

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 (SRSG-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 SRSG). 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 SRSG-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.

TOOL 2

(cont'd)

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*² 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'](#)

² 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.