



INTEGRATING THE PREVENTION OF THE UNLAWFUL RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS INTO THE OPERATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS



Aussi disponible en français sous le titre : Intégration de la prévention du recrutement et de l'utilisation illégaux d'enfants soldats dans le processus de planification opérationnelle.

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This précis is based on CFJP 5.0 *The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process*, with specific child protection considerations drawn from JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict*, the précis includes references to military child protection focal points (MCPFP). At present, the options for establishing the MCPFP position, along with approved terms of reference and CAF-mandated training, have not been approved. As an interim measure, CJOC has assigned child protection considerations to the GENAD for deployed operations. This document will be subject to periodic review to align with upcoming reference documents and guidance. Feedback and inputs can be directed to the Dallaire Centre of Excellence for Peace and Security, attention Concepts and Doctrine at dallairecoe@forces.gc.ca.

INTRODUCTION

1. In situations of armed conflict, the unlawful recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups continues to be among the most common verified violations against children. In 2021, the UN reported that more than 6,310 children (5,707 boys, 603 girls) were unlawfully recruited and used by parties to conflict.¹
2. JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* identifies the role of the military in preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers by armed forces and armed groups across all relevant operations, supplementing JDN 2017-01 *Child Soldiers*.
3. Using the CAF operational planning process (OPP), this précis identifies how to integrate the planning considerations for child protection in operations, with specific focus on preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups. While subject matter expertise can be provided by the Military Child Protection Focal Point (MCPFP) or Advisor (MCPA), it is the responsibility of Commanders and planners to ensure that considerations regarding CAF roles in child protection area included IAW the mission mandate and objectives.
4. Coordination and collaboration are important principles for mainstreaming prevention activities into military planning. Military child protection strategies, plans, and actions must be developed in coordination and cooperation with mission and non-mission civilian child protection actors.
5. There are different understandings of the definition of a child soldier. The CAF definition of child soldier², which reflects Canada's international legal obligations and commitments, is:

A child soldier is defined as a person under 18 years of age unlawfully recruited or used in any capacity in armed conflict by armed forces or a non-State armed group.³

1 Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict dated 27 July 2022 (<https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/441/10/PDF/N2244110.pdf?OpenElement>).

2 DTB record # 696540.

3 For this definition unlawful recruitment includes compulsory recruitment, recruitment in violation of international law, recruitment without proof of age, or recruitment without informed consent of the child's parents/guardians. Unlawful recruitment does not include voluntary recruitment for the purpose of attending schools operated by, or under the control of armed forces. The term "used" refers to the exploitation of children in any capacity, including as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, labourers, spies, and human bombs, in security roles, or for sexual purposes. The term "used" does not include employment with armed forces that is consistent with international law.

6. While this précis is focused on preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers, an understanding and consideration of all of the Six Grave Violations against children during armed conflict must be included in planning.⁴

GENERAL

7. This précis builds on CFJP 5.0 *The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process* by inserting into the relevant stages and steps of the OPP unique considerations related to military child protection tasks; details of which can be found in Annex A and in JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict*. Where no considerations are listed, there are no unique child protection aspects for that stage/step.
8. Throughout all stages of the OPP there is a requirement for intersectional disaggregated data collection, analysis, and use with a specific focus on girls, boys, and gender diverse children to properly:
 - Support the mission analysis;
 - Integrate the courses of action development;
 - Shape the operational plans; and
 - Monitor measures of performance and measures of effectiveness in the plan review.

4 The Six Grave Violations against Children during Armed Conflict: 1. Recruitment and or use of children; 2. Killing or maiming of children; 3. Rape and other forms of Sexual violence against children; 4. Attacks against schools or hospitals 5. Abduction of children; and 6. Denial of humanitarian access to children. In 2005, the Security Council established a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) to systematically monitor, document and report on violations committed against children in situations of concern around the world. On the basis of this information, the United Nations Secretary-General lists parties to conflict who recruit, kill or maim children, commit sexual violence against children, abduct children and attack schools and hospitals in his annual report on children and armed conflict for UN engagement with the goal of preventing and ending these violations.

STAGE 1 – INITIATION KEY ELEMENTS ACTIVITIES DELIVERABLES

1.0 Once the Initiating Directive is received the following activities take place:

a. **Activate Planning Staff.**

- Ensure that military child protection advisor/focal point or expertise is included within the HQ.
- Establish MCPFP within HQ J-staff as needed.
- Establish contacts or establish MCPFP with higher and/or subordinate HQ.
- Establish contact with other mission protection advisors (military and civilian) including other contingents or members of the coalition or UN mission.
- Identify and establish contact with non-mission child protection actors.

b. **Gather Planning Tools.**⁵

- Obtain or develop a child protection directive.
- Obtain national, coalition/UN/NATO child protection mandates, directives, guidelines, SOPs.
- Obtain appropriate child protection related publications and documentation.
- Obtain specific CAF documents:
 - CDS Planning and Initiating Directives. Strategic Joint Staff should provide advice to ensure child protection is considered as an operational objective, specifically preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.
 - Child Protection Planning Guide (PG). PGs provide planning guidance in specific areas to operations planners. The intent of these guides is to supplement the planning information available within approved doctrine, the Defence Plan, Directives and other documents. PGs should not repeat information available from these source documents but rather detail unique planning considerations within a specific area that are not covered elsewhere. The inclusion of a child protection specific PG provides additional focus and information for inclusion in the OPP and should be developed at both the strategic and operational level.

c. **Guidelines to Staff.** Guidelines on how to apply the prevention factors and considerations to the planning process. The guidelines should also include direction on (not exhaustively):

- How the Staff is to coordinate their internal efforts with the MCPFP and other protection advisors.
- Establishing the necessary external higher and subordinate MCPFP contacts.

⁵ The planning tools should be provided through the chain of command and/or from specific CAF developed material which is still being produced. Suggested resources are listed in Annex B.

- Establishing contacts with OGD child protection stakeholders.
 - Establishing contact with civilian child protection actors in the mission area.
 - Establish monitoring and reporting processes within the mission and identifying how to exchange this information with UN agencies.
- d. **Initial Assessment.** This assessment will provide an initial allocation of available time to complete the plan.
- e. **Identify Threats.**
- Identify specific factors that could place children at risk:
 - What are the main violations/threats children face? Are there any patterns of violations? Where are these violations primarily occurring? Why are these violations occurring?
 - Who are the main perpetrators of grave child rights violations?
 - What are the known or presumed motivations and capacities of perpetrators for committing the violations?
 - Do CAF, NATO, United Nations or coalition forces or operations pose a threat and/or cause harm to children?
 - Identify potential threats to CAF military operations resulting from child soldiers and/or CAF interaction with child soldiers.
 - Identify potential threats CAF military operations may pose to increasing risk of unlawful recruitment or use of child soldiers by armed forces or armed groups.
- f. **Commander's Initial Guidance.** The Commander should issue initial direction that includes specific direction related to child protection, in particular for preventing the unlawful recruitment and use by armed forces and armed groups, to ensure that child specific information is obtained, and that force structure and appropriate training requirements are identified and in-place.
- g. **Issue Warning Order to Subordinate/Supporting HQ.** Include specific direction regarding confirming or establishing the MCPFP network.

STAGE 2 – ORIENTATION

2.0. **Introduction.** On receipt of an initiating directive, a Commander must orient the staff towards the requirements of the new operation. The key product of the Orientation Stage is the Commander's Planning Guidance.

2.1 **Mission Analysis.** The first stage towards the production of the Commander's Planning Guidance is mission analysis. The Commander with assistance from the staff is responsible for conducting the overall mission analysis. This analysis has two objectives: it determines the nature of the problem and confirms the results to be achieved.

- When mandated to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of children the normal steps and activities conducted during the mission analysis need to explicitly include analysis of the inter-related factors which can make a child vulnerable to becoming associated with an armed force or armed groups, and then deduce the optimal tasks to prevent or pre-empt recruitment.

2.2 Mission Analysis follows these steps, all of which are developed considering available factors, necessary deductions and possible output:

a. **Review of Situation.** Much of this information will be deduced from the Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace (JIPB) (See B-GJ-005-200/FP-000 - Joint Intelligence Manual for details):

- Specific to prevention is the need to consider the push and pull factors which could put children at risk of becoming associated with armed forces or armed groups (see JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* for details).
- While conducting the mission analysis, the considerations stemming from these questions should be factored in the analysis. Key Factors have a decisive influence on the military planning. In addition to the factors assessed in CAF OPP and JIPB (e.g. time, space, force), the factors related to the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers are to be considered as a distinct category in the factor analysis.
- In addition to the critical questions found in Annex A, Key Factors can include:
 - What are the security threats and risks faced by girls, boys, and gender diverse children and what are their protection needs and priorities? (as a minimum use the Six Grave Violations).
 - What children are at risk of becoming associated with armed forces or armed groups, where are they, and are they static or are they moving?
 - How imminent is the threat to civilians, and specifically to children, in the Area of Operation (AOO)?

- Who are the perpetrators, or likely perpetrators, of the Six Grave Violations against children?
 - What capabilities do perpetrators require to unlawfully recruit and use children in the ways they want?
 - What community early-warning and protection mechanisms are in place? What is the percentage of women compared to men participating in these mechanisms?
 - How is child protection and specifically use of CAF in preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children stipulated in national, coalition, NATO, or UN directives?
 - What is the role of military forces in preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children? (Include supporting roles to other mission components and/or non-mission civilian child protection actors).
 - What are specified, implied and essential military prevention tasks?
 - Does the coalition/UN/NATO operation have the capacity to address the threat, in whole or part?
 - What are the constraints that affect the conduct of prevention tasks and operations (such as distances and timings)?
 - What are the limitations of our own force's capabilities?
 - What are the Host Government forces capabilities and willingness to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of children?
 - What are the most dangerous consequences of inaction for the at-risk children – for the mission and overall peace/stabilization process?
 - What are the potential risks to children posed by CAF actions?
 - During the assessment of operational factors in the mission analysis, the planner must consider all protection aspects associated with the mission and how they relate to children, and specifically prevention tasks. Then how these tasks support or are supported by achieving the other military objectives.
- b. **Review Higher Level Direction.** The Commander and their staff thoroughly analyze the higher Commander's order to ensure they completely understand the assumptions, constraints and restraints, objectives, end state, criteria for success, and tasks.
- Specific to prevention is to ensure explicit direction is provided related to the use of the military in preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children, and how these fit into the overall mission mandate for CAF.
- c. **Critical Facts and Assumptions.** See the JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* chapters 2, 3 and 4, and the critical questions listed in Annex A of this précis.

- d. **Constraints/Restraints.**
- Are there specific constraints and/or restraints related to prevention tasks?
- e. **Key Strengths and Weaknesses (Own and Enemy).**
- Focus on ability related to conducting tasks to prevent the Six Grave Violations and/or to perpetrate the Six Grave Violations against children. Included in this assessment is the willingness of all actors to prevent or perpetrate the Six Grave Violations.
- f. **Tasks (Assigned/Implied).**
- Using the JDN 2023-01 and Annex A matrix what are the assigned and implied tasks related to prevention using Assess, Act and Support?
 - As a minimum this would include reporting and monitoring the Six Grave Violations.
- g. **Objectives.**
- Are there specific objectives directly related to child protection?
 - How does child protection and specifically prevention tasks fit into or contribute to achieving the overall objectives?
- h. **End State.**
- How do prevention tasks fit into achieving the end state? Are they operational objectives? Decisive points?
- i. **Transition Conditions.**
- Specific considerations related to child protection, specifically prevention, tasks in the transition phase need to be considered to ensure continuity of effort with the civilian child protection actors and/or other militaries including the host state as the CAF forces transition out of the theatre.
- j. **Force Capabilities and Groupings.**
- Ensure that the force has the capabilities, training, policy and direction to execute prevention tasks (see JDN 2023-01 chapter 4 for details associated with force generation).
- k. **Command and Control Structure Required.**
- Relationships with host nation security forces (if any), mission, and non-mission child protection actors should be identified, and coordination mechanism established.
 - Reporting mechanism for the Six Grave Violations should be identified to include within the mission command and control context (UN, NATO or coalition) and nationally within the Canadian reporting chain.

- l. **Assess Risk.** The Commander and staff identify potential risks based on the staff analysis and make an initial assessment of the risk level (extreme, high, medium and low) for each risk.
 - Assessment of the risks specific to unlawful recruitment and use should include risk of inaction, risks to children of CAF taking action to deal with identified factors related to children becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups, and risks associated to own actions.
- m. **Proposed Timeline.** The Commander and staff refine their initial plan for the use of available time.
- n. **Develop Mission Statement.** A draft Mission Statement for the operation is prepared based on the mission analysis.
 - Unless this is a key element of the overall mission then it is unlikely prevention will be noted in the mission statement; however, prevention tasks must be linked to the mission statement.
- o. **Prepare Mission Analysis Brief.** The mission analysis briefing (CFJP 5.0 *The Canadian Forces Operational Planning Process*, Annex C to Chapter 5) is given to both the Commander and the staff. This helps the Commander, and the staff develop a shared vision of the nature of the mission and the results to be achieved. The factors, deductions and related military tasks should be highlighted during this brief.
 - Explicit factors, deductions and potential tasks related to unlawful recruitment should be included in the MA brief.
- p. **Develop/Issue the Commander's Planning Guidance.**
 - Initial Commander's directive on child protection should be included.

STAGE 3 – COURSES OF ACTION DEVELOPMENT

- 3.0 **Introduction.** Courses of Action (COAs) development begins with a review of the Commander's Planning Guidance, produced in the previous stage. This provides the necessary direction and guidance to the planning staff to continue the estimate process and shape the development of the initial COAs.
- 3.1 **Review Commander's Planning Guidance.** It is important to ensure a common understanding of the Commander's intent as articulated in this document.
- Is there sufficient guidance related to child protection and prevention based on approved mandate and objectives to ensure HQ and subordinate staff are able to incorporate child protection tasks into their plans?
- 3.2 **Staff Analysis.** Staff analysis identifies the factors and the derived deductions that are relevant to the operation being planned.
- Understanding and analysing the factors that can lead to children becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups are conducted at this stage and the deductions derived from that analysis will lead to identifying those military responses required to prevent recruitment for consideration in developing COAs.
- 3.3 In developing COAs there are a number of key principles to apply:
- Coordinated actions with relevant protection actors should be planned to take into consideration all sections of the local community (women, men, girls, boys and gender-diverse people) with a focus on those in vulnerable or marginalized situations.
 - Communities are in the best position to identify their own vulnerabilities and related threats to child soldier recruitment and use.
 - Military personnel must be mindful in their engagement with communities so that they do not expose the population or civilian protection/humanitarian/developmental actors to risk or cause harm through their engagement.
 - The needs and rights of the child must be understood and respected.
- 3.4 The following factors (not an exhaustive list) are found for all tasks, however, when considering prevention tasks, these need to be examined through an explicit child protection lens:
- a. **Area of Operations (AOO).** Analysis of the AOO involves a broad view of not only such physical elements as the topography, oceanography and meteorology, but issues related to the political, diplomatic, alliance/coalition, economic, cultural, religious, and host nation(s) situation in the region.

- These considerations need to be further examined based on how they impact girls, boys and gender diverse children and the associated factors that may place them at risk of becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups.
- b. **Opposing Forces Capabilities.**
- The factors and considerations related to armed forces and armed groups recruiting and using child soldiers needs to be added here. This can be examined from two perspectives:
 - Does the armed force or armed group unlawfully recruit and use children, and if so in what capacity?
 - The strategic, operational and tactical impact of CAF encountering/engaging child soldiers.
- c. **Other Actors.** Apart from the opposing forces or threat actor evaluation, this step can be used to assist planners to understand key local personalities, influencers and community groups, including men, women and gender-diverse people, who the mission is likely to engage with during operations. It identifies whether local actors are likely to support, oppose or are neutral to the CAF presence and can generate a greater understanding of vulnerable population groups and specifically the implications on child protection.
- Success in child protection, including preventing unlawful recruitment and use, is dependent on understanding local perceptions, therefore gathering baseline perception data is critical. Such data should include gender-responsive conflict analysis using GBA Plus⁶ which among others considers how gender shapes and is shaped by conflict.
 - Identify other relevant actors' intent, capabilities, strengths, weaknesses and other critical factors including the gender norms and roles and how they shape conflict, with attention on their attitudes and actions towards the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers.
- d. **Political Considerations.** The ultimate authority for the use of military power resides with the political authorities.
- The Initiating Direction is expected to identify concisely the political requirements of the potential military option and should include or frame the use of the CAF in preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers is to be considered. Strategic Staff and Policy advisors have an important role in identifying this requirement and providing advice on potential military tasks.

⁶ GBA Plus is an analytical approach used to assess the potential effects policies, programs and initiatives may have on diverse groups of people. The word "Plus" in the term is used to show that the analysis goes beyond biological (sex) and sociocultural (gender) differences to consider other factors that intersect to determine individual identity. These factors may include ethnicity, religion, age and disability.

e. **Own Forces Capabilities.**

- Ensure that the force has the capabilities, training, policy, and direction to execute prevention tasks (see JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* chapter 4 for details associated with force generation).
- Ensure that Military Child Protection Focal Point functions are included in the order of battle (ORBAT).
- Ensure that the force has sufficient capabilities to collect, analyse, report and translate into military tasks, GBA Plus and other contextual and mission specific information relevant to the Indicators and Warning (I&W) associated with the recruitment and use of child soldiers.
- Ensure pre-deployment training includes prevention tasks, and international obligations and commitments related to children's rights.
- Ensure pre-deployment training includes child protection with a gender-sensitive understanding of different rights and needs of girls, boys and gender diverse children.
- Ensure mission specific training that reinforces mental resiliency is included to better prepare CAF personnel to deal with child recruitment and use and/or the Six Grave Violations.
- Ensure that planners, analysts, advisors and policy officers incorporate and respond to the findings from GBA Plus to the design of capacities and force generation.

f. **Time and Space.**

- Define the limitations or opportunities that time and space may impose on the achievement of the stated objectives related to child protection.

g. **Command and Control.**

- Understand the position of other military and security partners operating in the theatre with regards to preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.

h. **Logistics and Movement.**

- Clear direction on not employing children in any capacity by CAF needs to be included as part of the logistics analysis.
- Ensure that the force has the capability to temporarily detain and transfer girls, boys and gender diverse children rapidly and with a gender- and age-responsive and child protection approach.
- Ensure the force has appropriate medical equipment and supplies for ill or injured girls, boys and gender diverse children in urgent situations.

- i. **Rules of Engagement (ROE).**
 - Ensure that ROE include the ability to execute the range of military tasks to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of children is a vital aspect of developing feasible COAs that allow the CAF to take the required actions to achieve mandated tasks.

- j. **Conflict Termination.**
 - As the staff analysis considers the desired or expected nature of the post-conflict “landscape” in physical terms as well as in terms of the political, diplomatic, and economic environment of the AOO, consideration to the impact on children must be considered including supporting Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) processes as tasked.

- k. **Risk.**
 - Included in considering risk is identifying the risks the recruitment and use of children poses to the mission itself, force protection, the transition or post-conflict phases of the operations, and own military actions have on children and those factors that may make them more vulnerable to becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups.

- l. **Assigned/Implied Tasks.** These tasks are derived as previously outlined. Analysis of tasks will result in deductions that will impact on the timing of the operation, force preparation requirements, the types and size of forces that will be required to carry out the operation, the phasing of the operation, command and control relationships and other mission related issues.
 - Potential tasks can be found in 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* chapter 4.
 - Also, the staff is to identify potential specific force requirements, deficiencies or surpluses related to executing assigned prevention tasks.

- m. **Develop Enemy Forces COAs.**
 - Specific to preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children an understanding of the various armed groups and armed forces recruitment and use of children needs to be considered.

- n. **Develop Own Forces COAs.**
 - The development of COAs should include military responses to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers.
 - Key to developing own COAs is how it supports ongoing civilian led child protection activities.

- o. **Present Information Brief.**

- p. **Commander/COS Provide Further Direction.**

q. **COA Validation.**

- Inclusion of child protection experts should be considered to provide additional perspectives and knowledge to COAs development and validation. This can include civilians from within the mission structure and child protection actors outside of the mission structure where feasible.

r. **Wargaming.**

- Inclusion of child protection experts should be considered to provide additional perspectives and knowledge as both Red Teams as well as various cells involved in the wargame. This can include civilians from within the mission structure and child protection actors outside of the mission structure where feasible.

s. **Compare COAs.**

- Each COA should aim to reduce or eliminate the risk of unlawful recruitment and use of children and in doing so must rigorously consider the impact on children.
- Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each COA, focusing on the cost/benefit to protect children, specifically on preventing children becoming associated with armed forces or armed groups against the factors listed in JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* chapter 2, including consideration of risk mitigation.

t. **Deliver Decision Brief.**

u. **Commander Selects COA.**

v. **Concept of Operations (CONOPS).** The final event of this Stage is the preparation and issue by the staff of the Commander's CONOPS. A CONOPS can be described as a clear and concise statement of the line of action chosen by a Commander in order to accomplish their mission. In general, the CONOPS accomplishes the following:

- Expresses the Commander's methodology and rationale to attain specific objectives including protecting children from the Six Grave Violations, specifically the preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers.
- Advises the Initiating Authority of the Commander's intentions related to the use of the CAF to prevent the perpetration of the Six Grave Violations and provides an instrument for them to concur and, if necessary, to obtain political approval.
- Informs subordinate Commanders, headquarters' staff and supporting formations of the scope, nature and likely prevention tasking required for their plans.

STAGE 4 – PLAN DEVELOPMENT

4.0 An approved plan or OP O will be the final product of the planning process and includes the following steps.

- a. **Seek CONOPS Approval from Higher Authority.**
- b. **Identify and Resolve Issues/Shortfalls.** The development of the plan is to be based on the approved CONOPS. At this point in the process the planning staff will have a very clear picture of the issues and shortfalls, which could impede the execution of the mission as the Commander envisions in the CONOPS. The resolution of these issues and shortfalls will affect how the plan is developed from the CONOPS.
 - Identify issues or shortfalls which impact the ability to execute prevention tasks.
 - Identify issues or shortfalls which impact the ability to support child protection actors in the AOO.
 - Revise the CONOPS to account for shortfalls which cannot be addressed.
- c. **Prepare the Plan.**
 - Are child protection tasks integrated into the main plan?
 - Are child protection tasks/issues integrated across the J sections?
 - Are child protection tasks/issues included in the decision support matrix?
- d. **Synchronize Annexes and/or Supporting Plan.**
 - Develop the child protection annex and/or appendices.
 - Have child protection requirements been included in the other relevant annexes and/or SUPLANS?
- e. **Develop Branches and Sequels if Required.**
- f. **Submit Plan for Approval.**

STAGE 5 – PLAN REVIEW

5.0 A Plan/OP O must be reviewed regularly to evaluate its viability. The evaluation may be conducted through exercises, war gaming or techniques such as logistics flow modelling. In terms of time and quantifiable results, the most effective method may be computer-based war games.

- Have the factors or overall situation related to child protection changed?

ANNEX A

MILITARY RESPONSES TO PREVENTING THE UNLAWFUL RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILD SOLDIERS

1. This annex provides a summary of actions the CAF could take to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups given the appropriate mandate and in coordination with other government departments, mission elements, international organisations, civil society groups and child protection actors. These responses should always be informed through deliberate GBA Plus assessment early in strategic and operational planning stages. JDN 2023-01 *Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict* should be referred to for greater detail on critical questions and possible actions.
2. At minimum, the CAF **must always monitor for and report on the Six Grave Violations against children through the appropriate military chain of command**. Military responses to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers can be divided into three types of response:
 - a. **Assess.** Ongoing and iterative actions aimed at providing or increasing understanding and situational awareness;
 - b. **Act.** It is critical to take the analysis which results from Assess and use it as a planning factor during military planning processes (OPP, targeting, and other related processes); and
 - c. **Support.** Support activities are military activities that allow others (political groups, human rights organizations, humanitarian and development actors, police, child protection actors, and local communities, etc) to deal with structural, community, individual and armed group/forces factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups.
3. When considering the factors for child recruitment into the analysis, planning and execution of military operations, it is useful to group them into four broad contextual categories: type of conflict; social, economic and political context; state capacity and governance; and characteristics of armed forces and armed groups. For ease of integrating into the analysis and planning processes, the factors, associated indicators and warnings are formatted as a checklist of critical questions that can be used to determine the most relevant factors for a given situation (see table below).
4. Children's association with armed forces and armed groups occurs for a multitude of complex and inter-related reasons. Recruitment trajectories vary significantly across geographical locations and based

on a host of intersectional identity factors, including age, gender, physical ability, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. Asking critical questions, like those provided below, provides a contextual understanding of recruitment dynamics across settings and social groups. The questions and potential tasks listed below need to be considered at the strategic, operational and tactical levels and must take into account the historical, cultural, and socio-economic dimensions of a conflict and should be integrated into ongoing activities that precede and follow the deployment for specific operations, and included in Commanders Critical Information Requirements (CCIR), Primary Intelligence Requirements (PIR) and as part of Intelligence Preparation of the Operating Environment (IPOE).

Type of conflict. The type of conflict can shape the operational environment and it provides the context in which children may become associated with armed forces or armed groups.

Critical Questions		Possible Actions/Potential Tasks
1	Is the conflict ongoing, a recent outbreak, or is it a resumption of a previous armed conflict?	Assess the degree to which the mandate and political objectives support the use of the military to prevent the unlawful recruitment of children by armed forces and armed groups.
2	Is the conflict transitioning from one type of warfare to another?	Provide military advice regarding the use of military in preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.
3	Is there an increase in the activity and/or use of armed gangs or community self-defence groups?	Ensure that defence strategic level policy, orders and directives enable the operational and tactical level forces to respond to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups.
4	Is there a high or increasing availability of small arms and light weapons?	Ensure the force is structured, trained to be able to conduct assess, act and support tasks.
5	Is there a presence of armed groups or proxies that use child soldiers, and how are they associated with different actors?	Provide directive/orders specific to child protection to the operational and tactical level commanders.
6	Are there cross-border attacks on strategic asset points?	Issue authorities, including ROE that specifically allows military forces to prevent the unlawful recruitment and use children by armed forces and armed groups.
7	Are there porous borders and highly frequented cross-border trade routes (legal and illegal)?	Establish contact and maintain liaison with both mission and non-mission child protection actors.
8	Is there the presence of underground (human, smuggling, migratory, arms, drugs, or other) trafficking routes?	Support national, regional, and local security forces to address factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed groups/forces.
9	Are there high or increasing rates of Conflict Related Sexual Violence (CRSV)?	Work with local security forces to increase security, with specific focus on security for girls, boys and gender diverse children.
10	Is there a high or increasing numbers of refugees or internally displaced persons (IDPs)?	Support appropriate agencies and Inter-Governmental Organizations (IGO), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) for the return and/or movement of refugees or IDPs, and humanitarian access/assistance.

Social, Economic and Political Context

- This level of analysis is found in existing CAF doctrine. Therefore, this section focuses on those aspects directly related to child soldiers.
- Social cleavages and grievances are specific aspects that can contribute to, and be exacerbated by, ineffective state governance.

Critical Questions		Possible Actions/Potential Tasks
1	Has there been a decrease in the reach, effectiveness, or access to informal governance mechanisms and service providers?	Assess and report on the reach and effectiveness of state institutions with an understanding of the factors which impact children being susceptible to becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups.
2	Is there an increase in difficulty in accessing or a lack of access to food, water, and other critical supplies?	Assess and report on the reach and effectiveness of informal services and non-state institutions with an understanding of the factors which impact children being susceptible to becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups. Determine impact on CAF operations and likely requirements to support political, human rights, humanitarian and development actors.
3	Is there a high or increasing number of public appeals aimed at encouraging community mobilization to counter, either by increasing defensive measures or taking offensive actions against, real or perceived security threats?	Support diplomatic, aid, development, and protection groups to address underlying factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed groups/forces. Support national, regional, and local security forces to increase reach and effectiveness of state institutions.
4	Is there a high or increasing number of public appeals aimed at promoting collective mobilization to advance a political or ideological causes?	
5	Is there a high or increasing number of public appeals based on politicization of identity (eg. ethnic or religious affiliation)?	
6	Is there a high or increasing number of calls to avenge perceived wrongs or grievances?	
7	Does school curricula support or reinforce patriotic or ideological appeals from armed forces and armed groups?	
8	Are girls, boys and gender diverse children politically and socially marginalized?	
9	Are women and girls politically and socially marginalized?	
10	Is there a large or increasing proportion of local population under the age of 18?	
11	Is there a high or increasing levels of poverty, both in prevalence and severity?	

12	Is there a widespread or increasing use of child labour?	
13	Is there a high or increasing number of orphans or children without adult caregivers?	
14	Is there a high or increasing number of families displaced and/or separated?	
15	Are there high or increasing levels of sexual and gender-based violence in the form of domestic abuse, neglect, and/or forced marriage?	
16	Are there high or increasing levels of sexual exploitation and sexual and gender-based violence?	
17	Is there an absence of children in areas where they are normally observed, or presence of children in areas where they are not normally observed?	
18	Are schools functioning and accessible in the AOO?	
19	Is there the destruction or closure of sports and leisure infrastructure that cater to children?	

State Governance and Capacity to Provide Security

- Effective governance addresses the underlying causes of conflict and, in the broader sense, can pre-empt or reduce the impact of conflict by meeting the needs of the population.
- Security is a specific responsibility of the state and needs to be considered from both a state and individual perspective. Current CAF doctrine considers state security. Therefore, the indicators listed here are focused on individuals or groups and reflect the real or perceived effectiveness of the State in providing security for all of its diverse groups. The actions listed can be considered in conjunction with other protection tasks (e.g. gender, CRSV, POC) but are focused on children.

Critical Questions		Possible Actions/Potential Tasks
1	What is the reach and effectiveness of state institutions (eg. national and local institutions providing for education, health, justice and social protection) in meeting the needs of the population?	<p>Assess and report on the reach and effectiveness of state institutions with an understanding of the factors which impact children being susceptible to becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups.</p> <p>Assess and report on the reach and effectiveness of informal services and non-state institutions with an understanding of the factors which impact children being susceptible to becoming associated with armed forces and armed groups.</p> <p>Determine impact on CAF operations and likely requirements to support political, human rights, humanitarian and development actors.</p>

2	Are there attacks or abuses against local communities or diverse elements of the population by non-state armed groups?	Conduct Key Leader Engagement (KLE) with other intervening security forces to develop a common understanding and approach to preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.
3	Are there attacks or abuses against local communities or diverse elements of the population by state security forces?	Conduct KLE with persons of importance or influence to develop a common understanding and approach to preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.
4	Are there community self-defence groups? What is their composition, and why have they formed?	Provide a safe and secure environment for children and child protection actors.
5	Are there attacks or abuses carried out by community self-defence groups/gangs/proxies against other communities or diverse elements of the population?	Provide physical security as appropriate for children and child protection actors.
6	Is there increasing attacks on schools, teachers, and real or perceived local representatives of the state?	Provide reporting, including the Six Grave Violations, on situation, needs and violations of rights specific to girls, boys, and gender diverse children.
7	Are there attacks on refugee or IDP camps?	Provide a deterrent force when presented with credible information of imminent threat to children.
8	Is there a high or increasing levels of sexual and gender-based violence in the form of domestic abuse, neglect, forced marriage, and/or conflict-related sexual violence?	Adjust locations, temporary and permanent, of forces and patrol routes to deter the exploitation of children.
9	Is there the reporting of abduction of children?	Support diplomatic, aid, development, and protection groups to address underlying factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed groups/forces.
10	Is there the destruction, closure, or occupation by armed forces or armed groups of schools and hospitals?	Support national, regional, and local security forces to address factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed groups/forces.
11	Is there tailored, long-term programming for children previously associated with armed forces or groups?	Work with local security forces to increase security, with specific focus on security for girls, boys and gender diverse children. Support national, regional, and local security forces to increase reach and effectiveness of state institutions. Provide a secure environment for refugees or IDP to reduce vulnerability of children. Support appropriate agencies and IGO, NGO for the return and/or movement of refugees or IDPs, and humanitarian access/assistance. Support DDR programs.

Characteristics of armed forces armed groups

- These reasons will vary based on a group's history, composition, strategic- and tactical-level goals, and the context in which it operates.
- Reasons for recruiting children may also vary over time, with some motivations carrying more or less weight as conflict dynamics evolve.

Critical Questions		Possible Actions/Potential Tasks
1	Are armed forces or armed groups already using child soldiers?	Task intelligence assets to analyze patterns and linkages of factors to the recruitment of children.
2	Are effective actions taken to ensure accountability for members of armed forces or armed groups who commit grave violations against children?	<p>Conduct KLE, where situations permit, with senior armed group leaders to develop a common understanding and approach to preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.</p> <p>Conduct KLE with senior host nation military leaders to develop a common understanding and approach to preventing the unlawful recruitment and use of children.</p> <p>Through training, exchanges and interaction, shape culture of targeted partnered/supported force(s) so they do not recruit and use children.</p>
3	Is there a high or increasing reliance on illicit funds or external sources of funding? From where/whom?	Support diplomatic, aid, development, and protection groups to address underlying factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed groups/forces.
4	What is the proximity to and reliance on natural resources (eg. gemstones, minerals, etc...) by armed forces or armed groups?	Support diplomatic, aid, development, and protection groups to address underlying factors that cause an armed force or group to recruit and use children.
5	Is there a decreasing access to financial resources by the armed forces or armed groups?	Support national, regional, and local security forces to address factors that make children susceptible to becoming associated with armed groups/forces.
6	Are there public promises to alter traditional gender roles and emancipate women and girls?	Work with local security forces to increase security, with specific focus on security for girls, boys and gender diverse children.
7	Are there public promises to provide members with food, security, or financial rewards?	Establish contact and maintain liaison with non-mission CP actors.
8	Are there public promises to provide education, employment, or other skills?	Support CP actors and armed forces and armed groups to release child soldiers.
9	Are there public promises to avenge perceived wrongs or grievances?	Support national, regional, and local communities and CP actors to prevent the use of children as part of community self-defence forces.
10	Are there public promises to establish a new political order and/or take control of existing State institutions?	

CONCLUSION

5. Military responses to preventing the recruitment and use of children need to be tailored and applied according to the relevant Canadian, UN, NATO, or coalition mandates, authorities, directives, processes, and procedures. Implementation of the actions noted in this annex will allow the CAF to implement the Vancouver Principles, increase overall mission effectiveness, and help protect the most vulnerable.

ANNEX B

SELECTED RESOURCES

GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

- A. Government of Canada, *The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers*, 2017. https://www.international.gc.ca/world-monde/issues_development-enjeux_developpement/human_rights-droits_homme/principles-vancouver-principes.aspx?lang=eng (accessed 11 Apr 2022).
- B. Government of Canada, *Implementation Guidance for the Vancouver Principles*, 2019. <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-national-defence/corporate/reports-publications/vancouver-principles.html> (accessed 11 Apr 2022).

CAF

- C. JDN 2017-01 Child Soldier.
- D. JDN 2023-01 Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Children in Conflict.
- E. Aide Memoire: Canadian Armed Forces Responses to Preventing the Unlawful Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers, 2022.

NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

- F. NATO Protection of Children in Armed Conflict – Way Forward (PO(2015)0165) (March 2015).
- G. NATO IWSWM-0242-2015(SD1) - MC advice on the Implementation Roadmap (03 June 2015).
- H. NATO Joint Task Force Headquarters Standing Operating Procedure 307, Reporting and Information Sharing in Support of Children and Armed Conflict (14 Sep 2016).
- I. SHAPE Bi-Strategic Command Directive 086-004, Children and Armed Conflict (10 Jun 2016).

UNITED NATIONS

- J. *The Geneva Conventions of 1949.*
- K. *Additional Protocols I to the Geneva Conventions.*
- L. *Additional Protocols II to the Geneva Conventions.*
- M. *Convention on the Rights of the Child Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts (2000).*
- N. *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (17 July 1998).*
- O. UNICEF. *The Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (February 2007).*
- P. UNSCR 1261, 1314, 1379, 1460, 1539, 1612, 1882, 1998, 2068, 2143, 2601, 2427, 2225, *Children in Armed Conflict.*
- Q. UNSCR 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122, and 2242, *Women and Peace and Security.*
- R. DPO-DPPA *Manual for Child Protection Staff in United Nations Peace Operations (2019).*
- S. UN SGB/2003/13 “Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.”
- T. “Child Protection Advisor.” <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/children/> [accessed 2016-09-22].
- U. DPKO-DPA-DOS Policy on Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations (2017).
- V. OSRSG-CAAC – DPKO – UNICEF, Guidelines. Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict (June 2014).
- W. Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. «The Six Grave Violations.» <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/>.

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