

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'