Peace operations and child protection: turning early warning into early detection

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Introduction

The June 2020 UN Secretary-General's report on the plight of children in armed conflicts ([Rapport du Secrétaire général sur le sort des enfants en temps de conflits armés](#)) confirms that the UN has verified more than 25,000 severe violations against children worldwide. Among these cases, 7,747 children, «some of which were no more than 6-years old» were recruited and used mostly (90%) by armed groups.

The practice of recruiting and using children in armed conflicts, which has been widely documented for years, has prompted - particularly since the 2000s - the adoption of international standards to protect children and eradicate their involvement in armed conflict. Wide awareness campaigns launched by the UN, such as *Zero under 18* in 2010, *Children Not Soldiers* in 2014, or *Act to Protect* in 2019, have supported these normative developments. Nevertheless, the issue is still topical: the humanitarian organisation active in child protection, World Vision, estimates that 300,000 children are currently recruited in armed conflicts throughout the world, and the trend does not seem to abate.

Some armed groups, such as Boko Haram, active in north-eastern Nigeria and the border regions of the Lake Chad basin, are even reportedly seeking to intensify the recruitment of children.[1] Cameroon and Burkina Faso, two countries that have so far been absent from the Secretary-General's annual reports, will be included in the 2021 report. The phenomenon of recruiting and using of children in armed conflicts involves a complex dynamic, which remains insufficiently explored in its many dimensions. Indeed, comprehensive knowledge and a deeper understanding of the issue of child recruitment in armed conflicts can also have an impact on the prevention of other abuses against children as they can be interconnected.

Peace Operations (POs), which have the protection of civilians as their core mandate, are strongly committed to the fight against the recruitment and use of children. Nevertheless, the illegal use of children is still a reality in the three French-speaking countries hosting the largest peace missions in terms of number of personnel.

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1. "Experts : Boko Haram Recruiting Children as Soldiers, Suicide Bombers", *Voice of Africa*, 4 September 2020.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the Central African Republic (CAR), the recruitment and use concerned 601 and 208 of children respectively. In Mali, the UN has verified the recruitment of 215 children, 24 of whom were recruited by the Malian armed forces, for the first time since 2014.[2]

Several concrete steps have been taken over the last ten years in order to equip missions with training and monitoring mechanisms, to provide those missions with personnel specifically dedicated to child protection and to promote awareness among troop-contributing countries.

However, efforts to reduce and fight the recruitment and use of children as combatants have been mainly reactive, focusing on the demobilisation and reintegration of child soldiers.[3] While demobilizing recruited children and supporting their reintegration remains essential, there is also an urgent need to strengthen preventive actions that involve acting before children are recruited.

At Canada's initiative in November 2017, 54 UN Member States endorsed 17 commitments[4] (known as the Vancouver Principles) for effective and efficient prevention, within the framework of POs, against the recruitment and use of children in conflict. In particular, the third Vancouver Principle (or third chapter) aims to link the concept of early warning to the protection of children in armed conflict. It also stresses the importance of having an early warning system: "The ability to identify and act on early warning indicators of the recruitment and use of child soldiers can enable important preventive measures".

The purpose of this note is to report - based on examples drawn in particular from interviews[5] with personnel in charge of this issue within the three peace operations deployed in French-Speaking Africa (MINUSMA, MINUSCA, MONUSCO) [6] - on how these early warning mechanisms are being developed.

First, we will briefly review the major institutional milestones that have marked international awareness of this issue, and we will insist on the reasons for the strong commitment of the POs - military and police forces have the particularity of being the "eyes and ears" of prevention and warning systems in the field -, while pointing out the current limits of the prevention tools available for those missions.

2..Report of the Secretary-General on the plight of children in armed conflict A/74/845-S/2020/525, Security Council, June 2020.

3. Shelly Whitman and Catherine Baillie Abidi "Preventing recruitment to improve protection of children", The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Allons-y, Vol. 4, March 2020.

4. The 17 Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers are a set of political commitments to prevent and address the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups during United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations.

5. The observations presented in this note are the result of interviews with staff of the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPKO), as well as with staff of the child protection sections of the three operations cited, and with institutional representatives of Canada and the R. Dallaire Institute.

6. These are the Multidimensional Integrated Mission for the Stabilization of Mali (MINUSMA), the Multidimensional Integrated Mission for the Stabilization of the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO).

We will then analyse Vancouver Principle 3 on early warning and the necessity of greater understanding to better address the reasons for enlistment as well as the need to identify the signals that precede recruitment, before looking at the evolution of warning systems in the operations mentioned above and drawing some recommendations for the future.

POs and the fight against the recruitment and use of child soldiers: development and the limits of prevention

The legal framework for the protection of children is very broad. Therefore, we will highlight a few essential steps in this framework, which is linked in particular to the notion of children in conflict.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC - **Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant**), which came into force in 1990, defines a child as a person under the age of eighteen. It was not until the early 2000s that the issue of the use of child soldiers, whose presence in conflicts has long been confirmed, was addressed at the international level. This is the commitment made by the States Parties to the **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child**[7] on the involvement of children in armed conflicts. This Protocol, adopted in 2002, took a step forward by setting 18 years as the minimum age for recruitment into armed forces, use in armed conflict and enrolment in armed groups.

Other important international milestones were then set. This is the case of the Paris Commitments and Principles[8] (2007) to protect children from use or recruitment by armed groups or military forces. Ten years later, the Vancouver Principles, initiated by Canada, placed the fight against these practices at the heart of peace operations. The 17 Vancouver Principles, endorsed by nearly 100 states to this day (2020) also provide a framework of commitment for the prevention of violence against children and their protection at every stage of the conflict cycle.

At the same time, growing awareness of the issue of child protection in conflict and the inclusion of this concern in the security agenda has resulted in a series of thematic resolutions[9], with operational measures for POs.

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7. The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict was adopted by General Assembly Resolution A/RES/54/263 on 25 May 2000.

8. According to the Paris Principles, a "child associated with an armed force or armed group" is any person under the age of 18 years who is or has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group, regardless of the function performed by that force or group. This includes, but is not limited to, children, girls or boys, used as combatants, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual.

9. Resolution 1261 adopted by the UN Security Council in 1999 was the first resolution on children and armed conflict (CAAC).

Protecting civilians and the most vulnerable in times of conflict is indeed one of the priority missions entrusted to peace operations by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Since 2001,[10] specific provisions on child protection have been incorporated into the mandates of PSOs. The policy on child protection[11] in POs defines the roles and responsibilities of the different actors in the protection of children affected by conflict and specifies the obligations of all personnel (civilian, military and police) to defend and respect children's rights.

Although child protection is a shared responsibility, peace operations are distinct from other UN actors and non-governmental organizations working in child protection. In particular, UN military and police forces, who are in daily contact with children during their movements and patrols, are frontline actors. And for many children living in armed conflict,[12] military and police personnel are often the first external contact. Uniformed personnel are particularly well placed to "contribute to monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children by providing early warning of alleged violations to the mission's child protection staff or other trained Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM)[13] monitors."[14] Charged with "collecting and reporting objective, accurate and reliable information in a timely manner," the mechanism, established in 2005, has become a key monitoring tool in child protection. The MRM reports only on violations committed and enables military and civilian components to better tailor interventions and protect children from all abuses in conflict.

Furthermore, POs have a political role, which differs from that of UNICEF or other non-governmental organisations involved in child protection. Child Protection Advisers (CPAs)[15] are specialists assigned to missions since 2001 and play a key role in establishing dialogue with those responsible for the most serious violations of children's rights.[16] They have access to the different armed groups and parties to the conflict. This dialogue has led to the signing of action plans by military and armed groups and the release of thousands of child soldiers. The political role of POs goes far beyond the sphere of child protection and benefits the entire UN Country Team, particularly in the context of political dialogue, peace negotiations and humanitarian access.

Nevertheless, despite changes in the normative framework and the efforts mobilised in terms of prevention, notably through training and different tools put in place in peace operations, recruitment and use of children persist in many regions[17] and in the majority of current conflicts.

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10. Resolution S/RES/1379 (2001).

11. Policy on Child Protection in the United Nations Peace Operations, Département des Opérations de paix, June 2017.

12. Shelly Whitman, Catherine Baillie Abidi, *op. cit.*

13. Resolution S /RES/1612 (2005).

14. V. Falco, A. Vargo "Vancouver Principle 6 and the UN monitoring and reporting mechanism: the MRM as a 'whole-of-mission' responsibility in UN peacekeeping operations", UN DPO, Allons-y, Vol. 4, March 2020.

15. Resolution S/RES/1379 (2001).

16. See Policy 2017, *op. cit.*

17. 18 States are reported to be concerned according to the Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict A/74/845-S/2020/525, *op. cit.*

In Mali, CAR and DRC, three countries where the largest peace operations are deployed in terms of numbers of personnel (in a French-speaking environment), the UN continues to record cases of children who have been recruited. Including in the armed forces in Mali and DRC as illustrated in the table below:

The evolution of recruited/used children in Mali, in CAR and in RDC [18].

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	TOTAL
Mali	127 (27 confirmed cases)	442 (78 confirmed cases)	159	114	215	1 057
Non-state armed groups	127	442	159	114	191	
Government armed forces	0	0	0	0	24	
Central African Republic	40	74	299	75	208	696
Non-state armed groups	40	74	299	75	206	
Government armed forces	0	0	0	0	2	
Democratic Republic of the Congo	488	492	1049	631	3107	5767
Non-state armed groups	478	492	1043	622	3106	
Government armed forces	10	0	6	9	1	

The United Nations tirelessly and regularly reiterates the need to promote and embed a culture of prevention within the organization.[19] Despite its commitment to prevent conflicts and anticipate serious human rights violations, the UN nevertheless struggles to find effective strategies to address this issue.

Several studies, including those of the Romeo Dallaire Initiative for Child Soldiers[20] (the Dallaire Initiative), have noted that over the past two decades, attention has focused more on reaction and Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programmes than on prevention.[21] While DDR programmes facilitate the reintegration of child victims of recruitment and abuse once they are released, they do not anticipate and prevent their recruitment and use.

According to the Security Council Report of 2017, the naming and shaming approach of the UN Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, which focuses on identifying global violations and naming perpetrators, has been less successful with armed groups than with other parties to conflict.[22]

So how can the use and recruitment of children by armed groups or regular forces be prevented and anticipated?

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18. Table based on UN reports: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.

19. See in particular resolutions S/RES/2143 (2014); S/RES/2151 (2014); S/RES/2171 (2014). See also HIPPO Report A/70/95- S/2015/446, p. 11.

20. The Dallaire Initiative (Dalhousie University, Halifax), established by Lieutenant-General Roméo Dallaire, is a Canadian programme that aims to bring a security sector perspective to the issue of child soldiers, while equipping them with the training and tools to prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers around the world.

21. "Understanding the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers as an Early Warning Indicator", The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Working Paper, 2015.

22. Children and Armed Conflict: Sustaining the Agenda, Research Report, Security Council Report, 2017 No. 4, 27 October 2017.

This question refers to the understanding of the phenomenon of recruitment in its entirety and to the detection of factors that precede recruitment. Addressing these factors appears to be an essential step towards improving child protection, as it allows the design and implementation of prevention tools. The UNSC Resolution on Children and Armed Conflict of 2018 states, inter alia, that the Council "*Declares its determination to review and use the tools of the United Nations system to ensure that early warning systems for potential conflicts lead to the early adoption by or in coordination with the most appropriate United Nations agency or regional actor of concrete preventive measures, including for the protection of children and the establishment of sustainable peace, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations*".[23]

The importance of early warning for prevention: Chapter 3 of the Vancouver Principles

The Vancouver Principles were a timely addition to international and UN frameworks by emphasizing the need to prioritize and operationalize the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers in areas where peace operations are deployed. Chapter 3 makes direct reference to early warning. Early warning is defined as a preventive tool, based on the systematic collection and analysis of information, with the aim of identifying threats and anticipating the process of escalation in the intensity of conflict, and developing strategic responses and actions to the actors involved.[24]

Through this principle, signatory countries commit to "support UN efforts to monitor, report, detect and address early warning indicators of the recruitment and use of child soldiers, recognizing that such acts may amount to war crimes and may be precursors to other war crimes, including attacks against civilians and civilian objects, crimes against humanity and genocide".[25]

The Vancouver Principles distinguish between the principle of early warning and the principle of prevention, which focuses on preventive action, and the principle of «monitoring and reporting», which focuses on reporting violations and abuses committed against children. Nevertheless, says Vancouver, the three principles are intrinsically linked.

The purpose of the Vancouver Principles is to provide a set of concrete recommendations[26] to Member States for the full implementation of an early warning system in peace operations.

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23. Resolution S/RES/2427 (2018).

24. Thesaurus and glossary of early warning and conflict prevention terms (abridged version), Alex P. Schmid, FEWER (Forum on Early Warning and Early Response), Erasmus University, May 1998. Cited in Amandine Gnanguênon, "Afrique de l'Ouest: faire de la prévention des conflits la règle et non l'exception", Observatoire Boutros-Ghali du maintien de la paix, 24 September 2018.

25. Implementation Guidance for the Vancouver Principles: Chapter 3 - Early Warning.

26. Implementation Guidance for the Vancouver Principles, *op. cit.*

These are:

- Develop a list of risk factors for the recruitment and use of child soldiers, in consultation with child protection specialists;

- Systematically collect information associated with early warning indicators of child soldier recruitment and use;

- Report early warning indicators of child soldier recruitment and use to the appropriate authorities in the mission in a timely manner.

The first recommendation, which consists of making a list of risk factors, also concerns all actors involved in child protection, whether international (UNICEF, etc.) or non-governmental organisations[27], Member States or the research community. Canada, through the Dallaire Initiative, is particularly involved in the development of an early warning mechanism and the definition of indicators focusing on the recruitment and use of child soldiers, particularly through the Knowledge for Prevention (K4P)[28] project. The last two recommendations are concrete measures that states are encouraged to undertake in order to equip their military personnel with these capabilities.

However, a formal, fast early warning system related to children issues does not yet exist. In the context of conflict prevention, early warning systems that have been developed include a multitude of indicators[29] that are interlinked to assess the likelihood of a crisis.

These indicators are essential in order to measure the evolution and changes in a situation. However, according to researchers Laura Cleave and William Watkins[30], none of these mechanisms focus specifically on the recruitment and use of children, even though this is a cross-cutting issue since the phenomenon persists in the majority of crises. The 2017 DPKO policy on child protection also emphasises the need for child-specific indicators: "*It is also crucial to incorporate child protection into the broader framework of mission protection activities, such as early warning systems, local warning networks, etc*."[31]

Several obstacles and difficulties can be mentioned with regard to the development of a warning system. On the subject of data collection[32], which is an integral part of the early warning mechanism, Catherine Baillie Abidi, Director of Research at the Dallaire Institute, believes that "reliable and 'real-time' information on recruitment is still lacking".[33] Dr Siobhan O'Neil confirms that "data accessibility and aggregation is problematic in many countries"

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27. Among these: Invisible Children, Child Soldiers International, Whatchlist, World Vision etc.

28. Launched in 2019, the K4P project is committed to the development of an early warning system dedicated to children; the incorporation of specific indicators into early warning systems for conflict prevention; It also aims to use the knowledge acquired to enrich prevention and child protection programmes in conflict situations.

29. Amandine Gnanguênon, *op. cit.*.

30. Laura Cleave and William Watkins, *op. cit.*

31. See Policy 2017, *op. cit.*

32. Allard Duursma and John Karlsrud, "Predictive Peacekeeping: Strengthening Predictive Analysis in UN Peace Operations", Stability: International Journal of Security & Development, 2019.

33. Knowledge for Prevention (K4P), online symposium, 28 September-2 October 2020, organised by the Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security.

despite the existence of the MRM, "one of the most advanced mechanisms [for preventing violations against children]" [34] . Another major challenge is the identification of risk factors, which require a holistic approach to the complex dynamics of child recruitment and use. Moreover, as Chapter 3 points out, "Not all risk factors are the same: some are structural in nature, while others are linked to more dynamic circumstances or events."

Studies have mostly focused on the determinants of recruitment, from the perspective of recruiters, whether from the recruiters, children and context, the humanitarian and societal consequences, and DDR. However, several researchers have pointed out the need to highlight the link between the recruitment and use of children and the dynamics of conflict. This recognition is crucial because "the inability to see the causal link leads to misdirected policies, resources and efforts to prevent and combat the use of child soldiers".[35]

Acknowledging the security issues surrounding the recruitment and use of children is equally crucial in order to further convince uniformed personnel in POs of the importance of combating this phenomenon.

Researchers Haen and Böhmelt[36] have thus demonstrated that the practice of child recruitment by rebel forces, in addition to the impact on the combat capabilities of these groups, significantly affects the duration of conflicts. Other researchers have investigated the vicious circle of instability that risks perpetuating itself by creating generations of violent adults.[37] For its part, the UNSC, in its Résolution 2427 (2018), "*recognises that serious human rights abuses and violations of human rights or violations of international humanitarian law, including against children, may be an early indication of conflict or the escalation of conflict, as well as a consequence of such conflict*".

Another aspect that makes the development of an early warning system complex lies in the limits of predictive capability. This is reflected in the design of scenarios of the likelihood[38] of recruitment or use of children according to different risk factors.

Finally, to be effective, an early warning system must consider responses, i.e. interventions for each type of indicator to mitigate threats to children. In other words, early warning cannot be separated from early action. Troops need to be trained to respond quickly to early warning. Otherwise, the system risks being counterproductive. Many studies have documented the difficulty[39] of translating early warning into early response for a variety of reasons, including bureaucratic, political, or lack of human and financial resources. The K4P project argues for the need to address the 'responsibility to respond', citing the example of Somalia or CAR where cases of recruitment and recruiters are documented without any action being

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34. *Ibidem*.

35. "Understanding the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers as an Early Warning Indicator", The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, *op. cit.*

36. Raas Haen and Tobias Böhmelt "Could Rebel Child Soldiers Prolong Civil Wars", 11 January 2017.

37. Vera Achvarina and Simon F. Reich, No Place to Hide: Refugees, Displaced Persons, and the Recruitment of Child Soldiers, International Security, 2006, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 127-164.

38. K4P online symposium, 28 September-2 October 2020.

39. A. Duursma and J. Karlsrud Allard Duursma, *op. cit.*

considered. According to Lt Col Ingabire[40], Gender Advisor in the DOP Office of Military Affairs, speaking at the K4P symposium, the effectiveness of the response is a corollary of the military components' awareness of the value of an early warning system and the quality of exchanges between the military component and the local community.

The role of communities in warning systems

If the importance of including local communities in early warning systems is not mentioned in Chapter 3 of Vancouver, it remains paramount. Information and data collected directly from communities - without necessarily going through trained people - is essential.

POs are particularly well placed to collect this information because they have the capacity to access communities in conflict-affected areas where workers from international organisations may not always be able to intervene.[41] In 2015, experts in the HIPPO report stated that "the best information often comes from the communities themselves".[42]

Authors Duursma and Karlsrud explain why locally collected information is a good source for early warning: "Local communities often know best what is happening in their respective regions. Armed groups do not operate in a social vacuum, but have rather many links with locals (Kalyvas 2006).

Yet, for the UN to take full advantage of local knowledge, local early warnings need to be systematically collected and analysed" [43].

Moreover, information and communication technologies are making it easier daily to contact people and share information in real time. Thanks to mobile phones, various actors can receive and send information even in remote areas. Local communities - often seen through the prism of the victims who need to be protected - are thus integrated into alert systems and play an active role in preventing violence because anyone with a phone, regardless of their position, can share their knowledge and receive alerts about potential dangers.[44]

40. Lt Col. Ingabire is also a member of the Rwandan armed forces and has participated in African and UN operations in the Central African Republic.

41. Tristan Burger, "Small Arms: An Applied Approach to Children in Armed Conflict Prevention Initiatives in Africa" Master's Theses, University of San Francisco, 2017.

42. Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (HIPPO), 15 June 2015.

43. A. Duursma and J. Karlsrud, *op. cit.*

44. C. P. Martin-Shields quoted in Tristan Burger, 2017, *op. cit.*

Warning systems established by MONUSCO/MINUSCA and MINUSMA

Data collection and feedback: the role of military components

Chapter 3 of the Vancouver Principles recommends to:

- *Systematically collect information associated with early warning indicators of the recruitment and use of child soldiers, and to*
- *Report early warning indicators of the recruitment and use of child soldiers to the mission authorities.*[45]

As part of the child protection mandate, uniformed personnel (military and police) are responsible for monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children. However, they are not allowed to interview children.
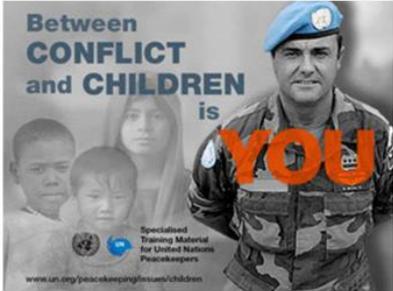
In this regard, he is called upon to play a leading role in the implementation of an early warning and prevention system for the recruitment and use of children by armed groups or forces. Chapter 3 recommends that "Peacekeepers should be prepared to collect reliable information associated with early warning indicators of the recruitment and use of child soldiers. To the extent possible, information collected on these early warning indicators should be disaggregated by age and gender. "The Infantry Battalion Manual also recalls that patrols aim to collect, develop and report early warning indicators".[46]

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45. Chapter 3 - Early Warning, Vancouver Principles, Government of Canada, 2017.
46. United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM), Second Edition, Department of Peace Operations, January 2020.

The Force Commander's and Police Commissioner's Directives on Child Protection complement the roles[47] of the military forces in various manners according to the operation concerned.[48] They make sure that child protection is integrated into all aspects of the mission by the means of instructions and guidance to the members of the various components of the mission.[49] To support the implementation of an early warning system, Chapter 3 of Vancouver suggests that "peacekeepers should refer to the force commander's or police commissioner's child protection directive for further guidance on establishing and reporting early warning indicators."

The MINUSCA Force Commander's Directive makes a direct reference to early warning, but does not provide any precise definition of the establishment of warning indicators: "The force must play a proactive role in preventing violations against children and plan responses to early warning signs such as hate speech, children suddenly out of school and the risk of reprisals after an attack". The mission acknowledges the value of further studies on warning indicators, but recognizes that the child protection team does not have the means or capacity to do so.

Data collection and feedback from the contingents to the civilian sections of the Mission are carried out according to a hierarchical structure (see Annex 1). The Gender and Child Protection Officer of the Force is responsible for ensuring smooth communication between the Force and the (civilian) Child Protection Section.[50] In addition, feedback is provided through a multi-level Focal Point system. Appointed by the Force Commander and the Police Component Commissioner, the Focal Points are located at Headquarters, sector and battalion levels.

Battalion Focal Points (appointed by Battalion Commanders) are responsible, among other things, for forwarding alerts of violations against children to the Component Focal Point, the Child Protection Advisers (CPAs) and the Human Rights Section, "in accordance with agreed information-sharing protocols and the organisational chart".[51] The focal points act as relays for the CPEs, and as child protection resource persons for helmets and blue berets. Their mandate includes ensuring that child protection is integrated into the daily work of the battalions, advocating for compliance with international standards and rules regarding the arrest or detention of children, and facilitating coordination and information exchange on child rights violations between CPAs. These focal points are, in most cases, also gender focal points within the components.

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47. The roles and responsibilities of the military and police components are spelled out in the 2017 Policy.

48. All three operations cited have a Directive. The MINUSMA Directive is an internal document that could not be consulted.

49. Specifically, the Guidelines are aimed at mainstreaming child protection in missions at Force Headquarters (in the capital), within the Mission's areas of deployment, as well as within battalions and the work of military observers.

50. MINUSCA Force Commander's Directive, December 2018.

51. *Ibid.*

According to the Infantry Battalion Manual, "This is a means to ensure the participation of women and girls in working groups on early warning mechanisms and protection of civilians".[52]

When uniformed component personnel witness one of the six grave violations against children, the data collected will subsequently be integrated into the MRM and contribute to the consolidation of the UN Secretary-General's Annual Reports on Children and Armed Conflict. In this way, the MRM plays a crucial role in informing the UN Security Council about grave violations against children and their perpetrators.[53] In MONUSCO and MINUSMA, data reported by field officers are disaggregated by age and gender, which allows for a better understanding of the dynamics of recruitment and use of children by armed groups.[54]

These data are essential in order to refine the understanding of "who is a child soldier, how child soldiers are recruited and used, and the gender dimensions of the phenomenon".[55]

In addition, the MINUSCA Force Commander's Directive recalls that each Mission location (field office) has an early warning and response cell, which ensures the triangulation, verification and dissemination of information and the assessment of all threats related to the Protection of Civilians through the early warning matrix. The mission recalls the role of the Joint Mission Analysis Center (JMAC) in developing warning signals.[56] The JMAC is responsible for informing the mission leadership on a weekly basis on the economic and social environment, illegal exploitation of minerals, etc. The JMAC is also responsible for the development of a warning system for the protection of civilians. This general information is extremely useful to identify potential dangers. In the case of MONUSCO, this is the SAGE information management system, in which the data and the various incidents encoded by the different sections are listed in a structured manner[57] to facilitate their use, particularly in the event of an alert.

The MINUSMA Directive[58] also refers to the presence of an early warning system, useful for gathering information on violations committed or potential risks of violations. It also explains the complex reporting mechanism and who is responsible for it.

Once appointed, the focal points are responsible for establishing a warning system, at their level, to transmit information on grave violations through the chain of command. The Force works according to the principle of joint responsibility "Plan-Act-Protect".

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52. United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM), Second Edition, Department of Peace Operations, January 2020.

53. Laura Cleave and William Watkins, *op. cit.*

54. Chapter 3 of the Vancouver Principles states that "To the extent possible, information collected on these early warning indicators should be disaggregated by age and gender".

55. Victoria Bryce and Dustin Johnson "Security Sector Training on Prevention of Recruitment", The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, Allons-y, Vol. 4, March 2020.

56. Interview with MINUSCA Child Protection Section.

57. Allard Duursma and John Karlsrud, *op. cit.*

58. Interview with MINUSMA Child Protection Section.

The Directive also provides a "Soldier's Card on Child Protection - Tactical Aid-Memoire" which recalls the different situations where the mechanism should be automatically activated and rapid action taken.

For example, with regard to the recruitment and use of children, soldiers are asked to systematically report the presence/absence of children (even if they only see them) during their patrols. Even if the military cannot determine whether or not these children are associated with armed groups, their presence/absence can be an indicator of risk.[59]

The Directives are aligned with the 2017 DOP Policy on Child Protection and follow the requirements for monitoring and reporting violations. Chain-of-custody mechanisms in peace operations ensure that alerts on violations are effectively transmitted in accordance with the MRM.[60] However, the Directives do not yet provide information on the development of holistic, observable indicators to identify imminent threats to vulnerable groups - including children - which are critical to establishing an early warning system as called for in the Infantry Battalion Manual[61] and recommended in Vancouver Principle 3. In the absence of such observable and verifiable indicators, there also appears to be a lack of clarity as to who should design the indicators and the distinction between early indicators and alerts related to cases of violations committed. Nevertheless, lack of staff remains a concern in the different operations.

Inclusion of local populations in POs' early warning systems

As discussed earlier in this paper, local populations play a crucial role in preventing violations against children. Indeed, since 2005, the UN has recognized the importance of civil society in the prevention and resolution of conflicts.[62] In addition, the UN Policy on the Protection of Civilians (POC) in Peace Operations emphasizes the importance of engaging local communities in early warning systems: "Engagement with communities should be an inclusive, two-way exercise which begins with listening to communities about their protection needs and capacities."[63]

The MONUSCO and MINUSCA missions use national staff to participate in the early warning mechanism, including Community Liaison Assistants (CLAs). Trained by the missions, these people who live among the population "facilitate the work of the military and police on the ground"[64] because they can collect data faster than expatriate staff.[65]   They also strengthen

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59. Interview with UNMISAM Child Protection Section.

60. The MRM is being implemented in all three countries: Mali, CAR and DRC.

61. United Nations Infantry Battalion Manual (UNIBAM), Second Edition, Department of Peace Operations, January 2020.

62. "The Council recognises the role of civil society in conflict prevention and resolution and intends to strengthen its relations with its groups", Security Council CS/8500, Coverage of United Nations Meetings and Press Releases, September 2005.

63. Policy on the Protection of Civilians in United Nations Peacekeeping, Department of Peace Operations, 2019.

64. Interview with MINUSCA Child Protection Section.

65. In this regard, MONUSCO's Child Protection Section noted, in an interview, the added value of French-speaking African contingents (e.g. Senegal) in dialogue with local communities, thanks to their better knowledge of the environment and the French language.

the bonds of trust between the military and the population. In this regard, the MINUSCA Force Commander, in his Directive, recommends that the Mission's early warning system strengthen collaboration between "community liaison assistants, community alert networks, military, police and civilian components (...) on child protection within their respective capacities.

More specifically, the CLAs "assume the role of interface between the peacekeeping mission, local authorities and populations. [...] They manage [for example] MONUSCO's early warning system, establishing radio networks, widely disseminating telephone numbers and providing telephones and credit to key contacts. This system enables communities in very remote locations to alert MONUSCO and by extension the national security forces to respond to immediate threats".[66] In its 2019 MONUSCO analysis report, the International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH) also recalled that the Mission's Civil Affairs Section is intended to be the interface between the Mission and the local authorities in terms of POC; "Community Liaison Assistants enable the Mission to communicate with communities and local authorities and to better understand local conflict dynamics.[67] MONUSCO has a network of 159 Community Liaison Assistants, 113 of whom are based at 39 military bases. They are trained in the protection of civilians, warning mechanisms and community protection planning.

Within MINUSCA, the (around 100) CLAs receive training on the MRM and particularly on the 6 violations. They have a mobile phone to share information or alert the mission as soon as they identify one of these violations.[68]

The child protection section then seeks to verify the information exchanged and, if necessary, visits the communities in order, for example, to raise awareness. Military personnel may also receive information from the Protection of Civilians Section. Depending on the alert, they will assess the need to strengthen patrols in the field, or even to set up a Temporary Operation Base (TOLB) to observe the situation.

The Mission also has a Community Alert Network, composed of some fifteen members.[69] These are people representative of communities who volunteer to work on the children issue. These are people representative of communities who volunteer to work on the issue of children and who are identified by the Child Protection Section during awareness-raising sessions. They will then be trained by MINUSCA. Unlike the CLAs, the members of the Community Alert Network are not employed or paid by MINUSCA. The alert system functions differently. When they wish to share information, they 'beep' the POC, who then calls them back to save the cost of the call and gives them directions.

66. "Community Liaison Assistants: a bridge between peacekeeping forces and local populations", Revue Migration forcées, Janosch Kullenberg, October 2016.

67. MONUSCO, 20 years in Democratic Republic of Congo. What are the priorities for its next mandate? Analysis, International Federation for Human Rights, December 2019.

68. Interview with MINUSCA Child Protection Section.

69. *Ibid.*

However, in its report on the situation in the Central African Republic in 2018, the UNSC noted that despite "the expansion of the recruitment and training of local liaison assistants operating throughout the country, given MINUSCA's limited capacity and the multiplication of hotbeds of tension throughout the country, the Mission has found it increasingly difficult to address all the new threats simultaneously".[70] For its part, FIDH advocates for the strengthening the dialogue and of early warning networks with communities, in particular through community liaison assistants, in line with the concept of "protection by projection".[71]

Despite the role of the CLAs in providing feedback, the Child Protection Section of UNMISAM is struggling to develop an alert network with local communities. The security environment (including the danger of improvised explosive devices) is compounded by a lack of personnel. The section has only five staff, one of whom is deployed in the Mopti region and the rest is in the capital. The lack of capacity to collect data on all areas of UNMISAM's deployment results in a significant loss of information and limits the Mission's ability to provide an appropriate response.

An initiative for the establishment of a regional MRM system in collaboration with the G5 Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Niger) had been discussed, but capacity limitations (in financial and human terms) forced the Mission to hold the project.[72] This initiative would have made it possible to take into account the cross-border nature of the dynamics of child soldier recruitment.[73]

This set of situations greatly reduces the capacity of MINUSMA to develop an early warning system dedicated to the prevention of child recruitment by armed groups.

Efforts deployed in all three operations to increase interaction with local communities are undeniable. Nevertheless, they still need to be strengthened and supported, particularly with a view to establishing community-based early warning systems, defined by the authors Macherera and Chimbari as "*a system in which communities participate in the identification of hazards and the formulation of the warning system, and not simply in reacting to a warning at the local level*",[74] thus creating more opportunities to prevent violence by enabling people to create evacuation protocols and security plans to avoid violence.

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70. Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the Central African Republic, Security Council S/2018/611, June 2018.

71. MONUSCO, 20 years in Democratic Republic of Congo. What are the priorities for his next mandate? Analysis, International Federation for Human Rights, December 2019.

72. Interview with the Child Protection Section of MINUSMA.

73. "Experts: Boko Haram Recruiting Children as Soldiers, Suicide Bombers", Sirwan Kajjo, *Voice of Africa*, September 2020.

74. Margaret Macherera and Moses J. Chimbari, "A Review Of Studies On Community Based Early Warning Systems", Jàmbá: Journal Of Disaster Risk Studies 8, No. 1 (2016), cited in Tristan Burger, *op. cit.* p. 29.

Mixed engagement teams: an asset for early warning systems

In addition to CLAs and community alert networks, some troop-contributing countries have deployed Female Engagement Teams (FETs) to collect data from local communities.[75] Evidence from the Knowledge for Prevention (K4P) seminar on early warning in child protection indicates that some research has shown the critical role that 'Marginalised gender groups' can play in early warning.

In particular, these groups are said to have better capacities to prioritise risks. The presence of women also facilitates the collection of information thanks to the trust built with the population.[76] Nevertheless, author G. Baldwin points the limitations of a gendered strategy of community engagement, which prioritises dialogue with women at the exclusion of the link with men[77].

In 2016, a women's team formed within the Zambian battalion of MINUSCA is building close ties with the population with women and children's, but this presence is limited to one locality where it is deployed. Nevertheless, women within the United Nations Police are active throughout the Central African Republic[78].

The first Pakistani female contingent of MONUSCO was formed in June 2019 in South Kivu (eastern DRC). It is made up of 32 women showing a wide range of expertise (psychologists, stress counsellors, gender counsellors).[79] Another Ghanaian battalion composed entirely of women (GHANBATT) within MONUSCO has, according to the Mission, "developed trusting and lasting relationships with women and children from local communities whom they meet during patrols in the DRC's area of operations".[80]

These teams, deployed within "mixed engagement platoons" (*Engagement Platoon*), has a minimum of 50% women in the group, and also aim to compensate for the lack of close relations between the contingents, the local population and contribute to the improvement of early warning mechanisms within the POs. [81]

The goal of these engagement platoons is to improve the knowledge and understanding of the environment of the populations the troops encounter in order to identify the most vulnerable people (including children). To this end, they are tasked with engaging in dialogue

75. Interviewed at the Knowledge for Prevention (K4P) online symposium, 28 September-2 October 2020, organised by the Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security.

76. Women are crucial for success in peacekeeping and intelligence gathering, 30 May 2017, Our Secure Future, Women Make the Difference.

77. Gretchen Baldwin, Beyond "'Women and Children': Gendered Community Engagement Strategies in UN Peace Operations", October 28, 2020, IPI Global Observatory.

78. Interview with MINUSCA Child Protection Section.

79. "The first-ever female Pakistani UN peacekeeping team receives UN medals", MONUSCO, February 2020.

80. "GHANBATT female engagement team boosts image of Ghana in UN Operations in DRC", MONUSCO, January 2019.

81. Inclusiveness in Training for Security From Numbers to Effectiveness Or It is more than "add women and mix", Lieutenant Colonel Colin Magee – Deputy Military Advisor at Canadian Mission to the UN.

with communities and conducting gender-sensitive situation analyses. EPs collaborate with other civil actors and conduct targeted activities and patrols with LFAs.[82] It should be noted, however, that the contingents' knowledge of the French language can, depending on the environment, be an additional asset in contact with the populations.

Training: a key tool in prevention

Training is fundamental, in particular when it targets skills that do not fall within the traditional field of military expertise but have become essential in the multidimensional environment of operations.[83] This is particularly the case for child protection.

Training on child rights and protection became compulsory in 1999 (SCR 1261/1999) and a pre-deployment module for police and military contingents on the subject of child protection was subsequently (2008) integrated into the basic pre-deployment curriculum.

Specialised training on child protection for military personnel consists of six modules that can be delivered in three days:[84] 1. children in armed conflict; 2. the child protection framework; 3. interacting with children; 4. the role of responsibilities of OP components and external partners; 5 and 6 the role and missions of the military. The training aims to promote a better understanding of the child protection mandate, the different actors' participation in the mandate and are involved in child protection coordination.

The 2017 DOP Policy on Child Protection states that the Force Commander "will ensure that all military personnel receive briefings and on-going training on child protection during missions to enable them to recognize, report and respond appropriately to child protection concerns. It is the responsibility of child protection advisers to "Provide newly deployed peacekeepers with child protection training that complements the child protection training that all members of the operation must receive prior to deployment. ». The Policy also states that prevention includes training, awareness raising and accountability for all violations and abuses against children.

The Directives[85] of the Force Commanders of MONUSCO, MINUSCA and MINUSMA specify the periodicity, targets and themes of child protection training for contingents during the course of the Mission.

According to the **MINUSCA** Directive, all military personnel receive mandatory training twice a year on Training Modules 1 and 3, respectively on 'What is a child? "and 'interacting with a child' respectively. Focal Points receive training upon appointment on Modules 1 and 5, which include a component on the MRM and reporting. At Mission headquarters in Bangui, the full training (6 modules) is "**mandatory**" and at the field level it is "**desirable**". In the field, the Mission notes that upon arrival, contingents have either not been trained or have received

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82. *Ibid.*

83. *Victoria* Bryce and Dustin Johnson, Security sector training on prevention of recruitment, *op. cit.*

84. UN Military Specialized Training Material in Child Protection, United Nations Peacekeeping Resource Hub, 2020.

85. This is also the case for the United Nations Mission in Southern Sudan (UNMISS).

only minimal training of one hour, "which is not enough". This justifies the need to organise compulsory training for all soldiers every 9 months. To catch-up for the lack of training, the Mission is also prioritising the training of trainers, lasting 3 to 4 days within the battalions.

Given the energy and time devoted to training, resources seem insufficient to ensure the level of understanding and appropriation of the matter by the participants, as well as the concrete translation of the principles and knowledge acquired during the training into their work. In 2019, **MINUSCA** also trained 1,500 members of the Central African Armed Forces on child protection issues.[86]

The **MONUSCO** Force Commander's Directive, for its part, refers to three levels of training: 1. **Mandatory training** (6 modules) which includes training on how to interact with the child. It is compulsory for all members of the military component and includes role-playing. 2. **Continuous training**. Focal Points are responsible for the level of training of their unit on child protection issues. Contingents work with TCCs to provide regular training during the mission on the code of conduct (every three months). 3. **Remedial training**. Good practices should be presented after a child protection incident. This training should also identify gaps and what could have been done by the contingents to avoid the incident. In the field, training remains a concern.

Although staff cannot "escape" training, as it is compulsory and must be rescheduled every 6 to 12 months[87] as the rotation of contingents for a maximum of one year does not allow them to capitalise on the knowledge acquired during training.

For the **MINUSMA**, the Directive states that training is mandatory and that "each military component will receive training as part of its induction training, which should include at least the six serious violations, scenario-based exercises and the Directive, as directed by the Force Commander".[88] The Directive also lists the types of training: "In-Mission Training, Remedial Training, Focal Point Training".

In concrete terms, the mission notes that the training of contingents, although mandatory, is left to the discretion of the troop-contributing country and therefore to its perception of the importance of protecting children in conflict.[89]

Despite the widespread availability of training, not all actors in the security sector have yet taken advantage of it "to act appropriately and effectively in their work".[90] Moreover, the preferred approach, based on the identification of violations once they have been committed, does not allow for an approach focused on prevention.

The same is true of the MRM module, which does not contain a list of indicators that would allow contingents to identify a potential violation of a child's right since the mechanism aims to denounce violations once they have occurred. It is therefore necessary, as the Dallaire

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86. Interview with MINUSCA Child Protection Section.

87. Interview with MONUSCO Child Protection Section.

88. Interview with the MINUSMA Child Protection Section.

89. *Ibid.*

90. Victoria Bryce and Dustin Johnson, *op. cit.*

Initiative reminds us, that training should address all the dynamics involved in the recruitment and the use of children from the perspective of a security concern.

The results of a study carried out by the Dallaire Initiative show that scenario-based training is one way of preparing contingents and police elements more adequately in the event of an alert; "Scenario-based exercises» are used to better demonstrate the wide variety of possible interactions between security forces and child soldiers and strengthen the course content with experiential learning»[91]. It is important - as stressed in the Directives - that when patrolling, patrols should be able to recognize situations where children are most vulnerable to recruitment, be able to identify children who are at risk of being used as informants or messengers, and be able to decode information transmitted by civilians.

The issue of training evaluation is also among the avenues to be explored, which presupposes the provision of additional resources. The literature suggests that troop- and police-contributing countries, as well as the UN and peacekeeping training centres "give priority to evaluating the effectiveness of their training and ensure that evaluations are used to improve training design and programmes to ensure best practice in preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers.[92]

However, as it stands, the Integrated Training Service (ITS) of the DOP, as well as the child protection team, do not have sufficient human and financial resources to ensure post-training evaluation, although this is a crucial issue.

Conclusion

In 2017, 54 UN member states adopted the 17 Vancouver Commitments, aimed at mobilizing international attention on the prevention of the recruitment and use of children by armed groups and armed forces. Today, nearly 100 States have endorsed these principles. Chapter 3, on early warning, advocates a prevention approach based on the detection of signals prior to the recruitment of children and the operational readiness of uniformed personnel by contributing countries.

Despite the establishment of a United Nations Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on the plight of children in armed conflict, the phenomenon of the use of children is far from being eradicated, particularly among irregular armed groups. The fight against this practice is all the more difficult as the dynamics of recruitment and use of children have become more complex; armed groups are splitting up and managing to adapt their recruitment strategies.

The uniformed components of POs are an essential link in the MRM: they help collect data and information observed during their movements and patrols and pass it on to senior management and civilian child protection personnel so that appropriate protection measures can be taken. However, as it stands today, the data collected by the MRM, particularly through the reporting on situational awareness by the contingents, targets 6 cases of suspected

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91. *Ibidem*.

92. Alberto Cutillo and Richard Gowan and Paul D. Williams quoted by Victoria Brice and Dustin Johnson, *op. cit.*

violations once they are committed or suspected, but does not prioritise the recruitment of children after their involvement in conflict.

Developing - through a holistic approach - indicators specifically related to the dynamics of recruitment and use of children, seems to be a pioneering way to strengthen early warning capacities at a more global level of the mission in order to improve early response, while also strengthening missions conflicts analysis skills. Such indicators do not yet exist today, nor do they exist in global conflict early warning systems.

Indeed, the issue of under-age recruitment still tends to be viewed through the narrow prism of the humanitarian and social consequences for children considered as victims, obscuring the link between child recruitment and conflict. A better understanding of security issues, including at the level of the contributing countries, would however allow for a more effective awareness for the various stakeholders. From this perspective, early warning is of major importance for prevention.

As Laura Cleave and William Watkins point out, "the development of a [more formalised] system in this area can help to identify recruitment patterns which could, in turn, be used to better inform child protection and recruitment prevention»[93].

Efforts already undertaken by the Romeo Dallaire Initiative for Child Soldiers[94] in this regard should be continued and joined by other countries and organisations in order to expand the indicators (including gendered ones) and integrate them into the warning systems of peace operations, such as the MRM, which is already operational and has proven its effectiveness. Three indicators, considered critical in scenarios of the likelihood of recruitment, are the focus of the Dallaire Initiative: the duration of the conflict, the reason for the conflict (if it is the result of a coup d'état), and whether or not children are used by government security forces.

Child protection policies, guidance, guidelines, and training for those involved - including contingents deployed to POs - should also take into consideration new indicators that are specific to the recruitment and use of children and that reflect a holistic understanding of the issues. These various projects, some of which are still in progress,[95] should be carried out under the aegis of the DOP, which - as lead partner - ensures consistency of policy and decisions.

Finally, the role of local communities in warning systems could be further strengthened, as illustrated by the situation induced by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, these PO alert systems rely heavily on local communities, thanks to which missions can quickly access information from the most remote territories and risk zones. The freeze on troop rotations, the lack of personnel in the field, and the disruption of humanitarian aid in some areas of deployment

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93. Laura Cleave and William Watkins, *op. cit.*

94. The Dallaire Initiative *op. cit.*

95. For example, a pre-deployment training curriculum for the Platoon Commitment for troop and police contributing countries is being developed by the Integrated Training Service (ITS) of the DOP. A working group (Dallaire Institute, Canada and Uruguay) has been set up to develop a list of early warning indicators. The issue of child protection will be integrated into the training module, with a special focus on the dynamics of child recruitment.

due to the pandemic, could only be compensated for by the increased use of new information and communication technologies to keep in touch with populations.

This provides an opportunity to rethink local information collecting and to take advantage of traditional mediation and communication mechanisms.[96] Communication media such as telephones allow young people and children to be even better integrated into early warning systems, "because they should no longer be seen as a problem but as part of the solution".[97]

It is therefore time to increase, security conditions permitting, the use of these means "to change the way of working, to rely more on local actors, including young people, and on existing traditional [conflict resolution] mechanisms".[98]

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96. K4P online symposium, 28 September - 2 October 2020.

97. *Ibid.*

98. *Ibid.*

	Host State endorses the Vancouver Principles	Mandate	References to early warning in the Mission's mandate	Number of child protection advisers
United Nations Integrated Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)	Yes	Mandate 2020-2021 (Draft Resolution) *Among the priority tasks* : (Section: Protection of Civilians) "Provide specific protection to women and children affected by armed conflict, **including through the deployment of child protection advisers**". *Other tasks include* : (Section: Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration and Repatriation) **"Pay particular attention to the needs of children associated with armed forces and groups and to the need to separate children from such forces and groups and to prevent further recruitment, including through the implementation of gender-sensitive programmes"**.	*Among the priority tasks* : (Section: protection of civilians) "To improve their relations with the civilian population, **strengthen their early warning mechanisms** and step up **their** efforts to detect and report violations of international humanitarian law.	16 staff members
United Nations Integrated Multidimensional Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)	No	Mandate 2020 - 2021 (S/RES/2531) (2020) *Among the priority tasks* : (Section: Protection of Civilians) **"Provide special protection and assistance to women and children affected by armed conflict, including through protection advisers, child protection advisers and child protection counsellors"**.	*Among the priority tasks :* (Section: protection of civilians) "**Strengthen early warning systems** and systematically record and analyse the rate of MINUSMA's response".	5 staff members

		Other tasks include : (Section: obligation under international law) "Requests MINUSMA to **consider child protection as a cross-cutting issue affecting all aspects of its mandate".**		
United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUSCO)	Yes	[Mandate](#) 2019-2020 (S/RES/2502) (2019) *Priority tasks include* (Section: Support for stabilisation and institution building in the DRC) "Continue to work with the Government of the Democratic Republic of Congo to **consolidate the achievements of the action plan to prevent and end the recruitment and use of children by the FARDC".** *Other tasks include* : (Section: Child Protection) "Requests MONUSCO to take fully into account the **cross-cutting issue of child protection** in all its mandated activities [...] to **prevent violations and abuses against children**, recognizing the crucial role played **by child protection advisers** in this regard ...".	*Among the priority tasks* : (Section: Protection of Civilians) "Strengthen their interaction, including that of troops and police personnel, with the civilian population [...] **strengthen their early warning system".** *Other tasks include* : (Section: Child Protection) "Requests MONUSCO to **continue to ensure the effectiveness of monitoring and reporting mechanisms on children** in situations of armed conflict".	27 staff members

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The «Observatoire Boutros-Ghali du maintien de la paix» (Boutros-Ghali Peacekeeping Observatory) provides a framework for discussion between experts and French-speaking personalities from staff contributing countries. Its objective is to strengthen the triangular dialogue between States involved in peacekeeping, the Security Council and the United Nations Secretariat.

To find out more about the «Observatoire Boutros-Ghali du maintien de la paix»:
https://www.observatoire-boutros-ghali.org