Our Manifesto

War has changed. Therefore, our tactics must change too.

Today, children are used as weapons of war for many state armies and armed groups. Their tactical and strategic use continues to drive conflict, destroy communities and tear at the very fabric of peace efforts around the world.

For far too long we have ignored the strategic and tactical use of children as weapons of war and left those who serve, from militaries, police to peacekeepers poorly prepared to interact in such moral dilemmas, thereby putting themselves at risk and missing opportunities to prevent escalation of violent conflict.

The time has arrived for bold ideas and innovative approaches.

Our mission, to progressively end the use of child soldiers through a security sector approach, is identifying gaps in past knowledge and approaches to better equip those who protect with the practical tools and knowledge necessary to radically alter behaviours and attitudes that make the use of children as soldiers one day “unthinkable”.

Children must but at the heart of the international peace and security agenda. Their continued lack of inclusion represents a missing opportunity to prevent escalation of violent conflict.

It is the Dallaire Initiative’s response to affecting attitude and behaviour change that is our organisational differential: seeking to demonstrate that our training, research and advocacy has significant, long-lasting impacts, well beyond the implementation of our immediate programming.

As a pioneer in this regard, we have built an identity as a subject leader in preventing the use of children as weapons of war.

Therefore, it is significant that we continue to establish projects and approaches that champion these attitude and behaviours changes. From our world-leading holistic national approach to addressing issues of child soldiery, through training and education initiatives, best exemplified by our ongoing work in Sierra Leone, to our research that is identifying gaps and equipping police officers with the tools to prevent radicalization leading to extreme violence, to our tireless efforts to raise children as a priority on the international peace and security agenda, we are creating more innovative, progressive and holistic solutions to prevent the use of children as weapons of war both at home in Canada and around the globe.

We believe that if we can end the use of child soldiers globally, we will go a long way in preventing and addressing conflicts. We cannot be afraid to go boldly forward together to alter the status quo and end the use of child soldiers—progressively.

All of us at the Dallaire Initiative wish to thank our allies, donors, partners and friends for having assisted our work through the past year. Our efforts to progressively end the use of child soldiers would not have been possible without your ongoing support—support that inspires us to continue to shed light, empower change and make the world a better place for children.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shelly Whitman
Executive Director
The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

Welcome Letter

Looking back on our last year, we can say with certainty that it has been our most rewarding and exciting year on record. Over the past year, we have expanded as an organisation, developed new ground-breaking projects, and continue to incubate our unique prevention oriented approach to end the use of children as weapons of war in new countries and contexts.

When it comes to cracking the code and putting an end to the cycle of violence and recruitment of children into armed conflict, it is prevention that will produce the most cost-effective solutions—both financially and morally—than picking up the pieces after war.

We believe that the use of children as soldiers is a tactical and strategic element of current conflicts that must be addressed with innovative ideas. Through our work with security sector actors, policymakers, international organisations, communities and children, we are unlocking new strategies for conflict prevention. Our proactive, targeted and preventative approach is unique in the world. It draws on years of knowledge and experience gained through working with key partners in the field and leverages an approach with those who are committed to ending this crime against humanity.

It is the Dallaire Initiative’s response to affecting attitude and behaviour change that is our organisational differential: seeking to demonstrate that our training, research and advocacy has significant, long-lasting impacts, well beyond the implementation of our immediate programming. As a pioneer in this regard, we have built an identity as a subject leader in preventing the use of children as weapons of war.

Therefore, it is significant that we continue to establish projects and approaches that champion these attitude and behaviours changes. From our world-leading holistic national approach to addressing issues of child soldiery, through training and education initiatives, best exemplified by our ongoing work in Sierra Leone, to our research that is identifying gaps and equipping police officers with the tools to prevent radicalization leading to extreme violence, to our tireless efforts to raise children as a priority on the international peace and security agenda, we are creating more innovative, progressive and holistic solutions to prevent the use of children as weapons of war both at home in Canada and around the globe.

We believe that if we can end the use of child soldiers globally, we will go a long way in preventing and addressing conflicts. We cannot be afraid to go boldly forward together to alter the status quo and end the use of child soldiers—progressively.

All of us at the Dallaire Initiative wish to thank our allies, donors, partners and friends for having assisted our work through the past year. Our efforts to progressively end the use of child soldiers would not have been possible without your ongoing support—support that inspires us to continue to shed light, empower change and make the world a better place for children.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shelly Whitman
Executive Director
The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

CONTENTS

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative
2016 Annual Report

Welcome Letter

Looking back on our last year, we can say with certainty that it has been our most rewarding and exciting year on record. Over the past year, we have expanded as an organisation, developed new ground-breaking projects, and continue to incubate our unique prevention oriented approach to end the use of children as weapons of war in new countries and contexts.

When it comes to cracking the code and putting an end to the cycle of violence and recruitment of children into armed conflict, it is prevention that will produce the most cost-effective solutions—both financially and morally—than picking up the pieces after war.

We believe that the use of children as soldiers is a tactical and strategic element of current conflicts that must be addressed with innovative ideas. Through our work with security sector actors, policymakers, international organisations, communities and children, we are unlocking new strategies for conflict prevention. Our proactive, targeted and preventative approach is unique in the world. It draws on years of knowledge and experience gained through working with key partners in the field and leverages an approach with those who are committed to ending this crime against humanity.

It is the Dallaire Initiative’s response to affecting attitude and behaviour change that is our organisational differential: seeking to demonstrate that our training, research and advocacy has significant, long-lasting impacts, well beyond the implementation of our immediate programming. As a pioneer in this regard, we have built an identity as a subject leader in preventing the use of children as weapons of war.

Therefore, it is significant that we continue to establish projects and approaches that champion these attitude and behaviours changes. From our world-leading holistic national approach to addressing issues of child soldiery, through training and education initiatives, best exemplified by our ongoing work in Sierra Leone, to our research that is identifying gaps and equipping police officers with the tools to prevent radicalization leading to extreme violence, to our tireless efforts to raise children as a priority on the international peace and security agenda, we are creating more innovative, progressive and holistic solutions to prevent the use of children as weapons of war both at home in Canada and around the globe.

We believe that if we can end the use of child soldiers globally, we will go a long way in preventing and addressing conflicts. We cannot be afraid to go boldly forward together to alter the status quo and end the use of child soldiers—progressively.

All of us at the Dallaire Initiative wish to thank our allies, donors, partners and friends for having assisted our work through the past year. Our efforts to progressively end the use of child soldiers would not have been possible without your ongoing support—support that inspires us to continue to shed light, empower change and make the world a better place for children.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shelly Whitman
Executive Director
The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative
ABOUT US
— The Dallaire Initiative

War has changed. Today, children around the world are now being pulled into conflict at alarming rates, creating the ever-growing threat of child soldiers on the battlefield. The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative aims to work together with global leaders to make a long-term impact in preventing the use of children as weapons of war and thereby breaking the cycle of recruitment. Together we can make the world a safer place by ending the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Together we can stop the children of today becoming the child soldiers of tomorrow.

The Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative was established in 2007 by retired Lieutenant-General the Honourable Roméo Dallaire, former force commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Our mission is to progressively eradicate the use of child soldiers through a security sector approach.

To achieve this important objective, the Dallaire Initiative conducts activities on three fronts:

• It conducts world-class interdisciplinary research to build—and share—knowledge, which in turn leads to new solutions;
• It engages in high-level advocacy activities to create and promote the political will to end the use of children as soldiers;
• It delivers tactical, prevention-oriented training to security sector actors, so as to support broader security sector reform.

In every aspect of its work, the Dallaire Initiative seeks to collaborate with concerned governments, security sector actors, academics, humanitarians and communities. In particular, its unique approach working with soldiers, police, prison personnel and private security operators — many of whom are the first point of contact for child soldiers outside of their armed force or armed group — is both ground breaking and critical to the interruption of children’s recruitment.

The ultimate focus of the rest of my life is to end the use of child soldiers and to eliminate even the thought of the use of children as an instrument of war.”

— LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret’d)
Founder
THE ROMÉO DALLAIRE CHILD SOLDIERS INITIATIVE

TOWARDS PREVENTION
— A Holistic Approach

The contemporary use of children as weapons of war continues to challenge the international community. Often left picking up the pieces after the child has served as a soldier, we have failed to protect the child, and ultimately prevent their recruitment and use as a child soldier in the first place. Tackled from a humanitarian approach, security sector actors are not part of the international response or solution to the prevention of the use of child soldiers.

Through taking a security sector approach, we complement international efforts, including child protection, international law, and demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration programs. Engaging with security sector actors, who are often the first point of contact for child soldiers in the field, we can create a comprehensive international response that enables us to take a preventive approach to the issue of children used as weapons of war.

The use of child soldiers is a security concern, and security sector actors must be part of the solution. Through this prevention-oriented approach, we aim to create the necessary tools and training, supported by research, to better protect children from recruitment, and in so doing, help end this crime against humanity, community-by-community, country-by-country, once and for all.

— LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret’d)
Founder
THE ROMÉO DALLAIRE CHILD SOLDIERS INITIATIVE

Our Pillars
These action-oriented pillars underpin our approach in preventing the use of children as weapons of war.

Pillar One
Training
We deliver tactical, prevention-oriented training to security sector actors, to promote broader security sector reform.

Pillar Two
Research
We conduct world-class interdisciplinary research to build—and share—knowledge, which in turn leads to new solutions.

Pillar Three
Advocacy
We engage in high-level advocacy activities to create and promote the political will to end the use of children as soldiers.

Photos from from left to right
01. Photo Credit: Peter Bregg 02. Photo Credit: The Dallaire Initiative 03. Photo Credit: Josh Boyter 04. Photo Credit: The Dallaire Initiative
CHILDREN’S RIGHTS UPFRONT

A Children's Rights Upfront approach seeks to elevate children higher up on the international peace and security agenda to create points of collaboration and aims to highlight the need to build international momentum to protect the rights of society’s most vulnerable—children.

Today, children represent the primary weapon system used by seven state armies and 51 armed groups in 14 contexts around the globe. Their use represents both a tactical and strategic choice by those who deploy them as weapons of war. However, since the adoption of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, only 17 out of 246 peace agreements, cease fires and related documents signed between warring parties, included provisions for child combatants.

The lack of inclusion of children within the international peace and security agenda represents a fundamental shortcoming in the overall protection of children from conflict. To address this gap, the Dallaire Initiative seeks to champion a Children's Rights Upfront Approach.

In short, this approach aims to elevate children higher up on the international peace and security agenda to create points of collaboration and seeks to highlight the need to build international momentum to protect the rights of society’s most vulnerable—children.

A Children’s Rights Upfront Approach is a fundamental pillar of the Dallaire Initiative’s ongoing advocacy and prevention-oriented approach for ending the use of children as weapons of war. By addressing the rights and needs of children, the international community can address the underlying factors that contribute to the use of children in armed conflict.

With nearly 250 million children living in conflict-affected countries, there is an urgent need for adequate protection as they fall prey to recruitment and use by armed forces and groups, killing and maiming, sexual violence, abduction and other grave violations of their rights. All parties to armed conflict must be held accountable for committing grave violations against children.

The Dallaire Initiative, now a member of the Paris Principles Steering group, participated in the anniversary events as part of a panel. Lien Roméo Dallaire (Ret’d) spoke to the need of raising children as a priority on the peace and security agenda and the necessity to take a prevention-oriented approach to ending the use of child soldiers. During the ten year anniversary, The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., M.P. Minister of International Development and La Francophonie announced Canada’s signing of the Safe School Declaration. This announcement represents the culmination of tireless advocacy efforts by the Dallaire Initiative and other organisations protecting education from attack.

Paris Principles and Commitments Ten Year Anniversary

Ten years after the landmark creation of the Paris Principles and Commitments on Children Affected by Armed Conflict, the international community reconvened in Paris to recommit to the principles and chart the pathway forward.

The Dallaire Initiative, now a member of the Paris Principles Steering group, participated in the anniversary events as part of a panel. Lien Roméo Dallaire (Ret’d) spoke to the need of raising children as a priority on the peace and security agenda and the necessity to take a prevention-oriented approach to ending the use of child soldiers. During the ten year anniversary, The Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, P.C., M.P. Minister of International Development and La Francophonie announced Canada’s signing of the Safe School Declaration. This announcement represents the culmination of tireless advocacy efforts by the Dallaire Initiative and other organisations protecting education from attack.

International Criminal Court Policy on Children

On November 18th, the Dallaire Initiative attended the launch of the Policy on Children for the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court in the Hague, Netherlands. This policy will help the Office of the Prosecutor of the ICC during the course of its work, to consider the rights and best interests of children and how they experience crimes against them during a conflict. As a result, this policy on children and armed conflict will contribute towards holding perpetrators of grave violations against children, including the enlistment and use of child soldiers, to account and help address issues of impunity related to these crimes.

The Dallaire Initiative played an instrumental role in the development of this policy paper through hosting four workshops with children affected by armed conflict and former child soldiers in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Mogadishu, Somalia, Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Medellín, Colombia during 2015 and 2016.

Protecting Children at a Glance

Paris Principles

105 States

105 states have endorsed the Paris Principles. By endorsing, states aim to ensure that child soldiers are treated primarily as victims, not perpetrators and that their reintegration is a priority.

Paris Commitments

56 States

56 states have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, which seeks to protect education from attack in conflict-affected areas.

The Paris Principles reflect experience and knowledge from across the globe and are intended to both foster greater programmatic coherence and support and promote good practice on the issue of children affected by armed conflict.

Creating a Point of Collaboration

The protection of children is one of the sole issues that continues to bring together key international actors. For example, the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely ratified international agreement to date. As a result, children continue to represent a critical rallying point for the international community to unite around and move towards solutions.

Developing Action

Once identified, the Dallaire Initiative through training, advocacy, research and education activities supports points of collaboration. The Dallaire Initiative seeks to champion a holistic approach, bridging humanitarian and security sector responses through top-down, bottom-up context-specific interventions, while minimizing the duplication of efforts.

“Children are the priority, and they need to be protected from joining armed forces and armed groups. We have a duty to humanity to do this.”

Dr. Shelly Whitman
Executive Director
the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

“…”

NEXT PAGE

A National Approach
A NATIONAL APPROACH
— Top Down, Bottom Up

Once the place of mass recruitment and use of some 10,000 child soldiers, Sierra Leone has established itself as a key African peacekeeping nation.

The government of Sierra Leone continues to partner with the Dallaire Initiative to introduce a holistic approach to the issue of child soldiers. Through training with their military, police and prison services, along with developing and delivering a primary school program to educate children on the dangers of recruitment, Sierra Leone is taking proactive action to end the use and recruitment of child soldiers on the African Continent.

In the past year, the Dallaire Initiative has trained 498 Sierra Leonean police officers who are destined to serve in the national Armed Forces, Sierra Leone Police and the Sierra Leone Corrections Service, to introduce country-specific training that:

- Improves interactions between security sector forces and child soldiers in the field, with primary focus on the identification and re-recruitment of child soldiers;
- Outlines the major security sector issues related to child soldiers and conflict resolution;
- Identifies strategies for preventing the recruitment of child soldiers;
- Identifies strategies for preventing the recruitment and re-recruitment of child soldiers;
- Improves interactions between security sector forces and child soldiers in the field, with the overall aim of protecting children from manipulation by armed groups; and
- Works with the legal instruments that guide the protection of children in conflict situations.

The country of Sierra Leone knows first hand the long-term impacts of using children in war. Having endured 11 years of a brutal civil war, Sierra Leone is now committed to ensuring this will never happen again. Located within a region of unrest, it is crucial that the country remains vigilant and engaged to the permanent eradication of the use of child soldiers within its borders since violence has quickly spilled over from neighbouring countries in the region before.

The Dallaire Initiative partnered with the Sierra Leone Ministry of Defense, The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, Sierra Leone Police and the Sierra Leone Corrections Service, to introduce country-specific training that:

- Outlines the major security sector issues related to the phenomenon of prevention of the use of child soldiers;
- Identifies strategies for preventing the recruitment and re-recruitment of child soldiers;
- Improves interactions between security sector forces and child soldiers in the field, with the overall aim of protecting children from manipulation by armed groups; and
- Works with the legal instruments that guide the protection of children in conflict situations.

The Dallaire Initiative Youth Peace Clubs is 50 years old.

Education Project by the Numbers

Number of Teachers who participated in the Dallaire Initiative’s Training of Trainers Program on Child Soldiers:

- 150

Number of Teachers who participated in the Dallaire Initiative’s Pre-Deployment Training Program on Child Soldiers:

- 498

About the Education Project

In November 2017, the Dallaire Initiative conducted its second-ever training of trainer for educators in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This training consisted of building the capacity of teachers to facilitate the Dallaire Initiative’s education modules and story books, which help educate children on issues of legal rights to understanding the impacts of conflict on children. Once trained, our training of trainer participants returned to their home districts and schools to develop Dallaire Initiative Youth Peace Clubs.

In January and March 2017, the Dallaire Initiative visited these peace clubs in the three districts. During these visits, Dr. Shelly Whitman, Ben O’Bright and Dustin Johnson visited with community and government representatives, parents, teachers and children participating as part of the Dallaire Initiative Youth Peace Clubs. The children demonstrated the lessons they had learned from the teachers, facilitating our education curriculum through a mixture of round robin reading, peace statements and dramatisations.

A National Approach – Training

While many child protection agencies are currently implementing child protection-oriented programs in Sierra Leone, none focus on child soldiers from a security sector angle. The Dallaire Initiative has developed a youth-oriented training module on matters relating to child soldiers and conflict resolution. Presented directly in primary schools across Sierra Leone, the module was developed and educated Sierra Leonean children about three topics:

- Basic legal rights, as guaranteed by national and international legal conventions;
- Primary motives, tactics and strategies of child soldier recruiters; and
- Reliable means of avoiding underage recruitment.

This work is undertaken through an established partnership with the Sierra Leone Peace to Work Movement (PPM). The Dallaire Initiative is also working in collaboration with former Sierra Leonean child soldiers, whose experiences serve to remind us all of the need to prevent any future recruitment.

Training by the Numbers: Police

Rank Breakdown:

- Constable: 46%
- Sergeant: 34%
- Inspector: 13%
- Superintendent: 7%

From September 10th to 22nd, the Dallaire Initiative along with Veteran Trainer to Eradicating the USe of Child Soldiers (Ken Hoffer), traveled to Sierra Leone to conduct pre-deployment training for 498 police officers who are destined to take part in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Mali (MINUSMA) and Sudan (UNAMID). This training represented the largest ever training cohort by the Dallaire Initiative to date.

“Now we are exporting peace to other nations, and it is a testament to how far we have come as a nation.”

— Participant

Sierra Leone Participant in the Dallaire Initiative’s Security Sector Training Program on Child Soldiers
LEADING FROM THE FRONT  
— Training

The Dallaire Initiative’s training produces better, more specialised soldiers, police, and peacekeepers. Our preventative training changes attitudes, behaviours and policies of militaries, police and peacekeepers, allowing them to counter-act the issue of child soldiers with specific tools and knowledge. This approach represents a strategic investment that over the long term produces more cost-effective solutions.

Many groups or organisations are prepared to tell military, police and peacekeepers what not to do; the Dallaire Initiative focuses on what they can do—empowering the security sector to be part of the solution.

The Dallaire Initiative’s proactive, targeted and preventative training ensures that militaries, police, and peacekeepers can prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers in the field effectively with the necessary tools and knowledge required. This work with the security sector is breaking new ground, and is a critical part of interrupting the cycle of recruitment of children by armed groups. The Dallaire Initiative’s training ensures a response of children by armed groups. The Dallaire Initiative’s proactive, targeted and preventative training ensures that militaries, police, and peacekeepers can prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers in the field effectively with the necessary tools and knowledge required.

This approach represents a strategic investment that over the long term produces more cost-effective solutions.

Canadian Armed Forces Joint Doctrine Note on Child Soldiers

The Canadian Armed Forces, on March 2nd, launched its Joint Doctrine Note on Child Soldiers. This doctrine represents the world’s first comprehensive doctrine to be adopted by a country’s armed forces to identify the strategic, operational and tactical considerations about the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

This doctrine is the culmination of many years of advocacy efforts by the Dallaire Initiative. In particular, this doctrine will provide a leading example to our NATO allies, in peace support operations with the UN, as well as our partners in global missions towards ending the use of child soldiers once and for all.

“The significance of this doctrine cannot be understated. Within its lines, not only is a baseline set for how Canada understands and actively assists to prevent the use of child soldiers, but how we will better prepare the men and women who face this reality in the field. This will ensure that our armed forces can undertake an active role in helping end this reality of war.”

Statement on Canadian Armed Forces Doctrine on Child Soldiers

Training on Preventing the Use of Child Soldiers  
British Peace Support East Africa and African Union Mission in Somalia

In December 2017, the Dallaire Initiative conducted its first training in conjunction with the British Peace Support East Africa (BPST-EA) and the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). The training included representatives from the Federal Government of Somalia, Somalia Armed Forces and AMISOM and focused on preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers. The initial training, conducted over three days in Karen, Kenya, was designed to inform a nine-day training of trainers to be carried out in February 2017. It was reviewed and opened by Ambassador Francisco Caetano Jose Madeira, Special Representative of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on Somalia.

Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Children during Armed Conflict Training of Trainer

Conducted over nine days and hosted at the Humanitarian and Peace Support School (HPSS) located in Embakasi, Kenya, this training of trainers was a first of its kind training bringing together AMISOM and Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) personnel to learn how to address and prevent the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Through a mixture of in-class and scenario based training, participants were equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to facilitate training within their governmental departments and communities to prevent the use of children as weapons of war.

“In Focus  
Scenario-Based Training During  
February 2017 Training of Trainer in Nairobi, Kenya

Over two days, the Dallaire Initiative conducted full-scale scenario based training on some of its twelve interactions for security sector actors encountering child soldiers in the field in Nairobi, Kenya. Training participants, along with actors to create a level of realism, worked their way through the scenarios that included interacting with child soldiers at a check point to children being used as porters. This scenario-based training was witnessed by Her Excellency Ms Sara Hradecky, the Canadian High Commissioner to Kenya, which is demonstrative of Canada’s commitment to the region of East Africa and the safety of children.
The Dallaire Initiative continues to translate knowledge into action with tools specifically designed for the security sector—for military, police and peacekeepers.


The Third Edition features:

- **Operational Considerations:** Providing critical knowledge for commanders, staff, and planners at an operational level to incorporate child soldier concerns.
- **Tactical Considerations:** Tactical considerations for security sector actors as they pertain to the unique security problem presented by the presence of child soldiers.

These tactics include sample rules of engagements (ROEs), standard operating procedures (SOPs), and guidance for communicating with children.

**Updated Interaction Charts:** These charts provide step-by-step procedures for specific situations related to child soldiers. The third edition of Child Soldiers: A Handbook for Security Sector Actors aims to highlight and reinforce the various roles that security sector actors (i.e., navies, and private security maritime contractors) can undertake in protecting children used in maritime piracy, both at sea and on land.

**The Toolkit at a Glance**

**Date of Launch:** March 28th, 2017

**Number of Pages:** 40

**Number of Tools:** 9

**Type of Tools:** Village Map, Interaction Charts, Operational Planning Materials

The Toolkit — Protecting Education from Attack

Over the past year, the Dallaire Initiative, in conjunction with the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), has developed a toolkit for protecting education from attack.

The Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) is a unique inter-agency coalition formed in 2010 to address the problem of targeted attacks on education during armed conflict.

Starting in July 2016, the Dallaire Initiative was tasked with creating a set of tools for security sector actors to operationalize the guidelines in military and peacekeeping operations worldwide. The toolkit consists of operational and tactical tools including standard operating procedures, outlined in an interaction chart, aide memoires and reporting templates.

On November 8th and 9th 2016, the Dallaire Initiative presented the initial toolkit to GCPEA’s primary stakeholders at the African Union Headquarters in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Over two days, the toolkit was revised and edited in preparation for its final launch in March 2017.

On March 28th and 29th, the Dallaire Initiative participated in the formal launch of the GCPEA toolkit in Buenos Aires, Argentina. As a much-anticipated centre piece of this two day conference, hosted by the Argentinian Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs together with the Government of Norway to discuss the implementation of the Safe Schools Declaration, The Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative launched Implementing the Guidelines: A Toolkit to Guide Understanding and Implementation of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict. Attended by representatives from 80 states, together with international organizations and civil society representatives from around the world, this conference highlighted the release of the Toolkit, made up of practical tools intended as teaching aids, tactical and operational guidance materials and aide-memoire specifically designed for state and non-state military planners, at both the operational and tactical levels.
Since its inception, the Dallaire Initiative has made significant contributions to the body of knowledge on the use of child soldiers over the past few decades, but much remains to be learned. These holes in knowledge lead to gaps in action and missed opportunities for the international community to prevent the use of children as weapons of war. Today’s complex challenges require innovative solutions based on sound evidence and understanding of the problem.

The academic community has developed a considerable body of evidence about the use of child soldiers over the past few decades, including their interactions with security sector actors, the involvement of children in maritime piracy, their importance in early warning of mass atrocities, and the gendered dimensions of child soldiers, and has already opened new possibilities for collaboration with other organizations and researchers.

The Dallaire Initiative’s institutional home at Dalhousie University provides a unique home for world-class research to support our advocacy and training work. As the Dallaire Initiative’s other pillars address the current gaps in the international response to the use and recruitment of child soldiers, our research works to fill in the gaps in academic knowledge about child soldiers to provide the evidence to create and implement new solutions.

Since its inception, the Dallaire Initiative has made significant contributions to the body of knowledge on the use of child soldiers, including their interactions with security sector actors, the involvement of children in maritime piracy, their importance in early warning of mass atrocities, and the gendered dimensions of child soldiers. Over the past year the Dallaire Initiative’s research has continued to break new ground and draw international attention to our work.

Our research is not a stand-alone pillar, but provides a foundation of evidence for our work to build upon.”

— Dustin Johnson
Researcher The Romeo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative
The Wounded Warriors Canada Veterans Trainers to Eradicate the Use of Child Soldiers (VTECS) Program

Launched in February 2016, the first cohort of VTECS get down to work in May with an online, distance-learning course, which was followed by a one month residency in Halifax, Nova Scotia at Dalhousie University. The inaugural program provided an opportunity for participants to receive focused education in the field of child protection and to develop academic and instructor/facilitation skills, benefiting in all areas for veterans transitioning from military to civilian life and employment.

In reconstructing their expertise and experiences, Canadian Forces Veterans become community educators and advocates, championing the Dallaire Initiative’s vision of a world where children are no longer recruited or used as weapons of war.

The VTECS Program is divided into two core components, a non-residency and residency portion. Through these two portions, VTECS participants are required to complete two credited and two non-credit courses, which will give them the basis to understand the phenomenon of child soldiers and equip them with the skills to sensitise others through education, training, or advocacy.

Residency

Once accepted to the program, participants are required to complete the Dallaire Initiative’s e-learning course during the non-residency portion of the program from March – June 2017. The online course provides background information on the phenomena of child/soldiers and familiarises participants with the Dallaire Initiative’s unique approach to the issue of child soldiers.

Non-Residency

The residency portion of the program is conducted over a four-week period (July 11th – July 29th 2016) at Dalhousie University. Participants are required to complete two upper-level credited academic courses on “Children and War” and “World Politics” taught by professors from the Political Science Department. Also, participants are required to complete a combined “Basic Prevention of the Use of Child Soldiers Course” and a “Train the Trainer Prevention of the Use of Child Soldiers Course” taught by staff from the Dallaire Initiative.

The Dallaire Initiative’s solid base of research through an extensive knowledge synthesis report, eight participatory workshops and subsequent analysis on findings in a workshop report are now contributing to the development of Canadian government policies and ensuring that our children and communities are safer, more secure, and free from violence.

Resources for Police

Utilising the Process of Radicalization Leading to Violence chart the Centre for the Prevention of Violence, the Building Connections Table Top exercise takes a rigid, detailed flow-chart and breaks it down into movable hexagonal cards that can be worked through individually and in concert. This enables each piece of the radicalization process to be expanded on with more detail and information included on the cards. The table top exercise will allow for the complexity of personal and social circumstances that can lead to radicalization leading to violence to be better illustrated through an ever changing, modifiable story board.

Connections: Resource and Training App for Edmonton Police

Based on consultations with Edmonton Police Services, Community organisations and youth, the Dallaire Initiative has undertaken the development of a smartphone app. This tool is designed to be easily accessible and mobile to support officers in their interactions with children, enhancing their ability to assist youth they encounter while on duty.

Understanding the Pathways of Radicalization Table Top Exercise

Utilising the Process of Radicalization Leading to Violence chart the Centre for the Prevention of Violence, the Pathways to Radicalization Table Top exercise takes a rigid, detailed flow-chart and breaks it down into movable hexagonal cards that can be worked through individually and in concert. This enables each piece of the radicalization process to be expanded on with more detail and information included on the cards. The table top exercise will allow for the complexity of personal and social circumstances that can lead to radicalization leading to violence to be better illustrated through an ever changing, modifiable story board.

The Building Connections Program is a response to the growing concern of youth engagement in radicalisation and extreme violence within Canada. Specifically, this project aims to:

- Better understand the role that police can play in preventing the recruitment of youth in extremist groups; and
- Where such recruitment may already have begun, how can they best intervene before legal action is required.

Through the Dallaire Initiative’s ongoing consultations, workshops, and meetings with the major stakeholders in the various jurisdictions involved in the project over the past two years has ensured our approaches are addressing the contextual realities that Canadian officers face.

The Dallaire Initiative’s solid base of research through an extensive knowledge synthesis report, eight participatory workshops and subsequent analysis on findings in a workshop report are now contributing to the development of Canadian government policies and ensuring that our children and communities are safer, more secure, and free from violence.

The Building Connections Program is a response to the growing concern of youth engagement in radicalisation and extreme violence within Canada. Specifically, this project aims to:

- Better understand the role that police can play in preventing the recruitment of youth in extremist groups; and
- Where such recruitment may already have begun, how can they best intervene before legal action is required.

Through the Dallaire Initiative’s ongoing consultations, workshops, and meetings with the major stakeholders in the various jurisdictions involved in the project over the past two years has ensured our approaches are addressing the contextual realities that Canadian officers face.

The Dallaire Initiative’s solid base of research through an extensive knowledge synthesis report, eight participatory workshops and subsequent analysis on findings in a workshop report are now contributing to the development of Canadian government policies and ensuring that our children and communities are safer, more secure, and free from violence.

In Focus

Speaker Series

Over the month of July, four international humanitarian experts and leaders descended on the Halifax Central Library providing insights and opportunities to the international community has in protecting children from war.

LGen Roméo Dallaire

LGen Dallaire (Ret), Founder of the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative discussed the innovative work of the Dallaire Initiative in seeking to prevent the use of children as weapons of war.

Dr Shelly Whitman & Nakita Malik

During their presentation, Dr. Shelly Whitman and Nakita Malik of the Dalhousie University discussed insights and opportunities the work of the Dallaire Initiative in eradicating the use of child soldiers.

Paula Donovan

Paula Donovan is Co-Director of the Child Soldiers Initiative. Her presentation explored the impact of violence on children and the role violent propaganda plays in recruiting and exploiting children.

The protection of children and the Dallaire Initiative approach has applicability at home and abroad and illustrates the importance of working with Canadian Police to ensure the safety of children from violence.

In Focus

E-Learning

The launch of our inaugural Child Soldiers & At-Risk Youth online course, delivered in partnership with Dalhousie University’s Certificate in Police Leadership Program took place March 1st, 2017.

Building on the Dallaire Initiative’s past experiences developing learning modules for an online environment, the Child Soldiers & At-Risk Youth online course is designed to provide those who work in the security sector with a comprehensive overview and comparative understanding of the issue of child soldiers from both a domestic and an international perspective. Following completion of the course, learners will be able to identify why and where children are used by armed groups, gangs and various other forces; understand and discuss the security dimensions of preventing the use of children by armed groups, gangs and forces, and lastly, provide the learners with the key relevant tools and knowledge to respond to this issue in their field.

The building on the Dallaire Initiative’s past experiences developing learning modules for an online environment, the Child Soldiers & At-Risk Youth online course is designed to provide those who work in the security sector with a comprehensive overview and comparative understanding of the issue of child soldiers from both a domestic and an international perspective. Following completion of the course, learners will be able to identify why and where children are used by armed groups, gangs and various other forces; understand and discuss the security dimensions of preventing the use of children by armed groups, gangs and forces, and lastly, provide the learners with the key relevant tools and knowledge to respond to this issue in their field.

The aim of the overall Police Leadership Program is to enhance management and leadership skills for those in policing of law enforcement positions.

Annual Report 2016

CHILDSOLDIERS.ORG

NEXT PAGE

Donors and Financials
EXTRAORDINARY COLLABORATORS

— 2016

All financial contributions to the Dallaire Initiative help us conduct the training, research and advocacy needed to help eradicate the use of child soldiers.

Thank you for supporting us in making the use of child soldiers unthinkable.

FINANCIAL REPORT — 2016 to 2017

Fiscal year 2016/2017 proved to be another successful year for the Dallaire Initiative as we realized an increase of investments within a continued framework of effective operational and fiscal management. As we enter a new fiscal year financially well positioned to support our strategic direction, we look forward to fulfilling our mission of ending the use and recruitment of child soldiers.