to the children.

   It is only when you have answers to these questions that you can identify and plan the actions to take to reduce vulnerability and risks. Then, you need to update and adjust your situational awareness accordingly and progressively.

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**SLIDE 14: CASE STUDY: SITUATIONAL AWARENESS**

**Case Study:**

*Situational Awareness*

On a patrol in your Company Operations Base area of responsibility, you pass through a village that hasn't been visited by the United Nations in a while. Everything seems calm and the villagers are going about their daily business.

You stop in the marketplace to chat with some villagers and get a grasp of the situation. A village elder complains about recent visits by an armed group that has been active in the area for a couple of months. You know that such visits are common, villagers are usually harassed, and goods are taken from them.

According to the village, the armed group asked to see the local teacher. On their second meeting with the teacher, which ended in an argument, they shot him for unknown reasons. As you carry on with your patrol, you mention the incident to your driver, who half-jokingly remarks:

"I wonder who the teacher was teaching, because there are not any children to be seen in the entire village."

**To whom will you report your observations, and what is your analysis of the situation?**

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** This scenario portrays a situation in which a teacher was killed by an armed group. The situation needs further investigation. The killing of a teacher should be reported to the Child Protection Adviser as a possible grave violation against children.
Give learners time to read the scenario then, depending on time, discuss the question as a large group or divide learners into small groups.

**Optional Reporting Activity**

If there is sufficient time, ask learners to note in writing the information they would need to draft a report: name of village, GPS location, name of armed group(s), where is group from/moved to, number of perpetrators, date of killing, time of the killing, weapons carried, number of visits, number and sex of child victims, ethnic/religious affiliation of armed group, ethnic/religious composition of the village, village focal point for further contact, etc.

**Key takeaways:**

1. Report violations or concerns through the chain of command (military Child Protection Focal Point and civilian Child Protection Adviser).

2. Killing a teacher may be considered a grave violation and must be reported to a child protection officer/actor.

3. Targeted killing of teachers (several incidents) could be an early warning of child recruitment.

4. Child recruitment, especially on a large scale, may be an early warning indicator of security threats and/or military activity by this group.

5. Children not going to school/schools closed/children kept at home are strong indicators of perceived insecurity in a community; crucial to note this for situational awareness analysis.

6. The Child Protection Adviser can elaborate on context-specific child protection concerns that would help with your military situational awareness analysis.

7. When assessing the situation, consider if only boys or only girls are missing. If one gender in particular is missing, that could be an indication of gender-specific targeting.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The killing of a teacher in the scenario in slide 14 should be reported to the Child Protection Adviser as a possible grave violation against children. Security Council resolution 1998 (2011) explicitly mandates this.

- Recurrent attacks on teachers, on the basis of their profession, is a grave violation, as spelled out in Security Council in resolution 1998 (2011). Teachers are “protected persons in relation to schools”. This will be covered in more detail during the scenario discussions.

In addition to including the killing of the teacher in the patrol report to your own hierarchy, make sure to inform the civilian Child Protection Officer and the child protection actors in your area of responsibility, through the chain of command. Ideally, the military Child Protection Focal Point at Force Headquarters and either the Intelligence or Operations directorates (G2 or G3) will also alert their respective civilian colleagues in the Child Protection Section upon reading the patrol report.

The information obtained from that scenario will also be crucial in your military analysis of the situation.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The specific information in the Secretary-General’s report (A/74/845-S/2020/525) illustrates the importance of military reports of grave violations.

This information, in the annex of the Secretary-General’s report on children and armed conflict, could not have been compiled without the joint effort of various mission entities and external child protection partners. The role of the military is imperative in the monitoring and reporting mechanism.
SLIDE 17: INFORMATION COLLECTION PLAN

Information Collection Plan

⇒ Include specific questions relating to child protection

This will help to:

• Identify early-warning indicators (e.g., are there boys/girls in the streets? Are boys/girls going to school?)
• Determine whether the situation is changing
• Report violations through the monitoring and reporting mechanism

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Information collection templates, reporting procedures and formats vary from mission to mission. Slide 18 shows the minimum information required in a report.

- Ask learners if they are familiar with information collection plans. Also ask if they have ever had to report violations against children.

Information collection plans vary from one mission to another, depending on the Force Commander’s critical information request. Force Commanders usually include civilian protection as one of the components to monitor in their requests. It is important that priority information requirements regarding children be included in the requests.

For example, in Chad, peacekeepers were required to report on child soldiers; this information was considered as priority information.
Notes (For Trainer)

Key Message: Monitoring and reporting the six grave violations is a mandated task for military peacekeepers.

The child protection mandate includes providing information to the MRM. The six grave violations committed by armed forces/groups against children must be reported to the Security Council for action.

It is important to report the six grave violations through the chain of command. In gathering information, peacekeepers must not interrogate children. They should take note of information obtained through observation and talking to adults. Child Protection Advisers can investigate further to acquire more details.

Some indicators of threats to children:
- Parents are afraid to send their children to school: could be a sign that children are being recruited in or around the school;
- There are no children in the streets: could be a sign that the local population considers that their children are at risk.

It is important to consider threats to boys and girls separately because they are sometimes targeted differently at an early age.
If violations have already been committed, note as much as possible in writing:
- Type of violation
- Date and time
- Location
- Alleged perpetrator
- Circumstances of the violation
- Details of the violation
- Number of children involved
- Age, sex, nationality, religion of victims (children)
- Other important information

**Remember:** Do not interrogate children. Do not take photographs of children.

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**SLIDE 19: CONDUCTING CHILD PROTECTION ACTIVITIES – DO'S AND DON'TS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consider the child’s best interests</td>
<td>Put the child(ren) in danger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know and coordinate with the child protection actors in your area of responsibility</td>
<td>Neglect to share information with the child protection actors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyse protection threats and risks for children</td>
<td>Forget about child-specific threats/risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discretely take note of details, and keep information confidential (location, armed group/unit, number of children, sex, violation)</td>
<td>Interview, interrogate or take photographs of the child(ren)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be aware of your impact (as a uniformed person) on the child(ren)</td>
<td>Casually spend time with children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The military Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for promulgating these Do’s and Don’ts to all members of the force.

💡 When conducting military operations, peacekeepers should always consider the impact of their actions on children. They must make children’s safety and well-being the priority. The best interest of the child should guide all interactions with children.
This slide shows some Dos and Don’ts when monitoring and reporting child protection issues. They may help you to act correctly in different situations.

□ Handout: Dos and Don’ts of monitoring and reporting

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**SLIDE 20: TAKEAWAYS (1/2)**

**Takeaways (1/2)**

- Know your roles and how you can contribute to child protection:
  - Direct role: prevent violations and mitigate threats;
  - Support role: gather information, support the Child Protection Section, provide security to Child Protection Advisers.
- Military components have directives/SOPs on child protection – apply them.
- Create orders and SOPs to address information requirements, handover of children, etc.
Takeaways (2/2)

- Child protection is an integral part of practically every patrol activity.
- Protection involves a combination of actions to reduce vulnerability and risk.
- Assess the child-specific indicators in your operational environment.
- In all your actions and orders, consider the best interest of the child.

Summary

**Takeaways from Lesson 3.2:**

- Know your roles and how you can contribute to child protection:
  - Direct role: prevent violations and mitigate threats;
  - Support role: gather information, support the Child Protection Section, provide security to Child Protection Advisers.
- Military components have directives/SOPs on child protection – apply them.
- Create orders and SOPs to address information requirements, handover of children, etc.
- Child protection is an integral part of practically every patrol activity.
- Protection involves a combination of actions to reduce vulnerability and risk.
- Assess the child-specific indicators in your operational environment.
- In all your actions and orders, consider the best interest of the child.
SLIDE 22: REFERENCES (1/2)

References (1/2)


SLIDE 23: REFERENCES (2/2)

References (2/2)

- United Nations, UNDDR, Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), 2014 (see chaps. 5.20, “Youth and DDR”, and 5.30, “Children and DDR”)
- OSRS-Children and Armed Conflict website (http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
Lesson 3.3

Military Component Child Protection Action and Response

The Lesson

Starting Lesson 3.3

For an interactive start to lesson 3.3, ask learners:

What are some of the moral dilemmas to think through when deployed in a mission area where rebel groups are using child soldiers?

OVERVIEW
Lesson 3.3 builds on Military Component Child Protection Roles and Tasks and will prepare learners for discussions of the scenarios presented. Based on learners’ experience and previous peacekeeping training, this lesson provides an opportunity for learners to discuss – in plenary and/or small groups – a number of “snapshot” scenarios, which should help them develop a basic understanding of the challenges, dilemmas and principles of child protection, as it relates to the military at the tactical level.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• Demonstrate how the rules of engagement of the mission provide military peacekeepers with the authority and tools to effectively protect children;
• Define child soldiers and discuss the challenges they pose;
• Apply the guidelines for dealing with child soldiers;
• Demonstrate the range of appropriate military actions in response to grave violations against children.

ACTIVITIES
• Scenario discussions (slides 17-25);
  (Note: If time permits, use the Situational Awareness case study in lesson 3.2, slides 14-15 in this lesson);
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

This lesson (3.3) builds on lesson 3.2 on Military Component Child Protection Roles and Tasks and will prepare learners for discussions of the scenarios presented. Based on learners' experience and previous peacekeeping training, this lesson will also provide an opportunity for learners to discuss – in plenary and/or small groups – a number of “snapshot” scenarios, which should help them to develop a basic understanding of the challenges, dilemmas and principles of child protection, as it relates to the military at the tactical level.
SLIDE 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

• **Demonstrate** how the mission rules of engagement provide military peacekeepers with the authority and tools to effectively protect children;
• **Define** child soldiers and discuss the challenges they pose;
• **Apply** the guidelines for dealing with child soldiers;
• **Demonstrate** the range of appropriate military actions in response to grave violations against children.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

The legal authority to use force to protect civilians is the focus of this presentation. The dilemmas confronting peacekeepers when faced with child soldiers will also be discussed.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The military component is deployed to a mission with a distinct authority to use force, if necessary, to implement its mandate. The military component’s role in providing physical protection is the main reason for armed military personnel in a peacekeeping mission. However, it should also conduct preventive and pre-emptive activities.

As mentioned in the previous lesson, the military peacekeeper’s role is to support the implementation of the mission’s mandates, including the child protection mandate. When you encounter any of the six grave violations, you must immediately think of how to prevent the violation from recurring.

Actions may be in the form of prevention, pre-emption, response or consolidation:

1. **Preventing violations** requires a thorough understanding of the operational environment in order to identify the specific risks and vulnerabilities to children in your area of responsibility. Peacekeepers should work with the mission’s child protection partners to reduce risks, including local communities and authorities, civil affairs and child protection personnel in the mission, to implement an early warning mechanism. Preventive responses aimed at reducing vulnerabilities and mitigating risks to children must involve local communities, child protection actors,
and other substantive Sections and Components in the mission, such as Civil Affairs, Human Rights, and United Nations Police.

2. **Pre-empting violations** requires a thorough understanding of the operational environment in order to identify threats and develop tactical plans to deter or mitigate threats. That involves increased patrols at specific times and in places where violations have historically taken place.

3. **Responding to violations**: When the threat of physical violence to civilians is apparent, more active measures aimed at deterring potential aggressors from conducting hostile acts may be necessary. At this stage, the violent behaviour is already under way and steps must be taken to compel the aggressor to stop. Direct military action should be considered as an option.

4. **Consolidation** refers to action taken after prevention, pre-emption or response in order to sign off on the action, such as reporting and investigating. A thorough understanding of the violations by every peacekeeper and officer is critical to ensure accurate and timely reporting and information-sharing with the Child Protection Adviser in the mission and other child protection actors.

If a mission has a child protection mandate, every incident involving children must be reported to the Security Council. Peacekeepers are required to inform the Child Protection Adviser of any violations they encounter. This will enable the Child Protection Adviser to decide on adequate long-term responses for engaging with armed forces/groups, bringing the issue to the attention of the authorities, or referring individual cases to child protection agencies. Peacekeepers must be familiar with the six grave violations against children in armed conflict that must be reported.

* Review the six (categories of) grave violations against children in module 1.*
**Key Message**: “All necessary means” includes the use of force, including deadly force.

Slide 4 shows an example of the language commonly used in Security Council resolutions for the child protection mandate. This text is taken from Security Council resolution 2514 (2020) defining the protection of civilians mandate of UNMISS in South Sudan.

The text of the resolution clearly states that protection of civilians must be a mission priority and authorizes the mission to use “all necessary means” to protect civilians under “threat of physical violence”. This implies the use of force, including deadly force. It should be emphasized that protection mandates must be carried out without prejudice to the responsibilities of the host country and may include actions against bodies or authorities of the host State if they are the perpetrators of violations. The Security Council understands that the military cannot be present everywhere and at all times, but where deployed, military peacekeepers have an obligation to protect civilians.
Rules of Engagement (1)

- Mission rules of engagement are developed by the Department of Peace Operations (DPO);
- They provide parameters within which peacekeepers may use different levels of force;
- They ensure that the use of force is undertaken in accordance with the purpose of the mandate, and the principles of international humanitarian law;
- Missions with a protection mandate have robust ROEs which authorizes military peacekeepers to use force – including deadly force – to protect civilians, including children, from physical violence.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** A peacekeeping mission with a protection mandate will have robust rules of engagement. Military peacekeepers are authorized and expected to use force, if necessary, to protect civilians.

The rules of engagement of a United Nations peacekeeping mission are developed and approved by the Department of Peace Operations in consultation with troop-contributing countries and revised by the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA).

Once the rules of engagement have been drafted, DPO ensures consistency with the mandate of the United Nations mission, the military situation and the political considerations of the host country and troop-contributing countries.

Since rules of engagement constitute a legal document, their application must be consistent with international humanitarian and human rights law. Rules of engagement lend legitimacy to United Nations military peacekeepers on the ground. It is critical that the rules and procedures for implementation are consistently applied by all military peacekeepers at all levels of military operations.
Rules of engagement authorize military peacekeepers to use force to defend the mission’s mandate, fellow peacekeepers and the freedom of movement of United Nations personnel. It is critical that military personnel understand the peacekeeping principle of impartiality in the context of using force to defend the mission’s mandate and the obligation to act, no matter who the perpetrators are. Application of the use of force will be discussed, utilizing sample rules of engagement in relation to the scenarios, in this lesson.

**SLIDE 6: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT (2)**

**Rules of Engagement (2)**

**Duty to use minimum and proportionate force**

- This does not prevent the immediate use of deadly force if the threat to life is imminent, and there is no alternative to remove that threat;
- The use of force should be commensurate with the level of the threat;
- However, the level of response may have to be higher in order to minimize UN and civilian casualties.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The principles of “necessity” and proportionality” derived from international humanitarian law apply to the use of force by military peacekeepers. However, the level of military response may be higher, and even lethal, in order to minimize United Nations or civilian casualties.

- Under international law, the use of force in self-defence is governed by two principles: necessity and proportionality. The use of force must be necessary for self-protection, and the amount of force used must be proportionate to the threat. United Nations peacekeeping operations also subscribe to the principle of “minimum force necessary” to deter or remove a threat. Proportionality does not mean “in kind”, for example, if someone shoots at you with a bow and arrow, you don’t have to shoot back with the same weapon, but rather you use the quickest
and most effective means at hand to protect yourself from further harm. Likewise, you don’t blow up an entire building to take out one sniper. Reason is the key to matching the force to the threat. Necessity relates to the imminency of danger/harm, which may require the use of force.

These principles do not prevent the immediate use of deadly force if the threat to life is imminent and there is no alternative to remove the threat. The peacekeeper on the ground may not have the time or the opportunity to fire a warning shot, and direct fire is authorized if necessary to protect civilian lives.

The use of force should be commensurate with the level of the threat. For example, using attack helicopters to take out a sniper may not be reasonable. However, sometimes more force than that being applied by an attacker may be necessary to remove a threat. E.g., if you encounter a group of rebels attacking civilians with machetes, you may use firearms to neutralize the threat to civilian lives.

EXAMPLE: A man approaches a sentry post with a round object in his hand. He continues approaching despite warnings to halt and makes a motion as if he is pulling a pin from a grenade. Can the object be clearly identified? Has there been a history of attacks in the area? At what point should the action be considered a hostile intent? These are difficult judgment calls – every peacekeeper should undergo practical scenario-based training in these kinds of situations before arriving in the mission area.

Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations authorizes peacekeeping forces to use force for purposes other than self-defence. Mission rules of engagement (which will be reviewed subsequently) authorize the use of force for purposes other than self-defence in a number of settings, including but not limited to:

1. Ensuring the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel;
2. Ensuring the protection of United Nations personnel, facilities, installations and equipment;
3. Ensuring the protection of civilians, including children, under imminent threat.
Terminology: Under Imminent Threat

**Under imminent threat...**

- The term “imminent” is not bound by time or geographic location;
- A threat of violence against civilians, including children, is imminent from the moment it is identified up to when the mission can determine that the threat no longer exists.

**Key Message:** A threat of violence against civilians, including children, is imminent from the moment that it is identified until the mission can determine that said threat no longer exists.

- “Imminent” does not imply that violence is 100 per cent guaranteed to occur in the immediate future. A threat to civilians may exist if a potential aggressor is believed to have the intent to inflict physical violence.

If the threat exists, then it is imminent, and the mission must take action. Such action is not only required by the military, but also by police and civilian peacekeepers. Sometimes, the Security Council omits the word “imminent” to avoid a narrow interpretation of threat. This is intended to promote a proactive mindset and ensure that peacekeepers take preventive and pre-emptive action against threats to civilians.
SLIDE 8: RULES OF ENGAGEMENT (3)

Rules of Engagement (3)

Hostile intent and imminent threat...

Determining whether there is hostile intent or imminent threat should be based on one or a combination of three factors to be considered by the Commander on the scene:

1. *Capability and preparedness* of the threat;
2. *Evidence of the intention* to attack;
3. *Historical precedent* within the area of operations.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Commander at the scene makes the decision as to whether or not there is an imminent threat or hostile intent.

- Even if the on-scene Commander decides that only one of the factors listed in slide 8 constitutes an imminent threat, peacekeepers are authorized to use force, including deadly force, to protect civilians, including children.
SLIDE 9: AN INTEGRATED RESPONSE

**Key Message:** Always report to/share information with the Child Protection Adviser/Officer without delay.

Once the immediate threat against children is mitigated or addressed, the military unit must inform the mission’s Child Protection Adviser through its chain of command. This is the only way to ensure that violations are monitored and reported to the appropriate bodies and that support is provided to children and their families. Accurate and timely information-sharing, coordination among mission actors, country team entities and external actors is critical to ensure viable, effective measures to protect children.
SLIDE 10: GRAVE VIOLATIONS THAT YOU ARE MOST LIKELY TO ENCOUNTER

**Grave Violations That You Are MOST LIKELY to Encounter**

1. Recruitment or use of children
2. Killing and maiming
3. Rape and other sexual violence
4. Attacks on schools or hospitals

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** These grave violations occur in our mission areas. The military component has an obligation to take action against these violations and to report them to the Child Protection Adviser.

Refer to the handout, Six Grave Violations, in lesson 1.1.

The six grave violations were introduced in Module 1, lesson 1. As a military peacekeeper, you are most likely to encounter the four violations showing on slide 10. In this lesson (3.3), we will discuss the obligation for military peacekeepers to respond to these violations when observed, and the possible actions that can be taken. These violations are real; they occur on a global scale and in many of the conflict areas to which peacekeepers are deployed.

Examples of grave violations:

1. Tens of thousands of boys and girls are recruited and used by armed forces or armed groups in conflict areas in over 20 countries worldwide;

2. About 10,000 people are killed or injured by unexploded ordnances annually, of which, more than 40 per cent are children;
3. Rape and other forms of sexual violence against children are committed on a large scale in conflicts, such as the ones in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan;

4. Attacks on schools or hospitals are prevalent in all conflict areas from Mali to Afghanistan, in Yemen and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

In this lesson, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of the required military response to the most common grave violations that military commanders/peacekeepers may encounter at the tactical level. You will also demonstrate your understanding of critical coordination, communication and information-sharing with other child protection actors, through scenario-based discussions following the plenary presentation.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

☞ Ask learners to give examples of the functions that child soldiers may serve. Recap child soldier functions as necessary (see lesson 1.1).

☞ Tens of thousands of boys and girls are recruited and used by armed forces or armed groups in conflict in over 20 countries around the world. As a military peacekeeper, you are likely to encounter “young soldiers” carrying guns and wearing uniforms. However, it is important for you to know that children – boys and girls – are assigned wide-ranging functions in armed forces or armed groups.

The definition of “child soldier” is broad, given the wide-ranging functions that children serve in an armed force or armed group.

☞ Children may be used by armed groups in a number of different ways, including in direct combat roles, in intelligence operations as spies or scouts, for reconnaissance (especially as children are seldom viewed with suspicion), as decoys or saboteurs, to man checkpoints, or as couriers or messengers. Children may also be used as porters, cooks, cleaners and, in many cases, girls are used as sex slaves or “bush wives.” These children are referred to as “children associated with armed forces or armed groups.”
Sexual violence by armed groups and armed forces against boys is also a documented concern.

“A child associated with armed forces and armed groups” refers to any person below 18 years of age who is or has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to fighters, cooks, porters, spies or for sexual purposes.

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**Key Message:** Children are recruited and used by armed groups for different reasons. One key reason is that they provide a strategic advantage.

- There are many reasons why children are recruited by armed groups. Children are often viewed as being obedient and easily manipulated and considered as posing a lesser threat to commanders. Children are effective at pillaging and looting villages for money, food and supplies. Their size makes them agile and suitable for certain tasks that may be challenging for adults (e.g. working in tight crevasses of mines, etc.).
Children are often brave and willing to take risks without contemplating the consequences. They may be considered cheap and expendable, and they are present in large numbers.

Local commanders may want to increase the size of their fighting force in order to enhance their rank and status, or to increase control over a given territory. The forced recruitment of children into such groups is a quick and easy way to increase a force’s numbers.

SLIDE 14: DEALING WITH CHILD SOLDIERS (1)

If they pose a threat,
• Be prepared to deal with such situations;
• The principles on the use of force in peacekeeping operations and the mission rules of engagement must be thoroughly understood by all.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: If child soldiers pose a threat to you or others, the rules of engagement of the mission must be applied.

Military peacekeepers must be prepared to deal with various situations, such as the use of child soldiers by armed groups. The mission’s rules of engagement must be thoroughly understood by everyone.
**Discussion**

Ask learners about their views on these issues based on the fundamental principles relating to hostile acts, hostile intent or demonstration thereof. Emphasize the critical role and responsibility of commanders at all levels to train their subordinates on these important issues.

- All peacekeepers must know, understood and apply the following principles in all situations:
  1. Use force as a measure of last resort;
  2. Use the minimum amount of force to achieve the objective;
  3. Do not use force except for self-defence and in defence of the mandate.

Responses from learners may vary depending on their national military cultures. However, they must evoke the principles of peacekeeping – namely, determining hostile act/intent, the principle of self-defence, the use of minimum force and only as a measure of last resort, etc. for their responses to be considered acceptable.

- Remind learners of their obligations under international humanitarian law. See:
  - Secretary-General’s Bulletin on observance by United Nations forces of international humanitarian law (ST/SG/1999/13); and
  - Applicability of international humanitarian law to United Nations peacekeeping forces (International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), 1993).

It must emphasized that aggressive or hostile posturing by children or child soldiers may not necessarily constitute a threat; the seemingly aggressive attitude of a child soldier approaching a United Nations vehicle with a weapon may not necessarily be a hostile act or intent. It could be that the child is simply scared and wants the peacekeepers to withdraw. The United Nations operation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) has specific guidelines on this.

- Handout: Guidelines for Dealing with Child Soldiers (MONUSCO)
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Peacekeepers must receive scenario training on how to deal with child soldiers. Such training must reflect the mission environment, the reality on the ground and the rules of engagement of the specific mission.

When you encounter a child soldier, you must remember that he/she is “a child” – someone below the age of 18 years –, who is vulnerable, impressionable, frequently irrational and worthy of protection.

On the other hand, he/she is “a soldier” and therefore the enemy – denying this fact could be detrimental to your safety and ignore/negate/disregard/underestimate the child’s own experience. This may cause a moral dilemma as to how to treat the person.

Peacekeeper must understand that they have to balance the vulnerabilities of the child with operational necessities. Sometimes, there is no time for prolonged considerations. Under extreme circumstances, as that described above, if you fear for your life or if grievous bodily harm is feared, the rules of engagement for peacekeepers will likely authorize the use of lethal force.
Not all situations in which peacekeepers encounter child soldiers are equally unexpected or dangerous. For example, if peacekeepers are able to plan for the likelihood of encountering a child soldier, they will be far better equipped to juggle the moral dilemma of protecting a child and/or defeating an enemy. In such cases, when afforded a comparably longer response time, peacekeepers have the responsibility to fight with restraint (and ideally, to pursue the objective of capturing the child soldier alive).

Various strategies can be employed to limit the number of child soldier casualties in the field and to prevent the hazardous second guessing associated with moral dilemmas, including:

1. Supporting mission components and other child protection actors in awareness-raising, dialogue and engagement, upon request and where appropriate, so as to facilitate the safe release of child soldiers;

2. Focusing on the centre of gravity by targeting adult commanders instead of child soldiers during a firefight;

3. Attempting to create a buffer between the child soldier and his/her adult commander (children who do not have an ideological attachment to their armed group’s cause are more likely to surrender if they have been separated from their commanders);

4. Revisiting the rules of engagement concerning child soldiers and role-playing these situations can help ensure better preparation for interactions with child soldiers.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Always remember that child soldiers are victims of conflict. Do no harm. Report them to the Child Protection Adviser.

All children associated with armed forces and armed groups are victims. They may have experienced torture and other cruel treatment while recruited and the mere fact of recruitment is a crime. Therefore, although child soldiers may be combatants or ex-combatants and perpetrators of horrible acts, you must bear in mind that they are victims of recruitment in the first place.

Always keep in mind the best interest of the child and ensure that your actions do more good than harm. If you see a child among the host country’s armed forces or in an armed group, you should raise it with your Commander. Hopefully, the Commander will be able to act so that the child/children do not disappear before they could be formally released.

You may also discretely take note of the situation and immediately report it to the Child Protection Adviser in the mission, who will decide what action to take. The Child Protection Adviser may ask you to assist in the transfer of the child.
The following slides contain scenarios to be discussed in plenary or in small groups. Build on learners’ experience and training to generate discussion and appropriate responses to the scenarios.

SLIDE 17: SCENARIO 1 – DEALING WITH CHILD SOLDIERS

Dealing with Child Soldiers

SCENARIO 1
While patrolling the area, you encounter four child soldiers from a known faction guarding a checkpoint utilizing an improvised roadblock. They refuse to allow you freedom of movement, and demand that all “living things” must pay a “road tax”. They seem intoxicated.

How would you respond and why?

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Consider options other than the use of force to dismantle the checkpoint and ensure freedom of movement.

SCENARIO 1: Dealing with child soldiers

- The following is an example of actions and considerations to take into account if you encounter a child soldier with a weapon at a checkpoint:

1. Remain calm;
2. Treat the child soldier with respect as he or she is acting under military orders;
3. Try to reason with the child soldier;
4. Turn around and abandon the crossing, and try to locate the child soldier’s local commander to request that the checkpoint be dismantled, and to try to obtain the child’s release;
5. Report the situation to the mission’s Child Protection Adviser;
6. Bear in mind the “best interest of the child”; using force to disarm the child soldier may not be the best option.

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SLIDE 18: SCENARIO 2 – DEALING WITH CHILD SOLDIERS

**Dealing with Child Soldiers**

**SCENARIO 2**

As you are patrolling the area, you notice a child with a weapon moving aggressively toward you.

*How would you respond and why?*

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Does the child pose an imminent threat to you or others? Is there hostile intent?

**SCENARIO 2: Dealing with child soldiers**

Ask learners:

How would you, the peacekeeper, react in this situation? What should you consider?

Allow learners 5-10 minutes to discuss the scenario. In case of international participation, try to elicit responses from learners from different cultures so as to compare and generate discussion.
Highlight and define “hostile intent”, “hostile act” and “imminent threat” and inform learners that the Commander on the ground would make this determination. The child may be afraid and running towards the United Nations for help or protection, or he/she may have hostile intent. This is why realistic scenario training in handling such situations is critical.

The military Peacekeeper’s dilemma is whether or not to use force. If this is determined to be an imminent threat or a hostile act, force may be used in self-defence or to protect civilians. The context of the situation will guide the Commander on the ground in making the determination (e.g., have child soldiers committed hostile acts against the United Nations recently? Have child soldiers voluntarily disarmed recently in this area? etc.). If the decision to use force is taken, only the minimum level of force should be used to mitigate the hostile act or imminent threat.

**SLIDE 19: SCENARIO 3 – DEALING WITH CHILD SOLDIERS**

**Dealing with Child Soldiers**

**SCENARIO 3**
While on patrol, you encounter child soldier who has escaped from his captors. He asks you for help.

*How would you respond and why?*

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Always accommodate a child soldier seeking your assistance and wanting to surrender and disarm.
The following is an example of appropriate responses, which will most likely be included in the mission guidance:

1. Disarm and secure the child;
2. Immediately alert the closest Child Protection Adviser or Child Protection Focal Point;
3. Refer to the SOP or mission guidelines on the handover of children.

**SCENARIO 3: Dealing with child soldiers**

Ask learners if their response would be different if they were on an un-escorted United Nations military observer (UNMO) patrol.

**Answer:** The responses should be the same!

It is important for military peacekeepers to be aware of the ways in which a child might attempt to escape from an armed group, and of the strategies that armed groups might employ to prevent such attrition. Peacekeepers should be particularly observant with respect to girl soldiers who are attempting to demobilize, as it is especially difficult for them to escape from armed groups. This is partly because of the power that the commanders exert over them, and partly because of the perceived invisibility of girls’ roles.

Children who leave armed groups must be helped and protected. The following are the main reasons why children leave armed groups:

1. Formal demobilization processes following a peace agreement;
2. Release during conflict owing to advocacy campaigns or direct negotiations;
3. Escape from the armed group;
4. Capture by an opposing armed force or rival armed group;
5. Abandonment by the armed group (e.g., owing to injury, disability, sickness, pregnancy, infant caregiving, etc.);
6. Cessation of hostilities.
SLIDE 20: SCENARIO 4 – DEALING WITH CHILD SOLDIERS

Dealing with Child Soldiers

SCENARIO 4
As a contingent officer in the mission, you often meet with the host State’s forces in your area of responsibility. On your way to meet with the Commander, you encounter a checkpoint with 10 host-State soldiers. It is apparent that two of the soldiers are children.

How would you handle this situation?

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Remember the “Do no harm” principle. Do not engage or adopt a posture that would place the child soldiers at risk.

SCENARIO 4: Dealing with child soldiers

• Your action will depend on several factors, including your relationship with the local commander. The discussion should generate the following responses:

1. Discretely take note of the details of the situation;

2. Do nothing that could expose the child to danger;

3. Raise the issue with the Commander of the national forces;

4. Remind the Commander that there are policies that prohibit the use of soldiers under 18 years of age. Some armed forces (e.g., South Sudan) have signed Action Plans with the United Nations to release all child soldiers; Commanders can be reminded of their obligations under the Action Plan;

5. Do not try to extract the child, particularly if you are concerned about your working relationship with the Commander of the national forces.
6. Immediately inform the Child Protection Adviser in the mission of the situation, including the location, estimated number of children, name of the unit encountered. It might be difficult for you to assess ages; when in doubt, take note of the potential child soldier and report to the Child Protection Adviser. The Child Protection Adviser is best suited to negotiate the release of a child/children.

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**SLIDE 21: NEGOTIATING THE RELEASE OF CHILD SOLDIERS**

**Negotiating the Release of Child Soldiers**

- If possible, ensure that the negotiation is being conducted by a Child Protection Adviser;
- If a child soldier seeks spontaneous demobilization in the field, he/she must always be accommodated, regardless of whether child protection personnel are present;
- Child Protection Advisers must be informed immediately;
- Children should be handed over to Child Protection Advisers as soon as possible.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The Child Protection Adviser is the lead expert in child protection and is best suited to negotiate the release of child soldiers.

- Unless a child soldier surrenders and seeks demobilization during a patrol or in the heat of battle, civilian child protection personnel should always assume responsibility for conducting negotiated extractions. It is the role of military peacekeepers to secure the conduct of the negotiation.

If a child soldier seeks spontaneous demobilization in the field, they must always be accommodated, regardless of whether Child Protection Advisers are present. However, Child Protection Advisers must always be informed immediately about the demobilization.
Mission or force SOPs will determine what to do with children released to the United Nations military. If girl soldiers are handed over to the military, make sure that they are provided with separate accommodation and, if possible, assign a female officer as their interim care provider until they can be handed over to a Child Protection actor.

SLIDE 22: SCENARIO 5 – KILLING AND MAIMING

Killing and Maiming

**SCENARIO 5**

You are a UNMO Team Leader deployed in a remote area of the mission. Yesterday, one of your patrols discovered a minefield close to a local village in your area of responsibility. You are worried that the local population, in particular children, might enter the minefield by accident and get seriously injured or killed.

What actions would you take to ensure the protection of children in the area concerned?

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Work with child protection experts/actors and sensitize the local population.

- In some missions (e.g., UNIFIL, Lebanon), mines and cluster ammunition are a serious threat to children.

**SCENARIO 5: Killing and maiming**

- The following are examples of appropriate responses, based on common sense and military knowledge:

  1. Mark and secure the minefield; if necessary, request United Nations troops to place guards to ensure that civilians do not expose themselves to this threat;
2. Sensitize the local population; work through local child protection actors to sensitize children to the danger of entering the minefield;

3. Inform the chain of command about the minefield and, if there is a United Nations mine action centre (MAC) in the mission area, report the minefield and enquire about options available to clear the minefield.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The military should never occupy a school or hospital, even for a short period of time.

**SCENARIO 6: Military use of schools or hospitals**

This scenario should generate the following discussion points:

1. Schools and hospitals should be treated as zones of peace, where children are granted protection even in times of conflict. However, there is an increasing trend in armed conflicts whereby schools and hospitals are being attacked with detrimental effects and impact on children;
2. Apart from the direct and physical damage to schools and hospitals, conflict can result in the forced closure or the disrupted functioning of these institutions. Children, teachers, doctors, nurses and patients may be subject to threats by parties to conflict, if they are suspected, for example, of supporting the other party to conflict. Also of great concern is the use of schools for military purposes, such as recruitment grounds and polling stations.

3. The company (unit) commander should politely decline the offer to use the school and explain to the local chief why.

**SLIDE 24: MILITARY USE OF SCHOOLS OR HOSPITALS (contd.)**

- What instructions would you give the Company Commander and why?
- What difference would it make if the Chief had offered a hospital as the base for the MOB?
- What if the host State’s forces that are fighting with the faction are based in the school, and invite the Company to join them in a joint operation?

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Under no circumstances should United Nations troops use schools or hospitals for military purposes.

Note that this scenario does not describe an attack on a school, but rather the use of a school.

The use of schools by United Nations peacekeepers is strictly prohibited. There is a caveat that national armed forces may use schools if there are no other options, but this should be considered a last resort in a dire situation. United Nations peacekeepers should thus advocate for all armed forces to vacate schools and find another base.

The discussion around the three questions in slide 24 should generate the following responses:

1. **What instructions do you give the Company commander and why?**
   United Nations peacekeepers are prohibited from using schools for military purposes, as schools are protected places and zones of peace and comfort.

2. **What difference would it make if they offered a hospital as the base for the MOB?**
   Hospitals are protected installations under international humanitarian law and must not be used for military purposes;

3. **What if the host country’s forces that are fighting with the faction are based in the school and invite the Company to join them in a joint operation?**
   The United Nations company Commander should explain that schools should not be used for military purposes, as the presence of national forces in the school increases the risk of the school being a target and destroyed in the fighting. The Commander should advocate for the forces to immediately vacate the school premises.

4. **The Commander should also inform the Child Protection Adviser in the mission, providing all relevant information:**
   - Name and location of the school;
   - Name of the village;
   - Unit of the host country’s forces that is occupying the school;
   - Estimated number of soldiers;
   - Estimated number and types of weapons they have;
   - Name and rank of the local commander, etc.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The mission context will determine the company Commander’s action. However, the Commander should gather facts and inform the Child Protection Adviser of the mission and United Nations Police to obtain the children’s release and provide them with medical care.

**SCENARIO 7: Monitoring and reporting other incidents**

This scenario is similar in nature to abduction, however, in this case, detention is being carried out by local law enforcement agencies. As previously mentioned, abducting or seizing children against their will and/or that of their adult guardians, either temporarily or permanently and without due cause, is illegal under international law.

The question should generate the following responses:

1. From the perspective of a United Nations mission, this situation would be better handled by the United Nations Police, which will have more information and knowledge about local laws and international law. The United Nations Police will also have a better network and relationship with local law enforcement agencies and are better positioned to influence the behaviour of local police;
2. The United Nations military should monitor, gather facts on, and report the situation through the chain of command and to the mission’s Child Protection Adviser or other child protection actors in the area;

3. This is a real situation drawn from Mali. The children were not released immediately. In fact, it took a very long time for the children to be released. The mission intervened at the highest level and the initial information was critical to triggering the chain of action.

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Detention of child soldiers by United Nations military units should only be done in extreme circumstances to ensure the safety and well-being of the child/children.

- In some situations, and in order to protect the child and other civilians, you may have to detain a child soldier. Detention of child soldiers by United Nations military units should only be done in extreme circumstances to ensure the safety and well-being of the child.
Child soldiers who are being detained should be handed over to a child protection actor immediately.

Most missions have a mandate to support DDR processes. The military role and tasks of formed units and military observers varies from mission to mission.

Units have the primary role of providing a safe and secure environment, while military observers may play a role in information collection and registration of child soldiers.

If you are involved in a mission’s DDR operations, always make sure that child soldiers are separated from adult combatants and handed over to specialized agencies tasked with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers.

**SLIDE 27: TAKING ACTION, REPORTING – OTHER VIOLATIONS**

**Taking Action, Reporting – Other Violations**

- Be aware of other violations relevant to the particular context (e.g., illegal detention, forced displacement, trafficking);
- Ask the Child Protection Adviser for a briefing on the situation of children affected by armed forces in your particular context;
- Make sure that you fully understand the violations that you are expected to report.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** It is critical that military peacekeepers know the specific threats to children in the respective areas of responsibility. Ask the Child Protection Adviser/Officer for a briefing.
In today’s peacekeeping environment, peacekeepers are expected to be alert to other relevant violations in the mission area. For example, the illegal arrest and detention of children, often as a result of the alleged association of children with armed forces or armed groups, has emerged as a serious concern in conflict settings. The children may be considered “enemies” or “deserters.” Forced displacement may also be an issue of concern if related to fear of child recruitment, sexual violence or any other grave violation. In some cases, armed groups or criminal elements have taken advantage of the desperate situation of children and insecure borders to traffic children for sexual exploitation or domestic labour. If you encounter such violations, you should not only report them to the appropriate child protection actor, but also take action, as necessary.

Upon deployment, ask the Child Protection Adviser or military Child Protection Focal Point for a briefing on the situation of children affected by armed conflict in the particular mission area, as situations may differ considerably by country or region.

Make sure you fully understand the violations that you are expected to be alert to.

Additional Considerations for UN Military

- Ensure that schools and other educational institutions are not used or impacted when planning/conducting military operations;
- Ensure that the standard operating procedures (SOPs) for dealing with children in custody are known by all personnel;
- All possible efforts should be made to avoid civilian casualties, in particular child casualties.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The use of schools for military purposes is prohibited. Ensure SOPs are in place for the handling of children in custody.

In addition to the Dos and Don’ts discussed in the previous lesson (3.2), there are three key elements that the military component must bear in mind to support child protection in mission areas.

The United Nations Military must always ensure that educational institutions, such as schools, are not used for the conduct of military operations.

Headquarters at all levels should ensure that the standards of procedure (SOPs) on issues related to children (e.g., handling children in custody, reducing civilian casualties, collateral damage) are developed and disseminated to all military peacekeepers.

Peacekeepers must make every effort to avoid civilian casualties, in particular children.

Pre-deployment and in-mission training of military units and individual soldiers on these topics should be a key requirement.
### SLIDE 29: CONDUCTING MILITARY OPERATIONS – DOS AND DON’TS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Do</strong></th>
<th><strong>Don’t</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assist child soldiers when they surrender or are captured</td>
<td>Send a child/children away or tell them to come back the next day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inform the mission CPA and hand them over to the nearest child</td>
<td>Hand a child/children over to the host-State army without consulting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>protection actor as soon as possible</td>
<td>the Child Protection Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share your knowledge of child protection issues with national</td>
<td>Underestimate your role as a positive role model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>military counterparts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the host-State army not to use schools as bases for their</td>
<td>Use schools or hospitals as bases for military operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Handout: Dos and don’ts for military operations
SLIDE 30: TAKEAWAYS

Takeaways

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

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The takeaways from this lesson are as follows:

- Peacekeepers have a mandate to protect children. The protection of the most vulnerable populations must be a focus when developing plans and orders to implement protection tasks.

Rules of engagement provide peacekeepers with the authority to use force, if necessary, to protect children. Peacekeepers must know what constitutes an imminent threat and a hostile act/intent.

Protection of children is an integral part of the overall mission mandate. This is a whole-of-mission effort and the military component plays a critical part in providing physical protection, minimizing threats and reducing children’s vulnerabilities in hostile environments. In addition to taking action, remember to inform the Child Protection Adviser of threats to/violations against children.

Coordination and information-sharing on child protection issues are a key aspect of your role as a peacekeeper.
The handling of child soldiers is complex and requires training. Remember that a child with a gun is also a victim of conflict.

Always keep in mind the best interest of the child. A sound understanding of your operational environment is essential to ensure that children are not exposed to further violations owing to military responses. If in doubt, always discuss these issues with a Child Protection Adviser or a specialist in your mission area.

**Summary**

**Takeaways from Lesson 3.3:**
- Protection of children is an integral part of the overall mission mandate.
- Rules of engagement provide the authority to use force, if deemed necessary, to protect children.
- The handling of child soldiers is complex and requires training.
- Bear in mind two key considerations:
  - Take action to address child protection threats;
  - Inform child protection actors of violations.
- Hand over child soldiers to child protection actors as soon as possible.

**References**

- OSRSG-CAAC website (http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org)
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Trainers should highlight key paragraphs in the rules of engagement, including principles, rules for use of force beyond self-defence, and key definitions.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
The Lesson

Starting Lesson 3.4

For an interactive start to lesson 3.4, ask learners:

Why is there need for a Child Protection Focal Point in Force Headquarters? Can it be a part-time task? Is training required for this function?

OVERVIEW
Lesson 3.4 will examine the military Child Protection Focal Point System, focusing on the specific role and responsibilities of the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point. It will also address the development and implementation of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
• Explain the functions of the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point within the military component and the mission;
• Identify and discuss the key guidance required for the military component at the tactical level;
• Demonstrate the application of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

ACTIVITIES
• United Nations Mission – generic multidimensional structure (slide 5)
• Directions to Sector Headquarters, Units, and Military Observer Team Sites (slides 12 and 13)
• Mainstreaming child protection (slide 17)
Lesson 3.4 will focus on the specific roles and responsibilities of the Child Protection Focal Points at Force Headquarters, and on the development and implementation of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.
SLIDE 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning Objectives

• **Explain** the functions of the Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point within the military component and the mission;

• **Identify** and **discuss** the key guidance required for the military component at the tactical level

• **Demonstrate** the application of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

- This lesson (3.4) will focus on the roles and responsibilities of the military Child Protection Focal Point at Force Headquarters, including with regard to the interaction with the civilian Child Protection Adviser and other key components in the mission. The lesson will also cover his/her responsibility for providing guidance on child protection at the tactical level.

  In this lesson, we will also discuss the purpose, development and content of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive. We will examine an actual child protection directive and the generic directive that serves as a template.

- The specific learning objectives of this lesson are on slide 2.
SLIDE 3: MILITARY COMPONENT CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT SYSTEM

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The network of military Child Protection Focal Points is essential to the military component’s child protection tasks and for effective coordination with mission and external partners.

This slide was shown in a previous lesson (3.2, slide 8). It will serve to remind learners of the coordination and information-sharing within the military component and with the mission’s Child Protection Section.

It highlights the position of the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point (the subject of this lesson) and shows his/her interaction with other child protection actors at various levels.
**Key Message:** Child protection is very important in United Nations peacekeeping owing to the horrendous consequences of armed conflict on children.

In some missions, the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is also the military Gender Officers. The gender role is not covered in this specialized training package.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for:

- Coordination with the Child Protection Section of the mission;
- Providing advice on and mainstreaming child protection:
  - Advise the Force Commander;
  - Advise and support all staff functions;
- Providing operational guidance to sectors and units;
- Establishing/Strengthening the Child protection Alert System;
- Ensuring and supporting the provision of training on child protection;
- Developing directives and standards of procedure (SOPs) on:
  - Handover of children associated with armed forces/groups;
  - Interactions with children;
  - Child exploitation/labour.

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**Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point – Key Tasks**

- Coordinate with the mission Child Protection Section
- Child protection advice and mainstreaming
  - Commander
  - All staff functions
- Operational guidance to sector and units
- Establish/Strengthen alert system
- Train sector and unit focal points on Child Protection Directives/SOPs
  - Handover of children associated with armed groups
  - Interactions with children
  - Child exploitation/labour
The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point must interact almost daily with the (civilian) Child Protection Section of the mission to exchange information, provide support, maintain situational awareness, and update the Section on relevant military component activities. This is a key relationship that must be nurtured. A key to the successful implementation of the child protection mandate is recognizing that the civilian component operates in a more informal manner than the military component and that the Child Protection Section is the lead for the implementation of the child protection mandate in the mission.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point ensures that child protection is mainstreamed at Force Headquarters; works closely with the Force Commander and other staff functions; and is the expert on tools such as the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive. Mainstreaming means that child protection is always at the forefront of military personnel’s work. When drafting orders or planning an activity, the military officer must always consider their impact on children and their security. Special provisions on child protection and security should always be included.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point provides operational guidance, including drafting documents such as the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive, providing advice during the planning and execution of operations. This involves close liaison with the operations and other staff branches involved in the activities (such as CIMIC) to keep abreast of any planning and to provide timely advice (e.g., prior to completion of the document). Such guidance is also provided to sector headquarters, units and military observer team sites.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point will establish/strengthen the Child Protection Alert System to share information on the six grave violations and other child protection concerns, as well as on threats which could cause displacement, human rights violations, etc. through the military chain of command and to the Child Protection Section. The emphasis of the Alert System is to enable proactive action.

Training is a continuous process in missions, including induction training led by the Integrated Mission Training Centre (IMTC) on arrival, policy-driven in-mission training led by the Child Protection Adviser, as set out in the 2017 Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations. This is “refresher” training to ensure that the relevant child protection SOPs (on handover of children associated with armed groups, interactions with children and child exploitation/labour, etc.) are understood. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point should support that training and try to ensure that it is interesting, relevant and appropriate, and that all peacekeepers complete it. This will involve close liaison with the Child Protection Section and the personnel that deliver the training.
**Key Message:** The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point primarily interacts with the civilian Child Protection Section of the mission. Other sections of the mission (e.g., JMAC, DDR) would also be of interest, but they may be best approached by the corresponding staff functions in Force Headquarters.

- Remind learners of the mission structure, then initiate a discussion by asking learners: Who would the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point interact with at mission headquarters?

- Child protection is a whole-of-mission effort that involves everyone. However, the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point will mainly interact with the Child Protection Section (CPS) of the mission, on an almost daily basis. Peacekeepers may be involved in some of their meetings and possibly in the Protection of Civilians Working Groups at mission headquarters.

While sections such as JMAC and DDR will be of interest to peacekeepers, those sections need to be carefully approached. Force level U2 personnel are the main link between Force Headquarters and JMAC, and know who best to approach. It would be best to ask U2 to introduce you to JMAC, then work out the best way to...
continue the dialogue. Interacting with the United Nations Police would also be key; they would have a Child Protection Focal Point and carry out police patrol duties in the mission area. The police Child Protection Focal Point frequently attends meetings with the Child Protection Section and would have much to share with you.

**SLIDE 6: FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT – WITHIN FORCE HEADQUARTERS (1/2)**

![Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point – Within Force HQ (1/2)](image)

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Everyone at Force Headquarters is involved in child protection activities. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point should be familiar with the activities of all staff functions and work with them to ensure that child protection is effectively mainstreamed.

- Handout: Force Headquarters Structure (in not already handed out)

**Group Activity**
Review the Force Headquarters structure with learners, explain the U-level, and initiate a group activity. Divide learners into groups (pairs, tables, other) and ask them to identify how each function (U1-U9) can contribute to child protection. Allow five minutes for discussion, then ask the groups to populate the boxes in slide 7.
Key Message: Everyone in Force Headquarters is involved in Child Protection activities. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point should be familiar with the activities of all staff functions and work with them to ensure that child protection is effectively mainstreamed.

The slide shows boxes for each U function. Ask each group to provide an example of how U functions can contribute to child protection, and fill in the boxes in the slide.

EXAMPLES

U2: Maintains an assessment of the threats to children in each part of the mission area, identifies trends and seeks to provide early warning to the Force. U2 should know which armed groups are recruiting and using children. Information comes from JMAC, United Nations Police, military patrol and Civil Affairs reports, etc.

U3/U5: U3 conduct operations and may plan operations to be executed over a short period of time (e.g., three days); U5 plans future operations.
There are two main lines of activity:

1. Ensuring that all kinetic operations consider the risk of harm to children (collateral damage) and identify measures to reduce the risk. For example, your unit is going to conduct a deliberate operation against an uncooperative armed group that is based in a village. How can you reduce the risk of harming children (and other civilians) living in the village? Mortaring the village risks injuring not only the armed group but also civilians.

2. Conducting deliberate operations to protect children, such as preventing an armed group from attacking a village.

**U4**: U4 does not actually have any resources but can request resources from Mission Support. One key area is supporting the establishment of holding facilities in battalion bases. If apprehended, children should not be held for more than 48 hours before being handed over to UNICEF, or as agreed with the mission Child Protection Adviser and UNICEF, to the most relevant child protection actor. Moreover, children should be separated from adults in all holding facilities.

**U9**: CIMIC liaises with civilian agencies and may be a valuable source of information about children at risk. It is the focus for quick-impact projects (QIPs) such as building wells, repairing schools, donating books and writing material, etc. Many of these projects either support children directly or have an indirect impact on children. They should be carefully assessed to ensure that they will not having a negative effect on children.

**Medical**: Very sick and/or injured children may be treated at a United Nations military base, as a last resort. Contingency plans need to be made for this eventuality and must be rehearsed. Children temporarily held at a United Nations military base will need preliminary medical examinations, which need to be formalized as a procedure (see SOPs).

Medical outreach refers to instances whereby a medical team (from a unit or level 2 hospital) visits a village or local hospital to provide medical support. Medical teams may also support NGOs carrying out inoculation programmes, which will likely prioritize aid to children (especially infants). Each event has to be planned, the risks to children identified, and action/measures taken to reduce the risk.

**Information operations**: The military component will likely carry out key leader engagement (KLE) activities with senior members of the host country’s military at the national and provincial levels, as well as with leaders of armed group. A component of this engagement will be to persuade them to stop the use of child soldiers. Other information operations, initiatives may include conducting awareness sessions to sensitize villagers to the risks that their children face and what actions they can take to reduce the risks (e.g., escorts to go to school).

**U1**: U1 deals with sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) cases, some of which may involve children.
U7: Child protection training will be conducted as part of induction training and as continuous (refresher) training with the rotation of units. One component of this training will be child protection training.

SLIDE 8: FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT - SECTOR HEADQUARTERS, UNITS AND UNITED NATIONS MILITARY OBSERVER TEAM SITES

- Establish focal point network and ensure information flow so as to maintain situational awareness, including an alert system on the six grave violations
- Ensure that Force HQ child protection directions are understood and implemented
- Support Sector HQ, unit, UNMO team site focal points in operations and training

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for ensuring that the information flow and the Alert System are functioning efficiently.

Show Slide 3 - Military Component Child Protection Focal Point System again. It is important that learners recognize the military chain of command in United Nations missions. Force Headquarters provides directions to sector headquarters, which in turn will direct battalions and team sites in the sector.

That means, the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point will not normally communicate directly with an infantry battalion in a sector. The Focal Point may, however, communicate with force troops (e.g., engineers) who are not under the command of sector headquarters.
Maintaining situational awareness and issuing timely directions are always a challenge for Force Headquarters. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is key to maintaining situational awareness in relation to child protection issues and achieves this through the focal point network (see slide 3) with sector and force troops. Sectors can be linked to the units they command and to the UNMO team sites in their area of responsibility. The main reason for this network is to alert Force and sector headquarters when children are in danger, so that they may take action to pre-empt the threat. This alert system may also trigger an investigation into an action that has already taken place. Each mission has its own procedures for an alert system and communication with the Force, Child Protection, and other parts of the Mission to ensure a coordinated response.

Force Headquarters issue directions through the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive (to be examined subsequently) and formal orders. It is the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point’s responsibility to track the directions, support other headquarters and units in implementing them, and confirm that they have been implemented.

The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point should establish good relations with the civilian Child Protection Adviser in the mission and the designated Child Protection Focal Point at sector headquarters in order to better support the sector, units and UNMO with their operations and training requirements.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The Child Protection Alert System triggers early/timely involvement of the Child Protection Section and other mission actors to pre-empt threats to children.

- Use the slide builds and explain to learners:

  The Child Protection Alert System feeds into the Civilian Protection Alert System. It has an instruction that the mission Child Protection Adviser/Child Protection Section should be notified as a priority, so that the appropriate child protection network can be activated as required.

  Each mission has its own alert system, but all follow the same generic outline through the chain of command.

  In this slide, a temporary operating base (TOB) has information that will trigger pre-emptive action to protect children at risk. The TOB may be able to take action itself and report though the chain of command, or it may only be able to report on the situation so that others can take action and other mission partners can be involved.

  The report goes through the military chain of command to the operations centres (which may contain early-warning cells), where each level analyzes the information, provides direction and reports upwards. As this is a “flash report”, the information should flow almost immediately.

  The sector operations centre is most likely the first level where the military component can interact with other mission components. Sector headquarters is likely to be co-located with the United Nations field office and the sector Commander will most likely co-chair the civilian protection working group with the Head of Field Office. There will be a crisis-action mechanism involving United Nations civilian staff, and the police and military components. The crisis-action mechanism (Crisis Action Team on the slide) will be well documented in SOPs, and rehearsed.

  Sector headquarters shares the information from the “flash report” with the field office. A crisis-action group will analyse the situation and issue directions for joint action across the three civilian protection tiers, prioritizing pre-emptive action. They may also involve agencies outside the mission, such as UNICEF.

  Reports would also be sent to Force Headquarters by the sector, and to mission headquarters by the United Nations field office (through the Joint Operations Centre (JOC)).

  Military Child Protection Focal Points are usually involved at each level and the civilian Child Protection Officer in the United Nations field office would be involved in crisis-action planning.
In the standard operating procedures of MINUSCA, the aim is for a coordinated response to be issued within one hour of the incident.

**Slide 10: Operational to Tactical Level**

**Key Message:** The Force Child Protection Plan is part of a larger picture, so it must be integrated/mainstreamed.

This slide outlines the framework of plans in MONUSCO. Other missions may use different terminology. The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive is mission specific and issued at the strategic level, in accordance with DPKO/DFS/DPA Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017). The peacekeeping force deployed at each mission should have developed mission-specific child protection directions based on the particular Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive, in consultation with the civilian Child Protection Adviser. Usually, the mission framework is articulated in a Mission Stabilization Plan. MONUSCO’s mandate in the Democratic Republic of the Congo also drove the development of an Illegal Armed Group Plan.
It is imperative to implement the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive in close coordination with other mission plans and directives. Operational level plans and orders are translated into tactical level plans and activities. Coordination at the sector and field office levels is essential for the effective implementation of the child protection mandate.

**SLIDE 11: FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT – MUST DOS**

**Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point – Must Dos**

- Maintain a good relationship with civilian Child Protection Advisers
- Engage all Force HQ staff functions so as to influence assessment and planning of operations
- Support subordinate child protection focal points in military components
- Share information with civilian child protection partners

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point’s primary responsibilities:
- Maintain good relations with the Child Protection Section/Advisers, so that military and civilian components work effectively together;
- Engage all Force Headquarters staff functions to inform the assessment and planning of child protection operations (mainstreaming);
- Support the Child Protection Focal Points in the military component of the mission;
- Share Information (upwards, downwards, sideways) with relevant child protection partners.
SLIDE 12: DIRECTIONS TO SECTOR HEADQUARTERS, UNITS AND UNITED NATIONS MILITARY OBSERVER TEAM SITES (1/2)

Directions to Sector HQ, Units and UNMO Team Sites (1/2)

**Group Activity**

- What essential directions should Force HQ issue, and in what format?
- What child protection guidance would sector HQ, units and UNMO team sites expect from Force HQ?

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

This part of the lesson will focus on directions relating to child protection issued by Force Headquarters to sector headquarters, units and UNMO team sites. Divide learners into groups and ask them to discuss the following question:
What essential directions should Force Headquarters issue, and in what format?
Allow five minutes for discussion.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Directions from Force Headquarters must be comprehensive with regard to the responsibilities of the Child Protection Focal Points at each level.

First of all, directions from Force Headquarters must be very clear about the child protection roles and responsibilities for each level. They should spell out what the sectors are required to do.

Secondly, the roles of the reporting and coordination mechanisms must be defined so that everyone understands how the alert system works, to whom reports should be submitted, and from whom to seek advice and support.

Thirdly, procedures to cover all eventualities must be in place: what action should be taken when a child soldier surrenders; what are the procedures for detaining a child; how to secure an incident area for subsequent investigation, etc.

Directions from Force Headquarters should be issued in written format and regularly reviewed. Some directions may be in the form of operational orders (OPORDs) and further broken down into fragmentary orders (FRAGOs). Although force SOPs will contain detailed procedures, the main document is the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.
SLIDE 14: FORCE COMMANDER’S CHILD PROTECTION DIRECTIVE

Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive

- Directions to subordinates on key issues
- Drafted by staff, in conjunction with Child Protection Adviser
- Signed by Force Commander (authority may be delegated, but not responsibility)
- Forwarded to SRSG and other mission components/sections
- Office of Military Affairs, DPO
- DPO Child Protection Team

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: The Force Commander should be actively involved in the preparation of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive so that it reflects his/her views.

This slide contains some preliminary notes on the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive (an actual directive and the generic directive (that serves as a template) will be examined later).

Force Headquarters will issue directives covering key concerns (e.g., sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), civilian protection, child protection, detention, operational pace during unit rotations, etc.). It is important that the directives be comprehensive and cover all the aspects of a subject area so that they may be valid for a long time.

One of the first things you should do upon arrival at the mission is to locate the Force Commander’s directives and make sure that you are up to date on them. There should be a stand-alone Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive, so that peacekeepers have a specific go-to document on what needs to be done with regard to implementing the Child Protection mandate.
The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for drafting the Force Commander’s Directive in close coordination and consultation with the civilian Child Protection Adviser and other functions in the mission, as necessary. Although it is the Focal Point who drafts the Directive, the Force Commander should provide initial directions, review the drafts, and sign the final product. The Force Commander is also responsible for the implementation of the Directive. The key recipients and users of the Directive are staff at Force and sector headquarters, units and UNMO team sites.

Directives are normally copied to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in charge of the mission, the appropriate civilian sections at mission headquarters, and the Office of Military Affairs (OMA) in DPO, where they may be reviewed to ensure that they are compliant with the relevant DPO policies, in consultation with the DPO child protection team.

Key Message: The military child protection directions are informed by strategic and tactical operational guidance, as set out above, and must reflect the situation.
The different sections in a mission issue directions (see top text box) as they are familiar with the realities, concerns and issues on the ground, at the operational level (see bottom text box). The military component's Child Protection Focal Point is at the centre/middle and has to issue guidance to the peacekeepers. His/her role is to balance directions from above and the realities on the ground and produce a practical document in consultation with the civilian Child Protection Adviser, who is the lead for the implementation of the mission's child protection mandate.

The Force Commander's Child Protection Directive cannot provide directions on how to resolve every single situation at the tactical level. Therefore, the military Child Protection Focal Point is a key resource person to provide additional guidance, if necessary.

**Key Message:** Child protection must be mainstreamed into military operations and specific activities aimed at protecting children must be included when planning and conducting military operations.
Practically every military operation has child protection consequences. Mainstreaming child protection is crucial to ensure that the “do no harm” principle is taken into account and the mission’s child protection goals are achieved.

**Learning Activity/Group Discussion**

Discuss a recent/past mission experience and identify child protection mainstreaming activities undertaken:
- What type of operations?
- What type of activities?
- Were they successful?
- Why/Why not?

Ask learners the questions on the slide and initiate a discussion based on their responses.

Emphasize the distinction between outreach activities and child protection mainstreaming activities.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Every mission that has a child protection mandate will have a Force Commander's Child Protection Directive. The context and content of the directive will vary from mission to mission.


Go over the directive with learners; point out the supporting roles of each staff function (see para. 5) and the examples in Annex D, which illustrate child protection responses.

Note that paragraph 4 covers the mission-specific SOPs - plan, act, alert, protect -, which are not covered in this specialized training package.

Suggest that learners read the directive more carefully in their own time. Each directive has to be adapted to the specific child protection needs of the respective mission.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Simply issuing a Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive is not enough; monitoring and evaluating its implementation are critical.

This slide shows how MONUSCO monitored and evaluated the implementation of the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive:

1. **It conducted an online survey after one month to identify the level of understanding of the Directive at the tactical level.**

2. **It conducted a field survey in areas with endemic child protection concerns to check if procedures were being applied correctly and if additional directions or training were required. If additional operational directions were needed, the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point would provide additional guidance and support.**

3. **The surveys led sector headquarters to articulate SMART goals related to child protection concerns so as to generate child protection activities to implement the Directive. The implementation of the activities were then evaluated to determine their effect on the ground.**
Even if the situation is not dire, children are always vulnerable and at risk in conflict situations. The information collected through the surveys was key to improving the guidance on the implementation of the mission’s child protection mandate and the Directive.

**SLIDE 20: GENERIC FORCE COMMANDER’S CHILD PROTECTION DIRECTIVE**

### Generic Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive

- Use the generic directive/template as a guide
- Details will differ from mission to mission
- Preparation: identify all existing directions relating to child protection in the mission
- Coordinate closely with the civilian Child Protection Adviser when drafting the Directive
- Follow-up the Directive to ensure that it has been received and implemented
- Update/re-issue Directive, as necessary

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The generic Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive must be adapted to the specific child protection context of each mission.


This is a generic Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive that serves as a template. It can be found in annex 5a of DPO/DPPA Manual for Child Protection Staff in United Nations Peace Operations (2019):

- Go over the slide, then circulate the generic Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive
- Explain that it serves as a template and must be adapted to the specific mission context, in close consultation with the civilian Child Protection Adviser. See the other annexes in the Manual.
The generic directive is a guide to what might be included in a Force Commander's directive. Every Mission will have its own format for its Force Commander's Child Protection Directive and every Force Commander will have his/her own ideas as to what it should include. The content will also vary depending on the mission's mandate, its child protection challenges, the Child Protection Adviser's advice on mandate implementation in that particular mission context, and how the mission is organized.

When planning the Force Commander's Child Protection Directive, one of the first tasks is to identify all existing directives relating to child protection, including those at Force Headquarters, DPO and the mission. The Force Commander's directive should reflect the mission's child protection directions and relevant DPO policies and guidance.

The drafting lead (usually the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point) should liaise with the other staff functions at Force Headquarters, as well as coordinate with the Child Protection Adviser in the mission and obtain his/her buy-in. It would not be desirable to issue the directive only to have the Child Protection Adviser disagree with parts of it, or to realize that it is not aligned with DPKO/DFS/DPA child protection policy.

Once issued, the Force Commander's directive must be followed up, ideally by a visit to/communication with sector headquarters and tactical level units to confirm that it has been received and understood, and to identify how the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point can assist the other focal points with its implementation. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point should conduct such visits with the Child Protection Adviser or Officer, whenever there is personnel rotation.

Lastly, the Force Commander's directive must be regularly updated and re-issued as the situation changes, as DPO or the SRSG issues fresh directions, or when there is a new Force Commander. Provision should therefore be made for regular joint reviews of the Force Commander's Child Protection Directive, in line with the evaluation review of the directive by the Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point and the civilian Child Protection Adviser in the mission. This may be done on a quarterly basis through an evaluation report on activities carried out to implement the directive. Amendments may be proposed to the directive based on the quarterly evaluation reports and it should be revised annually. Guidance should be sought from the Child Protection Adviser and DPO's child protection team as to whether the annual evaluation of the implementation of the directive should be conducted by United Nations Headquarters.

Regarding the generic directive: while references are normally listed under the title of the document, in cases where the references are substantial, they can be placed in a separate annex. References from Force Headquarters, the mission, DPO and other sources should be clearly indicated.
SLIDE 21: TAKEAWAYS

Summary

Takeaways from Lesson 3.4:

- The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point has a key role to play in mainstreaming child protection in the military component.
- Interaction with the mission Child Protection Adviser is essential.
- Timely information flow is vital to be pre-emptive in protecting children.
- The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive is one way to provide comprehensive direction to the Force – **but it must be adjusted/followed up/evaluated** on a regular basis.
References

- United Nations, Terms of Reference – Military Child Protection Focal Points, 2020
Photo on slide: UNMISS MONBATT patrol in Leer County, January 2016
(UN Photo 658938, Zenebe Teklewold)

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

- Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
Starting Lesson 3.5

For an interactive start to lesson 3.5, ask learners:

How does the child protection action of battalions and UNMO teams differ from those of force and sector headquarters?

Does it mean that additional information and directions are required?

OVERVIEW

Lesson 3.5 covers the role of military Child Protection Focal Points at sector headquarters, military unit and team site levels. The discussion will help to identify how units and team sites are organized on the ground and how they interact with the population, including armed groups.

This is a different role from that of staff based at headquarters and requires additional information and directions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

• Explain the functions of Child Protection Focal Points at sector, unit and team site levels;
• Identify and discuss how best to implement Force Headquarters child protection directions at the tactical level;
• Demonstrate the application of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for child protection at the battalion level.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

This lesson will examine the specific responsibilities of military Child Protection Focal Points at the tactical level.

HANDOUTS (FOR LEARNERS)

1. Child Protection Pocket Card (example)
2. Takeaways (Modules 1-3)
This lesson will focus on the roles and functions of military Child Protection Focal Points at the tactical level (sector, units, team sites), their interaction with the Child Protection Adviser/Officer in the mission, and other child protection actors at the field level.

We will discuss the implementation of child protection directions from Force Headquarters (e.g., contained in the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive) and the importance of developing SOPs for specific child protection action and interaction at the tactical level.

The specific learning objectives for this lesson are on slide 2.
SLIDE 3: MILITARY COMPONENT CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT SYSTEM

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: The network of military Child Protection Focal Points is essential to the military component’s child protection tasks and for effective coordination with mission and external partners.

This slide was presented earlier (lessons 1.2, 3.2 and 3.4). It shows the coordination and flow of child protection information within the military component and with the Child Protection Section in the mission.

It also shows the relationship between sector headquarters, battalions, force troops, units and UNMO team sites.

Mention to learners that force troops (which will be discussed briefly in this lesson) report directly to Force Headquarters.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: Many of the offices in the mission headquarters are replicated in the field office.

This slide was presented earlier (lesson 1.2). This slide has builds.

The mission headquarters is made up of several offices and is most often located in the capital city of the host country, which facilitates mission leadership engagement with the host country’s leadership. The civilian component in the mission has offices in different areas of the host country, most often in regional/provincial capitals. The mission usually establishes a regional or field office, which is smaller than mission headquarters, but which contains branches of several mission offices (depending on the mandate and the situation in the country). The field offices usually have staff for civil affairs, human rights, a JMAC and an operations centre - often called a Field Joint Operations Centre (FJOC) - as well as a Civilian Protection Officer and a Child Protection Officer.
The military sector headquarters is likely to be co-located with a field office and its staff work in liaison with the field office, similar to how Force Headquarters liaises with mission headquarters. For example, the sector Commander may meet daily with the Head of Field Office, G2 staff liaise with JMAC, the sector Child Protection Focal Point liaises with the Child Protection Officer, if there is one, or the Human Rights Officer or the civilian Child Protection Focal Point in the field office. United Nations police will also be co-located with the field office and liaise with its personnel. The Field Joint Operations Centre will contain civilian, military and police representatives.

SLIDE 5: OPERATIONAL TO TACTICAL LEVEL

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Tactical-level child protection plans are informed by the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive. This slide shows where the tactical-level plans fall within the larger framework.

This slide was presented in lesson 3.4. It shows the relationship between the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive and other mission and force plans and directions. The mission mandate and mandated tasks will drive this planning framework. For example, MONUSCO has a stabilization plan, including an illegal armed group (IAG) plan. All plans and orders disseminated from the operational level must be fully coordinated at the tactical level.
The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive is formulated at the operational level in consultation with other strategies and plans, such as the mandate implementation plan and the protection of civilians strategy.

It is imperative to implement the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive in close coordination with other mission plans and directives. Operational level plans and orders are translated into tactical level plans and activities. Coordination at the sector and field office levels is essential for the effective implementation of the child protection mandate.

SLIDE 6: SECTOR CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT – KEY TASKS

- Coordinate with the Field Office child protection staff to advise Sector Commander and staff
- Implement Force HQ directions
- Mainstream child protection in all operations
- Establish and strengthen an alert system and a referral system at sector level
- Provide support for child protection to subordinate units and team sites, including threat-related CP training
- Sensitize all staff on zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and child labour

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** The sector Child Protection Focal Point works with the civilian child protection personnel to mainstream child protection into the sector activities, and to ensure that all child protection cases are referred and child protection concerns are addressed.

One of the sector Child Protection Focal Point’s key tasks is coordinating with the field office child protection staff – so as to provide the most appropriate advice to the sector Commander and staff –, and act as a liaison between sector headquarters and the child protection staff to facilitate two-way communication.
(We will look at how to implement Force Headquarters child protection directions at the sector level later in the lesson.)

As in Force Headquarters, mainstreaming child protection in all military activities is a key task for the sector Child Protection Focal Point. Mainstreaming is intended to ensure that child protection is always at the forefront of our minds, so that any time orders are drafted, or an activity is planned, their impact on children and their security is taken into account.

The sector Child Protection Focal Point must maintain close liaison with the operations and other branches (such as CIMIC) that are involved in activities to keep up to date on any planning that may be in progress and to provide timely advice (not after the document has been signed).

Another important task is establishing and strengthening the Child Protection Alert System at sector level to ensure alerts from battalions and team sites are received so as to trigger appropriate action by sector headquarters and the field office. Other less urgent child protection reports should be referred through the military chain of command to the sector Child Protection Focal Point and civilian child protection personnel so that they are aware of the situation regarding all current and emerging child protection challenges in the sector area of responsibility. All these reports must be reflected in the child protection monitoring and reporting mechanism.

The sector Child Protection Focal Point also supports the Child Protection Focal Points at the battalion and UNMO team sites levels on all child protection matters, including providing child protection training relating to threats. The sector Child Protection Focal Point should be familiar with the child protection challenges in each battalion’s and UNMO team’s area of responsibility.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Battalion child protection personnel also engage at the company and TOB levels.

*If necessary,* remind learners about the difference between Child Protection Focal Points in infantry battalions under sector headquarters and force troop Child Protection Focal Points who report to Force Headquarters.

Force troop units working within a sector’s area or responsibility may also be directed to link into the sector headquarters.

The United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM) (2020) contains additional information on how a battalion functions. Force units (i.e., engineers, aviation, logistics, medical, etc.) have their own United Nations peacekeeping manuals.

The battalion Child Protection Focal Point provides advice to the battalion Commander - and in the case of force troops, the unit Commander - on all child protection concerns/issues that may require force action. The Focal Point should have received child protection training prior to deployment and may communicate with the sector Child Protection Focal Point and, through him/her, with the civilian child protection staff for advice and support.
Normally, there are no civilian Child Protection Officers in a battalion’s area of responsibility as the civilian staff are mostly found in mission headquarters and field offices. However, there may be other (non-Mission) child protection actors in the area of responsibility, including United Nations agencies, such as UNICEF, international NGOs, such as Save the Children, local NGOs and clinics. Peacekeepers should be familiar with all these partners, know their capabilities and limitations, and have their contact numbers.

The battalion headquarters also engages with the local authorities, military and police. Although these interactions are not led by a civilian Child Protection Officer, there may be child protection elements in the dialogue.

The sector Child Protection Focal Point works with other battalion staff to implement sector child protection directions, including those contained in SOPs. The procedures relating to the surrender of child soldiers and temporary detention of children are included in battalion SOPs.

As in Force and sector headquarters, mainstreaming child protection is an essential and continuous task, in order to ensure that each patrol is well prepared to encounter children in different situations and take appropriate actions.

The Child Protection Alert System is especially important at the battalion level because the initial reports of threats to children usually come from battalions, and present the opportunity for pre-emptive action by the battalion, supported by sector headquarters and the field office. The Child Protection Officer should ensure that troops are familiar with and know how to use the Alert System to report threats to children so as to ensure timely and appropriate action. Other reports about children are usually transmitted through a referral system to sector headquarters and to the civilian Child Protection Adviser to support the MRM.

Each battalion has a Child Protection Focal Point at company bases, and companies should have focal points at their deployed TOBs. The battalion Child Protection Officer should ensure that the battalion child protection policies are implemented and support the Child Protection Focal Points.

It is imperative that child protection training for battalions focus on the main threats to children in the battalion’s area of responsibility – for example, are there any illegal vehicle checkpoints manned by child soldiers in the area? How can troops be trained to take appropriate action? Does the country’s military forces use child soldiers or affiliates? What action should be taken by United Nations military? All child protection training should utilize the rules of engagement of the mission.

Lastly, Force Child Protection Officers at sector level work with battalion leadership to ensure that no children are employed on the bases and no troops use children, for example, to clean cars (including outside of the base). There is zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse of children.
Key Message: Military observers play an important role in child protection as they patrol areas that are not covered by battalions and may be the only United Nations personnel coming into contact with certain civilians.

This slide has builds. Explain the role of United Nations military observers (UNMO) as some learners may not be familiar with that function. Some UNMO team sites are located within military bases for force protection, while others may be located in individual houses in the community.

Quick activity

Before showing the text of the bullets, ask learners if they are familiar with the role of military observers (someone may have been an UNMO).

Also ask learners what they think the role of the Child Protection Focal Point at a team site entails.

Each UNMO team site should have a Child Protection Focal Point, who must have sufficient training and knowledge of child protection threats in the area to be effective. The Child Protection Focal Point at sector level should monitoring this.
United Nations military observer teams may operate in different areas from the infantry battalion and therefore have different contacts, and communicate with different local child protection actors. There may be duplication/overlap with the battalion, so the team site Focal Point and the battalion Child Protection Officer must liaise with each other.

Child protection must be taken into account in all patrols, as military observer teams will see children while on patrol and should be on the lookout for indications of the six grave violations and other threats to children. They should also note any positive impacts on children in the patrol area, such as resumption of classes in schools or vaccination programmes.

Child protection advocacy means raising awareness on and promoting children’s rights and best practices for the protection of children. Such advocacy may include disseminating public information products, such as posters, developed by the Child Protection Section of the mission, advising villagers about escorting their children to school, or warning villagers about mines.

The team site Child Protection Focal Point should ensure that the military observers are familiar with the Child Protection Alert System and know what to look out for, how to transmit messages, and what happens when messages are transmitted through the system. The military observers should also be aware of the importance of referring all information about threats and violations against children to the civilian child protection personnel for timely activation of the monitoring and reporting network.

Child protection training is important for military observers also, as they come from different military forces and often from various branches (e.g., army, navy, air force) and units (e.g., logistics, medical, engineering). The team site Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for child protection training and should ensure that the training is relevant to the child protection challenges in the area (e.g., know what action to take if the national armed force is using a local school for accommodation).

Zero tolerance on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) of children and child labour must be enforced on military observer team sites. Team sites are often situated in communities, therefore Child Protection Focal Points must continuously sensitize and remind the teams about SEA and child labour.
SLIDE 9: IMPLEMENTING FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES (1)

Group Discussion

- Does Sector HQ need to produce its own Child Protection Directive?
- Is issuing a Directive sufficient?
- Should the Sector Directive be a cut-and-paste from the Force HQ Directive?
- What are the key contents of a Child Protection Directive?

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Group Discussion

Divide learners into groups and make sure each group has a recent mission-specific Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive.

Allow 5 minutes to discuss the questions on the slide. Note some of the responses on a flip chart/whiteboard before moving on to the next slide (which contains suggested answers).
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**Key Message:** Sector headquarters cannot simply issue the Force Commander's Child Protection Directive and expect it to be implemented. The Directive has to be adapted into procedures and orders at the tactical level to be implemented as action on the ground.

- The directions issued by sector headquarters should not be a simple cut-and-paste of the Force Commander's Directive. They must be specific to the particular sector.

At the tactical level, procedures and orders based on the Directives enable direct communication of the action that is required on the ground. Therefore, the Force Commander's Child Protection Directive must be translated into a SOP or an order (e.g., a FRAGO) in order to be implemented. SOPs indicate what actions to take on the ground and what administrative action (e.g., forms/reports to be submitted) is required.

- Sector Headquarters provide directions to battalions and the UNMO team that carry out operations on the ground; such directions must therefore be relevant to their missions and tasks, and must also be mainstreamed in the sector's overall concept of operations and not be seen as separate activities.
The sector’s directions must also reflect the child protection threats in the sector’s area of responsibility and the sector’s plans for addressing those threats.

No matter the format of the directions, once issued, their implementation must be monitored and the outcomes assessed. Are the orders being implemented? Do they have the desired effect? If not, what should be done?

Lastly, battalions and UNMO teams must be trained on and rehearse the SOPs and orders so that they can effectively implement them on the ground. The Child Protection Focal Points at sector headquarters, battalion and team site levels should contribute to this training.

**SLIDE 11: IMPLEMENTING FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION DIRECTIONS – SECTOR ORDERS**

- Drafted by the sector Child Protection Focal Point and the civilian Child Protection Officer
- Jointly approved by the sector Commander and Chief of Staff
- Collated by the Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point
- Ensure that Child Protection Adviser is briefed on all sector plans

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive and other child protection directions for the military authorize child protection activities at the tactical level. The activities themselves require separate military planning.
The child protection directions issued by Force Headquarters must prompt the sector to assess the child protection needs and challenges in their area of responsibility/operations, and to draft and implement a child protection plan accordingly. The sector Child Protection Focal Point should be responsible for drafting the plan, while the sector Commander or Chief of Staff should review and approve it. The Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for collating and reviewing the sector’s plans and providing direction and support as necessary.

This process is key to enabling child protection activities at the tactical level to ensure compliance with operational guidance and directives and the achievement of the child protection objectives.

**SLIDE 12: DEVELOPING MILITARY ACTIVITIES**

**Key Message:** Protection of host country infrastructure by United Nations military includes protecting schools.

**Small-group Discussion**
Divide learners into groups. Have each group appoint a spokesperson to report in plenary. Allow 10 minutes for the discussion.
**SCENARIO: Attacks on Schools**
You are the sector Child Protection Focal Point. You have received reports of attacks against a school. The sector headquarters (brigade) has the mandate to “protect the host country’s infrastructure”.

Your Chief of Staff has developed three strands of military activity: identify, protect and hand over.

**Instructions**
- Discuss possible tactical-level activities to recommend to your sector Commander to better protect schools against attacks.

Examples of activities:
- Establish a list of schools and their status (e.g. used, disused, vulnerable to attacks/use by armed forces or armed groups) [find];
- Establish an alert system to enable proactive action [protect];
- Support villages in protecting their schools [protect];
- Identify and influence/neutralize the armed forces or armed groups likely to attack schools [find and protect].

Note: The activities should also include protection of teachers.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Key Message: The Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive is only as good as its implementation at the tactical level.

The sector and tactical-level military Child Protection Focal Points are responsible for implementing the Directive in order to link child protection and military activity. The military Child Protection Focal Point must be able to explain child protection concerns to the military personnel and units. The military Child Protection Focal Point is also the interlocutor for the sector Child Protection Focal Point and must ensure that he/she is briefed on any significant child protection issues and developments in the area.

Remember to involve the Child Protection Adviser and Section in planning military activities, in particular when planning robust security operations. If in doubt, reach out to the Child Protection Adviser or other Child Protection Officers with knowledge of the local context.

Finally, try to include back briefs to child protection colleagues into your daily work routine. When there is a military plan to be implemented and when the security situation permits, try to get the Force/sector planning team to back brief the civilian components of the mission. This will facilitate information-sharing and build trust between military and civilian partners.
Key Message: The child protection mandate impacts most military tasks. There is a specific SOP for child protection, and other SOPs also contain procedures that are relevant to child protection.

- The battalion may incorporate child protection procedures into one or several SOPs, for example:
  - On the role of battalion Child Protection Focal Points, so that they and the personnel and troops of the battalion know what the Child Protection Focal Point does;
  - On the six grave violations against children, identifying the violations, action(s) to take, and how and to whom to report on them;
  - On how to report immediate threats to children using the Child Protection Alert System, including the format of the report;
  - On civilian-military cooperation (CIMIC) for organizing events for children, such as medical outreach, and quick-impact projects (QIPs) that impact children;
- On dealing with child soldiers: e.g., what to do if you encounter a child soldier, voluntary surrender of a child soldier, detention of child soldiers (this may be covered in the battalion SOP on detention), handing over a child soldier to civilian child protection actors or a government child protection agency;

- On sexual exploitation and abuse and child labour.

This list is not exhaustive; other SOPs may include child protection-related procedures (e.g., cordon and search SOPs).

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### SLIDE 15: RULES ON DETENTION

**Rules on Detention**

- Last resort measure and for as short a time as possible
- Immediately disarm child/children
- Inform the Child Protection Section
- Separate children from adults (unless same family), and boys from girls
- Respect the child (and his/her rights)
- Provide food, first aid, civilian clothing
- Do not question the child/children (other than basic facts)
- Bear in mind the best interest of the child
- Bear in mind the “Do No Harm” principle

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** If you must detain a child, always keep in mind “the best interest of the child” and the “do no harm” principle.

DPPA/DPO/DSS Standard Operating Procedure: The Handling of Detention in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Special Political Missions (2021) is the key reference on this matter. Peacekeepers should familiarize themselves with it. The mission and Force Headquarters will also have their own directive on detention.
Detention or “temporary holding” of children is a measure of last resort and must be for as short a time as possible.

Note that there is likely to be a delay between the surrender of a child soldier and the battalion’s ability to hand over the child to the Child Protection Adviser. Therefore, battalion and company bases should plan for this eventuality and ensure that procedures are in place and that a designated holding area is available.

Voluntary surrender: When a child soldier surrenders, he/she must be disarmed and searched for munitions and explosives immediately or as soon as it is safe to do so. That is to ensure that the child does not pose a risk to himself/herself or others.

The Child Protection Adviser should be informed in a timely manner, through the operations room and the Alert System, so that action can be taken to arrange for the transfer of the child to a civilian environment.

Children must NOT be detained with adults, unless they are members of the same family, as this may cause them to be harmed. In addition, girls must be separated from boys, and it is advisable to separate young children from teenagers.

Respect the rights of the child; keep the child informed of what is going on and respond to his/her questions; provide food, water, first aid and civilian clothing; indicate washing/sanitation facilities.

Do not question the child beyond the basic facts (name and age); if they do not want to provide this information, do not press them further.

Do not ask questions of a tactical nature. The child will be interviewed at a later stage by Child Protection Officers who are familiar with the appropriate methodology.

Always bear in mind the “best interest of the child” and the Do No Harm principle.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

Group Discussion

Divide learners into groups and ask them to discuss the following:

There is a lot of child protection information for a peacekeeper to remember on the ground. Do you think a Child Protection Pocket Card would be useful? If yes, what information should be on the card?

(Note that a Rules of Engagement Card already exists)

Note the groups’ responses on a flip chart/whiteboard and explain that only a limited amount of information can fit onto a card. Too much information would defeat the purpose of a quick-reference card.

Share the Child Protection Pocket Card (as an example) after the initial discussion.
SLIDE 17: TAKEAWAYS

Takeaways

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

Summary

**Takeaways from Lesson 3.5:**
- Each level (sector, battalion, unit, temporary operations base, UNMO team site) should have its own specific tactical child protection documents.
- Child protection documents must be relevant to the specific area of responsibility and the role of the unit.
- Documents are only the basis for effective child protection; peacekeepers must be trained, rehearse and implement procedures.
- Report all child protection concerns/observations and establish mechanisms to generate situational awareness.
SLIDE 18: REFERENCES

References

SLIDE 19: QUESTIONS

Photo on slide: MONUSCO Patrol, January 2016
(UN Photo 661282, Abel Kavanagh)

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

◽ Allow sufficient time for questions to be asked/answered. Actively encourage questions from learners.
References

Legal Instruments and Principles

- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989 (see also www.unicef.org/crc/index_30160.html);
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 2002;
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, 2000;
- Geneva Conventions of 1949, and their Additional Protocols;
- International Labour Organization (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182);
- Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, 1998;
- Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (the Paris Principles), 2007;

United Nations Sources

- DPKO, Core Pre-Deployment Training Materials, 2017;
- DPKO, Specialized Training Materials on Child Protection for United Nations Police, 2018;
- OSRSG-CAAC, The Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation (Working Paper No. 1), 2009 (updated 2013);


General Assembly, Report of the Secretary-General on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/74/705), February 2020;

DPKO/DFS, United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines, 2008;


OCHA, United Nations Integrated Missions Planning Process (IMPP): Guidelines endorsed by the Secretary-General on 13 June 2006;

UNDDR, Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), 2014 – see chapters 5.20, “Youth and DDR” and 5.30, “Children and DDR”;


Non-United Nations Sources

International Campaign to Ban Landmines – Cluster Munition Coalition, Landmine Monitor 2020, November 2020;


Websites

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, https://watchlist.org/. See also the smartphone application for iPhone and Android by Watchlist;

- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, http://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/;

- International Criminal Court, Lubanga Case (all documents relating to The Prosecutor v. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo), https://www.icc-cpi.int/drc/lubanga;

Handouts

Module 1: Conceptual Framework

Lesson 1.1: Children in Armed Conflict
1. Six Grave Violations against Children
2. Case Study on Gender: Testimonies from a Boy and a Girl

Module 2: Legal Framework

Lesson 2.2: Child Protection Framework
1. Excerpts from Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict
2. Paragraphs on child protection in Security Council resolutions (Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan, Central African Republic) – (also used in Module 3)
3. Child Protection Framework scenarios
4. UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive
5. Convention on the Rights of the Child
6. ICRC, Legal Protection of Children in Armed Conflict (Factsheet 2003)
7. List of references

Module 3: Operational Framework

Lesson 3.1: Interacting with Children
2. When Interacting with Children – Dos and Don’ts

Lesson 3.2: Military Component Child Protection Roles and Tasks
1. DPKO/DFS Terms of Reference – United Nations Military Child Protection Focal Point
2. Monitoring and Reporting – Dos and Don’ts

Lesson 3.3: Military Component Child protection Action and Response
1. Guidelines for Dealing with Child Soldiers (MONUSCO)
2. Military Operations – Dos and Don’ts
Lesson 3.4: Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point
1. Generic Mission Headquarters Structure
2. Force Headquarters Structure
4. DPKO/DFS Terms of Reference – United Nations Military Child Protection Focal Point
5. MONUSCO Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive

Lesson 3.5: Military Child Protection Focal Points in Sectors, Units and Team Sites
1. Child Protection Pocket Card
2. Takeaways (Modules 1–3)

Scenario Exercises

Military Child Protection Focal Points
1. Role of Military Child Protection Focal Points – Military Occupation of Schools
2. Role of Military Child Protection Focal Points – Offensive Operations

Military component
3. UNMISS Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive
5. Exercise: Role of Military Component: Rules of Engagement – Mission Y
6. MONUSCO Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive
10. MINUSCA Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive
11. MINUSCA Directive on the protection of schools and universities against military use
12. Role of Military Component: Rules of Engagement – Missions