

BRIEF GUIDE ON COORDINATION WITH OTHER ACTORS IN THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Helping Canadian police personnel deployed abroad to understand and use coordination mechanisms within and outside the UN system in order to promote and protect the rights of the child in peace missions.



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CHILD PROTECTION

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TEAMWORK IS KEY TO PROTECTING CHILDREN EFFECTIVELY

Child protection is at the heart of the mandate of all peacekeeping operations. As Canadian police deployed in bilateral or multilateral international operations, you must understand, contribute to and promote the various mechanisms used to coordinate child protection.

Every component (i.e., a person or group) involved in peacekeeping missions is responsible for child protection and must consider child rights issues as its core business. All peacekeepers – police, military and civilians – must be aware of their responsibilities and receive child protection training in order to effectively fulfil their duties in their respective missions.

Each component must also be aware of the roles and responsibilities of the other persons and teams involved in the child protection system, as well as the various mechanisms for coordinating their interventions. Success is dependent on close cooperation, especially when circumstances are challenging.

Canadian police personnel deployed in international missions must:

- *Be aware that child protection is a shared responsibility between several actors, including international police*
- *Understand and play a meaningful role in coordination mechanisms*
- *Be able to identify children's cases and refer them to the right persons or teams within the child protection system*

KEY MESSAGE

International policing is all about building good relationships, **putting aside prejudices, being flexible, acting as a conciliator**, understanding **differences of opinion** and being able to **propose alternative solutions** while upholding the UN's core value of **respect for diversity**.

As soon as you are deployed, you must make it a priority to understand the various mechanisms for coordinating with actors in the child protection system. You must quickly **familiarise yourself with the local coordination system, formal and informal standard operational procedures**, as well as any **multi-sectoral agreements** already in place.

It is important to keep an open mind when coordinating with different persons and teams. Coordination efforts can only be successful if the individuals involved are ready, willing and able to work together. It is therefore your duty to cultivate the ability and willingness to coordinate with others so that we can achieve our respective and common objectives.

THE CLUSTER APPROACH

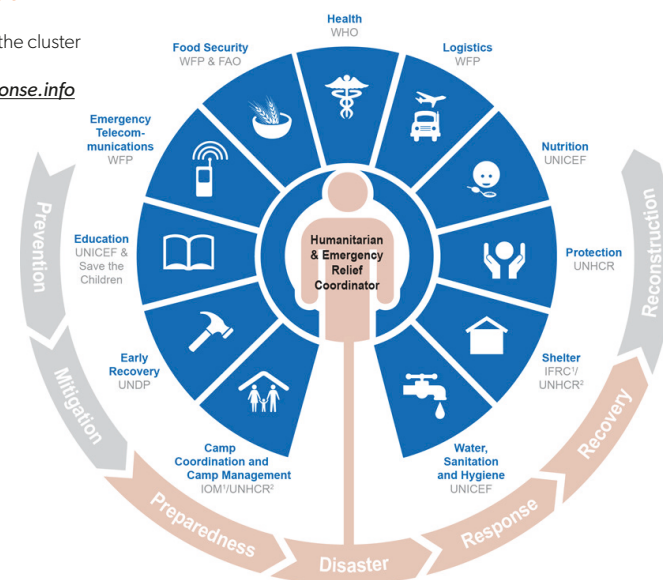
The United Nations (UN) continually reviews and updates its structures and processes. Its broadest structural changes were implemented in 2005, when the **Humanitarian Reform Agenda** was introduced. The purpose of this reform was to enhance predictability, accountability and partnership in humanitarian coordination offers. One of the new concepts included in the reform is the **cluster approach**.

The Humanitarian Reform platform describes **clusters** as groups of humanitarian organisations, both UN and non-UN, in each of the main sectors of humanitarian action. Each cluster has clear responsibilities for coordination. Cluster Leads were introduced at the global and country levels to further enhance coordination, promote partnerships between all relevant actors, and strengthen accountability for humanitarian responses. At the country level, the Cluster Lead is an agency or organisation that formally commits to lead and coordinate a particular humanitarian response sector. Each Cluster Lead reports to the Humanitarian Coordinator and is responsible for establishing standards and policies, building response capabilities and providing operational support.

The Cluster Approach

For more information on the cluster approach, visit:

www.humanitarianresponse.info



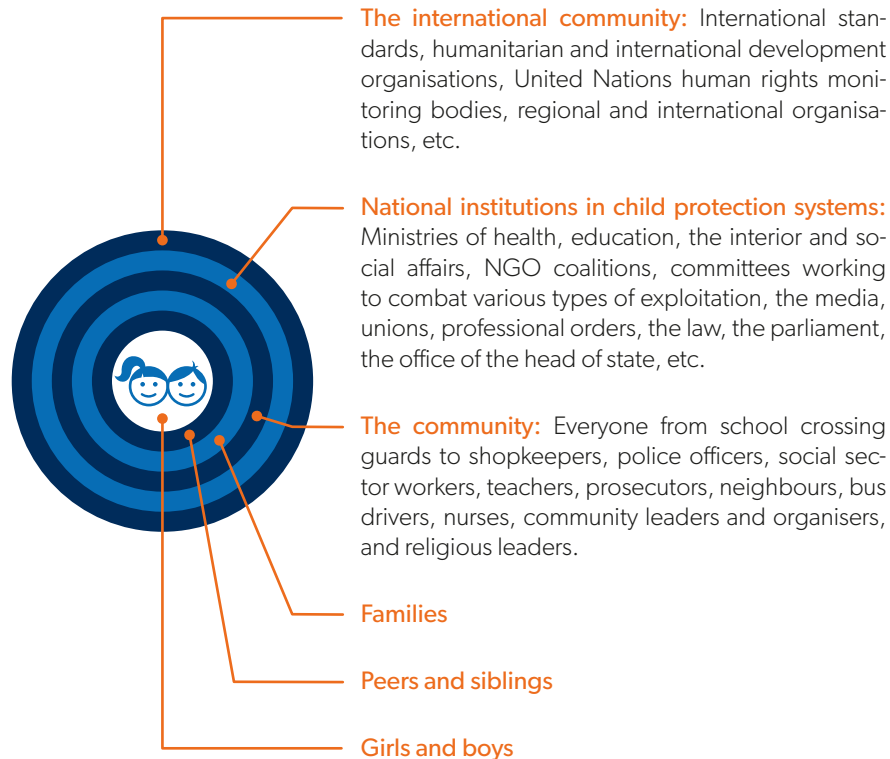
The Global Protection Cluster is led by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It coordinates and provides inter-agency policy advice and support at the global level. Under the Protection Cluster comes the **Child Protection Area of Responsibility** (CP AoR), which is specifically focused on enhancing child protection coordination and response in humanitarian contexts. Its purpose is to ensure that child protection efforts made by national and international actors are properly coordinated and achieve maximum quality and impact. The CP AoR provides in-country and remote support to inter-agency field-level child protection coordination groups and its inter-

national, national and local members in over 40 countries. The organisation's actions are carried out by its Geneva-based coordination staff, its Helpdesk, and its Rapid Response Team¹.

KEY MESSAGE

Canadian police personnel on international missions must be familiar with the specific clusters active in the area in which they are deployed. They must divide responsibilities among themselves and contribute meaningfully to coordination efforts overseen by these clusters. Canadian Police should work closely with the Child Protection Area of Responsibility if it is active in the area.

THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM



1. You can contact them via help@humanitarianresponse.info. Additional information about the organisation's operations is available on its website: <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en>

Whether you are in Canada or abroad, it is your responsibility to understand how the child protection system works. A child protection system is made up of formal and informal structures, men and women, organisations and institutions, all of which have a role to play in creating a protective environment for children. The child protection system is also made up of laws and policies, social services, cultural and social norms, which enable the system's stakeholders to adequately protect and promote the rights of the child.

The child is at the heart of the child protection system, which takes into account the child's developmental capabilities, points of view, potential, strengths and challenges. The concentric circles closest to the child represent the people who are typically closest to the child, particularly those who the child trusts and who have the greatest influence on the child's development. **The further we move away from the child, the more the level of action becomes multilateral.** Responsibility for protecting the child does not decrease as we move away from the centre — in fact, it increases.

As Canadian police, you must be sensitive to the differences between the Canadian system and the one in place where you are deployed. Traditional leaders and religious figures may play a more significant role in the local child justice system. Informal procedures may be the norm. Obligations to report abuse may differ. The division of responsibility between prosecutors, social workers and the police may be very different from what you are used to. In other words, you must adapt to the local justice and child protection systems while endeavouring to strengthen the child protection mechanisms and capabilities within these systems.

KEY MESSAGE

Canadian police who deployed abroad must familiarise themselves with the child protection systems in place in the area. They must be sensitive to any differences with the Canadian system, while recognising that the national police must have a role to play in the local system. How could the national police's child protection capacities be strengthened? This is an important question for Canadian police to ask and address when on international missions.

COORDINATING WITH PRIMARY ACTORS

KEY MESSAGE

Upon deployment, Canadian police must map the various actors involved in the child protection system to understand the various coordination methods and the roles and responsibilities of Canadian and host-state police in relation to each of these actors.

As part of your work, you will need to interact with actors at various levels, including:

- A: The different components participating in the UN mission
- B: UN agencies and other international actors
- C: National governmental and non-governmental actors

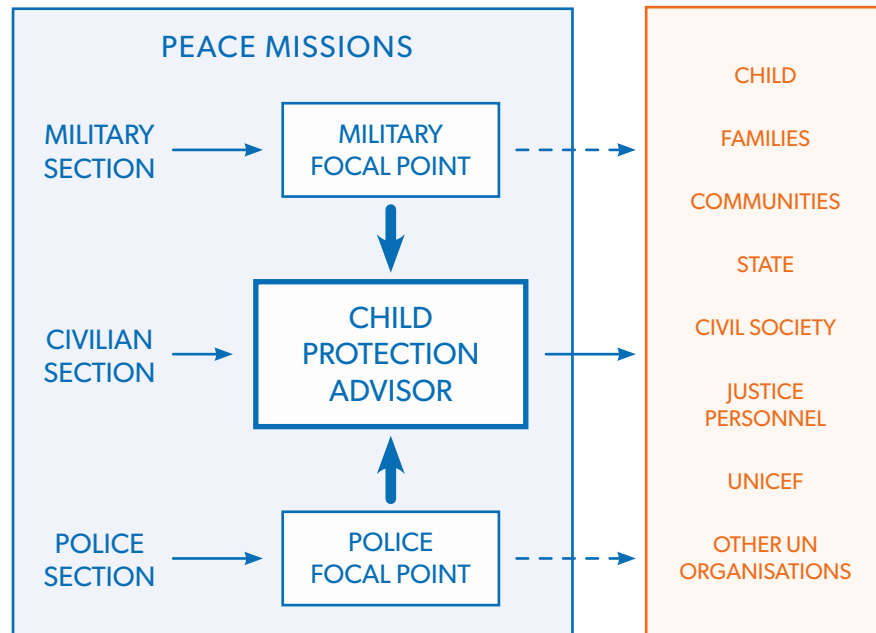
All of these actors interact with one another. As Canadian police personnel deployed on an international mission, you will also have to interact with some of these actors, either directly or while advising the host-state police. For example, you may interact with them to:

- Refer and follow-up on cases
- Establish inclusive and effective peacebuilding and peacekeeping strategies and actions
- Coordinate or facilitate activities
- Forge connections to reinforce capacity building
- Collect information
- Monitor and report situations

It is important to note that Canada deploys police personnel in a variety of contexts. Some are deployed through United Nations peacekeeping missions, while others are deployed through bilateral agreements. The following section describes how the UN has organised the roles and responsibilities of civilian, military and police components in peacekeeping missions. This division of responsibilities is used for all missions, even those that are not operating under a UN mandate. It is therefore important for all Canadian police personnel to be familiar with the division of responsibilities established by the UN. Alternative means of coordination for each component will be specified if the mission is not multilateral.

A. THE DIFFERENT ACTORS WITHIN A UN MISSION

Within UN missions, **child protection advisors (CPAs)** and **UN Police focal points on child protection** are responsible for coordinating activities. As shown in the diagram below, CPAs and focal points are responsible for coordinating with different UN sections and other actors, depending on the situation.



Please note that the work of these actors overlaps. Children's issues must be considered a shared responsibility.

1. MILITARY COMPONENTS

Military personnel work alongside civilians and the UN Police to promote stability, security and peace processes. They also work with local communities to promote lasting peace, protect personnel and property, and provide direction, guidance and strategies to personnel engaged in preparing, implementing and supporting disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes. Furthermore, as stated in the *Child Protection in United Nations Peace Operations Policy*², military components have an important role to play in ensuring that child protection is promoted in all aspects of the mission by establishing directives, guidelines, standard operating procedures and

military actions. Ongoing child protection training equips military personnel to recognise, report and respond appropriately to mission-specific child protection concerns. A military child protection focal point and a child protection officer both work full time at mission headquarters, coordinating closely with child protection advisors and staff. They also make sure the above-mentioned provisions are met in accordance with policy standards. Canadian police personnel on peacekeeping missions must understand the workings of civil/military cooperation in the area of deployment and explore avenues for supporting this cooperation.

2. CIVILIAN COMPONENTS

Civilian personnel work alongside local authorities and communities to provide support in addressing social and civic issues. These individuals also serve as the link between local stakeholders and the UN mission. Civilians are organised in different sections, which may or may not be present and active in your area of deployment. Canadian police personnel must understand the mandates of these sections in order to maximise teamwork on various issues, including child protection. Here are some of the main civilian sections whose work overlaps with international policing:

- **Human rights section**

Human rights components monitor, investigate, document, report and advocate on human right situations in UN peace operations and political missions. In addition, they ensure that justice and equity are promoted throughout peace processes. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is engaged with the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) throughout all peace mission cycles. Violations of human rights observed or monitored by Canadian police personnel should be documented and reported to this section.

- **Civil affairs section**

Civil affairs components promote stability, security, and peace processes. The section works with local authorities and civil society at the national and grass-roots levels and provides conflict-management support to ensure effective peace. This section works alongside police to engage the population, including children and young people, in matters related to the mission and peace process.

- **Rule of law section**

Rule of law activities in peacekeeping are people-centred initiatives that are tailored to local customs and circumstances and help communities produce concrete peace dividends. This section supports the rule of law by providing interim stability or security measures, such as mixed, informal and community-led security arrangements and local peace agreements. This section is also responsible for security and justice reforms, which affect law enforcement and security forces and include justice for children.

2. For more information: <https://issat.dcaf.ch/download/127346/2601570>

• Justice and correction section

This section supports the work of justice and corrections components in UN peace operations and special political missions around the world. It assists host countries in delivering essential justice and prison services, strengthening criminal justice systems and facilitating rule of law reforms.

KEY MESSAGE

Child protection advisors coordinate all child protection actions carried out as part of the mission. Canadian police personnel deployed on international missions must communicate, collaborate with and report to them on all matters related to child protection.

• Gender section

This section provides technical support for including gender perspectives in the development of policies and planning instruments as well as their implementation by all mission components. Additionally, it works with mission components on capacity building for national and local partners on topics including equality and non-discrimination against girls and boys.

• Protection of civilians (humanitarian) section

The protection of civilians (POC) is a shared responsibility among all parts of a peacekeeping mission, including civilian, military and police functions. Civilian protection is carried out in cooperation with humanitarian actors through actions such as providing security, engaging with local authorities and governments, persuading groups to combat sexual violence, preventing, demobilising and reintegrating child soldiers, etc. This mandate is extremely challenging, hence the importance of understanding the coordination system in your area of deployment and acting within laws, guidance and directives in place.

• Child protection section

Child protection is a central part of all military, police and peacekeeping operations. When conflict has a serious impact on children, child protection advisors are also deployed. The section works to ensure that child protection is a priority in the peace process and operations by engaging in a number of activities. For example, this section works with national police and local authorities to ensure that the rights of children in contact with the law are upheld. It also monitors and reports on serious violations against children, and it negotiates with armed groups. This section works in partnership with UNICEF and the Office of the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict. It ensures that child protection concerns are included in all aspects of the mission.

IMPORTANT

In the absence of a child protection component, the human rights component is responsible for promoting and protecting children and children's rights. In bilateral missions where there is no UN peacekeeping mission, UNICEF often plays a similar role.

› FOCUS : CHILD PROTECTION ADVISORS

Child protection advisors (CPAs) are deployed in peacekeeping missions with mandates that include specific provisions on child protection. CPAs act as the liaison between the peacekeeping mission and child protection actors on the ground. They play a crucial role by advising the peacekeeping mission and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General or the Head of Mission to ensure that child protection issues are addressed throughout all stages of the peace process and that all key actors and mechanisms within the mission adopt a child-friendly approach.

» MANDATE

Child protection advisors are mandated to advise the Head of Mission or Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the needs and rights of children. **They serve as child protection focal points and experts while making sure that all key actors and mechanisms within the mission adopt a child-sensitive and child-rights-centred approach.**

» ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Act as the point of contact for the UN peacekeeping mission
- Lead data collection initiatives and liaise with the task force on monitoring and reporting on the six grave violations set out in UN Resolution 1612³
- Develop mainstream child protection mechanisms and build the capacities of national institutions, military, police, etc.
- Coordinate with UNICEF, the host government, NGOs and other groups as needed
- Advocate for children's rights
- Provide child protection advisory services to the Head of Mission, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and all mission components
- Negotiate agreements for the release of children associated with armed forces and armed groups
- Engage in dialogue with parties engaged in conflict on the signing and implementation of Security Council-mandated action plans to halt and prevent grave violations against children
- Ensure that concern for child protection is reflected in other reporting processes, such as conflict-related sexual violence or public human rights reporting
- Provide training, tools and expertise on child protection to UN peacekeeping personnel and other components

3. For more information on the grave violations: childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/

- Act as child rights advocates with host state governments, diplomatic and donor communities, and regional and international organisations

3. POLICE COMPONENTS

Police components may be organised into different sections that are present and active in your area of deployment. Canadian police personnel must understand the mandates of these sections in order to maximise potential for teamwork in various areas, including child protection. Here are some of the main police sections whose work crosses over with international policing:

- **Security sector reform section**

This section assists field operations and groups that support national security sector reforms. It also develops normative documents, provides training to other practitioners and organises events on topics related to security sector reform.

- **Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) section**

This section is tasked with addressing conflict-related incidents or patterns of sexual violence such as rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced sterilisation or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity committed against women, men, girls or boys. Its work includes monitoring and verifying such incidents, and coordinating with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG/SVC) to strengthen cooperation with the donor community, inter-governmental agencies and regional organisations in responding to CRSV.

- **Conduct and discipline unit (CDU)**

This section oversees conduct and discipline issues in peacekeeping operations and special political missions, including combatting child sexual exploitation and abuse. They formulate policies, develop training and awareness-raising activities, and oversee misconduct investigations. Conduct and discipline teams (CDTs) are included in many peacekeeping missions and special political missions around the world. Some field missions have a conduct and discipline focal point. CDTs and focal points in field missions advise the Head of Mission on conduct and discipline issues involving all categories of personnel and address all forms of misconduct by United Nations personnel in field missions, including acts of child sexual exploitation and abuse.

› FOCUS : UN POLICE FOCAL POINTS ON CHILD PROTECTION

Protecting children in situations of armed conflict is an inherent priority for police as it falls under their broader obligation to protect civilians and human rights in peace and security operations. Police focal points on child protection play a crucial role in child protection by coordinating the child protection efforts of individual police officers and by liaising with civilian child protection advisors.

KEY MESSAGE

Police focal points on child protection coordinate the police component's child protection efforts. Canadian police personnel deployed on international missions must know who is the focal point on their team or, in the absence thereof, ensure that one is appointed. Canadian police personnel must communicate, collaborate and report to them on all matters related to child protection.

» MANDATE

Police focal points on child protection are mandated to facilitate the coordination and sharing of information on child rights violations among child protection advisors and child protection staff⁴.

» ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Act as the point of contact on child protection for all UN Police within the mission
- Ensure that child protection is integrated into the work of UN Police, including **mentoring** and **advising activities**
- Support the adoption of mission-specific **directives and standard operating procedures to inform** UN Police child protection activities
- **Provide guidance on child-sensitive interviewing techniques and community-oriented policing**
- Advocate for compliance with international norms and standards, including those concerning child apprehension and detention, diversion and alternative measures to deprivation of liberty
- Provide support for **preventing and responding to child rights violations**, including sexual exploitation and abuse
- Facilitate coordination efforts and share alerts on child rights violations with child protection advisors and child protection staff

4. [http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2382\(2017\)](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2382(2017))

B. UN AGENCIES AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

1. UN AGENCIES

Canadian police personnel must keep in mind that multiple agencies work on child protection, either directly or indirectly. These agencies can be excellent partners to assist Canadian police personnel with their capacity-building and support mandates in international missions.

- **UNICEF: Main agency working on all children's issues**

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) works with UN peacekeeping personnel and multiple international and national actors to promote, monitor and report on child rights and wellbeing and to expand child protection services. UNICEF leads various areas of activity, including demining, vaccination, education, child protection and justice for children.

KEY MESSAGE

Outside peacekeeping missions, UNICEF (the main UN agency working on children's issues) typically coordinates child protection activities between different UN agencies.

- **UNOCHA: Main agency working on humanitarian aid coordination**

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) contributes to effective humanitarian response through coordination, advocacy, policy, information management and humanitarian financing tools and services. OCHA's country and regional offices are responsible for delivering the agency's core functions at the local level by leveraging the functional expertise available throughout the organisation. OCHA is the agency to contact to find out who does what in an emergency. OCHA oversees the cluster approach and produces various maps to facilitate collaboration.

- **UNHCR: Main agency providing services to refugees**

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is dedicated to saving lives, protecting rights and building a better future for refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people. The agency works with international partners, national stakeholders and communities to ensure that all persons are afforded the right to seek asylum in another country and to secure lasting solutions to crises. The UNHCR serves boys and girls who are displaced, stateless, asylum seekers or refugees inside and outside camps.

- **UNODC: Main agency working on organised crime and human trafficking**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) seeks to achieve security and justice for all by helping states and their peoples guard against the serious threats posed by drugs, crime and terrorism. The UNODC helps the UN provide a coordinated, comprehensive response to the interrelated issues of illicit drug trafficking and abuse, crime prevention and criminal justice, international terrorism and political cor-

ruption. The agency often collaborates with national police in various areas of judicial reform and capacity building.

- **UNDP: Main agency working on development**

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) works with governments and local communities to find solutions to global and national development challenges. It works towards the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. Some of its projects include components dedicated to prevention, community mobilisation, awareness raising and access to justice.

- **UN Women: Main agency working on gender equality**

The United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) leads, promotes and coordinates efforts to advance the full realisation of women's rights and opportunities. It provides technical and financial support while promoting and monitoring work on gender equality carried out across the UN system. Naturally, it is responsible for matters related to the rights of girls.

- **UNFPA: Main agency working on sexual and reproductive rights**

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) oversees matters related to sexual and reproductive health. Its work involves providing healthcare to women and youth as well as creating national strategies, protocols and campaigns. The agency leads a number of initiatives aimed at addressing sexual violence and it often collaborates with national police in carrying out these initiatives.

- **IOM: Main intergovernmental organisation in the field of migration**

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) works in the four broad areas of migration management: migration and development, facilitating migration, regulating migration, and addressing forced migrations. Its activities include the promotion of international migration law, policy debate and guidance, protection of migrants' rights, migrant health and gender issues related to migration. IOM often holds capacity-building activities for national police on issues related to migration and trafficking.

- **WFP: Main agency delivering food assistance in emergencies**

The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) works mostly in conflict-affected countries. It provides emergency assistance, relief, rehabilitation and development aid, and conducts special operations with communities to improve nutrition and improve food security. On occasion, it provides food to children through centres, including facilities where children may be deprived of their liberty.

- **SRS/CAAC: Main advocate for the protection and well-being of children affected by armed conflict**

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRS/CAAC) acts as a convener and facilitates collaboration on child protection across the United Nations, both at the headquarters with the UN Security Council and

at the field level with peacekeepers and civil society partners. It collaborates closely with child protection advisors and UNICEF and can support advocacy and coordination efforts for the well-being of children affected by armed conflict.

- **ILO: Main agency working on work and labour issues**

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) is a United Nations agency that sets labour standards, develops policies and devises programmes promoting decent work for women and men and works actively on the elimination of all forms of child labour. Its supports comprehensive plans of action to eliminate them, including situations where children are victims or witnesses of crimes, or in conflict with the law.

2. OTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTORS

Various international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) make significant contributions to the child protection and juvenile justice systems. Canadian police personnel deployed on international missions should make a point of coordinating with them to benefit from their:

- Expertise on child-friendly practices
- Extensive knowledge on country-specific children's rights issues
- Referral capacities and services
- Advocacy and liaison capabilities with various duty bearers and networks

While it is not possible to list of all agencies that work globally on child protection issues, here are some key international organisations that support child protection in humanitarian contexts:

- **International Committee of the Red Cross**

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) aims to protect vulnerable groups of people and victims of international and internal armed conflict. This includes war-wounded prisoners, refugees, combatants, civilians, migrants and children. In terms of child protection, the ICRC and the National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society runs reunification programmes for migrant children and their families, visits detention facilities, and coordinates messaging for children and other persons deprived of their liberty. It also works actively to prevent children from being recruited by armed forces or other groups and supports the demobilisation of children.

- **Save the Children**

Save the Children (SC) is an international non-governmental organisation that promotes child rights, provides relief and helps support children in over 120 countries. It partners with local organisations, communities and government bodies and works actively to uphold the best interests of the child by strengthening child protection systems. It promotes a rights-based approach to programming, mostly through advocacy, monitoring, education and prevention initiatives as well as through direct humanitarian

relief, including in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes.

- **World Vision**

World Vision (WV) is a global relief, development and advocacy organisation that partners with children, families and their communities to help them reach their full potential. Its activities include providing child-focused disaster management strategies and relief, supporting community-led development projects and engaging in advocacy. WV operates in many countries affected by armed conflict and supports initiatives that have a direct impact on children affected by war.

- **Terre des hommes**

Terre des hommes (Tdh) is a network of organisations working in the area of children's rights. It supports and implements development and humanitarian projects designed to improve the living conditions of underprivileged children, their families and communities. In the field, Terre des hommes' programming covers child protection and development projects through empowerment and participation. The group also provides support to children and their families in emergency situations. Its work varies from promoting alternatives to detention and assisting children in conflict with the law to monitoring and advocating against child exploitation in all its forms.

- **International Rescue Committee**

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) is a global humanitarian aid, relief and development organisation. It provides support to people whose livelihoods are affected by conflict or disaster. The IRC is active in the areas of child and youth protection and development, economic recovery and development, governance, health, and women's protection and empowerment. The IRC's programmes ensure immediate care and protection as well as long-term child development.

- **Norwegian Refugee Council**

The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is a non-governmental organisation that aims to protect the rights of displaced people. The organisation is known for their quick deployment capacity and relief efforts, covering aspects such as shelter, legal aid, food assistance, access to clean water and access to education. Moreover, the NRC works to reduce or prevent threats to the safety, dignity and well-being of displaced persons. For example, it engages in dialogue with armed actors and runs several initiatives to promote access to justice and rapid education programmes for children and youth.

- **Oxfam**

Oxfam is a confederation of 20 independent charitable organisations that focus on the alleviation of global poverty and gender equality. Through public awareness campaigns, advocacy and assistance during disasters and conflicts, Oxfam works with partners and communities to create lasting change. Its activities are varied and cover everything from ensuring access to safe spaces for education to facilitating knowledge-sharing between local partners and communities on the impact of child marriage.

- **War Child**

War Child (WC) provides assistance to children in areas experiencing conflict and the aftermath of conflict. It plays an active role in raising public awareness on the impact of war on communities and the responsibility to act. Furthermore, War Child works directly with local organisations and communities to rebuild legal structures, to increase the capacities of justice and legal actors, and to provide access to formal and informal education for children in war-affected communities.

- **International Bureau for Children's Rights**

The International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR) is an international non-governmental organisation that works to strengthen the capacities of people who work directly with children within the child protection and justice for children systems. Its three main areas of action are justice for children, children and emergencies, and violence against children. The organisation provides technical support on participative and sustainable capacity building for frontline workers.

3. REGIONAL INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATION

The organisations listed below all play a critical role in peacekeeping. Canadian police deployed in bilateral or multilateral international operations should collaborate with them to apply international norms and standards on child protection. In addition, each of these organisations has its own policies, guidelines and norms for various issues related to child protection.

- **AU:** African Union
- **ASEAN:** Association of Southeast Asian Nations
- **ECOWAS:** Economic Community of West African States
- **EU:** European Union
- **IGAD:** Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
- **International Criminal Court and Special Tribunals**
- **League of Arab States**
- **OAS:** Organization of American States

4. DONORS

Donors support initiatives by allocating resources and funding projects in different areas of intervention. Their funding patterns can vary in types, lengths and conditions. Justice for children, police reforms and capacity building are examples of initiatives these donors support:

- **ACFID:** Australian Council for International Development
- **AFD:** Agence Française de Développement
- **AECID:** Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation
- **DANIDA:** Denmark's Development Cooperation
- **DFID:** Department for International Development
- **ENABEL:** Belgium's Development Agency
- **GAC:** Global Affairs Canada
- **IADC:** Italian Agency for Development Cooperation
- **JICA:** Japan International Cooperation Agency
- **Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland**
- **Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Holland**
- **NORAD:** Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
- **SIDA:** Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- **SDC:** Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
- **USAID:** United States Agency for International Development

"There is still confusion among certain donors about the nature of child protection. In particular, there is a persistent confusion or lack of clarity on how it differs from overall protection and a lack of recognition that child protection addresses certain very specific forms of abuse, violence, exploitation and neglect, not all the rights of children."

- Global Protection Cluster
(http://cpaor.net/sites/default/files/cp/Donor_perspectives_FINAL.pdf)

C. NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACTORS AND OTHER ACTORS WITHIN THE NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

Most host state police services have internal and multisectoral protocols for cases involving a child who is a victim or witness of crime or who is in conflict with the law. Once you have been deployed, it is important to familiarise yourself with formal and informal protocols as well as the existence and mandate of any specialised police units dealing with child victims or witnesses of crime and/or children in conflict with the law. This will enable you to make referrals or provide support on cases involving children.

1. SPECIALISED UNITS

Specialised units typically include police officers who are experts in child protection, know the national child protection system well and are equipped to handle cases involving children. Specialised units can also include other professionals such as social workers, lawyers, psychologists and/or educators.

Examples: Juvenile Police Unit (Afghanistan), Family Support Units (Liberia and Sierra Leone, etc.).

Within police departments, specialised units may handle cases of violence against children, cases of children in conflict with the law, and cases of sexual and gender-based violence.

Most national police departments have units that specialise in child protection, though the names, composition and responsibilities of these units vary from one country to the next. **It is important to inform yourself on these specialised units early in your deployment so that you will know where to refer cases involving children.**

It sometimes happens that specialised units have been created by law or by a directive issued by the host state's police, but the units are not yet fully operational, especially outside of the capital city. As UN Police, you may be asked to assist with decentralising these specialised units and/or providing capacity-building training.

If no specialised unit exists, UNICEF and the CPA made advocate for the creation of one while you are deployed to the area.

KEY MESSAGE

In most missions, host state police have protocols and standard operating procedures on how to handle cases involving children in collaboration with governmental and non-governmental actors. UN Police personnel should seek to understand and strengthen these procedures by coordinating with CPAs.

2. NATIONAL ACTORS

» LEGAL SYSTEMS AND THEIR ACTORS

Legal systems vary, depending on the host state. Some countries use a common law system while others use a civil law system, an Islamic law system or a mixed system. Of course, criminal procedures, police work methods and the various actors that make up the legal system also vary, depending on the country and the type of legal system in place.

In addition to these basic legal systems, some countries have a traditional legal system that operates in parallel with the official legal system. Traditional legal systems are often referred to as “customary law” and may or may not be considered part of the official legal system. In some countries, customary law applies for minor offenses that can be addressed through traditional conflict resolution systems and can sometimes be recognised by the actors of the official legal system.

Canadian police personnel deployed on international missions must understand the host country's legal system, promote compliance with international norms and standards concerning the best interests of children, and support coordinated child protection actions.

The various actors in the juvenile justice system include, but are not limited to:

- Juvenile court magistrates
- Juvenile court judges
- Juvenile court prosecutors
- Community support structures
- Religious leaders

KEY MESSAGE

The type of legal system in place determines of the various roles and responsibilities that you must understand in order to effectively coordinate approaches and actions aimed at promoting the best interests of children.

» GOVERNMENT ACTORS

Canadian police personnel must also be familiar with the various government actors that are responsible for child protection and provide child protection services. It is your responsibility to make sure that child protection principles and obligations are always taken into account and understood by decision-making bodies.

Examples of government actors:

- Department of children affairs / women's affairs / social affairs
- National police

- Department of justice
- Department of interior
- Corrections services: juvenile detention and rehabilitation centres
- Department of Education: schools, teachers, etc.
- Department of Health: nurses, doctors, forensic experts, etc.
- Social workers
- National child protection network

3. INFORMAL CHILD PROTECTION ACTORS

In many countries affected by armed conflict, informal child protection actors within the community play a critical role, sometimes achieving more than formal mechanisms in other countries.

Family members, kinship networks, traditional leaders, religious leaders and teachers can all play a leading and decisive role in juvenile justice issues. Often, their role differs greatly from the role played by comparable individuals or groups in Canada. In addition, a community's beliefs and practices concerning childhood, child rearing, child safety and child protection concerns may be very different from those set out in international standards that promote the individual rights and best interests of children. It is important to take into account that under International Humanitarian Law, families are rights-bearers and those rights need to be ensured and respected by all law enforcement agencies and staff. For instance, families have the right to know what happened to family members who may have gone missing or have the right to be in contact with family who are detained.

As Canadian police personnel deployed in international missions, you must strike a balance between being sensitive to local, cultural and customary practices while constantly referring stakeholders to the international norms and standards you are there to practice and promote. Keep in mind that there is no “one size fits all” approach to coordinating with informal actors. Every country and community is different. Therefore, it is important to keep an open mind and quickly identify informal actors in order to better support the best interests of children. Remember that child protection advisors may be able to provide helpful insights on how to address differences between local practices and international standards.

KEY MESSAGE

Being sensitive to local practices, traditions and culture is essential to being able to carry your mandate. At the same time, it is important to remember that harmful practices cannot be ignored or condoned. You have the obligation to promote and adhere to international standards on child protection. These standards are universal.



CHILD PROTECTION SPECIALISTS INVOLVED IN THE MISSION

CHILD PROTECTION ADVISOR (CPA)

Name and title:

Tel.:

Email:

Address:

UN POLICE FOCAL POINT ON CHILD PROTECTION

Name and title:

Tel.:

Email:

Address:

GOVERNMENT CONTACTS

Name and title:

Tel.:

Email:

Address:

Name and title:

Tel.:

Email:

Address:

Name and title:

Tel.:

Email:

Address:

NGO CONTACTS

Name and title:

Organisation:

Tel.:

Email:

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Name and title:

Organisation:

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Name and title:

Organisation:

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Email:

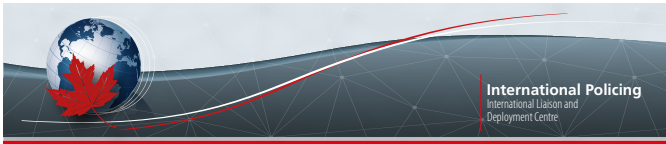
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DE LOS DERECHOS DEL NIÑO
المكتب الدولي لحقوق الطفل

Canada

+ 1 514 932 7656 - info@ibcr.org - www.ibcr.org



Royal Canadian
Mounted Police

Gendarmerie royale
du Canada

RCMP National Headquarters
Headquarters Building
73 Leikin Drive, Ottawa ON K1A 0R2

RCMP-GRC.GC.CA