THE ROMÉO DALLAIRE CHILD SOLDIERS INITIATIVE | DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

Child Soldiers: A Handbook for Security Sector Actors

First Edition

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The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative
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Founded by retired lieutenant-general and celebrated humanitarian Roméo Dallaire, we are a global partnership committed to ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers worldwide, through ground-breaking research, advocacy, and security-sector training.

This publication is available free for download at:
http://www.childsoldiers.org/training-manual

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"For soldiers with any sense of honour at all, fighting children offers a no-win situation. To be defeated by children would almost certainly bring death, derision and disgrace, while to win would carry the taint of having killed mere children."

—LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)

Acronyms

AAR	After Action Review
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AU	African Union
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child (also, UN Committee on the Rights of the Child)
CRC Op. Pro.	Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
EU	European Union
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HRA	Human Rights Abuse
HRO	Human Rights Officer
HRW	Human Rights Watch
ICC	Interim Care Centre
IDDRS	Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanisms

NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PRT	Provincial Reconstruction Team
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SRSG	Special Representative to the Secretary-General
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research

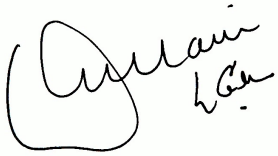
A Note from the Founder
LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)

Throughout the past few years, this Initiative has consulted with numerous academic partners, field practitioners, and military men and women to design the most comprehensive handbook for military and police on the phenomenon of child soldiering to date. Our work has shown that the training of security sector actors changes attitudes, which in turn change behaviours and actions, allowing uniformed personnel to identify and counteract recruitment tactics and better protect children at risk. This requires innovation and collaboration by all concerned.

It is my hope that this handbook is disseminated widely and that it continues to be amended on a regular basis, so as to remain current; *your* real world experience will become an integral part of the professionalization of "good soldiers" everywhere. Ultimately, however, it is my hope that one day, this handbook will no longer be needed, because the use of children in war will be a thing of the past.

As security sector actors, we cannot accomplish this goal alone. It is only if we open ourselves up to learning about others and share a common interest in child protection that difference will be possible. I am going to continue working to achieve this aim and I believe that with your leadership on this issue, we can make a substantial contribution towards ending this crime against humanity.

If we can end the use of child soldiers globally, we may go a long way in preventing conflicts in the first place.



LGen Honourable Roméo A. Dallaire, (Ret'd)

Part I
Introduction

About the Initiative

1.1 What is the Initiative?

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative is a global partnership committed to ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers worldwide, by researching practical solutions, advocating for policy change and conducting comprehensive, prevention-oriented training for security sector actors.

Its unique approach to working with military, police and peacekeeping forces – often the first point of outside contact for child soldiers – is groundbreaking and critical to the interruption of the cycle of recruitment by armed groups.

The Initiative is housed at the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies (CFPS) at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada. With nearly 40 years of experience in research, publishing, teaching and providing policy advice on Canadian and American interventions abroad, CFPS is led by academics with extensive field experience and who are working on issues of peace and security, development, and child protection on behalf of the United Nations and other international bodies.

1.2 Guiding Principles

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative is guided by the following core values:

- Respect for all stakeholders and their diverse viewpoints;
- Acknowledgement of the transformative power of education;
- Adherence to the best interests of the child;
- Avoidance of the duplication of efforts via coordination and collaboration;
- Value of local organizations and community-based efforts;
- Encouragement of bold, forward thinking.

Part II
Concepts and Strategies

A Unique Approach

2.1 Children in Armed Conflict – A Military Priority

In focusing solely upon disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and not upon the complete eradication of the use of child soldiers as a phenomenon, the international community has merely attempted to fix the broken, rather than to protect the whole. Until this issue is elevated within the security agenda, the international community will continue to squander excellent opportunities to prevent the recruitment of children into armed forces and armed groups.

By framing the issue of children in armed conflict as a specific priority concern for security sector actors, the Initiative empowers military and police to develop better strategies and policies to not only prevent or limit child soldier recruitment, but also to improve the security sector's interactions with children during actual armed conflict, with the ultimate aim of avoiding fatalities on all sides.

While pre-deployment training for military, police and peacekeepers is improving – particularly with respect to children's rights and the protection of civilians – very little is currently being done to prepare security sector actors for the possibility of confronting child soldiers before and during active hostilities. This presents security sector actors with a serious dilemma, as they are forced to juggle moral considerations and their rules of engagement (ROE) with the basic need to protect themselves, their fellow officers and affected civilians.

This manual urges security sector actors to recognise that preparation for interaction with children in armed conflict is as important as preparation for any other aspect of a mission. It also stresses that there should be strong cooperation and coordination with agencies that usually have primary responsibility for children during armed conflict. Such collaboration enables security sector actors to draw upon the wealth of intelligence that is generated by these civilian organizations and to contribute to the strengthening of child protection in general.

The recruitment and use of children in hostilities is a crime under numerous widely ratified regional and international treaties and is the focus of many Security Council resolutions. As such, in the eye of the law, child soldiers are victims of a crime and are therefore entitled to special attention and protection.

2.2 The Purpose of this Handbook

This training manual aims to highlight and reinforce the various roles that security sector actors (i.e. military, police and peacekeepers) can play in protecting all children affected by war. In particular, it focuses upon national and international military and police forces who, by accident or design, are in direct contact with child soldiers in the field. This handbook serves as a resource to accompany in-class training and simulations developed by the Initiative.

No individual country or regional organization as yet developed coherent policies or military and police doctrine for dealing with children in complex peace operations. Similarly, there is little substantive guidance on tactics, techniques and procedures to handle armed groups that use child soldiers. With this manual, the Initiative takes an initial step in filling those identified gaps, by raising awareness of the problem amongst security sector actors and by providing basic operational guidance for action.

The Initiative bases its recommendations upon research from primary and secondary sources conducted over several years, including security and humanitarian sector actors in conflict and post-conflict settings.

2.3 Who Should Use this Manual?

This training manual targets national, regional and international security-focused organizations, such as local police departments, national militaries, private security companies, the African Union (AU) and the UN. It is also meant to educate, inform and change attitudes and behaviours amongst all security sector actors who have participated in Initiative led training sessions and seminars, with the overall aim of preventing the use of children by armed forces and armed groups.

In the field, these security sector actors serve as critical points of contact with children, both before they are recruited into armed groups and during actual combat. Each moment of contact presents a vital opportunity to prevent children from engaging in hostilities, as well as to safely remove them from harm's way.

CIVPOL Afghanistan Mission

"Our military peacekeepers actually play an important role in protecting children from violations."

—Hervé Ladsous[1]

Under-Secretary-General for
Peacekeeping Operations

2.4 Key Concepts

As Margot Wallström, former Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, stated on 6 April 2011, "…sexual violence has been recognised by the international community as a security threat that demands a security response[2]." Similarly, The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative believes that the use of children by armed forces and armed groups should also be considered a security threat that demands a security response.

This manual offers insight, lessons learned, good practices, training tools and tactical procedures that should be implemented by security sector actors in the field. It demonstrates that:

- In addition to being a serious legal, human rights and child protection problem, child soldiering is a significant security issue that can potentially cause, sustain or expand armed conflict. Child soldiers may also have direct bearing upon whether a peace operation is or is not successful. As such, the international community should view child soldiering as an important problem of prime relevance to the security agenda;

- The role of security sector actors in protecting children during armed conflict has been previously under-appreciated. Actors are encouraged to assume greater responsibility for this role by adhering to the menu of tactical and operational recommendations in this manual;

- Solutions to child soldier-related challenges are best achieved through concerted, collaborative and mutually reinforcing action amongst security sector actors and other agencies working within their respective spheres of influence.

2.5 The Scope of this Training Manual

This training manual is not intended to overlook or replicate work that has been or is being done on the issue of child soldiering, and the Initiative wishes to acknowledge the many related achievements that have already been made by local, regional and international organizations. Rather, it is intended to serve as a catalyst to focus and strengthen security sector actors' role in better protecting children in armed conflict and to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to assist them in doing so.

Wherever possible, other supporting documents will be highlighted as potential reference points, to complement the information presented. In particular, it is suggested that this manual be supplemented by the following external resources:

- The "Do No Harm" Principles;
- The UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) Child Protection Policy;
- The UN Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) Handbook;
- Humanitarian Negotiation: A Handbook for Securing Access, Assistance and Protection for Civilians in Armed Conflict;
- All other national and international legal instruments that concern the protection of children during armed conflict.

As has been previously suggested, more practical and specialized training on security sector actors' potential interactions with child soldiers is necessary, so as to assist these actors in developing keener awareness, knowledge and skills that will enable them to better protect both themselves and children who are associated with armed groups. As such, this guide should ideally be used as a complement to in-class or online training.

Finally, each conflict and post-conflict zone exhibits unique characteristics and dynamics that require different strategies and actions to address the recruitment and use of children. Through ongoing input from users, continued applied research and the Initiative's "Lessons Learned" process, this manual will remain a living document that will be regularly updated, so as to reflect good practices that have been collected.

The Minimum Standards for Security Sector Training on Child Soldiers

2.6 Why Are Minimum Standards Important?

Despite the existence of a global normative legal framework and extensive international programming, the phenomenon of child recruitment and use in armed conflict persists. The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative believes that widespread standardized training for security sector actors is one crucial way to address this failure.

As such, the Initiative is currently collaborating with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to develop a set of minimum standards for all security sector training related to child soldiers. The full set of minimum standards will be available for use in the near future.

2.7 Minimum Standard #1: Security Sector Actors Must Demonstrate a Clear Understanding of the Definition of a Child Soldier

Following any child soldier-related training, security sector actors should be able to properly define and explain:

- National and international legislation on the issue;
- What constitutes child soldiering (i.e. the various roles and responsibilities a child soldier might have in an armed group);
- How child soldiers are recruited;
- How child soldiers are used strategically;
- The unique roles played by girl soldiers and the gender-specific challenges that they face (e.g. giving birth to children within the armed group, etc.).

2.8 Minimum Standard #2: Security Sector Actors Must Begin to See Child Soldiers as a Security Concern that Demands Unique Attention

Training should encourage security sector actors to "see the child first and the (child) soldier second." Course participants may demonstrate their new understanding by successfully explaining:

- Why child soldiers should be on the security agenda;
- The types of interactions that may occur with a child soldier;
- The moral dilemmas associated with confronting a child soldier;
- The risks associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD);
- How security sector actors might improve their interactions with child soldiers.

2.9 Minimum Standard #3: Security Sector Actors Must Understand the Importance of Effective Reporting and Collaboration with Other Concerned Organizations

Because of the unique role they play in conflict and post-conflict environments, security sector actors have access to information that humanitarian organizations do not – and vice versa. Course participants should therefore be able to explain:

- How to effectively recognize, monitor and report human rights abuses committed against children;
- The importance of collaboration, coordination and information sharing, particularly with humanitarian and civil society organizations.

The Importance of Situational Awareness

2.10 Knowing the Context

When addressing the use of child soldiers in a conflict or post-conflict situation, the need to understand the context one is working is cannot be overstated. Security sector actors must have keen knowledge of the socio-

cultural environment into which they have been deployed, must assess existing and potential resources and limitations, and evaluate the capacity of existing organizations to work in a cohesive and coordinated way.
Peace operations, pre-deployment and induction trainings should cover some of this contextual information. However, to increase one's effectiveness during the mission, security sector actors are advised to proactively seek out more information and to learn as much as they can about their particular context.

While it is impossible to compile a truly comprehensive list of all factors that are associated with the child soldier phenomenon across all contexts, the following is a partial list of key questions that security sector actors should ask themselves whilst working to prevent the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups during conflict:

- → Does the country have a history of child soldiering, either within the armed forces or within armed groups?
- → Are the country's children currently at risk and are their basic needs being met?
- → Are the Ministries of Health, Education and Child Welfare functioning well?
- → What are the national laws concerning the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict? Are the laws being upheld?
- → Who are the country's traditional caregivers for children? Has conflict disrupted this customary relationship? What alternative methods of care are possible if traditional mechanisms have broken down?
- → Are children used for the purposes of witchcraft?
- → Are children being manipulated by adults to suit their political, ethnic or religious purposes?
- → What organizations exist in country for the protection of children (e.g. local, national, international, etc.)?

2.11 Protecting Children During the Implementation of Peace Agreements

Over the past 15 years, 135 peace agreements have been signed between warring parties. Of these agreements, only eight contained specific provisions for child soldiers.

While a ceasefire agreement or peace accord may be in place, not all of the warring factions may be signatories. Therefore, it is possible that there will continue to be high levels of residual violence that originates from those who are still prepared to use force to achieve their political objectives.

In addition, in a war-torn state where the agents of security and law enforcement are weak or non-existent, organized criminals, bandits and gang leaders may try to exploit situations of perceived opportunity. These criminal elements may not hesitate to employ children within their group.

In this context, security sector actors should ask themselves:

- → Are child soldiers explicitly addressed in any of the agreements, declarations or statements made by or between armed parties?

- → If there is a UN mission, what is the UN's mandate in this country? If there is a peace operation, does the mandate outline responsibilities for the protection of children? Does it address child soldiers specifically?

- → What government policies and programmes apply to child soldiers, and what agencies or individuals are responsible for these policies? Are these policies and programmes being implemented? If so, with what effect? Is strengthening required?

- → Has anyone focused upon the issue of child soldiers before the arrival of the UN peace operation in country? What information or best practices might they share with you?

- → What is the status of regional and international laws concerning the protection of children and the use of child soldiers? Have these laws been integrated into national legislation?

"If specific provisions for child soldiers had been included in the UNAMIR mandate, perhaps the situation could have been different. We were faced with children who were armed to the teeth with machetes and axes, and there was nothing we could do about it."

—LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)

The following are two examples of peace agreements that included specific provisions for child soldiers:

Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (1999)

Article XXX
Child Combatants

The Government shall accord particular attention to the issue of child soldiers. It shall, accordingly, mobilize resources, both within the country and from the International Community, and especially through the Office of the UN Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict, UNICEF and other agencies, to address the special needs of these children in the existing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.

Abuja Peace Agreement for Darfur (2006): Reintegration Special Needs

442. The Reintegration Plan shall develop specific programs for former combatants under the age of 18, female former combatants and disabled former combatants.

443. Specific programs shall be developed to address the particular reintegration needs of children, especially orphans and combatants.

444. UNICEF and other child protection organizations shall be called upon to support and assist in the identification, removal, family reunification and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups.

2.12 Cross-Border Considerations

Conflicts with regional dimensions are particularly frustrating for security sector actors attempting to establish peace and protect children from recruitment. Cross-border war renders any attempt to disarm, demobilize and repatriate former combatants especially challenging. In the chaos of such conflict, many armed groups will continually seek out opportunities to recruit and use children within their ranks.

Regional Recruitment in West Africa

Children are often recruited when one conflict ends and another begins across the border in a neighbouring country.

According to Human Rights Watch, "The government of Côte d'Ivoire has recruited hundreds of recently demobilized combatants in Liberia, including scores of children under 18, to fight alongside Ivorian government forces...

In mid-March [2005], Human Rights Watch interviewed 13 Liberian ex-combatants, including four mid-level commanders and eight children, who consistently identified two Ivorian military officers – one colonel and one sergeant – whom they said coordinated the recruitment of Liberian recruits on behalf of the Ivorian government[3]."

In areas where regional conflict exists, security forces should consider that:

- Children are often trafficked or recruited across porous borders;
- Wherever possible, security along borders should be increased;
- Efforts should be made to support birth registration campaigns, as children under the age of 18 who are without proper identification are at much higher risk of abduction, trafficking and recruitment into armed groups;
- The regional dimensions of a conflict should affect the design and implementation of DDR programmes. Attempts to create a DDR programme without taking regional dynamics into consideration will seriously undermine efforts to secure the release of child soldiers;
- Constant information flow between affected countries is crucial, so as to allow for careful coordination of programming amongst state departments, peacekeeping forces, security forces and humanitarian organizations.

The Lord's Resistance Army: Cross-Border Recruitment

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), based in East and Central Africa, is one example of an armed group that forcibly abducts children across borders. According to UN Security Council S/2012/365:

"With an estimated strength of fewer than 500 elements, the LRA continues to affect a disproportionate number of civilians. While the exact number of children associated with the LRA is unknown, it is believed to be significant, given the group's practice of forcibly recruiting children. It is believed that most adults in the LRA ranks were recruited as children…

Some 440,000 persons are estimated to have been displaced by the LRA, both internally and across borders, since 2008. The LRA operates across a vast territory of 400,000 sq. km, covering the border between the CAR, the DRC and South Sudan…"

Standard Operating Procedures and Rules of Engagement:

2.13 The Importance of SOPs for Reporting Human Rights Abuses Against Children

Security sector actors—by virtue of their privileged access to zones of conflict—are uniquely positioned to observe human rights abuses directed specifically against children.

The following is a proposed SOPs for the reporting of what the UN terms the six grave violations of children's rights: 1) the killing or maiming of children; 2) recruitment or use of children by armed forces or armed groups; 3) attacks on schools or hospitals; 4) rape or other sexual violence against children; 5) abduction of children; and 6) denial of humanitarian access to children.

The following SOP, which was designed by the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, should be adapted to reflect the standards of the armed force that will be using it.

2.14 Sample SOP for Reporting Human Rights Abuses Against Children

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

PURPOSE

To delineate the responsibility each member of a security sector force has to report incidences of human rights abuses against children up through their respective chain of command.

SCOPE

This SOP shall apply to all members of the armed forces (or police), regardless of rank.

RATIONALE

The rationale of this SOP is that the information collected will be used to guide future operations or interventions, improve training and inform external partners so that they may be engaged when necessary to address the identified abuses in a coordinated manner.

GUIDELINES

1. All members of the armed forces (or police) who have received training in the recognition of human rights abuses (HRA) shall be subject to this SOP;
2. At each level (i.e. battalion, division and corps) a Human Rights Officer (HRO) shall be designated for the collection and reporting of HRA;
3. Any member of the armed forces who has observed a HRA during the course of their duties shall report as soon as practicable to their immediate supervisor/commander;
4. Any supervisor/commander receiving a report of a HRA shall immediately notify the designated HRO at the organisational level. For example, a company commander who receives a report shall forward same to the company HRO, who will compile all HRA reports at the company level and forward same to the battalion, etc.;
5. All supervisors/commanders will ensure that all members under their control are asked during an After Action Review (AAR) process whether they observed any HRA during their patrol/shift/period of duty;
6. It will be the responsibility of the HRO to meet on a fortnightly basis with their respective commander to analyse HRA and to choose a course of action (e.g. engage with external partners, human rights organisations, etc.). The commander will also have the responsibility to ensure that all ranks are trained in the recognition of HRA and to seek specialised training for units who are likely to encounter certain categories of HRA, such as child soldiering, sexual assault, mass murder, torture, etc.

Note that this example SOP should be employed in conjunction with the example incident report that can be found further on in this section.

2.15 Monitoring: A Useful Tool for Collaboration

Adopted in 2005, UN Security Council Resolution 1612 established a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) that calls upon all security sector and civilian actors to address six particularly grave violations of children's rights. These six grave violations include:

- The maiming and killing of children;
- The recruiting of children by armed groups;
- Attacks against children's schools and hospitals;
- Rape and sexual violence against children;
- The abduction of children;
- The denial of humanitarian access to children.

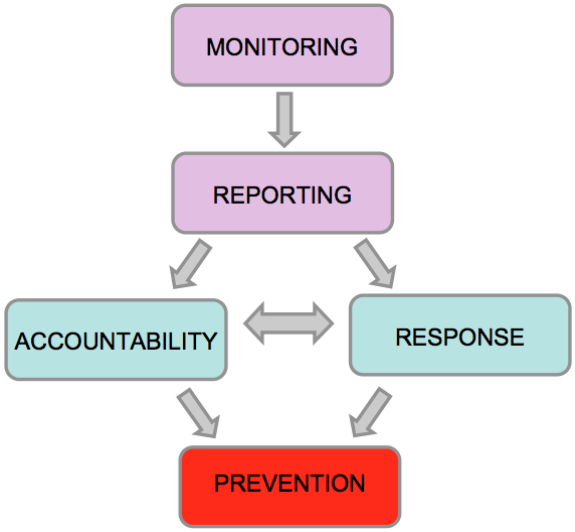
Security Council Resolution 1882 expands the list of triggers that should result in the implementation of the existing MRM on grave violations. It stipulates that the annual report on children in armed conflict received by the Security Council must now list parties that have serially engaged in the killing, maiming, rape or sexual abuse of children (i.e. those armed actors who have repeatedly committed such grave violations over a protracted period of time).

These resolutions are perhaps two of the most important tools for collaboration offered to security sector and civilian actors, because they allow members of both spheres to report upon the six grave violations and to cooperate in holding violators accountable for their offences.

Reports concerning any one of these six grave violations are to be objective and should provide specific and reliable information on abuses committed by all armed actors, whether state or non-state. UNICEF, UN Child Protection Units, peacekeepers, NGOs and civil society groups are all instructed to report directly to the MRM Steering Committee and the Country Task Force whenever a violation has been witnessed. Similarly, these actors should be willing to share the intelligence gathered from their monitoring efforts with security sector actors (and vice versa).

Verification of all instances of observed grave violations is imperative. This is where collaboration between security sector and humanitarian actors becomes particularly crucial, as they tend to operate in similar environments and can therefore corroborate one another's claims.

Elements of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism[4]



Source: 2010 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations Against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict.

2.16 The Importance of Note-Taking

Note-taking is a rudimentary responsibility for all security sector actors. In its most basic form, it simply entails documenting a clear record of events. Notes should be made at the time of an event (e.g. encountering a child soldier, etc.) or immediately thereafter, in order to preserve the reliability and integrity of their activities. Moreover, a standard template for such note-taking is highly recommended.

The following is a partial list of details that should be included in a notebook:

- Time and date of patrol;
- Shift, duty or assignment;
- Vehicle number (if applicable);
- Mobile phone number (if applicable);

- Partner's name (if applicable);
- Weather conditions.

Security sector actors should use professional language and be prepared to substantiate whatever is recorded in their notebook. If a correction is required, the security sector actor should draw a single line through the incorrect sentence and enter the correction in the margins. All corrections must be initialed by the note-taker.

The security sector actor's notebook may serve as a memory aid under numerous circumstances. For example, a notebook may be used to refresh an officer's memory when a report must be written or when testifying in court. The notebook may be employed in this capacity long after a security sector actor has completed his or her mission and has returned to their home country, as peacekeeping missions, investigations and court proceedings continue long after an individual officer leaves.

A security sector actor who has served in on a mission may be called upon at any time to provide information pertaining to a particular event that occurred during his or her posting. Indeed, this could happen years after having returned from an operation. Thorough, comprehensive note-keeping is therefore the best means of recalling such specific information.

Note-Taking and the Charles Taylor Trial

"I worked as an investigator for the Special Court in Sierra Leone from October 2005 to October 2006. During my tour of duty, I had an opportunity to travel to Liberia to meet with a confidential source. At one point, this source provided documentation that was relevant to the prosecution relating to Charles Taylor.

Several years after my return to Canada, I began to receive emails from an investigator who was working for the Special Court. Questions had been raised regarding the continuity of certain documents. The trail of Charles Taylor was underway and the prosecutor was looking to enter evidence relating to the documentation I had received from the source. I had minimal recollection of the events but fortunately I had made thorough notes and was therefore able to provide significant details to the prosecutor, to aid in the trial process. The moral of the story is: take good notes!"

—Sgt. Penny Hart, Halifax Regional Police

2.17 Sample Incident Report: Human Rights Abuses Section

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative has developed a sample incident report for the human rights abuses section that security sector actors may adapt for their particular reporting needs, should a standard template not have been provided. Such incident reports should be used in conjunction with the sample SOP and note-taking procedures outlined above.

Human Rights Abuses		
General ☐ Killing ☐ Maiming ☐ Recruitment as Soldiers ☐ Physical Abuse ☐ Incitement to Violence ☐ Attack on a School or Hospital ☐ Denial of Humanitarian Access ☐ Other (explain below)	Children ☐ Killing ☐ Maiming ☐ Recruitment as Soldiers ☐ Physical Abuse ☐ Rape ☐ Sexual Abuse or Prostitution ☐ Denial of Humanitarian Access ☐ Human Trafficking ☐ Other (explain below)	Gender-based violence ☐ Killing ☐ Maiming ☐ Rape ☐ Sexual Abuse or Prostitution ☐ Denial of Humanitarian Access ☐ Forced or Underage Marriage ☐ Other (explain below)
Other observations		

Credit: Carl Conradi

"Children are our future and if we use them in battle, we are destroying the future. We must reclaim them, every one of them, one at a time."

—Kofi Annan[5]
Former UN Secretary-General

2.18 Rules of Engagement

> "Rules of engagement do not specify any special procedure to employ when using force against child soldiers, either when the peacekeeper's life is directly at risk or when the task could be compromised."
>
> **—LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)**

ROEs provide security sector actors with guidance on the use of force in combat, reducing hesitation on the battlefield and increasing the likelihood of context-appropriate responses. They are often crafted after careful deliberation by multiple partners from both the security and civilian spheres.

In some cases, the appropriate response may involve lethal force. The clear delineation of this possibility in ROEs may help alleviate the self-doubt and psychological hardship that adult soldiers often experience after a confrontation with child soldiers.

Unfortunately, most ROEs do not currently make any particular recommendations concerning the proper conduct of security sector actors vis-à-vis child soldiers. As such, it is crucial that security sector actors worldwide lobby for the creation of such operational guidance.

Effective pre-deployment training should include role-playing exercises for security sector actors, so as to allow them to rehearse their ROEs.

2.19 Child Protection Code of Conduct for Security Sector Actors

Many codes of conduct for security sector actors have been developed in a wide variety of formats. Most are simplified versions of more complicated documents that govern or guide behaviour and action in the field. A breach of one's code of conduct should result in punishment, in the same way that breaches of other security sector regulations are punished.

Although no specific code of conduct has been created for interactions with child soldiers, Save the Children has created a "Child Protection Code of Conduct for Soldiers[6]" that should be followed by all security sector actors in the field. This code of conduct – which the Initiative has adapted below – demands that security sector actors:

- Ensure the safety of civilians at all times, while paying special attention to women and children;
- Respect the basic needs of children (e.g. clean water, food, shelter, healthcare, etc.);
- Do not separate children from their parents;
- Do not rape or sexually abuse children;
- Protect children from landmines;
- Do not employ children in their own ranks;
- Cooperate with humanitarian organizations;
- Always report child rights abuses;

Be firm, fair and friendly (remember that the "child belongs to everybody").

The Multi-Disciplinary Approach

2.20 The Importance of Collaboration

The persistent use of children in armed conflict demands concerted effort from security sector actors and humanitarian organizations. They must work together to move beyond standard reactionary responses to the child soldier phenomenon, towards carefully planned and preventative action. However, there are no specific prescriptions that can be applied; opportunities to collaborate need to be acknowledged on an ad hoc basis and lessons must be extrapolated from successful partnerships of the past.

Having said this, if child protection is specifically included in an operation or mission's mandate, the overall planning process should include a dedicated preparatory group led by the Child Protection Office or Unit, which includes staff from both the security sector and civilian sides of the mission.

> "There is little common understanding across agencies of child protection issues, standards of practice, or the organizational implications of these. There are huge difficulties in applying child protection principles in the many different legal, social and cultural contexts in which international agencies work[7]."
>
> **—Mike Aaronson, Director of Save the Children (UK)**

Community involvement is another key to successfully eliminating the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Children often return to communities that have been deeply affected by violence. Successful efforts to secure the release and prevent the re-recruitment of child soldiers will depend upon the involvement and cooperation of these fragile communities, their leaders and their organizations. Without such collaboration, efforts will not be sustainable.

Key questions that security sector actors should keep in mind whilst engaging with communities include:

- → How is the community traditionally structured?
- → How are decisions made within the community and by whom?
- → How has the conflict altered traditional roles and customs within the community?
- → What support mechanisms for unaccompanied or orphaned children exist within the community?
- → How many non-governmental organizations exist in the community and what do they do?
- → What role do religious organizations play within the community? Are there specific religious leaders who can assist with protection initiatives?
- → Which members of the community are most respected (i.e. those who may not be in official positions of authority but who are nonetheless capable of assisting with child protection)?

Finally, the intelligence that is produced via regular monitoring and evaluation of the child soldier phenomenon should be shared as widely as possible. Such intelligence – whether developed by security sector or civilian actors – can improve all parties' ability to act pre-emptively when protecting children from forced participation in conflict.

Part III
The Operational Framework

About Child Soldiers

3.1 Who is a Child Soldier?

> "A child soldier is any person below 18 years of age who is or has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities."
>
> **—The Paris Principles and Guidelines**

There are a number of factors that put children at elevated risk of joining armed groups, either voluntarily or by force. For example, a child may be at risk if he or she is:

- Impoverished;
- Unaccompanied;
- Orphaned;
- Homeless (e.g. street children);
- Living in an IDP or refugee camp;
- Female;
- Illiterate or poorly educated;
- Related to or friends with someone who has joined an armed group;
- Related to or friends with someone who has been maimed or killed in conflict (and who therefore must be avenged);
- A forced labourer (e.g. in a mine, a factory, a crop field, etc.);
- Born into an armed group;
- Part of a community that hosts a local "protection militia";
- Part of an ethnic or religious minority;
- In conflict with the law;
- Addicted to drugs.

It should be noted that this list of potential risk factors is in no way exhaustive.

3.2 Why Do Adults Use Child Soldiers?

> "It is no coincidence that 60 per cent of the non-state armed forces in the world today deliberately make use of child soldiers. For rebel groups, using the child soldier doctrine is a way to overcome their weak starting point as far as recruiting, organization and other state-centred systemic barriers to growth[8]."
>
> **—P. W. Singer, Author of Children at War**

Adults might choose to recruit and use child soldiers because:

- They do not know that it is illegal to employ children in conflict-related activities;
- They would like to increase the size of their fighting force, so as to move up in rank or improve their control over a given territory;
- Children are viewed as being obedient and easily manipulated, and are therefore seen as posing a smaller political threat to commanders;
- Children are effective at pillaging and looting villages for money, food and supplies;
- Children's small size makes them agile and disposes them to certain tasks that are too challenging for adults (e.g. working in the tight crevasses of mines, etc.);
- Children are often brave and are willing to take risks without contemplating the consequences;
- Children are cheap, expendable and can be found in large numbers;

- Children require very limited training – once they can shoot, dismantle and clean a gun, they are ready to be sent to the front lines;

- Children pose a moral problem for enemies, as most professional security sector actors will hesitate to shoot when faced with a child holding a gun.

> "It takes a year to train before you [professional soldiers] can go to the front to fight. With us, it was a week. All you have to know is to point the gun away from you and know the commands to crawl and know when to attack in ambushes. That was it. After a week, we were on the front lines[9]."
>
> **—Ishmael Beah, Author of A Long Way Gone, Memoirs of a Boy Soldier**

3.3 How Are Child Soldiers Used?

Children can be employed by armed groups in a number of different ways. For example:

- They can be made to participate in direct combat on the front lines;
- They can be used in intelligence operations as spies, scouts or reconnaissance (especially because children are seldom viewed with suspicion);
- They can be employed as decoys or saboteurs;
- They can act as bodyguards;
- They can be used to man checkpoints;
- They can be employed as couriers or messengers to communicate between units;
- They can be sent out on vanguard, minesweeping or suicide missions;
- They can be made to recruit and train other children;
- They can act in a support capacity as porters, cooks, cleaners, etc.;

- They can be forced to engage in manual labour (e.g. in mines, crop fields, etc.);
- They can be enslaved as sex objects or as "bush wives";
- They can be employed for the purpose of witchcraft (e.g. as protectors of amulets), as children are commonly perceived as being spiritually chaste and pure.

It should be noted that the use of child soldiers places all children at risk. Once one child has been used, all children suddenly become suspects.

3.4 Where Are Child Soldiers Used?

On account of the recent proliferation of small arms and light weapons that can easily be used by children, armed groups across the globe are now recruiting and using boys and girls to sustain and expand their campaigns.

Every year, the United Nations Secretary-General issues a report on children and armed conflict. In its two annexes, the report lists all armed groups – both state and non-state – that recruit and use children; one identifies groups operating in countries that are on the UN agenda, while the other lists groups that are not on the UN agenda.

The 2011 list includes 52 state and non-state armed groups operating across three continents, 32 of whom are "persistent perpetrators" that have been on the list for at least five years in a row. Seven of these persistent perpetrators are state armies.

It is important to note that this UN report – which is intended to "name and shame" – can be highly politicised. Many countries do not wish to appear on the list for fear of international sanctions.

3.5 Girl Soldiers and Gender-Based Violence

Much like boy soldiers, girls can be made to perform any number of different tasks within a fighting force. They may be combatants, cooks, spies, porters, intelligence officers, suicide bombers, sex slaves, mothers, childcare providers, minesweepers and/or messengers[10].

They are also important strategic assets for adult soldiers, in and of themselves. This is because:

- The presence of girls improves the morale of male troops;
- Pregnant girls help increase troop numbers;
- The popular stigma surrounding motherhood out of wedlock serves as a particularly effective disincentive for pregnant girls to escape;
- As girls become more attached to their "bush husbands", the chances of them attempting to escape similarly decreases.

Many girl soldiers who have escaped from their armed force or armed group will not participate in a formal DDR process – as evidenced by the extremely low numbers of girls who appear at demobilization centres. Girls may choose not to participate in a DDR programme for any number of reasons, including because:

- She may fear stigmatization by her community;
- She may still feel attached to a commander within her former armed group;
- She may suffer feelings of shame;

- She may worry about the prospect of physical abuse at the hands of her family or neighbours;
- She may have given birth within the armed group and does not see how the DDR process will benefit her as a mother;
- She may perceive that the DDR programme is poorly designed or under-resourced, especially with respect to the psychosocial services and livelihoods training that it purports to offer.

When girl soldiers do return home, they face a variety of reintegration challenges that are different from those faced by boys. Such concerns may include:

- The lack of understanding on the part of community members concerning the unique experiences and needs of girl soldiers;
- The communal stigmatization of those girls who have been raped or who were enslaved as "bush wives";
- The caring of children born to girl soldiers whilst in the bush;
- The health risks associated with malnutrition, HIV/AIDS, other sexually transmitted infections, malaria, dysentery, etc.;
- The community's expectation that former girl soldiers – many of whom may feel empowered by their soldiering experience – return to life as a submissive domestic labourer;
- The threat of physical or sexual abuse in the home;
- The lack of access to education and/or vocational training that is specific to girls

3.6 The Children of Child Soldiers

Girl soldiers who have been raped or used as sex slaves frequently give birth in the bush. Their children face a number of unique physical, economic and psychosocial challenges, above and beyond those experienced by other child soldiers.

Academic Carolyn Nordstrom has noted that the children of girl soldiers "…often face stigma, discrimination, abandonment and even infanticide…". They are at much higher risk of becoming street children once the conflict has ended – and as adults, they may be legally stateless, on account of not having received any formal identification or documentation at birth[11].

Evidence also suggests that children born within armed groups are far more difficult to integrate into civilian communities once the conflict has ended. While older child soldiers are usually able to remember life before the conflict – and therefore retain a healthier sense of identity and stability – children born in armed groups are completely unfamiliar with the civilian context. For them, extraction from the armed group represents the loss of the only family they have ever known.

Child Soldiers and Security Sector Actors

3.7 Child Soldiers: A Security Concern

Kidnapping by Child Soldiers

In September 2000, British troops in Sierra Leone were captured by child soldiers associated with an armed group called the West Side Boys. According to reports, the British squad commander refused to allow his troops to fire on the children, even though they were armed.

The resulting rescue operation left dozens dead. Meanwhile, there is growing anecdotal evidence of soldiers returning home from conflicts in Iraq, Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and Rwanda, only to suffer acute psychological stress because of the guilt associated with harming child combatants[12].

"Do you kill children who kill? Do you kill children who are there under duress, who have been stolen from their families, their schools, churches or villages, lined up with a few of their friends and killed to establish discipline? Do you kill a child who is enticed, not for a desire to kill, but due to the effects of drugs; children who do not realise the full impact of what they are facing or the consequences of their actions?"

—LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)

Child soldiering is widely considered to be a profound legal, human rights and child protection problem that presents professional security sector actors with unique challenges for which they currently under-prepared. This lack of preparation is a dangerous oversight. Security sector actors are usually placed on the front lines with little (if any) training on what to expect from or how to deal with children being used as soldiers. Yet security sector actors are often the first point of outside contact for child soldiers and as such, they have a crucial role to play in preventing their recruitment and use.

3.8 Good Soldiers Do Not Use Bad Weapons

The Assassination of Laurent-Désiré Kabila

According to Jason Stearns, author of *Dancing in the Glory of Monsters* and the Congo Siasa blog, "Young [Congolese] recruits from the Kivus constituted a third of Kabila's army of 50,000. Since the early days of his rebellion, Kabila surrounded himself with child soldiers, much to the chagrin of visiting diplomats and dignitaries who were often accosted by youths asking for a couple of dollars or some cigarettes."

At one point, a foreign businessman and friend of the former President of the Democratic Republic of Congo warned the latter against using child soldiers. Kabila reportedly rebuffed the businessman's advice, claiming that, "They could never hurt me. They are my children."

Kabila was wrong. When he was assassinated in 2001, child soldiers within his entourage were reportedly a part of the plot[13].

Accuracy is by far the most important factor in determining what constitutes a good weapons system, specifically because the phenomenon of civilian casualties is of such preeminent concern. The recent investments that leading militaries have made to improve radar, global positioning system (GPS) and laser guidance technologies would

attest to this fact. Modern militaries demand weapons systems that guarantee pinpoint accuracy – ones which result in little to no collateral damage, even in densely populated areas.

A well-trained soldier is part of such a weapons system. He or she has been empowered to distinguish between a good target (such as an enemy combatant) and a civilian target (such as a child). The soldier can then control his or her rate of fire depending upon the situation, thereby minimising collateral damage.

However, modern governments are now fighting against rebel groups, insurgents and terrorist organizations that do not wear uniforms. This makes it increasingly difficult for even the most well-trained soldier to discern between enemies and innocents, and to carry out his or her ROEs.

In such an unpredictable fighting environment, a child's inability to comprehend ROEs and make rational decisions renders them an especially poor weapons system. Professional security sector actors who take their job seriously would therefore never assign war-related responsibilities to a child.

As a good soldier:

- → Would you invest in a soldier who is not dependable (i.e. who is weak, constantly tired and hungry, and who will slow you down in the field)?
- → Would you want a soldier whose small body is easily injured by the blowback of their weapon?
- → Would you use a soldier who is quick on the trigger and who, without thinking, could risk harming another of your own?
- → Would you want to doubt another soldier's loyalty in the midst of a firefight?
- → Would you entrust a child with sensitive tactical information?

3.9 The Impact of Child Soldiers on Security Sector Actors: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

"Shock hits you as you realise this soldier is not a man or a professional – not your equal in age, strength, training, understanding. This soldier is a child, in the tattered remnants of a military uniform, with dozens more children behind him."

—LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd)

Post-Traumatic Stress

Among British forces operating in West Africa between 2000 and 2002, a number of incidents of clinical depression and PTSD were reported amongst individual officers who had faced child soldiers[14].

There is very little data or research that explains the psychological impact of encountering a child soldier upon security sector actors. There have, however, been clear anecdotal indications that the negative psychological impacts of these interactions warrant immediate concern. Actors that have encountered or been forced to engage with child soldiers in the field face the extremely difficult challenge of having to reconcile their experiences of children as both vulnerable innocents and aggressive combatants. Uncertainty or hesitation in the heat of battle can lead to fatal consequences for both child soldiers and security sector actors themselves. Moreover, the psychological impact of such interactions can ultimately undermine the very cohesion and fabric of any armed unit, thereby compromising the overall success of a mission[15].

The very real possibility of military engagement with child soldiers should be a primary consideration when designing strategy for missions. Such detailed planning, coupled with explicit child soldier-focused pre-deployment training, may help to mitigate the threat of PTSD amongst

security sector actors who are forced to engage children in the field.

Wherever possible, pre-deployment training should:

- Prepare security sector actors for the possibility of armed engagement with children who are used as soldiers;
- Train security sector actors to identify the common strategic and tactical uses of children by armed groups, including support capacities (e.g. cooking, cleaning, etc.);
- Impress upon security sector actors that child soldiers have a diminished capacity for moral reasoning and that their actions will reflect this immaturity[16];
- Instill in security sector actors a clear understanding of the role that gender dynamics can play in child soldiering;
- Outline for security sector actors the various national, regional and international legal mechanisms that guarantee children's rights;
- Include simulation exercises that allow security sector actors to practice their ROEs.

In order to better prepare security sector actors for the moral dilemmas associated with child soldiering, improved effort must also be made to create systems whereby incident reports from the field are effectively analysed and fed back into the training cycle. This would ensure that pre-deployment training is current, accurate and relevant.

Finally, all security sector actors who have faced child soldiers in the field should be offered quality post-conflict counselling and treatment, so as to mitigate any ensuing trauma or negative psychological effects.

Fighting Child Soldiers: A Moral Dilemma

3.10 Seeing the Child and the (Child) Soldier

> "Child soldiers are a problem all over the world but it is something we in the West are not accustomed to. We raise our own children and bring them up and having to fight children is not something we are ready for[17]."
>
> **—Col. Charles Borchini (Ret.), US Army**

All security sector actors must acknowledge the unique duality of the child soldier. On the one hand, he or she is still very much a child – someone who is vulnerable, impressionable, frequently irrational and worthy of protection. On the other, he or she is a soldier – and to deny this fact may be both detrimental to the safety of the security sector actors and not in keeping with the child's own experience.

A moral dilemma presents when adult security sector actors must make critical decisions about engaging child soldiers in combat. Studies have shown that the more personal this dilemma is, the more likely it will be the emotional and not the cognitive portion of the brain that is activated[18]. Put differently, if a security sector actor has not been properly trained to engage a child soldier in battle – or if he or she is unfamiliar with the relevant ROEs – he or she will act with emotion and may put all concerned parties in grave danger.

3.11 Sample Moral Dilemmas

There are a wide variety of situations in which a security sector actor might experience a child soldier-induced moral dilemma. For example:

- → If a security sector actor confronts a 12-year-old child pointing a weapon, what should he or she do?

→ If a young girl who is suspected of being an enemy messenger or spy jumps in front of a security sector actor's vehicle, what should he or she do?

In either case, if the security sector actor were to hesitate, fellow officers could get shot or otherwise injured. If, however, he or she were to shoot or continue to drive, then he or she must deal with the potential psychological consequences of having killed a child.

Moral dilemmas are further complicated by both the phenomenon of self-demobilizing child soldiers (i.e. those who attempt to surrender in the chaos of battle) and the security sector actor's fear of professional repercussions (e.g. being subjected to a court martial, dismissal from one's post, etc.).

3.12 Reaction #1: Short Response Time

> "I found interaction with child soldiers problematic, both morally and practically. On the one hand, I realized they were children and that their wrongdoings were not really their own fault. On the other hand, their very ignorance of normal morality made them particularly dangerous. Most of the rebels I encountered were too young to remember life before the civil war and their commanders were quick to exploit this. When the bullets started flying, I am afraid their age became irrelevant[19]."
>
> **—Maj. Phil Ashby, QGM, Royal Marines**

The security sector actor's two moral imperatives are: 1) to protect innocents; and 2) to defeat the enemy. However, when child soldiers appear in an ambush or in the middle of a firefight, there is seldom enough time or manpower to accomplish both mandates. As such, the security sector actor will be forced to make a choice.

Under such extreme circumstances, security sector actors cannot be expected to override their years of training so as to distinguish between adult combatants and child combatants. When given a very short

response time, they should know that if grievous bodily harm is feared, their ROEs will likely authorise the use of lethal force. Moreover, they must feel confident that if they choose to return fire, they will receive full institutional backing and psychosocial support (when necessary).

On a related note, it is not recommended that security sector actors shoot to maim child soldiers. A child soldier with a wounded limb can still pose a very serious treat to security sector actors.

3.13 Reaction #2: Long Response Time

> "…when just combatants could use lesser force against child soldiers without seriously compromising their ability to achieve their just aims, they may be morally required to fight with restraint, even at greater risk to themselves[20]."
>
> **—Jeff McMahan, Philosopher and Military Ethicist**

Not all situations in which security sector actors encounter child soldiers are equally unexpected or dangerous. When, for example, a security sector actor is able to plan for the likelihood of encountering a child soldier, he or she will be far better equipped to juggle the two moral imperatives of protecting innocents and defeating one's enemy. In such cases, when afforded a comparably longer response time, security sector actors have a responsibility to fight with restraint (and ideally, to pursue the objective of capturing child soldiers alive).

At present, most ROEs concerning interactions with child soldiers are either weak or non-existent. Because of this, security sector actors are given very little guidance for when they encounter child soldiers in a dangerous but non-lethal context. Such doctrinal gaps give rise to moral dilemmas, which put security sector actors at a greater risk of self-doubt and PTSD. It is therefore imperative that the security sphere work to create standard ROEs and SOPs that can guide the choices of security sector actors when they are afforded the time to reflect before their act.

3.14 Recommendations for Avoiding the Moral Dilemma

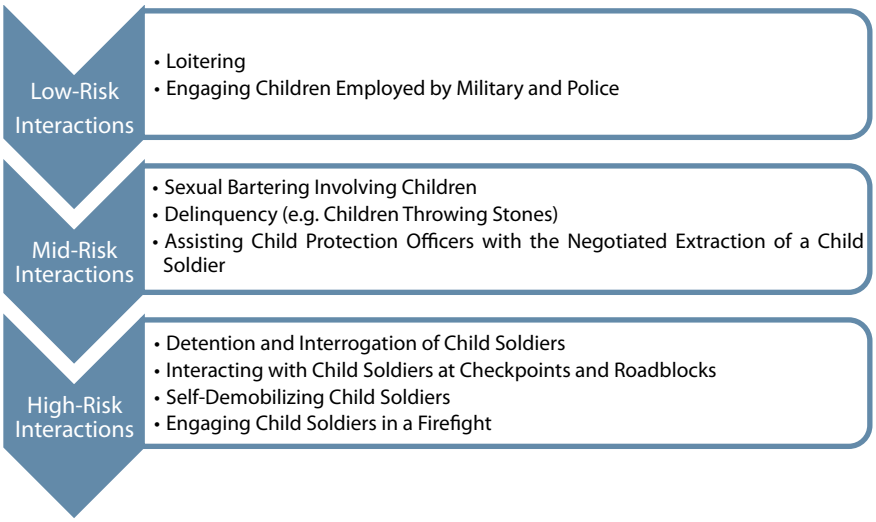
There are various strategies that can be employed so as to both limit the number of child soldier casualties in the field and prevent the hazardous second-guessing associated with moral dilemmas. These include:

- Conducting Psychological Operations in advance of any operation, so as to convince child soldiers to abandon their units;
- Focusing upon the centre of gravity by targeting the adult commanders of child soldiers during a firefight;
- Attempting to create a buffer between the child soldier and his or her adult commander (as children who are not ideologically attached to their armed group's cause are more likely to surrender if they have been separated from their commanders);
- Revisiting the ROEs concerning child soldiers and role playing them so as to ensure better preparation for interactions with child soldiers.

Part IV
The Tactical Response

Improving Interactions with Child Soldiers

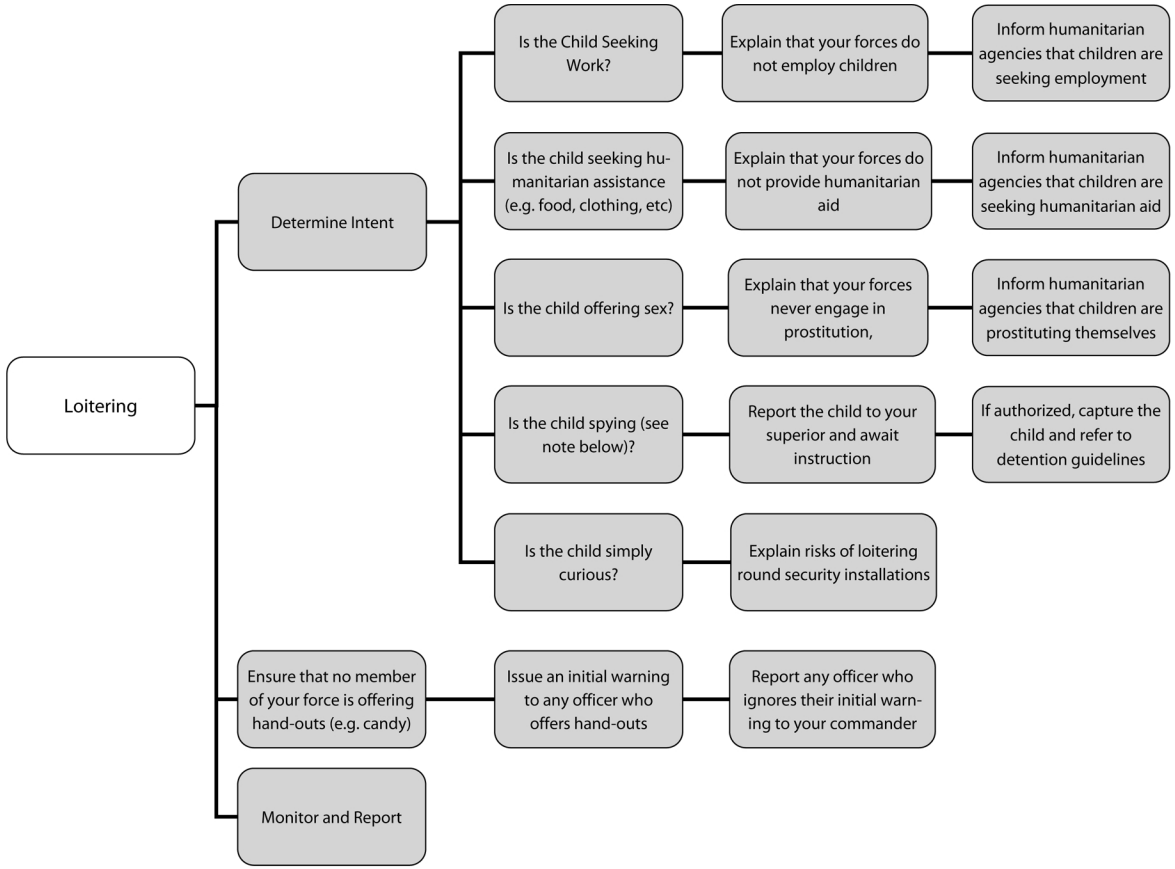
4.1 The Spectrum of Interactions with Child Soldiers



All security sector actors have a responsibility to protect the rights of the child. All interactions with child soldiers should therefore strive to have a minimum negative impact.

Such interactions may take on any number of different appearances. Security sector actors may encounter child soldiers at military installations or armed checkpoints. Armed groups may send children into villages that are occupied by security sector actors so as to conduct reconnaissance missions. In the case of girls, tasks may include befriending professional security sector actors and offering them sexual services in exchange for access to information or facilities[21]. Even in the most stereotypical situation of an adult soldier facing a child with a gun, different and unexpected factors can arise with different and unexpected consequences. For example, such interaction may take place within the context of an ambush or during a routine armed patrol. As such, security sector actors should be aware that traditionally low-risk scenarios can explode into high-risk interactions, just as high-risk interactions can de-escalate into low-risk exchange.

4.2 Loitering



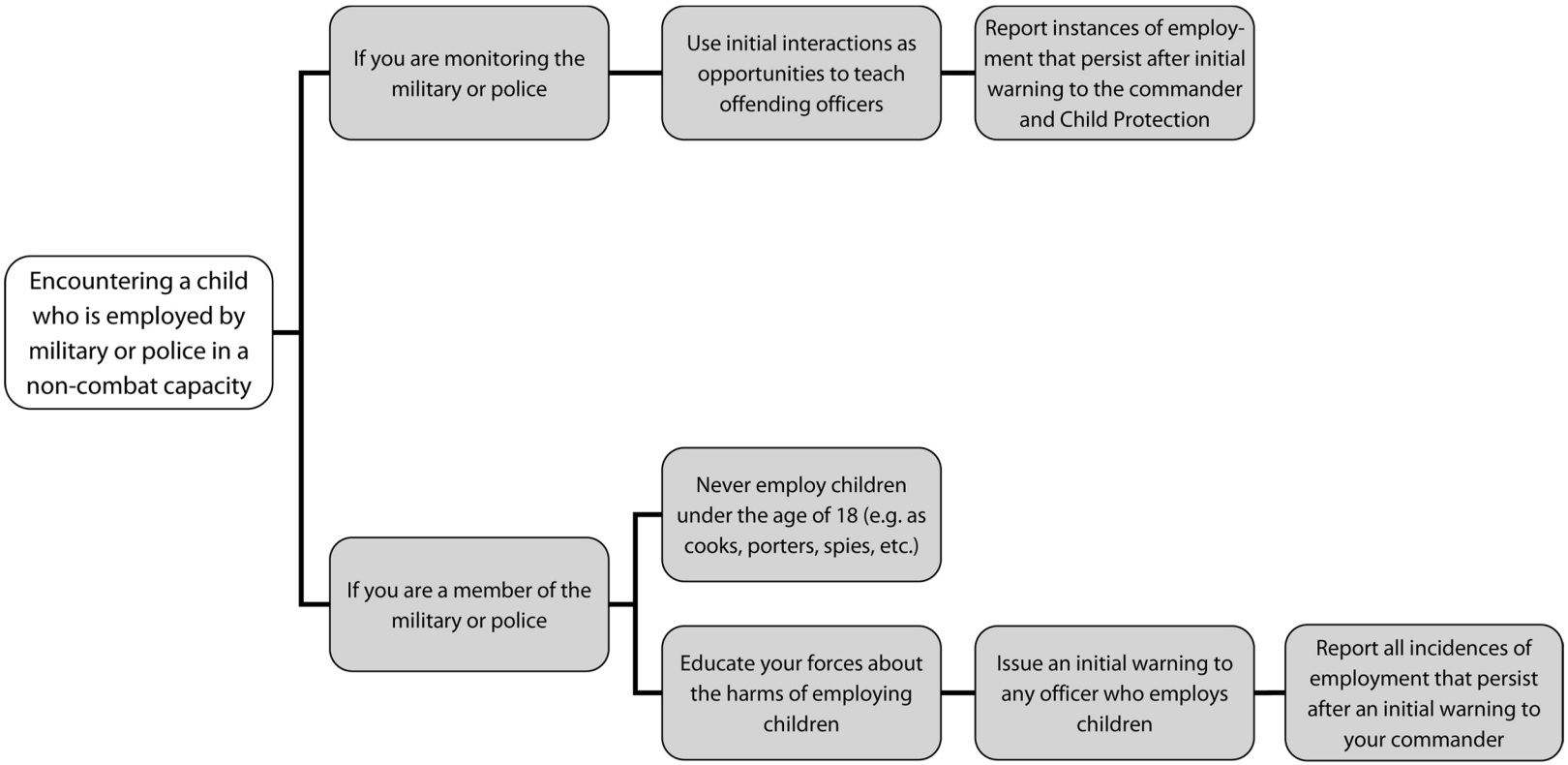
4.2 | Key Considerations: Loitering

- Children should be told that it is dangerous for them to loiter around security installations and personnel, as they are frequently targeted for attack;

- All security sector actors should refrain from offering inducements to children (e.g. candy, pencils, charity money, etc.). Instead, actors should report children's needs to relevant international organizations, such as UNICEF or the International Red Cross/Red Crescent;

- While it may be difficult to determine whether a child is acting in the capacity of a spy, one indicator may be that they regularly loiter in one place but then disappear whenever you attempt to approach them. Pay close attention to children with mobile phones or cameras, as well as to groups of children in which one appears to be a leader who sends "runners" to report on activities.

4.3 Encountering a child who is employed by military or police in a non-combat capacity

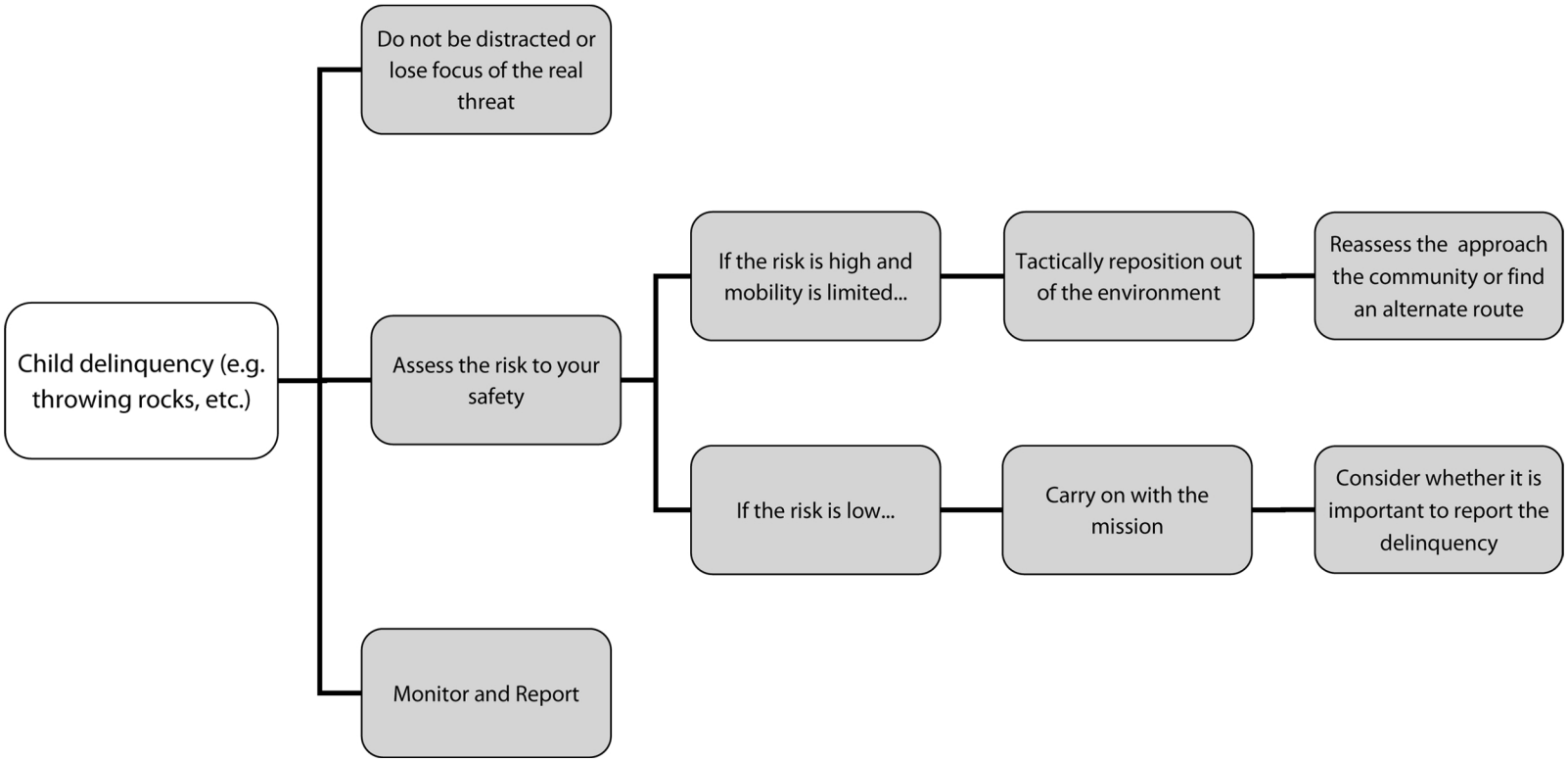


4.3 | Key Considerations: Engaging Children Employed by Military and Police

- Children employed by the military or police – either as child soldiers on the front lines or in a support capacity (e.g. as cooks, porters, spies, chai boys, etc.) – are exposed to serious physical risks. Insofar as security sector installations are enemy targets, children associated with military and police may be similarly targeted. As such, children under the age of 18 should never be employed by the military or police under any circumstances;

- Special consideration should be given to instances of prostitution and sexual abuse. Professional security actors should never engage in sexual relations children under the national age of consent and all infractions should be reported immediately.

4.4 Delinquency (e.g. Children Throwing Stones)



4.4 | Key Considerations: Delinquency (e.g. Children Throwing Stones)

- Security sector actors should never allow themselves to be distracted from their mission or the real threat. The best response to instances of child delinquency is to ignore the behaviour, especially when one is mounted on vehicle. However, if a security sector actor is patrolling on foot, a measured response may be required;

- If a security sector actor perceives that an entire neighbourhood or community exhibits a negative attitude towards security sector presence, it is important to report this observation in the After Action Review, as the area may require a PSYOPS initiative or extra vigilance;

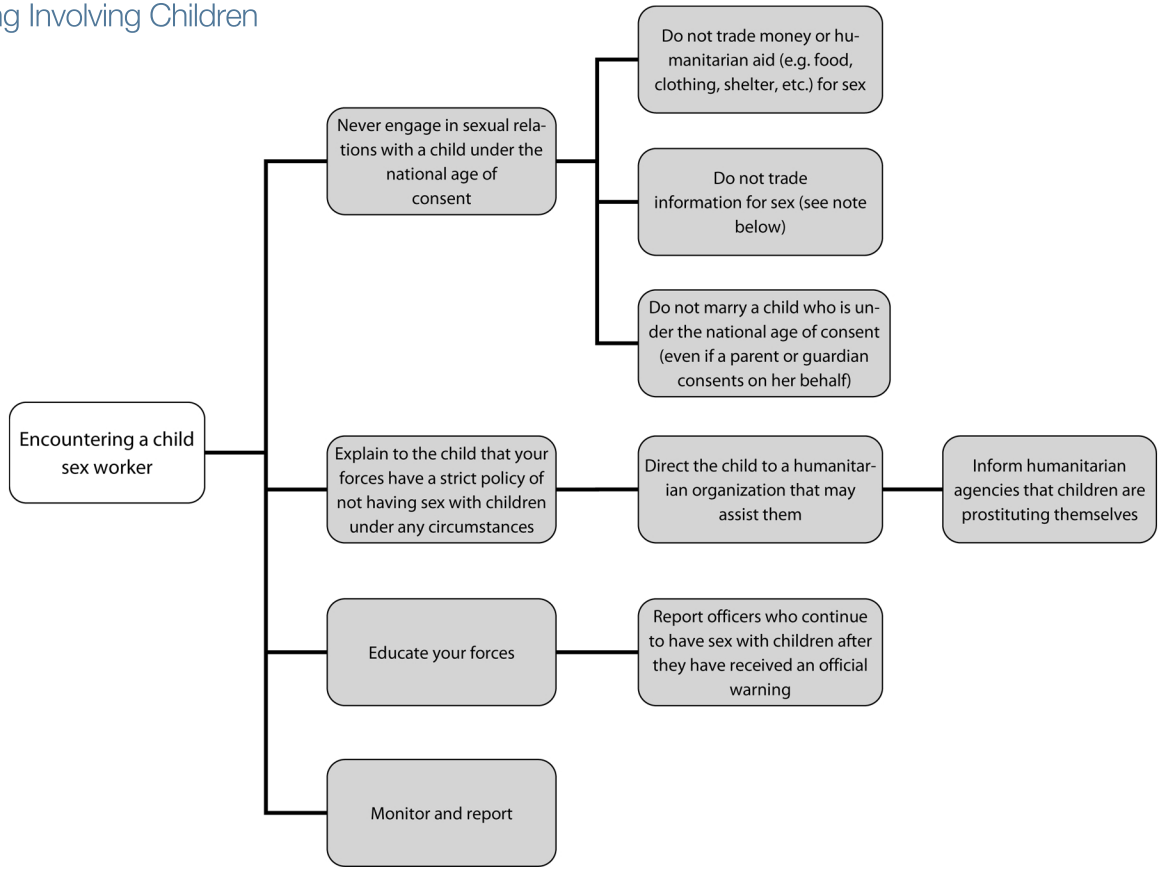
- Using weapons to respond to youth throwing rocks is a no-win situation if one is trying to court public opinion and gain a community's support. Likewise, security sector actors should make limited use of non-lethal tools such as tear gas, as they may unintentionally cause children to panic;

- Tactically, security sector actors should consider repositioning their unit so as to ensure that those under their command do not contribute to escalation;

- Security sector actors should work with community elders and leaders so as to encourage children to stop such delinquent behaviour;

- Remember that children all over the world occasionally engage in delinquent behaviour and that the vast majority of such activity is neither intentionally harmful nor politically motivated.

4.5 Sexual Bartering Involving Children



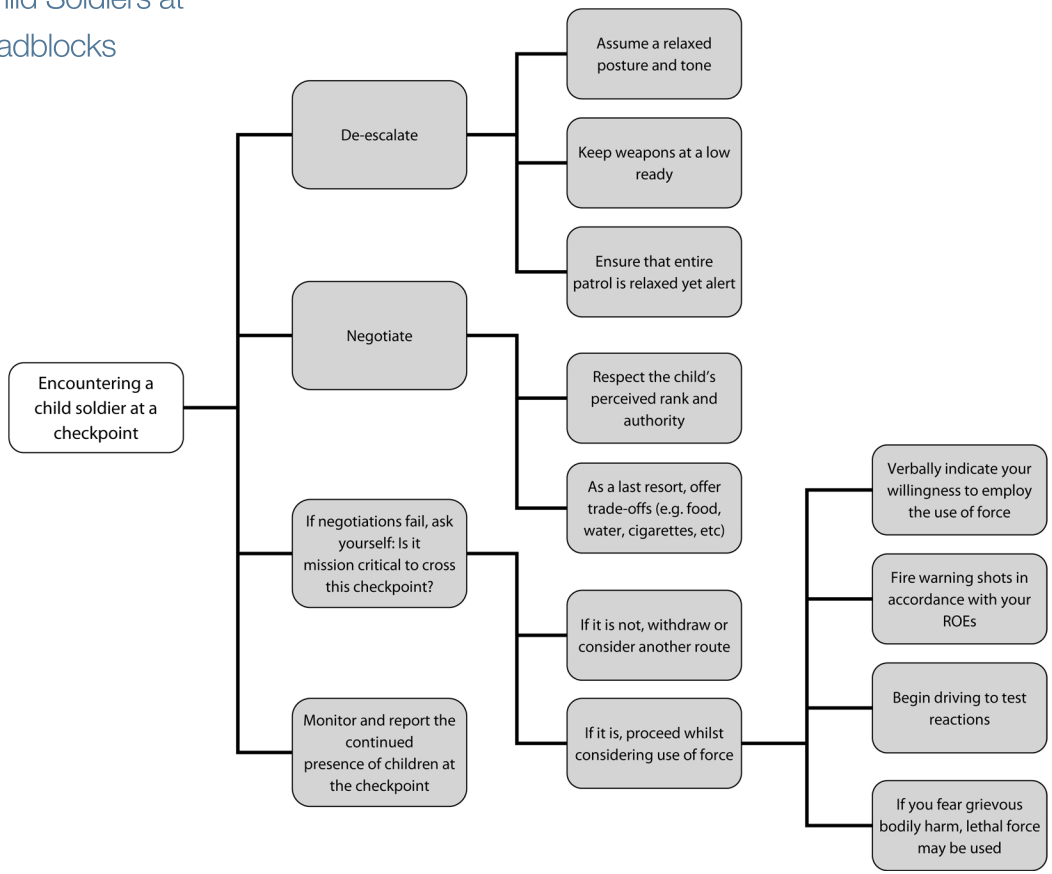
4.5 | Key Considerations: Sexual Bartering Involving Children

- Professional security sector actors should never engage in sexual relations with a child who is below the national age of consent;

- Children may also put security sector actors at risk when they lure them for sex. There are many cases in which child soldiers have posed as sex workers so as to extract information from or kill security sector personnel.

> "In Nepal, one of my soldiers was approached by a young woman at a bar in the city. He went back to the hotel with her. The next morning, he had not returned to the base and when we went looking for him, we found him dead in the hotel room. The girl had been sent by the rebel group to seduce our soldiers and kill them."
>
> **—Former Training Session Participant**

4.6 Engaging with Child Soldiers at Checkpoints and Roadblocks

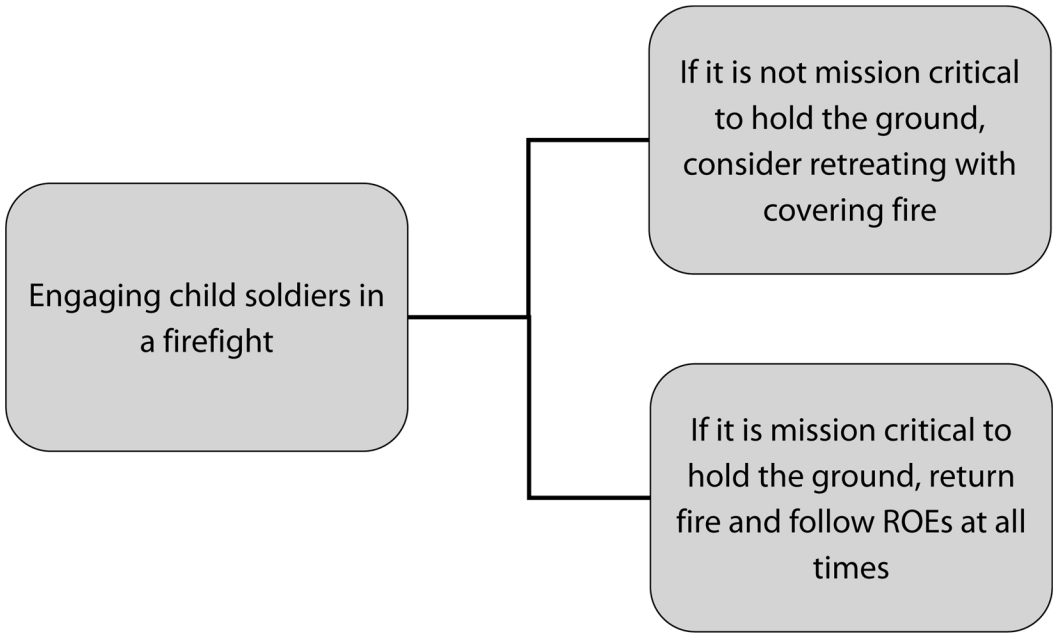


4.6 | Key Considerations: Engaging with Child Soldiers at Checkpoints and Roadblocks

- Your actions should be based upon your appraisal of mission criticality and not upon the perceived need for power dominance. Remember the mission at all times. If it is not mission critical to cross the checkpoint, consider withdrawal;

- When negotiating, the offering of trade-offs should be a last resort. Once you offer food, water, cigarettes or fuel, there may be the expectation that you provide such goods every time you cross the checkpoint in the future. Weapons and ammunition should never be offered as a trade-off.

4.7 Engaging Child Soldiers in a Firefight



4.7 | Key Considerations: Engaging Child Soldiers in a Firefight

- It is acknowledged that in the heat of battle, security sector actors cannot be expected to override their training and ROEs so as to distinguish between adult combatants and child combatants. As such, security sector actors should adhere to their ROEs at all times;

- Security sector actors should remember that child soldiers may seek to surrender and demobilize during battle. When a child requests to be demobilized, they must always be accommodated;

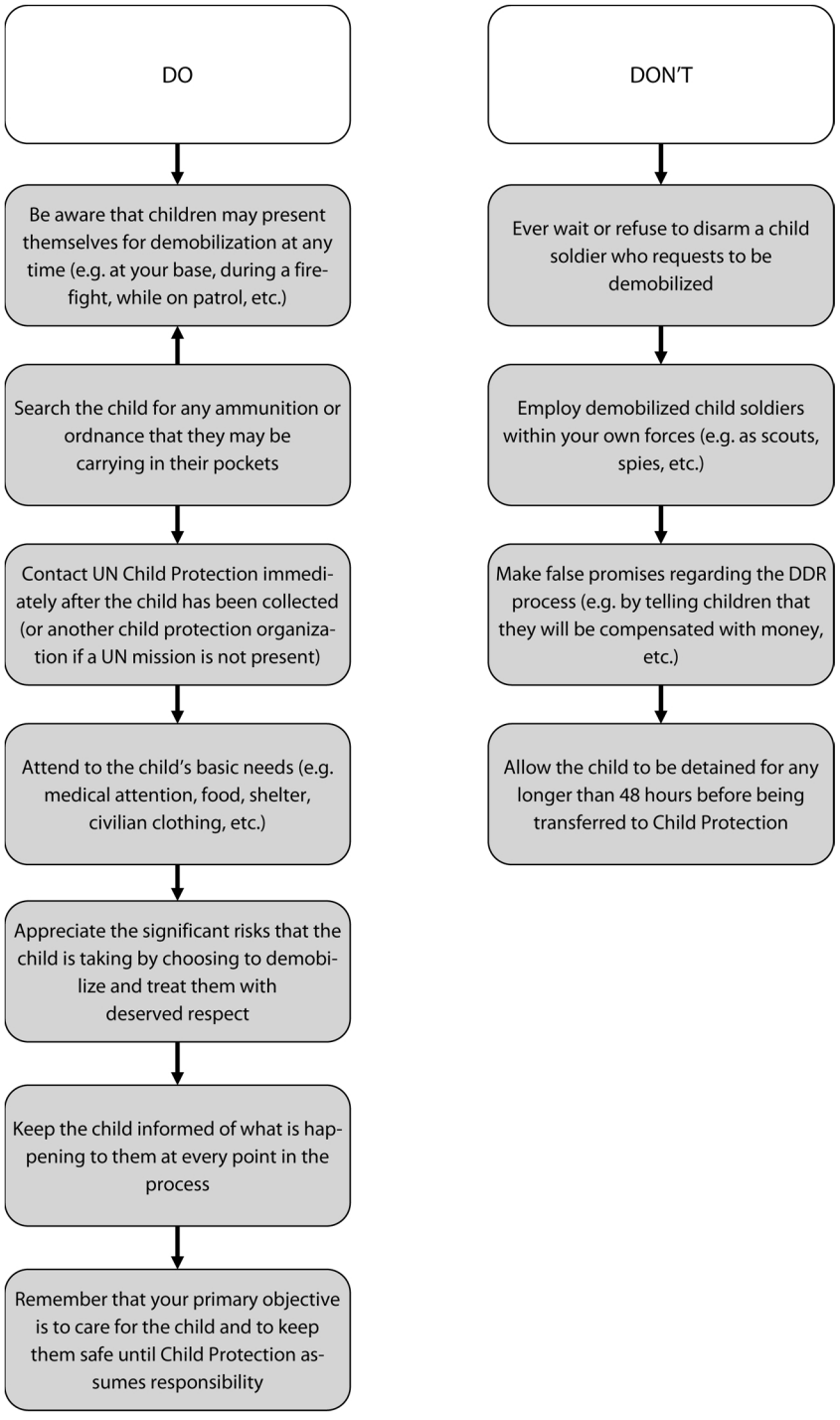
- It is not recommended that security sector actors shoot to maim child soldiers. A child soldier with a wounded limb can still pose a very serious threat to security sector actors;

- Wherever possible, security sector actors should attempt to target adult commanders (i.e. the "centre of gravity" in a child soldier firefight). Oftentimes, if the adult recruiters and users are neutralized, the children under their command will be more inclined to surrender;

- When the targeting of child soldiers becomes truly unavoidable, security sector actors should bear in mind that one enemy casualty may prompt the surrender of many others. This is to say that one life has the potential to save a great many others;

- After having engaged child soldiers in battle, security sector actors should be aware of the risk of PTSD and should be sensitive to symptoms of PTSD in one's peers. Consider holding Critical Incident Debriefs after such encounters, so as to minimize the potential psychological effects.

4.8 Self-Demobilizing Child Soldiers



4.8 | Key Considerations: Self-Demobilizing Child Soldiers

- It is important for security sector actors to be aware of the ways in which a child might attempt to escape an armed group, as well as of the strategies employed by armed groups to prevent such attrition;

- Security sector actors should be particularly observant with respect to girl soldiers who are attempting to demobilize, as it is especially difficult for them to escape armed groups. This is partly because of the power that commanders exert over them and partly because of the perceived invisibility of girls' roles.

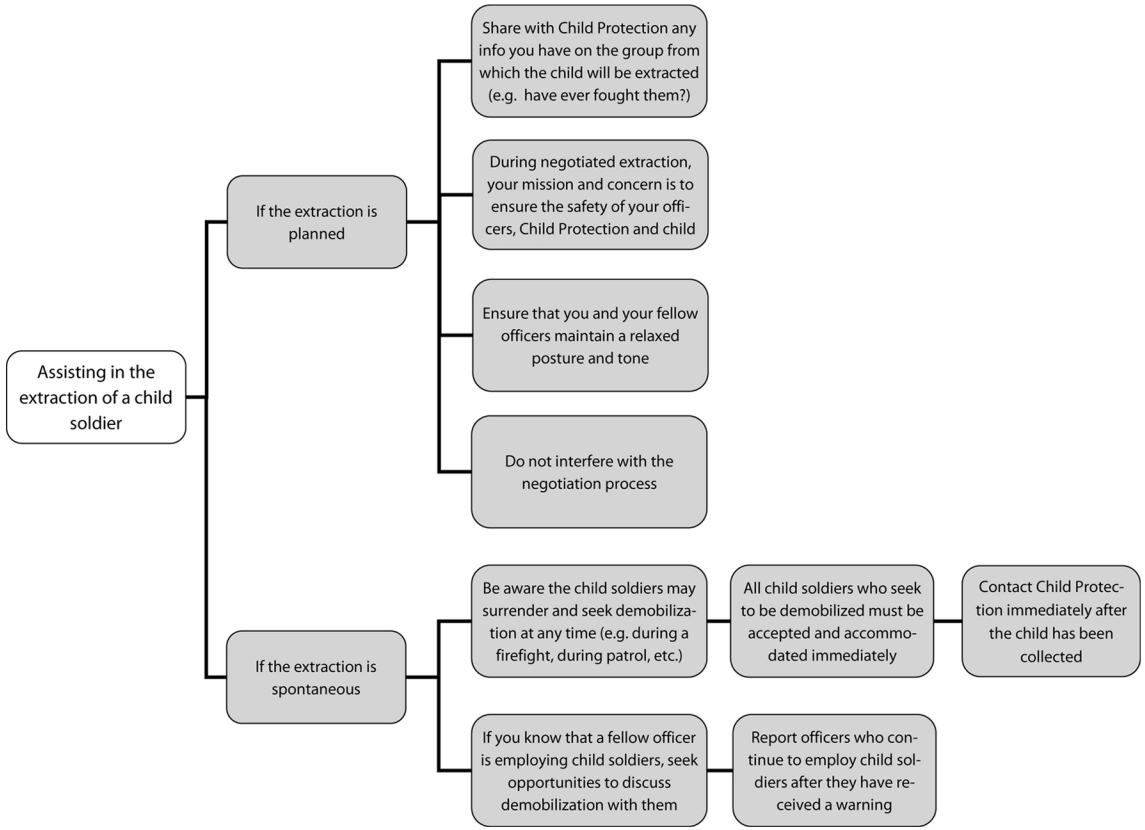
- Children should not necessarily have to await a formal peace process in order to leave an armed group[22]. Children leave armed groups because of the following reasons:

    - Formal demobilization processes following a peace agreement;
    - Release during conflict due to advocacy campaigns or direct negotiations;
    - Escape from the armed group;
    - Capture by an opposing armed force or group;
    - Abandonment by the armed group (e.g. because of injury, disability, sickness, pregnancy, infant care-giving, etc.);
    - Cessation of hostilities.

Escaping Small Boy Units

In Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) employed a "buddy system" that involved pairing child soldiers together, so as to ensure that neither one would escape. If one partner disappeared, the other child left behind would face severe repercussions, including beating and maiming.

4.9 Assisting Child Protection Officers with the Negotiated Extraction of a Child Soldier



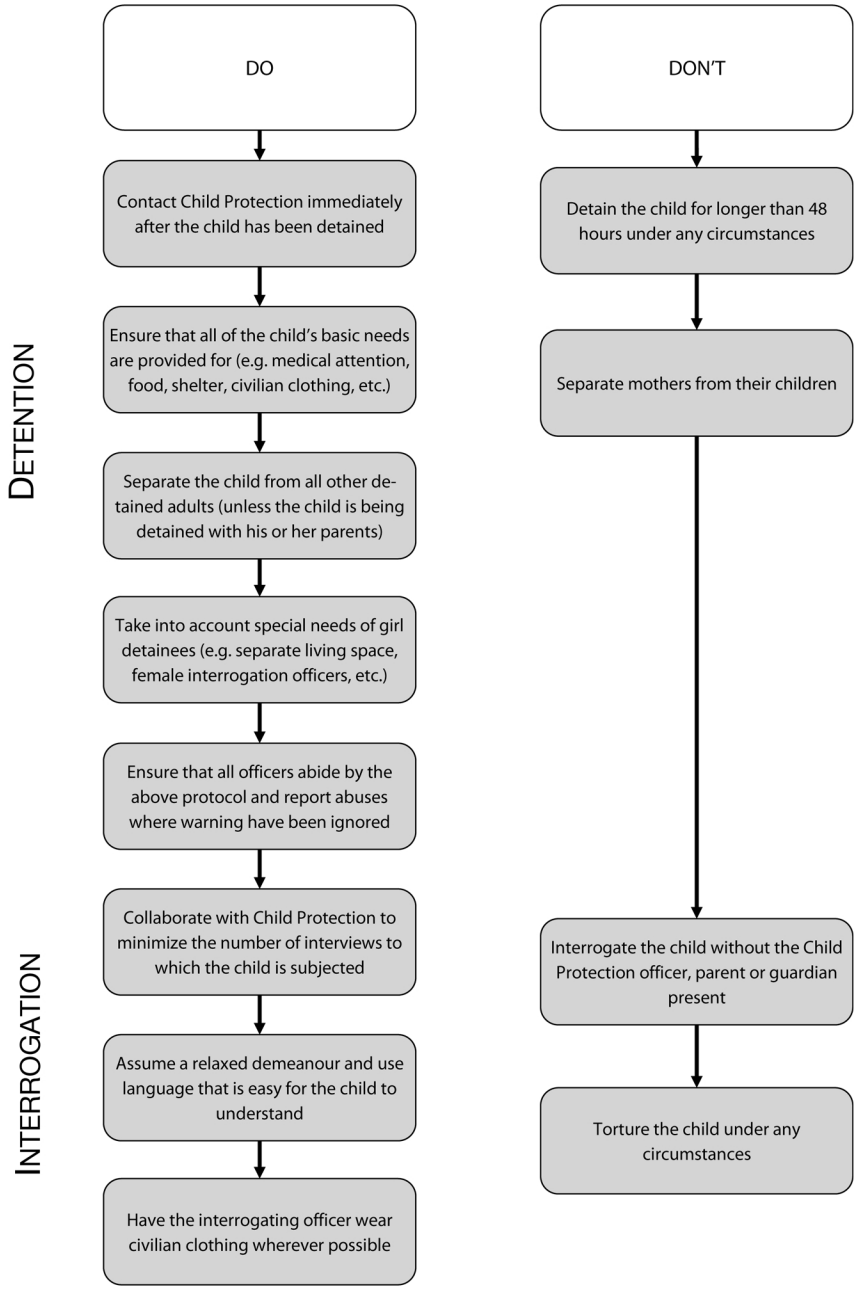
4.9 | Key Considerations: Assisting Child Protection Officers with the Negotiated Extraction of a Child Soldier

- Familiarize yourself with some of the possible reasons why a commander may view child soldiers as a valuable asset, why they may wish to retain them and how they may be convinced to surrender them (see "Part I: The Operational Framework");

- Unless a child soldier surrenders and seeks demobilization during a patrol or in the heat of battle, child protection (preferably UN) should always be responsible for conducting negotiated extractions. It is the role of security sector actors to secure the negotiation being conducted;

- If a child soldier seeks spontaneous demobilization in the field, they must always be accommodated, regardless of whether child protection is present. However, child protection must always be informed immediately after the fact (see "Interaction #4: Self-Demobilizing Child Soldiers).

4.10 Detention and Interrogation of Child Soldiers



4.10 | Key Considerations: Detention and Interrogation of Child Soldiers

- In general, children should not be subjected to interrogation. However, if a child must be interrogated, collaboration with child protection officers is essential, particularly so as to minimize the number of potentially traumatic interviews to which the child is subjected;

- It is widely understood that information obtained via torture is often inaccurate and unreliable. Under such duress, former prisoners have reported that they would say anything – whether true or false – in order to make the abuse stop;

- Likewise, information obtained using coercive or illegal techniques will likely be ruled as inadmissible in court proceedings.

See Annex 3 for a list of suggested interrogation questions.

Psychological Operations

4.11 Psychological Operations and Child Soldiers

Psychological Operations, or PSYOPS, are planned operations intended to convey selected information to a military, civilian or enemy audience, so as to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning and behaviour. The purpose of PSYOPS is to induce or reinforce attitudes favourable to one's own objectives. Target audiences may include governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society groups, armed groups, communities or individuals. Crucially, PSYOPS may also be conducted within one's security sector organization, so as to strengthen esprit de corps or lobby support for a particular strategy or mission.

PSYOPS are also variously referred to as political warfare, "hearts and minds" campaigns and propaganda. While humanitarians do engage in activities that security sector actors might rightly classify as PSYOPS, they tend to label these activities as "awareness-raising" or "sensitization" campaigns. As such, when interacting with the humanitarian community, security sector actors are advised to be aware of the sensitivities associated with differing vocabularies.

PSYOPS may be employed to counter child soldiery in a number of different ways. From the prevention angle, radio programs, mobile theatre, cinema, leaflet

distribution and text messaging can be used to disseminate information that helps parents protect their children from recruitment. Likewise, the same tools can be used to project information concerning DDR programmes to child soldiers currently operating in the field.

Radio: A Tool for Awareness-Raising

In 2012, The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, along with the *Association de Soutien aux Opprimés*, created a series of radio-based skits to be used as an awareness-raising tool. These skits can also be used in training sessions where role-playing is not possible.

PSYOPS are also an invaluable way for security sector actors to cultivate general goodwill within communities. When security sector actors engage directly with a community and assist it without demands of recompense – for example, by helping civilians prepare against or recover from natural disasters, implementing quick impact projects to improve infrastructure or organizing friendly football matches – there is an increased likelihood that the community will generously repay those efforts by providing information and material support.

When designing child soldier-oriented PSYOPS, security sector actors are advised to collaborate with humanitarian organizations as much as possible, as humanitarians have extensive experience conducting such information campaigns and are generally seen by communities as a more credible source of unbiased information than the military or police.

* * *

What follows is a list of some of the most common PSYOPS tools that have been used to conduct child soldier-oriented information campaigns in the past:

Radio Programmes	Radio programmes can be used to broadcast information about the legal ramifications of child soldiering, so as to deter recruiters. They may also be used to deconstruct the various myths that might encourage parents to volunteer their children for recruitment (e.g. if you child joins our armed group, he or she will eventually receive an education in Europe"). Radio programmes are particularly effective when they are presented by actual former child soldiers who have successfully demobilized, as they are widely considered by other child soldiers to be particularly trustworthy sources of information.
Mobile Theatre and Cinema	Mobile theatre or cinema entails the presentation of informative and often humorous skits or scenes to all members of a community. These skits and scenes may depict instances of child recruitment, abuse at the hands of a commander or escape from an armed group. Their purpose is to teach community members various strategies that may be employed to avoid falling victim to child soldiering or to entice armed groups to release children currently in their ranks. Mobile theatre and cinema is particularly effective when used to promote community acceptance of reintegrated child soldiers and, like radio programmes, they benefit from the legitimacy engendered by direct participation of former child soldiers themselves.
Leaflets	Informative leaflets have also been used to disseminate information about child soldiers. These slips of paper often convey information via drawings so that all persons can understand them, regardless of their language or literacy level. Leaflets are dropped out of airplanes and scattered across villages or forests where child soldiers are believed to be operating. They are a particularly effective means of conveying information about DDR programmes to child soldiers currently being held in the bush.
Text Messaging	As telecommunications infrastructure becomes more widespread, text messaging via mobile phones has become a practical and powerful way to share information with communities. For instance, if security sector actors are aware of an armed group operating a short distance away from a civilian community, text messages can be sent to warn the community of potential attack and child recruitment.

Part V
Other Considerations

Cross-Cutting Issues

5.1 The Stigmatization and Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers

Reintegration is a key consideration when attempting to effect long-term peace and stability within a post-conflict setting. However, the process of returning children to their families and communities is often fraught with many challenges.

One of the main obstacles to successful reintegration is the stigmatization of former child soldiers. If we fail to address the threat this poses to the child's full psychosocial recovery, the efficacy of the DDR process could be put in jeopardy and the child will face increased risk of future re-recruitment. It is therefore crucial to recognise the detrimental impact that stigmatization can have upon the consolidation of peace in the long-term.

Stigmatization

In one study conducted by the International Labour Organisation, 80% of African households surveyed said they would not want their children to mix with former child soldiers. Such statistics point to some of the significant social obstacles former child soldiers may face when they return home. This stigmatization can be even more severe in cases where the child's family has been killed or cannot be properly traced, thereby necessitating placement within an adoptive community[23].

To prevent stigmatization and ensure the successful reintegration of former child soldiers:

- The location of ICCs and DDR centres must be carefully assessed so as to both maximize their accessibility to children and to guarantee their security;
- Child soldiers may require extra protection and monitoring when released back into their home communities, as they are often viewed by their communities as being an undesirable burden;
- PSYOPS or sensitization campaigns may be employed so as to help communities better understand what is taking place during the reintegration process;
- Security sector actors must be prepared to report and monitor instances of revenge attacks or killings of former child soldiers by their community, as children may be held responsible for having committed atrocities, even if they had been forced to commit such acts;
- Drop-in centres or mechanisms for children to report crimes committed against them due to their former combatant status should be created;
- Security sector actors should be educated about the risks posed to former child soldiers and should be prepared to support them accordingly.

In sum, all children in a conflict zone are affected by violence. It is important to recognise that labelling a child as being a perpetrator can have serious consequences for his or her reintegration process.

5.2 Interim Care Centres (ICCs) and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) Centres

During conflict and post-conflict situations, interim care centres (ICCs) and DDR centres are necessary to assist child soldiers immediately after they have been extracted from their armed group. Although great effort is usually made to avoid militarising these centres, security sector actors may occasionally be required to assist in their protection and in the protection children who are housed there.

DDR-related security concerns may include the following:

Population Protection	During the disarmament and demobilization of children, humanitarian workers subject themselves to tense and potentially dangerous conditions, especially as such processes increasingly take place amidst ongoing hostilities. There are ways in which security sector actors can contribute to the protection of these individuals. However, this must be done with careful consideration of how best to achieve security whilst also avoiding overt militarisation. Protective activities should also involve communities that neighbour ICCs and DDR centres, as former child soldier can create security concerns themselves (either real or perceived) if they escape or if an armed group attempts to re-capture them.
Information Sharing	Security sector actors should engage in information-sharing with other concerned organizations on all matters pertaining to child soldiers. Different actors will have different pieces of intelligence and different perspectives on the problem and possible solutions, which when collated, could be of tremendous use in the field. For example, information on potential security threats could determine appropriate locations for ICCs and DDR centres.
Logistical Support	There may be circumstances in which security sector actors have the capacity to offer logistical support to the planning, establishment and managing of ICCs, DDR centres and other related activities.
Capacity Building and Monitoring	There may also be areas where international security sector actors can help build the capacity of national security sector institutions.
Expansion of Military Objectives and Mandate	As security forces and peace operations grow, there may be room to explore how they could better serve the needs of children affected by armed conflict. Through the evolving mechanisms available to security sector actors – including, for example, Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) and hybrid missions – there may be some potential to become more engaged in the reconstruction of child-friendly spaces.

Security for ICCs and DDR centres is essential for the protection of both the children and those working within these settings. In order to achieve effective security, the following actions should be considered:

- Releasing children into their communities before they have completed their psychosocial rehabilitation can have a detrimental effect upon child, the family unit and the community;

- Children released from armed groups may be well-trained fighters with a great deal of aggression. If such behaviour is not dealt with appropriately, it can become a serious problem for the community;

- Communities that are not properly sensitized to the needs of former child soldiers may wish to take revenge upon these children, which can lead to safety concerns for both the child and his or her family;

- Children that are not rehabilitated effectively may re-join or be re-recruited into an armed group once released, thus starting the child soldier cycle all over again.

5.3 Conflict Minerals

"…with children present, political ideology is less necessary to the maintenance of warfare. Indeed, many conflicts fuelled by child fighters have been simply about personal greed and the seizure of valuable mineral assets... There [is] a focus on making money by seizing diamond mines, looting villages and exacting protection money, but there [is] little effort to cultivating [sic.] popular support or enacting social change[24]."

—P.W. Singer, Author of Children at War

Many of the world's ongoing conflicts involve the exploitation of natural resources. Child soldiers are frequently employed to extract or transport these resources or to provide security for the exploitation process. Analyses of resource flows, price fluctuations, and regional and international linkages must therefore be included in the intelligence development process, so as to determine the degree to which extraction impacts the conflict's intensity and longevity (particularly vis-à-vis child soldiers). Understanding such dynamics may help security sector actors to perceive the underlying motivation for commanders to recruit and use child soldiers. It may also assist child protection officers to conduct a more informed and compelling negotiation during the attempted extraction processes.

5.4 Witchcraft

Although it is commonly accepted that in many African and Latin American contexts, children are used in armed groups for the purposes of witchcraft or as guardians of amulets (often referred to as *gris-gris* or fetishes), there is a strong taboo amongst security actors to discuss this phenomenon.

Child Witches in the Democratic Republic of Congo

According to research conducted in the Democratic Republic of Congo by Save the Children[25], there are three main "types" of child soldiers who are perceived to be involved in witchcraft:

The Erotic	Very young girls – typically from 13 to 15 years of age – who take the place of adults as dancers, seducers and sex symbols.
The *Kadogo*	Child combatants who are capable of incarnating evil and death.
The *Shege*	Street or market children who are recruited as embodiments of chaos and social disintegration.

While not much is known about the use of children by armed groups for the purposes of witchcraft, security sector actors are advised to keep several points in mind:

- In the African context, children with albinism or physical disabilities are specifically targeted for the purposes of witchcraft;

- Child soldiers who are drugged and/or brainwashed into thinking that they are either invisible or invincible may be used by adult commanders as human shields;

- Children who have been drugged or brainwashed may appear to be particularly aggressive and fearless. These children therefore pose an especially serious security threat;

- Children who have been bewitched may be sent into battle without weapons, so as to confuse and intimidate the enemy.

Credit: Marie Frechon

"He is still in the forest carrying his gun. For the little ones like him, they give invisibility 'gris-gris,' which makes you disappear from the view of the enemy. They make a small cut in the tongue and put the potion on. The gris-gris is prepared by the kadogo dawa, the younger children who take care of the medicine." [26]

—Former Child Soldier
Interviewed by Amnesty International

Part VI
Annexes

Annex 1: Lexicon

To ensure successful joint planning and action on the subject of child soldiers, communication between all concerned stakeholders – including security sector actors, humanitarian organizations, governments, communities and child soldiers themselves – is essential. For such communication to be effective – especially in the context of monitoring and reporting – security sector actors must be aware of the different vocabularies employed by the civilian organizations with which they might partner. Communication barriers between diverse actors limits all parties' ability to halt the use of child soldiers.

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative has often used the term "weapons system" to describe the use of children as soldiers. In doing so, it acknowledges the perversity of the concept. The use of this term in no way precludes or ignores the humanity of children; instead, it serves to highlight the security concerns posed by child soldiers that are often overlooked. By emphasising these concerns, the Initiative believes that security sector actors have a particularly important role to play in the protection of children during conflict.

Armed Conflict: International and/or non-international conflicts of high and low intensity.

Armed Forces: Official government armed forces, including the army, navy and air force. Does not refer to paramilitaries or non-state armed groups.

Armed Groups: Paramilitary or non-state groups which use arms for political reasons. Includes opposition forces, factional or tribal groups,

armed groups belonging to ethnic or religious minorities and a range of other militia organizations. Crucially, the term is also used to refer to armed groups (often paramilitaries and militias) which are backed by or allied to government forces but are not officially part of them.

Child: Any person under 18 years of age. This definition is consistent with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 1); the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (Article 2); and International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (Article 2).

Child Soldier/Children Associated with Armed Forces and Groups: Consistent with the Paris Principles, any person under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers, and those accompanying such groups, other than purely as family members. The definition includes girls recruited for sexual purposes and forced marriage. The term child soldier does not, therefore, refer only to a child who is carrying or has carried arms.

Child soldiers are also referred to by child protection agencies such as Save the Children as "children associated with armed groups and forces" (CAAF), so as to emphasize the need for inclusive programmes which provide support to all child soldiers, not only those who carry weapons. The definition is intentionally broad because it seeks to extend protection to and include as many children as possible in DDR programming. The rationale is that within armed forces and groups, roles may be flexible. Whether a child is used as a combatant, cook, porter, soldier's 'wife' or for any other purpose, they are exposed to the dangers and hardships of war. They may be targeted as enemies or for reprisals by opposing forces. Many are forced to witness or participate in human rights violations or suffer such abuses themselves.

Collaboration/Cohesion: The exchange of information, sharing of resources, coordination of strategic objectives and co-implementation of programs amongst governmental, security, non-governmental and civilian actors. The eventual aim of collaboration is full integration, whereby different actors come together in a single body so as to implement a specific program.

Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR): A process entailing the comprehensive disarmament of combatants, their transition from military to civilian life and the provision of opportunities for sustainable social and economic reintegration. DDR aims to support the high-risk demographic of ex-combatants so that they become stakeholders in the peace process[27]. DDR should be made accessible to all combatants who are party to an armed conflict, whether they are members of the armed forces, a paramilitary or a non-state armed group.

Disarmament: The collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weaponry of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programs[28].

De-escalation: An act or process intended to reduce the level or intensity of a conflict or encounter. For example, moving one's aimed weapon to a "low ready" is an act of de-escalation.

Detention: The harbouring of any individual – whether civilian or ex-combatant – in a police or military installation. In the case of children, no former child soldier should be detained for longer than 48 hours before being transferred to UN Child Protection (or whichever national body is responsible for the rehabilitation and reintegration of child combatants).

Demobilization: The formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (e.g. cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is also called rehabilitation or reinsertion[29].

Interim Care Centre (ICC)/Transit Centre: Places where former child soldiers live as they go through the rehabilitation process. Usually run by local organisations and overseen by UNICEF, ICCs typically house former child soldiers for an average of 3 months. Literacy training, psychosocial support and vocational training all take place in this centre.

Internally Displaced Peoples (IDPs): Persons who have been forced to flee their homes for reasons such as armed conflict, gang violence, human

rights abuses or other disasters, and who have sought safety elsewhere in the same country.

Interrogation: A form of interview most commonly directed by military or police to extract information from a person. Subjects of interrogation are often suspects, victims or witnesses of a crime. It has been proven that data collected during interrogations (i.e. under duress) are usually unreliable, exaggerated or false. Under no circumstances should an interrogation involve torture, especially in the case of children.

Military Intelligence: The product that results from the collection, processing, integration, analysis, evaluation and interpretation of available information concerning an adversary or area of operations[30]. In the humanitarian sphere, there are no separate terms for raw data and intelligence – both are called "information".

Negotiation: The process by which two parties debate and agree upon a mutually beneficial course of action. The aim of any negotiation should be the satisfaction of both parties' core interests.

Neutralise: In a military context, neutralization signifies the elimination of a threat by killing. However, for the purposes of this manual, the term is meant to denote the elimination of an entire weapons system (i.e. child soldiery) by concerted advocacy and preventative action. For example, the Initiative seeks to neutralise the use of child soldiers by armed forces and armed groups.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): A mental health condition that is triggered by a terrifying event. Symptoms include flashbacks, nightmares and extreme anxiety, as well as uncontrollable thoughts about the event[31].

Psychological Operations (PSYOPS): Planned operations intended to convey selected information to a civilian or enemy audience, so as to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning and behaviour. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce attitudes and behaviours favourable to one's own objectives[32].

Ratification: The means by which governments consent to be legally bound by an international treaty. In most cases, ratification follows the

actual signing of the treaty and requires action by a national parliament. States ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child or its Optional Protocols must deposit their instruments of ratification with the UN Secretary-General.

Refugee: As per the United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is, "A person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it."

Reintegration: The process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility and often necessitates long-term external assistance[33].

Recruitment: Refers to the ways in which people become members of armed forces or groups. Recruitment can be compulsory, voluntary and/or forced. Compulsory recruitment is usually known as conscription, whereby some citizens are required by law to join the armed forces for a certain period of time. Voluntary recruitment is usually regulated by law or via policy of the armed forces, though it also refers to situations in which a person is enlisted or joins an armed group without the use of force. Forced recruitment entails the illegal use of force (for instance, in the form of abduction or under any other act of duress). The lines between compulsory, voluntary and forced recruitment are often blurred. Children may be subjected to various political and economic pressures that provide them with few alternatives to joining armed forces or armed groups.

Rules of Engagement (ROEs): Specific laws and conventions that dictate the circumstances in and extent to which security sector actors may employ force. ROEs are designed to prevent the inadvertent escalation of a potentially dangerous situation, such that aggressive action will not be

instigated against the forces of another state – or against armed groups within a state – without careful observance of national law.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): An established procedure to be followed when carrying out a specific operation or when in a specific situation.

Theatre: The environment in which a security sector actor operates. In the humanitarian sphere, the theatre is referred to as "the field".

Uniformed Actor: Refers to men and women working within in the security sector. It includes military, police, peacekeepers and private security operators.

Use of Force: The use of weapons to inflict bodily harm upon a belligerent. Instances in which use of force is permitted are highly particular and defined by individual countries' ROEs. In general, security sector actors are only permitted the use of force when they fear grievous bodily harm to either civilians or themselves.

Weapons System: A concept developed by Lt. Gen. Roméo Dallaire (Ret.) that describes how children are used by adults as tools with which to wage war. The child, like the automatic rifle, is relatively cheap and, after some rudimentary training, fairly easy to operate. Tactically, the child is desirable because he or she is easy to maintain (insofar as he or she eats and drinks less than the average adult) and does not require payment. Should the child become unserviceable, he or she can easily be disposed of[34].

Annex 2: International Law

The recruitment and use of children in hostilities is a crime under numerous widely ratified regional and international laws, and is the focus of many UN Security Council resolutions. Below are some of the main conventions and guidelines that currently exist for the protection of children in armed conflict. Security sector actors should also familiarise themselves with the national laws of the country in which they are operating, as well as with the international laws that the country has ratified.

Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

This protocol was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 May 2000 and entered into force on 12 February 2002. It sets 18 as the minimum age for direct participation in hostilities, for recruitment into armed groups and for compulsory recruitment by governments. States may accept volunteers from the age of 16 but must deposit a binding declaration at the time of ratification or accession, setting out their minimum voluntary recruitment age and outlining certain safeguards for such recruitment.

Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court

This statute established a permanent court to try persons charged with committing war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. In its definition of war crimes, the statute includes "…conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities" (Article 8(2)(b)(xxvi)); and in the case of an internal armed conflict, "…conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities" (Article 8(2)(e)(vii)).

When drafting the treaty, delegates agreed that the terms "using" and "participate" would apply not only to children who are directly involved conflict as combatants, but also to those children in supportive roles that

are linked to combat, such as scouts, spies, saboteurs, decoys, couriers and checkpoint guards. Also prohibited is the use of children in "direct" support functions, such as carrying supplies to the front line. The statute further defines sexual slavery – of adults and children – as a crime against humanity (Article 7(1)(g)). The treaty came into force and the court came into being on 1 July 2002.

ILO Minimum Age Convention 138

This convention was adopted on 26 June 1973 and came into force on 19 June 1976. States ratifying the convention are committed to pursuing a national policy designed to ensure the effective abolition of child labour and to raise progressively the minimum age for admission to employment or work to a level consistent with the fullest physical and mental development of young persons (Article 1).

ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention 182

This convention was adopted on 16 June 1999 and came into force on 19 November 2000. It commits each ratifying state to "…take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency". The term "child" applies to all persons under the age of 18 years and the worst forms of child labour include all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery (such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom) and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict (Article 3a).

Additional Protocols to the Four Geneva Conventions of 1949 (1977)

The protocols set 15 as the minimum age for recruitment or use in armed conflict. This minimum standard applies to all parties, both governmental and non-governmental, in both international and internal armed conflict.

Article 77 of Additional Protocol I, Applicable to International Armed Conflicts

This article states that, "The Parties to the conflict shall take all feasible measures in order that children who have not attained the age of fifteen

years do not take a direct part in hostilities and, in particular, they shall refrain from recruiting them into their armed forces."

In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years the Parties to the conflict shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest (Paragraph 2). If, in exceptional cases, despite the provisions of paragraph 2, children who have not attained the age of fifteen years take a direct part in hostilities and fall into the power of an adverse Party, they shall continue to benefit from the special protection accorded by this Article, whether or not they are prisoners of war (Paragraph 3).

Article 4(3)(c) of the Additional Protocol II, Applicable to Non-International Armed Conflicts

This article states that, "Children who have not attained the age of fifteen years shall neither be recruited in the armed forces or groups nor allowed to take part in hostilities."

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Although the Convention on the Rights of the Child generally defines a child as any person under the age of 18, Article 38 uses the lower age of 15 as the minimum for recruitment or participation in armed conflict. This language is drawn from the two Additional Protocols to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949.

Article 38 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

This article insists that, "States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities (Paragraph 2). States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest (Paragraph 3).

African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child

This charter is the only regional treaty in the world that addresses the issue of child soldiers. It was adopted by the Organization of African Unity (now the African Union) and came into force in November 1999. It defines a child as anyone below 18 years of age, without exception. It also demands that: "States party to the present Charter shall take all necessary measures to ensure that no child shall take a direct part in hostilities and refrain in particular, from recruiting any child" (Article 22.2).

The Paris Commitments and Principles

A major international conference entitled "Free Children from War" was held in Paris on 5 and 6 February 2007. The meeting, co-organized by the Government of France and UNICEF, was attended by 58 countries and included dozens of government ministers, donors, heads of UN agencies and many non-governmental organizations.

At the meeting, the 58 governments endorsed and pledged to respect the principles contained in two documents. The Paris Commitments consist of a set of legal and operational principles intended to protect children from recruitment and use in armed conflict. They complement existing legal and political mechanisms already in place. The Paris Principles is a more detailed document which sets forth a broad doctrine relating to the protection of children from recruitment and use in armed conflict, and their release and successful reintegration into civilian life. The Principles also address the need for long-term prevention strategies, in order to definitively end children's involvement in armed conflict once and for all.

-

The UN Security Council has also passed a series of resolutions condemning the recruitment and use of children in hostilities. These include resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000) 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).

Annex 3: Sample Interrogation Questions

The following sample interrogation questions were obtained during a field visit to UNDDR MONUSCO in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo in 2012.

The Child's Wellbeing

- Are you injured? Do you need medical attention?

General

- From which group have you escaped?
- Where did you escape from (i.e. what precise location)? Do you remember the date?
- Did you feel afraid during your time with the group? If not, why not?
- Were there any other child soldiers in your group?
- Did your commander allow you to speak with other abductees?
- Did your commander ever speak with you? If so, about what?
- Did your commander ever force you to learn another language?
- Were there women in your group? If so, what roles do they play?
- If there were women in your group, did any of them have children? If so, who cared for them?

Communications

- Is there more than one group operating in the area?
- Are the various armed groups in communication with each other? If so, by what means?
- Did you observe any use of bushcraft (i.e. leaving signals on the ground or in trees, etc.) by one group or another?

Command and Control Structure

- Who was the commander of your group?

- How did you know who was a high-ranking officer? Did you use specific markers to designate rank?
- How did one move up the ranks?
- What were the names of the other officers that were in your group?
- Where any of the officers in your group wounded? If so, how did the group care for them?
- What was the size of your group?
- Roughly how many combatants were women?
- Could women obtain positions of power within your group?
- What areas or regions did your group usually travel through?
- Did your group collaborate with outsiders (e.g. other national army troops, armed groups or communities)?
- Are you aware of the general command and control structure running across your armed group?
- Did your group ever conduct attacks or commit atrocities? If so, what motivates the group to conduct attacks and atrocities?
- What factors might cause them to increase or decrease attacks?

Weapons and Armaments

- What types of weapons and ammunition did your group have?
- How did your group re-supply its arms and ammunition? Where did the arms and ammunition come from?
- Did your group have a weapons cache? If so, do you know where it is?

Religious Practices

- Did your group ever practice religious ceremonies? If so, how regularly and of what type?

Provisioning

- Besides looting, how did your group sustain itself?
- Did your group ever return to cache points? If so, how often and in what approximate location (e.g. country, region, landmarks, etc.)?

DDR

- Have you ever seen a DDR pamphlet? If so, were you allowed to keep any pamphlets that you found?
- Were you allows to listen to the radio? If so, did you ever hear any DDR-related radio or other "amnesty" messages?
- Were you allowed to attend community mobile cinema screenings?
- Do you think there are any other members of your group who are ready to demobilize?

The Future

- Are you aware of your armed group's future plans (particularly as regards movement, attacks and the potential abduction of other children)?
- How was the morale in your group (and in others, if known)?

Annex 4: UN DPKO's Code of Personal Conduct for Peacekeepers

1. Dress, think, talk, act and behave in a manner befitting the dignity of a disciplined, caring, considerate, mature, respected and trusted soldier, displaying the highest integrity and impartiality. Have pride in your position as a peace-keeper and do not abuse or misuse your authority;

2. Respect the law of the land of the host country, their local culture, traditions, customs and practices;

3. Treat the inhabitants of the host country with respect, courtesy and consideration. You are there as a guest to help them and in so doing will be welcomed with admiration. Neither solicit or accept any material reward, honour or gift;

4. Do not indulge in immoral acts of sexual, physical or psychological abuse or exploitation of the local population or United Nations staff, especially women and children;

5. Respect and regard the human rights of all. Support and aid the infirm, sick and weak. Do not act in revenge or with malice, in particular when dealing with prisoners, detainees or people in your custody;

6. Properly care for and account for all United Nations money, vehicles, equipment and property assigned to you and do not trade or barter with them to seek personal benefits;

7. Show military courtesy and pay appropriate compliments to all members of the mission, including other United Nations contingents regardless of their creed, gender, rank or origin;

8. Show respect for and promote the environment, including the flora and fauna, of the host country;

9. Do not engage in excessive consumption of alcohol or traffic in drugs;

10. Exercise the utmost discretion in handling confidential information and matters of official business which can put lives into danger or soil the image of the United Nations[35].

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Child Soldiers International
http://www.child-soldiers.org/home

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DPKO Child Protection
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International Labour Organization (ILO)/International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)
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Network of Young People Affected by War
http://www.nypaw.org/

Office of the Special Representative of the UN on Children and Armed Conflict
http://www.un.org/children/conflict/english/index.html

UNICEF
http:www.unicef.org/protection/index_armedconflict.html

SAVE the Children
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Notes

Notes

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UN Photo-Eskinder Debebe

"Children are both our reason to eliminate the worst aspects of armed conflict and our best hope of succeeding in that charge."

—Graça Machel

Author of the groundbreaking report
The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children

Biographies

LGen Honourable Roméo A. Dallaire, (Ret'd)

Founder

Appointed to the Senate of Canada in March of 2005, LGen. Dallaire served with the Canadian Forces for more than three decades before retiring as a Lieutenant-General. In 1993, he took command of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), a post in which he and his limited number of troops witnessed the killing of more than 800,000 Rwandans in a period of little more than three months. Since his retirement, Senator Dallaire has worked to bring an understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to the wider Canadian public. He served as a Special Advisor to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) on matters relating to war-affected children around the world and to the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade on the non-proliferation of small arms.

He has been named Fellow of the Ryerson Polytechnic University and has received honorary doctorates from numerous Canadian universities. In 2002, LGen Dallaire was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada and in 2005 was presented with the United Nations Association of Canada's Pearson Peace Medal. LGen Dallaire spent the 2004-2005 academic year as a Fellow at Harvard University's Carr Center for Human Rights Policy where he directed in-depth research into the problem of Child Soldiers. His most recent book is entitled *They Fight like Soldiers, They Die like Children, The Global Quest to eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers.*

Shelly Whitman, PhD

Executive Director

Shelly took up the post of Director of the Initiative in January 2010. Prior to this she has had an academic career teaching in International Development Studies and Political Science at Dalhousie University, Saint Mary's University and the University of Botswana. Her research interests have been broadly focused on issues related to peace, development and human security. More specifically she has conducted research on small

arms and light weapons in Southern Africa, gender and conflict, children and conflict, the international criminal court, the Great Lakes region and peace and reconciliation efforts in post-conflict societies.

From 2000-2002, Shelly worked as Head of Research on the inter-Congolese dialogue, under the direction of Former Botswana President, Sir Ketumile Masire. Previous to this post, she was a Research Consultant at UNICEF, NY and worked under the direction of Ambassador Stephen Lewis on the OAU Rwanda Genocide Report. Shelly recently introduced a new course on Children and Armed Conflict at Dalhousie University and took on the additional role of Director of the Child Soldiers Initiative in November 2009.

Tanya Zayed, MA

Deputy Director

Since joining the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative in 2008, Tanya Zayed has acted as a focal point for all military and police training programmes in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Botswana and Canada. Proficient in curriculum design and facilitation, Tanya graduated from Saint Paul University with a Master's degree in Conflict Studies.

Prior to joining the Initiative, Tanya worked with Save the Children (Canada) in Bogota (Colombia), where she contributed to the "Rewrite the Future" programme on Education in Emergencies. Tanya has also worked in Cochabamba (Bolivia) with various programmes dealing with at-risk children and youth who are living on the streets and in prisons.

Carl Conradi, MA

Programme Officer

Carl first assisted the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative in 2009, when he conducted three months of research in Bukavu (Democratic Republic of Congo) concerning communication strategies aimed at raising awareness of DDR processes amongst active child soldiers. He returned to the Initiative in 2012, to act as chief researcher and focal point for programmes related to child piracy.

Before joining the Initiative, Carl worked on several youth-oriented conflict management projects in Somaliland (Northern Somalia), the Netherlands, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lebanon and Yemen. He is also an Insight Collaborative Fellow and has worked with the World Food Programme in Yemen and Egypt. He earned his MA in Conflict, Security and Development from King's College London.

Julie Breau, MA

Deputy Director, Centre for Foreign Policy Studies, Dalhousie University
Project Officer, The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

Julie is the Deputy Director of the Centre for Foreign Policy Studies at Dalhousie University and a Project Officer with the Initiative, with whom she has been intermittently involved since 2010. Julie has worked for the exercise and simulation department of the Pearson Centre, with whom she co-created a suite of scenario products currently used by African Union, EU and NATO military training exercises based on real-world models and research, and has been part of the Directive Staff of NATO and EU Command Post Exercises.

Julie has done profit management and event planning for the Atlantic Canada action-tank for emerging leaders, 21inc and has been a long-time volunteer with the Humanitarian Issues Program of the Canadian Red Cross, as well as the Rights & Democracy Student Network, most recently through its National Consultative Committee. She completed the Human Rights Training Programme for human rights practitioners organized by EQUITAS – International Centre for Human Rights Education. Julie has a Master of Arts (Political Science) from Dalhousie University, where she wrote a thesis on the reintegration of girl soldiers in post-conflict Sierra Leone.

Feedback Form

Through ongoing input from users, continued applied research and the Initiative's "Lessons Learned" process, this handbook will remain a living document that will be regularly updated, so as to reflect good practices that have been collected from across the globe.

Microsoft Word and PDF versions of this feedback form are available at www.childsoldiers.org/training-manual. Completed forms can be sent as an email attachment to info@childsoldiers.org.

Demographic Information	
Security Force	☐ Military ☐ Police ☐ International Peacekeeper
Country	
Rank	
Job Function	
Unit	
Years of Service	
Gender	☐ Male ☐Female

1. **How did you obtain this handbook?** ***(Check all that apply.)***

   ☐ Training delivered by The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative
   ☐ Training delivered by a third party
   (*please specify*: _____)
   ☐ Downloaded from the Initiative's website
   ☐ Other
   (*please describe*: _____)

2. **If you received this handbook during a training session offered by the Initiative or third party, was the training:**

   ☐ Mandatory
   ☐ Optional

Feedback form continues on reverse.

3. Please rate the following statements according to the scale below:

	Strongly Disagree	**Disagree**	**Neither Agree Nor Disagree**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
This handbook taught me new information about the subject of child soldiers.					
This handbook is relevant to my job.					
This handbook provided me with practical tools.					
I will give this handbook to others.					
I will discuss this handbook with others.					
The handbook is written in clear language.					
The layout of the handbook is appealing.					
The examples that were given were relevant.					

4. Comments

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Contact Information (Optional)

If you wish to be added to The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative's mailing list, please write your email address here:

_____

THE ROMÉO
DALLAIRE
CHILD
SOLDIERS
INITIATIVE