



# the 1612

monitoring and  
reporting mechanism

**Resource Pack for NGOs**



## Acknowledgments

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict would like to thank all NGO and UN counterparts who participated in the development of the Resource Pack, in particular: *Association des Jeunes pour le Développement Intégré-Kalundu* (Ajedika), the Child Protection Working Group, *Coalición contra la Vinculación de Niños, Niñas y Jóvenes al Conflicto Armado en Colombia* (COALICO), the International Rescue Committee, Karen Human Rights Group, Nonviolent Peaceforce, Norwegian Refugee Council, Save the Children, War Child, World Vision International, as well as staff from UNICEF, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict is grateful for the support of a major anonymous donor, the government of Norway, and the government of Germany. Their generous support allowed for the development of this Resource Pack.

This Resource Pack was written by Filipa Schmitz-Guinote, supported by Gilles-Philippe Page, for Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict.

*The 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism:  
A Resource Pack for NGOs*

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second edition, 2015

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Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict is a fiscally-sponsored project of the Tides Center, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and the nation's largest fiscal sponsor.

Concept and Production: Green Communication Design inc

# CONTENTS

Introduction and User Guide	5				
part I – UNDERSTANDING THE MRM	7	part II – PLANNING YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE MRM	37	part III – ENGAGING IN THE MRM	55
THE MRM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS	8	DEFINING A STRATEGY FOR ENGAGEMENT IN THE MRM	38	BASIC PRINCIPLES AND ETHICAL STANDARDS	56
tool 1 Glossary of terms on the MRM	9	tool 17 Guiding questions ‘Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM’	39	tool 27 Factsheet ‘Guiding principles for MRM’	57
tool 2 Q&A ‘What is the MRM?’	11	tool 18 Guiding questions for self-assessment ‘Assessing security risks before engaging in the MRM’	41	tool 28 Sample language for a Code of Conduct	58
tool 3 The MRM cycle	13	tool 19 Guiding questions ‘Participation in a MRM Country Task Force?’	43	tool 29 Checklist ‘Confidentiality’	59
tool 4 Factsheet ‘Key security council resolutions on the MRM’	14	tool 20 Case study ‘NGO participation in the MRM Task Force in Colombia’	45	tool 30 Checklist ‘Informed consent’	60
tool 5 International legal foundation of the six grave violations	15	OPERATIONAL PLANNING	46	MONITORING GRAVE VIOLATIONS	61
tool 6 Factsheet ‘The six grave violations’	16	tool 21 Factsheet ‘Building on existing activities to monitor, report and respond to grave violations’	47	tool 31 Factsheet ‘What information is needed for the MRM?’	62
tool 7 Factsheet ‘Key actors in the MRM’	17	tool 22 Guiding questions ‘Stakeholder analysis’	48	tool 32 Factsheet ‘Information gathering’	64
tool 8 Factsheet ‘The role of peacekeeping missions in the MRM’	19	tool 23 Factsheet ‘Mapping relevant international obligations of your country of operation’	50	tool 33 Checklist ‘Interviewing techniques’	66
tool 9 Factsheet ‘Listing and de-listing parties to conflict’	21	tool 24 Guiding questions ‘Mapping national provisions that protect children in conflict in your country of operation’	51	tool 34 Annotated case study ‘Recognizing the grave violations’	69
tool 10 MRM map	23	tool 25 Factsheet ‘Advantages and disadvantages of participating in the MRM through networks’	52	tool 35 Factsheet ‘Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations’	72
tool 11 Q&A ‘Action plans’	24	tool 26 Checklist ‘Before you engage in the MRM’	53	tool 36 Do’s and don’ts ‘Providing feedback and managing victims/community expectations in relation to the MRM’	74
tool 12 Factsheet ‘Link between the MRM and the MARA (conflict-related sexual violence)’	27			tool 37 Case study ‘Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip’	76
NGOs AND THE MRM	28			tool 38 Case study ‘Community-led monitoring in Southeastern Myanmar’	77
tool 13 Factsheet ‘Why are NGOs called upon to participate in the MRM?’	29			tool 39 Case study ‘Village child protection committees in Eastern DRC’	78
tool 14 Factsheet ‘Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?’	30				
tool 15 Matrix ‘Options for NGO participation in the MRM’	31				
tool 16 Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’	33				



(cont'd) **CONTENTS**

(cont'd) **part III –  
ENGAGING IN THE MRM**

**INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND SECURITY  
WHEN MONITORING GRAVE VIOLATIONS** ..... 79

**tool 40** Self-assessment exercise ‘Security risks  
when gathering information on grave violations’ 80

**tool 41** Group exercise ‘Security while collecting information’ 81

**tool 42** Case study ‘Emergency fund for protection  
of monitors in Eastern DRC’ 83

**tool 43** Checklist ‘Facilitating UN verification of  
cases of grave violations’ 84

**tool 44** Q&A ‘Using a case database’ 85

**tool 45** Annotated sample case database 86

**tool 46** Factsheet ‘Information management’ 87

**tool 47** Group exercise ‘Confidentiality and  
information management’ 90

**REPORTING GRAVE VIOLATIONS** ..... 91

**tool 48** Communication flow in MRM countries 92

**tool 49** Communication flow in non-MRM countries 93

**tool 50** Factsheet ‘Other avenues to report grave violations’ 94

**LINKING MONITORING, PREVENTION AND  
RESPONSE TO GRAVE VIOLATIONS**..... 97

**tool 51** Factsheet ‘Linking monitoring, prevention  
and response to grave violations’ 98

**tool 52** Factsheet ‘The MRM and the cluster system’ 100

**tool 53** Guiding questions ‘Mapping service providers  
and identifying referral pathways’ 102

**tool 54** Case study ‘Emergency fund for  
referrals in Eastern DRC’ 103

**tool 55** Guiding questions ‘Planning advocacy  
on the grave violations’ 104

**tool 56** Case study ‘Options for local advocacy in Eastern DRC’ 107

**tool 57** Case study ‘Responding through advocacy:  
ad-hoc release of children in Eastern DRC’ 109

**tool 58** Case study ‘Community engagement in  
prevention of recruitment and protection  
of children at risk in Colombia’ 110

**tool 59** Factsheet ‘Engagement with Armed  
Non-State Actors on the protection of children’ 111

**tool 60** Checklist ‘Mainstreaming child protection  
in peace processes’ 115

**tool 61** Practice standards in children’s participation  
(Save the Children Alliance) 117

**tool 62** Case study ‘Child-led advocacy in Colombia’ 118

**part IV –**

**LEARNING FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE MRM** ..... 119

**EVALUATING MRM-RELATED ACTIVITIES** ..... 120

**tool 63** Matrix ‘Indicators and means of verification  
for MRM-related activities’ 121

**tool 64** Guiding questions ‘Collecting best  
practices on MRM-related activities’ 124

**ANNEX – FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE** ..... 127



## Introduction and User Guide

The 1612 Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), which documents six grave violations perpetrated against children in situations of armed conflict, is a UN-led process that performs best when it enjoys the support and participation of civil society actors. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), whether local or international, have been contributing to the MRM by monitoring and documenting grave violations, responding to the needs of victims, and by advocating for stronger action to protect children. However, the scope of their engagement can vary due to a number of factors including security constraints, limited knowledge of how the mechanism works and insufficient financial and technical capacity.

In 2012, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations developed comprehensive information and guidance on the MRM. These materials were key to the development of this Resource Pack and important for any entity engaging in the MRM. However, they are tailored to UN staff *mandated* to implement the MRM and, as such, not all of the materials are directly relevant to NGOs. NGOs are in a distinct position in that they can *choose* whether and how to participate in the MRM.

By drawing on best practices and lessons learned from NGO engagement in the MRM, this Resource Pack aims to complement the UN materials by offering NGOs a wide range of information, advice, guidance, tools and examples, to help them participate in the MRM in a manner that strengthens the impact of their work and of the mechanism.

### Objectives and target groups

This Resource Pack was formed with two specific objectives:

- To help NGOs mainstream information about the MRM within their own organizations/teams and empower them to identify appropriate ways of engaging with the mechanism.

- To enable NGOs to autonomously identify technical capacity gaps within their teams and to strengthen their capacity to monitor and report on grave violations against children.

**The primary target groups** of this Resource Pack are field staff from local or international NGOs who are/will be actively engaged in the MRM and/or in child protection programming related to grave violations, as well as management staff from national or international NGOs (field and HQ). **The secondary target group** of this Resource Pack is the UN, both in-country and at headquarters, in particular staff members who interact with NGOs in the framework of the MRM.

### Methodology

This Resource Pack is the result of a wide consultation with national and international NGOs as well as UN practitioners (HQ and field) conducted between September and December 2013. In 2014, Watchlist worked with partners to conduct field trainings on the MRM in Mali, DRC, Nigeria, Myanmar and South Sudan. This process was an opportunity to test the material presented in the Resource Pack and informed the 2015 update.

Watchlist sought wherever possible to capitalize on existing resources. The following materials were key to the development of this Resource Pack:

- *MRM Field Manual*, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, June 2014<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The most updated version of the MRM Guidelines, Field manual, Training toolkit and Good practices study prepared by the O-SRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO are available at [www.mrmtools.org](http://www.mrmtools.org)



- *MRM Guidelines*, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, June 2014
- *MRM Global Good Practices Study*, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, June 2014
- *MRM Training Toolkit*, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, June 2014
- *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*, Global Child Protection Working Group, 2012
- *Professional Standards for Protection Work Carried Out by Humanitarian and Human Rights Actors in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*, ICRC, 2013
- *Protection – An ALNAP Guide for Humanitarian Agencies*, Hugo Slim and Andrew Bonwick, August 2005

## How to use this Resource Pack:

The Resource Pack is divided into four parts:

- **Part I: Understanding the MRM** – this section is aimed at organizations and/or staff who do not yet know (well) the MRM. It includes information about how the mechanism works, highlighting issues or questions that are particularly relevant for NGOs.
- **Part II: Planning your participation in the MRM** – this section is relevant for organizations/staff considering whether or how to engage in the MRM, or reconsidering/rethinking their current engagement in the MRM. It offers tools for both strategic and operational planning with regard to MRM-related activities.
- **Part III: Engaging in the MRM** – this section is intended for organizations that are about to start MRM-related activities or are seeking to further strengthen their capacity to monitor, report, prevent and respond to grave violations. It contains information and examples of methodologies, approaches and processes to gather information and follow-up on cases of grave violations, with an emphasis on security and confidentiality and on linking monitoring and response to violations.
- **Part IV: Learning from your experience with the MRM** – this section focuses on monitoring and evaluation of MRM-related activities. It is relevant for NGOs that have or are planning MRM-specific projects or activities or that are interested in reflecting on their own experience with the MRM.

The Resource Pack does not contain 'ready-made' tools. Rather, it offers 'raw material' that NGOs can use and adapt to their specific needs and context. Types of tools you will find in the Resource Pack include:

- **Factsheets:** factual information on how the MRM works or compilation of key issues, practices, standards and experiences on a specific topic related to the MRM implementation. They can be used as a resource to prepare meetings (internal or with the UN) and for trainings.
- **Checklists:** summarize key actions to take in preparation for the MRM (strategic planning) or while participating in the MRM (operational planning).
- **Self-assessment and guiding questions:** resources for internal discussions and planning.
- **Matrixes:** describe options for action and relevant implications on a range of issues relating to engagement in and implementation of the MRM. They are useful for planning purposes (internal meetings, meetings with the UN, project development).
- **Charts/diagrams:** visual interpretations of MRM-related processes and communication flows. They can be useful resources for presentations or trainings.
- **Case studies:** examples of NGO experiences with the MRM, focusing on specific topics and highlighting challenges and approaches taken to overcome those challenges. They can be a source of inspiration and guidance to plan MRM-related activities.
- **Exercises:** focus on operational issues related to MRM implementation and are useful resources for trainings.

## Your feedback

The Resource Pack is a living document. Watchlist aims to update it periodically, not only to reflect developments in the MRM and the children and armed conflict agenda, but also to continuously integrate new experiences and feedback from NGOs and the UN. We hope the Resource Pack will create the space for a global community of practice on the MRM. To this aim, we encourage NGOs and UN staff to send us feedback on the use of this Resource Pack, using the Feedback Form available in the Annex.

Feedback and any other questions or remarks can be sent at any time to Gilles-Philippe Pagé, Watchlist Partnerships Officer: [gilles-philippe@watchlist.org](mailto:gilles-philippe@watchlist.org)



# part I

understanding the MRM



# the MRM: what it is and how it works

**This section contains 12 tools that describe the policy and legal framework of the MRM, as well as its functioning. It highlights relevant issues, questions and processes that are particularly relevant for NGOs to know.**

## **List of tools in this section:**

tool 1 – Glossary of terms on the MRM

tool 2 – Q&A ‘What is the MRM?’

tool 3 – The MRM cycle

tool 4 – Factsheet ‘Key Security Council Resolutions on the MRM’

tool 5 – International legal foundation of the six grave violations

tool 6 – Factsheet ‘The six grave violations’

tool 7 – Factsheet ‘Key actors in the MRM’

tool 8 – Factsheet ‘The role of peacekeeping missions in the MRM’

tool 9 – Factsheet ‘Listing and de-listing of parties to conflict’

tool 10 – MRM map

tool 11 – Q&A ‘Action Plans’

tool 12 – Factsheet ‘Link between the MRM and the MARA  
(conflict-related sexual violence)’





# tool 1

## Glossary of Terms on the MRM

<b>MRM</b>	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism. Established by Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) to provide the UN Security Council with timely and reliable information on the <b>SIX GRAVE VIOLATIONS</b> against children.
<b>ANNEXES OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ANNUAL REPORT</b>	Parties to a conflict that commit any of the ' <b>TRIGGER VIOLATIONS</b> ' are listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report to the UN Security Council on the situation of children and armed conflict.
<b>ANNEX I</b>	List of parties to conflict that commit violations in countries that are already on the agenda of the UN Security Council.
<b>ANNEX II</b>	List of parties to conflict that commit violations in countries that are <b>NOT</b> on the agenda of the UN Security Council.
<b>LISTING</b>	Process of adding a party to conflict to the <b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b> . The decision is made by the UN Secretary-General on the basis of UN-verified information indicating that a party to a conflict has committed at least one of the 'trigger violations'. Listing leads to the establishment of the MRM in the country where the listed party operates.
<b>DE-LISTING</b>	Process of removing a party from the <b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b> . De-listing occurs after an armed actor has fully implemented an <b>ACTION PLAN</b> and the UN confirms that violations have stopped. Armed actors that simply cease to exist are also removed from the <b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b> .
<b>LISTED PARTY</b>	Armed force or group appearing in the <b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b> .
<b>ACTION PLAN</b>	Agreement between the UN and a listed party containing concrete time-bound measures to end a violation(s) for which the armed actor has been listed. Successful completion of an Action Plan leads to de-listing.
<b>PERSISTENT PERPETRATOR</b>	Armed force or group listed in the <b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b> for five years or more.
<b>SITUATION OF CONCERN</b>	Country or region where armed actors are under close observation but have not been included in the <b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b> . A description of the situation is included in the main body of the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. The <b>MRM</b> is not implemented in situations of concern.
<b>SIX GRAVE VIOLATIONS</b>	Violations monitored by the <b>MRM</b> : recruitment and use of children; killing and maiming of children; abduction of children; rape and sexual violence against children; attacks against schools and hospitals; denial of humanitarian access. Once established in a country, the MRM monitors all six violations and all parties to that conflict (whether listed or not).



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'TRIGGER VIOLATION'	Violations that constitute grounds for <b>LISTING</b> . Trigger violations are determined by UN Security Council Resolutions. So far, four of the six grave violations can trigger listing: recruitment and use of children; killing and maiming of children; rape and sexual violence against children; attacks against schools and hospitals.
COUNTRY-SPECIFIC REPORTS ON THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT	Reports submitted by the UN Secretary-General to the UN Security Council describing the situation of children in a country where the MRM is being implemented. These reports are submitted on a rolling basis several times a year and are examined by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. The outcome is the adoption of <b>CONCLUSIONS</b> . Each country is reviewed approximately every 2-3 years.
SECRETARY-GENERAL'S ANNUAL REPORT ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT	Report submitted to the UN Security Council every year in June or July. The report covers the preceding calendar year and contains: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) an analysis of main global concerns (thematic section);</li> <li>2) an update on 'situations of concern';</li> <li>3) an overview of grave violations and measures to address them in all countries where listed parties operate and</li> <li>4) two annexes listing the names of perpetrators (<b>annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report</b>).</li> </ol>
CONCLUSIONS	Official document adopted unanimously by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict after the examination of each country-specific report. Conclusions contain specific recommendations for the Security Council, UN, member states, donors and/or the concerned parties themselves. Conclusions must be followed up by the relevant Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting.
SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT	Thematic debate during which any UN member state can make public statements about the situation of children in armed conflicts and highlight or call for measures to help address the situation. NGOs may also be invited to address the Security Council in such occasions. The outcome may be the adoption by the UN Security Council of a new Resolution or of a Presidential Statement.



# tool 2

## What is the MRM?

### Q&A

#### What is the purpose of the MRM?

By collecting timely, objective, accurate and reliable information on violations and abuses committed against children by parties to armed conflict, the MRM provides the UN Security Council with an evidence-base to hold perpetrators accountable. It also helps actors on the ground advocate for and plan adequate protection and response measures and programs.

#### When was the MRM created?

In 2005, by Security Council Resolution 1612.

#### Where is the MRM implemented?

The MRM is implemented in all countries where armed actors that have been listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict operate.

#### What does the MRM monitor?

The MRM monitors grave violations committed against children by parties to an armed conflict in contravention of international human rights and humanitarian law. Concretely, the MRM monitors the following six violations against children: use and recruitment; killing and maiming; abduction; rape and sexual violence; attacks against schools and hospitals and denial of humanitarian access.

#### Who is in charge of implementing the MRM?

At the global level, the MRM is overseen by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRS-CAAC), in close cooperation with UNICEF and the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations. At country level, the MRM is overseen by Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR). The CTFMRs are co-chaired by the representative of UNICEF and the highest UN representative in the country (usually the Resident Coordinator or the SRS-CAAC). The CTFMR consist of relevant UN entities and can decide to invite NGOs to be part of it.

#### Can NGOs participate in the MRM?

NGOs are critical partners before, during and after the MRM. They can participate by providing information on violations to the UN (simple alerts or documented cases) and by responding to violations through their programs. CTFMRs may include national or international NGO members provided they are neutral, impartial and independent.

#### How is information collected in the framework of the MRM?

MRM information is collected by many actors on the ground: UN staff (in particular child protection, protection and human rights staff), as well as national and international NGOs. It is then compiled in a confidential database and analyzed by the CTFMR; and reported to the Security Council through the Office of the SRS-CAAC. UN-verified information (collected by the UN or cross-checked by the UN) is reported to the Security Council. Information that is not verified by the UN is categorized as 'non-verified'. While it is not reported to the Security Council, it contributes to context analysis and can be used to inform response programs on the ground.



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**Where does MRM information go?**

At country level, MRM information goes first to the CTFMR, which compiles it, analyzes it and reports it to the Office of the SRSG-CAAC in New York where the information is further vetted and included in reports to the Security Council via the UN Secretary-General. The Office of the SRSG-CAAC also reports to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council. Reports contain information about numbers of violations documented as well as trends; a few cases are included as examples, provided that there is no risk to victims or monitors on the ground. The identity of victims is never disclosed in reports.

**Is information collected by the MRM reported to the International Criminal Court (ICC)?**

No. The MRM does not collect information for the purposes of criminal prosecution at the national or international level. Nevertheless, one of the actions that can be taken by the Security Council following the examination of reports on the situation of children and armed conflict in a particular country is to refer the general situation to the ICC. The SRSG-CAAC has addressed the ICC as *amicus curiae*<sup>2</sup> in the past.

**How does the MRM help respond to the needs of victims on the ground?**

The MRM can help respond to the needs of victims at two levels: at the individual level, monitoring must be linked to a referral system, so victims can receive immediate assistance. On a larger scale, the MRM can provide evidence on vulnerabilities, prevalence and trends regarding the grave violations, which can inform response and prevention programming.




**How does the Security Council respond to MRM reports?**

The review of country-specific reports leads to the adoption of 'Conclusions' by the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. These are public documents adopted by consensus and can contain a range of points from recommendations to governments and armed actors to referrals to sanctions committees or to the ICC (see Security Council Working Group's 'Toolkit'). The Security Council Working Group can also conduct country visits to engage directly with authorities. Annual reports are usually discussed in an annual debate by the Security Council, which can lead to a Presidential Statement or a Resolution. Presidential Statements highlight the Council's position on key aspects of the children and armed conflict agenda. They are adopted unanimously and therefore carry political weight. Resolutions set up or clarify a policy framework for the protection of children in conflict and strengthen accountability. They may be adopted unanimously or by vote and are mandatory.

**What is the role of governments in the MRM?**

Governments have the primary responsibility to ensure the protection of children and the respect for international law in their countries. Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) specifies that 'actions taken in the framework of the MRM must support and supplement, as appropriate, the protection and rehabilitation roles of national governments'. As such, CTFMRs liaise with relevant authorities to strengthen national response and protection mechanisms for children affected by the conflict. Governments in countries where the armed forces are listed to the Annexes should engage in an Action Plan. Dialogues with non-state armed groups are also only initiated with the agreement of the concerned government. Because governments are parties to conflict they cannot however participate in CTFMRs and do not have access to information on individual cases documented in the framework of the MRM.

## related tools

-  [tool 15 – Matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM'](#)
-  [tool 1 – Glossary of terms on the MRM](#)
-  [tool 7 – Factsheet 'Key actors in the MRM'](#)

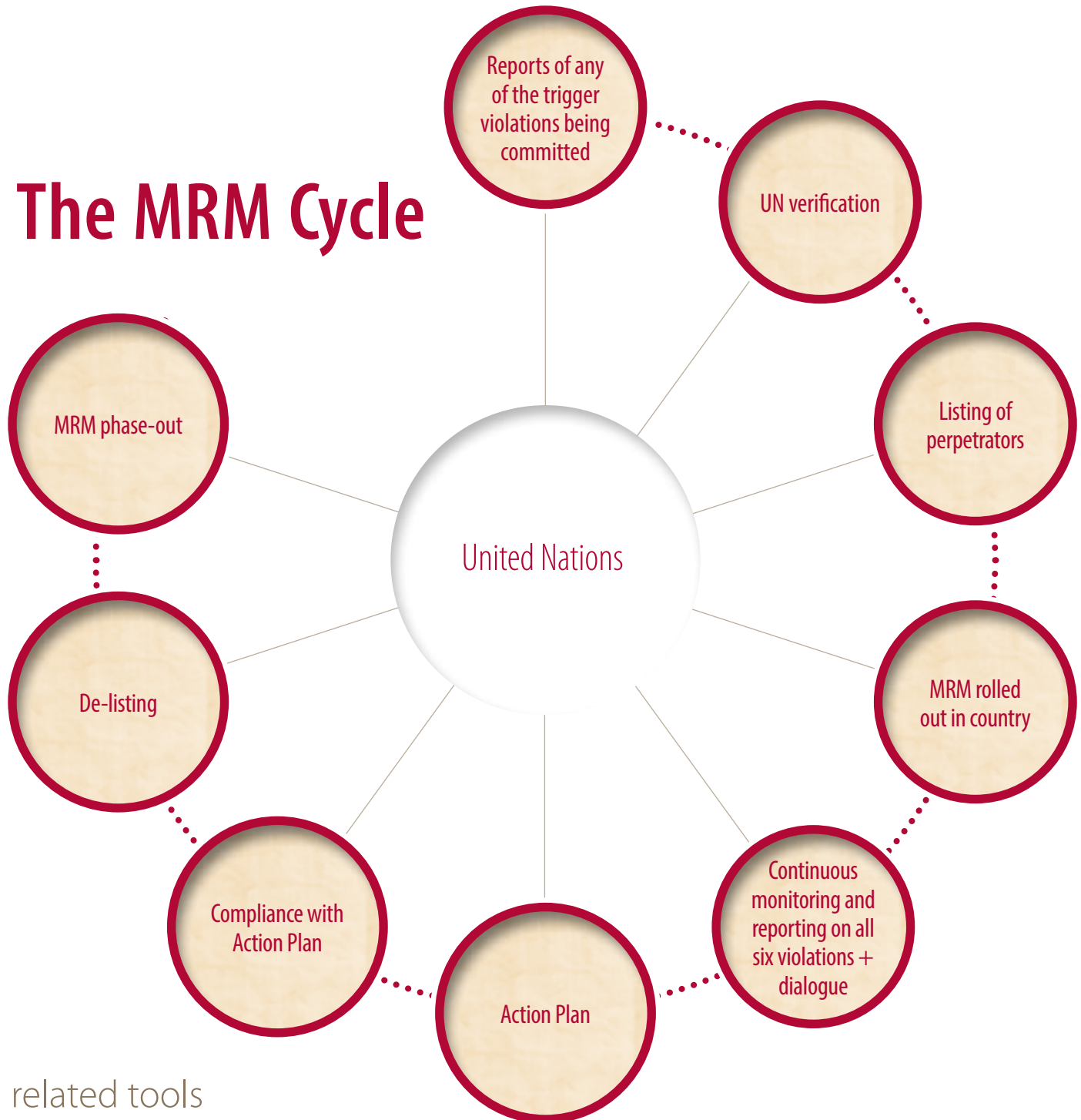
<sup>2</sup> An *amicus curiae* (friend of the Court) brings to the attention of the Court relevant matter not already brought to its attention by the parties and that may be of considerable help to the Court.





# tool 3

## The MRM Cycle

### The MRM Cycle



#### related tools

-  tool 1 – Glossary of terms on the MRM
-  tool 7 – Factsheet ‘Key actors in the MRM’



# tool 4

## Key Security Council Resolutions on the MRM

### Factsheet

Requests UN Secretary-General to list parties to conflict who use and recruit children in his annual reports on children and armed conflict.

Requests the UN to set up a Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM).

Establishes the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

Resolution 1379  
(2001)

Resolution 1612  
(2005)

Resolution 1882  
(2009)

Resolution 1998  
(2011)

Requests the UN Secretary-General to list parties to conflict who kill and maim children and who commit rape or sexual violence against children in his annual reports on children and armed conflict.

Requests the UN Secretary-General to list parties to conflict who threaten or carry out attacks against schools and hospitals or education and medical personnel in his annual reports on children and armed conflict.



# tool 5

## International Legal Foundation of the Six Grave Violations

The Office of the SRSG-CAAC published a Working Paper on the legal foundation of the six grave violations. It highlights relevant provisions of humanitarian and human rights law and provides further guidance for monitoring and reporting on these violations.

The full Working Paper can be downloaded [here](#).

A summary Booklet can be downloaded [here](#).

### related tools

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[tool 6](#) – Factsheet ‘The six grave violations’



# tool 6

## The Six Grave Violations

### Factsheet

<p><b>Killing and maiming</b></p> <p><b>Killing:</b> Any action in the context of the armed conflict that results in the death of one or more children.</p> <p><b>Maiming:</b> Any action that causes a serious, permanent, disabling injury, scarring or mutilation to a child.</p> <p>Killing and injuring of children as a result of direct targeting and also indirect actions, including: crossfire, landmines, cluster munitions, improvised explosive devices or other indiscriminate explosive devices. Killing or injuring can take place in the context of military operations, house demolitions, search-and-arrest campaigns or suicide attacks. Torture can also be reported under this category.</p>	<p><b>Recruitment and use of children</b></p> <p><b>Recruitment:</b> Refers to compulsory, forced or voluntary conscription or enlistment of children into any kind of armed force or armed group(s) under the age stipulated in the international treaties applicable to the armed force or armed group in question.</p> <p><b>Use of children:</b> Refers to the use of children by armed forces or armed groups in any capacity, including, but not limited to, children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies and collaborators. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities.</p>
<p><b>Attacks against schools and hospitals</b></p> <p>Attacks include the targeting of schools or medical facilities that cause the total or partial destruction of such facilities. Other interferences to the normal operation of the facility may also be reported, such as the occupation, shelling, targeting for propaganda of, or otherwise causing harm to schools or medical facilities or their personnel.</p> <p>» <b>Note:</b> A 'school' denotes a recognizable education facility or learning site. Education facilities and learning sites must be recognized and known by the community as a learning space and marked by visible boundaries.</p> <p>'Medical facilities' are places where the sick and wounded are collected and/or provided with health-care services.</p>	<p><b>Rape and sexual violence</b></p> <p>A violent act of a sexual nature to a child. This encompasses rape, other sexual violence, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced marriage/pregnancy or enforced sterilization.</p> <p><b>Rape/attempted rape:</b> is an act of non-consensual sexual intercourse. This can include the invasion of any part of the body with a sexual organ and/or the invasion of the genital or anal opening with any object or body part. Any penetration is considered rape. Efforts to rape someone, which do not result in penetration, are considered attempted rape.</p> <p><b>Sexual violence:</b> is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or acts to traffic a child's sexuality. Sexual violence takes many forms, including rape, sexual slavery and/or trafficking, forced pregnancy, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and/or abuse and forced abortion.</p>
<p><b>Abduction</b></p> <p>The unlawful removal, seizure, capture, apprehension, taking or enforced disappearance of a child either temporarily or permanently for the purpose of any form of exploitation of the child. This includes, but is not limited to, recruitment in armed forces or groups, participation in hostilities, sexual exploitation or abuse, forced labor, hostage-taking and indoctrination. If a child is recruited by force by an armed force or group, this is considered as two separate violations – abduction and recruitment.</p>	<p><b>Denial of humanitarian access</b></p> <p>The intentional deprivation of or impediment to the passage of humanitarian assistance indispensable to children's survival, by the parties to the conflict, including wilfully impeding relief supplies as provided for under the Geneva Conventions; and significant impediments to the ability of humanitarian or other relevant actors to access and assist affected children, in situations of armed conflict.</p> <p>The denial should be considered in terms of children's access to assistance as well as humanitarian agencies' ability to access vulnerable populations, including children.</p>

Definitions taken from *Field Manual – The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations Against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict*, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, April 2010 p.10-11





# tool 7

## Key Actors in the MRM

### Factsheet

Country Level	
<b>Resident Coordinator/ Humanitarian Coordinator (RC/HC)</b>	Highest UN authority in countries that <b>do not</b> have a peacekeeping, political or peace-building mission. Usually the head of UNDP. Co-chairs the CTFMR.
<b>Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG)</b>	Highest UN authority in countries that have a peacekeeping, political or peacebuilding mission. The SRSG is appointed by the Secretary-General. Co-chairs the CTFMR.
<b>UNICEF Representative</b>	Head of UNICEF at country level. Co-chairs the CTFMR with RC/HC or SRSG.
<b>Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR)</b>	Structure responsible for the implementation of the MRM at country level. It is co-chaired by the highest UN authority (SRSG or RC/HC) in the country and by the UNICEF Representative. Other UN entities may be designated as additional co-chairs if appropriate. The CTFMR is composed of all relevant UN entities and may include national and/or international NGOs or national bodies (e.g., National Human Rights Commission, Ombudsman Office) provided they are neutral, impartial and independent. Governments are not part of CTFMRs. CTFMRs compile and analyze all information on grave violations in the country and report it to the Office of the SRSG-CAAC on a quarterly basis. CTFMRs are also responsible for ensuring the establishment of referral mechanisms for immediate response, verifying incidents of violations, following up on Security Council recommendations, engaging in dialogue with parties to the conflict, and support the preparation and implementation of Action Plans.
<b>MRM focal points</b>	MRM focal points are individuals based in the field tasked to collect information on grave violations and communicate it to the CTFMR and to provide advice and technical support to organizations that monitor or provide alerts on violations. MRM focal points are generally UN staff, typically from UNICEF and/or peacekeeping mission, but may also be from other UN entities as relevant for a particular area (e.g., OHCHR, UNDP, UNHCR, OCHA). In areas where there is no UN presence, NGOs may also fulfill the role of focal point.
<b>NGOs</b>	On the ground, NGOs can provide alerts and information on grave violations to CTFMRs and they are engaged in the programmatic response to the needs of children affected by conflicts. NGOs can also play an advocacy role at the country and global level to strengthen mechanisms and policies to protect children in armed conflicts.
<b>Humanitarian Clusters</b>	The CTFMR should work closely with the Cluster system, in particular coordination spaces with mandates related to the protection of children. However, the distinction between the two bodies is important to maintain as some of the NGOs involved in Clusters may not wish to be associated with the MRM for security reasons. Good collaboration between the CTFMR and the Cluster system plays a key role in ensuring that monitoring translates into better access to referral services for victims. The Clusters can also provide information on grave violations as appropriate.



Headquarter Level	
<b>Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC)</b>	Acts as convener for the children and armed conflict agenda within the entire UN system and as an independent advocate for the protection of children in armed conflicts. This mandate was established by the UN General Assembly in 1996 and has since been renewed every three years. The appointment of the SRSG-CAAC is made by the UN Secretary-General. On a day-to-day basis, the SRSG-CAAC and her office work to build awareness and garner political support for the protection of children in armed conflicts, including by supporting the negotiation of Action Plans; overseeing and providing strategic direction for the global implementation of the MRM together with UNICEF and DPKO, <sup>3</sup> and preparing and vetting all CAAC-related reports for the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council and the Security Council.
<b>UNICEF Headquarters</b>	Together with the Office of the SRSG-CAAC, UNICEF provides day-to-day technical guidance and support to CTFMRs for an effective implementation of the MRM and develops working tools for the field (MRM guidelines, field manual, information management systems, etc.).
<b>Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)</b>	A child protection team provides training, guidance and technical advice to child protection advisors deployed to peacekeeping missions. They also work to mainstream child protection in peacekeeping by providing child protection training to military personnel deployed to peacekeeping operations.
<b>UN Secretary-General (UNSG)</b>	The UNSG submits reports on children and armed conflict to the Security Council through his SRSG on Children and Armed Conflict. The UNSG also decides on the inclusion or exclusion of parties to a conflict in the annexes of his Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, based on the recommendation by the SRSG and UN entities engaged in the MRM.
<b>Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict (SCWG-CAAC)</b>	Established by Resolution 1612 (2005), the SCWG-CAAC is composed of all 15 member states of the Security Council. The working group is responsible for reviewing all MRM reports (quarterly and country specific reports) and subsequently making recommendations to the Security Council, other UN entities, member states and non-state armed groups to improve the protection of children in armed conflict and strengthen accountability for perpetrators. The SCWG-CAAC is also mandated to review progress on the development and implementation of action plans and it can take action in different ways, as described in its 'Toolkit'.

## related tools

 [tool 1 – Glossary of terms on the MRM](#)

 [tool 3 – The MRM cycle](#)

<sup>3</sup> Department of Peacekeeping Operations



# tool 8

## The Role of Peacekeeping Missions in the MRM

### Factsheet

In countries where there is a peacekeeping mission, the Head of the Mission (Special Representative of the Secretary-General) co-leads the MRM together with UNICEF. UN peacekeeping missions typically include civilian, military and police components. The purpose of this factsheet is to clarify the role of peacekeeping mission actors in the MRM and outline opportunities for collaboration for NGOs.

#### Civilian component:

Most peacekeeping missions implementing the MRM have Child Protection Advisers (UNMISS, MONUSCO, UNAMID, MINUSMA, UNOCI, UNAMI, MINUSTAH and MINUSCA)<sup>4</sup>. Child Protection Advisers conduct systematic monitoring, reporting and verification of grave violations against children. They also engage in advocacy to prevent grave violations against children and support the preparation of reports required under the MRM.

In doing this, Child Protection Advisers coordinate with all relevant mission components (especially Human Rights, UN Police, Military, Women Protection Advisers). Together with UNICEF child protection staff, Child Protection Advisers are the MRM focal points for NGOs at field level: they can receive information on grave violations and report it to the MRM Country Task Force, and they conduct verification missions. Child Protection Advisers also participate in coordination fora, such as child protection working group meetings, and act as the main contact point for any NGOs that want to engage with the peacekeeping missions.

#### Military component:

Every UN mission is different. Their mandate and configuration derives from Security Council Resolutions. Some have strong military components, others are political missions without a military component.

The UN does not have its own troops; it is member states that contribute military personnel ('troop contributing countries') to each particular mission. Each contingent is trained by their respective country, but child protection is part of the pre-deployment training for all peacekeeping forces.

On the ground, military peacekeepers are present or patrol areas affected by conflict, including remote locations. Peacekeeping forces are not experts in child protection, but they support the work of civilian Child Protection Advisers and thus contribute to the MRM by:

- **Alerting** civilian staff within the peacekeeping mission to instances of grave violations they may have witnessed or been informed of (for instance by NGOs).
- **Facilitating contact** between UN civilian staff and conflict-affected communities.
- **Providing security** for monitoring and verification missions by UN civilian staff.

Most peacekeeping missions implementing the MRM also have a protection of civilians mandate, which means that they can proactively use force to protect civilians, including children, from an *imminent threat of physical violence*. Using force is a measure of last resort. Missions have developed many other tools such as early warning mechanisms, joint protection team missions and their visible presence to deter violations.

<sup>4</sup> UNAMI and UNSOM also have Child Protection Advisers, but they are political missions under the supervision of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) as opposed to peacekeeping missions. In missions where there is no dedicated child protection team, day-to-day implementation of the MRM is done by other UN civilian staff within the mission, such as human rights officers.



## Opportunities for NGOs to engage with military peacekeepers in relation to the MRM:

- **Primary contact points:** peacekeepers are sometimes the only UN actors seen on a regular basis in remote areas and may be the only points of contact for communities or local NGOs. They can alert the UN system to incidents or reports and facilitate contact with appropriate civilian child protection staff within the peacekeeping mission for follow-up.
- **Protection:** to prevent violations, military peacekeepers liaise with the community to gather information on protection threats. They are ultimately present for security and protection, and NGOs can seek their assistance if required.

**Main challenge to NGO interaction with peacekeepers:** In some situations, depending on the mandate of the mission and on the particular context, peacekeeping forces may be perceived by armed actors and/or local communities as parties to the conflict. NGOs should always apply appropriate risk assessment before deciding whether and how to engage with peacekeeping forces. Their primary focal point for child protection concerns within a peacekeeping mission should always remain the civilian Child Protection Adviser (or other appropriate civilian component of the mission).

## Do's and don'ts when engaging with military peacekeepers:

- **Do not** ask a peacekeeper to interview a victim or witness of a grave violation. Distinguish between UN child protection or human rights staff and military UN personnel. UN child protection staff is adequately trained to verify violations, military staff can only report to or facilitate contact with child protection staff.
- Assess the perception of peacekeepers among local communities and armed actors before deciding whether or how to engage with peacekeepers; always consider the civilian Child Protection Adviser as your primary focal point for all engagement with the peacekeeping mission on child protection concerns.
- Ensure that the general approach to peacekeepers is consistent and coherent within your organization.

## related tools

- 🔗 [tool 1](#) – Glossary of terms on the MRM
- 🔗 [tool 7](#) – Factsheet 'Key actors in the MRM'



# tool 9

## Listing and De-listing Parties to Conflict

### Factsheet

The UN Secretary-General decides whether to list or de-list parties to a conflict in the annexes of his annual reports on children and armed conflict on the basis of information verified by the UN and in accordance with the requirements set by the Security Council and indicated in this factsheet. NGOs may contribute to the listing process by providing alerts and information on any case of grave violation to the UN. It is then for the UN (not NGOs) to verify, aggregate and analyze all information received to see if it meets the required thresholds to recommend listing or de-listing an armed party. As such, the purpose of this factsheet is not to provide guidance for monitoring and reporting violations, but rather to help NGOs clarify their expectations regarding listing and de-listing processes and to provide background information that may be useful for advocacy purposes.

#### Listing parties to the conflict

Parties to a conflict can be listed by the Secretary-General in the annexes of his Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict when there is UN-verified information that they are committing at least one of the 'trigger violations'. Annual reports are usually released in late Spring and concern information gathered during the preceding calendar year.

The Security Council has so far determined that four out of the six grave violations can be triggers for listing:

**Recruitment and use of children:** established as a 'trigger violation' by Security Council Resolution 1379 (2001):

*(...) Requests the Secretary-General to attach to his report a list of parties to armed conflict that recruit or use children in violation of the international obligations applicable to them (...)*

**Killing and maiming, and rape and sexual violence:** established as 'trigger violations' by Security Council Resolution 1882 (2009):

*(...) Requests the Secretary-General also to include in the annexes to his reports on children and armed conflict those parties to armed conflict that engage, in contravention*

*of applicable international law, in patterns of killing and maiming of children and/or rape and other sexual violence against children in situations of armed conflict (...)*

- » **Note:** For a party to conflict to be listed for killing and maiming or rape and sexual violence, there must be sufficient information to demonstrate a "pattern", which implies 'a "methodical plan", "a system" and a collectivity of victims'<sup>5</sup>.

**Attacks on schools and hospitals:** established as a 'trigger violation' by Security Council resolution 1998 (2011):

*(...) requests the Secretary-General to also include in the annexes to his reports on children and armed conflict those parties to armed conflict that engage, in contravention of applicable international law;*

*(a) in recurrent attacks on schools and/or hospitals*

*(b) in recurrent attacks on schools and/or hospitals recurrent attacks or threats of attacks against protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals in situations of armed conflict, bearing in mind all other violations and abuses committed against children (...)*

<sup>5</sup> Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, 13 April, 2010 (S/2010/181), para. 175



## TOOL 9

- » **Note:** For a party to conflict to be listed for attacks on schools and hospitals, there must be sufficient information to demonstrate a recurrence of violations (multiple violations). Moreover, this includes 'direct attacks against [schools or hospitals] as well as indiscriminate attacks, resulting in damage to or destruction of these facilities or which have the effect of impeding the ability of a school or hospital to function and/or placing children at risk, and acts of looting of these protected facilities'<sup>6</sup>.
- » **Note:** Military use of schools is not a trigger for listing a party to the conflict, as it is not necessarily a violation of international humanitarian law. However, because it can hamper children's access to education and puts children at risk of attack, the UN Security Council requested the Secretary-General to continue monitoring and reporting on these incidents. The draft *Lucens Guidelines*, developed in 2013 by a broad group of experts, outline relevant principles from international humanitarian law and offer guidance to governments on how to minimize risks and the negative impact of military use of schools.

#### Understanding the relationship between the listing process and the MRM:

- The MRM can only be established in a country when at least one party to that conflict has been listed.
- Parties to a conflict can be listed for any of the four 'trigger violations', however, once established, the MRM monitors all six violations and all parties to a conflict whether or not they have been listed.
- The specific threshold of information required for listing is no longer relevant once the MRM starts. The MRM reports all incidents of grave violations, regardless of their frequency and pattern, and looks at the entire scope of each violation. For instance, while the military use of schools is not a trigger for listing, once established, the MRM will report on such incidents, since they create an environment of insecurity and interfere with the ability of children to get an education.

<sup>6</sup> Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, 26 April, 2012 (S/2012/261), para. 227

<sup>7</sup> Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, 13 April, 2010 (S/2010/181), paras. 178-179

## De-listing parties to conflict

Parties can be de-listed if:

- They have ceased committing the violation(s) for which they were listed and the UN can confirm it

AND

- They have signed and fully complied with an Action Plan addressing the violation(s) for which they were listed<sup>7</sup>.

Monitoring will, however, continue after de-listing, as violations may re-occur (which may lead to re-listing).

Listed parties that cease to exist are also removed from the annexes of the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict.

However, questions remain as to what path is available for armed parties that the UN does not have access to for the purpose of negotiating Action Plans.

## related tools

 [tool 11 – Q&A 'Action plans'](#)

## other resources

- *Draft Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict*, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2013.
- *The Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation*, Working Paper No. 1, Office of the SRSG-CAAC, October 2009 (updated November 2013).
- Guidance note on Security Council Resolution 1998, Office of the SRSG-CAAC, New York, 2014.



# tool 10 MRM Map

(As of March 2015)

## Current MRM countries





# tool 11

## Action Plans

### Q&A

#### What is an Action Plan?

An Action Plan is an agreement between a listed party to the conflict and the UN with a view to complete a series of time-bound, concrete activities to halt and prevent violations and to take remedial action<sup>8</sup>. Action Plans cover grave violations for which the armed actor has been listed in the annex of the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. Successful completion of an Action Plan leads to de-listing.

#### What are some examples of activities typically included in Action Plans?

Action Plans can cover any of the four 'trigger violations' for which an armed party can be listed. Action Plans are composed on the basis of a pre-established template for each 'trigger violation'. While activities are mandatory, the manner of implementation may be flexible depending on the armed party and context at stake. The following are some of the activities typically included, among others:

- **Prevention:** visit to recruitment centers, training camp and detention facilities for periodic identification and verification activities and release of children present in the ranks; issuance and dissemination of military orders or directives concerning the terms of the Action Plan with sanctions for non-compliance; review and modification of rules of engagement to prevent killing and maiming of children; campaigns informing the public of measures to prevent violations and seek redress.
- **Awareness-raising and capacity building:** public recognition and apology for violations; training for compliance with military orders or directives relevant to the protection of children.
- **Support to survivors, their families and communities:** access to medical, psycho-social assistance, as well as vocational and educational training; mine clearance and mine risk education (in the case of Action Plans on killing and maiming); identification and return of human remains and facilitation of dignified re-burials of deceased children.
- **Accountability:** establishment or reinforcement of complaints procedures, disciplinary measures, investigation and prosecution of alleged cases of violation.

#### Who is usually involved in the negotiation of an Action Plan? Can NGOs contribute to that process?

Action Plans are agreements between the UN and a listed armed actor. On the side of the UN, actors involved in Action Plan negotiation are: globally, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSR-CAAC); and at country level: Resident Coordinators or Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (in the case of countries with peacekeeping missions), UNICEF and any other UN entity engaged in the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR). On the side of the armed party: high-ranking commanders, relevant government entities (in the case of Action Plans with a state actor). Because Action Plan negotiation is a political process, NGOs are traditionally not involved directly in this phase. This is however subject to discussion and agreement by the main negotiating parties.

#### What is the role of governments in the negotiation and implementation of an Action Plan with an armed non-state actor operating in its country?

Action Plan negotiations with armed non-state actors are initiated by the UN with the express or tacit consent of the government. The UN will not move forward with engaging with an armed non-state actor if the government formally denied the access necessary for such discussion. However, in cases where dialogue is possible, governments are not parties to these negotiations nor to any Action Plan eventually signed with the armed non-state actor.

<sup>8</sup> *MRR Field Manual - The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRR) on Grave Violations Against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict*, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, April 2010 p.39





(cont'd)

### What can be done when the UN is denied access to an armed non-state group for the purposes of signing an Action Plan?

While signing an Action Plan is not possible in some situations, non-state armed groups can still be encouraged to unilaterally release children from their ranks or adopt other relevant measures to end and prevent grave violations. If security allows, NGOs are encouraged to reach out to non-state armed actors and support them in ending grave violations outside of an Action Plan framework and to inform the CTFMR. Denial of access to armed non-state actors is publicly denounced in annual and country-specific reports on children and armed conflict. Similarly, any efforts by such actors to end and prevent grave violations are publicly acknowledged in these reports.

### Are Action Plan requirements different for state actors and armed non-state actors?

Action Plans do not assign non-state actors responsibilities that are the prerogative of the state. As such, certain requirements are not applicable to non-state armed groups, for instance: enacting laws, ratifying international treaties or carrying out nationwide campaigns.

### How are Action Plans monitored? Can NGOs play a role in that process?

Action Plans are primarily monitored by UN members of the CTFMR, on the basis of a monitoring plan devised after signature of the Action Plan. This may include, for instance, visits to facilities and sites, review of documentation, interviews with survivors or other stakeholders, etc. Action Plans require that the UN and other relevant actors (to be determined at the time of signature) be granted unhindered access to all relevant areas, facilities and sites for monitoring purposes. This may include NGO members of the CTFMR. NGOs that are not members of a CTFMR can also contribute to Action Plan monitoring by:

- **Alerting the MRM:** it is critical that any cases of grave violations committed by an armed actor party to an Action Plan be reported to the MRM focal points or the CTFMR, so that preventive activities can be strengthened.
- **Advising:** due to their proximity with affected communities and knowledge of the local context, NGOs may be able to provide CTFMRs with critical context and stakeholder analysis to help set up adequate and effective implementation and monitoring strategies for Action Plans.
- **Community outreach:** NGOs can facilitate access to affected children and communities for consultation and dissemination of information about the Action Plan. NGOs may also be well placed to echo the voices of affected children and communities regarding Action Plan implementation.
- **Service provision:** NGOs may have response programs that support survivors, their families and communities, or have the expertise to set them up.
- **Sustainable reintegration:** through their day-to-day work with communities, NGOs are well placed to monitor the reintegration of children in their communities and identify risks of re-recruitment/re-enrolment or reintegration challenges that need to be addressed either within the Action Plan or in the longer-term.

### Are signed Action Plans made available to the public?

Action Plan signatures are widely reported, but Action Plans themselves are not made public unless signatories choose to do so. This has to do with the fact that some activities, being linked to the military and national security, could be considered as sensitive. However, NGOs and the public are informed of Action Plan commitments and the general implementation process as part of targeted outreach and public communication campaigns. Awareness-raising campaigns that publicize Action Plan commitments are a crucial activity in Action Plan implementation.

### How many Action Plans have been implemented so far?

Watchlist keeps an updated table with an overview of Action Plans on its website and iPhone app.



(cont'd)

### How is Action Plan implementation funded? Can NGOs access funds for response programs in support of Action Plan implementation?

There is no specific fund for Action Plan implementation. Mobilization of funds for Action Plan implementation is a challenge, as negotiations with armed actors may last several years, making it impossible to raise funds until the document is actually signed. CTFMR members are then collectively responsible for raising funds and managing the allocation of those funds to activities implemented in support of Action Plans by their organizations or partners.

### Who determines the successful completion of an Action Plan?

This is determined by the SRSB-CAAC upon recommendation of the CTFMR and after verified execution of each activity in the Action Plan.



### What happens if new reports of violations emerge after the completion of an Action Plan and de-listing of an armed actor?

Verified reports of violations that meet the threshold for listing would lead to the re-listing of the armed party in the annex of the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. This has so far never happened.

### How do Action Plans relate to peace processes and peace agreements?

Action Plans are not dependent on the existence of a peace process, since grave violations against children are contrary to international humanitarian law and, as such, should stop even if the conflict continues. However, peace processes can create enabling environments and opportunities for dialogue, signature and implementation of Action Plans. Moreover, incorporating concrete child protection safeguards as early as possible in ceasefires and political agreements facilitates the timely release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.

## related tools

-  **tool 16** – Factsheet 'NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations'
-  **tool 7** – Factsheet 'Key actors in the MRM'

## other resources

- *Action Plans to Prevent and End Violations against Children, Discussion Paper, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, April 2013.*
- *Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, A/68/267, 5 August 2013 - paras. 81-87 on 'Mainstreaming child protection in peace agreements'.*
- *Engaging Armed Non-state Actors on Humanitarian Norms: Reflections on Geneva Call's Experience, Pascal Bongard, Humanitarian Practice Network - Humanitarian Exchange Magazine - Issue 58, July 2013.*
- *Building Respect for Humanitarian Action and IHL among 'Other' Weapon Bearers, ICRC, Overview.*
- *Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups - A Manual for Practitioners, Gerard McHugh and Manuel Bessler, United Nations, 2006.*



# tool 12 Link between the MRM and the MARA (conflict-related sexual violence)

## Factsheet

Established by Security Council Resolution 1960 (2010), the **Monitoring Analysis and Reporting Arrangements (MARA)** gathers information on conflict-related sexual violence whether affecting children or adults. It is under the purview of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence and Conflict (SRSV-SVC). Similarly to the MRM, the MARA is also based on the listing of perpetrators of conflict-related sexual violence and on regular reporting to the Security Council. The implementation of the MARA on the ground capitalizes wherever possible on existing monitoring mechanisms and databases, such as the MRM or human rights monitoring conducted by the Human Rights component of peacekeeping or political missions or through field offices of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. To facilitate this coordination, the UN system as whole has adopted a common working definition of conflict-related sexual violence:

*"(...) incidents or patterns (for the purposes of listing in accordance with Security Council resolution 1960 (2010)) of sexual violence, that is rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization or any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity against women, men or children. Such incidents or patterns occur in conflict or post-conflict settings or other situations of concern (e.g. political strife). They also have a direct or indirect nexus with the conflict or political strife itself, that is, a temporal, geographical and/or causal link. In addition to the international character of the suspected crimes (which can, depending on the circumstances, constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of genocide or other gross violations of human rights), the link with conflict may be evident in the profile and motivations of the perpetrator(s), the profile of the victim(s), the climate of impunity/State collapse, cross-border dimensions and/or the fact that they violate the terms of a ceasefire agreement"<sup>9</sup>.*

**Link to the MRM:** cases of conflict-related sexual violence where a survivor is a child are cross-referenced in both the MRM and the MARA. This means that NGOs can report information on such cases both through the MRM or the MARA. Incidents of sexual violence in which survivor(s) are all adults, however, do not fall under the MRM and should be reported through the MARA only.

<sup>9</sup> Secretary-General's Report to the Security Council on Conflict-related Sexual Violence, 13 January 2012 (S/2012/33) para. 3



# NGOs and the MRM

This section contains four tools about the role of NGOs in the MRM. They describe the various possible modalities and reasons for participation, as well as potential challenges.

## List of tools in this section:

tool 13 – Factsheet ‘Why are NGOs called upon to participate in the MRM?’

tool 14 – Factsheet ‘Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?’

tool 15 – Matrix ‘Options for NGO participation in the MRM’

tool 16 – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’



# tool 13 Why are NGOs called upon to Participate in the MRM?

## Factsheet

Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) underlines that the MRM “must operate with the participation of and in cooperation with national governments and relevant United Nations and civil society actors, including at the country level” (S/RES/1612 (2005), para. 2(b)). The MRM Guidelines further state that<sup>10</sup>:

*International and local NGOs play a central role in the MRM at all levels. In-country, they are often the front line of contact with affected communities and hence an **important source of information** in the MRM and especially critical to provide appropriate response programming for children. The participation of NGOs in the MRM is an issue of high sensitivity given the risks that it poses for NGO personnel and programmes. The level of engagement of NGOs, included in the MRM Task Force, is a determination that should be made by NGOs themselves in each country context. In some situations, NGOs participate as full members of the MRM Task Force, while in others they may interact with the MRM informally, providing information and alerts without a visible role. [emphasis added].*

NGOs also play a crucial role **before and after the MRM**:

- **Knowledge and awareness of the context:** NGOs are often present on the ground before or at the very onset of a conflict and information they may have on grave violations is an important basis for identifying perpetrators and establishing a monitoring and reporting mechanism. NGOs can also provide valuable analysis including causes and typologies of violations which can translate into more targeted prevention and response.
- **Greater capacity to build trust with communities:** NGOs adopting community-based programmatic approaches develop a close relationship with local leaders and community members who are more likely to share sensitive information based on the trust developed over time.
- **Can access locations where the UN and international actors may not reach easily:** NGOs often work in regions where the UN cannot reach so easily for security or

logistical reasons. While NGOs face logistical challenges and their mobility can be limited they tend to have greater capacity to monitor the conflict in more remote areas.

- **Sustainability:** Once the MRM in a given country phases out, NGOs may be able to ensure long-term follow-up to response programs that were set up to address grave violations, which is a critical prevention strategy in unstable environments. In the event of a re-ignition of the conflict after the MRM has ended, NGOs are in a unique position to alert the UN to any new instances of grave violations.

## relevant tools

- 🔗 **tool 14** – Factsheet ‘Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?’
- 🔗 **tool 15** – Matrix ‘Options for NGO participation in the MRM’

## other resources

- *Getting It Done and Doing It Right – A Global Study on the Implementation of the UN-led Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict (2008).*
- *The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict in Nepal: A Civil Society Perspective, Partnerships for Protecting Children in Armed Conflict (2012).*

<sup>10</sup> Guidelines on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict, OSRSG-CAAC/UNICEF/DPKO, March 2012 p. 8



# tool 14 Why do NGOs Choose to Participate in the MRM?



## Factsheet

NGOs are essential sources of information for the MRM and they also play a critical role in responding to the needs of children victims of grave violations. NGOs can therefore offer a lot to the MRM, but they can also gain from the mechanism.

Engagement in the MRM is typically linked to an overarching aim of **ensuring the protection and well-being of children in conflict areas**. Concretely, monitoring and reporting on grave violations contributes to this aim by offering or facilitating:

- **Knowledge and awareness:** without information about violations there can be neither response nor accountability. Monitoring grave violations allows actors on the ground to understand concretely the impact of a given conflict on children. Reporting them through the MRM helps further raise the profile of the situation of children.
- **Strengthened response, planning and coordination:** data collected through the MRM (whether by one organization or collectively) may at a certain scale provide important information on prevalence, patterns and trends in grave violations. This can in turn help NGOs plan or adjust relevant programs and also provides useful baselines for future project monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, an NGO that actively builds linkages between monitoring and response, is able to position itself within the local humanitarian/child protection community and build partnerships and alliances to strengthen the overall response to children in armed conflict.
- **Advocacy for accountability and stronger protection:** the MRM can amplify efforts made by NGOs at the national or local level to advocate for the protection of children in armed conflicts and hold perpetrators accountable, in particular by offering NGOs a space to build strategic alliances and collaboration with other actors, and to position local child protection issues at the international level. Furthermore, being a UN-led mechanism based on the principle of confidentiality, the MRM can in some situations offer NGOs an advocacy avenue, while shielding them from public exposure that could put them at risk.
- **Advocacy for funding:** analysis of MRM data (violations and follow-up) can highlight critical funding needs and serve as evidence to advocate with donors for more funding for the protection of children in armed conflict. This is particularly important in situations where response services are nonexistent or inadequate and need to be created, strengthened or prioritized.

## relevant tools

-  **tool 13** – Factsheet ‘Why are NGOs called upon to participate in the MRM?’
-  **tool 15** – Matrix ‘Options for NGO participation in the MRM’



# tool 15 Options for NGO Participation in the MRM

## Matrix

	What is it?	Potential additional level of visibility/risk?	What do I need?	Where do I start?
<b>Raising awareness (prevention and response)</b>	<p>Sensitizing communities, authorities and/or armed actors on the importance of protecting children in conflict, as well as on available mechanisms for protection and response.</p> <p>This is often done in the framework of wider child rights or human rights awareness-raising activities and may or may not be done in conjunction with reporting for the MRM.</p>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General knowledge of the legal foundation and response mechanisms on the grave violations.</li> <li>• Existing rights-related awareness-raising activities.</li> </ul>	Contact UN child protection actors (like the peacekeeping mission or UNICEF) or the MRM focal point in your area to discuss how your activities can reinforce existing awareness-raising efforts made in the framework of the MRM.
<b>Responding to grave violations</b>	<p>Provision of services to victims of grave violations without engaging in monitoring and reporting.</p> <p>Types of services: medical assistance, counseling, legal assistance, vocational or educational support, recreation activities.</p>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant response program adequately staffed and funded.</li> <li>• Integration in referral pathways linked to the MRM.</li> </ul>	Contact UN child protection actors (like the peacekeeping mission or UNICEF) or the MRM focal point in your area, at any stage, to discuss how your services can be integrated into referral pathways for MRM violations.
<b>Observing and alerting</b>	<p>Notifying MRM focal points about incidents of grave violations or threats and risks that may lead to grave violations.</p> <p>Basic information about the type of violation, location, and number of victims may already suffice for an alert. It does not require details about the case, nor interviewing victims or communities.</p>	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence in conflict areas and contact with conflict-affected communities.</li> <li>• General knowledge of the grave violations.</li> </ul>	Get in touch with UN child protection actors (like the peacekeeping mission or UNICEF) at any time, to be put in contact with the MRM focal point in your area for future alerts.
<b>Informal communication</b>	<p>Reporting information on grave violations identified in the framework of existing programs and activities of the organization in a conflict area.</p> <p>Information would be gathered on one or several of the grave violations, depending on the type of activity being conducted. The organization may or may not also conduct awareness-raising activities.</p>	Low/medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Existing activities or programs involving contact with conflict-affected communities and through which information on grave violations emerges.</li> <li>• Some knowledge of the grave violations among relevant staff.</li> <li>• Confidentiality protocols (new or existing).</li> </ul>	Contact the MRM focal point in your area at any time to discuss and agree on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confidentiality rules.</li> <li>• Process for reporting information (who, when, how, what format).</li> <li>• Process for case verification (incl. risk mitigation measures).</li> </ul>



## TOOL 15

(cont'd)

	What is it?	Potential additional level of visibility/risk?	What do I need?	Where do I start?
<b>Documenting</b>	Proactively documenting abuses as part of a project or initiative built for that purpose (specific field-based project or punctual field research). The organization may also conduct awareness-raising activities.	Medium/high (specific risk mitigating measures must be in place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence in conflict areas and contact with conflict-affected communities.</li> <li>• Dedicated staff and financial resources (communications and local transportation).</li> <li>• In-depth knowledge of the grave violations.</li> <li>• Staff trained in fact-finding.</li> <li>• Strict security and confidentiality and information management protocols.</li> <li>• Ability to facilitate referral and/or response.</li> <li>• Ability to handle visibility at local level.</li> </ul>	<p>Contact the MRM focal point in your area prior to starting the project to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinate on areas to be covered by the project to avoid overlaps with other information gathering activities within the MRM.</li> <li>• Discuss and agree on confidentiality rules.</li> <li>• Discuss and agree on process for reporting information (who, when, how, what format).</li> <li>• Discuss and agree on process for UN verifications (incl. risk mitigation measures).</li> <li>• Discuss possible technical capacity building support by MRM focal point.</li> </ul>
<b>Being member of a Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR)</b>	Documenting + all aspects of the mandate of a CTFMR.	High (specific risk mitigating measures must be in place)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presence in conflict areas and contact with conflict-affected communities.</li> <li>• In-depth knowledge of the grave violations.</li> <li>• Staff trained in documenting violations.</li> <li>• Security and confidentiality protocols.</li> <li>• Information management system.</li> <li>• Referral system.</li> <li>• Dedicated technical staff and financial resources.</li> <li>• Ability to handle high visibility and conduct sustained advocacy or dialogue in country, including at high-level (i.e. engagement of country director).</li> </ul>	<p>Contact UN child protection actors (like the peacekeeping mission or UNICEF) as soon an armed actor from your country of operation is listed to discuss the possibility of participating in the future CTFMR.</p>

## related tools

- [tool 7](#) – Factsheet ‘Key actors in the MRM’
- [tool 1](#) – Glossary of terms on the MRM
- [tool 16](#) – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’

- [tool 26](#) – Checklist ‘Before you engage in the MRM’
- [tool 17](#) – Guiding questions ‘Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM’

- [tool 19](#) – Guiding questions ‘Participation in a MRM Country Task Force?’
- [tool 21](#) – Factsheet ‘Building on existing activities to monitor, report and respond to grave violations’





# tool 16 NGO Participation in the MRM: Potential Challenges and Limitations

## Factsheet

The challenges and limitations described below vary from context to context and depend on how the NGO chooses to participate in the MRM.

### Security risks:

As far as security risks associated with participation in the MRM are concerned, it is helpful to distinguish two scenarios:

#### Scenario 1: alerts and informal communication

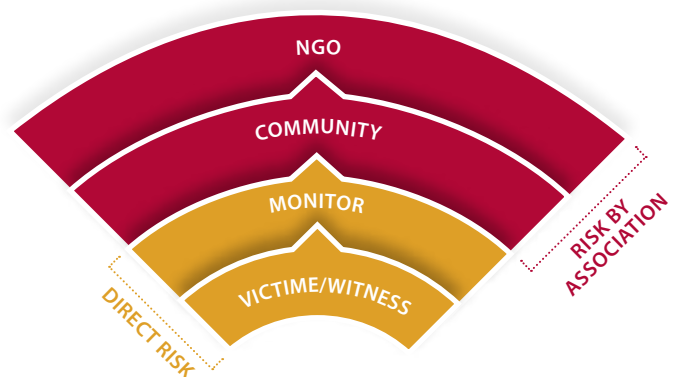
Many NGOs participate in the MRM by reporting information that they come across through their existing programs and activities in conflict-affected areas. In such cases, reporting to the MRM does not necessarily bring *additional* security risks to the ones already run by NGOs. The main concern then is that the identity of the NGO or of the person providing information to the MRM may be disclosed either when that information leaves the NGO or during verification activities conducted by the UN.

#### Mitigation options:

- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point on confidentiality protocols for communication and management of information provided by your NGO.
- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point on a clear process and conditions for coordination and organization of verification activities in relation to cases reported by your organization, in particular when they include site visits and interviews.
- Consider if transmitting information to the MRM indirectly via a trusted network or wider forum may help mitigate security risks.
- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point/CTFMR on precautions regarding use of information reported by your organization for advocacy at the national or global level (the greater the visibility, the higher the risk, in particular for NGOs that operate alone in a certain area).

#### Scenario 2: documentation and CTFMR membership

Proactively monitoring and reporting violations perpetrated by armed actors may pose additional personal security risks for victims, individual NGO staff members who gather information on violations (monitors) and communities. Increased visibility brought by a formal link to the MRM can also potentially create a threat for the NGO as a whole.





### Mitigating options:

- Before deciding whether and how to engage in the MRM, assess the level of risk in your context.
- Determine how much risk (if any) your organization is willing to take and choose the appropriate modality for participating in the MRM.
- Apply a do-no-harm approach to monitoring and reporting activities in order to protect victims and communities from retaliation.
- Ensure strict confidentiality when gathering and reporting information on violations.
- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point to define an information management policy, including a clearly defined chain of communication with key focal points with clear roles and responsibilities.
- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point on a clear process and conditions for coordination and organization of verification activities by the UN in relation to cases reported by your organization, in particular when they include site visits and interviews.
- Consider if reporting information to the MRM indirectly via a trusted network or wider forum may help mitigate security risks.
- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point/CTFMR on precautions for use of information reported by your organization for advocacy at the national or global level (the greater the visibility, the higher the risk, in particular for NGOs that operate alone in a certain area).
- Identify physical protection mechanisms offered by other entities, if any (NGOs, UN, government/state entities).

### The 'response gap':

As a reporting mechanism focused on the Security Council, the MRM is sometimes seen as disconnected from a direct response to the needs of victims on the ground. This has been a source of frustration for NGOs. It is important however to note that while the MRM as such does not have a programmatic response component, *linking* with response mechanisms is one of the guiding principles of the MRM:

*It is essential that the monitoring and reporting of violations be closely linked to appropriate responses regarding violations, whether it is a referral of a child to a service provider, for advocacy or other form of response. The MRM was envisioned to not only monitor and report but also to lead to an appropriate protection response<sup>11</sup>.*

This approach is not exclusive to the MRM, since it is grounded on ethical principles applicable to any rights monitoring work. It is therefore the responsibility not only of CTFMRs, but also of anyone monitoring and reporting on grave violations, whether UN or NGOs. Understanding the role of the MRM as a *catalyst* and *enabler* for response on the ground (rather than as a response mechanism in itself) and clarifying how all those involved can contribute to this process may help dissipate some of the frustration around the issue of the MRM and response. Exploring the potential of the MRM to enable response (e.g., by offering an evidence base for fundraising, advocacy and programming) may also help address situations where there are simply no referral services in place, which are particularly challenging for NGOs documenting grave violations.

### Credibility and bias:

Some NGOs may be naturally closer to a particular community, ethnic or language group due to their membership or mission; others may not have nationwide reach but rather focus on a particular area of the country where perhaps only one or some of the armed actors are active; some may be particularly critical of the government, others particularly supportive of the government or cautious about criticizing authorities. These are all factors that can contribute to a real or perceived bias or lack of neutrality and may affect the credibility of an NGO within the MRM.

### Mitigation options:

- Try to identify factors that may contribute to a selective or partial monitoring and reporting on grave violations by your NGO.
- Adopt strict standards and a thorough methodology to gather information and facts on incidents of grave violations. This is key to ensure the highest possible level of objectivity, even when monitoring and reporting only on a selected group of victims or armed actor in the conflict.

<sup>11</sup> *Field Manual – The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) on Grave Violations Against Children in Situations of Armed Conflict*, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), April 2010, p. 13



## The six grave violations - a restricted lens on the impact of conflict on children?

As demonstrated by the 1996 Machel report, a founding document in the UN's 'children and armed conflict agenda', the impact of conflict on children is wider than the situations covered by the six grave violations. As the 'children and armed conflict agenda' entered the realm of the Security Council in 2001, a focus was put on articulating its links to the question of international peace and security, hence the formulation of six grave violations based on international humanitarian law. This in turn helped create a clearer framework for the MRM. NGOs participating in the MRM, especially those that invest considerable resources and staff time in it, may find the need to focus exclusively on the six grave violations challenging, when they observe a much wider range of problems on the ground. While information reported to the Security Council through the MRM focuses strictly on the six violations, experiences in different countries have shown that the MRM process can enhance monitoring of broader child rights violations and protection concerns that are specific to each context. While such information is not used for reporting purposes, it can provide a critical evidence base for:

- Context analysis in the framework of the MRM.
- Advocacy and response to the needs of children affected by conflict at country level.

In **Colombia**, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting reflected on how the six grave violations typically manifest themselves in the local context to ensure clarity and coherence in monitoring and reporting. During this exercise, forced displacement was highlighted as a major characteristic of the armed conflict in Colombia with clear links to the grave violations. While forced displacement is not as such reported to the Security Council in the framework of the MRM, the issue has been mentioned in annual and country reports to highlight the consequences and impact of grave violations, in particular forced recruitment of children, denial of humanitarian access and sexual violence in the specific context of Colombia. ►



Since 2007, a **working group on children and armed conflict** has been reporting on the impact of conflict on children in the **Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) and Israel**, which have been featured in the annual reports of the Secretary-General since 2003 (no parties have been listed, however). Among the violations monitored by this working group are arrest, detention and ill treatment of children by Israeli forces. These issues are framed within broader child rights, namely art. 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but also describes a repercussion of recruitment and use of children, since these detention cases affect mostly children suspected of being associated with Palestinian armed groups. Monitoring of child detention by the working group has provided important evidence for advocacy at country level.

### UN verifications:

The MRM is a mechanism established by the Security Council, and the UN is mandated to implement it. The UN is also responsible and accountable for the accuracy and reliability of information compiled through the MRM. For this reason, cases formally reported to the Security Council must have been verified by designated person(s) of the UN. How verifications are conducted depends on the context, but, for example, may include a follow-up interview with the primary source of the information. UN actors are, however, not always able to conduct verifications of all cases reported, either due to access or security restrictions or due to limited staff capacity. Information provided by an NGO may therefore go unverified and be recorded merely as 'alleged' or 'subject to verification', carrying less weight than 'UN-verified' information. This may lead to frustration and discouragement among NGOs and communities who could be expecting a greater follow-up to the information shared, sometimes at great risk.

### Mitigation options for NGOs:

- Discuss with the MRM focal point the verification capacity and reach of the UN in the geographical areas covered by your organization.
- Explore with the MRM focal point context-specific options to overcome access or capacity problems negatively affecting UN verifications.
- Discuss with the MRM focal point what options for response and follow-up are still available at the local or national level for cases that cannot be 'UN-verified'.



## TOOL 16

- Take into account the likelihood of UN verification when balancing risks and benefits of monitoring and reporting grave violations in a particular area.
- In areas where the likelihood of UN verifications is low and security risks are high, consider engaging only through response services, alerts or informal reporting.
- Discuss and agree with the MRM focal point on a clear process for coordination and organization of verification activities in relation to cases reported by your organization, in particular regarding site visits and interviews.

### Action Plans:

NGOs are often involved in supporting the implementation of Action Plans, in particular through programs that support victims and the reintegration of children separated from armed groups and armed forces. However, Action Plans are agreements signed between the government or the armed group and the UN. Because the negotiation and the monitoring phase (namely site visits) of an Action Plan, however, often carry political sensitivities, it traditionally remains a UN undertaking. Action Plan negotiation and monitoring can therefore limit NGO participation, in particular for NGOs that are members of a CTFMR and are otherwise actively engaged in all aspects of MRM implementation.

National NGOs were members of the Nepal CTFMR and contributed to the MRM by monitoring and reporting on grave violations in almost half of the country's districts. When time came for a dialogue with the UCPN-Maoists on a possible Action Plan to end the recruitment and use of children (which was eventually signed in December 2009), the Maoists opposed the involvement of NGOs in the negotiations and implementation of the Action Plan. The group perceived NGOs as a biased counterpart, while the UN was considered more neutral. NGOs did not participate in discussions concerning the Action Plan neither prior nor after signature, nor did they provide any input indirectly, as discussions effectively evolved outside the framework of the CTFMR.

In the case of Myanmar, however, international NGOs who are members of the CTFMR are assisting the UN in monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan with the armed forces, signed in June 2012.

## relevant tools

-  **tool 15** – Matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM'
-  **tool 43** – Checklist 'Facilitating UN verifications of cases of grave violations'
-  **tool 18** – Guiding questions for self-assessment 'Assessing security risks before engaging in the MRM'
-  **tool 17** – Guiding questions 'Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM'
-  **tool 31** – Factsheet 'What information is needed for the MRM?'
-  **tool 46** – Factsheet 'Information management'
-  **tool 38** – Case study 'Community-led monitoring in Southeastern Myanmar'

## other resources

- *The Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict in Nepal: A Civil Society Perspective, Partnerships for Protecting Children in Armed Conflict* (2012).



# part II

planning your participation  
in the MRM



# defining a strategy for engagement in the MRM

This section contains four tools to help NGOs determine how best to engage in the MRM. The tools focus on issues and questions that may need to be discussed and clarified both internally and with the UN before engaging in the MRM.

## List of tools in this section:

- tool 17 – Guiding questions ‘Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM’
- tool 18 – Guiding questions for self-assessment ‘Assessing security risks before engaging in the MRM’
- tool 19 – Guiding questions ‘Participation in a MRM Country Task Force?’
- tool 20 – Case study ‘NGO participation in the MRM Task Force in Colombia’



# tool 17 Clarifying Goals and Expectations before Engaging in the MRM

## Guiding questions

Clarifying objectives and expectations in relation to the MRM and weighing them against risks and your organization's capacity is a critical step to determine how best to engage in the mechanism. Referring to the matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM' and to the factsheet 'Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?' here are some issues for consideration:

	End violations and accountability for perpetrators	Response to the needs of children victims of grave violations
<b>What can you expect from the MRM?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Listing</b> of armed actors, <b>documentation</b> of grave violations and reporting to the UN Security Council.</li> <li>• <b>Security Council pressure</b> on perpetrator and government.</li> <li>• Platform for high-level <b>UN dialogue with government at country level</b>.</li> <li>• <b>Action Plans</b> to end and prevent violations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MRM data (prevalence/patterns) can help raise the profile of grave violations and <b>highlight funding gaps and response needs</b>.</li> <li>• MRM data (prevalence/patterns) can be used in <b>planning response programs</b>.</li> <li>• MRM can facilitate coordination to <b>improve access to referral services</b> for victims of grave violations.</li> </ul>
<b>Timeline</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Listing, documentation, reporting:</b> any time.</li> <li>• <b>Security Council pressure:</b> every 2-3 years when the country is being reviewed by the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.</li> <li>• <b>Dialogue at country level:</b> possibly continuously once MRM is established.</li> <li>• <b>Action Plans:</b> negotiation times vary from a few months to several years.</li> </ul>	Any time once a critical mass of information is gathered.
<b>Variables/caveats</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Listing, documentation, reporting:</b> the UN may not be able to verify cases in certain areas, which means not all information will be the basis for listing or for reports to the UN Security Council.</li> <li>• <b>Security Council:</b> the UN cannot guarantee the outcome of Security Council deliberations.</li> <li>• <b>Dialogue at country level:</b> CTFMRs must be willing and able to conduct high-level advocacy with the government.</li> <li>• <b>Action Plans:</b> armed actor must be willing to enter into a dialogue; UN must have access to the armed actor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Security/access constraints may affect reliability of data collection and may not be sufficient to show prevalence or patterns.</li> <li>• As the entity centralizing all MRM data, CTFMR would need to establish a collaboration with relevant response actors and <i>fora</i> in order to facilitate a system of systematic referrals.</li> </ul>



## TOOL 17

(cont'd)

	End violations and accountability for perpetrators	Response to the needs of children victims of grave violations
<b>What can your organization do?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide reliable information (alert, communication, documentation) on grave violations and facilitate UN verifications as much as possible.</li> <li>• Raise awareness about the causes and consequences of grave violations as well as commitments made by duty bearers to end and prevent such practices.</li> <li>• Monitor compliance with such commitments and make appropriate actors accountable through reporting or advocacy.</li> <li>• Join a CTFMR and contribute to advocacy efforts at country level.</li> <li>• Conduct advocacy with the government or Security Council directly, based on information your organization collected.</li> <li>• Use alternative international avenues for advocacy, based on information your organization gathered.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor and analyze grave violations trends to inform program design and fundraising efforts for a more targeted response.</li> <li>• If your organization does not provide services to victims, link up with service providers in your area of operation to ensure referrals if needed.</li> <li>• If your organization provides services to victims, link up with actors engaged in the MRM to facilitate referrals and improve program planning.</li> <li>• If possible, share analysis of data collected by your organization in coordination <i>fora</i> in your area of operations to inform joint planning efforts.</li> <li>• Join a CTFMR and help build strong links between monitoring and response (regardless of whether data is UN-verified).</li> </ul>
<b>Added value and potential impact according to type of MRM participation</b>	<p><b>HIGHEST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CTFMR member:</b> ability to influence CTFMR role in the country.</li> <li>• <b>Documentation:</b> ability to gather evidence-base for own advocacy if needed.</li> <li>• <b>Communication:</b> dependence on the UN/CTFMR's ability to verify information and conduct advocacy.</li> <li>• <b>Alert:</b> dependence on the UN/CTFMR's ability to verify information and conduct advocacy.</li> </ul> <p><b>LOWEST</b></p>	<p><b>HIGHEST</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CTFMR member:</b> ability to influence the establishment of strong links between monitoring and response at country level.</li> <li>• <b>Response/alert/communication:</b> ability to gather relevant information for program planning and to contribute to referrals at least at local level.</li> <li>• <b>Documentation:</b> no further added value compared to response, alert or communication above.</li> </ul> <p><b>LOWEST</b></p>

## related tools

- tool 15** – Matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM'
- tool 14** – Factsheet 'Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?'
- tool 18** – Guiding questions for self-assessment 'Assessing security risks before engaging in the MRM'





# tool 18

## Assessing Security Risks before Engaging in the MRM

### Guiding questions for self-assessment

When considering an engagement with the MRM, it is important to assess what **additional** security risks MRM activities could create in the specific context where you are operating. Below are some examples of guiding questions which can help steer a self-assessment exercise:

Factor	Potential additional risk brought by your participation in the MRM	Assess potential level of additional risk (low, medium, high) according to each option for MRM engagement
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Your NGO is the only one (or one of only a few) operating in a certain area where armed actors are present.</b>	NGO may be easily identified as the source of information on violations in that area, risk of retaliation against the organization.	Awareness-raising
		Response only (no monitoring, no reporting)
		Alert
		Informal communication
		Documentation
		CTFMR membership
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>You have local staff or community volunteers permanently living in the area where armed actors are present.</b>	Vulnerability to personal retaliation.	Awareness-raising
		Response only (no monitoring, no reporting)
		Alert
		Informal communication
		Documentation
		CTFMR membership
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Your NGO interacts with potential victims of grave violations on a regular basis.</b>	Victims may be exposed to personal retaliation because they are known to interact with your organization regularly.	Awareness-raising
		Response only (no monitoring, no reporting)
		Alert
		Informal communication
		Documentation
		CTFMR membership
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Your NGO regularly interacts with local armed actors to secure humanitarian access.</b>	Possible loss of trust and breakdown of communication if public reports emerge about violations by that armed actor.	Awareness-raising
		Response only (no monitoring, no reporting)
		Alert
		Informal communication
		Documentation
		CTFMR membership






## TOOL 18

(cont'd)

Factor	Potential additional risk brought by your participation in the MRM	Assess potential level of additional risk (low, medium, high) according to each option for MRM engagement	
<input type="checkbox"/> Your NGO provides life-saving services to communities in areas where armed actors operate.	Potential negative humanitarian impact if access to the area is compromised due to security threats or breakdown of communication with local armed actors.	Awareness-raising Response only (no monitoring, no reporting) Alert Informal communication Documentation CTFMR membership	
<input type="checkbox"/> Your NGO has substantial human and financial engagement in areas where armed actors operate.	Potential negative programmatic impact if access to the area is compromised due to security threats or breakdown of communication with local armed actors.	Awareness-raising Response only (no monitoring, no reporting) Alert Informal communication Documentation CTFMR membership	
<input type="checkbox"/> Your NGO managed to establish a confidence-based relationship with communities that are otherwise reluctant to interact with 'outsiders' (e.g., international NGOs or UN). That confidence-based relationship is what ensures your security in those areas.	Potential breakdown of confidence (leading to insecurity) if your NGO is not able to provide response or feedback on cases of grave violations reported by the community.  Potential breakdown of confidence (leading to insecurity) if your NGO is seen to engage too closely with 'outsiders'.	Awareness-raising Response only (no monitoring, no reporting) Alert Informal communication Documentation CTFMR membership	
<input type="checkbox"/> Your NGO is not currently active in a conflict-affected area.	The MRM deals with sensitive matters so it may not be well received by communities. This may in turn affect your capacity to establish confidence with local communities and create a secure environment for your staff to work in.	Awareness-raising Response only (no monitoring, no reporting) Alert Informal communication Documentation CTFMR membership	

## related tools

-  [tool 15](#) – Matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM'
-  [tool 14](#) – Factsheet 'Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?'

-  [tool 17](#) – Guiding questions 'Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM'



# tool 19 Participation in a MRM Country Task Force?

## Guiding questions

Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) are responsible for the implementation of the MRM at country level. CTFMRs are co-chaired by the highest UN authority in the country and UNICEF (and possibly a third co-chair), and include representatives of all other relevant UN entities. Membership may be extended to other parties, such as national or international NGOs, provided they are neutral, impartial and independent. Governments are not part of CTFMRs.

CTFMRs collect and analyze information on grave violations, report it to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, follow up on Security Council recommendations, engage parties to the conflict to support the preparation and implementation of Action Plans and work to ensure adequate referral and response mechanisms are in place to assist victims. CTFMR members play a pivotal role for the MRM at country level.

The following facts may need to be taken into account by an NGO considering joining a CTFMR:

- Membership of a CTFMR requires financial and time investment.
- Membership of a CTFMR comes with a certain degree of visibility. While this may strengthen public advocacy and fundraising capacity, it may also increase security risks, especially if the organization has ongoing activities and presence in conflict-affected areas.
- As in any group structure, actions and strategies in a CTFMR are adopted collegially; this requires flexibility and a willingness to find compromises in the event of a disagreement.
- CTFMRs handle sensitive information, therefore members are bound by confidentiality rules.

With this in mind, there are a number of issues that NGOs may want to discuss both internally and with the UN. Some issues may need to be clarified prior to a decision to join a CTFMR, while others may be addressed at a later stage when discussing the Terms of Reference and work plan of the CTFMR.

## Some key issues to discuss with the UN:




- What is the added value of our participation in the CTFMR?
- What financial and time investment (technical and senior level) would be expected of my organization if it joins the CTFMR?
- How can we tailor our role in the CTFMR to capitalize as much as possible on our existing capacity and expertise?
- For tasks in the CTFMR work plan that require dedicated funding (e.g., Action Plan monitoring), would CTFMR members raise and use funds collectively or would each member be responsible for financing their respective tasks?
- Aside from individual case information, how far do confidentiality rules extend within the CTFMR? Would my organization be able to take public positions on issues relating to children and armed conflict outside the framework of the CTFMR?
- As the MRM is a UN-led mechanism, do NGOs have equal weight to UN members within the CTFMR, as far as decision-making is concerned? If not, what type of decisions would remain the prerogative of the UN?
- Are there any actual or potential limits to our participation in the CTFMR as members?



## Some key issues to discuss internally:

- What is the added value of our participation in the CTFMR and what do we expect from it?
- Do we have (or can we obtain) the necessary financial and human resources to join the CTFMR? What existing capacity and expertise could be used to support our role in the CTFMR?
- Are any of our current donors among the members of the CTFMR? If so, could this affect our role and the dynamic within the group, in particular in the event of a disagreement?
- Are any past or potential donors among the members of the CTFMR? If so, would we still seek or accept funding from them? If we would not seek or accept funding from them, could this affect the financial viability of our current or future programs?
- How could additional security risks brought by a visible association with the MRM and the CTFMR affect our ongoing programs? What measures can we put in place to mitigate these risks?
- Do these risks outweigh the potential gains of a formal participation in the CTFMR?
- Could membership of the CTFMR negatively affect our relationship with the government? If so, what measures could we take to prevent this?
- Do we have (or could we build) a confidence-based relationship with all other members of the CTFMR?

## related tools

-  [tool 20](#) – Case study ‘NGO participation in the MRM Task Force in Colombia’
-  [tool 15](#) – Matrix ‘Options for NGO participation in the MRM’
-  [tool 16](#) – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’



# tool 20

## NGO Participation in the MRM Task Force in Colombia

### Case study

Colombia has a vibrant civil society and a number of NGOs had been monitoring, reporting, responding to and advocating on issues of children and armed conflict long before the MRM started, at both the national and international level. This is the case of COALICO, a national civil society platform established in 1999 with the mission to promote and protect the rights of boys and girls affected by the armed conflict in Colombia.

In 2003, several Colombian armed groups were listed in the annex of the Secretary-General's annual report for use and recruitment of children. As soon as Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) was adopted, COALICO analyzed it and tried to determine its implications for a context like Colombia. It proactively reached out to the UN in this process, including by preparing a situation report on children and armed conflict in Colombia and sending it directly to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC) in 2007.




When discussions on the establishment of a Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) started, COALICO advocated actively with the UN to be included in this forum. For a network like COALICO, membership of the CTFMR meant the opportunity to further strengthen the impact of their existing monitoring and advocacy work. The composition of the CTFMR was eventually decided after a process of consultation and discussion, which culminated with a visit of the SRSG-CAAC to Colombia. In addition to various UN entities and the Office of the Ombudsman, one permanent and two rotational spots were allocated for national NGOs. COALICO became the permanent NGO member of the CTFMR.

Once membership was secured, COALICO engaged in internal discussions on how to incorporate membership in the CTFMR into the network's strategic and work plans. Among the issues discussed was the need to maintain space for advocacy on children and armed conflict outside the realm of the CTFMR. This issue was in turn discussed with the UN when the Terms of Reference of the CTFMR were being drafted. A mutually acceptable solution was found, whereby advocacy could be conducted unilaterally and without prior

coordination, provided that it was based on information already made public and that positions were clearly attributed to the organization, not the CTFMR.

Since the CTFMR started working in Colombia, COALICO has conducted numerous advocacy initiatives and campaigns for the protection of children in armed conflict in Colombia, including on politically sensitive issues. COALICO has also made frequent public statements on MRM-related documents and events, such as the Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council on the situation of children and armed conflict in Colombia, the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict and the Security Council's open debates on children and armed conflict.

### related tools

-  [tool 19 – Guiding questions 'Participation in a MRM Country Task Force?'](#)
-  [tool 15 – Matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM'](#)
-  [tool 17 – Guiding questions 'Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM'](#)



# operational planning

**This section contains six tools to help NGOs plan and determine how best to engage in the MRM. The tools focus on issues and questions that may need to be discussed and clarified both internally and with the UN before engaging in the MRM.**

## **List of tools in this section:**

**tool 21** – Factsheet ‘Building on existing activities to monitor, report and respond to grave violations’

**tool 22** – Guiding questions ‘Stakeholder analysis’

**tool 23** – Factsheet ‘Mapping relevant international obligations of your country of operation’

**tool 24** – Guiding questions ‘Mapping national provisions that protect children in conflict in your country of operation’

**tool 25** – Factsheet ‘Advantages and disadvantages of participating in the MRM through networks’

**tool 26** – Checklist ‘Before you engage in the MRM’



# tool 21 Building on Existing Activities to Monitor, Report and Respond to Grave Violations

## Factsheet

Depending on the type of engagement chosen, monitoring grave violations does not necessarily require an NGO to establish a dedicated project or carry out additional activities. Existing activities may already provide information on grave violations that can simply be captured and reported to the MRM focal point (provided necessary steps are taken to ensure informed consent and confidentiality). The key to building on existing activities in order to monitor and report on grave violations is for an organization to have a protection-oriented approach or to mainstream protection throughout its interventions.

Activity:	Good basis for:	What else do you need?
<b>Any form of human rights or protection monitoring/ assessment/situation analysis</b>	Documenting grave violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> <li>• Include information on the MRM in requests for informed consent.</li> </ul>
<b>Needs assessment</b>	Alerting to grave violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> </ul>
<b>Educational activities</b>	Alerting Preventing (identifying risks, raising awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> </ul>
<b>Child friendly spaces and recreational or after school activities</b>	Alerting Documenting (intake interviews) Preventing (identifying risks, raising awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> <li>• Check if your confidentiality rules allow you to share information with the MRM.</li> <li>• Include information on the MRM in requests for informed consent.</li> </ul>
<b>Any work with community-based structures/ organizations or youth groups</b>	Alerting Documenting (intake interviews) Preventing (identifying risks, raising awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> <li>• Include information on the MRM in requests for informed consent.</li> </ul>
<b>Awareness-raising activities</b>	Alerting Preventing (identifying risks, raising awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> </ul>
<b>Vocational training</b>	Preventing (identifying risks, raising awareness)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> </ul>
<b>Medical care</b>	Alerting Documenting (intake interviews)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> <li>• Ensure that your patient confidentiality rules allow for information to be shared with others.</li> <li>• Include information on the MRM in requests for informed consent.</li> </ul>
<b>Counseling</b>	Alerting Documenting (intake interviews)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> <li>• Ensure that your patient confidentiality rules allow for information to be shared with others.</li> <li>• Include information on the MRM in requests for informed consent.</li> </ul>
<b>Legal assistance</b>	Alerting Documenting (intake interviews)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge of the six grave violations.</li> <li>• Ensure that your client confidentiality rules allow for information to be shared with others.</li> <li>• Include information on the MRM in requests for informed consent.</li> </ul>

## related tools

 **tool 15** – Matrix 'Options for NGO participation in the MRM'



# tool 22 Stakeholder Analysis

## Guiding questions

Stakeholders are persons or entities that play a role or may influence (negatively or positively) your course of action in a particular context. Stakeholder analysis and mapping can help an organization identify with whom it should collaborate, coordinate or generally interact when engaging in the MRM). While some stakeholders may be known entities, the analysis and mapping exercise may reveal the need to establish new contacts and relationships, depending on the type of engagement chosen by the organization and its objectives. Below are some questions and examples that may help guide the analysis and mapping of relevant stakeholders prior to engagement in the MRM (the list of examples is not exhaustive):

**What is stakeholder analysis?** A stakeholder is an individual, group or institution that has a vested interest in a specific issue such as those related to the protection of children affected by armed conflict. The purpose of the stakeholder analysis is to map the landscape of actors and identify to what extent and in what ways they may contribute to a given goal.

**Why is stakeholder analysis important?** Stakeholder analysis can help a project or program identify:

- The interests of all stakeholders which may affect or be affected by your goal.
- Potential conflicts or risks that could jeopardize the initiative.
- Opportunities and relationships that can be built to achieve your goal.
- Groups that should be encouraged to participate in different stages of the project.
- Appropriate strategies and approaches for stakeholder engagement.
- Ways to reduce negative impacts on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups.

**How to develop stakeholder analysis?** Stakeholder analysis can be developed through workshops, focus groups and interviews. Here are some components that should be included for each geographical area that your organization intends to cover for the MRM:

**1- Goal:** Identify the goal your organization is trying to achieve. If you feel that the general goal of protecting children through monitoring, reporting and response to grave violations is too broad, narrow it down to one violation and repeat the exercise as often as necessary.

**2- Stakeholders: Which are the stakeholders relevant to your MRM-related activities?** Try to be as specific as possible when listing the various stakeholders in each area, taking into account gender considerations. Include all potential supporters as well as opponents of the activity.

Examples: children, families, community leaders, community (in general), religious leaders, youth leaders, community organizers, teachers, health workers, your own organization's staff, other NGOs, MRM focal points, government representatives, police, lawyers, judges, prosecutors, armed forces armed groups.

**3- Role and mandate: How are the stakeholders involved in the issue?**

Identify the role played by each stakeholder in relation with the issue. Some stakeholders may have a mandate to protect children or to respond to grave violations through the provision of services (legal, medical, psycho-social, reintegration). Others may be actors with influence which can contribute to mobilize the will to better protect children from the consequences of conflict.





## TOOL 22

### 4- Interests: What are the main interests/expectations of these stakeholders?

- Physical protection/assistance.
- Prevention of violence.
- Community well-being and stability.
- Economic and social stability or prosperity.
- Justice/accountability.
- Power/control (political, military, economic).

### 5- Power/influence: How can these stakeholders assist or interfere with MRM-related activities conducted by your organization?

*A stakeholder can play several roles, both positive and negative.*

Some examples of assistance:

- Provide information on grave violations (as first or secondary sources).
- Provide immediate assistance to victims (medical, legal, mental health).
- Provide a long-term support structure for victims (reintegration, education, etc.).
- Provide redress and increase accountability.
- Provide access to the community/victims ("gatekeepers").
- Use their influence with the community, armed actors, government or international actors.

Some examples of interferences:

- May be reluctant to monitor or report on grave violations.
- Are potentially biased.
- Cover up grave violations.
- Protect armed actors which commit violations.
- Threaten or retaliate against monitors and victims.
- Are suspicious of foreign organizations or foreign staff (UN or NGOs).
- Are suspicious of NGOs in general.
- Can block access to certain communities or areas.
- Do not carry out their duties reliably due to corruption.




### 6- Resource: What capacities do stakeholders have to contribute to MRM-related objectives?

- Financial resources.
- Knowledge (language, cultural insights) and technical capacity.
- Access (geographical, political, social).
- Relations and network.

### 7- Relationship: With which stakeholders is your organization already engaging? With which stakeholders does your organization need to establish a relationship in order to participate in the MRM the way it wants to? How will that relationship be established?

See the sample stakeholder analysis format [here](#).

## related tools

-  [tool 53](#) – Guiding questions 'Mapping service providers and identifying referral pathways'
-  [tool 17](#) – Guiding questions 'Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM'
-  [tool 55](#) – Guiding questions 'Planning advocacy on the grave violations'



# tool 23 Mapping Relevant International Obligations of Your Country of Operation

## Factsheet

» **Note:** UNICEF country office may have already mapped out international obligations of your country in relation to child rights/child protection. Check their website or contact them to see if that information is already available.

### Is the country party to any of the following international instruments?

Instrument	Where to find out?
<input type="checkbox"/> The four Geneva Conventions (1949)	ICRC Treaty Database - <a href="#">here</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions (1977)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions (1977)	
<input type="checkbox"/> International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)	UN Treaty Collection website - <a href="#">here</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2000)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Convention against torture and other cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (1992)	
<input type="checkbox"/> ILO Convention nr. 182 concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labor (1999)	ILO website - <a href="#">here</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (1998)	UN Treaty Collection website - <a href="#">here</a>
Regional instruments:	OAS website - <a href="#">here</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> American Convention on Human Rights (1969)	Website of the African Commission on Human Rights - <a href="#">here</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> African Charter on Human and People's Rights (1981)	Website of the African Commission on Human Rights
<input type="checkbox"/> African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990)	Website of the African Commission on Human Rights
<input type="checkbox"/> Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights establishing the African Court of Human Rights (1998)	Council of Europe website - <a href="#">here</a>
<input type="checkbox"/> European Convention on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950)	

Does the country have any declarations or reservations to any of the international instruments that limits or affects obligations regarding the protection of children in conflict? (*you can check that using the same links where you checked about ratifications*).

## related tools

**tool 5** – International legal foundation of the six grave violations

**tool 55** – Guiding questions 'Planning advocacy on the grave violations'



# tool 24 Mapping National Provisions that Protect Children in Conflict in Your Country of Operation

## Guiding questions

» **Note:** UNICEF country office may have already mapped out relevant national provisions concerning child rights/child protection in your country. Check their website or contact them to see if this information is already available.

### Legal framework:

- How is 'child' defined in national law?
- Are any of the six violations criminalized in national law?
- Does the law establish a minimum age for enrolment in the national armed forces? (compulsory and/or voluntary)
- What authority is responsible for handling complaints about soldier misconduct or alleged criminal acts relating to a grave violation?
- Before what type of jurisdiction (military or ordinary) can members of the armed forces be prosecuted when suspected of a crime relating to a grave violation?
- What is the minimum age of criminal responsibility?
- Are there precedents of children themselves being prosecuted for their association with an armed group?
- What procedural safeguards are there in place for children in conflict with the law?
- Is there a witness protection program? If so, what does it offer, who is eligible and what is the process to obtain such protection?




### Administrative/policy framework:

- What are the administrative and policy directives relevant to the protection of children affected by armed conflict?
- What birth registration policy is in place and what proof of age is normally available for age verification?
- What is the recruitment procedure and who is responsible for implementing it within the armed forces? What is the age verification process?
- Do the armed forces have standard operating procedures to follow when they capture children associated with

armed groups during combat or other type of military action? (in particular, concerning detention, interrogation and handover of children)

- If there are foreign troops in the country (e.g., peacekeepers, foreign intervention forces), do they have similar standard operating procedures to the ones mentioned above?
- Is there a policy on prevention of sexual violence within the national armed forces and/or foreign forces present in the country (e.g. 'zero tolerance policy')?
- Is there a policy on the protection of schools and hospitals within the armed forces and/or foreign forces present in the country?
- Is there a formal demobilization and reintegration process for children associated with armed forces or armed groups? If so, what institutions are responsible and what steps must be followed? If not, how have children been demobilized and reintegrated in the past?
- Is there a formal security sector reform process underway? If so, how does it address issues related to the protection of children?
- Are parties to the conflict involved in a peace process or transitional justice mechanism? What agreement, commitments or policy have resulted from such a process?

## related tools

-  [tool 23](#) – Factsheet 'Mapping relevant international obligations of your country of operation'
-  [tool 22](#) – Guiding questions 'Stakeholder analysis'
-  [tool 55](#) – Guiding questions 'Planning advocacy on the grave violations'



# tool 25 Advantages and Disadvantages of Participating in the MRM through Networks

## Factsheet

NGO networks are often established to work on topics that require sustained advocacy or a wide range of skills and expertise. Networks can take different shapes: some are a continuous collaboration between a selected number of organizations on a specific issue of common interest. These networks typically have their own operating budget and a permanent secretariat or coordinator hosted by one of the members. Others are ad-hoc collaborations limited to a particular initiative or campaign.

### Advantages of engaging in the MRM through a network:

- More anonymity and protection for individual member organizations.
- Maximizing existing expertise and capacity.
- Ability to cover more areas and more issues.
- Avoiding duplication of efforts through closer coordination.
- May facilitate referrals and case follow-up (if the network includes organizations providing services to victims).
- May help fundraising efforts (network action is often prioritized by donors).

### Challenges:

- Member organizations may not have equivalent levels of capacity and expertise, which may affect the internal balance and division of labor of the network.
- Need to harmonize approaches to security, advocacy and external communication, which in some cases may be fundamentally different from one another.
- Internal communication, decision-making and approval processes may be lengthy and complex.
- Potential competition for funds between the network itself and individual members or between individual members (in particular if members have overlapping expertise).

### Checklist for a successful network:

- Members know each other well (institutionally and if possible personally).
- Members have a clear common goal.
- Members clearly define their level of commitment and the resources they can contribute.
- Each member brings its own expertise or added value to the group, there are no overlaps.
- Members have equivalent capacity levels in their respective areas of expertise or a commitment is made by some members to reinforce the capacity of other members.
- Roles, responsibilities, decision-making and approval process, as well as division of labor and internal communication are clear and agreed to by all, if necessary in a written document (MoU, ToR).
- Members commit funds for network-related activities and agree on a common or joint fundraising strategy, if necessary.
- Members allocate a focal point for network-related issues and, for long-term collaborations, a permanent secretariat or coordinator is hired.



# tool 26 Before you Engage in the MRM

## Checklist

Suggested issues to discuss and agree upon with the UN/MRM focal point:

	Alert	Informal communication	Documentation	CTFMR member
What information should be provided?	✓	✓	✓	✓
In what format should information be provided?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Who should the information be provided to?	✓	✓	✓	✓
Who will have access to the information my organization provides?	✓	✓	✓	✓
How will the UN use the information?	✓	✓	✓	✓
What coding system will we use to protect the identity of the victim, monitor and organization and at what stage will such coding be implemented?		✓	✓	✓
What is the capacity of the UN to verify reports and how is verification being conducted?		✓	✓	✓
What response and follow-up options are available at the local or national level for cases that cannot be 'UN-verified'?		✓	✓	✓
Is there already a response pathway for MRM cases in my area of operations or would I need to establish one?		✓	✓	✓
How can the UN assist my organization in the event of threats or retaliation to staff involved in monitoring?			✓	✓
What kind of feedback can I expect from the UN/CTFMR regarding follow-up and advocacy on cases reported by my organization or general progress in implementing the CAAC agenda?		✓	✓	✓
How does the CTFMR conduct advocacy? (roles, responsibilities, planning and decision-making process)				✓
Are CTFMR members bound by specific confidentiality rules?				✓



### Suggested pre-engagement checklist :

	Alert	Informal monitoring and reporting	Documentation	CTFMR member
Your expectations and objectives in relation to the MRM are clear and realistic.	✓	✓	✓	✓
You are aware of potential additional risks brought by your participation in the MRM and are willing to handle them.			✓	✓
You know what information to gather and in what format to record it.	✓	✓	✓	✓
It is clear who in your organization gathers information and who transmits it to the MRM focal point.	✓	✓	✓	✓
You have discussed and agreed with the MRM focal point on a modality to communicate information on violations safely.	✓	✓	✓	✓
You have discussed and agreed with the MRM focal point on confidentiality rules for use and transmission of information you provide to the MRM.	✓	✓	✓	✓
You have discussed and agreed with the MRM focal point how verifications will be organized and conducted.		✓	✓	✓
You have a risk mitigation strategy in place to prevent and protect staff, victims and communities from potential retaliation (either an existing strategy covering all your activities or a strategy developed for MRM-related activities specifically).		✓	✓	✓
You know how to store and handle case information safely and confidentially.		✓	✓	✓
You are able to offer some level of support and assistance to victims (directly or via referral to service providers).		✓	✓	✓
You have dedicated and trained staff with adequate technical capacity.			✓	✓
You have adequate financial resources to cover costs associated with information gathering and follow-up.			✓	✓
You are able and willing to handle visibility at local level.			✓	✓
You have assessed potential impact of the MRM.			✓	✓
You are able and willing to handle high-profile advocacy and visibility at national level.				✓



# part III

engaging in the MRM



# basic principles and ethical standards

This section contains four tools that highlight the basic ethical and professional principles and standards applicable to rights monitoring activities, such as those carried out in the framework of the MRM.

## List of tools in this section:

- tool 27 – Factsheet ‘Guiding Principles for MRM’
- tool 28 – Sample language for a Code of Conduct
- tool 29 – Checklist ‘Confidentiality’
- tool 30 – Checklist ‘Informed consent’





# tool 27

## Guiding Principles for MRM

### Factsheet

The following principles have been taken from the MRM Field Manual Annex 7 and highlight key humanitarian principles and their meaning for monitoring, reporting and response.

Principle	Definition	Implications for the MRM
<b>Best interests of the child</b>	In all decisions affecting children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In all aspects of the MRM, the best interests of the child must be a primary consideration.</li> </ul>
<b>Humanity</b>	Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The dignity and rights of all people must be respected and protected.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring, reporting and response must be conducted for the principal and sole purpose of alleviating human suffering, wherever it is found, and not for any political purposes.</li> <li>Monitoring, reporting and response must be undertaken in a way that protects and respects the dignity and rights of victims. For example, by respecting the dignity of victims during interviews and in the recording and reporting of violations.</li> </ul>
<b>Neutrality</b>	Humanitarian action must be carried out without engaging in hostilities or taking sides in controversies of a political, religious or ideological nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring, reporting and response must be undertaken in an unbiased, objective manner without taking sides in political or ideological disputes. These activities must make every effort to report on violations against CAAC <i>by any and all parties</i> to the conflict.</li> <li>Monitoring and reporting should not be undertaken to support or advance the political objectives of any one party to a conflict.</li> </ul>
<b>Impartiality</b>	Humanitarian action must be carried out without discriminating as to ethnic origin, gender, nationality, political opinions, race or religion. Action must be guided solely by needs and priority must be given to the most urgent cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring, reporting and response must be undertaken without discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, gender, nationality, race, religion or any other factor. For example, practitioners must not limit monitoring and reporting to violations affecting victims from any one particular group.</li> </ul>
<b>Operational independence</b>	Humanitarian actors must retain full control of their operations. Agencies must ensure that their operational independence is respected at all times. Humanitarian action must be conducted separately and clearly distinguished from military-led relief operations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MRM practitioners must at all times retain operational control and direction of monitoring, reporting and response activities. MRM practitioners should not, for example, agree to restrictions by parties to the conflict on the type or scope of monitoring of violations against children.</li> </ul>

### related tools

- tool 29 – Checklist on confidentiality
- tool 28 – Sample language for a code of conduct
- tool 46 – Factsheet ‘Information management’





# tool 28 Sample Language for a Code of Conduct

Many organizations have codes of conduct for their staff, while others do not. The content and focus of these codes of conduct varies depending on the type of activities that the organization performs. This tool suggests language that is relevant to MRM activities (although the guiding principles are also applicable to many other activities). Organizations can include this language in existing codes of conduct if needed or they can use it to develop one.

- Only discuss case details with people who **need** to know that information.
- Do not talk about cases of violations in public places or with or near persons who are not authorized to have such information. This includes taxi or office drivers, cleaners and other support staff, colleagues from other projects or organizations, and also your relatives, personal friends, neighbors.
- Do not disclose the identity of a victim in reports to be shared outside your organization.
- Ensure that the child or child's parent/guardian has given informed consent to share the story. Abide by any limits or restrictions expressed by the child or child's parent/guardian.
- Choose the location of interviews carefully and make sure the victim/witness feels safe there.
- Interrupt or stop an interview if the victim/witness is feeling distressed.
- Do not give or show your personal opinion or judgment about an event, person or group during interviews (either verbally or through body language).
- Ensure that all information you collect is safely used and stored, in accordance with your organization's protocols.

## related tools

-  [tool 29 – Checklist 'Confidentiality'](#)
-  [tool 46 – Factsheet 'Information management'](#)



# tool 29 Confidentiality

## Checklist

- Information is only collected and shared with the informed consent of the child or a parent/guardian (incl. photos and videos).
- Records of cases of violations are kept in a secure location.
- Reports are made anonymous and identities of victims are shared only with persons who need to know them.
- An internal data protection protocol is in place clarifying who collects information, how it should be recorded (standardized codes), who can have access to it and in what format, security of files (paper and electronic) and a contingency plan to protect and safeguard files in the event of an emergency.
- All relevant staff is adequately trained to handle confidential information.
- Respect for confidentiality is included in relevant organizational documents (policies, codes of conduct).

## related tools

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tool 46 – Factsheet  
'Information management'



tool 47 – Group exercise 'Confidentiality and information management'



# tool 30 Informed Consent

## Checklist



Informed consent is about ensuring that sources understand the consequences of taking part in the monitoring process. The difficulty arises in assessing how much and what information is necessary in each different situation. There needs to be a balance between making sure that the interviewee is aware of any potential risks involved in providing information and obtaining as much useful information as possible. Emphasizing the potential risks may discourage the interviewee from talking, but it would be unacceptable to prioritize information over the well-being of an individual for whom there may be a real risk. The following checklist highlights key information that should be communicated when seeking consent.

- The child is able to understand the points detailed below.
- The child is not able to understand the points detailed below, but a parent or guardian is present and able to understand the points detailed below.
- Understands that refusing to provide information does not restrict in any way the possibility of obtaining assistance and that conversely, agreeing to provide information does not bring additional assistance.

### The child/parent/guardian:

- Is informed of the identity and mandate of the person and organization conducting the interview.
- Understands why the information is being collected.
- Understands how the information is going to be used (documentation, communication, possibly verification by the UN) and who will be allowed to access information.
- Understands the risks of providing such information.
- Understands what confidentiality and security measures can be taken to mitigate risks.
- Has specified any conditions or limitations to his/her participation in the interview or any other stage of the documentation process.
- Understands that his/her collaboration is a choice and not an obligation.
- Understands that he/she can stop the interview and withdraw his/her testimony at any moment.
- Knows how to get in touch with your organization if need be.

## related tools

-  [tool 27 – Factsheet ‘Guiding Principles for MRM’](#)
-  [tool 46 – Factsheet ‘Information management’](#)
-  [tool 29 – Checklist ‘Confidentiality’](#)



# monitoring grave violations

**This section contains nine tools that give basic technical guidance for monitoring grave violations, as well as concrete examples of best practices in collaborating with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations.**

## **List of tools in this section:**

tool 31 – Factsheet ‘What information is needed for the MRM?’

tool 32 – Factsheet ‘Information gathering’

tool 33 – Checklist ‘Interviewing techniques’

tool 34 – Annotated case study ‘Recognizing the grave violations’

tool 35 – Factsheet ‘Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations’

tool 36 – Do’s and don’ts ‘Providing feedback and managing victims/community expectations in relation to the MRM’

tool 37 – Case study ‘Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip’

tool 38 – Case study ‘Community-led monitoring in Southeastern Myanmar’

tool 39 – Case study ‘Village child protection committees in Eastern DRC’



# tool 31

## What Information is Needed for the MRM?

### Factsheet

Depending on the type of engagement in the MRM, organizations may provide many or few details about cases of violations to the UN. Some organizations may use a standardized MRM case incident report form developed by the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR), while others may provide information or alerts using other formats, or simply orally. This tool will be useful for NGOs that need guidance to prepare data collection activities in ways that respond more directly to the MRM's need.








## TOOL 31

- **Who** is (are) the victim(s) including gender, age, ethnicity, religion, status (e.g., refugee, displaced), care situation (e.g., unaccompanied minors, separated); **in cases of attack on schools and hospitals**, provide name, location (province, town/village, street or local descriptive), administration (public/private) and type (fixed, temporary, mobile).
- **What** party to the conflict is responsible, including, where possible, unit and commanders involved, as well as patterns of attacks from particular units or commanders.
- **When** the incident occurred, including date, time of the day; **in cases of military use of schools and hospitals**, how long did the incident last, was the facility open, closed, abandoned or used for military purposes (in cases of attack), and were children, education or medical personnel present during the attack.
- **Where** did the incident occur, including location (province, town/village, street or local description, place (e.g., home of the victim, field, detention facility).
- **How** did the incident take place, including type of weapon, methods of warfare, length of the attack, any warnings given, as well as a preliminary determination whether the attack was deliberate or indiscriminate; **in cases of military use of schools or hospitals**, how was it used, purpose and methods of use, medical supplies or education materials taken/damaged, checkpoints placed in the vicinity.
- **Consequences** of the incident, including medical or psychosocial harm, loss of livelihood, stigmatization; **in cases of attacks on schools or hospitals**, damage inflicted to the structure, its resources and ability to function following the attack, numbers of children taught or treated before and after the attack, displacement caused by the attack, presence of unexploded ordnance or other remnant of war, and overall access to education following the attack.

## related tools

-  **tool 32** – Factsheet ‘Information gathering’
-  **tool 33** – Checklist ‘Interviewing techniques’
-  **tool 34** – Annotated case study ‘Recognizing the grave violations’



# tool 32 Information Gathering

## Factsheet

The gathering of complete, reliable and timely information on grave violations to produce compelling reports and inform political and programmatic response is central to the MRM's purpose. NGOs are most often not direct witnesses of violations and access to information may represent a significant challenge. Accordingly, the gathering of information requires thorough inquiries with a wide variety of sources capable of producing strong testimonies and evidence. The reliability of the information needs to be assessed to preserve the credibility of the mechanism and its ability to mobilize stronger response.

### Developing a network of contacts:

NGOs most often are not direct witnesses of violations and therefore need to proactively seek access to information that can be sensitive, and likely not very public in nature. In many cases, only a few individuals may be aware or knowledgeable about violations, and information gathering may require privileged access to these "gatekeepers". NGOs should therefore strategically develop their network of contacts. Such a strategy may include the development of community-based child protection networks which can raise an alert when a violation is taking place and facilitate a response. Network building is also an imperative step towards building greater capacity to facilitate a response to the abuses documented as part of the monitoring exercise.

### Sources:

It is common to distinguish between primary and secondary sources to differentiate the relative weight that should be attributed to the information collected.

- **Primary sources:** persons who were present during the incident (victim, eyewitness or perpetrator).
- **Secondary sources:** persons who are close to the victim or were in contact with the victim before or after the incident (parents/guardians, teachers, community members, community or religious leaders, medical personnel, journalists, NGO personnel, activists/human rights defenders, lawyers, prosecutors, police, etc.), or documents and other material

evidence that can confirm that the incident took place and provide additional details (photographs of victim's wounds or scars, medical records, police records, reports from other investigative entities, photographs of the site where the incident took place showing signs of violence, ammunition left behind, etc.).

### Collecting information:

Claims regarding grave violations must be corroborated by facts gathered on the ground. In this sense, the most common and effective way of collecting information about grave violations is through interviewing victims and witnesses. Interviewing is also potentially the most sensitive approach to data collection and should be treated with extreme caution to prevent possible risks for the interviewee, the monitor and the broader community. Possible risks include threats, retaliation, exclusion, stigmatization of the victim and re-traumatization. Other approaches to information gathering may include site visits, review of media coverage and collation of documents including NGO reports, laws, policies and programmatic framework. While the MRM primarily seeks to find key information on specific cases of violations, particular efforts should still be invested in documenting the broader context in which violations are taking place. Whoever is collecting the information has the responsibility to gather, store and share information in a way that ensures confidentiality and protects the rights and privacy of respondents.





## Assessing the reliability of sources:

NGOs may use various techniques to corroborate the information obtained from victims and witnesses. An interviewer can test the internal consistency and coherence of testimony by returning to the same subject several times but with different questions. In general, confirming key information with different sources -- "triangulating" -- is an effective way to measure reliability. Primary sources are usually given greater weight and may be considered more reliable than secondary sources due to their degree of proximity to the violation. Similarly, the reliability of secondary sources may be assessed as a function of remoteness. For example, a parent should be given more weight than a community leader who heard from that parent. Independently of distance to the claim, an assessment of how reliable a source may be should factor in the possible bias of a witness by taking into consideration ideological and political beliefs which may translate into some truth being exaggerated or silenced.

## Verification of information:

The UN is ultimately responsible and accountable for the reliability of the information reported to the Security Council. Accordingly, the chair of the CTFMR must be satisfied that the inputs provided by partners reach a minimum standard of verification. According to the MRM Field Manual, information gathered from only one primary source deemed credible by a trained and reliable monitor should be verified by a designated member of the CTFMR before it is reported to the Security Council. When the CTFMR has information that has been assessed as credible, but for which complete verification has not been possible, it should still be documented and may be reported as "alleged" or "subject to verification".

## Follow-up actions:

Gathering information should not be considered independently from the response to grave violations. While monitors are often not in a position to directly offer assistance to victims and community members, they should still take responsibility for facilitating access to referral services by providing key information on which services are available and how to gain access. If services are not accessible or not used by potential beneficiaries, gaps and obstacles should be documented so actions are taken to strengthen the referral system.

## related tools

-  [tool 33](#) – Checklist 'Interviewing techniques'
-  [tool 31](#) – Factsheet 'What information is needed for the MRM?'
-  [tool 34](#) – Annotated case study 'Recognizing the grave violations'
-  [tool 37](#) – Case study 'Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip'
-  [tool 39](#) – Case study 'Village child protection committees in Eastern DRC'
-  [tool 41](#) – Group exercise 'Security while collecting information'



# tool 33 Interviewing Techniques

## Checklist

Once victims or witnesses are identified, interviewing them is usually the most effective way of gathering information, but it is also the most likely to negatively impact their well-being, place them at additional risk, and, if not carried out properly, affect the quality and reliability of the information provided. The following checklist offers some tips and advice on how to plan and conduct an interview.

Interview plan	Interview techniques
<p><b>Preparing for the interview</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Carry out a thorough risk-assessment:</b> List all possible security concerns and develop contingency plans to deal with each one of them. Know who the main actors are, what their interests are and whether they represent a credible threat. Prepare responses regarding the reasons for your visit and what you are doing in case people ask you difficult questions or appear suspicious.</li> <li>• <b>Empower yourself:</b> Find out as much as you can remotely about the case. Be knowledgeable about legal standards regulating violations, possible remedy and how to best access referral services.</li> <li>• <b>Get the facts:</b> Establish a list of what you already know about the case and what information is missing.</li> <li>• <b>Prepare your interview format:</b> Write down a checklist of the data and facts necessary to assess the allegations. Familiarize yourself with a map of the area to build geographical references. Establish the structure of the interview, develop a questionnaire and test your interview plan with local colleagues.</li> <li>• <b>Be self-aware:</b> Cultural differences may impede good communication. Cross-cultural differences include attitudes about the meaning of the traumatic experience, gender relations and appropriate topics of conversation. Physical interactions such as eye contact and hand-shaking can lead to misunderstanding. Some cultures may communicate in a more direct fashion than others.</li> <li>• <b>Composition of the delegation:</b> If the monitoring mission is composed of various members, ensure gender balance and ethnicity / languages, and train a translator if necessary.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Setting the interview</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Consider the location of the interview carefully:</b> Plan the interview in a location that is safe, private and easily accessible for the interviewee. Choose a time of day bearing in mind the person's daily routine, distance, means of transportation and cost.</li> <li>• <b>Avoid group interviews:</b> Except when the interviewee requests to be accompanied for greater comfort or support, individual interviews should be prioritized to avoid testimonies being influenced by the presence of others.</li> </ul>



(cont'd)






Interview plan	Interview techniques
<b>Initiating the interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduce yourself:</b> Give your name and the name of the organization you represent. Introduce the interpreter if applicable and explain what his/her role is.</li> <li>• <b>Establish an initial rapport:</b> Project an attitude of professionalism, sincerity and sensitivity. Acknowledge and be appreciative for the effort made by the interviewee to engage in what might be a challenging discussion.</li> <li>• <b>Clarify the purpose of the interview:</b> Explain why you asked for the interview, the type of questions you are interested in asking and how you intend to use the information.</li> <li>• <b>Confidentiality:</b> Explain that the information will be kept confidential in a protected database, and that reports will be anonymous to prevent traceability.</li> <li>• <b>Establish ground rules:</b> Clarify that participation is entirely voluntary and that the interviewee may decide to stop the interview at any moment or impose specific restrictions on how certain information may be used. If your organization provides services, be clear that access to assistance is not conditional, in any way, on participation in the interview.</li> <li>• <b>Notes:</b> If you intend to take notes, tell the interviewee and ensure you protect the content. Some organizations refrain from using audio/video recordings; if used, make sure you manage them with extreme caution and protect the identity of the interviewee if the content is extremely sensitive.</li> <li>• <b>Obtain consent:</b> Explicitly ask whether the interviewee would like to proceed under the conditions described. If the child is too young to understand the implications of his/her participation, seek the consent of a parent or caregiver.</li> </ul>
<b>Interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Narrative statement:</b> Ask the interviewee if he/she would like to begin by narrating his/her story. Listen, do not interrupt or ask follow up questions right away and be patient with circular or repetitive statements that may not be a priority for you.</li> <li>• <b>Specific questioning:</b> Once the interviewee has given his/her narrative, complement by asking targeted questions. Start with clarifying elements of the narrative which you may not understand entirely, and seek additional or more specific information which was not yet addressed.</li> <li>• <b>Use open-ended questions:</b> Close-ended questions can only be answered by yes or no and do not offer the interviewee sufficient opportunity to elaborate and share important information you may be seeking. Avoid them, except if you need to clarify a very specific point.</li> <li>• <b>Avoid leading questions:</b> Those are questions that suggest a particular answer or contain the information you are looking to have confirmed. This may influence the testimony in significant ways.</li> <li>• <b>Seek clarification:</b> Revisit previous statements by saying "you mentioned this" and seek more in-depth information by asking "how do you know" or "what led you to that conclusion?"</li> <li>• <b>Seek details:</b> Clarify dates, times, places, identities, numbers, ranks of alleged perpetrators, physical descriptions, etc. If the interviewee is describing the scene of an alleged crime, ask him/her to make a sketch of it for you. Bring a map to pinpoint implicated places.</li> <li>• <b>Remain professional:</b> Stay objective and neutral. Do not judge or show your opinion as this may affect what the interviewee may choose to omit and disclose, or undermine their confidence. Be careful not to communicate through body language; ensure your demeanor does not portray skepticism.</li> <li>• <b>Show sensitivity and empathy:</b> Maintain eye contact, even partially if you are taking notes. Work from non-controversial and non-sensitive questions towards more sensitive issues. If a line of questioning is too difficult for the interviewee, offer to take a pause or skip to another question. Acknowledge how difficult revisiting traumatic events may be.</li> </ul>



(cont'd)

Interview plan	Interview techniques
<b>Closing the interview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Supporting evidence:</b> Ask whether the victim/witness may have supporting documentation (arrest warrants, threatening notes, death certificates, autopsy reports, hospital records); photos or videos of the incident; shell casings, ammunitions or other remnants of war. Do not keep but ask whether you can take pictures.</li> <li>• <b>Follow up:</b> Ensure that the interviewee knows about possible referral services. Ask whether he/she would like you to facilitate access to services to the extent possible. Orient the interviewee if appropriate.</li> <li>• <b>Last question:</b> Ask the interviewee if he/she has any questions or can think of any additional information which may be useful.</li> <li>• <b>Contact:</b> Make sure the interviewee knows how to contact you should they have any concerns or questions, and obtain contact information for the interviewee if it does not put him/her at risk.</li> </ul>

## related tools

- 
[tool 31](#) – Factsheet ‘What information is needed for the MRM?’
- 
[tool 32](#) – Factsheet ‘Information gathering’
- 
[tool 40](#) – Self-assessment exercise ‘Security risks when gathering information on grave violations’
- 
[tool 29](#) – Checklist ‘Confidentiality’
- 
[tool 30](#) – Checklist ‘Informed consent’

## other resources

- *Manual on Human Rights Monitoring*, OHCHR, 2001 - Chapter 7 (Information gathering) and Chapter 8 (Interviewing).
- *Security in a Box: Tools and Tactics for Your Digital Security*, Tactical Technology Collective and Front Line Defenders, 2009.
- *Workbook on Security: Practical Steps for Human Rights Defenders at Risk*, Front Line Defenders, 2011.



# tool 34 Recognizing the Grave Violations

## Annotated case study

The following case descriptions can be used in trainings as a case study or role play. Depending on the mandate of your organization and on the type of engagement you have in the MRM (alert, informal communication, documentation), some sections and guiding questions may be more or less relevant and may need to be tailored to your specific context. The purpose of the exercise is to identify potential grave violations and to map steps to be taken in terms of documentation of the incident and follow-up.

You are in a town called ABC that was attacked by rebels two months ago. You meet one of the local teachers who recalls the events of that day:

*- They came straight for the school. I was in the first room with my 5<sup>th</sup> graders, and my colleague Mrs. B was in the other room with the 4<sup>th</sup> graders. They ordered the students to assemble outside in the courtyard. I saw them hit Mrs. B several times and they dragged her to the back of the building but I couldn't do anything. One of them hit me on the head with his gun and I lost consciousness. I woke up later in the same place. Two of my students were standing next to me calling my name and throwing water on my face. They said the men took three of the boys from the other class and two girls from my class with them. I asked them about Mrs. B and they said they didn't see her leave. I haven't seen her since the attack. The headmaster was shot in the shoulder. He was at the market and ran to the school as soon as he heard that there was an attack. Apparently they stopped him just outside the school as they were leaving. He tried to reason with them to let the kids go, but they just shot him and took off.*

A few days after you spoke to the teacher, the armed forces attack and take control of an old hospital building in a town not far from ABC that was being occupied by the rebels. You know one of the soldiers who took part in this attack and he tells you that there were several children in that hospital with the rebels. Some of them were killed in the attack and the others were taken to the military base for questioning and then handed over to the police. You alert the teacher in ABC town and he joins you the next day at the police station together with the parents of the five children who were taken from the school two months ago. The police takes you to a cramped cell with 10 children. They are visibly distressed and some are injured. Two of the parents who are with you recognize their children: a boy and a girl. The guard agrees to let the boy and the girl out to a separate room where you, the teacher and their parents talk to them.

The boy tells:

*- The soldiers took us to that hospital building and told us we were men now and had to fight for our nation. They gave us real guns and taught us how to shoot. Some of the kids were really small and the guns were too heavy for them. Whenever they missed the target they were punished. I remember on the third day, a kid called Z. was shot dead right there in front of us as a punishment. He was only 10 years old. After a few weeks, we started to go out on night raids with the soldiers to villages in the area. My role was to set fire to the houses even if people were inside. My friend C.'s role was to keep watch down a road leading to a camp for displaced people near the town. The foreigners sometimes sent their trucks with water, food and medicine down that road. He had to alert the commander by phone and then the commander would send a couple of soldiers to set up a road block and tax the convoy. Sometimes they just took food, other times they asked for money. One day apparently they had a bad argument with a foreigner from one of those organizations and there were no more convoys on that road after that.*

The girl tells:

*- I was taken to the kitchen in the hospital building. I think the hospital had not been functioning for a long time because there were not many instruments we could use to cook. There were other women and girls there with me. We had to cook and fetch water for over 50 people. At night, we all slept in the same room on the floor. One night, I noticed that one of the older girls called M., who usually slept next to me, was not there. I think it was the night before the soldiers took over the hospital. She came back a couple of days later covered in bruises. She didn't want to talk to anybody, but we all knew what had happened to her. She is over there in the cell, but she's still not talking to anybody. When the soldiers attacked the hospital we ran in all directions. My friend F. and I were caught by a group of soldiers and they took us to the army camp. It was not a nice place, there were all these men and they were angry at us. I stayed there for three days and then they brought me here, I don't know why. I guess F. is still at the camp.*



## Guiding questions for discussion:

### 1) What violations can you identify in this scenario?

- **Killing?** Yes: the case of Z. Further discussion: what about the children who were killed by the armed forces during the attack against the hospital, according to the soldier?
  - **Abduction?** Yes: five children were taken by force from the school by an armed group.
  - **Attack against a school?** Possibly. Was there damage to the school? Did the school close because of the attack? Was ammunition or unexploded ordnance left behind?
  - **Attack against protected person in relation to education?** Yes: the two teachers, five abducted children and the headmaster (even if he was attacked outside the school premises).
  - **Recruitment and use of children?** Yes: children abducted by the armed group, including the girls who were used for cooking (non-combat activities are still considered 'use').
  - **Denial of humanitarian access?** Yes: road block on the way to the internally displaced persons (IDP) camp.
  - **Rape/sexual violence?** Possibly: case of M.
  - **Attack against hospital?** The hospital was occupied by the armed group – was the hospital operational when that happened? The hospital was then attacked by the armed forces in retaliation to the presence of the armed group. While the hospital was by then a legitimate military target (due to the presence of the armed group), the attack was perhaps not conducted according to the principles of proportionality and precaution.
- » **Note:** determining whether or not a particular incident is a grave violation depends on the details of the case and the context in which it occurred. When in doubt, always report the case to the MRM focal point.

### 2) What type of sources do you have for each of those violations?

#### What additional sources could you find to confirm that information?

Violation	Available source	Possible other sources
Killing	The boy is a primary source (eyewitness).	The other children present in the police station may have witnessed the killing as well.
Abduction	The boy and girl are primary sources, as they were the victims.	The two students who woke up the teacher are eyewitnesses.
Attack against school	Teacher and all students present at the school.	Site visit to observe any damage.
Attack against education personnel	Teacher is victim and eyewitness for Mrs. B. Headmaster (if still alive) is victim.	Students may have witnessed the attack on the headmaster.
Recruitment and use of children	Boy and girl are victims and eyewitnesses.	Other children present at the police station are victims and eyewitness.
Denial of humanitarian access	Boy is secondary source (heard about it).	Other children present at the police station may be able to confirm the story.  Humanitarian actors may have a record of when and why convoys to the IDP camp were interrupted.
Rape/sexual violence	M. is victim.	Medical examination would confirm whether there was rape or other form of sexual violence.



### 3) What additional information would you ask the people you talked to in this scenario?

#### Additional questions for the teacher:

- What was the age range of the children present in the school when it was attacked?
- Aside from the five children taken by the armed group, according to the students, are all the other children accounted for?
- Was the school building damaged during the attack by the armed group?
- Did the headmaster survive? Where is he now?
- Was the hospital operational before the armed group started occupying it?

#### Additional questions for the soldier:

- How many children were detained after the attack on the hospital?
- How many children were killed or wounded during the attack on the hospital?
- Was the hospital operational when the armed group occupied it?
- Who was the leader/commandant of the rebel group?

#### Additional questions for the boy:

- Do you know what happened to the two boys and the other girl who were taken with you from the school?
- Do you know how many children were with you at the hospital before the attack?
- How many other children did you see at the military base before you were sent to this police station?
- How did they treat you at the military base?
- Clarify who the 'soldiers' are. The boy seems to use the term 'soldier' to refer to the rebels, while the girl uses the term 'soldier' to refer to the armed forces that took control of the hospital.

#### Additional questions for the girl:




- Do you know what happened to the two boys and the other girl who were taken with you from the school?
- Do you know how many children were with you at the hospital before the attack?
- How many other children did you see at the military base before you were sent to this police station?

- How did they treat you at the military base?
- Clarify who the 'soldiers' she is referring to are. The boy seems to use the term 'soldier' to refer to the rebels, while the girl uses the term 'soldier' to refer to the armed forces that took control of the hospital.
- Inconsistency: how many days was M. gone? She mentions the night before the hospital was taken, but she also says M. came back 'two days later'.

### 4) What response/follow-up measures could you take?

- Advocacy for immediate treatment of the wounded children.
- Advocacy for the release of all children present at the police station and/or referral for legal aid.
- Alert the UN human rights office and/or the ICRC on the detention of the children.
- Follow up with armed forces for the handover of any remaining children still detained at the base and/or to raise any concerns about mistreatment of children detained at the camp.
- Check with the morgue to see if any bodies of children were taken there following the attack on the hospital and if so, how many.
- Try to speak to M. and see if she accepts to see a doctor. There may still be time for an emergency post-rape kit (within 72h after rape) which could prevent pregnancy or sexually transmissible diseases. She also seems to need post-trauma support. Contact with M. should ideally be done by a female trained in dealing with survivors of sexual violence.
- Update the parents of the other three children still missing if the boy or girl gave you any information on the whereabouts of those children.

### related tools

-  [tool 31](#) – Factsheet 'What information is needed for the MRM?'
-  [tool 6](#) – Factsheet 'The six grave violations'
-  [tool 5](#) – International legal foundation of the six grave violations



# tool 35 Opportunities and Challenges of Engaging with Communities to Monitor and Respond to Grave Violations

## Factsheet

International and national NGOs usually implement activities in close collaboration with community members, often organized in the form of formal or semi-formal structures (community-based organizations, committees, etc.). Engagement with communities creates several opportunities to improve monitoring and response to grave violations:

- Communities are essential sources of information.
- They can facilitate referrals and the provision of assistance to victims.
- Influential community members can be instrumental in local advocacy efforts.
- In some areas, a confidence-based relationship with local communities is essential for the security and protection of NGO staff.
- They are key actors in any effort to build an overall protective environment for children for prevention and reintegration purposes.

In turn, lack of engagement with communities may make it impossible to monitor and respond to grave violations, in particular in difficult to reach areas or closed communities. Confidence-building is crucial in these cases.

NGOs participating in the MRM have worked with communities in various ways, depending on the context and on the modality of their engagement in the mechanism. Collaboration can range from relying on communities for alerts on incidents of grave violations to empowering communities to document cases and engage in follow-up and local advocacy. While each context is different, the following table outlines some typical challenges and possible mitigating strategies:

Challenge	Possible mitigating strategies	Illustrative case studies
<p><b>Potential bias:</b> communities may be polarized along ethnic, national, cultural, religious or political dividing lines. In certain contexts, communities may also actively support a party to the conflict. This affects their objectivity and neutrality when alerting or helping to document violations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Involving external actors trained and able to identify potential biases and cross-check information.</li> <li>• Training community monitors on rigorous documentation methodology.</li> <li>• Diversifying outreach to communities in order to achieve an overall balance at the country or regional level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study 'Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip'.</li> <li>• Case Study 'Community-led monitoring in Southeastern Myanmar'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resistance to 'outsiders' and detrimental community practices/positions:</b> international presence and internationally-agreed upon standards are not always accepted by local communities, due to existing cultural and social norms and traditions (e.g., girls' right to education, who is considered a child). Communities may also adopt coping mechanisms that create risks for children (e.g., encouraging youth to join an armed group, involving children in self-defense groups).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Permanent or frequent field presence in order to build confidence progressively.</li> <li>• Empowering communities in the protection of children.</li> <li>• Using participatory methods to sensitize communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study 'Community engagement in prevention of recruitment and protection of children at risk in Colombia'.</li> </ul>





(cont'd)

Challenge	Possible mitigating strategies	Illustrative case studies
<p><b>Potential unreliability due to voluntary engagement:</b> individuals who are active in community structures often do so on a voluntary basis. Inevitably, their engagement may waiver due to demotivation, competing family or community responsibilities, or security risks.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan regular training/awareness-raising to address high turn-over of community volunteers.</li> <li>• Devise non-financial strategies to acknowledge and encourage community efforts.</li> <li>• Devise emergency protection strategies.</li> <li>• Manage community expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study 'Village Child Protection Committees in Eastern DRC'.</li> <li>• Case study 'Emergency fund for referrals in Eastern DRC'.</li> <li>• Case study 'Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Frustration among the community as a whole:</b> communities may perceive available response as inadequate, slow or insufficient. In certain contexts, the six grave violations may cover only a limited portion of conflict-related child protection issues identified by communities. If monitoring is limited in its scope, it may lose relevance for communities and create frustration.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Empower communities to make the link between monitoring activities and referral pathways or response programs.</li> <li>• Link monitoring of grave violations to wider child rights monitoring outside the framework of the MRM. This can widen the scope of issues monitored and addressed through community structures, which in turn ensures efforts stay relevant for communities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case study 'Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip'</li> </ul>

## related tools

- [tool 37](#) – Case study 'Monitoring grave violations through child protection networks in the Gaza Strip'
- [tool 38](#) – Case study 'Community-led monitoring in Southeastern Myanmar'
- [tool 39](#) – Case study 'Village Child Protection Committees in Eastern DRC'
- [tool 54](#) – Case study 'Emergency fund for referrals in Eastern DRC'

- [tool 16](#) – Factsheet 'NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations'
- [tool 36](#) – Do's and don'ts 'Providing feedback and managing victims/community expectations in relation to the MRM'
- [tool 58](#) – Case study 'Community engagement in prevention of recruitment and protection of children at risk in Colombia'



# tool 36 Providing Feedback and Managing Victims/Community Expectations in Relation to the MRM

## Do's and don'ts

Efforts to increase accountability for perpetrators are progressive and depend on many variables and actors, making it difficult to capture achievements until there is a major breakthrough, such as the signing of an Action Plan for instance. As far as response is concerned, programs can also take time to be rolled out, especially if funds still need to be raised. As such, it may often be a challenge to give feedback to victims and communities who provide information for the MRM and to whom MRM actors are ultimately accountable. Yet some form of feedback is possible, if expectations are managed from the beginning. Below are some examples and lessons-learned drawn from the experience of NGOs engaged in the MRM:

### Step 1: Understand and manage expectations

- Try to understand what feedback the victim/community expects.
- Clarify what follow-up and feedback your organization is able to do/give, in what timeframe, and clarify what is beyond your power/capacity to do.
- Do not promise that a particular incident will be featured in a country or annual report to the Security Council. Only a small number of cases are described in these reports and purely as examples. It does not mean that other cases were not taken into account in the analysis exposed in the report.

### Step 2: Identify the types of feedback you can give

#### Individual level:

- If concrete follow-up steps were agreed upon (e.g., referral), keep the victim and family informed on steps taken to follow up on their case.
- If information on a case of grave violation came to your organization via an intermediary individual, make sure you let this intermediary know that you have contacted the victim and/or conducted necessary follow-up. It is often easy to forget about the intermediary, once direct contact with the victim is made.

#### Community level:

- Inform communities of major developments relating to the MRM, such as signature of Action Plans with armed actors operating in the country, publication of annual and country reports, adoption of conclusions on the country, adoption of resolutions, etc. Explain that monitoring and reporting on grave violations is the critical starting point for all these developments. This can take the form of dedicated meetings or it can be integrated into other activities (trainings, workshops).
- Inform communities about advocacy initiatives aiming to mobilize duty bearers into taking positive actions on child protection issues. Let community members know who the target of the advocacy is, what key messages are communicated and what feedback is obtained. When commitments are made, make sure to follow up and report progress.
- If contact with a community was made in the framework of a research activity (report, study), present the final product to the community and/or, if possible, build in a preliminary feedback opportunity before the product is finalized.
- If you are implementing a MRM-related project in collaboration with a particular community, plan to provide feedback to the community on progress and outcomes of the project when you are preparing your donor reports and offer an opportunity for them to provide additional input and recommendations.



### General public:

- If appropriate for your organization, inform the public of major developments relating to the MRM through press releases or your website.

### Do:

- Explain the purpose of information gathered for the MRM.
- If there are security risks, explain what protection measures you can realistically implement and for how long; explain what protection measures can be provided by others.
- Allow community members to provide input into defining the course of action that could be taken in response to violation(s).
- Offer options for support and assistance that you can provide or seek.
- Explain the process and timeframe for such support and assistance.
- Follow-up and give feedback to questions asked by communities.
- Explain what follow-up and feedback depends on others and not only on you.

### Don't:

- Let communities think that they will only get assistance if they agree to report grave violations.
- Offer or promise support that you are not in a position to provide or facilitate.
- Promise victims, witnesses or communities that a particular case of violation reported by them will appear in a report to the Security Council.

### related tools

- 
[tool 35 – Factsheet ‘Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations’](#)



# tool 37 Monitoring Grave Violations through Child Protection Networks in the Gaza Strip

## Case study

*This case study summarizes findings documented in 'Protecting the rights of Palestinian children affected by armed conflicts through community-based mechanisms in the Gaza Strip and North Lebanon', Regional Workshop 9 – 12 May 2011, Amman/Jordan, Save the Children Sweden.*

No Israeli or Palestinian armed actors are listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, and as such there is no MRM in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). However, the impact of the armed conflict on children in this area has been featured in the body of the report as a 'situation of concern' since 2003. In 2007, UNICEF established an informal working group to collect data on the grave violations, bringing together the UN and national and international NGOs, to collect information on grave violations and submit regular reports to UNICEF headquarters and to the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. Save the Children is an active member of this working group and working together with a national partner NGO, during 2008, established a Child Protection Network (CPN) composed of 21 NGOs and community-based organizations across the Gaza Strip to advocate with authorities, communities and international bodies for stronger protection of children. One staff member from each CPN organization was appointed focal point for grave violations and was tasked to collect information on incidents using a standard form. The CPN collaborated with Child Protection Committees (CPC), also established by Save the Children in areas most affected by the conflict. The CPCs were composed of elected influential community members (religious leaders, teachers, doctors, etc.) and tasked to raise awareness of child protection, as well as to facilitate referrals and assistance to families.

In a regional workshop organized by Save the Children to review best practices and lessons-learned, the following **positive outcomes** resulted from the OPT experience:

- Increased awareness of the international legal framework to protect children in conflict.
- Improved referrals and access to services for children victim of conflict-related violence.
- Ability to conduct evidence-based advocacy, thanks to continuous documentation of abuses.

The following **challenges** were identified:

- High turnover and limited commitment of monitors due to the fact that they collect information on a voluntary basis. This led to knowledge gaps and affected the ability of the CPN to document violations systematically.
- Bias: only violations perpetrated by specific actors, and not all, were reported.
- Overlapping reports due to uncoordinated monitoring by many different actors, in particular human rights NGOs.
- Frustration within the CPN due to lack of feedback from the UN on information submitted by the CPN.
- Frustration among communities due to insufficient response services for victims of the conflict.

The following key **recommendations** were formulated:

- Analyze data on grave violations and use it to improve coordination and fundraising to strengthen child protection systems.
- Use data on grave violations as a basis for local advocacy and creating opportunities to provide feedback on these efforts to affected communities.
- Devise non-financial strategies to acknowledge the efforts of community volunteers (certificates, participation in learning events, etc.).

## related tools

-  **tool 35** – Factsheet 'Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations'



# tool 38 Community-Led Monitoring in Southeastern Myanmar

## Case study

A national NGO has been documenting a wide range of violations against rural populations in Southeastern Myanmar since 1992. Given the characteristics of the armed conflict in Myanmar and its impact on children, the NGO has documented grave violations against children and fed information into the MRM.

**Documentation methodology:** information is gathered through a network of community-based field researchers: individuals who are known and respected by their community and committed to the protection of human rights. Some of them receive financial or material support from the NGO; others act on a voluntary basis. Field researchers are trained to gather oral testimony, collect other forms of evidence of abuse (such as photos, video, official documents, etc.), cross-check information from multiple sources and assess the credibility of these sources and to report incidents to the NGO using standard forms (situation updates, incident reports).

**Community-centered approach to human rights documentation:** while the documentation methodology is structured and rigorous, the NGO's approach is to echo villagers concerns, rather than to pro-actively seek information on specific issues or violations. As such, field researchers are trained to ask open questions so that communities can express their concerns spontaneously. As community members, field researchers are also themselves encouraged to present their analysis of relevant local dynamics or recent events in their case reports and situation updates. This approach acknowledges and accepts that individual reports can never be 100 percent neutral, and rather seeks to mitigate subjectivity by gathering evidence from as many sources and perspectives as possible and articulating competing viewpoints.

**Information processing:** the work of field researchers generates a considerable amount of information on a wide range of issues. An Information Processing Team then assesses all data and requests, if necessary, a follow-up with relevant community members to clarify or confirm facts. The team then distills core issues for advocacy based on all information available and develops and disseminates advocacy materials, such as thematic reports, commentaries, press releases, incident reports, etc.

**Feedback and motivation:** the NGO gives periodic feedback to each field researcher on the quality of their reports and offers advice and recommendation for improvement where necessary. All field researchers meet annually and prizes are awarded to the best researchers for each category of reports.

## related tools

-  [tool 35 – Factsheet ‘Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations’](#)



# tool 39 Village Child Protection Committees in Eastern DRC

## Case study

A national NGO engaged in the MRM in eastern DRC has established 'Village Child Protection Committees' (VCPC) in remote locations to help them monitor and report on grave violations against children. The VCPC are composed of a few community members who expressed interest in child rights after being sensitized and trained on basic principles of humanitarian law and on the six grave violations specifically. VCPC members document and follow up on cases of grave violations; sensitize communities (incl. children) about their rights and available remedial and protection mechanisms and help mediate community conflicts. The committees also function as a space for the community to identify needs and vulnerabilities of children. As such, they also fulfil a prevention and early alert role.

VCPCs are present in areas that have relatively reliable cell phone coverage. The VCPCs are equipped with one mobile phone and monthly calling credit and are tasked to alert the NGO as soon as they witness or hear of a violation perpetrated by an armed group in their area. The alerts are done via SMS and rely on a system of code numbers. Upon receipt of the SMS, the NGO's focal point for the area in question follows up with the VCPC to determine whether the victim needs to be referred to a service provider for assistance and coordinate the referral. This is followed by a site visit when further information on the case is collected and a follow-up plan is made if necessary (e.g. local advocacy).

While communication and transportation costs directly associated with monitoring and follow-up activities are covered by the NGO, VCPC members themselves act on a voluntary basis. The rationale behind this voluntary approach is mainly security related. VCPC members are under no obligation to send alerts; they send them only if/when they feel safe. A financial incentive could create a sense of obligation and lead some members to run more risks than they should when monitoring the actions of armed actors. Still, security risks are real for VCPC members and the NGO has an emergency fund designed to cover costs of temporary relocation of VCPC members who receive threats.

### Advantages

- **Maximizing use of limited staff to cover a wide area:** thanks to the SMS alert system, the NGO staff responsible for each area can know where to go and when. Without this system, they would need to be permanently roving, which would inevitably restrict the area of coverage.

- **Empowerment:** beyond the simple alerts, some VCPCs often engage in wider community sensitization, advocacy and follow-up on cases of violations. This creates a solid basis for community support to children victims of grave violations, which is particularly important for prevention and reintegration initiatives.

### Challenges:

- **Voluntary engagement and (de)motivation:** VCPC members live in areas where poverty levels are high. While they understand why they do not receive any compensation for their participation in the alert system, some members get demotivated and some disengage altogether after some time. Periods of demotivation and member turnover can affect the ability of VCPCs to provide timely and systematic alerts. The NGO has factored this challenge into its activity plans and foresees periodic training and sensitization sessions to all VCPCs (for old and new members). It has also strengthened VCPCs participation in advocacy and peer exchange initiatives, which has proven to be an effective way of re-motivating some members and empowering VCPCs in general.

### related tools

- 🔗 [tool 42](#) – Case study 'Emergency fund for protection of monitors in Eastern DRC'
- 🔗 [tool 35](#) – Factsheet 'Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations'



# information management and security when monitoring grave violations

**This section contains eight tools that can help NGOs assess and mitigate security risks when documenting grave violations. This includes risks in relation to personal security as well as to the integrity and confidentiality of information.**

## **List of tools in this section:**

tool 40 – Self-assessment exercise ‘Security risks when gathering information on grave violations’

tool 41 – Group exercise ‘Security while collecting information’

tool 42 – Case study ‘Emergency fund for protection of monitors in Eastern DRC’

tool 43 – Checklist ‘Facilitating UN verification of cases of grave violations’

tool 44 – Q&A ‘Using a case database’

tool 45 – Annotated sample case database

tool 46 – Factsheet ‘Information management’

tool 47 – Group exercise ‘Confidentiality and information management’



# tool 40 Security Risks when Gathering Information on Grave Violations

## Self-assessment exercise

Assess your vulnerability to situations that may compromise your and your source's security and/or the confidentiality of information and select relevant mitigating steps according to the level of risk:

Risk	Level (high/medium/low)	Suggestions
Information may be overheard or relayed to persons who do not need to know it		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose an appropriate location if you are conducting interviews.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not discuss case information with or in front of people who do not need to know it (e.g., taxi or office drivers, cleaners and other support staff, colleagues from other projects or organizations, personal friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Avoid communicating sensitive information by phone if there is a risk your telephone may be tapped and use extreme caution when you must do it (e.g., using code words).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not leave case information in plain sight or in shared spaces.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not send case information through others, unless specifically allowed to do so.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clarify with the MRM focal point who in the UN will have access to the information you will provide.</li> </ul>
Information may be lost		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Always keep case information with you until you can store it.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep copies of case information in a safe place.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use codes for victim, monitor, location, violation and perpetrator.</li> </ul>
Information may be seized (arrest, road-block, checkpoint)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use codes for case, victim, location, focal point, perpetrator.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If there is an imminent or likely risk that information may be seized, do not carry any form of data collection forms.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write down only partial information or limit yourself to oral exchanges and complete the full report as soon as possible in a safe location.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be sure to know what to say and how to conduct yourself in a situation where sensitive information may be seized (raid, arrest, roadblock, checkpoint).</li> </ul>
It may become known that the source provided information to your organization, which exposes him/her or your staff member to harassment, retaliation or stigmatization		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose an appropriate location if you are conducting interviews and confirm if the source feels safe there.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the victim or parent/guardian gives informed consent prior to an interview.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a low profile when conducting interviews.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate closely with the UN to ensure that verification missions do not attract undue attention to the source and clarify who in the UN can have access to information about the case you reported.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify partner organizations or entities able to provide physical protection to a victim/witness at risk (e.g., relocation) and discuss this option with the victim/witness.</li> </ul>
Other:		

## related tools

- [tool 32 – Factsheet 'Information gathering'](#)
- [tool 33 – Checklist 'Interviewing techniques'](#)
- [tool 46 – Factsheet 'Information management'](#)





# tool 41

## Security while Collecting Information

### Group exercise

Your organization runs a health clinic in an IDP camp and your colleague who manages the clinic tells you that soldiers have been raping girls and that two girls have agreed to report their case. You are the only person in your organization trained to interview children, so you plan to meet the girls at the clinic in the camp. In order to avoid duplicating interviews, you have asked the MRM focal point to accompany you so the case can be verified. To get to the camp you have to pass several army checkpoints. The soldiers know your organization and your colleagues from the health clinic, and they usually let the vehicle pass without any questions or searches. However, they don't know you, as you don't often go into the camp.

**Handouts:** Tool 32 – Factsheet 'Information gathering' and Tool 39 – Self-assessment exercise 'Security risks when gathering information on grave violations'

### Group discussion:

1) **What potential risks can you identify in this situation (think of risks for the victim, for yourself/your organization and for the information itself)? What issues would you need to clarify to better determine those risks?**

- **Clarifications needed:**
  - **Visibility:** are the colleagues at the clinic national staff or international staff? Are you and the MRM focal point national or international staff? Would the soldiers be more likely to be suspicious of national or international staff?
  - Has the MRM focal point ever visited the camp? Do the soldiers know him/her and what he/she does?
  - Do the soldiers stop other organizations at the checkpoints or do they usually let everyone pass without questions?
  - Do many other organizations work in the camp, in the same area as yours or is your organization the only one active in that particular sector?

- **Potential risks:**

- **Seizure of information:** soldiers could stop the car, search it and seize your notebook, laptop or documents which could contain sensitive information.
- **Retaliation against the victim:** depending on what information is collected during the interview, it could expose who the victim is and soldiers may retaliate against him/her.
- **Damage to organization's relationship with the soldiers:** soldiers could become suspicious of your organization as a whole, which could affect access to the camp and the continuation of other activities like the health clinic. Depending on who else works in the camp, your NGO could be later identified by the soldiers as the source of information about the rapes.

2) **What steps would you take to minimize these risks?**

- **Protecting the information:**
  - If you know that you risk being stopped/searched, how would you record information during the interview? For example printed data collection forms may be too sensitive to carry with you.
  - What precautions would you take to ensure that information is not seized by the soldiers and that the girls' identity is not exposed?



## TOOL 41

- **Protecting the victim:**

- Is it safe to interview the girls at the camp or is it better to interview them somewhere else?
- Could the girls meet you and the MRM focal point somewhere else without raising security risks for themselves? Can the girls leave the camp and go through checkpoints safely? Where would be a safe place for you to meet?
- Do no harm: do the security risks outweigh the benefits of conducting the interview? Is it perhaps better not to interview the girls and instead to document the case only based on information provided by colleagues at the clinic? In case the presence of the MRM focal point creates more risk, could there be an alternative method of verification that would not require his/her presence?

- **Protecting your organization:**

- What would you tell the soldiers at the checkpoint if they stopped your vehicle and asked questions? Would you lie to them? Would this risk affecting the relationship of confidence that your other colleagues have established with the soldiers?
- Do no harm: do the security risks outweigh the benefits of conducting the interview?
- Would you need to discuss specific confidentiality precautions with the UN to prevent exposing your NGO as the potential source of the information on those rapes?

## related tools/handouts

- 🔗 [tool 32](#) – Factsheet ‘Information gathering’
- 🔗 [tool 33](#) – Checklist ‘Interviewing techniques’
- 🔗 [tool 40](#) – Self-assessment exercise ‘Security risks when gathering information on grave violations’



# tool 42 Emergency Fund for Protection of Monitors in Eastern DRC

## Case study

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict partners with national NGOs in Eastern DRC that monitor and report on grave violations in the framework of the MRM through a network of trained community volunteers. As part of these partnership projects, NGOs map service providers in their area of operation, establish relevant contacts and set up referral pathways for medical, psychosocial and legal assistance to victims. Two main challenges were identified at the very onset of these projects:

- 1) **Referrals:** while organizations knew who to refer victims to, it was sometimes difficult for victims to physically reach service providers when they lived in remote areas. Conversely, many service providers were not able to reach these areas.
- 2) **Protection:** over time, community volunteers trained to alert the organizations to cases of grave violations acquired a certain level of visibility within the community. While this visibility enables victims and families to easily reach out to volunteers and report incidents, it also puts volunteers at risk of threats or retaliation by armed actors. In extreme cases, relocation was necessary, which represented additional costs for the organization.


To address this challenge, an 'emergency fund' was built into all project budgets to cover costs directly associated with referrals and physical protection of individuals. Instructions and procedures for the use of the 'emergency fund' were composed and integrated into project funding agreements. They outline the general aims of the fund, as well as approval processes to be followed for certain costs. In order to allow organizations enough flexibility to decide on the use of the fund on a case-by-case basis, there is no list of eligible or ineligible costs, but rather general principles to guide decision-making:

- **Equity and non-discrimination:** the 'emergency fund' is limited. Organizations should manage it taking into account the timeframe and geographical range of the project and ensure that its allocation is equitable and non-discriminatory.

- **Expectation management:** the organization must avoid creating expectations among victims and their families that cannot be met. The child, the family and the community must understand that assistance is limited and exceptional.
- **Punctual use:** due to its limited capacity, the 'emergency fund' should not cover recurrent or continuous costs.
- **Exceptional use:** the 'emergency fund' should only be used if costs are unavoidable and if no other organization or person is able to cover them (in part or in their totality).

Some examples of costs covered by the 'emergency fund': transportation of a child to a provincial hospital for medical treatment, transportation of legal practitioners to a remote area to collect testimonies from communities affected by conflict violence, payment of living costs of a community monitor relocated to a provincial capital with the logistical assistance of peacekeeping forces due to imminent risk of personal retaliation by elements of a local armed group.

## related tools

-  [tool 40 – Self-assessment exercise 'Security risks when gathering information on grave violations'](#)



# tool 43 Facilitating UN Verification of Cases of Grave Violations

## Checklist

Information formally submitted to the Security Council must be UN-verified. For this reason, the UN may need to review documentation and cross-check information provided by NGOs, including through interviews with victims and witnesses. There are security, confidentiality and ethical aspects to take into consideration prior to UN verifications. NGOs who initially reported the case may want to ensure the following points are discussed and agreed upon with the MRM focal point prior to verification activities:

### Disclosure of information:

- Any disclosure of documentation or information for the purpose of UN verification is made in accordance with the confidentiality rules that were agreed upon by the source of that documentation or information.



### Re-interviewing:

- When possible, alternative means of verification could be identified to avoid re-interviewing victims or witnesses. In accordance with basic standards of practice, re-interviewing victims of violations should be avoided to prevent re-traumatization. This is particularly relevant for survivors of sexual violence.
- In case a re-interview by the UN is needed and does not pose a high risk of re-traumatization, confirm consent with the witness or victim in question. Consent given to your NGO for the first interview does not necessarily extend to the UN for a second interview.

### If a visit to the affected community or area is planned:

- Discuss the visit beforehand with the community to explain its purpose, assess expectations and any security risks that a UN visit might pose for the community.
- Advise the UN on appropriate measures to mitigate possible security risks for UN staff taking part in the visit, the community and your NGO (in particular if there are no other NGOs present in the area). This may include measures to reduce visibility (e.g., unmarked vehicles), alternative meeting venues, remote communication, etc.).
- Advise the UN on approaches needed to manage community expectations during and after the visit and devise a post-visit feedback plan.

## related tools

-  [tool 16 – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’](#)
-  [tool 26 – Checklist ‘Before you engage in the MRM’](#)



# tool 44 Using a Case Database

## Q&A

### Why use a case database?

A case database provides an overview of all cases monitored. It serves several purposes:

- 1) Case management: plan and track follow-up conducted or needed for each case.
- 2) Analysis and planning: over time, a database helps you understand patterns and trends in violations. This analysis can indicate areas and issues that need attention, an important baseline for future projects.
- 3) Monitoring and evaluation: identify changes and gaps that may require an adjustment in day-to-day activities. This will also help you draw best practices and lessons-learned.
- 4) Reporting and advocacy: generate graphics and charts for donor reports and advocacy materials.

### What information should be included and how should it be organized?

This depends on how you initially collect information and how you will use the database.

- See an annotated sample database.

### How can I analyze database information?

Using drop-down menus in the database allows you to easily extract and compare information:

- Filter cases by location and violation: this shows you if the number of violations has increased, decreased or fluctuated in an area over time. This can be useful for planning purposes and for impact monitoring.
- Filter cases by perpetrator and period: this can show you peaks in 'activity' and if they coincide with other major developments occurring at that time (e.g., elections, military offensive). This is useful information for prevention and advocacy.

- Filter and compare incident dates and reporting dates: this helps you spot victim outreach problems that require further investigation. A significant delay may indicate that victims find it hard to reach your organization. A sudden increase in delays may indicate that victims face new challenges to reach your organization.

Before drawing general conclusions, check other sources (e.g., peer organizations working in the same areas) to confirm if your analysis is correct.

## related tools

-  [tool 45 – Annotated sample case database](#)

## other resources

- *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*, Global Child Protection Working Group, 2012 – Standard 5 'Information Management'
- Child Protection Information Monitoring System: [www.childprotectionims.org](http://www.childprotectionims.org).



# tool 45

## Annotated Sample Case Database

### Case database

#### Sample case database for monitoring and reporting on grave violations

This tool provides a sample case database in Excel format that can be used to systematize the case information collected through monitoring.

- » **Note:** this sample assumes that full case information is collected and stored in a separate document (e.g. incident report, case intake form).

Click [here](#) to download the Excel document.

#### related tools

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[tool 44](#) – Q&A ‘Using a case database’



# tool 46 Information Management

## Factsheet

In order to protect the safety and privacy of victims and to mitigate risks for the organization's information, cases of grave violations must be handled with strict respect for confidentiality rules. This implies special precautions when collecting, storing and sharing such information.

### Security and confidentiality when collecting information

Assess your vulnerability to situations that may compromise your and your source's security and/or the confidentiality of information and select relevant mitigating steps according to the level of risk:

Risk	Level (high/medium/low)	Suggestions
Information may be overheard or relayed to persons who do not <i>need</i> to know it		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose an appropriate location if you are conducting interviews.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not discuss case information with or in front of people who do not <i>need</i> to know it (e.g., taxi or office drivers, cleaners and other support staff, colleagues from other projects or organizations, personal friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Avoid communicating sensitive information by phone if there is a risk your telephone may be tapped and use extreme caution when you must do so (e.g., using code words).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not leave case information in plain sight or in shared spaces.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Do not send case information through others, unless specifically allowed to do so.</li> </ul>
Information may be lost		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Always keep case information with you until you can store it.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Keep copies of case information in a safe place.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use codes for victim, monitor, location, violation and perpetrator.</li> </ul>
Information may be seized (arrest, roadblock, checkpoint)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use codes for case, victim, location, focal point, perpetrator.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> If there is an imminent or likely risk that information may be seized, limit yourself to oral exchanges and write the report later in a safe location.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write down only partial information and complete the full report as soon as possible in a safe location.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Be sure to know what to say and how to conduct yourself in a situation in which sensitive information may be seized (raid, arrest, roadblock, checkpoint).</li> </ul>
It may become known that the source provided information to your organization, which exposes him/her to harassment, retaliation or stigmatization		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose an appropriate location if you are conducting interviews and confirm if the source feels safe there.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Ensure that the victim or parent/guardian gives informed consent prior to an interview and knows how the information will be handled.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Maintain a low profile when conducting interviews</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate closely with the UN to ensure that verification missions do not attract undue attention to the source.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Identify partner organizations or entities able to provide physical protection to a victim/witness at risk (e.g., relocation) and discuss this option with the victim/witness.</li> </ul>
Other:		



## Security and confidentiality when storing information

Assess your vulnerabilities - how high are the following risks for your office/organization and select relevant mitigating steps according to the level of risk:

Risk	Level (high/medium/low)	Suggestions
Damage to premises (and documents) due to natural event/disaster		<input type="checkbox"/> Keep copies of electronic and paper files in a different location. <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce the amount of information you store in that location, for instance by archiving old files elsewhere (other office or overseas) every couple of years. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider storing all information elsewhere. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you list relevant steps in a contingency plan.
Searches/raids		<input type="checkbox"/> Reduce the amount of information you store in one location, for instance by archiving old files elsewhere (other office or overseas) every couple of years. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep copies of electronic and paper files in a different location. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider storing all information elsewhere. <input type="checkbox"/> Store hard copies in a discreet but safe place if you feel a locked cabinet would attract too much attention during a search/raid. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you list relevant steps in a contingency plan.
Robbery		<input type="checkbox"/> Store hard copies in a locked cabinet or in a discreet place if a locked cabinet would attract too much attention in a robbery. <input type="checkbox"/> Do not store files in valuable items (laptops) or make sure you remove the items from the premises at closing time. <input type="checkbox"/> Store electronic files in a mobile device that you can remove from the premises. <input type="checkbox"/> Destroy all files as last resort (deletion, shredding, incineration). <input type="checkbox"/> Assess office security and strengthen it if necessary. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep copies of electronic and paper files in a different location.
Sudden closure of premises due to impending attack		<input type="checkbox"/> Consider storing all information elsewhere. <input type="checkbox"/> Store electronic files in a mobile device that you can easily remove from the premises. <input type="checkbox"/> Remove files from the premises before closing the premises. <input type="checkbox"/> Destroy all files as last resort before closing the premises (deletion, shredding, incineration). <input type="checkbox"/> Keep copies of electronic and paper files in a different location. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure you list relevant steps in a contingency plan.
Electronic surveillance		<input type="checkbox"/> Password-protect or encrypt electronic files. <input type="checkbox"/> Change the passwords at irregular intervals. <input type="checkbox"/> Restrict the number of people allowed to access the information directly. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your computer has a functioning firewall.
<b>Other:</b>		

## Security and confidentiality when sharing information with MRM focal points

- Clarify the format and mode of communication: avoid sending sensitive information electronically or use caution if you must do so (firewalls do not protect documents sent out electronically): password-protect all documents and/or use a secure file-sharing platform.
- Clarify what information you can share with the MRM focal point and whether codes or code words will be used.





- Clarify who from your organization is authorized to provide information to the MRM focal point.
- Clarify who at the UN is the MRM focal point who will receive your information.
- Establish a confidence-based relationship with your MRM focal point.
- Clarify how the UN will manage information provided by your organization (where will it be stored, how will it be communicated within the MRM).
- Consider having a formal information sharing protocol with the UN detailing all the points above.

### Institutional documents and policies you may need to develop or adapt depending on how you participate in the MRM

Documents	Key points
Staff Code of Conduct (and implementation policy/protocol)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behavior when collecting sensitive information.</li> <li>• Behavior when discussing sensitive information.</li> <li>• Abidance by internal protocols and plans.</li> </ul>
Internal data protection protocol [See useful resources from the Child Protection Information Management System below]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who collects information?</li> <li>• How is information transferred from the field to the main office?</li> <li>• Who else can have access to information within the organization?</li> <li>• Who analyzes information?</li> <li>• Who communicates information to external actors?</li> <li>• What codes and code words are used?</li> <li>• Where is information saved and stored (paper, electronic)?</li> <li>• Who has access to passwords and keys?</li> <li>• Contingency plan for emergencies: what steps should be taken, who is responsible?</li> </ul>
Include information management in the organization's safety and security plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include preventative steps to store sensitive information safely.</li> <li>• Include a contingency plan to remove or dispose of sensitive information in the event of an emergency.</li> </ul>
Client information / consent form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give options for consent on how the information can be used and who can access it.</li> </ul>

### related tools

- [tool 45](#) – Annotated sample case database
- [tool 44](#) – Q&A 'Using a case database'
- [tool 29](#) – Checklist 'Confidentiality'
- [tool 30](#) – Checklist 'Informed consent'
- [tool 47](#) – Group exercise 'Confidentiality and information management'

### other resources

- *Child Protection Information Management System, Training Manual* (Template data protection protocol and data protection checklist) available at [www.childprotectionims.org](http://www.childprotectionims.org).
- *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*, Global Child Protection Working Group, 2012 – Standard 5 'Information Management'.
- *Security in a Box: Tools and Tactics for Your Digital Security*, Tactical Technology Collective and Front Line Defenders.
- *Workbook on Security: Practical Steps for Human Rights Defenders at Risk*, Front Line Defenders, 2011.



# tool 47 Confidentiality and Information Management

## Group exercise

Write each of the following actions on a Post-it and distribute the Post-its to participants (omit the colored boxes). On a wall or white board, make two sections 'Risk/breach of confidentiality' and 'respect for confidentiality'. Ask participants to read their Post-it and place it in what they think is the right section. Discuss any incorrect classifications or hesitations (gray boxes are risks/breaches). Refer to the Checklist 'Confidentiality' for guidance during the discussion.

Hard-copy case files are stored in a locked cabinet

Electronic case files are password-protected

You password-protect electronic files and store them on a USB stick that you keep in the office safe

You discuss a case of violation with your brother who works as an accountant for the UN

You always obtain informed consent from the child/parent/guardian before interviewing

When you report cases to the MRM focal point, you ask for a meeting and take all relevant files with you on a USB stick

You discuss details of cases of violations at a child protection working group meeting

You filled out several incident report forms today and left them on your desk at the office

You include photos of child victims of violations in your donor reports

You tell a girl's uncle, who is also a community leader, that she was raped by a soldier

You avoid sending confidential files via email, but when you do, you make sure all files are password-protected

You discuss a case of violation with your colleague in the car. The car is driven by the office driver

You are interviewing a child victim of a violation in an open area at the office

You post the photo of a child victim of violation on your organization's website

You ask a colleague from another program to take incident reports to the office and give them to your boss so he can store them safely

You use codes instead of victims' names when you transcribe case information to a database



# reporting grave violations

This section contains three tools outlining available avenues to report cases of grave violations and gives guidance on how to transmit information.

## List of tools in this section:

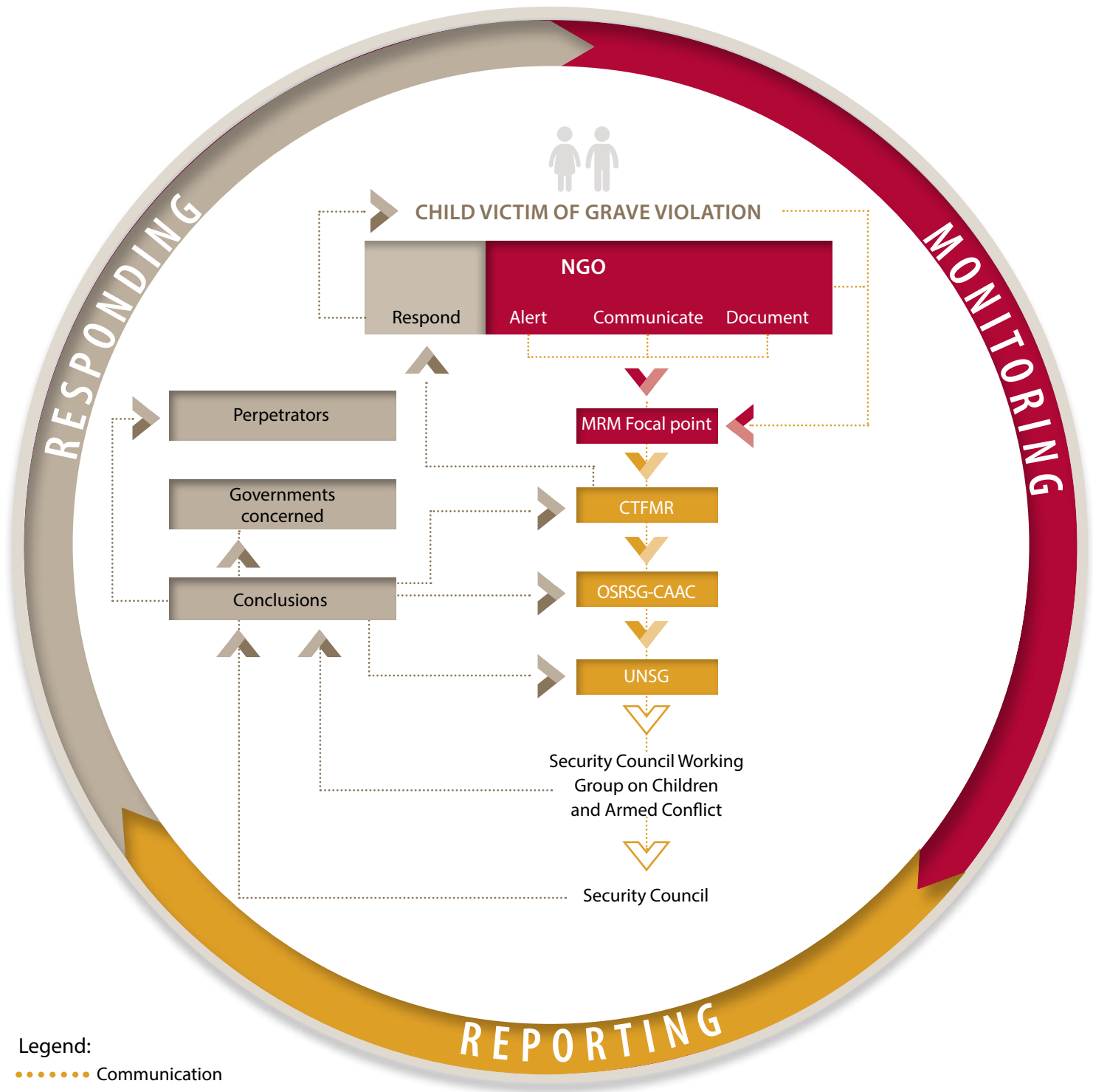
tool 48 – Communication flow in MRM countries

tool 49 – Communication flow in non-MRM countries

tool 50 – Factsheet ‘Other avenues to report grave violations’



# tool 48 Communication Flow in MRM Countries

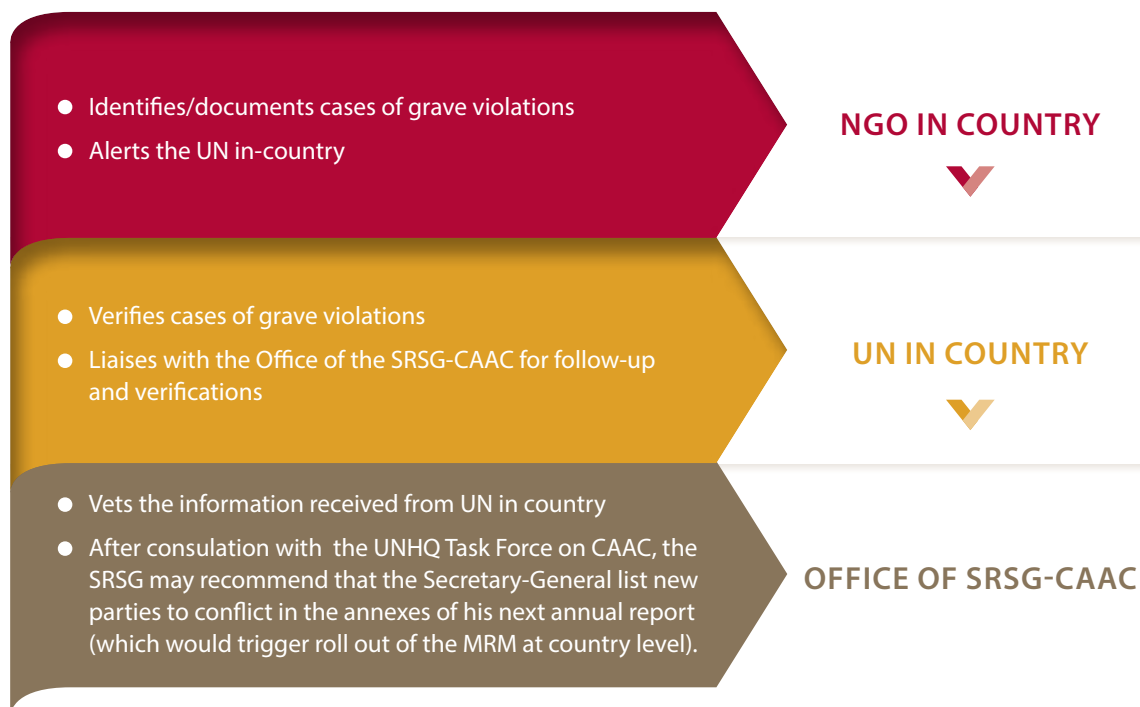




# tool 49

## Communication Flow in NON-MRM Countries

In countries where no parties to an existing or a new conflict have yet been listed, the MRM is not in place and the ability to collect the information on grave violations is therefore more limited. While the UN country team has human rights monitoring capacity to build the evidence necessary for listing, NGOs may play a significant role by preparing reports specifically looking at the situation of children and raising the profile of trigger violations to inform the listing process.



» **Note:** parties to conflict can only be listed for the so-called 'trigger violations' (recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals).

### related tools

- [tool 9](#) – Factsheet 'Listing and de-listing of parties to conflict'
- [tool 1](#) – Glossary of terms on the MRM



# tool 50 Other Avenues to Report Grave Violations

## Factsheet

The MRM is not the only avenue for NGOs to report violations against children by armed actors. Depending on the country, the following alternative/additional **international mechanisms** may be of interest:

Entity/Mechanism	What can be reported	Pre-conditions	When to report and how	Possible outcome	Further information for NGOs
<b>Treaty monitoring bodies:</b> <b>Committee on the Rights of the Child (monitors CRC and OPAC implementation)</b> <b>Human Rights Committee (monitors ICCPR implementation)</b> <b>Committee against Torture (monitors CAT implementation)</b>	Violations of the relevant convention.	Country must have ratified the convention.	Every state party must submit to the Committee official reports on the status of implementation of the Convention/ Protocol on a regular basis. NGOs can submit 'shadow reports' to the Committee ahead of the examination of the country's official report.	NGO submissions are formally taken into account during the review process. At the end of the process the Committee issues 'Concluding observations'. This document outlines concrete actions the country must take and report on in the following cycle. It is therefore an important document for future advocacy and action for NGOs at country level.	Simple Guide to the UN treaty-based bodies, ISHR (2010).
<b>Individual complaints/ communication procedures:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committee on the Rights of the Child</li> <li>• Human Rights Committee</li> <li>• Committee against Torture</li> </ul>	Individual cases of violations falling under the mandate of the relevant Committee.	Country must be a party to the treaty and recognize the competence of the relevant Committee.  Exhaustion of domestic remedies.	As soon as possible after exhaustion of domestic remedies.	Committees may initiate inquiries into the situation in a state party, provided it has recognized the competence of the relevant Committee in this regard.	Procedure for individual communications.  FAQs about treaty bodies complaints procedures.



(cont'd)

Entity/Mechanism	What can be reported	Pre-conditions	When to report and how	Possible outcome	Further information for NGOs
<p><b>Communications to Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council (thematic and country mandates)</b></p> <p>Of particular relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sp. Rapp. on torture</li> <li>• Sp. Rapp. on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence</li> <li>• Sp. Rapp. on Violence against women</li> <li>• Sp. Rapp. on right to education</li> <li>• Working Group on arbitrary detention</li> <li>• Sp. Rapp. on the situation of human rights defenders (for issues concerning protection of NGOs engaged in monitoring/ reporting violations)</li> <li>• Country mandates (e.g., Central African Republic; Mali; Myanmar; Somalia; Sudan; Syria)</li> </ul>	Violations falling under the mandate of the relevant special procedure.	None	Any time, following the required procedure for each mandate. Communications may be submitted regardless of whether domestic remedies have been exhausted.	<p>Country visits/bilateral advocacy to push for preventive or investigative action to be taken.</p> <p>Note: all mandate holders are required to submit a 'communications report', which includes a short summary of all cases received through the Communications Procedure.</p>	Instructions for submitting information to special procedures.
<b>Human Rights Council (HRC)</b>	Any violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms.	<p><b>Universal Periodic Review (UPR):</b> none</p> <p><b>Complaints mechanism:</b> exhaustion of domestic remedies; cases must not have been already dealt with by a special procedure or treaty body (principle of non-duplication).</p>	<p><b>UPR:</b> all UN member states are subject to a regular UPR by the HRC. The UPR is a peer review process in which all countries can discuss and make recommendations to the country under review. NGOs may submit information to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) as 'other stakeholder', ahead of the UPR session where the country is being reviewed. NGOs may also make a statement directly at the HRC in-person.</p>	<p><b>UPR:</b> NGO submissions are compiled by the OHCHR and are included in the set of documents being officially examined in each session. The outcome of each UPR session is the adoption of a report containing all issues and recommendations raised. The country under review must publicly accept or reject each of these recommendations. The country must report on the status of implementation of recommendations in its following review cycle.</p>	<p><b>UPR:</b></p> <p>Calendar of sessions</p> <p>Instructions for submissions</p> <p><b>Complaints mechanism:</b></p> <p>Procedure for complaints</p>




(cont'd)

Entity/Mechanism	What can be reported	Pre-conditions	When to report and how	Possible outcome	Further information for NGOs
Human Rights Council (HRC) (cont'd)			<b>HRC Complaints Mechanism:</b> communications by individuals, groups or NGOs that claim to be victims of/ have credible information on patterns of gross human rights violations. Complaints may be submitted against any country, regardless of whether it has ratified any particular treaty.	<b>HRC Complaints Mechanism:</b> complaints considered admissible may result in requests for information/action by the concerned state and continued dialogue, appointment of an independent expert to monitor the situation, provision of technical advice to the concerned state in order to address the situation.	

**Other avenues to report grave violations at national level:**

- National judicial system.
- National human rights institutions: individuals (Ombudsmen) or entities (Commissions) that investigate, promote and protect human rights. The degree of independence of these institutions depends on national laws and contexts. The UN conducts reviews of national human rights institutions. Ratings and review schedules can be consulted here.
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights at country level.
- Government entities dealing with victim assistance and protection.

## related tools

-  [tool 23 – Factsheet ‘Mapping relevant international obligations of your country of operation’](#)





# linking monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations

**This section contains 12 tools about ways to strengthen links between monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations against children. Response is interpreted here as referral to service providers and advocacy.**

## **List of tools in this section:**

tool 51 – Factsheet ‘Linking monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations’

tool 52 – Factsheet ‘The MRM and the cluster system’

tool 53 – Guiding questions ‘Mapping service providers and identifying referral pathways’

tool 54 – Case study ‘Emergency fund for referrals in Eastern DRC’

tool 55 – Guiding questions ‘Planning advocacy on the grave violations’

tool 56 – Case study ‘Options for local advocacy in Eastern DRC’

tool 57 – Case study ‘Responding through advocacy: ad-hoc release of children in Eastern DRC’

tool 58 – Case study ‘Community engagement in prevention of recruitment and protection of children at risk in Colombia’

tool 59 – Factsheet ‘Engagement with armed non-state actors on the protection of children’

tool 60 – Checklist ‘Mainstreaming child protection in peace processes’

tool 61 – Practice standards in children’s participation (Save the Children Alliance)

tool 62 – Case study ‘Child-led advocacy in Colombia’



# tool 51 Linking Monitoring, Prevention and Response to Grave Violations

## Factsheet

The collection of information about protection concerns should systematically trigger or inform prevention and response activities; this is a basic professional standard for all humanitarian actors<sup>12</sup>. Some NGOs engaged in the MRM may themselves be implementing specific response programs for children affected by war, others may not. Regardless of their programmatic activities, the table below shows steps that organizations can consider as a follow-up to cases of violations they come across, depending on the type of engagement they have in the MRM and on the security environment in which they operate.

Follow-up step	What it means	General aims	Examples of potential outcomes	Most relevant for what grave violation(s)?
<b>Referral</b>	Linking victims/relatives with a service provider that can respond to their needs. Typically, victims of grave violations are referred to medical and trauma care, psycho-social support and legal assistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Care/assistance.</li> <li>Reintegration.</li> <li>Accountability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Victim gets medical or psychological care.</li> <li>Victim or relatives get legal redress.</li> <li>Victim gets support to resume his/her 'normal' life.</li> </ul>	Maiming; rape and sexual violence; recruitment and use; abduction.
<b>Advocacy</b>	<p>Discussing how to address a particular situation or problem with armed actors and/or authorities, as well as with actors who may influence or have leverage with them.</p> <p>Discussing assistance needs of children affected by armed conflict and mobilizing financial support for response programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with an obligation.</li> <li>Accountability.</li> <li>Prevention of violations.</li> <li>Improved response/services for children in conflict.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Armed actor changes or stops a harmful practice (e.g., vacates a school, allows humanitarian access, releases children in its ranks).</li> <li>Authorities take proactive action to respond to violations and protect children (e.g., investigations and prosecutions of perpetrators; release of children detained for association with armed groups or application of juvenile justice standards in the event of a prosecution; adoption of child protection-related policies, legislation or services).</li> <li>Donors increase support to response programs for children affected by the conflict.</li> </ul>	All six grave violations (individually or as a whole).

<sup>12</sup> See *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*, Child Protection Working Group, 2012 (Standard 6 – Child Protection) and *Professional Standards of Protection Work Carried Out by Humanitarian and Human Rights Actors in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*, ICRC, 2013



(cont'd)

Follow-up step	What it means	General aims	Examples of potential outcomes	Most relevant for what grave violation(s)?
<b>Awareness-raising</b>	Sensitizing children, communities, child-minders, armed actors or authorities to the risks and impact of armed conflict on children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confidence-building.</li> <li>Prevention of violations.</li> <li>Reintegration.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voluntary association of children with armed actors is prevented.</li> <li>Dialogue is established with armed actors and they adopt tactics and practices that prevent violations.</li> <li>Communities offer a supportive environment for survivors of rape and sexual violence and for children formerly associated with armed forces and groups.</li> </ul>	Attacks on schools and hospitals; denial of humanitarian assistance; rape and sexual violence; recruitment and use of children.

## related tools

- tool 53** – Guiding questions ‘Mapping service providers and identifying referral pathways’
- tool 57** – Case study ‘Responding through advocacy: ad-hoc release of children in Eastern DRC’
- tool 54** – Case study ‘Emergency fund for referrals in Eastern DRC’
- tool 55** – Guiding questions ‘Planning advocacy on the grave violations’



# tool 52 The MRM and the Cluster System

## Factsheet

This factsheet summarizes relevant findings of the MRM global good practices study, UNICEF.

In emergency contexts, 'clusters' bring together humanitarian actors (UN and NGOs) operating in the same sector to ensure coordinated needs assessments, planning, service delivery and advocacy. Of particular relevance for the MRM are the following clusters:

- Protection (led by UNHCR); and its child protection working groups (led by UNICEF). In addition, it might also be useful to follow closely on the gender based violence working group (led by UNFPA-UNICEF).
- Education (led by UNICEF and Save the Children).
- Health (led by WHO).

Collaboration between the MRM and clusters has been articulated in various ways depending on the contexts:

- Training of cluster members on the MRM.
- Inclusion of the MRM as a standing or recurring agenda item in cluster meetings.
- Participation of cluster coordinators in CTFMRs.
- Written documents outlining mutual roles, responsibilities and communication flows between clusters and the CTFMR.

### MRM Information Management System (IMS) used to inform programmatic response in Afghanistan

In Afghanistan, the MRM IMS served to inform program planning. MRM data analysis on killing and maiming of children through mines and UXOs revealed that a high percentage of the casualties were boys aged 9 to 14 years old who were out of school and who engaged in metal scrubbing for income generation, mainly in the eastern and southern regions. A mine-risk education project is being planned to reach out to this vulnerable group that had previously not been specifically targeted by such existing programs.

### Education cluster participation in the MRM in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Particularly since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1998, the education clusters have begun to take a more active role in collecting and reporting information on attacks on schools to CTFs. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, for example, the education cluster coordinator is a member of the CTF and has organized trainings on the MRM for cluster members. This has worked especially well where the MRM is seen as adding value for the cluster, such as in Dungu (Democratic Republic of the Congo), where the MRM provided a platform from which the cluster advocated against the military use of schools. The education cluster coordinator was instrumental in ensuring the inclusion of MRM reporting in the Humanitarian Action Plan in the country.

*MRM global good practices study, UNICEF, June 2014*



## Benefits of a collaboration between the MRM and the cluster system:

### Benefits for the MRM:

- Stronger link between monitoring and response.
- Linking with clusters expands the reach of the MRM: due to their wide membership, clusters that are well informed about the MRM may lead more organizations to provide alerts or information about cases.

### Benefits for the cluster system:

- MRM data can help trigger and plan programmatic response.
- MRM data can strengthen clusters' advocacy efforts (fundraising and protection/accountability).

### Boundaries:

The sensitive nature of grave violations and the need to ensure confidentiality and security of MRM information may be a challenge when it comes to collaboration with the cluster system. The presence of government representatives in some clusters may limit the ability of organizations to discuss MRM-related issues. Moreover, in some contexts, agencies prefer to focus on service delivery and maintain a distance from monitoring and advocacy in order to safeguard their ability to operate. In such cases, collaboration may be limited to programmatic response and sharing of analysis.



# tool 53 Mapping Service Providers and Identifying Referral Pathways

## Guiding questions

Organizations that come across victims of grave violations, whether through monitoring or other activities, benefit from mapping available service providers in the area and clarifying how to refer children to assistance if needed. When mapping service providers, and in order to gather basic referral information for victims, organizations may want to consider the following questions:

Type of assistance	Location/area covered by the service provider	Name of service provider and contact point	Admission/intake process	Access/outreach	Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medical care</li> <li>• Legal assistance or representation</li> <li>• Psychological counseling</li> <li>• Psycho-social assistance</li> <li>• Vocational training</li> <li>• Physical protection</li> </ul> <p>If relevant, specify if the assistance concerns a particular type of violation (e.g., rape; reintegration of former child soldiers, etc.).</p>		Specify if it is a governmental, private or humanitarian service provider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a selection/prioritization of care beneficiaries?</li> <li>• If so, what are the criteria?</li> <li>• How long does the admission/intake process take?</li> <li>• What information and documentation would a child victim need to provide for admission/intake?</li> <li>• Is this information kept confidential or does it need to be shared with other entities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can the service provider go to the victim or does the victim need to go to the service provider?</li> <li>• If the service provider is mobile (e.g., mobile clinics), what is the schedule and route?</li> <li>• What are the possible obstacles limiting beneficiaries' access to referral services? If services are available, why would they not seek assistance?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would the service imply any costs for the victim (e.g., medicine, administrative/court fees, etc.).</li> </ul>

## related tools

[tool 51](#) – Factsheet 'Linking monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations'

[tool 54](#) – Case study 'Emergency fund for referrals in Eastern DRC'



# tool 54 Emergency Fund for Referrals in Eastern DRC

## Case study

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict has partnerships with several national NGOs in eastern DRC that monitor and report on grave violations in the framework of the MRM through a network of trained community volunteers. As part of these partnership projects, NGOs map service providers in their area of operation, establish relevant contacts and set up referral pathways for medical, psychosocial and legal assistance to victims. Two main challenges were identified at the very onset of these projects:

- 1) **Referrals:** while organizations knew who to refer victims to, it was sometimes difficult for victims to physically reach service providers when they lived in remote areas. Conversely, many service providers were not able to reach these areas.
- 2) **Protection:** over time, community volunteers trained to alert the organizations to cases of grave violations acquired a certain level of visibility within the community. While this visibility enables victims and families to easily reach out to volunteers and report incidents, it also puts volunteers at risk of threats or retaliation by armed actors. In extreme cases, relocation was necessary, which represented additional costs for the organization.


To address this challenge, an 'emergency fund' was built into all project budgets to cover costs directly associated with referrals and physical protection of individuals. Instructions and procedures for the use of the 'emergency fund' were composed and integrated into project funding agreements. They outline the general aims of the fund, as well as approval processes to be followed for certain costs. In order to allow organizations enough flexibility to decide on the use of the fund on a case-by-case basis, there is no list of eligible or ineligible costs, but rather general principles to guide decision-making:

- **Equity and non-discrimination:** the 'emergency fund' is limited. Organizations should manage it taking into account the timeframe and geographical range of the project and ensure that its allocation is equitable and non-discriminatory.

- **Expectation management:** the organization must avoid creating expectations that cannot be met among victims and their families. The child, the family and the community must understand that assistance is limited and exceptional.
- **Punctual use:** due to its limited capacity, the 'emergency fund' should not cover recurrent or continuous costs.
- **Exceptional use:** the 'emergency fund' should only be used if costs are unavoidable and if no other organization or person is able to cover them (in part or in their totality).

Some examples of costs covered by the 'emergency fund': transportation of a child to a provincial hospital for medical treatment, transportation of legal practitioners to a remote area to collect testimonies from communities affected by conflict violence, payment of living costs of a community monitor relocated to a provincial capital with the logistical assistance of peacekeeping forces due to imminent risk of personal retaliation by elements of a local armed group.

## related tools

-  **tool 53** – Guiding questions 'Mapping service providers and identifying referral pathways'



# tool 55 Planning Advocacy on the Grave Violations

## Guiding questions

Advocacy, whether at the local, national or international level, is a way to respond to concerns and needs of victims of grave violations. Depending on the type of engagement in the MRM, on the capacity of the organization and on the level of visibility that the organization is willing to accept, the following are some guiding questions that may be useful when planning advocacy action:

Questions		Examples
<b>What?</b>	What do we want to achieve concretely?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• End a violation in a particular case (e.g., opening humanitarian access).</li> <li>• Change a practice or policy that is allowing violations to happen (e.g., active recruitment of children).</li> <li>• Call for a particular practice or policy that would prevent future violations (e.g., standard operating procedures to protect and/or deal with children during hostilities, zero tolerance policy on sexual violence).</li> <li>• Help victim claim a right (e.g., child-friendly procedure for children in violation/with the law).</li> <li>• Accountability/punishment.</li> </ul>
<b>Why?</b>	<p>What rules, laws, standards and commitments can we rely on to back-up our request?</p> <p>What evidence can we use to justify our request?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policies, procedures and commitments adopted/endorsed by the armed actor:</b> standard operating procedures, peace agreements, public declarations, Action Plans, Deeds of Commitment.</li> <li>• <b>National legal provisions</b> relative to the protection of children in conflict.</li> <li>• <b>International instruments (binding and non-binding) relative to the protection of children in armed conflict:</b> humanitarian law, human rights law, Paris Principles and Commitments (children associated with armed forces/groups), <i>Lucens Guidelines</i> (military use of schools), Security Council Resolutions, Security Council 'Conclusions' on the country.</li> <li>• <b>Governmental policies and procedures.</b></li> <li>• Specific case of violation (with informed consent and in accordance with the confidentiality rules agreed upon with the victim).</li> <li>• Prevalence, patterns and trends in violations observed through monitoring.</li> <li>• Secretary-General's reports on children and armed conflict (annual and country-specific).</li> </ul>
<b>Who?</b>	<p><b>Who is the target?</b></p> <p>This can include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) the person/entity that must change their practice/behavior.</li> <li>2) person/entity who has a duty to ensure the respect for the right we want to see realized.</li> <li>3) person/entity that has influence or leverage on any of the former.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Armed group, armed forces, judicial authorities, law enforcement authorities, government entities/representatives, parents/communities.</li> <li>2) Relevant government entity; individual at the top of the chain of command or hierarchy.</li> <li>3) Legal or administrative oversight entities, embassies/diplomatic representatives, international high profile individuals, community leaders, religious leaders, education or medical personnel, media.</li> </ol>





(cont'd)

Questions	Examples
<p><b>How?</b></p> <p>Should the action be discreet or public? Will the action be taken at the local, national or international level?</p> <p>In what format will we conduct the advocacy action?</p>	<p><b>Discreet:</b> limited exposure for the organization but higher vulnerability for the individual carrying out the advocacy, more space for negotiation and dialogue but less pressure for the target to act.</p> <p><b>Public:</b> more pressure and scrutiny on the advocacy target, more exposure but also more protection for the organization, limited space for negotiation and dialogue.</p> <p>Letter, meeting, series of meetings, report, submission of information, media communication, campaign, etc.</p> <p>Think of how formal the interaction should be.</p>
<p><b>When?</b></p> <p>Are there any dates, moments or events particularly relevant for this advocacy action?</p>	<p><b>Signature/adoption of new instruments:</b> adoption of new legislation or policies strengthening the protection of children, ratification of treaties relative to the protection of children in armed conflict, ceasefire, peace agreement, Action Plan, Deed of Commitment.</p> <p><b>Anniversaries or celebratory dates:</b> anniversaries of the signature of new instruments (see above), international children's day, 'red hand' day,<sup>13</sup> etc.</p> <p><b>Release of a report:</b> by your organization, by the Secretary-General, by treaty bodies or special procedures.</p> <p><b>Discussion of the situation of children in the armed conflict in international fora:</b> Security Council, Human Rights Council, treaty bodies, International Criminal Court.</p> <p><b>High-profile visits:</b> national government officials, foreign government officials, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict, UN Special Rapporteurs, Special Envoys (UN, European Union, African Union), UN Commissions of Inquiry, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Determine when exactly to intervene in order to take advantage of any of these dates/events/moments (e.g., meeting high-profile visitors on arrival, submitting information to international fora prior to discussions.)</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Allies?</b></p> <p>Can we rely on 'allies' to help us pass a message to the advocacy target?</p> <p>Could any of these 'allies' affect our neutrality and independence or our reputation in the eyes of the advocacy target?</p> <p>Is the advocacy approach of a potential 'ally' compatible with our approach?</p>	<p>'Allies' can include: UN MRM focal point, other NGOs, the CTFMR, diplomatic representatives, donors, high-profile visitors (see above).</p>
<p><b>Entry points?</b></p> <p>To what issues are the advocacy targets sensitive to and on which can we expect openness and cooperation?</p>	<p>Compliance with legal obligations and political commitments taken publicly, political legitimacy and credibility, reputation (internal or external), community support, legacy, professionalism, etc.</p>

<sup>13</sup> Red Hand Day, February 12 each year, is an annual commemoration day on which pleas are made to political leaders and events are staged around the world to draw attention to the fates of child soldiers



(cont'd)

Questions		Examples
<b>'Sticky' points?</b>	On what issues can we expect resistance or opposition from advocacy targets?	Allegations of grave violations, credibility of the source of these allegations, allegations of inaction or slow reaction, relevance of internationally-agreed upon standards, foreign interference, past interactions between the advocacy target and your organization (or organizations similar to you) that may not have had a positive outcome, etc.
<b>Security?</b>	<p>Can the action be carried out without raising additional security risks for victims, communities, organization staff or the organization as a whole?</p> <p>Are there any precautions that need to be taken to mitigate those risks?</p> <p>In the case of advocacy linked to individual case follow-up: does the victim concerned consent to advocacy action being taken on his/her case?</p>	<p>Exposure to stigma or retaliation, misinterpretation or politicization of our advocacy message by others (armed actors, communities, authorities) impacting existing relationships, etc.</p> <p>Special safeguards for children, in particular if they are actively involved in the advocacy action.</p>

## related tools

-  [tool 5](#) – International legal foundation of the six grave violations
-  [tool 23](#) – Factsheet 'Mapping relevant international obligations of your country of operation'
-  [tool 24](#) – Guiding questions 'Mapping national provisions that protect children in conflict in your country of operation'
-  [tool 22](#) – Guiding questions 'Stakeholder analysis'
-  [tool 50](#) – Factsheet 'Other avenues to report grave violations'
-  [tool 56](#) – Case study 'Options for local advocacy in Eastern DRC'
-  [tool 57](#) – Case study 'Responding through advocacy: ad-hoc release of children in Eastern DRC'
-  [tool 61](#) – 'Practice standards in children's participation' (Save the Children Alliance)
-  [tool 62](#) – Case study 'Child-led advocacy in Colombia'

## other resources

- *Humanitarian Negotiation: A Handbook for Securing Access, Assistance and Protection for Civilians in Armed Conflict*, Deborah Mancini-Griffoli and Andre Picot, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2004.
- *Guidelines on Humanitarian Negotiations with Armed Groups*, Gerard McHugh and Manuel Bessler, United Nations, 2006.
- *Humanitarian negotiations with Armed Groups – A Manual for Practitioners*, Gerard McHugh and Manuel Bessler, United Nations, 2006.
- *Engaging Armed Non-state Actors on Humanitarian Norms: Reflections on Geneva Call's Experience*, Pascal Bongard, Humanitarian Practice Network - Humanitarian Exchange Magazine - Issue 58, July 2013.
- *Building Respect for Humanitarian Action and IHL among 'Other' Weapon Bearers*, ICRC, Overview.
- *Draft Lucens Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict*, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2013.
- *Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces and Armed Groups*, February 2007.



# tool 56 Options for Local Advocacy in Eastern DRC

## Case study

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict partner organizations in Eastern DRC document cases of grave violations and report them to the MRM. In a joint workshop, they listed local advocacy actions they typically take in follow-up to cases of violation, in their specific context of operation:

Situation	Action	Target	Allies
<b>Recruitment and use of children</b>	Sensitizing armed actors on the prohibition of child recruitment.  Advocacy for the release of children and reintegration, preferably in the family/community.	Local commander and higher chain of command.	Community leaders, MRM focal point, ICRC <sup>14</sup>  Coordination of releases: UENPDDR <sup>15</sup> , MRM focal point, organizations running transit centers.
<b>Voluntary association of children with armed groups</b>	Sensitizing children and communities on the prohibition of child recruitment and on the importance of keeping children in civilian life.	Families  Children (in particular children at risk, such as out-of-school children, street children).  Local commander and higher chain of command.	Teachers, community leaders.
<b>Arrest and detention of a child by the armed forces due to his/her former association with an armed group</b>	Advocacy for the release of the child.  If a criminal investigation is in progress, advocacy for respect of juvenile justice procedures and standards, for instance transfer the case to a 'Peace Tribunal' ('tribunal de paix').	Military jurisdiction  Peace Tribunal ('tribunal de paix').	Legal aid organizations, MRM focal point.
<b>Occupation, attack or destruction of a school by armed forces or armed group</b>	Advocate with the armed actor so that they vacate the premises.  Sensitize the armed actor on the importance of preserving the civilian nature of schools.	Local commander and higher chain of command.	Community leaders, MRM focal point, ICRC.

<sup>14</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross

<sup>15</sup> Government agency mandated to coordinate demobilizations in DRC





## TOOL 56

(cont'd)

Situation	Action	Target	Allies
<b>Threats against medical or educational personnel by an armed actor</b>	<p>Mediate the conflict and end the threat.</p> <p>Identify practical measures to protect the individual, if imminent risk.</p>	<p>Individual making the threat (if known); local commander and/or higher chain of command.</p> <p>MONUSCO,<sup>16</sup> ICRC, other international agencies.</p>	<p>Community leaders, other medical and educational personnel.</p>
<b>Denial of humanitarian access</b>	<p>Advocacy to secure access.</p>	<p>Local commander and/or higher chain of command.</p>	<p>MONUSCO, OCHA<sup>17</sup>, ICRC, clusters.</p>
<b>Rape and sexual violence by armed actors</b>	<p>Advocacy for immediate arrest of perpetrators (if known).</p> <p>Sensitizing communities about the rights of sexual violence survivors in order to reduce stigmatization.</p> <p>Sensitizing communities to the assistance and care available for survivors of sexual violence in order to encourage survivors to seek assistance as soon as possible.</p>	<p>Military jurisdiction.</p> <p>Communities.</p> <p>Communities, in particular women's groups.</p>	<p>Legal aid organizations, MRM focal point.</p> <p>Women's organizations.</p>
<b>Threats against individuals involved in monitoring grave violations</b>	<p>Mediate the conflict and end the threat.</p> <p>Relocate the individual, if imminent risk.</p>	<p>Individual making the threat (if known); local commander and/or higher chain of command.</p>	<p>Community leaders.</p>

## related tools:

-  **tool 55** – Guiding questions 'Planning advocacy on the grave violations'
-  **tool 57** – Case study 'Responding through advocacy: ad-hoc release of children in Eastern DRC'

<sup>16</sup> UN peacekeeping mission in DRC

<sup>17</sup> UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs



# tool 57 Responding Through Advocacy: Ad-Hoc Release of Children in Eastern DRC

## Case study

In July 2012, 33 children were released from a breakaway faction of an armed group active in the eastern province of South Kivu, DRC. The children had been with the group for two to three months.

The separation was made possible after a community child protection committee established a dialogue with the armed group, which had been recruiting children between the ages of 14 and 17 among its own ethnic community for some time. The community committee had received training on Security Council Resolution 1612 and been coached on awareness-raising and local advocacy initiatives by a national NGO that acts as the 1612 focal point in that region.

When the armed group eventually agreed to release the children, the community alerted the NGO, which then organized a mission to the area together with MONUSCO (the peace-keeping mission in DRC) and a representative from a transit center for former child soldiers in the provincial capital, Bukavu. The joint efforts of these actors enabled 22 children to immediately re-join their families in the area. The armed group was operating in a remote location, which constituted a challenge for the removal of the remaining 11 children whose families did not live in the immediate area or had not yet been traced. With the logistical support of a MONUSCO helicopter, the remaining children were safely transferred to the transit center in Bukavu, where they received further psychosocial support and vocational training while waiting to be re-integrated into a family setting.

In a context like DRC, ad-hoc demobilizations like these are not unusual and typically result from local advocacy conducted by communities, civil society or UN actors. This example demonstrates how local advocacy combined with an adequate follow-up mechanism can lead to tangible results for children victims of grave violations.

## related tools

 [tool 51 – Factsheet ‘Linking, monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations’](#)



# tool 58 Community Engagemet in Prevention of Recruitment and Protection of Children at Risk in Colombia

## Case study

A civil society network actively engaged in the MRM in Colombia launched an initiative called 'Prevention School' which aims to strengthen the capacity of local actors and communities to identify and protect children at risk of recruitment by armed actors. The initiative builds both on existing community coping mechanisms and on institutional structures set in place to protect children at risk. The 'Prevention School' has two pillars: 1) training and 2) protection.

### 1) Training component:

Child-minders such as teachers, parents, community members, as well as local welfare officials were identified as key target groups for prevention activities, as they are best placed to identify children at risk and intervene to prevent recruitment and protect the child. The NGO developed a dedicated training manual for child-minders that highlights the legal, conceptual and institutional framework for child protection (and for the prevention of child recruitment in particular), as well as a means of identifying children at risk and recommendations for action.

### 2) Protection component:

Children identified as being at imminent risk of recruitment can be protected through temporary relocation. In cases where there is no alternative, children can be relocated to a government-run institution in the capital, Bogotá, but preference is given to relocations within the same family or community. In fact, in communities in which the concept of collective responsibility is particularly strong, children can be relocated anywhere within the community, rather than within the limits of their biological family. For instance in the department of Cauca, in the southwestern part of Colombia, the association of indigenous leaders ('cabildos') plays a pivotal role in facilitating and overseeing the relocation of indigenous children at risk from one area of the department to another, placing them under the responsibility of the indigenous authority.

## related tools

-  [tool 51 – Factsheet 'Linking, monitoring prevention and response to grave violations'](#)



# tool 59 Engagement with Armed Non-State Actors on the protection of children

## Factsheet

Armed non-state actors (ANSAs) play a central role in contemporary armed conflicts. Engaging with ANSAs to comply with international norms on the protection of children is therefore a critical element in any effort to mitigate the impact of conflict on children. However, engagement with ANSAs often remains inadequate and, in some contexts, is actively discouraged or prohibited by states.

Undeniably, the UN-led MRM offers a strong opportunity for systematic engagement with ANSAs to negotiate compliance with international norms on the protection of children. The UN has the mandate to engage in dialogue with all actors, including ANSAs, listed for grave violations against children in the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict. The purpose of the engagement with listed parties is to negotiate time-bound Action Plans to end and prevent violations for which they were listed.<sup>18</sup> Listed parties must comply with the terms of the Action Plan to be removed from the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict.

The "naming and shaming" approach offers a significant reputational incentive for violators to negotiate Action Plans, particularly those that are seeking political legitimacy. Yet the MRM also faces significant challenges, including the reluctance of some governments to grant access to UN agencies, lack of incentive or political will by ANSAs to engage with the UN and difficulties in identifying a clear chain of command and leadership. The political nature of the mechanism may also antagonize some ANSAs which are reluctant to engage in a process they perceive as biased or partial.

In those circumstances, NGOs offer an alternative forum for dialogue with ANSAs on the protection of children.

### Complementary role of NGOs in engaging with ANSAs

To the extent that they are perceived as removed from the interests attributed to states and international organizations, the independence of NGOs can increase their credibility among some ANSAs.

NGOs, especially local groups working on long-term community-based programming, may have developed the knowledge, relationships and access necessary to better design a more targeted engagement strategy with ANSAs. They may have a more developed understanding of the interests and ideology influencing an armed group's ability or willingness to comply with norms on the protection of children. Their understanding of the structure and modes of operation of the ANSA may also allow them to identify more easily the appropriate "gatekeeper" or entry point to initiate dialogue with the most suitable interlocutor.

NGOs also tend to be small in size with a more informal organizational structure that allows them to be flexible in their engagement. They may be able to access remote locations which many international organizations cannot reach. Finally, some NGO leaders may gain legitimacy in the eyes of ANSA leadership based on individual reputation and personal integrity.

<sup>18</sup> United Nations Security Council resolution 1539 (2004) on children and armed conflict, April 22, 2004, para. 5(b).



## Case study: The Experience of Geneva Call

Geneva Call is a Swiss-based NGO dedicated to promoting ANSA compliance with international humanitarian norms. The key tool of engagement that Geneva Call uses is an innovative instrument, the *Deed of Commitment*, which allows ANSAs, as they cannot become parties to international treaties, to publicly commit to respect these norms and be held accountable for their pledge. To date, Geneva Call has developed three such documents: the *Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action* in 2000, the *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict* in 2010 and the *Deed of Commitment for the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination* in 2012. The *Deeds of Commitment* reflect international standards. They are signed by the ANSA leadership and countersigned by Geneva Call and the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva, which serves as custodian of the deposited documents. Geneva Call supports and monitors implementation by signatory ANSAs. In addition to direct engagement, Geneva Call works with civil society and community-based organizations to build their capacities to support the engagement process with ANSAs and assist in monitoring their commitments. In some circumstances, Geneva Call also uses tools other than the *Deed of Commitment*, such as unilateral declarations or codes of conduct. When ANSAs are not prepared to commit to abide by international standards, Geneva Call pursues a step-by-step approach, seeking incremental improvements of their policies and practices.

Geneva Call is in dialogue with about 40 ANSAs worldwide on issues related to the protection of children in armed conflict, notably from recruitment and use in hostilities. To date, 12 have signed the *Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict* and have taken measures to enforce their obligations. In addition, several other ANSAs have made similar pledges and adopted new protective rules in their internal regulations.

Geneva Call's constructive and inclusive approach is complementary to the work undertaken by the United Nations and other actors involved in child protection. While many agencies focus on assistance and reintegration, Geneva Call strives to prevent abuses by ANSAs and encourage them to provide children with the aid and care they require, such as access to education or protection from enemy attacks.

### Defining strategic engagement with ANSAs

ANSAs are extremely diverse, ranging from those that are using violence for political reasons and have a strong ideological purpose, to those that are more profit-oriented with criminal motivations. Some are highly centralized with effective hierarchy and chain of command, while others' organizational structure is much more unreliable. Groups may also differ in their level of territorial and social control, their independence from the territorial or neighboring states and responsiveness to the demands of local communities.

Along with these configurations, defining an effective engagement strategy requires an appreciation for the reasons motivating non-compliance or compliance with norms on the protection of children.

Possible reasons for non-compliance:

- ANSAs cannot take part in the development of, or become party to, international treaties and have therefore limited buy-in and ownership.

- Non-compliance of their opponent and the fear of losing a strategic military advantage by limiting means and methods of warfare – e.g., the use of child soldiers in particular can be seen as vital in an imbalanced/asymmetric military confrontation.
- Lack of interest in establishing/increasing political legitimacy among the local population.
- Lack of knowledge and understanding of particular norms and how to enforce them.
- Low judicial or political accountability for non-compliance.
- Local belief about children's mystical protective powers against the enemy.

Possible reasons for compliance:

- ANSAs desire to be recognized, along with their cause, as legitimate by international actors.





## TOOL 59

- Improving their reputation among their allies and gaining popular support.
- Fear of prosecution under international criminal justice mechanisms and the loss of judicial privileges under transitional justice agreements, which most often exclude those responsible for international crimes.
- Reciprocity and a desire to influence the opponents' behavior towards increased protection of children.
- Limited capacity to monitor the commitments made by armed actors, which may have little willingness and/or ability to comply, especially in remote locations with restricted access.
- Operational limitations due to lack of financial and/or logistical resources, as well as limited technical knowledge.
- Difficulties in overcoming ANSAs discriminatory attitude towards certain groups which may translate into selective protection.
- Understanding and adapting to the particular idioms of the targeted ANSAs in cross-cultural contexts in which different world views and communicative styles may influence receptivity.

### Key challenges faced by NGOs in engaging with ANSAs:

- Restrictions on access to ANSAs by the local government based on concerns that the engagement would legitimize the group.
- Undermine the neutrality of the NGO which may translate into security risks or limits on access and possibly compromise other programmatic activities.

## Case study: National NGO Engagement With ANSAs in DRC

A national NGO in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) uses community-based child protection committees to monitor and report grave violations within the framework of the MRM. Given the longstanding relationship with community leaders and authorities, the NGO has developed the contacts and knowledge to access the leadership of a local self-defense militia. With the help of local authorities and community leaders, the NGO engaged the armed groups on compliance with international norms on the protection of children.

At the early stages, the main goal of the engagement was to raise awareness and disseminate norms through dialogue and trainings on the protection of children. Knowledge and ownership of the norms was at first limited but the exercise served to build confidence and created opportunities to persuade the ANSA to slowly commit to key protection principles. By ensuring the participation of local leaders in the process, the NGO fostered local ownership, improved its capacity to monitor compliance and improved accountability.

When the armed group eventually agreed to release children, the NGO worked closely with partners including the child protection section of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Congolese national institutions responsible for coordinating disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) activities and other child protection actors. Field missions are organized with child protection actors specialized to identify children, conduct age verification and refer separated children to transit centers offering care and assistance to facilitate their reintegration.

Local authorities and leaders often already enjoy a certain level of access with the leadership of armed groups with whom they address their concerns and grievances. Therefore, empowering local leaders to make clear demands for the protection of children is another approach for greater compliance. It is also common that some community members consider the recruitment and use of children as legitimate in some circumstances. In other cases, reintegration efforts are hindered by stigma and discrimination against former child soldiers. Therefore, participation of the broader community was an important part of the NGO's overall strategic engagement with ANSAs.



### Key lessons:

- There is little opportunity for ANSAs to express their willingness to abide by humanitarian norms, which may limit their incentive to respect them or put them into practice.
- While armed actors are often reluctant to accept norms that are imposed on them, they are usually more inclined to enforce commitments that they have negotiated and agreed to on their own.
- The participation of local communities in defining commitments can ensure local ownership and improve the capacity to monitor compliance with commitments and promote accountability.
- Engagement should prioritize the needs of children who are particularly vulnerable.
- Anticipate and capitalize on “windows of opportunity” when belligerents are more accessible or more inclined to comply with international norms.
- Humanitarian norms often have roots in the values, ethics and morality common to various cultures and traditions. Referring to similarities between norms and the ANSA’s culture may increase incentives for compliance.

### Conclusion:

NGOs’ efforts to engage with ANSAs reveal limitations and challenges, but also offer new avenues for improving these groups’ compliance with international norms. With greater support from states and international organizations, NGOs’ contribution could become more substantive and complement other ongoing efforts to address grave violations against children by ANSAs.

### related tools

- [tool 11 – Q&A ‘Action plans’](#)
- [tool 16 – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’](#)
- [tool 35 – Factsheet ‘Opportunities and challenges of engaging with communities to monitor and respond to grave violations’](#)
- [tool 39 – Case study ‘Village child protection committees in Eastern DRC’](#)
- [tool 56 – Case study ‘Options for local advocacy in Eastern DRC’](#)

### other resources:

- *Engaging Non-State Armed Groups on the Protection of Children: Towards Strategic Complementarity*, International Peace Institute (IPI) and Geneva Call, April 2012.
- *Rules of Engagement: Protecting Civilians through Dialogue with Armed Non-State Actors*, The Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, October 2011.
- *Engaging Armed Non-State Actors to Protect Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict: When the Stick Doesn’t Cut the Mustard*, Jonathan Somer, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 4 (1), 2012.
- *Engaging Armed Non-State Actors on Humanitarian Norms: Reflections on Geneva Call’s Experience*, Pascal Bongard, *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*, July 2013.



# tool 60 Mainstreaming Child Protection in Peace Processes

## Checklist

Post-conflict situations provide opportunities for government restructuring, legislative overhaul and “do it back better”. As such, peace processes represent a valuable entry point for the implementation of Resolution 1612 by including child protection considerations in structural reforms aiming to address the underlying causes of conflict and insecurity. However, the mainstreaming of child protection in peace processes still remains a largely unfulfilled aspect of the children and armed conflict agenda. The following checklist highlights key policy considerations to strengthen the integration of child protection in peace processes.

### Security sector reform (SSR):

- Include child protection in military training and standard operating procedures, as well as in military guidance as appropriate.
- Establish child protection units in national security forces.
- Establish detailed recruitment procedures which include effective age assessment mechanisms to prevent underage recruitment.
- Establish an effective vetting mechanism to ensure that no suspected perpetrator of grave violations of children’s rights is integrated or otherwise recruited into the security forces.
- Ensure that captured child soldiers are always treated in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law, and promptly handed over to child protection actors.
- Adopt measures to protect schools and hospitals from attack and to prevent the military use of schools in contravention of applicable international law.

### Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR):

- Require that release and reintegration of children associated with armed actors be carried out at all times, even during a conflict, and that actions to prevent child recruitment be continuous.
- Ensure complete age-specific assessment to inform DDR policy and program design and implementation and, given the complexity of the social reintegration of children, guarantee that child specific DDR mechanisms remain in place after national reintegration of adult combatants is completed.
- Adopt standard operating procedures for the immediate transfer of children escaped, captured or released from armed groups to competent state social services, child protection actors or relevant international bodies.
- Confer to a DDR Commission or institution the obligation to report the name and status of children undertaking the DDR process and monitor their reintegration with special attention to factors leading to re-recruitment.
- Provide assistance for the reintegration of former child soldiers including psychosocial support, education, vocational training, employment opportunities and support to their communities.
- Support children with necessary counselling, including help to: overcome trauma; develop self-esteem and gain life skills; learn about reintegration and livelihood opportunities; and receive peace education and non-violent conflict resolution training to help them regain a sense of the social norms and routines of civilian life.
- Ensure employment trainings are driven by the realities of the labor market and oriented towards specific job opportunities.



## TOOL 60

- Conduct a DDR gender assessment and design strategies, in particular with regards to reintegration, which meet the differentiated needs of girls associated with armed actors and their dependents.
- Promote the participation of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups as well as other war-affected children and the community as a whole in the development of assistance to reintegration initiatives so that inequalities and unfair treatment are avoided.

### Justice sector reform and rule of law:

- Promote the ratification of international and regional instruments relevant for the protection of children and provide support for their implementation.
- Advocate for the introduction of legislative amendments aiming to strengthen the accountability framework for the protection of children.
- Support the provision of technical assistance for the improvement of birth registration, including nationality legislation.
- Support the establishment of a juvenile justice system in line with international norms and standards.
- Support the establishment of restorative justice, diversion and alternatives to child incarceration that promote the child's reintegration into society in line with the principle of deprivation of liberty as a measure of last resort.
- Ensure the adoption of clear policies and safeguards on the treatment and transfer of children deprived of their liberty for association with armed groups.
- Prioritize criminal investigations and prosecutions of individuals suspected of grave violations against children, including through the provision of adequate resources for the relevant mandated institutions.
- Train and sensitize judges, lawyers, prosecutors, law enforcement officers and social workers on child protection legislation and the administration of juvenile justice.
- Request governments to regularly publish information on the number of prosecutions and convictions for grave violations against children.

### Peace negotiations:

- Remind parties to conflict of their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, in particular those concerned with the rights of the child.
- Call on parties to conflict to take measures to protect civilians, particularly children, from all forms of violence and abuse, in particular recruitment and abduction, killing and maiming of children, sexual and gender-based violence, attacks against schools and hospitals and denial of humanitarian access.
- Ensure that the concept of child soldiers is clearly defined to include all children associated with armed actors independently of the type of recruitment or how children are being used by the armed actor.
- Require parties to acknowledge the existence of child soldiers in their ranks, disclose to a Monitoring Ceasefire Committee their number, location and identity, and agree to the immediate and unconditional release of all associated girls and boys.
- Request grave violations against children to be recognized as a "prohibited act" which constitutes a violation of a ceasefire agreement and mandate a monitoring body to monitor and report such violations.
- Ensure the inclusion of child rights expertise in the mediation process, and facilitate consultation with child rights experts and children to improve accountability and ownership.
- Ensure that any peace agreement does not include amnesty or *de facto* impunity for alleged perpetrators of recruitment and use of children and other serious crimes.

### related tools

- 🔗 [tool 51](#) – Factsheet 'Linking monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations'
- 🔗 [tool 55](#) – Guiding questions 'Planning advocacy on the grave violations'



# tool 61

## Practice Standards in Children's Participation (Save the Children Alliance)

The Practice Standards in Children's Participation were developed by Save the Children following a wide consultation with staff, partners and children in various countries. It provides operational guidance on how to promote child participation in a safe, ethical and meaningful way.

Click [here](#) to download the document.

### related tools

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[tool 62](#) – Case study 'Child-led advocacy in Colombia'



# tool 62 Child-Led Advocacy in Colombia

## Case study

In September 2012, the Colombian government announced the start of formal peace talks with the FARC, one of the main armed groups in the Colombian conflict listed since 2003 in the annex of the Secretary-General's annual report for recruitment and use of children. In February 2013, on occasion of the 'red hand day', a group of children affected by the conflict participated in a public audience at the Colombian Congress to present a 'Book of Dreams' outlining their expectations and proposals for the peace process. The initiative was coordinated by a national civil society network and the event was highly publicized in a context that remains highly politicized and even polarized.

The following risks were identified prior to the event:

- Children could be overwhelmed or feel at risk because of public exposure.
- Potential politicization of the children's intervention.
- Aggressive questions from journalists could traumatize children.

The following process was adopted to ensure that participants were adequately prepared, supported and protected:

- 1) Participation in the initiative was open only to children who were already actively engaged in youth groups or other community structures where they could find overall support and coaching before and after the event.
- 2) Parents were informed of the initiative and gave their consent.
- 3) The selected group of children played a central part in the planning of the initiative and representatives of the civil society network accompanied them throughout the event.
- 4) The civil society network organized a preliminary information session with journalists to sensitize them to the particular vulnerability of these children.
- 5) A formal agreement was made with the TV channel that covered the event, outlining basic principles and ground rules.

In other advocacy initiatives organized by this civil society network, media outreach has also been done through a press conference. In such cases, attendance is reserved only for a select number of journalists known by the civil society network for their professionalism and sensitivity to the issues of children affected by armed conflict.

## related tools



tool 61 – Practice Standards in Children's Participation (Save the Children Alliance)



# part IV

learning from your  
experience with the MRM



# evaluating MRM-related activities

This part contains two tools that can help NGOs build monitoring and evaluation frameworks for their MRM-related activities and document best practices and lessons-learned.

## List of tools in this section:

tool 63 – Matrix ‘Indicators and means of verification for MRM-related activities’

tool 64 – Guiding questions ‘Collecting best practices on MRM-related activities’





# tool 63 Indicators and Means of Verification for MRM-Related Activities

## Matrix

Identifying adequate indicators for MRM-related activities depends on the context (security, availability of response services), the type of participation the NGO has chosen to have in the MRM and its objectives. Below are some suggested indicators and corresponding means of verification for the various types of engagement and objectives outlined elsewhere in this Resource Pack. Some of these indicators are relevant for internal planning purposes (e.g., work plans), while others can be useful for project proposals as action or outcome indicators (results frameworks, logframes).

Objective	Type of activities	Possible indicators	Means of verification
Decision-makers and the humanitarian community get accurate and credible information about violations perpetrated by armed actors against children in XX country/region	Monitoring Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Number of individuals trained in data collection methods (including ethical considerations).</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 100% of children/parents have given informed consent prior to interviews.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> XX% of cases documented by our organization include information from multiple sources.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Our organization is able to retain access/presence in area/region xxx and monitor violations continuously.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> XX% of cases monitored by our organization are reported to the UN MRM focal point.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> XX% of cases monitored by our organization are reported by the MRM focal point to the CTFMR.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The main concerns identified through our MRM-related monitoring is accurately reflected in annual or country-specific reports to the Security Council.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Data analysis on grave violations identified by our organization is included in humanitarian public communication tools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Activity reports.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Incident report/interview notes/informed consent forms.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Incident reports.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Case database.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Security assessments.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Case database.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feedback or interview with MRM focal point and/or CTFMR members.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Annual and country-specific reports.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Situation reports, appeals.</li> </ul>



(cont'd)

Objective	Type of activities	Possible indicators	Means of verification
<b>To ensure a response to the needs of children victims of conflict-related violations</b>	Referrals Advocacy (funding) Coordination Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Referral pathways are in place for medical, mental health, psycho-social and legal assistance. <input type="checkbox"/> Referral gaps are addressed through the establishment of new response programs for victims of grave violations. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of victims of grave violations identified through our MRM-related monitoring and in need of assistance are referred to service providers. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of survivors of sexual violence identified through MRM monitoring receive medical assistance within 72h from the incident. <input type="checkbox"/> Needs assessments include information on prevalence and risk of grave violations (security permitting). <input type="checkbox"/> MRM data is used as baseline information in joint or unilateral program planning documents. <input type="checkbox"/> Number of child protection programs in which adjustments have been made in response to information on grave violations collected by our organization.	<input type="checkbox"/> Mapping of service providers. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database or incident reports. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database; minutes of case conferences. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database. <input type="checkbox"/> Needs assessment questionnaires and reports. <input type="checkbox"/> Proposals, appeals, organization or cluster work plans. <input type="checkbox"/> Project proposals; work plans.
<b>To protect children and hold perpetrators accountable for violations</b>	Awareness-raising (prevention) Monitoring Reporting Local advocacy International advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children and adults in a given community who are able to identify risks and concerns in relation to the grave violations. <input type="checkbox"/> Number of armed actors who participated in awareness-raising initiatives. <input type="checkbox"/> Number of children and adults who participated in awareness-raising initiatives. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children and adults in a given community who know who to report risks or instances of grave violations. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children and adults in a given community who actually report risks or instances of grave violations. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of reports show a time gap of less than XX days between incident and report. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children at imminent risk of abuse by armed actors are safely relocated for their protection. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children and adults in a given community note an improvement in attitudes and practices linked to the protection of children and prevention of grave violations, in particular sexual violence and child recruitment.	<input type="checkbox"/> Project monitoring interview/questionnaire. <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting notes; activity reports; attendance sheets. <input type="checkbox"/> Activity reports; attendance sheets. <input type="checkbox"/> Project monitoring interview/questionnaire. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database; project monitoring interview/questionnaire. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database. <input type="checkbox"/> Project monitoring interview/questionnaire.



(cont'd)

Objective	Type of activities	Possible indicators	Means of verification
To protect children and hold perpetrators accountable for violations (cont'd)	Awareness-raising (prevention) Monitoring Reporting Local advocacy International advocacy	<input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children identified through our monitoring that were separated from armed forces or groups are reintegrated in their family, community or alternative space. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children identified through our monitoring that were separated from armed forces or groups and reintegrated in their family, community or alternative space re-join armed forces or groups. <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of follow-up advocacy actions lead to a tangible result (e.g., a school is vacated by an armed actor, denial of access to humanitarian assistance is lifted, demining/marking of a mine field, end of a threat/harassment). <input type="checkbox"/> XX% of children victims of grave violations who are in contact with the police or courts are dealt with using child-friendly procedures in accordance with juvenile justice standards. <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal investigations are initiated for XX% of cases of grave violations referred to legal assistance providers by our organization. <input type="checkbox"/> The main concerns identified through our MRM-related monitoring are accurately reflected in annual or country-specific reports to the Security Council.	<input type="checkbox"/> Case database; case follow-up reports; project monitoring interviews/questionnaires. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database; case follow-up reports. <input type="checkbox"/> Case database; case follow-up reports. <input type="checkbox"/> Annual or country-specific reports to the Security Council.

## related tools

- [tool 17](#) – Guiding questions ‘Clarifying goals and expectations before engaging in the MRM’
- [tool 14](#) – Factsheet ‘Why do NGOs choose to participate in the MRM?’
- [tool 51](#) – Factsheet ‘Linking monitoring, prevention and response to grave violations’
- [tool 52](#) – Factsheet ‘The MRM and the cluster system’
- [tool 53](#) – Guiding questions ‘Mapping service providers and identifying referral pathways’

## other resources

- *Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action*, Global Child Protection Working Group, 2012 (in particular indicators for Standard 4 – project cycle management; Standard 5 – Information management; Standard 6 – Child protection monitoring; Standard 11 – Children associated with armed forces or armed groups; Standard 14 – Justice for children; Standard 15 – Case management).
- *Child Protection Outcome Indicators*, Save the Children Child Protection Initiative, December 2012.



# tool 64 Collecting Best Practices on MRM-Related Activities

## Guiding questions

The following questions may help shape questionnaires or discussions with communities, staff and peer organizations on best practices on the implementation and impact of your MRM-related activities:

Issue	Question	Who should be asked?
<b>Strategic and operational planning of MRM-related activities</b>	Was a decision made to engage in the MRM (as part of a strategy) or is the organization's engagement more 'spontaneous'? Are there any particular advantages or challenges in the approach taken?	Management staff; technical staff.
	<i>What</i> are the main factors influencing the way the organization engages in the MRM and how do they influence the engagement concretely?	Management staff; technical staff.
	What are the goals of the organization in relation to the MRM and how are MRM-related activities of the organization contributing to those goals?	Management staff; technical staff.
	Has the organization ever changed the way it engages in the MRM? If so: what prompted it and how was it done?	Management staff; technical staff.
	Has the organization had to strengthen internal capacity or create new processes, protocols or policies in order to engage in the MRM? If so: how were these needs identified and how were they addressed?	Management staff; technical staff.
<b>Relationship with the UN</b>	Did the organization clarify with the UN/MRM focal point how information would be collected, communicated and processed before engaging in the MRM? If so: how was this done? If not: does it constitute a challenge for current MRM activities? How so?	Management staff; technical staff.
	Has the organization facilitated UN verifications? If so: how was it done? Were there any challenges? Could the process be improved? If not: does it constitute a challenge for MRM activities? How so?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.



(cont'd)




Issue	Question	Who should be asked?
<b>Quality of information / confidentiality/ security</b>	Did the organization ever get conflicting information on the same incident? If so: how was the issue handled?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	How does the organization identify potential bias and credibility issues while collecting information on the grave violations? How does it handle such situations?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	How does the organization manage confidentiality for MRM-related activities, both internally and with the UN?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations
	How does the organization monitor compliance with confidentiality rules in relation to MRM activities within the team?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	Did the organization ever have to interrupt or change MRM activities due to security concerns? If so: how were these concerns identified and how was a solution found?	Management staff; security staff; technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
<b>Relationship with communities</b>	Does the organization have a process in place to give feedback to victims and communities regarding case follow-up (response or advocacy) and impact of MRM-related activities? If so: what information is provided to victims/communities and in what format?	Staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	Does the organization give victims/communities the opportunity to suggest improvements to MRM-related activities? If so: when and in what format?	Staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	Did the organization have to manage community expectations with regard to the MRM? If so: on what issues concretely?	



(cont'd)

Issue	Question	Who should be asked?
<b>Follow-up and response</b>	What is the follow up process for cases of grave violations? How was it set up? Was it ever changed or adjusted to address a particular challenge or gap?	Staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	Does the organization follow-up on response actions taken by other organizations or the UN? If so, how?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	Is the organization able to identify obstacles in accessing and benefitting from services? If so, how does it address those obstacles?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.
	How does the organization track the progress and outcome of case follow-up (response + advocacy)?	Technical staff; staff directly involved in collecting information on grave violations.

## related tools

-  **tool 63** – Matrix ‘Indicators and means of verification for MRM-related activities’
-  **tool 16** – Factsheet ‘NGO participation in the MRM: potential challenges and limitations’
-  **tool 26** – Checklist ‘Before you engage in the MRM’



# annex

## Feedback Questionnaire

### 1. You are a:

- National NGO
- International NGO
- UN (field)
- UN (HQ)
- Other:

### 2. How is your organization currently engaged in the MRM in this country?

- No engagement
- Providing alerts to the MRM
- Informally communicating cases of grave violations to the MRM
- Actively documenting cases of grave violations
- Actively documenting cases of grave violations and member of the CTFMR

### 3. Why did you use the Resource Pack?

- To learn more about the MRM
- Because you were considering engagement in the MRM
- Because you were 'redefining' your engagement in the MRM
- Other:

### 4. How did you use the Resource Pack?

- In a training session for staff
- In preparation for internal meetings/briefings with senior management
- In preparation for internal meetings/briefings with program staff
- In preparation for meetings/briefings with the UN
- To develop/update project documents (e.g., logframes, work plans)
- To develop organizational documents/policies (e.g., security, information management)
- Other:

### 5. Was the format of the tools you used user-friendly and clear?

### 6. What tools were most useful for you?



(cont'd)

**7. Did you adapt any tools or did you use them as they were?**

**8. Are there any issues that you did not see reflected in the tools, but that were a major topic of discussion within your organization?**

**9. After using the Resource Pack did you:**

	Yes	Somewhat	No
Gain more knowledge of the MRM?			
Find ways to overcome challenges faced previously with the MRM?			
Gather support within your organization to engage in the MRM?			
Decide to engage in the MRM?			
Change the way you engage in the MRM? How so?:			
Decide not to engage in the MRM? Why?:			

**10. Any other comments or recommendations?**