Dr. A. R. Kaldas

**Lesson 3.1**

**Interacting with Children**

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**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 children (slides 20–23)

HANDOUTS (FOR LEARNERS)
2. When Interacting with Children – Dos and Don’ts (slides 24-25)
SLIDE 1: MODULE 3, LESSON 1: INTERACTING WITH CHILDREN

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

An appropriate subtitle for this module would be “Culture, Attitude, Behaviour, Code of Conduct, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse”.

Module 3, Lesson 1
INTERACTING WITH 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.

**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.

- Cultural 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.

**Slide 4: United Nations Standards of Conduct**

**UN Standards of Conduct**

- United Nations Peacekeeping Operations: Principles and Guidelines
- The highest standards of efficiency, competency and integrity
- Zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, and child labour
- Accountability of command

**Notes (for Trainer)**

**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.
**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/SGB/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.

**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.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**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).

SLIDE 9: SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE – CONSEQUENCES FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

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

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.

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**SLIDE 11: SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE: PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse: Prevention and Response

- What makes children in conflict areas vulnerable to sexual exploitation and abuse?
- 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.
- What possible impact can sexual exploitation and abuse have on your contingent and the mission?

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**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.
NO SEXUAL ACTIVITY WITH ANYONE UNDER 18!

- Knowledge of the age of the child is not relevant
- It does not matter if the child gives consent
- **Instruct the soldiers under your command accordingly**

**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.

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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helping a child who escaped from an armed group</th>
<th><strong>Child protection</strong> (Peacekeeping force should coordinate with CPA/CPU and use the agreed referral pathways to refer the child to designated child protection actors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Building a school</td>
<td><strong>Outreach</strong> (Good practice to inform CPA/CPU)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Providing security for a Child Protection Adviser investigating a case/allegation of sexual violence against children</td>
<td><strong>Child protection</strong> (Role of peacekeeping force, at the request of CPA/CPU)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Slide 17: Responses and Key Issues

<table>
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<th></th>
<th><strong>Responses – Key Issues</strong></th>
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| 4 | Advising the armed forces of the host State not to use schools for their operations | **Child protection**  
(If this situation is encountered, the peacekeeping force should also alert CPA for follow-up action, or coordinate with CPA/CPU on further action to be taken) |
| 5 | Organizing a soccer tournament for local children | **Outreach**  
(Good practice to inform CPA/CPU) |
| 6 | Reconnaissance to identify threats to children | **Child protection**  
(In coordination with CPA/CPU) |

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**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.
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.
CASE 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.
SLIDE 20: CASE STUDY 1 – WHAT TO DO?

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.
SLIDE 21: CASE STUDY 2 – WHAT TO DO?

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)


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.

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?**

**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?

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<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)

<table>
<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.

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”.*
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.

**Security Council resolution 2502 (2019)**
Democratic Republic of the Congo

*Child protection*

Requests MONUSCO to take fully into account child protection as a *crosscutting issue throughout its mandate* and to assist the Government of the DRC in ensuring that the protection of children’s rights is taken into account, inter alia, in DDR processes and in SSR as well as during interventions leading to the separation of children from armed groups in order to end and prevent violations and abuses against children, and acknowledges the crucial role of United Nations *Child Protection Advisers* deployed as a standalone capacity in MONUSCO in that regard, requests MONUSCO to continue to ensure the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on children and armed conflict (para. 31).

**Security Council resolution 2531 (2020)**
Mali

*Strongly condemning* all violations and abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law, ... as well as killing, maiming, recruitment and use of children, attacks against schools, humanitarian actors and services, and medical personnel and infrastructure...; (preambulary paragraph)

To provide specific protection and assistance for women and children affected by armed conflict, including through Protection Advisors, *Child Protection Advisors*, Women Protection Advisors and *civilian and uniformed Gender Advisors and focal points*, as well as consultations with women’s organizations, and address the needs of victims and survivors of sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict; (para. 28(c)(iii))
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.

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**SLIDE 5: SUPPORTING MANDATE IMPLEMENTATION THROUGH ACTION**

*Supporting Mandate Implementation through Action*

- **Action:** Provide physical protection for children
- **Action:** Protect civilians
- **Action:** Support DDR
- **Action:** Support separation of children from armed forces/groups with the CPA

- **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.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**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.

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

   - Guiding documents:

1. **Reinforcement Training Package**

- 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**

**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.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**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.

SLIDE 9 FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT - KEY TASKS

Force HQ Child Protection
Focal Point – Key Tasks

• Coordinate with 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
  – Sexual exploitation/abuse, child labour
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.
SLIDE 12: PROTECTION TOOLS/RESOURCES

Protection Tools/Resources

- Joint Protection Teams
- Must/Should/Could Matrix
- Community Liaison Assistants
- Community Alert Networks

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

Situational Awareness – Understanding the Operational Environment

1. What are the threats to children in my area of responsibility? (who, what, why, when, where)
2. What are the Government and the community doing about it?
3. What are other parts of the mission, UN agencies, other international organizations and NGOs doing about it and how can we work together?

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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**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.
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.
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.
Monitoring and Reporting Mandate

If any of the six grave violations against children has taken place, report the following:

- **Who** (alleged perpetrator/s)
- **Where**
- **What**
- **When**
- **Information about the child(ren)**
  - Age
  - Sex (how many boys/girls)
  - Nationality/other relevant information

**NOTE:** Even if you do not know all the relevant information, DO NOT interrogate children.

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 – DOS 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>

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**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**Key Message:** The military Child Protection Focal Point is responsible for promulgating these Dos 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

### 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.
**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”)
- OSRSG-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.
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,
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.
NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

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.
**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.

**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.
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.
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.
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 ordinances 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.

SLIDE 11: RECRUITMENT AND USE (1)

Recruitment and Use (1)

Review: *Child soldiers* may be used in various functions.
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.

Key Message: Children are recruited 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

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.

**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 a 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.
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**

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**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.

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**SLIDE 22: SCENARIO 5 – 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?*

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**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.

SLIDE 23: SCENARIO 6 – MILITARY USE OF SCHOOLS OR HOSPITALS

Military Use of Schools or Hospitals

SCENARIO 6
You have been informed that an armed faction, which is opposed to the peace process and hostile to the United Nations, has carried out attacks in a remote part of your area of responsibility near the border. You decide to deploy a mobile operating base (MOB) in the area. When the Company arrives in the village, the Chief points out a prime location in a primary school and offers the premises as the MOB/TOB.

(contd. on next slide)

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.)

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 vary 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

- 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.

SLIDE 28: ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR UNITED NATIONS MILITARY

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.
### Conducting Military Operations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Do</th>
<th>Don’t</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 protection actor as soon as possible</td>
<td>Hand a child/children over to the host-State army without consulting the Child Protection Section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share your knowledge of child protection issues with national military counterparts</td>
<td>Underestimate your role as a positive role model</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the host-State army not to use schools as bases for their operations</td>
<td>Use schools or hospitals as bases for military operations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Handout: Dos and don’ts for military operations
SLIDE 30: 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)
SLIDE 32: REVIEW THE RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

Review the Rules of Engagement

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.
Lesson 3.4

Force Headquarters Child Protection Focal Point

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.
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.
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.
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.

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

Force HQ Child Protection Focal Point – Sector HQ, Units, UNMO 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.

**SLIDE 9: CHILD PROTECTION ALERT SYSTEM**
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 through 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 analyze 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.

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**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.
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.
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.

**SLIDE 16: MAINSTREAMING CHILD PROTECTION INTO MILITARY OPERATIONS**

Mainstreaming Child Protection into Military Operations

- Integrate a child protection focus into military ops:
  - For example:
    - Assign task to a specific Brigade to:
      - Enable, strike, withdraw in order to neutralize ZZZ Armed Group
    - Support child protection actions by:
      - Designating NO FIRE areas/zones
      - Isolating locations for child soldiers

  Support activities cannot be carried out in isolation; they must be part of integrated mission planning

**NOTES (FOR TRAINER)**

**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.

SLIDE 17: MAINSTREAMING CHILD PROTECTION – LEARNING ACTIVITY/GROUP DISCUSSION

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?

Learning Activity/Group Discussion
Divide learners into small groups (at a table or around a flip chart/whiteboard).

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.

☐ Handout: MONUSCO Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive

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

Takeaways

- The Force HQ 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.

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.
Lesson 3.5

Military Child Protection Focal Points in Sectors, Units and Team Sites

The Lesson

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.
This lesson will examine the specific responsibilities of military Child Protection Focal Points at the tactical level.
SLIDE 2: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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 HQ child protection directions at the tactical level;
- **Demonstrate** the application of standard operating procedure (SOPs) for child protection at the battalion level.

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

- 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.**
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.
**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.

**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.
SLIDE 7: BATTALION/UNIT CHILD PROTECTION FOCAL POINT – KEY TASKS

Battalion/Unit Child Protection Focal Point – Key Tasks

- Advise Commander on child protection-related issues
- Maintain links with local child protection actors
- Implement sector directions on child protection
- Mainstream child protection in all operations
- Establish and strengthen an alert system and a referral system at battalion/unit level
- Provide support to Child Protection Focal Points at Company locations and TOBs, 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:** 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.
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.

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**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

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**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

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

**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.
SLIDE 13: IMPLEMENTING FORCE HEADQUARTERS CHILD PROTECTION POLICIES (3)

Implementing Force HQ Child Protection Policies (3)

- Refer to the Force Commander’s Child Protection Directive to ensure child protection is mainstreamed into all military functions and activities.
- As a Child Protection Focal Point, you are responsible for linking child protection to military activities = a mandated task.
- Conduct joint planning with civilian child protection colleagues.
- If in doubt, ask the Child Protection Adviser.
- Ensure back-briefs; share information.

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.
Battalion Child Protection – Standard Operating Procedures

- Role of the battalion Child Protection Focal Point
- Monitoring and reporting on the six grave violations
- Using the Alert System and appropriate report format
- Guidelines on interactions with children
  - Civilian-Military Cooperation Unit
  - Child Protection Unit
- Procedure relating to surrender of child soldiers
- Procedure relating to detention of children
- Procedure relating to handover of child soldiers
- Sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and child labour

NOTES (FOR TRAINER)

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).

**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

**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.
Group Discussion

There is a lot of child protection information for a peacekeeper to remember on the ground.

- Do peacekeepers need a Child Protection Pocket Card as a quick reference? (a ROE Card already exists)
- What information should the Pocket Card contain?

(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](http://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