

A special module on child labour and armed conflict



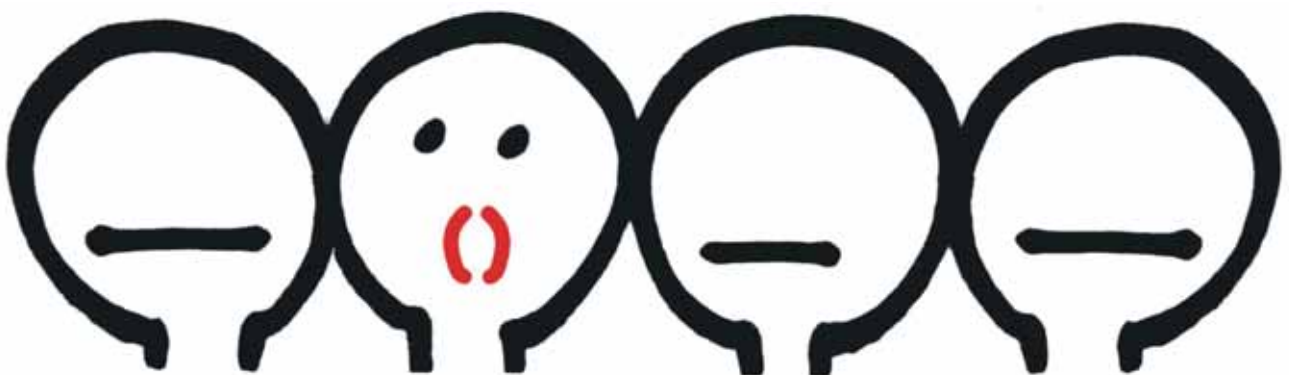
International
Labour
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SCREAT

Stop Child Labour

Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media





Stop Child Labour

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Arts and the Media

A special module on child labour and armed conflict

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)

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Supporting Children's Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media (SCREAM): A Special Module on Child Labour and Armed Conflict

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Preface

Over 30 countries have experienced armed conflict in the last decade with devastating consequences for children. In her groundbreaking 1996 report, *The impact of armed conflict on children*, Graça Machel highlighted that “not only are large numbers of children killed and injured, but countless others grow up deprived of their material and emotional needs, including the structures that give meaning to social and cultural life. The entire fabric of their societies – their homes, schools, health systems and religious institutions – is torn to pieces.”

Armed conflicts have direct and indirect effects on child labour. Tens of thousands of children around the world are fighting wars as part of government armed forces or other armed groups. Some of them are used as combatants and take direct part in hostilities, while others are used in supportive roles or for sexual purposes. However, the girls and boys who are associated with armed forces and groups are only a small proportion of the much larger number of children who are trapped in other forms of child labour as a result of armed conflict. These indirect effects on child labour persist long after the conflict ends.

Eliminating child labour has been a concern and an obligation for the ILO and its member States ever since its creation in 1919. This is reflected in the adoption of legal instruments by governments, workers’ and employers’ organizations, including ILO Convention No.138 (1973) concerning the minimum age for admission to employment and work and ILO Convention No. 182 (1999) concerning the need for urgent action to eliminate, as a priority, the worst forms of child labour.

Armed conflict is one of the major challenges to meeting the internationally approved target of eliminating all worst forms of child labour by 2016. As emphasized in the *RoadMap for Achieving the Elimination of Child Labour by 2016*, adopted at The Hague Global Child Labour Conference in 2010, while governments have primary responsibility for eliminating the worst forms of child labour, all actors have supporting roles. We must work together to raise awareness and sensitize the public on the rights of children to be free from child labour, the value of education and training, and the longer term costs of child labour, in terms of health, employment opportunities, persistent inequalities and intergenerational poverty.

Although progress has been made in the struggle to end child labour, much more remains to be done. An important step is to mobilize, educate and empower people, especially young people. To this end, the ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour launched the “SCREAM – Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media - Stop Child Labour” programme to empower children and youth to actively participate in the global campaign against child labour and bring about change in society. The methodology equips young people with knowledge and skills to convey their messages through different forms of artistic expression, such as drama, creative writing, drawing and music and in a manner specific to their culture and traditions.

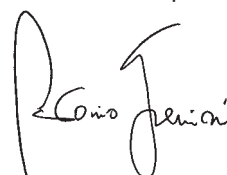
This SCREAM Special Module will contribute to sensitizing young people around the world about child labour and armed conflict and, in particular, the use of children by armed forces and groups, one of the gravest violations of children’s rights. The participatory methodology will mobilize young people’s commitment and creativity to become motivated advocates and agents of change in fighting violence against children and promoting a culture of peace in our inter-dependant world. More specifically, this Module, when used in areas affected by armed conflict, will be an effective tool to prevent child recruitment and also to promote the community acceptance of children released from armed forces and groups.

The preparation of this Special Module results of a collaborative effort between the ILO’s International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and the International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC-ILO). It was made possible through funding by the European Union, and materialized thanks to expertise and contribution of numerous individuals to whom ILO-IPEC and ITC-ILO would like to express their gratitude.



Constance Thomas
Director

ILO, International Programme on
the Elimination of Child Labour



Antonio Graziosi
Director, Training Programmes
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of the ILO

Acknowledgments

This "*SCREAM: A special module on child labour and armed conflict*" was developed by the ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) and the International Training Centre of the ILO (ILO-ITC).

Special thanks are due to Bill Brookman who authored the early draft of the Module and the drawings that accompany it and tested the Module in Uganda and Nepal. The precious contributions received from the young boys and girls in these countries helped shape this adaptation to conflict settings. This was followed by a further testing and validation of the Module by Young Frontiers in Uganda and Sudan, and their contribution is gratefully acknowledged. The testing of this Module would not have been possible without the assistance of the ILO and IPEC project staff in the above-mentioned countries.

This Module is the result of team work and benefitted from revisions, inputs and contributions from several colleagues. Sophie De Connick (IPEC Technical Specialist on Child Labour and Armed Conflict), Blerina Vila (Programme Officer of the ITC Child Labour, Forced Labour and Trafficking Programme), Maria Gabriella Lay (IPEC Programme Officer, IPEC Global Awareness Campaign), and Jane Colombini (Project Officer, IPEC Global Awareness Campaign) conceptualised and guided the process of its development. Sophie De Connick and Jane Colombini fine-tuned the methodology and extensively revised the content to bring the Module to fruition.

Special thanks are also due to the composer of the song "Enfant soldat", Mr. Daniel Beaume and the Lozère School of Music and youth choirs who participated in the recording of the song. This song is a special gift and its inclusion in this Module reflects the important role that music can play in mobilising action against the use of children in armed conflicts.

Importantly, the ITC and IPEC are grateful to the European Union for the financial contribution that enabled the development of this SCREAM Special Module.

Introduction

Violence is deeply rooted in society. In today's world we are witnessing violence in many forms in all countries cutting across boundaries of race, class, religion and culture. Violence is largely hidden and often condoned. It has devastating consequences on individuals' physical, mental and social health and wellbeing. Children are particularly vulnerable to violence and abuse and the costs are even greater. Children who survive must cope with terrible physical and emotional scars. Violence places at risk not only their health, but also their ability to learn and grow into adults who can create sound families and communities.¹

Child labour is a form of violence against children. Children in child labour are often exposed to physical, psychological, sexual and/or verbal violence. Children in worst forms of child labour, as defined in ILO Convention No. 182 (Article 3), are particularly at risk. These include:

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

One of the most effective ways to combat child labour and violence is through education. Education has a fundamental role to play in opening the door to a peaceful and non-violent world. It is not only a means of bringing about personal development but helps build relationships among individuals, groups and nations. People learn to respect the rights of men, women and children, to show mutual understanding, and to use advances in knowledge to foster human development rather than to create further distinctions between people. Provided with skills and knowledge, individuals become empowered to exercise their own rights and to actively participate in the promotion of human rights. It was in this light that this SCREAM Special Module on Child Labour and Armed Conflict was conceived – to empower young people to become actors in the elimination of child labour and the establishment of a culture of peace and non-violence. The Module focuses on the worst forms of child labour, in particular the situation of children associated with armed forces and groups. Links can also be made to other forms of violence among youth, such as gang violence and bullying. It aims to promote values, attitudes and behaviour which privilege the non-violent resolution of conflict, respect for human rights and children's rights in particular, intercultural understanding, tolerance and solidarity. This supports the Mandate of the Special Representative on Violence against Children which includes "the promotion of non-violent values and awareness-raising activities to overcome the invisibility and social acceptance of violence against children, support the abandonment of harmful practices and promote positive forms of discipline and child development approaches."

1 Pinheiro, Paulo Sérgio *World Report on Violence against Children* (United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children, 2006)

The underlying theme of this module is conflict. Conflict is a word we hear nearly every day, and it can take a variety of forms. Conflict can be verbal, physical, emotional or psychological. Conflict is a natural part of life and even healthy if the parties decide to act by initiating problem-solving. There is always a solution to be sought and the extent to which conflicts can be prevented or resolved depends much on the will of the parties to find mutually beneficial solutions. However, depending upon the circumstances, parties may not see this road of action as a possibility, so they will behave much differently. For example, what will happen if political upheavals, control of natural resources, social revolutions, the manipulation of ethnicities or religions or power and dominance are deeply rooted within a society? What if someone challenges one of these deeply rooted issues in such a way as to cause others to act out defensively? These are recognized sources of conflict and any of these factors may have the potential to push a conflict into an armed conflict. We can think of the progression from non-violent conflict to an armed conflict as escalation. When conflict escalates to a point at which the parties begin to use force, it becomes an armed conflict.

The following section provides guidance on the different ways that this Special Module on Child Labour and Armed Conflict can be used for education, awareness raising and social mobilisation of young people, and through them, the community at large, in different settings.

How to use this module

Why and for whom this new Module was developed

The SCREAM programme seeks to educate young people and enhance their skills of expression and their knowledge of the world around them. SCREAM aims to inspire young people to step out and be part of a positive movement for change in the wider world. The learning process impacts upon their perceptions and the perceptions of their communities and leads to changes in attitudes and behaviour. Through this process, young people will come to realise and fulfil their potential as agents of social change within their communities and will acquire a sense of “*glocal* citizenship” – that is, thinking globally and acting locally.

This SCREAM Module was developed to contribute to the prevention of the worst forms of child labour in armed conflict and post-armed conflict situations (hereinafter referred to as conflict and post-conflict situations). There is a specific focus on children associated with armed forces or groups. It also aims to promote community acceptance of children released from armed forces and groups or other worst forms of child labour. The activities are primarily designed to take young people through a journey of understanding in the lives of children associated with armed forces and groups. Participants will explore who these children are, why they join, what their role in the armed force or group is, how they are released as well as the long and sometimes difficult process of resuming life in the community and making a transition to civilian life. These activities can however easily be adapted to explore in a similar way other worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in conflict or post-conflict settings, such as sexual exploitation or forced labour.

The Module also offers suggestions to facilitators who intend to use it in non-conflict affected situations. They may choose to focus on children associated with armed forces and groups with the aim of sensitizing their group to the problem of the use of children in armed conflict in a given conflict situation. Alternatively, they may focus on worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in their area or country, in particular those related to armed violence or illicit activities (e.g. being part of a gang, drug trafficking or organized begging) or make links with bullying and other forms of violence and conflict in schools and communities.

The methodology used in this Module combines discussions, role-play and mimes, games and the use of images. In non-conflict affected countries an important research component is also added. Little material is required and most activities can be conducted with young people who do not have the ability to read or write.

This journey of understanding will culminate with the young people reaching out to their community and becoming agents of social mobilization and change. This is a pivotal point in the programme, when the young people in your group are empowered to become responsible citizens and are motivated to affect the world around them with their positive messages.

How it fits in with the original SCREAM Pack

If you have already implemented a SCREAM programme with your group – based on the 14 modules in the original SCREAM Pack - you can use this Module to carry out a follow-up project with a special focus on child labour and armed conflict.

If you have not yet started with SCREAM, you can factor this Module into your SCREAM programme from the outset. Consult your SCREAM User's Guide to help you plan your programme using the 14 modules and use the activities in this special Module to factor in education related to child labour and armed conflict.

However, this new Module is conceived to be a stand alone resource and can be used independently of the original SCREAM Pack. You can work through the activities in the order that they are presented and use the Information Section, and any other sources of information, to help you in your facilitation. The original SCREAM Pack is on the CD-ROM at the back of the Module and may be used as a complementary tool for some of the activities.

How the Module is organized

The **central part of the Module** is composed of 11 activities which are conceived as “building blocks” to progressively deepen the young people's understanding and knowledge on the worst form of child labour they have chosen to explore (e.g. the use of children in armed groups in Nepal, forced labour in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo or organized begging in the United Kingdom).

The three introductory activities in *Part 1 "Be aware"* lay down the foundations of the SCREAM programme on child labour and armed conflict. They will, on the one hand, help clarify the concept of child labour and its worst forms and, on the other hand, explore how conflict emerges. The three other activities in Part 1 will focus on how children become trapped in a worst form of child labour as well as their living and working conditions during this exploitative period.

The four activities in *Part 2 "Moving on"* explore the circumstances in which children are withdrawn from worst forms of child labour and the various dimensions of their reintegration/rehabilitation process. The last activity “Becoming agents of social change” is the section of the programme in which participants take their messages and their efforts out to the community.

For the benefit of the user, each activity begins with the aim, gain and timeframe of the activity, advice on what materials are needed and a step-by-step *activity summary* guide on how to carry it out. The *activity script* then sets out the procedures that the facilitator must go through to implement the exercise. It also includes some background information on the subject covered as well as notes to the user which provide additional guidance, tips or words of caution.

Each activity includes *suggestions for adaptation to non-conflict situations*. An important research dimension needs to be added to most activities to enable the young people to familiarize themselves with the worst form of child labour and/or armed conflict situation they have chosen to focus on. Further adaptations will also be needed for most activities if your group is making links with other forms of violence and conflict among youth, such as bullying. Other than that, the activity scripts will require very few adaptations. Considering that a lot of research is involved and that the activities build on one another with the final aim of bringing a message to the community, it is advisable to have participants work on the same situation throughout the Module (e.g. a given conflict situation and/or a given worst form of child labour).

In this “**How to use this module**” section, you will find overall guidance to help you plan, prepare for and implement the SCREAM programme on child labour and armed conflict.

The **information section** will provide you with some background information on child labour and armed conflict and more specifically about the use of children by armed forces and groups. This is a vast subject area and you will need to conduct additional research to prepare the activities. The section on **Useful sources of information** will guide you in your research.

At the back of this Module, you will find **case studies** and **images** which will be useful for specific activities. The images were drawn by Bill Brookman, artist, based on drawings from conflict-affected children in Nepal and Uganda. There are three sets of drawings:

Set one: Relates to the different roles children can play in the armed forces and groups and is to be used in the activity “Who are they?”

Set two: Relates to people or organizations that children can turn to for help. It is to be used in the activity “The information centre.”

Set three: Relates to various situations children may face (pregnancy, use of drugs, illness) and can be used at any point to stimulate discussion.

On the **CD-ROM** attached to this Module, you will also find the *song* “Child Soldier” (sung in French), including the lyrics (in English) and the musical accompaniment. This song about children associated with armed forces and groups was composed by Daniel Beaume and is one powerful tool which can be used in the SCREAM programme for sensitizing the community about this terrible violation of children’s rights. The CD-ROM also includes the original SCREAM Pack, the SCREAM special module on HIV, AIDS and child labour and the text of the key international Standards.

Planning the sessions

The table below provides you with the sequences, methodology and contents of the activities as well as with recommendations for use. It provides an overview of the whole Module and will help you plan your sessions.

The SCREAM special Module on child labour and armed conflict at a glance

Activities	Aim and gain
Part 1: Be aware	
Basic information on child labour: Discussion	The aim is to explore through discussions what child labour is, why it exists and its consequences on children. As a result, participants will have a basic understanding of child labour and the complexity of the problem.
Is it child labour? "Sabra says..." game	The aim is to reinforce, through a fun and participatory exercise, the understanding of the concept of child labour and to introduce the group to some forms of child labour that are prevalent in conflict situations. As a result, participants will be able to recognise what constitutes child labour and will know why such forms of work are not acceptable for children.
Understanding conflict: Role-play	The aim is to understand how conflict develops and breaks out while exploring ways to avoid it by using role-play to act out scenarios which can hinder or foster conflict. As a result, participants will discover that conflict is not formless but has a structure and that understanding this structure can aid the quest for peace.
Who are they? The image	The aim is to build the profiles of children associated with armed forces and groups using images and to make up stories based on it. As a result, participants will become aware that children associated with armed forces and groups may have other roles than just fighting. They will also understand what life is like within armed forces and groups.
Why join up? Five minutes mimes	The aim is to use drama alongside the transmission of information in view of exploring what might motivate children to join armed forces and groups and what might actually happen to them once they're associated. As a result, participants will become aware that joining armed forces and groups eventually results in situations far worse than anticipated.
The information centre: Role-play	The aim is to use role-play alongside the transmission of information in view of exploring how to seek help and from whom when there's a risk for children to be recruited by armed forces and groups. As a result, participants will be informed that help is available to children even in the most difficult circumstances and will have identified where this help might come from.

Activities	Aim and gain
Part 2: Moving on	
Stepping towards freedom: One minute mimes	The aim is to use drama alongside the transmission of information in view of exploring the circumstances of children's departure from armed forces and groups. As a result, participants will know that these children are not abandoned and that some people and organizations are fighting to get them released. They will also be aware of the numerous – good and bad – scenarios of children's departure.
Where to now? The backwards-forwards game	The aim is to look into positive aspects and difficulties of returning home and back to civilian life through a fun and participatory exercise. As a result, participants become aware of the challenges of reintegration and are able to identify some of the situations that will either advance or jeopardize the process.
Me and the others: Let's make a picture!	The aim is to produce a piece of abstract artwork which addresses psychosocial issues and the related community acceptance concerns. As a result, participants will have a better understanding of the complexity of the reintegration process. They will be aware of the key role that families and communities can play to support a child's reintegration.
Into work: The memory game	The aim is to have the group brainstorm on the concept of decent work and what is needed to access it and to use a fun exercise to summarize and remember the key points. As a result, participants will know about their labour rights and will be aware of the support that a child released from armed forces and group should receive in order to access decent work.
Becoming agents of social change: awareness raising in the community	Use this section in conjunction with the SCREAM Pack, and be creative with the materials, ideas and initiative that you have within your group to make an impact with your group's messages.

When planning your sessions, always be mindful of where would be a good place to stop and carry the activity over into the next session. Take your time. Prioritize making each session participatory, fun and engaging, and try not to cut sessions short due to time. The timeframe that is suggested in the activities summary is only a recommended timeframe, this is because it is recognized that the Module will be implemented in a range of different environments, with varying class sizes and participants of various ages and abilities. To use the Module properly, the facilitator should take the timeframe as a rough guide and plan his or her session according to the constraints that he or she faces.

Preparing the sessions

Know your group

SCREAM is based on the principles of gender sensitivity, respect for individuals from all backgrounds, non-discrimination and, of course, maximum participation. It is therefore recommended that you

get to know your group and find out about relationships, gender mixes, personal backgrounds and so on. This is important for the dynamics of the young people in your group.

Knowing your group becomes of utmost importance if you are using this Module in conflict or post-conflict situations. It may be the case that some of the young people in your group have been associated with armed forces and groups, or that someone in their family has. These individuals may come across some sensitive issues that could be difficult to deal with. You need to be ready to deal with this type of situation. This means getting familiar with the profile of children concerned, taking extra care not to hurt them during the activities and bringing in some professional help (see below). You may also consider skipping some activities that you do not consider appropriate. This would also apply to children withdrawn from other worst forms of child labour (e.g. sexual exploitation).

Get external support

You should seek some kind of a partnership with professional help such as child psychologists, social workers or even experienced teachers who you and your participants can turn to for support in moments of need. In case some young people in your group have been associated with armed forces and groups, have been in other types of exploitative situations or are facing difficult situations (e.g. pregnancy or use of drugs), arrange psychological and other type of appropriate support on standby.

If you feel that you're not familiar enough with the concepts of child labour and its worst forms, think about inviting child labour or child protection experts for the "Basic information" and "Is it child labour?" activities. This is particularly true if you are using this Module without having used the original SCREAM Pack before.

Just as in the SCREAM Pack, this Module relies on a synergy of different forms of artistic expression. You, as the facilitator, are not expected to have expertise in all of these different fields and that is why it is recommended that wherever possible you try to enlist the support of colleagues or friends who could come and lend a hand. For example you might have an associate with a particular interest in drawing or the theatre who could come and give some tips to your group as they take on these new and challenging forms of expression. If you are unable to get hold of external support, you will still be able to execute the activity perfectly well. Follow the guidance supplied, prepare yourself fully, and you will be more than ready to carry out the session.

Get familiar with the issues covered in the Module

Running this Module requires some familiarity with the problem of the use of children by armed forces and groups globally as well as the response to it. Although this is a worst form of child labour, it is an entirely new and vast subject area with specific legislative instruments, actors, policy instruments and programmes. You will need to get familiar with the issue before starting the programme. As a first step, it is recommended to read the whole Information Section provided with this Module. In addition, you will need to do some research to find out about the situation in your country/area. The "Useful sources of information" section provides some tips to guide your research.

SCREAMing

The process of empowering young people will not be achieved overnight and needs constant support, encouragement and counselling from the facilitator.

Hold a running discussion with young people throughout the programme about what they have learned, how they feel about child labour and armed conflict and whether they are motivated to take responsibility for these issues in their communities.

Group dynamics

Most activities in this Module involve breaking the group up into smaller subgroups. Think carefully about how you manage this, as it will be beneficial to maintain the same groupings throughout the whole programme, for reasons of teamwork and mutual trust. Usually a group size of four or five members is ideal so aim for that if possible. If you have a mixed gender group, try to achieve a gender balance in all your activities and encourage teamwork, respect and equality between the men, women, boys and girls.

Energizers

A SCREAM programme must run on a constant pulse of energy and participation, and to be most effective, it must be fun. For this reason it is important to integrate energizers periodically into the programme; before, in between or after your learning activities. This serves to keep the energy levels high, keep the concentration switched on and also lift the group's spirits following ventures into what could be some depressing and difficult subject areas.

There are a few examples of energizers in the appendix of this Module, and you will find others in the annex of the Role-Play module of the original SCREAM Pack (which is on the CD-ROM). However, an energizer simply needs to be a fun, active game that involves movement, singing, dancing or playing around. Often the best games come from the young people themselves and by all means encourage their participation in inventing, choosing and implementing the energizer games between the sessions.

Feedback

The SCREAM programme should close with a feedback session. This will enable the participants to reflect on the activities they have participated in, what they have learned and the behavioural changes it may have brought about. At the same time, it allows the facilitator to assess the outcomes of the SCREAM activities. When planning the SCREAM programme, think about how you prefer to receive feedback. This can be done in one of several ways:

- Prepare a feedback form beforehand and distribute it to the participants to fill in confidentially at the end of the activities (or another appropriate time).
- Have an open discussion on the SCREAM activities and encourage exchanges and constructive criticism during which you should take detailed notes.
- Split the participants into working groups and have them evaluate the workshop and then feed this back to the full group. Once again, you should take notes of these reports.
- Any combination of the above.

You may also think of other ways to evaluate the workshop. However, whatever you may decide, it is vital that participants have an opportunity to provide their feedback and see that their comments will serve a purpose and be acted upon. This is part of the participatory approach of SCREAM and respect for the relationships of trust and confidence that you will have built up with the participants.

So now you are ready to begin your SCREAM programme, to empower your team of young people on a journey to become responsible, effective citizens in their societies; to stand up to social injustices and to change the future of the world.

Good luck and keep on SCREAMing!!

Part 1: Be aware



Basic information on child labour: Discussion

What you will need:

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk
- ✓ Pens and paper
- ✓ Images of child labour
- ✓ Television and video playback, if available and if you have video material



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 120 minutes (or two sessions of 60 minutes)



The aim of this activity:

To explore through discussions what child labour is, its causes and consequences and what can be done to end it.



The gain:

Participants will have a basic understanding of child labour and the complexity of the problem. They will know about the International Labour Standards and national laws and will be aware of their rights.

Basic information on child labour - Activity summary

Preparation

- Make sure that you are familiar with the concept of child labour, its causes and consequences and the relevant international child labour standards, in particular ILO Convention on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No. 138), ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Have images of child labour available. If possible images reflecting the types of child labour prevalent in your country/area.

Getting started

Sit the group in a semi-circle around you and begin with a few ice-breakers to put the group at ease.

The activity

Step 1: Discussion

Facilitate a discussion on the following themes:

- What is child labour?
- What are the main causes and consequences of child labour?
- What action should be taken to end child labour?

Step 2: Wrap up

Wrap up by summing up the main points of the discussion. The group should now have a better understanding of what child labour is and why it exists.

Basic information on child labour - Activity script

Despite progress in recent years, there are still 215 million children in child labour, 115 million children among them in its worst forms. Indifference and denial are no longer possible. The international community has identified child labour as a significant impediment to the realization of children's rights, national development and the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to poverty alleviation, education, gender equality and HIV, AIDS.



However, child labour is a stubborn problem that, even if overcome in certain places or sectors, tends to reappear in new and often unanticipated ways. The response to the problem must be as versatile and adaptable as child labour itself. There is no simple, quick fix for child labour, nor a universal blueprint for action. Experience has shown that the effective elimination of child labour requires policies that address persistent poverty and the vulnerability of households to economic shocks. Important policy responses concern education, social protection and efforts to promote decent work for adults.

"No to child labour is our stance. Yet 215 million are in child labour as a matter of survival. A world without child labour is possible with the right priorities and policies: quality education, opportunities for young people, decent work for parents, a basic social protection floor for all. Driven by conscience, let's muster the courage and conviction to act in solidarity and ensure every child's right to his or her childhood. It brings rewards for all."

Juan Somavia, ILO Director-General

This activity introduces the problem of child labour and the complexities surrounding the issue. Through discussion, the group will develop a good understanding of what is child labour and what is not and become familiar with the relevant international child labour standards, the causes and consequences of child labour and what can be done to end the phenomenon. This activity is the initial discussion that precedes all the activities of the Module and it is therefore important that the concepts that are presented here are clear and accurate according to the international Conventions. If possible, contact ILO staff in your area for a discussion on the contents of the activity. Do not improvise and interpret the definitions and be prepared to provide accurate explanations of their meaning.

Preparation

To prepare for this activity you will need to:

- Make sure that you are familiar with the concept of child labour, its causes and consequences and the relevant international child labour standards, in particular ILO Convention on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No. 138), ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Refer to the Useful sources of information section for websites to visit and resources to read. The full texts of the above-mentioned Conventions as well as youth-orientated versions of ILO Conventions No. 138 and 182 are available on the CD-ROM accompanying this Module.

- Have images of child labour available. If possible images reflecting the types of child labour prevalent in your country/area from local magazines, newspapers or other documents. Otherwise, use the images included in the original SCREAM Pack (on the CD-ROM provided with this Module) or download images from the ILO photo gallery (see the Useful sources of information section).



Getting started

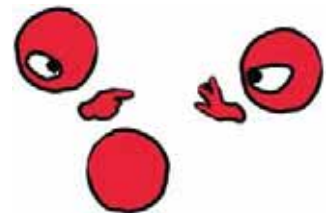
Sit the group in a semi-circle around you. Begin with a few ice-breaker activities to put the group at ease before starting the discussion. Refer to the Energizers section for ideas or introduce your own.

The activity

Step 1: Discussion

Question 1 - What is child labour?

Begin the activity by showing a short video or circulating images of different types of child labour prevalent in your area/country. After showing the video or having given the group some time to reflect on the images, ask "What do you understand by the term "child labour"? What does it mean to you? Encourage individuals to tell you what they already know about child labour, what they have heard from others or perhaps even experienced themselves in some form or other. Jot the various points on the blackboard/flipchart.



Stimulate the discussion with a few additional questions:

- What age of child are we thinking about when we talk about child labour?
- Would it be boys or girls or both?
- What sort of work are we talking about?
- Are child labourers paid?
- Are they well treated?
- Do they live at home?
- Do they go to school?
- Etc.

Explain that there are many different forms of child labour

What is child labour?

Child labour is work that children should not be doing because they are too young to work, or – if they are old enough to work – because it is dangerous or otherwise unsuitable for them. Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children's or adolescents' participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their education, is generally regarded as being something positive. Whether or not particular forms of "work" can be called "child labour" depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed and the conditions under which it is performed, as set out in the ILO Conventions and national legislation.

worldwide. Ask the group to give examples and jot these on the blackboard/flipchart. Explain that some forms of child labour are considered to be “worst forms”, for example, the use of a child for prostitution, the use of children in armed conflict, drug trafficking and dangerous work. “Worst forms” of child labour are especially harmful, morally reprehensible, and they violate the child’s freedom and human rights and therefore need to be tackled urgently. They go beyond “normal” economic and productive types of work: for instance, being associated with an armed force or group is considered a worst form of child labour. Go through the list on the blackboard/flipchart and ask the group to identify possible worst forms of child labour.

Explain that child labour and its worst forms are defined in the Conventions of the International Labour Organization on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (No. 138, 1973) and on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (No. 182, 1999). The Minimum Age Convention sets out clear guidelines for governments to define the minimum age at which children should be allowed to work. Its principle is that children should complete compulsory education before being allowed to work. There are special provisions for hazardous work (which should not be done by anyone under the age of 18) and light work. The Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention covers all boys and girls under the age of 18 in line with the definition of the child under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It calls for immediate and effective measures to eliminate the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency.

What is a Convention?

A Convention is an international agreement between countries. These are usually developed by the United Nations or other international organizations. Governments that ratify Conventions are obliged to incorporate them into their own laws and to make sure that these laws are applied in practice.

To conclude this initial discussion, emphasise that child labour should be thought of in the broader context of children’s rights. Ask the group to brainstorm what basic human rights children everywhere should have. Explain that the CRC was the first legally binding instrument to incorporate the complete range of human rights for children, including civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. The CRC includes the right to protection from economic exploitation (Article 32), the right to education (Article 28), the right to protection from dangerous drugs (Article 33), from sexual abuse (Article 34) and the right of children who have been neglected or abused to receive special help to restore their self-respect. Article 38 of the CRC refers specifically to children associated with armed forces or groups, stating that governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army and that children in war zones should receive special protection. There is also an Optional Protocol to the CRC on children and armed conflict, which complements the CRC and covers children up to the age of 18. It is important that the group understand that children are independent rights holders, fully entitled to claim their rights and to undertake appropriate responsibilities.

Question 2: What are the main causes and consequences of child labour?

After the initial discussion, stimulate a debate on the causes and consequences of child labour using the questions below:

Why does child labour exist?

Child labour is a complex problem and numerous factors influence whether children work or not. Poverty will probably emerge as the most compelling reason why children work. However, poverty is not the only factor in child labour and cannot justify all types of employment and servitude.

Note the various points that emerge from the discussion on a blackboard or flipchart. Some of the other main factors that should come up in the discussion include:

- *Barriers to education* – basic education is not free in all countries and is not always available for all children, especially in remote rural areas. Where schools are available, the quality of education can be poor and the content not relevant. In situations where education is not affordable or parents see no value in education, children are sent to work, rather than to school.
- *Culture and tradition* – with few opportunities open to children with more education, parents are likely to share a cultural norm in which labour is seen as the most productive use of a child's time. Children are often expected to follow in their parents' footsteps and are frequently summoned to "help" other members of the family, often at a young age.
- *Market demand* – child labour is not accidental. Employers may prefer to hire children because they are "cheaper" than their adult counterparts, can be dispensed of easily if labour demands fluctuate and also form a docile, obedient workforce that will not seek to organize itself for protection and support.
- *The effects of income shocks on households* – households that do not have the means to deal with income shocks, such as natural disasters, economic or agricultural crises or the impact of HIV, AIDS, may resort to child labour as a coping mechanism. For example, millions of children have been affected by the HIV pandemic. Many children live with HIV, while an even larger number have been orphaned or made vulnerable by AIDS. If a parent falls ill due to HIV or AIDS related illnesses, the child may have to drop out of school to care for family members. The phenomenon of child-headed households is also associated with the HIV, AIDS pandemic as orphaned children work to care for younger siblings.
- *Inadequate/poor enforcement of legislation and policies to protect children* – child labour persists when national laws and policies to protect children are lacking or are not effectively implemented.

Armed conflict can increase the risk factors associated with child labour. Conflict also increases the potential for children already working to be involved in more dangerous and harmful work. **Ask participants to think about ways armed conflict can exacerbate child labour.** The information in the box will guide you.

Pathways leading to child labour

Armed conflict is often associated with the displacement of families. Most households have few resources to fall back on when they lose their homes and livelihoods. The labour of children is then an effective buffer. Child labour can be used as a collateral for loans that families are forced to take in order to survive the transition to the new environment. Family separation is another pathway leading to child labour. It has the immediate effect of putting children on the streets. There is also a cultural impact of conflict with the precariousness of life in times of war leading people to shorten the time horizon, making children agree to take hazardous jobs they would not have accepted in time of peace, or for girls to go into prostitution. This is further exacerbated by the breakdown of the rule of law as well as the prevalence of firearms. During conflicts, access to schooling is heavily disrupted, either because schools are demolished, teachers are away or school facilities are inadequate, especially when families have been displaced. Also, sometimes parents have lost their source of income and can no longer afford sending their kids to school. Out-of-school children are at higher risk of engaging in the worst forms of child labour.

How does child labour harm children?

Ask the group for examples of how child labour could harm them. Again, note the various points that emerge from the discussion on a blackboard or flipchart. Use the information in the box below to help guide the discussion.

Consequences of child labour

Childhood is a critical time for safe and healthy human development. Because children are still growing they have special characteristics and needs, in terms of physical, cognitive (thought/learning) and behavioural development and growth, that must be taken into consideration. Child labourers are at a high risk of illness, injury and even death due to a wide variety of machinery, biological, physical, chemical, ergonomic, welfare/hygiene and psychosocial hazards, as well as from long hours of work and poor living conditions. The work hazards and risks that affect adult workers can affect child labourers even more strongly. For example, physical strain, especially when combined with repetitive movements, on growing bones and joints can cause stunting, spinal injury and other life long deformation and disabilities. Children often also suffer psychological damage from working and living in an environment where they are denigrated, harassed or experience violence and abuse. In addition, child labour has a profound effect on a child's future. Denied the right to a quality education, as adults they have little chance of obtaining decent work and escaping the cycle of poverty and exploitation.

Question 3: What action should be taken to end child labour?

End the activity with a discussion on what can be done to bring an end to child labour. What recommendations would the group propose to their government? If necessary, stimulate the discussion by writing a few key headings on the blackboard/flipchart, such as those suggested below:

- Awareness-raising
- Legislation and enforcement
- Education
- Social protection
- Social responsibility
- Decent work for parents
- Making workplaces child labour free

Step 2: Wrap up

Bring the discussions to a close by summing up the main points of the discussion. The group should now have a better understanding of what child labour is and why it exists, preparing them to focus on the underlying theme of this special Module: conflict.



Is it child labour? “Sabra says...” game

What you will need:

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes



The aim of this activity:

To reinforce, through a fun and participatory exercise, the understanding of the concept of child labour and to introduce the group to some forms of child labour that are prevalent in conflict situations.



The gain:

Participants will be able to recognise what constitutes child labour and will know why such forms of work are not acceptable for children.

Is it child labour? - Activity summary

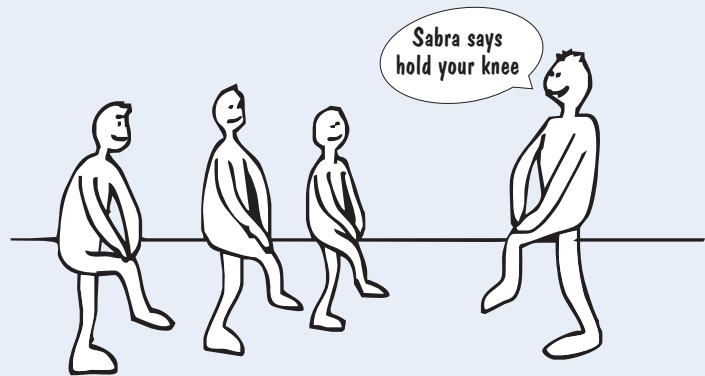
Preparation

- Know and understand the relevant international standards and national legislation.
- Get familiar with the child labour situation in your country/area, in particular with worst forms of child labour resulting directly or indirectly from armed conflict and violence.

Getting started

Explain the rules of the "Sabra says..." game and play it out a few times to get everyone familiar with it.

You will shout out instructions to the group and at the same time do the corresponding action. For instance, you will shout "Sabra says: Hold your knee!" The group must follow your instruction only if preceded by "Sabra says." If you shout out an instruction without "Sabra says" participants must not do it or they will be eliminated from the game.



The activity

Step 1: Agree on actions that characterize different children's work situations

Prepare some examples of children's work situations.

Ask the group to invent an action or mime which corresponds to each of the work situations. For example, being a spy for the commander of an armed group could be associated with the action of looking through a pair of imaginary binoculars.

Step 2: Play the game "Sabra says..."

Play the "Sabra says..." game. . Instead of using the phrase "Sabra says..." you will shout the work situations. Participants will perform the action associated with that work situation only if they think it is acceptable for a child to do; they should not perform it if they think it is not acceptable for a child to do.

Is it child labour? - Activity script

Through the “Basic information” activity, participants have become familiar with problem of child labour: what it is, why it exists, why and how it has to be eliminated. The “Is it child labour” activity builds on the previous one. It is meant to consolidate in a fun and participatory way some of the knowledge acquired but also to look in further depth at some of the worst forms of child labour that are found in conflict situations. In a way, it is a transition to the rest of the Module that will be conflict-centred.



Preparation

- Know the international child labour standards (available on the CD-ROM) and the relevant national legislation, in particular the age of compulsory schooling, the minimum age for admission to employment, the list of hazardous work for children (if applicable).
- Gather information on the child labour situation in your country/area and prepare examples of types of child labour, in particular those resulting directly or indirectly from armed conflict and violence. Find out whether the types of work that children do differ according to their sex.
- Be prepared to use examples that may illustrate the different types of child labour that you will be using in this exercise.



Note to user

Chose any name for the game (instead of Sabra). Why not the name of a participant?

Pay attention to the language used for the instructions. Make sure that what you are saying is understood clearly by the participants.

Adapt the actions that you request the young people to perform with due regard to persons with disabilities.

Note to user

You should be very well prepared for this activity. If you feel you are not familiar enough with the Conventions and that you won't be able to explain why some given children's work situations are child labour or not, think about inviting a resource person (e.g. from the ILO, the Ministry of labour, UNICEF or another child protection agency). If this is not possible, it is best to skip this activity and to move to “Understanding conflict”.

You must not take the risk of sending out the wrong message!

Getting started

Explain the rules of the “Sabra says...” game to the group. The group must stand, scattered around the room, facing the front where you stand. You will shout out instructions and at the same time do the corresponding action. For instance, you will shout “Sabra says: Touch your head!” and will actually touch your head with your hand. The group must follow your instruction only if preceded by “Sabra says”. If you shout out an instruction without “Sabra says” participants must not do it or they will be eliminated from the game. Repeat this several times using different simple instructions. Do it quickly for fun! Now the group is warmed up and knows how to play the game.

The activity

Step 1: Agree with participants on actions that characterize different children's work situations

Prepare some examples of children's work situations. Some examples are listed below but you are encouraged to come up with local examples. Think in particular of examples that are related to armed conflict. There should be a mix of situations that are acceptable and others that would not be acceptable because they are harmful to a child physically or psychologically, or interfere with the schooling, and would therefore constitute child labour; your preparation should help you in deciding about this. Write your own list of children's work situations on the flipchart or blackboard.

Examples of children's work situations:

- Some community members force you and other children to work in the field
- You work in the land of the rich man to pay for the debt he gave to your dad
- You are a spy for the commander of an armed group
- You live in a refugee camp and are pushed to have sex in exchange of food allowances
- You smuggle (arms, food, medicines,...) across the border to sell them to soldiers in the neighbouring country
- You are digging for gold
- You work as a carpenter helping for the reconstruction of your town
- You keep the family shop for a couple of hours after school
- You work as a servant for your cousin in town
- You help mother around the house
- You work on the field removing stones from the land before ploughing

Ask the group to invent an action or mime which corresponds to each of the work situations. For example, being a spy for the commander of an armed group could be associated with the action of looking through a pair of imaginary binoculars.



Note to user

Certain types of child labour are not appropriate to mime out, such as sexual exploitation. You should agree with the group on a sensitive way of miming it that is not suggestive, e.g. put the hands on the hair and mime a frightened face. Also assess whether it is appropriate to discuss sexual exploitation with your participants depending on their age.

Step 2: Play the game "Sabra says..."

Explain to the group that you're going to adapt the "Sabra says..." game. Instead of using the phrase "Sabra says..." you will shout the children's work situations. Participants will perform the action associated with that work situation only if they think

it is acceptable for a child to do; they should not perform it if they think it is not acceptable for a child to do. You will not yet discuss here whether they are right or wrong to refuse doing an action at this stage. You should get more laughs when the participants refuse to do what the facilitator 'orders' them to do!



Step 3: Discussion

The discussion on what has happened during the game is the most important part of this activity. Participants may have a different opinion of what is child labour and what is not (which work situations are acceptable for children and which are not). That does not mean that some of them are right and some of them are not. Some tasks performed by children can be child labour or not depending on the age of the child, the number of hours worked, whether it stops the child going to school or not, leaves time to do his/her homework, whether he/she is in hazardous work, whether he/she works under the supervision of an adult and so on.



Go through the children's work situations listed on the blackboard/flipchart one by one and explain which ones they were right or wrong to refuse doing. Spend some time on each situation for which it is not straightforward to determine whether it is child labour or not. The participants must be taught that it is the right of children to be protected from exploitation and the fact that exploitation happens does not mean that it should be accepted or that it is unavoidable. The main purpose of the activity is "to reinforce understanding of the concept of child labour and the worst forms of child labour" but in the process the participants will also learn that they have rights and that they are entitled to claim their rights.

The table below elaborates on the children's work situations of the game listed in Step 1. If you have used other situations, please be prepared to explain them in the same fashion.

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You and other children are taken to the field for work without possibility to say no	Yes
No one can force you to work, whether they pay you or not, whatever the nature of the work. The coercion can be both physical and psychological. Forced labour is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (a) of ILO Convention No. 182.	
You work in the land of the rich man to pay for the debt he gave to your dad	Yes
Having to work for repaying a debt is a form of slavery and is unacceptable. Bonded labour is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (a) of ILO Convention No. 182.	

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You are a spy for the commander of an armed group	Yes
• The recruitment of a child for use in armed conflict is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (a) of ILO Convention No. 182. It does not matter whether you actually fight and have a gun. You shouldn't be associated in any way to armed forces and groups, not even as cook, porter, messenger, nurse, etc. It does not matter if you enjoy it, feel protected or if you get paid. • If you're less than 15, your commander can be charged and prosecuted for war crime by the International Criminal Court in The Hague	
You live in a refugee camp and are pushed to have sex in exchange of food allowances	Yes
• The use of a child or adolescent below 18 years of age in sexual activities for remuneration or any other form of reward or favour is considered as sexual exploitation (or child prostitution). It is a violation of the human rights of children and is one of the worst forms of child labour (as per article 3 (b) of ILO Convention No. 182, as well as article 19.1 and 34 of the UN Convention on the rights of the Child (CRC) and article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography). • It does not matter how old you are, whether you're paid or not, whether you accept it or not. As a child (that is, under the age of 18) you have the right to be protected against sexual violence or exploitation and those involved in using and recruiting persons under 18 for sexual activities for reward should be denounced, prosecuted and penalized.	
You smuggle (arms, food, medicines,...) across the border to sell them in the neighbouring country	Yes
• Smuggling is an illicit activity. The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (c) of ILO Convention No. 182. All children should be prevented from working or being used in illicit activities. That includes smuggling but also production or trafficking of drugs, organized begging, trafficking of arms, being part of a gang, etc.	

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You are digging for gold • Work in mining is hazardous by nature and is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (d) of ILO Convention No. 182 • It is physically dangerous because of the heavy loads that strain their young bodies; dusts, gases, humidity, toxic substances used, and extreme temperatures that cause short and long term health problems; explosives used in the processes and unstable mining structures that cause accidents; tools and equipment made for use by adults that deform limbs of children.	Yes
You work as a carpenter helping for the reconstruction of your town • You can work as a carpenter as long as you have reached the minimum age for admission to employment in your country and as long as you're not doing hazardous work (for instance dangerous tasks). If the circumstances in which you work as a carpenter are hazardous (e.g. you are told to lay the beams for a roof in the third floor of the building working on unstable scaffold), it is a worst form of child labour until you reach 18 years of age. • You may be trained as a carpenter even before you reach the minimum employment age (at any age if you're trained in school or in an institution and from 14 as an apprentice) and perform work aimed to learn the craft, but the tasks which you perform must be appropriate to your knowledge of the craft and tools and must not harm your health or safety. You should be told how to protect yourself and what to do to avoid accidents and hazards and you should not be left without supervision in the workplace.	Depends
You keep the family shop for a couple of hours after school • As long as you go to school, have time to do your homework and as long as the work is not harmful in any way, helping your family business a bit is not child labour. It may actually be a positive experience as you may acquire some skills (such as keeping accounts) and prepare for your future as a trader. • It will become child labour if you keep the shop at night in a street that is insecure. You would be tired for school the following day. You're also at risk of being robbed.	Depends

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You perform households tasks for your auntie in town	Depends
• You can perform household chores for a family other than your own if you're above the minimum age of admission to work, if the working conditions are good and if the work is not hazardous. • Child domestic workers face many types of hazards in their situation (especially if living-in). Many are under extreme exploitation, often similar to slavery, and this can represent a worst form of child labour. They may work long and tiring days; use toxic chemicals; carry heavy loads; handle dangerous items, such as knives, axes and hot pans; they have insufficient or inadequate food and accommodation, and they may suffer humiliation or degrading treatment, including physical and verbal violence, and sexual abuse. These factors can have an irreversible physical, psychological and moral impact on the development, health and well-being of the child.	
You help mother or father around the house	No
• As long as you go to school and have time to do your homework and as long as the work is not harmful in any way, household work within your own family is not child labour. It is also likely to be a positive experience as you will learn to cook, clean the house, make the laundry or take care of a baby.	
You work in the family plot to grow some vegetables for feeding your family	Depends
• If you work in subsistence agriculture, not for another family or for a company, age-appropriate casual tasks that are of lower risk and do not interfere with a child's schooling and leisure time, can be a normal part of growing up in a rural environment. Indeed, many types of work experience for children can be positive, providing them with practical and social skills for work as adults. Improved self-confidence, self-esteem and work skills are attributes often detected in young people engaged in some aspects of farm work. • But working in the field (or doing other types of tasks) can be child labour if you are working from sun up to sun down, if the tools you are using are sharp and can cause you to lose limb or life, or keeps you from going to school. • Even if you think you are strong enough to lift a very heavy weight or work for very long hours it does not mean you must do it. The body of a child is still developing and is more susceptible to damaging factors than that of an adult. The dangerous effects may be immediately visible (you break a bone) or may take longer time to manifest (your spine gets deformed and you will suffer from back pain for the rest of your days having no money to buy treatment, and you become ultimately handicapped too early in your life and incapable of earning a living).	

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

This activity will be beneficial and equally important for young people in non-conflict situations. In these cases the aim of the activity may be one of the following:

- General awareness on child labour in conflict situations around the globe.
- Awareness on types of child labour in your country/area with particular attention to those related to armed violence and in particular to illegal and illicit activities.

General awareness on child labour in conflict situations around the globe

If your objective is to raise awareness of participants on the child labour in conflict affected areas, including the association of children with armed forces and groups, then you may use the children's work situations proposed under Step 1 of the activity script and add others (through research done by the participants on child labour in conflict and post conflict situation). You will then follow with Step 2 and 3 of the activity script.

Awareness on types of child labour in your country with particular attention to those related to armed violence and in particular to illegal and illicit activities.

You may focus on child labour in your country or locality, particularly to those related to armed violence and crimes. Below is a list of children's work situations that you may use; consider creating your own. You will then follow with Step 2 and 3 of the activity script.

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
Your father sends you and your baby sister begging in the streets	Yes
• No one can force you to work, whether they pay you or not, whatever the nature of the work. The coercion can be both physical and psychological. Forced labour is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (a) of ILO Convention N° 182. • There are situations where children are forced to beg and would suffer violence at home if they do not comply. • Putting children in the street even with the consent of their parents or by the parents themselves, exposes them to risks that are better avoided, affects their morals, most likely prevents children from attending school.	

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You and your friends rob people in the streets using knives	Depends
This is an illegal activity – and you should not do it – but the definition of the worst forms of child labour by the ILO Convention covers this only if you are made by someone to get involved in this kind of activity (crime).	
You don't go to school because you need to keep your clients supplied with drugs at any time of the day	Yes
The ILO C182 article 3(c) indicates that use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties, is a worst form of child labour. Children are involved increasingly as runners and pushers for drug dealers and therefore exploited. The exploitation still stands even if the person below the age of 18 makes money thanks to the illicit activity s/he is carrying out or even if s/he continues going to school.	
You are 15 and wait tables twice a week for two hours after 22:00 in a bar	Yes/ Depends
- You can work as a waiter, so long as you have reached the minimum working age (may be 14, 15 or 16 in your country and as long as you're not carrying out any hazardous work. For instance, if the minimum age in your country is 16 then it is child labour to wait tables at 15. - Even if you have reached the minimum age in your country (for example, the minimum age is 14, and you are 15), night work is likely to be included in the list of hazardous work that is prohibited for under-18, then it would be child labour to wait tables at night at 15. - If the bar is part of a striptease club? serving alcohol? or otherwise unsuitable for under-18? Night work may not be the only reason to consider it as hazardous work. - You may be trained as a waiter even before you reach the minimum employment age (at any age if you're trained in school or in an institution and from 14 as an apprentice) and perform work aimed to learn the craft, but the tasks which you perform must be appropriate to your knowledge of the craft and tools and must not harm your health, safety, or morals. You should be told how to protect yourself and what to do to avoid accidents and hazards and you should not be left without supervision in the workplace.	

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You earn lots of money as a drug mule (for example, carrying sachets of heroin inside your stomach)	Yes
• Drug smuggling is an illicit activity. The use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities is a worst form of child labour as per article 3 (c) of ILO Convention N° 182. All children under-18 should be prevented from being used in illicit activities. That includes smuggling but also producing or trafficking of drugs, organized begging, trafficking of arms, being part of a gang etc. • The exploitation still stands even if the underage person makes money thanks to the activity he/she is carrying out.	
You shop lift once a month for a boss, and get paid for it	Yes
• See above on drug mule	
You help classmates with homework in exchange for gifts or money	No
• Not all gainful (in kind or cash) activity carried out by children is child labour. There are legal (even if informal) ways in which people under the minimum age can make money, while being safe, not abused, and attending school.	
You baby-sit for a neighbour once a week for four hours	No
• Not all activity carried out by children is child labour. The international rules allow legal (even if informal) ways in which people under the minimum age as from 13 years of age (or 12 where the general minimum age is 14) to work on light work as long as it is not harmful, and not hindering attendance at school.	

Children's work situations	Is it child labour?
You work in the farm during cropping season with your family	Depends
• Children can carry out, within their family farms, work that does not jeopardise their health, safety and morals and that does not interfere with schooling. Working for a third person (employer) is different, even if you work next to your parents who are employees. Seasonal work may, however, be permissible as light work for children from 12 or 13 years old, if not harmful and does not interfere with schooling. • If the work however involves prolonged hours, work at heights, under extreme temperatures, use of pesticides, dangerous tools or heavy machinery, etc then this may be child labour even if it is done by adolescents (14-17) or during summer vacations and therefore does not interfere with schooling.	



Understanding conflict: Role-play

What you will need

- ✓ Blackboard or flipchart
- ✓ Any object that can be easily carried by a young person, e.g. a hat
- ✓ A bag of stones or pieces of paper to symbolise money
- ✓ Pens and paper
- ✓ A piece of string or rope to be used as a border on the floor (if the activity is carried out outside a line drawn on the ground will do as well)



Recommended timeframe

Approximately 60 minutes



The aim of this activity

To understand how conflict develops and breaks out while exploring ways to avoid it by using role-play to act out scenarios which can hinder or foster conflict.



The gain:

Participants will discover that conflict is not formless but has a structure and that understanding this structure can aid the quest for peace.

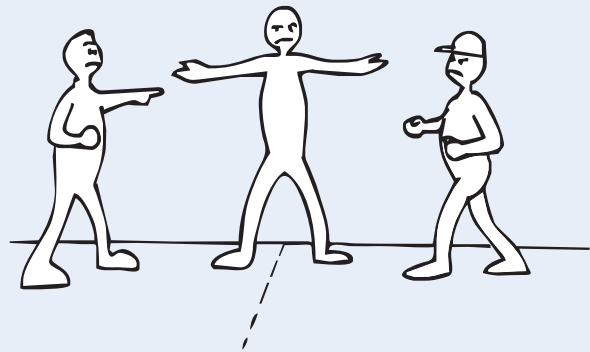
Understanding conflict - Activity summary

Preparation

- Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on conflict and conflict resolution.
- Prepare examples relevant to your country/area of recent or ongoing conflicts and how they were or could be resolved.

Getting started

Elect an observer/s to take notes for the final discussion at the end. Elect a mediator/s to intervene in the role-play with the role of attempting to guide those involved in the conflict in coming to a consensus in which they can collaborate to prevent a conflict from erupting. Divide the rest of the group into pairs who will play out the roles.



The activity

Step 1: Explain the rules of the role-play

- Explain to the participants that one role-player has a hat (or any object) and the other wants to get it. The pair role-plays one trying to get the hat off the other.

Step 2: Run through the chosen scenarios in role-play

- Repeat the role-play many times, with the different pairs taking turns to be on the “stage.”
- Each time, the facilitator adds or takes away various elements that could affect the negotiation and help avoid or stir up a conflict (e.g. giving currency to trade, establishing a boundary, and so on).
- Encourage the mediator to step in at least once in each role-play to see what effect this can have.
- Follow each role-play with a feedback discussion – which elements helped avoid conflict? Which elements contributed to the conflict? Write up the key points on a blackboard/flipchart with the help of the observer/s.

Step 3: Discussion and closure

- Wrap up on a positive note, emphasizing how conflicts can, and often are, resolved through dialogue and negotiation. The group could come up with a few messages for their peers and the community.

Understanding conflict - Activity script

This activity is a fun introduction to the underlying theme of the whole Module – conflict. It is an activity in which the themes of conflict, conflict resolution, conflict prevention, mediation, negotiation and peace will be explored by the young people on the most basic individual level. In understanding these issues on an individual level, the group will begin to comprehend how they relate to their specific situations and countries and will open their minds to the possibility of building peace and preventing future conflict.



A conflict, in its most basic form, is a disagreement between two individuals with diverging interests. Depending upon the specific circumstances surrounding the situation, at the onset the individuals may just disagree but the actions of one of them may lead the other to react in such a way that the disagreement turns into a verbal argument or even a physical fight. What is important to consider is how a differing of interests can be mitigated before it escalates to verbal or physical fighting.

Non-violent conflict resolution is a means to address conflicts that have escalated to the point of violence. However, it is also important to recognize that conflict resolution can also be used at any point during a conflict, whether or not violence has erupted. Conflict resolution aims to address and transform the root causes of a conflict. Some conflict resolution concepts and tools that will be explored and implemented via this activity include conflict prevention, negotiation, mediation and peace.

The fostering of peace has the power to prevent future conflicts, and thus provides the opportunity for all humans to live dignified lives. Every single individual, whether young or old, is able to take part in the process to create and sustain peace by using conflict resolution tools. Humankind should strive to create a culture of peace in which everyone's rights are respected, especially for children and young people because they are the ones that grow up to prevent tomorrow's conflicts. As Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations stated²:

"There is no trust more sacred than the one the world holds with children. There is no duty more important than ensuring that their rights are respected, that their welfare is protected, that their lives are free from fear and want and that they grow up in peace."

Preparation

To prepare for this activity you will need to:

- Read the part of the Information section on conflict and conflict resolution.
- Prepare examples relevant to your country/area of recent or ongoing conflicts and how they were or could be resolved.



Getting started

To start the activity, assign one person to play the role of the mediator and another person to play the role of the observer. Divide the rest of the group into pairs. You can assign more than one observer and mediator, depending on the size of your group. If you have a large group and a limited time for the role plays, ask the group to select two or three pairs and a mediator - the rest of the group will act as observers. It is important to engage girls as well as boys. Find a way to accommodate the shyness of girls and boys if it is an issue but do not exclude them from the role-play because of it.

If this is the first time that your group has tackled role-play, prepare them by running through some of the basic drama rules:

- They are performing the role-plays for an audience
- They must speak loudly, clearly and slowly
- They must apply basic drama techniques such as not turning their backs to the audience
- They should exaggerate all movements and actions
- They must enter into the characters they play and portray them to the best of their ability



Note to user

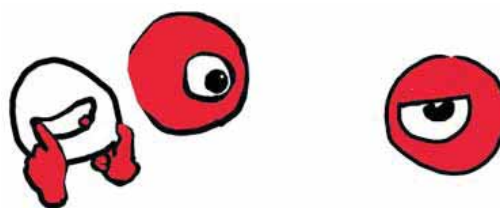
For further guidance on role-plays, refer to the "Role-Play" Module in the original SCREAM Pack which can be found on the CD ROM inserted in this publication. Read carefully the Do's and Don'ts of this Module.

The activity

Step 1: Explain the rules of the role-play

Bring the first pair up on the "stage" (which can simply be an area in the front of the room) and explain the role-play to the group. One of the role-players will be given something that the other wants, such as a hat. The pair role-plays one trying to get the object from the other. Explain that you will add different elements that will change the dynamics between the two – for example by giving one some money to negotiate with. Explain to the mediator/s that they can intervene at any point in the role-play – their role is to

attempt to prevent a conflict erupting. Mediators play a very important role in conflict resolution, acting as a neutral third party, they intervene to help the parties to come to an agreement to resolve a dispute or to put a stop to violence after it has broken out. Explain to the observer/s that their role is to take notes to capture what is going on in the role-plays, in particular how the introduction of new elements effects the possibility of conflict arising. If the participants are illiterate, ask your observer/s to be prepared to summarise what is going on by capturing and remembering key words or drawing simple images.



Step 2: Run through the chosen scenarios in role-play

Below are examples of different scenarios you can combine and run through with the pairs (you may add others). For example, with one pair, you may start with no communication allowed. After a few minutes stop them and tell them they can now speak as well. See how this affects the negotiations

for the object. You can use a variety of combinations with the pairs to show how introducing new elements can have an effect on the likelihood of conflict erupting. If you have limited time and can only run the role-play with one or two pairs, you may choose to run through all the scenarios with each of the pairs.

Scenario 1 “Differing interests and no communication”: Give one young person an object, tell the other person he/she wants it and must get it but they cannot speak. Soon they will be acting one trying to get the object, the other resisting. If it gets to a ‘play-fight’ stop the action and ask the audience what has happened.



Note to user

There might be a rule that no one can actually touch to ‘fight’, they can only clap the air towards an adversary to signify a blow. Wait until things have gotten out of hand before imposing this rule – even real wars have rules!

Scenario 2 “Differing interests and communication”: The actors can speak and try to make their point about having the object or obtaining something for it (at any cost). The ‘play-fight’ will take longer to develop. Stop the action and explain to the group that, with language and communication, protagonists have a better chance of negotiating and avoiding conflict.

Scenario 3 “Differing interests and boundaries”: Put a piece of string/rope or draw a line between the two to represent a border. Observe and see if negotiations continue until one or the other crosses the border. Would this be a violation of some existing rule? (Personal space? Accepted rules of what is “mine” and what isn’t? Violation of a national border? Does a border help?).

Scenario 4 “Differing interests and exchange”: Give the one without the object some “money” (bag of stones or pieces of paper) that can be exchanged for the object. Does having something to trade with help negotiations? Does this avoid conflict and preserve a peaceful relationship? Could it restore peace if it were broken?

Scenario 5 “Differing interests and lack of goodwill”: Give the one without the object some “money” that may be exchanged for the object and tell her to run away as soon as she gets the object without paying for it. What about laws? How important are rules? How can they be enforced? When does money help or hinder? What about greed?



Remember to ask the mediator to intervene at any point in role-playing the above scenarios. How did the mediator change the situation? Was he/she strong? Was he/she able to remain neutral and help the parties find a way to satisfy their interests without affecting the other negatively?

Note to user

If things seem to get out of hand use this to your advantage and point out how easy it is for situations to turn violent. Continue then to discuss what can be done to prevent violence and conflict, putting it in the broader context relevant to the country you are working in.

After each role-play, ask the group to analyse what happened. Ask the observer/s to report back on what was noted during the role-plays. See how different elements can affect the process and bring about conflict or its resolution. Make sure to stay in control to ensure that the comments are mature and positive and never allow feedback that will humiliate anyone. Write up significant words on the blackboard/flipchart. By the end you may have a list which looks something like this:

- Fight – no language – anger (emotions)
- Language – communication
- Boundaries – respect for the others

- The law
- Resources? Poverty?
- Power relationships
- Mediator – strong – weak?
- Peace – conflict

The list may change. This is only a guide. But the list will allow you to point out the various stages as the role-play developed. You can remind the participants of how, for example, a mediator can be more or less effective depending on his/her ability to create bridges between the two parties.

Step 3: Discussion and closure



Conclude by asking the group what impact the role-plays had on them, how did they feel about the actions of the role-players? What did they learn and how did it make them feel about conflict? Did it make them feel powerless or did they feel like they wanted to do something to resolve the situation?

At the end of the activity it is important to conclude by acknowledging that conflicts may arise, and that the underlying causes may or may not be controlled, but a solution can always be sought through communication, dialogue and negotiation. Encourage the group to come up with some messages for their peers and the community.

Some groups may be able to treat this activity as a game, while others may experience deep trauma and find insecurities resurfacing. Concluding with a song or dance, poem or quiet drawing may be more appropriate for a group that has experienced violence.

*"There is an Icelandic word, frekja, which has no direct translation in the English language, but applies to pushiness, greed, cheek and nerve. To elbow your way to the front of a line is 'frekja'. To snatch a toy from your sibling is 'frekja'. To think that you have the right to cause others pain, mental or physical, is 'frekja'. I believe that 'frekja', mixed with overbearing behaviour, is the cause of war."*³

Young woman, 16, Iceland

3 Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Global Youth Action Network, UNICEF, UNFPA and Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children: *Will you listen?" Young voices from conflict zones* (UNICEF, 2007)

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

As mentioned previously, the type of conflict referred to in this module is armed conflict. For young people living in areas not affected by armed conflict, this activity remains valid. It can be used to look at situations of violence and conflict relevant to their local environment, e.g. gang violence and bullying.

Another option is to suggest that the participants put themselves in the shoes of the parties involved in an armed conflict. Adapting the activity in this way would allow youth in non-conflict countries to learn more about parties involved in armed conflicts and how conflicts are resolved. It will help them to better understand the complexity of the issues and to begin to think about ways in which to prevent future conflicts.

Divide the students into groups of 10. Assign research roles to every two students so that they can work together. Ask the group to select a contemporary armed conflict or one that has recently ended.

- Pair One: Research the armed force or group.
- Pair Two: Research the opposing party (often the government).
- Pair Three: Research the role of the mediator if one intervened at some point during the conflict. If not, have them research what role a mediator could play in the negotiations surrounding this particular conflict.
- Pair Four: These two participants will serve as observers in the role play, but for the research portion they could be asked to research the peace process if there has been one.

You may choose to ask the participants to play the parts they have researched. Rather than acting out the conflict, you would ask them to act out a meeting regarding the ceasing of the armed conflict and movement towards a peace process, essentially the negotiation of peace.

If relevant to the context and the background of the group, the activity can be taken one step further with the aim of building an understanding on how young people in non-conflict situations can raise awareness on violence and conflict and foster a culture of peace. The group can make their messages public through a drama or an awareness campaign. Below are some suggestions on how to proceed.

Recap through group discussion:

- What 'peace' means.
- What conflict prevention and conflict resolution entail.
- Who the main players in conflict resolution at the international level are.
- Who represents their country/local area in conflict resolution processes.

Discuss under the guidance of the facilitator how they (as an organized civic group) could:

- educate themselves and their peers to become advocates for peace
- mobilise public support for peace and conflict resolution
- influence the decisions of their representatives in favour of peace

Decide what kind of awareness-raising campaign they would like to conduct in their school or community, with one main event such as a drama, debate or concert. Prepare the messages, leaflets, location, contact the partners to be involved in the event. After the event, discuss its impact and any further actions to be taken.



Who are they? The image

What you will need

- ✓ Images of the different roles children can play in armed forces and groups. Refer to "Set One" images provided with this Module
- ✓ Paper, pencil and crayons to make notes and draw pictures



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes

The aim of the activity:

To explore the roles of children associated with armed forces and groups by using images and to understand the negative aspects of such a life.



The gain:

Participants will become aware that children associated with armed forces and groups may have other roles than just fighting. They will also understand what life is like within armed forces and groups.

Who are they? - Activity summary

Preparation

- Have the images related to the different roles children can play in armed forces and groups available and read the case studies provided with this Module.

Getting started

Arrange the participants into small groups of four or five.

The activity

Step One: Creating the profiles

- Distribute one image per group with some information to put the images in context. Refer to the case studies provided with this Module for inspiration.
- Explain that they are to consider what might be happening to these children.



Step Two: What if...? Negative outcome

- Ask the groups to prepare a narrative of what might be happening in the images with a negative outcome.
- Ask the groups to present their narratives to each other.

Step Three: What if...? Positive outcome

- Ask the groups to prepare a narrative of what might be happening in the images with a more positive outcome.
- Ask the groups to present their narratives to each other.
- The facilitator can invite the groups to prepare an additional narrative combining the negative and positive aspects and outcomes.

Step Four: Final discussion

- Lead an open discussion but conclude with reassurances, if needed, that such roles may be a combination of challenges and some positive outcomes.

Who are they? - Activity script

The group will explore the wide variety of roles children in armed forces and groups are often expected to fulfil through an “image” activity. Armed forces and groups may recruit or use children to take part directly in hostilities as child fighters or fulfil various other tasks. Common tasks that children perform include patrolling, serving as bodyguards, cooks, porters and scouts. Additionally, girls are often forced to be “wives” for commanders and suffer from sexual exploitation and abuse.



The group will be encouraged to create stories based on the images and develop likely scenarios showing the probable negative aspects of life in armed forces and groups. This part of the activity aims to show that life within armed forces and groups has many negative implications. The activity ends by considering some possible alleviating factors – the aim here is to demonstrate that even the most difficult of situations can have some alleviating aspects so as not to leave young people who have been involved in armed forces and groups with a sense of despair. Life in an armed forces and groups is different for every child and is likely to be characterised by many different aspects, as reflected in the excerpt below:

“Life for children with the CPN (Maoist) appears harsh, though most children reported that they had been treated fairly with little or no gender discrimination. Some girls have reported sexual abuse but few complaints are made openly for fear of social ostracism. Some cases of beatings and harsh punishments, including hard labour, have been reported. Children who try to escape are beaten for hours. Most children procure basic food from households in villages where they camp but those being prepared for battles are provided a non-vegetarian diet by their commanders.”⁴

Armed conflict indirectly induces worst forms of child labour by affecting the “supply” and “demand” factors. Movements of population, separation from families, loss of parents, increased poverty, destruction of schools are some of the many consequences of armed conflict that will push a child to work as a coping mechanism. In conflict affected areas, the weak law enforcement, the culture of impunity, the dismantling of communities and loss of traditional systems and values are worsening the situation. As a result, children work in streets, are sexually exploited, are trafficked, work in illicit activities, in mining and other hazardous work. There are also situations where armed forces and groups are involved in some economic activity, such as mining or agriculture, and would force the local population, including children, to work for them, often without being paid.

The activity can be adapted to consider other worst forms of child labour in conflict situations by exploring the types of worst forms of child labour children are engaged in your area and building profiles and stories based on these. You will find images of child labour in the original SCREAM Pack on the CD ROM. You can also search and download images from the ILO photo gallery (see the Useful sources of information section), or even simply draw your own.

4 Charu Lata Hogg: *Child Recruitment in South Asian Conflicts: A Comparative Analysis of Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh* (Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2006)

Preparation

To prepare for this activity you will need to:

- Gather information on the use of children in armed conflict in your area.
- Have the images related to the different roles children can play in armed forces and groups available.
- Read the case studies provided with this Module.



Getting started

Divide the group into small groups of four or five individuals. You might consider splitting up friends who tend to stick together. This is not to make individuals feel uncomfortable or destabilized, but it is about beginning to make a more cohesive and dynamic group. The facilitator should judge.

Distribute one image per group. There are drawings of children in armed forces and groups provided with this Module ("Set One" images):

- (Child) fighter (boy or girl)
- (Child) fighter (girl)
- Porter (boy or girl) - Africa
- Porter (boy or girl) - Asia
- Cook (boy or girl)
- Scout (boy or girl)
- Messenger (boy or girl)
- Sexual exploitation (boy or girl)
- "Wife"

This definition was agreed by the international community. These are more than words, it is also a way to ensure that all children associated with an armed force or group are released and receive reintegration services and not only those who fought.

Children may be performing other tasks (bodyguard, care to the sick and wounded, vehicle checks, domestic chores, guarding prisoners, etc.). There is no reason not to include them if their inclusion advances the topic. It is also not always necessary to use the images in this pack for inspiration. Participants can draw their own or just imagine them!

A child associated with an armed force or armed group refers to any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities. This is why we have to avoid using the term "child soldiers".

Once the groups are assembled and have their images in front of them, distribute pens and paper and explain to them that they are to use their imaginations to create a story behind the image. The purpose of this activity is for the participants to learn and recognise the different roles carried out by children and identify scenarios which may occur to a young person who joins armed forces and groups.

The activity

Step One: Creating the profiles

The facilitator explains that the groups are to consider what might be happening to 'characters' in the images. Provide them with just a little bit of information to put the images into context (refer to the case studies provided with this Module for inspiration and do your own research). Encourage the groups to start by building a profile of the child by asking questions, such as:

- Is the child a girl or a boy?
- How old do you think the child is?
- Why is the child equipped or dressed in such a way?
- What time of day is it?
- What is he or she doing?
- Do you think he or she goes to school?
- Does the child look scared, hungry or alone?
- Does he or she have any friends?
- What do you think he or she is thinking and feeling?
- Etc...



This will help the groups to start to empathize with the character and builds up to the second Step of this activity, making up stories behind the images. This Step in the activity is closely related to "Building a profile of a child labourer" in "The Image" module in the original SCREAM Pack (available on the CD ROM). It would be useful to read it before conducting this activity.

Step Two: What if...? Negative outcome

In the second step of this activity, the groups will be asked to make up stories based on the profiles they have established, considering the negative implications of being in armed forces or groups. You should stress that children associated with armed forces and groups may have multiple roles, for example are a porter at one point and then are later fighting on the front-line.

Once you have explained this step, quietly suggest some new information to each group about the image that they possess. Here are some examples:



- You are sent to the front-line and fear for your life (fighter)
- You are forced to do bad things and are afraid (all)
- You are deprived of food and beaten (all)
- You have to walk for many hours carrying guns and ammunition (porter)
- You look out for the enemy and are afraid of being captured and shot (scout)
- You cook for everyone but are still hungry and afraid (cook)
- You are tired and cold (all)
- You are forced to take drugs and drink alcohol (all)

Note to user

If your group includes children who have been associated with armed forces and groups, be careful how you distribute the images. Some of the group may have experienced these situations. You must find out as much as possible about the background of all the individuals in your group and be sensitive to what they have been through. For example, if there are girls in your group that have been associated with armed forces and groups, it is likely that they have been victims of sexual exploitation and it would not be appropriate to ask them to create a story based on these images. You must, at all times, have someone you can refer children to if they need immediate counselling.

- You are often sick and your injuries are not treated (all)
- You are sexually abused and afraid you have HIV/AIDS (all)
- You are sexually abused by your “protector” (“wife”)
- You’re victim of corporal punishment and deprivation (all)
- You can’t go home and see your family (all)
- Etc...

"The food was bad and the meals irregular; we ate once in three days. When we stole cattle, the adults got the best pieces while the children had to be content with the bones."⁵

Patience, Burundi

Ask the groups to discuss among themselves and to create a short story or ‘narrative’ based on the character. Make sure that pens, paper and crayons are available in case the groups would like to make notes or tell their stories with drawings.

Ask the groups to present their narratives to each other. They can select one of the group members to present or may prefer to divide the presentation of the story between different individuals in the group.

At this stage, the dangers of being associated with armed forces and groups should be clear to all of the young people present.

Step Three: What if...? Positive outcome

Now the facilitator suggests new information about the ‘characters,’ this time with more alleviating outcomes. The purpose of this step is to not leave the group with a sense of despair, especially if your group includes one or more children who have been associated with armed forces and groups. Some examples are listed below:



- You manage to avoid the worst danger
- You feel part of a community, make friends, meet your wife/husband
- You are favoured as a “mascot”
- You feel valuable to the armed force or group
- You feel that your situation is better than the one you left behind (you feel safer, you eat, etc.)
- You have a defender
- You acquire some skills (cook, care giver to the sick and wounded, etc.)
- Etc...

Some roles have little to recommend them. Ingenuity and sensitivity will be needed here. If the group are having difficulty in coming up with alleviating outcomes, try to find some quotes, like the one below, to stimulate the discussion:

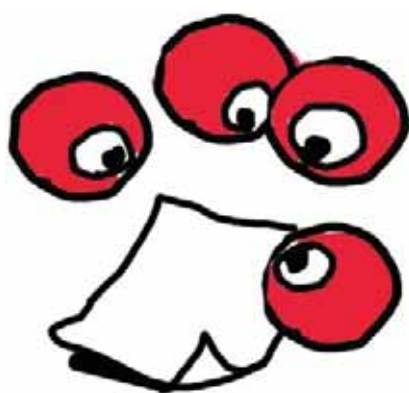
Note to user

If you are asking the young people to brainstorm who they think the characters might be, be imaginative! Why not have the facilitator roll up a piece of paper into a ball, stand facing away from the group and throw the ball over your shoulder. Whoever catches the paper has to think of the next character or make a statement relevant to the topic!

*"The atmosphere was bad on days when we had to fight because we were afraid of being wounded or killed. We were very brave but were still afraid. And for me, the days when we didn't have to engage in combat, it was good. I was like a bourgeois in peace."*⁶

Luc, 17, Congo

Although there may be some alleviating outcomes, the groups must understand that there is nothing good about being in armed forces and groups.



The groups devise and present their narratives as before.

If time permits the facilitator can invite the groups to prepare an additional narrative combining the negative and alleviating aspects and outcomes. This could then be built up into a little play and presented to a wider audience (see drama activity in the section on "Becoming agents of social change: awareness raising in the community.")

Step 4: Final discussion

The session can finish with summing up or, if time permits, open discussion (or, of course, quiet reflection). Remember that some individuals may have experienced these scenarios or could have similar experiences in the future. It is thus important to finish up on a positive note as there is little point in leaving them pessimistic and with no hope.



Note to user

Encourage the groups to be creative. If they want to present their narratives as mimes, you, as facilitator, might permit this, rather than appointing a representative from the group to narrate the stories. But beware! Mimes often get very long!

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

This activity can also be used as a general awareness-raising exercise for young people in non-conflict situations by asking the group to use their imagination to put themselves in the place of the children in the images. The group may not be aware of the very dangerous situations children in conflict situations often find themselves in. They may have heard of children fighting in wars, but will probably not have a clear idea of the multiple roles of children associated with armed forces and groups as, for example, front-line fighters, porters, cooks or messengers, to mention just a few. Follow through the steps outlined in the activity above, encouraging the group to imagine what it would be like to be that child shown in the image.

Alternatively, this activity can be adapted to focus on the types of child labour prevalent in your area related to violence and crime, such as drug dealing or stealing as a member of a gang. In this case, ask the group to draw their own images of the different roles and tasks carried out by children. Then follow the steps of the activity outlined above, using the drawings the group came up with to build profiles and narratives with negative and positive outcomes.



Why join up? Five minutes mime!

What you will need

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk
- ✓ Pens and paper



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes



The aim of the activity:

To use drama alongside the transmission of information to explore what might motivate children to join armed forces and groups and what might actually happen to them once they have joined.



The gain:

Participants will become aware that joining armed forces and groups eventually results in situations far worse than anticipated.

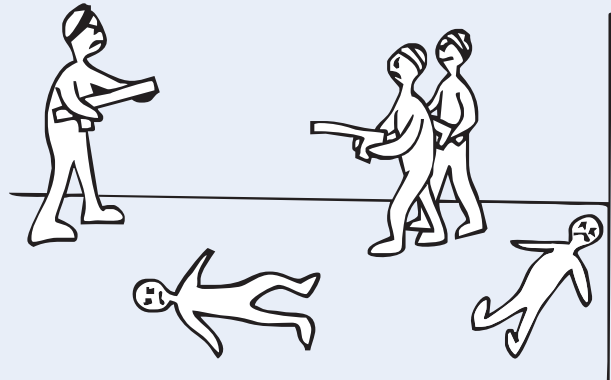
Why join up? - Activity summary

Preparation

- Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on recruitment of children by armed forces and groups.

Getting started

Start by asking the group to recap what they have learnt so far through the activities. Introduce the "Why join up?" activity.



The activity

Step 1: 1st Brainstorm

- Refer back to the characters established in the previous activity and ask the group what motivations these characters could have to become a member of armed forces or groups.
- Take a moment to make a note privately of the best reasons from the brainstorm and write them on separate pieces of paper.

Step 2: 1st Five minutes mimes

- Arrange participants into small groups of 4 or 5 and hand each group a slip of paper with a reason for joining up on it (or whisper it to them).
- Give groups five minutes to prepare their mimes.
- Create a stage area for each group to perform their mime in front of the other groups.
- The other groups must guess the characters and which reasons for joining up are being acted out. Some discussion should result.

Step 3: 2nd Brainstorm

- Ask the group to brainstorm why the reasons for joining will have negative consequences.
- Note the scenarios on separate pieces of paper.

Step 4: 2nd Five minutes mimes

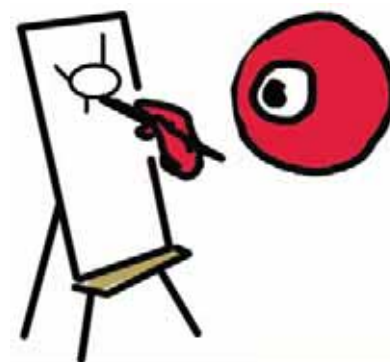
- Groups create new mimes, this time demonstrating these scenarios.
- Again these mimes are discussed by the whole group.

Step 5: Final discussion

- Emphasise how joining armed forces and groups may seem attractive at first but most often leads to unfortunate consequences.
- You could ask the group to write a poem or a narrative picture based on what has been covered so far.

Why join up? - Activity script

While some children are forced to join armed forces and groups and others are abducted, an alarming number take the decision to join. This activity looks at the reasons why young boys and girls may decide to join armed forces and groups. The group will explore the “perceived gains” of joining up through a brainstorming and mime activity. They will then be encouraged to delve deeper and imagine the “actual scenarios”, that is the consequences of life in armed forces and groups.



The nature of the activity suggests that there is an element of “choice”, however, as explained below, the “choice” has to be viewed in the overall context that the child is living in, and, as such, is generally not exercised freely.

“In recent years armies, rebels, paramilitary and militia groups all over the world have recruited hundreds of thousands of child soldiers.... Child soldiers are recruited by conscription, abduction, or coercion. In addition, youth also present themselves for service. It is misleading, however, to consider this voluntary. While young people may appear to choose military service, the choice is not exercised freely. They may be driven by any of several forces, including cultural, social, economic or political pressures. Once recruited, they take on support functions and fighting roles that entail great risk and hardship.”⁷

Children are vulnerable to recruitment due to the fact that armed conflict has devastated their communities, separating them from their families, obstructing their access to basic necessities and services and forcing them out of school prematurely. These children are left without alternatives and many join out of necessity and survival because the armed forces and groups may appear to offer a safe haven, supply children with food and may even be viewed as a chance to have a family when one has lost his/her family.

Evidence from Colombia indicates that most children who join armed forces and groups do it based on their own initiative. However, behind their own initiatives are factors including ideology, revenge, economic pressures, culture and survival. For example, Jose reveals the cultural reasons driving him to take the initiative to join and states:

“A cousin of mine, who was about to leave, asked me why we weren’t going together. I told him that I wasn’t going, and until then my mind had been made up. The day I decided to join them was when they came with a slightly older woman. I had talked to her the first time, and I really liked her. So I went with them because I really fancied her, but there was something else as well. She gave me a weapon to hold, and I could wear a uniform. I felt big and strong. If I had a weapon, I thought, people would look up to me.”⁸

This activity can and should also be used to consider why children decide to engage in other worst forms of child labour in conflict affected areas, depending on the context and the background of the group you are working with.

7 Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF. *Machel Study 10-year Strategic Review, Children and Conflict in a Changing World* (New York, 2009)

8 War Child International: *Child Soldiers: The shadow of their existence* (War Child International, 2007)

Preparation

This activity follows on and builds on the previous “Who are they?” activity. Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on recruitment of children in armed forces and groups. Every situation is different. Make sure that you are aware of the situation in your country, which armed forces and groups recruit children and the main methods of recruitment.



Getting started

At this stage in the Module, it would be useful to run through what has been covered so far on children and armed conflict. Ask the group to recap what they have learnt through the previous activities. They should come up with a list looking something like this:

- How conflicts affect children.
- How conflicts break out and the elements that can exacerbate or help resolve conflicts.
- The wide variety of roles children play in armed forces and groups and how this affects them.
- What we mean by children associated with armed forces and groups.

This will help you to take stock of how much the group have absorbed and ensure that they have understood the key messages that should have been transmitted through the activities. If any gaps arise, take the time to go back and explore the issues further.

Next, introduce the “Why join up?” activity. Explain that the purpose of this activity is to look at the different reasons why children may choose to join armed forces and groups. Understanding the different reasons for joining and thinking through what could happen to them will help young people to realise that their actions can have consequences that they may not initially foresee.

Make sure that you recognise that, in many circumstances, armed forces and groups may have abducted children or forced them to join, but that this is not always the case. Many children take the decision to join up. However, when the seemingly personal decisions are analysed, it becomes clear that they were taken under duress and that the children were unaware of the consequences.

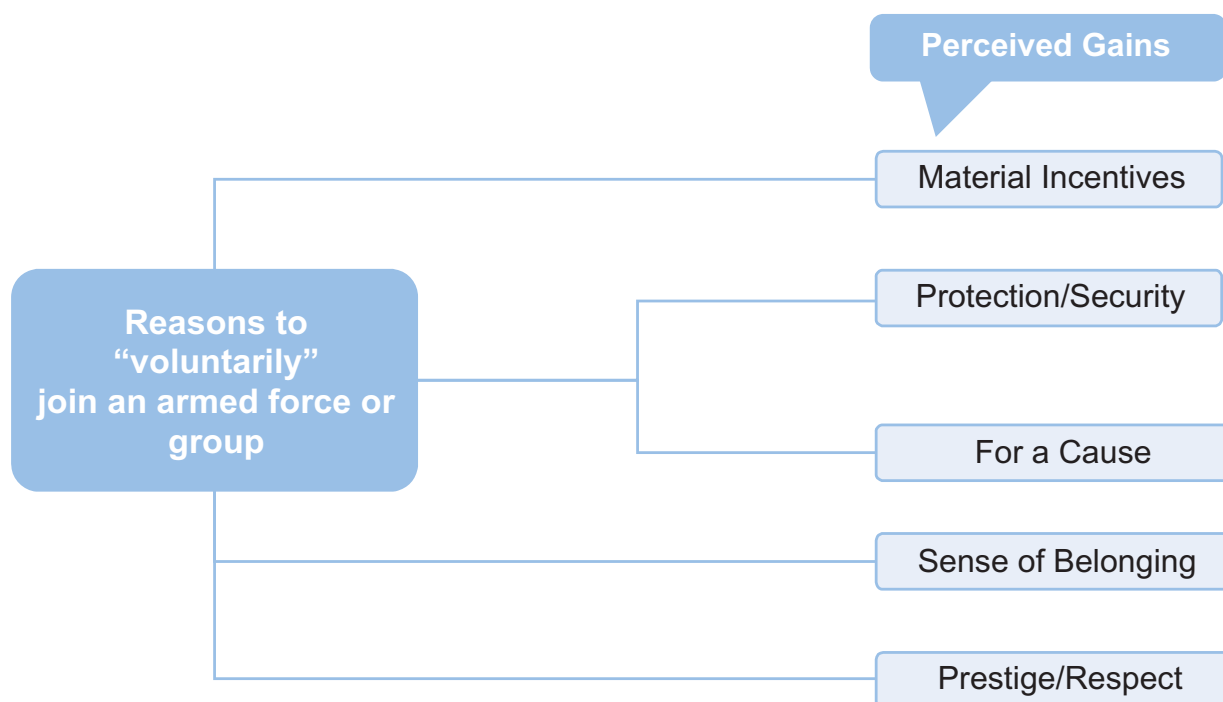
The activity

Step 1: 1st Brainstorm

Begin by reminding the group of the characters identified in the previous activity (fighter, porter, 'wife' and so on). You could write these up on the blackboard/flipchart. Draw pictures if needed, or refer to the images used in the previous activity. Tell the group to assume that it was a personal decision of these characters to become member of an armed force or group and ask what could be their motivations to do so.

Use a flipchart/blackboard to write up the results of the brainstorm. If appropriate, ask someone from the group to volunteer to write the notes. At the end of the brainstorm, take a moment to write the reasons on separate pieces of paper (for use in Step 2 of this activity).

It is possible that the group will give you reasons for joining an armed force/group that they think you want to hear. For example they may give 'food' as a reason – admittedly an accepted very common reason for joining up – but not mention the imagined prestige of carrying a gun. Encourage the group to recognise the full range of reasons for joining up.



Step 2: 1st Five minutes mimes

Once the brainstorm is finished, arrange the participants into small groups of 4 or 5. Distribute one piece of paper with a reason for joining up to each group (or whisper reasons to the groups if they are illiterate).

Each group now has been reminded of the characters identified in the previous activity and has a reason for joining armed forces and groups. Encourage them to link a character with the reason they have been given. For example, a porter may sign up because he thinks it will give him security. This link is being made just for the purpose of the activity. In practice, there is no link between specific roles children carry out in armed forces and groups and the reasons for which they join up.



Give the groups 5 minutes to prepare their mimes developing this theme. Remember a mime is an act where people perform a continuous play of short scenes without making any sounds – it is the body and the facial expressions that do the talking.

Ask the groups to perform the mimes to the rest. The others have to guess the characters and circumstances of the mime, in particular the reasons why the child joined the armed forces or group.

Step 3: 2nd Brainstorm

As a second step, conduct a brainstorm with your group to identify why the reasons for joining will have negative consequences. For example, a child joins for protection, but his/her protector dies and he/she is exposed to abuse by the other soldiers. Another example is that children join up for a wage and are never paid!

This diagram below illustrates some of the consequences that may be revealed during your brainstorm. These consequences are linked to the perceived gains of joining an armed force or group.

During the brainstorming, note the actual scenarios on separate pieces of paper.

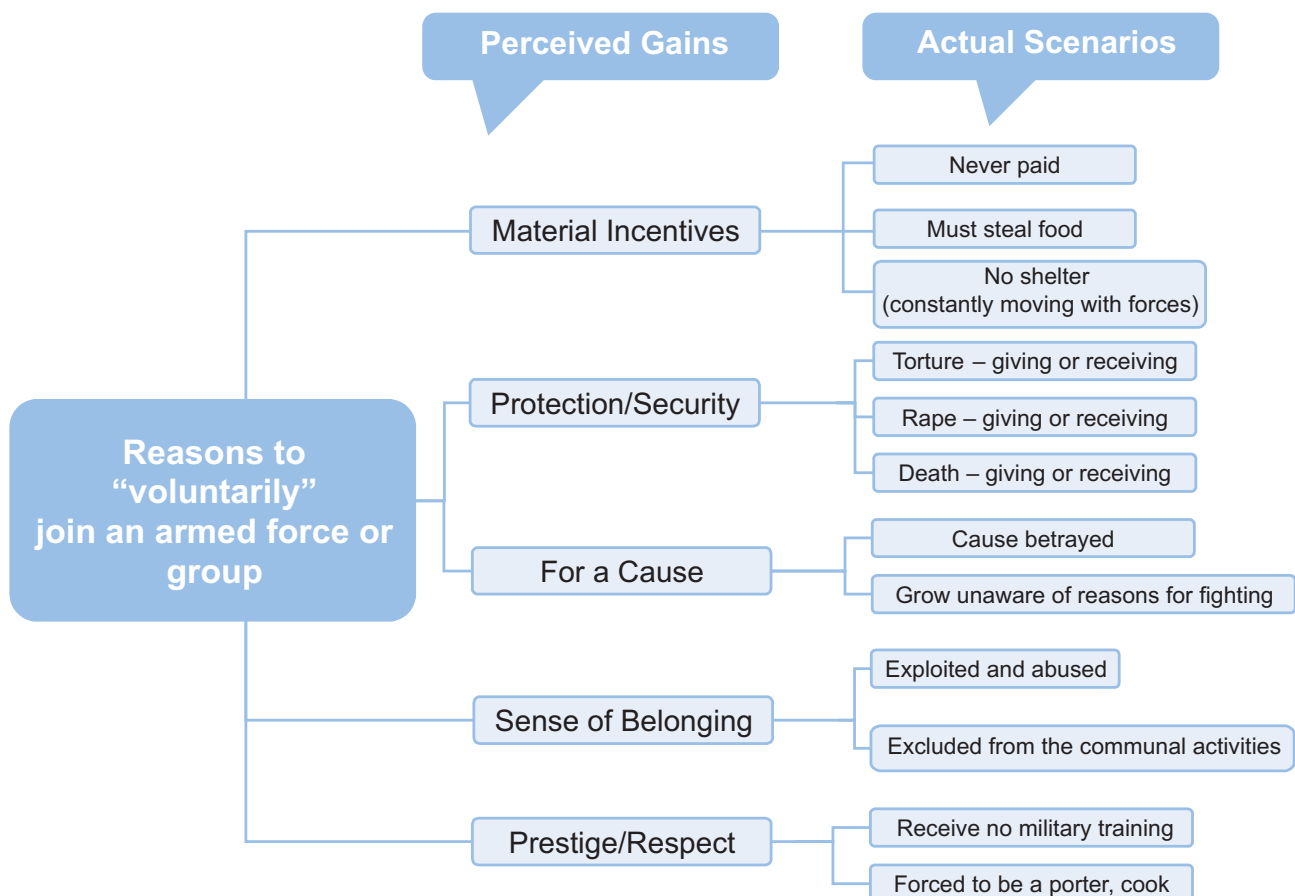
Step 5: 2nd Five minute mimes

Again the facilitator hands out or whispers the actual scenarios to the groups to prepare their mimes and present them to the other groups.



Note to user

When the groups perform the mimes, they might get carried away and start playing 'guns', enjoying the excitement of shooting and 'playing dead'. This is a good opportunity for you to teach them an important lesson. They are playing roles of adversaries shooting each other because of the attraction of guns and excitement. But they joined up for real reasons, like hunger or lack of work. The facilitator can ask them to repeat the mimes, wiser now in the light of what they have just realised.



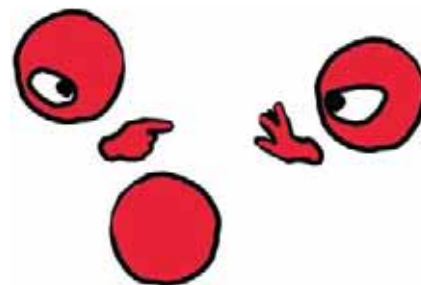
Take care when giving the different scenarios to the groups! Perhaps someone in that group has actually experienced something very similar and it would not be the case to make him/her re-live this.

Step 6: Final discussion

Lead a discussion of what has happened. Encourage the group to understand that the reasons for joining up were only perceived gains and were unlikely to persist. The actual scenarios are much more likely. Ask the group to write a poem, or draw a narrative picture of a young person who might have experienced the narratives explored in the Module so far: difficult home circumstances, running away/abduction/recruitment, becoming a young person in armed forces and groups and the consequences of such a life style.

Post all the poems and pictures up directly on the blackboard/flipchart and then draw a decorative border framing them all. You have made an instant exhibit! If you want to take this a step further, link with the art activity in the section on "Becoming agents of social change: awareness raising in the community."

Remind them that it is not all bad, but that joining up may eventually result in situations far worse than expected. Tell them that although they may feel alone and afraid, there are organizations/groups/people that they can turn to in their community for help if they are faced with such situations. This will be explored in the next activity.



Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

This activity will work equally well for young people as an awareness-building exercise in areas not affected by armed conflict. If you have sufficient time, encourage the group to carry out their own research on the reasons why children join armed forces and groups. There are many useful documents and websites (see the Useful sources of information section). If time is more limited, organise a structured brainstorming session, which could be organised in the following way:

Ask a member of the group to read out the excerpt below on the consequences of armed conflict on children.

*"The impact (of armed conflict) on children is more brutal than ever. War violates every right of the child. The direct consequences of war have received improved attention in the last decade – unlawful recruitment, sexual violence, displacement, killing and maiming, separation from family, trafficking and illegal detention. But in addition to these effects, the indirect consequences of war – including the loss of basic services, such as water, sanitation, health and education, as well as the rise of poverty, malnutrition and disease – have an equally horrific impact on children. Yet they are often overlooked. The impact of armed conflict on children perpetuates poverty, illiteracy and early mortality, robbing children of their families, security, education, health and opportunities for development. Whether as a cause or consequence conflict is a significant obstacle to achievement of the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals."*⁹

Hand out the case studies provided with this Module and give the group enough time to read them and reflect. Then encourage the group to put themselves in the shoes of children in areas affected by armed conflict and brainstorm the different reasons why children might join armed forces and groups.

Stimulate the debate by writing on the flipchart or blackboard some key situations children in war conflict affected areas might find themselves in and encourage the group to think about how these could influence a child's decision to join an armed force and group, for example:

- Orphaned by HIV/AIDS
- Separated from their families by the conflict
- Domestic violence
- Extreme poverty
- Parents/family killed by one of the rebel groups
- No schools, lack of opportunities
- Etc.

Proceed with the rest of the activity (Steps 2 to 6) as described in the activity script, based on the group imagining what it is like for children in these situations.

Again, this activity can also be adapted to focus on the types of child labour prevalent in your area related to violence and crime. For example, brainstorm the reasons why children may choose to join a gang and conduct the mimes based on the "perceived gains" and "actual scenarios".

9 Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF. *Machel Study 10-year Strategic Review*. op. cit.



The information centre: Role-play

What you will need

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk
- ✓ Pens and paper
- ✓ Images related to who children and young people can turn to for help. Refer to "Set Two – The information centre" images provided with this Module



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes.



The aim of the activity:

To use role-play alongside the transmission of information to explore how to seek help and from whom when children risk being recruited by armed forces and groups.



The gain:

Participants will be informed that help is available to children even in the most difficult circumstances and will have identified where this help might come from.

The information centre - Activity summary

Preparation

- Have the images (Set 2) related to who children can turn to for help available.
- Be aware of the specific organizations/groups/people children can turn to for help in your local context.

Getting started

Explain the aim of the activity – to know who to turn to for help in times of need. Divide the group into two smaller groups. One group are the children seeking advice, the other group represent people who may offer advice, for example friends, teachers, parents, NGOs, etc.



The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm/discussion

- Think of a real or imagined situation where armed forces or groups, war or conflict is approaching a locality.
- Brainstorm and discuss who children could turn to for help (use the “Information Centre” images if you wish, or ask the group to draw their own images).
- Discover that different people may give different types of help or advice.

Step 2: The information centre role-play

- Divide the group into two sub-groups – one group will be playing the parts of the information-givers the other group of the information-seekers.
- Role-play a situation where the information seekers are acting out the roles of children seeking advice and the information-givers are acting out the roles of people who may offer advice, such as friends, family or representatives from community-based child protection groups.
- Reverse roles, move people around and experiment with different scenarios.

Step 3: Conclusion

Conclude with discussion or quiet reflection using drawing, poetry or another creative activity.

The Information centre - Activity script



This activity aims to equip young people who are living in areas affected by conflict with awareness and knowledge of who they can turn to for help and advice if they are faced with a situation where they risk being recruited into armed forces and groups.

The young people may only know what is happening as a jumble of events. However, this activity aims to enable them to understand better the events around them and know how to seek help and from who. If you are considering other worst forms of child labour in conflict situations, this activity is equally useful to show the young people who they can turn to for help if they are at risk of entering such situations.

Different structures exist at the community level to protect children and young people and in this activity you should be aware of what exists in your area and how accessible the different channels are. In addition to the formal structures, namely those linked to local government agencies, community-based child protection mechanisms are increasingly being developed to address child protection in emergency, transitional and development contexts worldwide. Such community-based groups are given diverse names, such as child protection committees, child welfare committees or community watch groups. They are mainly composed of people who are influential in the community, such as parents, school teachers, community leaders, employers and sometimes include representatives of children's groups. These grassroots groups are proving to be an effective means of mobilising communities around children's protection and wellbeing. Such groups can play an important role in preventing the recruitment of children into armed forces and groups and in helping formally recruited children to reintegrate into civilian life.

Preparation

Before you start this activity make sure that you have the "Information centre" images (Set 2) provided with this Module available. Select the ones that are relevant to your local context. You should be aware of the specific organizations/groups/people children can turn to for help in your community and be prepared to remind your group of these as you conduct the activity.



Getting started

Explain the purpose of this activity. The activity follows on from the previous activities "Who are they" and "Why join up?" where the group would have looked at the different roles children play in armed forces and groups and the reasons for joining. Make sure that you recognise that, in many circumstances, armed forces and groups may have abducted children or forced them to join, but that this is not always the case. This activity aims to show the group that when there is an element of choice, help is often available – joining armed forces and groups is never the only option. Although they may find themselves in very difficult situations, there are people that they can turn to for help and advice. If they find themselves pressured or considering joining armed forces or groups to escape their present dire circumstances, before making any decisions they should know who they can turn to in their community for advice and support.

The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm/discussion

Based on the real or imagined scenario that a conflict/war is approaching or ongoing and that armed forces and groups are recruiting children, ask the group to think about who they could turn to in their community for help and advice. Use the images of the types of people who might offer advice provided in the back of this Module to stimulate the discussion. Write up (or ask a member of the group to write up) the results on a blackboard/flipchart. Alternatively, the group may prefer to pin up the relevant images and add their own drawings.

The group will probably come up with a list similar to this:

I would seek help/advice from:

- Family
- Elders
- School teachers
- Spiritual leaders
- Local government agency
- UN agency
- Community-based child protection groups
- Police officers
- NGO workers
- Friends



Note to user

You, the facilitator, must be aware and sensitive to local help that is, and is not, advisable or available.

Some individuals may feel that they are completely alone and say that they have nobody they can turn to. You should acknowledge that seeking advice is not always easy but encourage them to think about who they have contact with or who they could contact – they may find that they can get advice from unexpected sources.

Remind the group that some people will give bad advice. Ask them to think about who might give them bad advice and what sort of advice that would be.

For example:

- A soldier may tell you that you are going to defend a noble cause
- A brother may tell you that you are going to avenge your family members who were killed in the conflict
- Your friends may tell you that the soldiers/rebel group will protect you and your family
- A rebel may tell you that you will should join as you will be well fed and get paid



Now brainstorm what choices a young person may have when faced with the possibility of joining an armed force or group. How might they react? Your group could come up with a list similar to this:

- Seek help if possible

- Ignore threat
- Flee threat
- Resist threat
- Comply and go with the armed force or group
- Be enthusiastic about threat

The group will also have to consider they might have no choice, they might be:

- Kidnapped
- Captured
- Otherwise forced



The above list may be too sophisticated or irrelevant for some groups to consider. They may only be interested in the fact that they simply 'join up', in which case you might skip this part of the activity. However if the group or individuals in the group can comprehend these "freeze, fight or flight" reactions then their overall understanding of the challenges facing young people who were forced to join up will be enhanced and, if they are potential victims, they will be further empowered to resist recruitment.

Step 2: The information centre role-play

Divide the group into two sub-groups. One group are the children seeking advice, the other group represent people who may offer advice, for example friends, teachers, parents, NGO workers, etc. Refer back to people identified in Step 1 of the activity.

The advisors should form an inner circle facing out, holding paper with writing or pictures showing who they represent. The group seeking advice should form another circle around the advisors, facing towards them.

Explain that the individuals seeking advice have to think of a dilemma/reason for wanting to join up (Handed to them on slips of paper? Written on the blackboard/flipchart? Whispered to them? The choice is up to the facilitator). You can refer back to reasons identified in the "Why join up?" activity. Some examples of possible dilemmas/reasons are:

- "Other children I know have been captured by armed groups and forced to join up and I am worried that the same thing will happen to me"
- "I would like to join up to revenge my family"
- "Why should I resist joining up when the army can protect me and my family?"
- "I am on my own and have no-one to turn to. Joining up will help me to survive"
- "I am treated badly at home and joining up offers me an opportunity to get away from my family"
- "I want to join up to defend a noble cause"

Then they must go to the information centre for advice but the advisors can only give answers that they would be likely to give while in role. For example an NGO might give different advice from, say, a police officer. Don't forget to take seriously the situation when a young person is isolated and has no one to turn to.

One of the information centre participants must play the conscience of the young person seeking advice, their "inner voice" guiding them on the right path when they are being given bad advice. Perhaps this difficult role could be played by another teacher.

Those seeking advice should ask their questions one at a time, one question to one advisor. If the advisors feel that in that role they cannot give good advice they must direct the questioner to another adviser i.e. another person in the inner circle.

Role-play for 10 minutes and then reverse roles.

Step 3: Conclusion

Discuss what has happened. The young people should realise that there is advice to be sought from many directions. They should realise that some advice may be good, some worse and some might be bad. They should understand that different people give different advice which may or may not be useful.



At the same time the young people, by playing these roles – especially as advisors – will have had to form opinions and articulate them for themselves. The questioners will have practised asking questions. This practice may prove invaluable in the future when they may be genuinely seeking advice and need to state their questions articulately.

Make sure the conclusions are relevant to their own lives. By the end of the activity, the group should have learnt what kind of help is available in their area and how they can access it.

Before moving on to the second part of this Module, ask the group to reflect on what they have learnt so far. The aim is that with the knowledge gained from the activities, the young people will be able to make better informed choices if they are at risk of joining armed forces or groups. If your group includes one or more children who have been associated with armed forces and groups, then the activities should have enabled them to understand better the stages which led to their involvement and to see their situation more clearly. Conclude by giving the group some time to express their feelings through drawing, poetry, creative writing, music or any other means you see fit.

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

This activity can also be used as a general awareness-raising exercise for young people in non-conflict situations by asking the group to use their imagination to put themselves in the place of the children in the images. The group may not be aware of the very dangerous situations children in conflict situations often find themselves in. They may have heard of children fighting in wars, but will probably not have a clear idea of the multiple roles of children associated with armed forces and groups as, for example, front-line fighters, porters, cooks or messengers, to mention just a few. Follow through the steps outlined in the activity above, encouraging the group to imagine what it would be like to be that child shown in the image.

Alternatively, this activity can be adapted to focus on the types of child labour prevalent in your area related to violence and crime, such as drug dealing or stealing as a member of a gang. In this case, ask the group to draw their own images of the different roles and tasks carried out by children. Then follow the steps of the activity outlined above, using the drawings the group came up with to build profiles and narratives with negative and positive outcomes.

Part 2: Moving on



Stepping towards freedom: One minute mimes

What you will need:

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes

The aim of this activity:

To use drama alongside the transmission of information to explore the circumstances of children's departure from armed forces and groups.



The gain:

Participants will know that these children are not abandoned and that some people and organizations are fighting to get them released. They will also be aware of the numerous – good and bad - scenarios of children's departure.

Stepping towards freedom: One minute mimes- Activity summary

Preparation

- Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on the release of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- Gather information about the parties to conflict in your area/country and the way children depart from armed forces and groups.

Getting started

Start this activity by summarizing once more the reasons for which children have to be released from armed forces and groups.

The activity

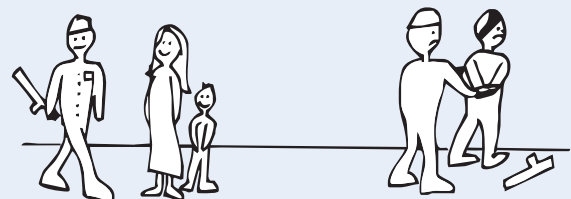
Step 1: Brainstorm

Have the group brainstorm different scenarios of children's departure from armed forces and groups.

Step 2: Prepare one minute mimes

The facilitator lists key points from the brainstorm.

Divide the group into sub-groups and give each of them a scenario of departure from armed forces and groups. Sub-groups have 5 minutes to devise one minute mimes.



A mother and child are rescued from an armed force or group

Step3: Perform one minute mimes

The sub-groups perform their mimes without being interrupted. Other sub-groups must guess which circumstance of departure they are miming.

Step 4: "Freeze!"

Mimes are repeated and viewers can shout out "freeze!" at what they consider the saddest and happiest moment in the mimes. Participants must justify why they have shouted out. Thus the group will begin to articulate how they feel about the issues with which the protagonists are faced.

Stepping towards freedom: One minute mimes - Activity script

The circumstances in which children depart from an armed force or group can vary considerably:

In some countries, parties to conflict decide to end the war and sign a ceasefire agreement and a peace treaty. The latter provides for the demobilization of combatants, including children where applicable. This is, for instance, the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo where tens of thousands children have been released from the government armed forces and from several armed groups through a national Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme.

But efforts to release children are carried out at all times, even during conflict. This is because the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups is illegal. Every year, the UN makes a list of parties to conflict that use and recruit children. The armed forces and groups on this “list of shame” are called to enter into dialogue with the UN and to prepare and implement time-bound action plans to halt and prevent this grave violation of children’s rights. Several parties have signed such action plans and negotiations with others are ongoing. In Nepal, for instance, thousands of children from the Maoist forces were released further to the signing of such an action plan.



Unfortunately, there are also situations where parties to conflict refuse to enter into dialogue with the UN and keep recruiting and using children. The departure of children from these armed forces and groups will only happen on an individual basis if they escape, are captured or if they are sent away by their commander (as is sometimes the case for disabled children). In Northern Uganda for instance, given that the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) has not demobilized and has not, with rare exceptions, released children from its ranks, the only ways for children to exit the LRA are either to escape or to be captured by the government forces during a battle.

“I was helped to escape by some boys who were also abducted. Immediately after we escaped, the rebels made a follow-up, they almost got me again but I hid in the bush near the road and the rebels passed.”

Boy, 15, Uganda¹⁰

The activity “Stepping towards freedom” looks into ways in which children depart from armed forces and groups and at what they might expect immediately after their release.

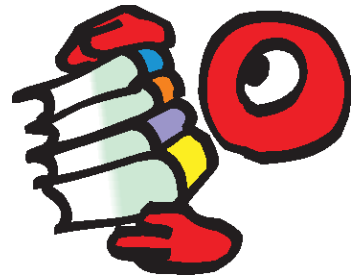
It can also be used to explore how children have been withdrawn from **other worst forms of child labour** in conflict affected areas (for instance sexual exploitation, exploitation as a result of trafficking and so on). Select one or several worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in your area and follow the instructions below, adapting them when necessary.

¹⁰ Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers: *Returning Home. Children’s perspectives on reintegration. A case study of children abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army in Teso, eastern Uganda* (London, February 2008).

Preparation

To prepare yourself for this activity, you should:

- Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on the release of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- Know about parties to conflict in your area/country and their commitment (or lack of commitment) not to use or recruit children. Gather information on ways in which children depart from armed forces and groups (see the Useful sources of information section)



Getting started



Start this activity by summarizing once more the reasons for which children have to be released from armed forces and groups as a matter of urgency. These include the fact that it is a violation of human rights, humanitarian rights, labour rights and that it is a war crime if the child is less than 15 years of age. Children are highly at risk of being killed, injured, and sexually exploited. They are facing terrible living conditions, are separated from their family and deprived from education.

The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm

Invite the group to brainstorm **different scenarios of children's departure from armed forces and groups**. These are some of the circumstances of departure that the group may come up with:

- The child escaped
- The child was captured by another armed group
- The child was sent home by his commander (on his own initiative, because the child asked for it or because the family asked for it)
- The child was released because he was sick or wounded (possibly disabled)
- The unit of the child disintegrated
- The unit of the child was defeated
- A ceasefire was declared and the unit of the child demobilized
- Some representatives of the government and the UN identified the child during an inspection visit to the camp and asked for his release
- The leaders of the armed group took the decision to release all combatants under the age of 18

Encourage the group to brainstorm further on the **possible support that children can get** immediately after their departure from the armed force or group. The discussion will probably come up with examples along the two following alternatives:

- The child is formally identified as a child associated with armed forces and groups and referred to relevant governmental services, UN agencies and NGOs that will reunite him/her with his/her family and provide him/her with appropriate reintegration services.
- The child is not formally identified as a child associated with armed forces and groups. He/she leaves the armed force or group and returns to his/her community (or settles elsewhere) without the support of any organization. Some children purposely avoid going through release and reintegration programmes in order not to be stigmatized further upon their return in their community and be “labelled” as child soldier. This is particularly true for girls. Children might then receive support from the government, the UN, NGOs, community based organizations, faith based organizations, community leaders, family, friends... or not at all.

Have the group **think of terrible things that might happen in the process** of departing from the armed force or group:

- The child might get injured or killed while escaping.
- A girl may be captured by another armed group and kept prisoner for a long time and eventually be used as a cook and married to a soldier.
- The child might find protection with an armed gang in the main city.
- A boy might be released thousands of kilometres away from his home community, possibly in another country.
- A boy can be separated from his wife/partner and child during demobilization.



Note to user

Some young people in the group might have anxiety about conflict and be less likely to speak up in a brainstorming session. Organize the brainstorming in a way to encourage them to share their ideas and feel comfortable about it.

The answers thrown out in the brainstorming may surprise you and advance your knowledge of the local situation. It is also important that you cover situations that the group did not come up with but you know to be of relevance so you can suggest ideas they may have left out.

Step 2: Prepare one minute mimes

The facilitator lists key points from the brainstorm. The group is divided into sub-groups. Each is given a scenario of departure from armed forces and groups (on paper or whispered) and has 5 minutes to devise a one minute mime.

For example a sub-group might be told: “You are wounded during an attack on the camp and sent to a hospital in the closest town. You lose a leg and become disabled. An NGO traces your family and sends you back home to your parents”. Another example could be: “The commander has taken the decision to release all children from the armed group. Your name and the name of your husband/partner are on the list of children that is given to the government and the UN. After having spent a few months together in a cantonment camp, you and your husband are both reunited with your respective families in communities that are very distant from each other”.

Step 3: Perform one minute mimes

The sub-groups perform their mimes. Viewers must not interrupt actors until the end of the mime. The other sub-groups must guess which circumstance of departure they are miming.

Try to avoid this step taking too long because the next “freeze!” step will be more influential in getting the young people to reflect on release and subsequent reintegration.

Step 4: “Freeze!”

The sub-groups perform their mimes again. Tell the viewers that they must shout out what they consider to be the saddest and happiest moment in each mime.

After each mime, discuss with the group the reasons why they thought a given moment was the happiest or the saddest of a scenario. This way the young people will begin to articulate how they feel about the issues with which children released from armed forces and groups are faced.

You should be aware that this session may have left participants feeling bewildered, without solutions to the state of transition of a child to civilian life. However, the next activity “Where to now? – The Backwards-forwards game!” will be great fun and will help show them the way. Concluding with a song or dance, poem or quiet drawing may be appropriate.

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

If your objective is to **raise awareness of young people on the use of children by armed forces and groups**, you may ask the group to conduct some research on a given country or area. They will need to find about the armed forces and groups recruiting and using children, about international and national efforts to release children and about ways in which children depart from the armed forces and groups. The Useful sources of information section will guide you. You can then follow the Steps 1 to 4 as described above.

You might choose to **focus on worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in your area or country, in particular those related to armed violence or illicit activities** (e.g. being part of a gang, drug trafficking or organized begging).

Through previous activities, the group will have explored some of these worst forms of child labour: why they are prohibited under the international standards and the national legislation, why and how children get trapped in them, what are the roles carried out by children and so on. In this second part of the Module, the group will now focus on ways to rescue these children and to rehabilitate them.

Ask the group to find out about efforts that are put in place to combat the worst forms of child labour that you have chosen to look into. What laws exist in your countries? Who is responsible for their enforcement? Is there a government policy and/or programme to address this worst form of child labour (both in terms of prevention and withdrawal/rehabilitation)? Is there an inter-governmental collaboration (for instance in the case of organized begging)? What other actors are involved (NGOs, faith-based organizations and so on)?

With this information in the back of their minds, the young people in your group will be ready to participate in the activity as described in Steps 1 to 4 above.



Where to now? The backwards- forwards game

What you will need

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk
- ✓ A pack of old cards or scraps of paper
- ✓ Adequate space for a stepping race and chalking on the floor



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes

The aim of this activity:

To look into positive aspects and difficulties of returning home and back to civilian life through a fun and participatory exercise.



The gain:

Participants become aware of the challenges of reintegration and are able to identify some of the situations that will either advance or jeopardize the process.

Where to now? The backwards-forwards game - Activity summary

Preparation

- Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- Know about the existence (or not) of reintegration programmes for children in your area/country and the type of individual or community support they provide.
- Research the different opportunities and challenges that children formerly associated with armed forces and groups experiencing reintegration may face in your area/country.

Getting started

Explain to the group that you are now going to look into positive aspects and difficulties of children's reintegration. The group must understand the rules of the game: a sports-style race where the Start line is the return home and where competitors can advance or retreat depending on the "Situation cards" they pick. The aim is to cross the Finish Line to be successfully reintegrated into the community.

The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm on the reintegration process

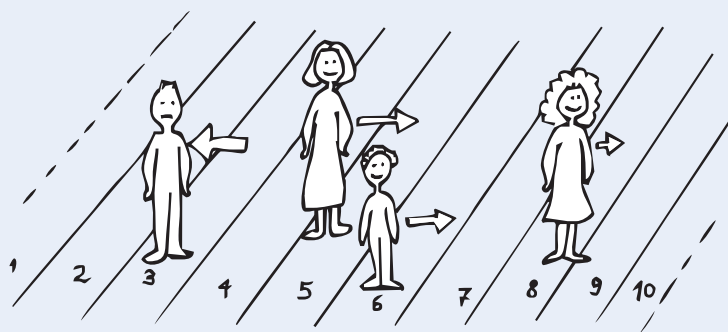
Have the group brainstorm on positive aspects and challenges of reintegration.

Make a list of the elements mentioned on the blackboard/flipchart and agree with the group on a symbol and a score (positive or negative) for each of them.

Prepare a pack of cards. Each card has a symbol on it corresponding to one of the elements listed. These will be "Situations cards" that will make competitors move backwards or forwards in the race.

Step 2: The game

Competitors line up at the Start line. Each one of them picks a card with symbol on it. The symbol corresponds to a "Situation" on the facilitator's list. For example: "Go to school: go forwards 4 paces!" Or "You are rejected by your peers: go back 2 paces!"



The winner is first to cross the Finish Line

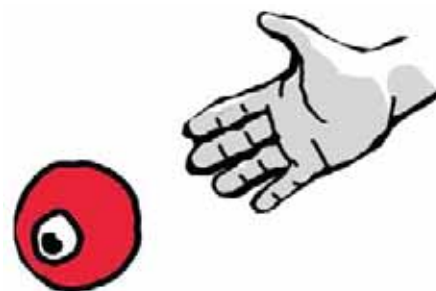
Step 3: Summing up

Have a short session to conclude the activity and reflect on the underlying messages to the activity.

Where to now? The backwards-forwards game - Activity script

The return of a child to his or her family and community is the end of an exploitative situation but is the beginning of a long and sometimes difficult process aiming at finding a viable alternative to involvement in armed conflict, at resuming life in the community and at making a transition to civilian life. This process is called reintegration. Its aim is for children to be like their peers in all positive aspects.

Children face many challenges upon their return in their families and communities. A research on children released from the Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda describes some of these physical, social, psychosocial, educational and economic challenges.



Challenges faced by children released from the Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda¹¹

The research indicates that children returned home in poor physical condition; sometimes with wounds, injuries, general sickness and sexually transmitted diseases. Some girls reported specific problems, such as pain resulting from rape and sexual abuse or HIV infections. Most children reported psychosocial and/or behavioural problems that can persist over time. The reception by the community and the peers was often problematic and sometimes even hostile, in particular for girls. The resulting social isolation and peer rejection at school, added to poor concentration, physical and mental difficulties and inability to pay school fees, contributed to some children dropping out of school. Other factors included marriage and pregnancy among the girls. It happened that children returned to their community to find their parents dead and were left to take care of themselves and their siblings. The need to survive meant that they had to seek a way of earning a living.

These challenges are however mitigated by resilience and protective factors such as family acceptance and support, community acceptance, opportunities for livelihoods and education, traditional cleansing or healing ceremonies and psychosocial support to children.

In many countries, programmes are put in place to support and facilitate the reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups into their communities. These programmes aim at community acceptance and at involving children in meaningful activities such as school or livelihoods.

11 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. *Returning Home*. op.cit.

The third verse of the song “Child Soldiers” by Daniel Beaume (see “Becoming agents of social change” activities) illustrates the difficulty of reintegration:

*To escape from that hell is not paradise won
You feel helpless, you're lost when not holding your gun.
Tomorrow's a word you must learn once again
And accept the embrace of your own fellowmen.
The nightmare still haunts you, the future seems unreal*

*We live in peace, we can't know how you feel.
Let us hear the lost soldier, waking from his dream:
« How often I have wept at the sights I have seen. »*

The present activity, “Where to now”, looks at the opportunities and challenges of reintegration. The two following ones will look more in depth into specific aspects of the reintegration process: “Into work” will walk you through the economic component of reintegration and “Me and the others” will explore psychosocial issues as well as some aspects of community acceptance.

You can easily adapt this activity to **other worst forms of child labour** in conflict affected areas. Select one or several worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in your area, conduct some research on specific challenges faced by children after their withdrawal from an exploitative situation and on necessary rehabilitation measures and then follow the instructions below by adapting them when necessary.

Preparation

To prepare yourself for this activity, you should:

- Prepare yourself by reading the part of the Information section on the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- Know about the existence (or not) of reintegration programmes for children in your area/country and the type of individual or community support they provide (see the Useful sources of information section).
- Research the different opportunities and challenges that children formerly associated with armed forces and groups experiencing reintegration may face in your area/country.



Getting started

The previous activity looked into circumstances in which children are released from armed forces and groups and return to their families and communities. Explain to the group that you are now going to look into positive aspects and difficulties of returning home and back to civilian life and of being involved in meaningful activities, in other words, the reintegration process.

Tell the group that you will do that through a game; a fun sports-style race where the Start line is the return home and to the community and where competitors can advance or retreat depending on the “Situation cards” they pick. The aim is to cross the Finish Line to be successfully reintegrated into the community.

Prepare a space for a stepping race! It need only be about 16 small paces long.



The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm on the reintegration process

The immediate purpose of this brainstorming session is to come up with a list of “Situations” that will be used for this game. But most importantly, it is a way for your group to explore the long and sometimes difficult process of reintegration for children associated with armed forces and groups.

The introduction to this activity script provides you with some background information but the brainstorming should focus on the challenges and opportunities that children experiencing reintegration may face in the specific context of your country/area. The research conducted in preparation to this activity will be very helpful. You should also encourage participants to actively contribute based on their own experience or knowledge of this issue.

As the brainstorm goes on, write on the blackboard or flipchart (or a sheet of paper) what the group says about the positive aspects of reintegration and the challenges children may be facing. These will be the “Situations” that will make competitors move backwards or forwards in the race, or in other words that will positively or negatively affect the reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups in their families and communities.

Emphasise to the participants that these “Situations” may come out in a bit of a jumbled order. It reflects the disorder and difficulty in this process of reintegration.

Below is a proposed list of “Situations”. Please remember it is only an idea of what might be chosen!

- You have nightmares, flash backs and hallucinations
- You attend traditional spiritual or cleansing ceremony
- You go to school
- You become orphaned
- You are rejected by your peers
- You learn technical skills
- You join a criminal gang
- You seek strength and comfort in religion
- You find out that you are HIV positive
- You are looked after by an elder
- You are sexually exploited
- You become homeless and live on the streets
- Teachers give you support, advice and guidance
- You participate in recreational activities with others
- You drop out of school
- You get rid of your drug addiction
- You experience stigma and resentment from community members at large
- You receive advice and counselling
- You keep using drugs
- You have access to health care
- You beg in the streets to provide for yourself and your younger siblings



Note to user

The facilitator must always be sensitive and informed. Usually the best people to ask for information are the local people and the participants! For example in some areas the phrase “interim care centre” is common. In another area the phrase would be unknown. In some rural areas drugs are not a big problem as there are in some urban centres. Community acceptance might not be a problem in some areas when it is systematically in others.

Once the brainstorm is completed, give each of these "Situations" a symbol (on the blackboard or flipchart). For instance a book for "Go to school" or a syringe for "You keep using drugs". Then prepare a pack of old cards or scraps of paper. Each one of them will have a symbol corresponding to a "Situation".

Go back to the blackboard/flipchart and assign a "score" to a "Situation" which advances if it is positive or retreats if it is negative. For instance: "you go to school": go forwards four paces or "you are rejected by your peers": go back two paces. Fierce debate will accompany this choice! Make sure that the group understand that this is done for the purpose of the game only. It is not worth spending too much time on assigning "scores".

In the pack of cards you can have a symbol (referring to a given "Situation") repeated more than once. But make sure the positive cards outnumber the negative cards otherwise no one will be able to finish the game!

As in other activities, you should be sensitive to what participants may have gone through and adapt the activity if necessary.

Step 2: The game

Have a few young people line up at the Start line. The number of competitors will depend on the space available. Other young people will watch. If time allows, you can organize a second race. Keep in mind however that what is interesting in this activity is not the game itself but the underlying message. It might be better to play the game only once and to keep more time for the preparatory and summing-up sessions (Steps 1 and 3).



Each competitor takes his/her turn to pick a "Situation card". The symbol on it is shown to the group. The facilitator, or a participant, then says what "Situation" it corresponds to on the list and how many paces the competitors need to move, either forwards or backwards.

Continue this way until a competitor crosses the Finish Line. He is the winner!

Step 3: Summing up

You should have a short session to conclude the activity and reflect on underlying messages to the activity.

Emphasize for instance that in real life, there is not one winner. Hopefully all children will overcome the challenges and be successfully reintegrated.

The game may have given the wrong impression that children do not have any control on their lives and that the success of their reintegration depends on external positive or negative factors. This is partly true but it is important to reiterate that they are also actors of their reintegration, in particular from the moment they are in school, in vocational training or working.

Finally, and most importantly, draw attention to the fact that the Finish line is not really a Finish line. It is a new Start line! Children formerly associated with armed forces and groups who are successfully reintegrated into their communities, are back at school or acquiring some skills to earn a living are now like their peers in all positive aspects. Their life is ahead of them!

Concluding with a song or dance, poem or quiet drawing may be appropriate.

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

If your objective is to **raise awareness of young people on the use of children by armed forces and groups**, ask the group to continue their research on the country or area they have worked on in previous activities. They now need to find out about the opportunities and challenges that children released from armed forces and groups experiencing reintegration are facing. Remind them that the challenges may be of a physical, social, psychosocial, educational and economic nature. This will help the participants to put themselves in the shoes of these children. You can then follow Steps 1 to 3 as described above.

If instead you have chosen to **focus on worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in your area or country (in particular those related to armed violence or illicit activities)**, ask the group to do some research on the rehabilitation process of children withdrawn from gangs, drug trafficking and organized begging. What difficulties are these children facing? What kind of support do they get and from whom? Is the support of their family determinant? What other protective factors can be identified? It would be very helpful to find one or several case studies to illustrate this rehabilitation process. You can then follow Steps 1 to 3 as described above.



Me and the others: Let's make a picture!

What you will need:

- ✓ Images representing different characters (use any of the images provided with this Module)
- ✓ Paper, pencil and crayons to draw pictures
- ✓ Tape or pins to display the drawings on the wall



Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes

The aim of this activity:

To produce a piece of abstract artwork which addresses psychosocial issues and the related community acceptance concerns.



The gain:

Participants will have a better understanding of the complexity of the reintegration process. They will be aware of the key role that families and communities can play to support a child's reintegration.

Me and the others: Let's make a picture! - Activity summary

Preparation

- Find out about the issue of community acceptance in your area/country. Are war-affected communities open to accepting a child back despite his/her war experiences? If there is a lack of acceptance, what forms does it take?

Getting started

Explain to the participants that they are now going to put themselves in the shoes of these children, to explore how they might feel once they are back in their community. Introduce the idea of how someone might feel vulnerable when, after looking forward to coming home for so long, things might not turn out as they had hoped.

The activity

Step 1: Drawing

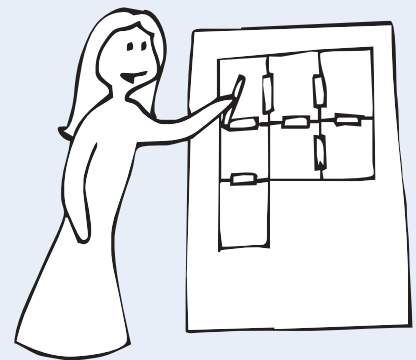
Ask each sub-group/individuals to choose one character of a child released from an armed force or an armed group. Explain that each sub-group/individual must produce a two-sided piece of artwork:

- A personal view of how the character they have chosen might feel returning home from an armed force or group.
- A view of how that child may be seen from the outside - by his family, peers or the community as a whole.

Step 2: Presentation of the artwork to the group and discussion

Each sub-group or individual presents their artwork one by one.

Work as a group to analyse and discuss each drawing. Discuss the reasons children released from armed forces and groups feel one way or another upon their return home and to their communities. What is the best way a community should receive them back? Are the children stigmatized? Is it justified? What can be done to improve the situation?



Step3: Make it public

If the participants are comfortable, the art could be shown publicly. It may help promote acceptance of children released from armed forces and groups in the community.

Me and the others: Let's make a picture! - Activity script

The return home to their families and communities is certainly a happy but difficult moment for children released from armed forces and groups. Research in Northern Uganda indicates that children released from the Lord's Resistance Army experience a variety of feelings, ranging from happiness to confusion and sadness. They are happy to be home, to be alive and to have escaped the frequent beatings. However this feeling of happiness is overshadowed by problems that children face upon their return, such as not finding their parents, lack of food and support, sickness, psychological disturbances, lack of school fees and so on. Some suffer from extreme fear of being re-abducted. Others are stressed and contemplate suicide. Many feel hurt because of community stigmatization, in particular girls who are regarded as "spoilt" and no longer marriageable.¹²



"You cannot be completely happy with all these wounds – both in your body and in your mind."

Boy, 15, Northern Uganda¹³

The level of community acceptance varies from one context to another. There are situations where community members may be open to accepting children back despite their war experience and others where community members are scared due to atrocities children may have perpetrated in their own community. The lack of acceptance can take many forms including insults and blame. This experience is painful for children who are then more likely to have negative social behaviours and high emotional distress.¹⁴

"Well they looked upon us negatively even when we were passing around there was no respect for us. People were pointing fingers at us saying that this one killed my father; this one killed my mother; that one burnt down our house."

Male, Sierra Leone¹⁵

The programmes that are put in place to support the reintegration of children released from armed forces and groups provide psychosocial assistance to these children. They also aim at facilitating their acceptance by their families and communities. This is one important reason why these programmes have adopted an inclusive community-based approach to reintegration. This means that a broad cross-section of children should receive support, in addition to children released from armed forces and groups, and that the community be actively involved in facilitating reintegration efforts.

12 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. *Returning Home*. op.cit.

13 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. *Returning Home*. op.cit.

14 T. Betancourt et al.: *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups: the state of the field and future directions* (Psychology beyond borders, April 2008).

15 T. Betancourt et al.: *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups*. op. cit.

The activity “Me and the others” explores the feelings of children upon their return home as well as the attitude of their communities. It aims at raising awareness on the difficulties children face so as to promote better understanding in the community and acceptance of the children.

Children withdrawn from **other worst forms of child labour**, such as sexual exploitation, may also be stigmatized by their family and community. Their experience may have impacted on their psychological wellbeing. The activity script can easily be adapted to other worst forms of child labour. It will require some preparation and research.

Preparation

The research you’ve conducted in preparation to previous activities will also be useful to this one. Try to find out more specifically about the issue of community acceptance in your area/country. Are war-affected communities open to accepting a child back despite his/her war experiences? If there is a lack of acceptance, what forms does it take?

Getting started

Through previous activities, the group will have explored the ways in which children are recruited, their roles with the armed force or group, the circumstances of their release and the situation they face once they are home.

Explain to the participants that they are now going to put themselves in the shoes of these children, to explore how they might feel once they are back in their community. Introduce the idea of how someone might feel vulnerable when, after looking forward to coming home for so long, things might not turn out as they had hoped. Part of the problem is that they might not feel – or are actually not – accepted by the community, another important issue that the group will look into.

The facilitator can cheer everybody up and say we are going to make a picture! Ask your group whether they would like to work individually or in small groups. Distribute materials. If materials are scarce, projects have even been done with just crayons and newspaper. As soon as the drawing begins the artists forget the newsprint and become absorbed with their creations.

The activity

Step 1: Drawing

In previous activities, the group will have become familiar with different characters of children released from armed forces and groups (in particular in the “Who are they?” and “Why join up?” activities). Ask each sub-group/individuals to **choose one of these characters who means something to them**. They can choose any of the characters represented on the images at the back of the Module or someone they know.

Explain that each sub-group/individual must **produce a two-sided piece of artwork**:



- A personal view of how the character they have chosen might feel returning home from an armed force or group (e.g. lonely, misunderstood, supported, hopeful, stressed, angry, worried, and so on).
- A view of how that child may be seen from the outside - by his family, peers or the community as a whole (vulnerable, hurt, dangerous, aggressive, and so on).

The two sides should be drawn on different pieces of paper that are simply taped together.

The group is asked to draw emotions and feelings which is a challenging task. In guiding your group through this activity, take your time to explain how to use imagery and perhaps draw some examples up on the flipchart/blackboard to make sure that everyone understands (see box).

How can ideas and emotions be expressed in art?

They do not have to produce a direct, literal drawing of what they see. Instead their objective might be to create an image suggesting a point of view. Your group might have to “think in the abstract”. They may use imagery, colours, symbols and other abstract methods.

For example, what colour could represent the emotion? What animal could represent that characteristic? Is there a weather type or an action or an object or event that could represent that idea? This is imagery.

If we think a person feels fear when he looks at a young man in a street-gang, what images might we use to show how his community views him? Guns? Explosions? Death? Monsters with big teeth? On the other page the young man may see himself as vulnerable or angry but not dangerous. What images might he use to portray this? Colours? Animals? Facial expressions?

The artists must first know what they want to express with their artwork before they know what to draw. Once they begin, try to leave the group as free and unrestricted as possible to encourage them to unleash their own artistic creativity.

The exercise can be repeated to go back in time to the period in the armed force or group or into the future; in fact anywhere the participants feel they need to explore. The result will be a series of drawings taped together which can be “read”. The pictures express how the participants see matters through their own eyes and through the eyes of those around them.

Step 2: Presentation of the artwork to the group and discussion

Each sub-group/individual presents their artwork one by one. Work as a group to analyze and discuss each drawing.

Discuss the reasons children released from armed forces and groups feel one way or another upon their return home and to their communities (remember that there are many factors to their psychological wellbeing, see box). What is the best way a community should receive them back? Are the children stigmatized? Is it justified? What can be done to improve the situation?

Remind the group that children associated with armed forces and groups must always be considered primarily as victims, whatever their crimes, and not as perpetrators.

Determinants of psychosocial adjustments¹⁶

Not all children are affected by war in the same way. The determinants of psychosocial adjustments include the following:

- Method of joining armed forces (abduction, etc.)
- Roles within fighting forces (e.g., combatant, porter, “bush wife”)
- Length of time spent with the fighting forces and age of abduction
- Family acceptance and support following return
- Community acceptance/stigma upon reintegration
- Opportunities for livelihoods and education
- Traditional healing ceremonies and spirituality
- Gender

Personal responsibilities such as caring for small children and family members

Step 3: Make it public

If the participants are comfortable, the art could be shown publicly. It may help promote acceptance in the locality. This could be linked to the “Art exhibition – create a canvas or mural” in the “Becoming agents of social change” section of this Module.

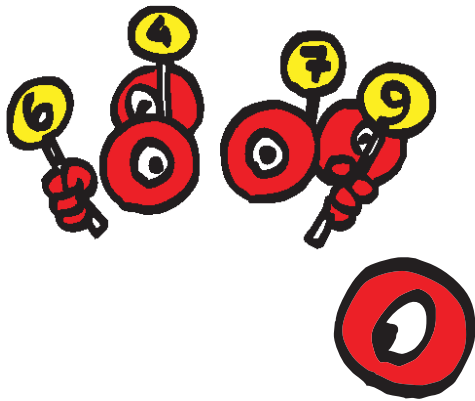
Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

Awareness raising of young people on the use of children by armed forces and groups. This activity does not require any adaptation. Through previous activities, participants have put themselves in the shoes of these children and have started to identify with them. “Where to now?” has deepened their understanding of the complexity of the reintegration process. You can follow the activity script described above.

Focus on worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in your area or country (in particular those related to armed violence or illicit activities).

You may ask the group to do some additional research on the psychosocial outcomes of children’s involvement in the worst forms of child labour. Ask participants to also look into the issue of community acceptance. It is likely to be problematic as well. Can your group help children withdrawn from worst forms of child labour be accepted by the community? Think about it and look at the “Becoming agents of social change” section for inspiration.

16 T. Betancourt et al.: *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups*. op. cit.



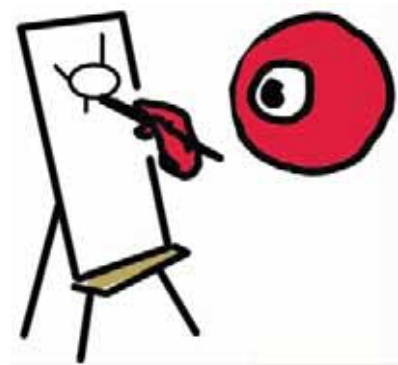
Into work: The memory game

What you will need:

- ✓ Flipchart or blackboard and chalk

Recommended timeframe:

Approximately 60 minutes



The aim of this activity:

To have the group brainstorm on the concept of decent work and what is needed to access it and to use a fun exercise to summarize and remember the key points.



The gain:

Participants will know about their labour rights and will be aware of the support that a child released from armed forces and group should receive in order to access decent work.

Into work: The memory game - Activity summary

Preparation

- Read the part of the Information section on the economic component of the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- Become familiar with the concept of decent work and think of some examples of decent work adapted to the local context.
- Think of the different steps leading to decent work, or in other words, of what the “Ladder to Work” could eventually look like.

Getting started

Explain to the group that you are now going to look into one specific aspect of children’s reintegration, which is access to work, and clarify a few key points.

The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm on the concept of Decent Work

Ask participants what they think decent work is or, in other words, what type of work they would ideally like for themselves.

Step 2: Find out the steps leading to decent work

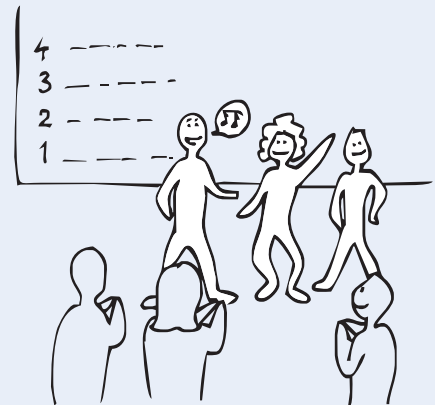
Remind participants of the profile of children that are released from armed forces and groups and then ask them to brainstorm on the steps leading these children to decent work: the “ladder-rungs”.

Step 3: The memory game

- Write the final selected list of “ladder-rungs” clearly on the blackboard/flipchart.
- Decide with the group a small action to go with each rung of the ladder.
- Divide participants into smaller groups that are going to compete with each other. Ask them to all turn their back to the blackboard/flipchart.
- Ask each sub-group to perform, one after the other, the steps leading to decent work by associating each step with an action. The facilitator – and participants who are not competing – are the only one to watch and to decide who the winners are.

Step 4: Discussion and conclusion

The brainstorming on decent work and the steps to access it is likely to have raised many issues. Encourage participants to express their questions and doubts. Discuss them and make sure you end this activity on a positive note.



Into work: The memory game - Activity script

Many children released from armed forces and groups are adolescents for whom going back to school is not an option. Their needs and aspirations are instead to acquire new skills in view of earning a living. This is particularly true for those with dependents, including girls.



Reintegration programmes for children usually have an economic component through which specialized and adapted services are provided to children of legal working age – we will call them young people – in view of leading them to work. This will provide them not only with economic security but much more. Through work, these young people can gain respect from their families and communities as persons that are able to help their families. Work can lessen the stigma and suspicious attitude young people may face upon return from armed forces and groups. It helps them to attain a sense of normality and safety.¹⁷ In other words, the economic and social components of reintegration are interlinked and support each other.

"There's been a big change in the young mothers' acceptance. Initially the community saw them as fighters' wives, and even their families rejected them. Now they earn money and support their families, and communities respect them. A good example of this is that the chief gave them land to do their collective work."

Community member, Liberia¹⁸

The aim of economic reintegration is work but not just any kind of work. Young people should be provided with work opportunities that are not hazardous (or else these would be worst forms of child labour). Furthermore, reintegration programmes should aim as much as possible at providing them with opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income, and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men – in other words, decent work.

This activity aims at exploring the concept of decent work and the different steps of the economic reintegration process of children that will lead to decent work.

Technically, the process of economic reintegration of children is the same for children released from armed forces and groups and for those withdrawn from other worst forms of child labour. The activity script can be followed as such for **other worst forms of child labour** in conflict affected areas.

Preparation

To prepare yourself for this activity, you should:

17 T. Betancourt et al.: *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups*. op. cit.

18 S. McKay et al.: *Community-Based Reintegration of War-Affected Young Mothers: Participatory Action Research (PAR) in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda* (July 2010).

- Read the part of the Information section on the economic component of the reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups.
- Become familiar with the concept of decent work and think of some examples adapted to the local context.
- Have an idea of the different steps leading to decent work, or in other words, of what the “Ladder to Work” could eventually look like.

Getting started

Explain to the group that you are now going to look in depth into one specific aspect of children’s reintegration, which is access to decent work. Clarify that this is only for children of legal working age (which should be no less than the age of compulsory schooling as defined in ILO Convention No. 138). Younger children will need to go back to school.

Clarify, if necessary, that there is no contradiction between promoting youth employment and combating child labour. Children of the minimum age for admission to employment in your country are legally authorized to work in activities that are not hazardous. If the work is hazardous, then it is a worst form of child labour.

Reiterate that the social and the economic components of reintegration are absolutely interlinked. There is no successful economic reintegration without social reintegration.

The activity

Step 1: Brainstorm on the concept of Decent Work

Ask participants what they think decent work is or, in other words, what type of work they would ideally like for themselves. They will probably come up with some of the ideas below:

- Work that allows me to earn enough money to meet my needs and those of my family.
- Work with reasonable working hours and days to rest during the week.
- Work that is safe, where I am not at risk of getting harassed, sick, injured or killed.
- Work where I, as a woman, earn as much as a man.
- Work that allows me to express myself freely to defend my rights as a worker.
- Work through which I benefit from social protection (access to health care for me and my family for instance).
- Work that I can access even though I am HIV positive and where I would not be discriminated against.



Participants will think of different things. All of these things combined will constitute decent work. You should make sure that all the different aspects of decent work are covered and make

suggestions if necessary. You can, for instance, ask “What about maternity leave?” or “What about access to work for disabled children?”

Step 2: Find out the steps leading to decent work

Explain to the group that you are going to explore the different steps leading to decent work.

Before you do so, **remind participants of the profile** of children that are released from armed forces and groups. This will help participants in identifying the services that need to be provided to them.



Some elements of the profile of children released from armed forces and groups

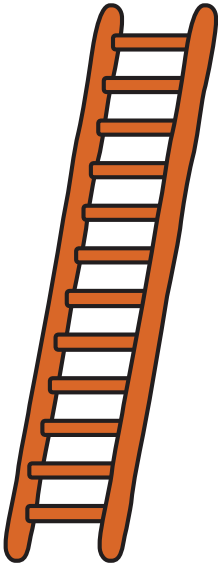
Armed conflict has influenced children during their formative years. Children released from armed forces and groups often have a low education level. Many do not know how to read, write and count. Most of them have no previous work experience, although in some cases, they may have acquired some skills during their stay in the armed force or group. Generally speaking, one could say that they have a labour market disadvantage and that they are in a difficult position to compete with more educated and experienced workers on the market. Children may have never lived in peaceful society and have no reference to, or memory of, such times. Many have a violent behaviour. Children have also been exposed to trauma. Some are addicted to drugs and alcohol.

Ask participants to brainstorm on the steps leading to decent work. Some of the steps will vary depending on whether the young person has decided to start a business (self-employment) or to look for a paid job with an employer (wage-employment).

Using concrete examples might help, for instance: “What are the steps to become an employee of the small local company which installs and repairs water pumps?”, “What are the steps to open my own beauty salon?”, “What are the steps to start a small cooperative of production, transformation and commercialization of pineapples?” or “What are the steps to become a cook in a hotel restaurant?” Think of other examples that are adapted to the local context.

Together these steps will form the rungs in the “Ladder to Work” that will be used in the Memory game.

The “Ladder to Work” below may help you guide the brainstorming. It gives examples of steps needed for a young person to start a business and access decent work. Try as much as possible to have participants come up with the different steps. However, you should be ready to suggest some so that eventually all the important steps are mentioned. This is a comprehensive example. Your ladder may include only some of these elements.



- Become a member of professional organizations that will help you defend your rights
- Get access to health care by subscribing to a micro health insurance scheme
- Get access to micro credit to develop further your business
- Make savings and deposit them safely in the bank
- Get training and advice on health and security at the work place
- Get some coaching from a professional to start and manage a business
- Get material support to help you start a business
- Acquire business skills
- Acquire vocational skills
- Acquire life skills
- Learn to read, write and count
- Decide what you want to do

These steps correspond to the services that will need to be provided to young people in the context of an economic reintegration programme. Remind the group that the types of services provided will vary from one individual to another depending on their actual needs (see elements of their profile in the box above). Also make sure that the group reflects on the specific needs of girls, of children with disabilities and of children with HIV or AIDS.

Make sure you dedicate enough time to the brainstorming. This is an important part of the activity.

Step 3: The memory game

Write the final selected list of “ladder-rungs” clearly on the flipchart or blackboard.

Explain that through the memory game, the group is going to learn and remember in an amusing way the various steps in their example that lead to decent work (the “ladder-rungs”).



Decide with the group a small action to go with each rung of the ladder. For example:

- “Learn to read” might involve saying the alphabet
- “Make savings” might involve pretending to counting money, putting it in a suitcase and heading to the bank

Divide participants into smaller groups that are going to compete with each other. Ask them to all turn their back to the blackboard/flipchart.

The objective is to be able to remember the steps leading to decent work by associating each step with an action. The winners are those who remember the most steps.

Ask each sub-group to perform, one after the other, the steps leading to decent work by associating each step with an action. The other sub-groups can’t watch, otherwise it will be easier for

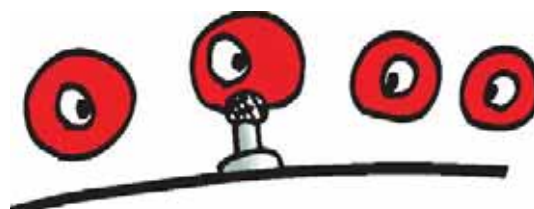
Note to user

The key parts of this activity are of course the brainstorming sessions on the concept of decent work and the services that need to be provided to children to help them achieve decent work (step 1 and 2). The memory game (step 3) is just a fun way to summarize and remember key points of the discussion. You should feel free to skip it if you think that it’s not relevant to your group or that time would best be used on the brainstorming and discussion (Step 4).

them when their turn comes to perform. The facilitator – and participants who are not competing – are the only one to watch and to decide who the winners are.

Step 4: Discussion and conclusion

The brainstorming on decent work and the steps to access it is likely to have raised many issues that you did not have time to discuss under Steps 1 and 2. This might be the time to come back to some of them, for instance:



- Take the time to discuss work opportunities in the area (or the lack of them) and how young people can access them (or not).
- Participants are likely to have questioned the feasibility for young people formerly associated with armed forces and groups to access decent work, especially in the social and economic environment they are reintegrated in.
- They might also have raised the absence or inadequacy of programmes (run by the government, the UN, NGOs, etc.) aiming at the reintegration of children in the area.

You should not try to avoid difficult topics. Encourage participants to express themselves. Their concerns are probably well founded. However, you should make sure that you end this activity on a positive note and that the main message has gone through:

- Children released from armed forces and groups are entitled to economic reintegration and it is the responsibility of the government, with the help of UN agencies and NGOs, to provide adequate services to help them find work.
- The objective of these programmes should be decent work. The local reality may not allow achieving this objective but programmes should aim towards it. Note that the UN now recognizes decent work as being the basis for sustainable recovery, development and peace.¹⁹
- In any case, there should be no compromise on basic rights. The child should be protected from child labour – including hazardous work, forced labour and discrimination

19 United Nations: *UN Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration* (2008).

Suggestion for adaptation to non-conflict situations

Awareness raising of young people on the use of children by armed forces and groups.

The activity script does not require adaptation. As for previous activities, participants will need to do additional research. What is the socio-economic environment of the country/area concerned? What jobs are to be found there? What are the main decent work deficits? What kind of support do children released from armed forces and groups need to access decent work?

Focus on worst forms of child labour that are prevalent in your area or country (in particular those related to armed violence or illicit activities).

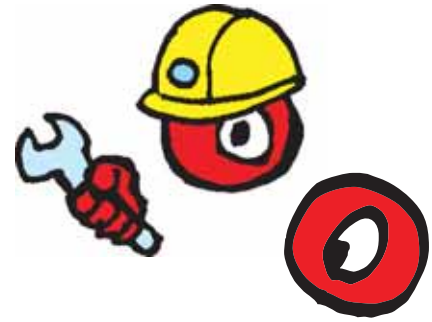
You may ask the group to do some research on Decent Work (instead of brainstorming). What is this concept about? Is Decent Work underlying the employment and social protection policies in the country? How successful has the government been in translating that into reality? Can the group identify some major decent work deficits in the country (e.g. do men and women receive equal pay for a given job? Are disabled people discriminated against? Are children of legal working age involved in hazardous work?).

Ask the group to research what the profile of children withdrawn from the worst forms of child labour might be and, more specifically, to look at what their advantages or disadvantages might be with regard to other children. Have they, for instance, acquired some skills which can be used to access work? On the contrary, do they face labour market disadvantages (e.g. behavioural problems, addictions, low level of education)?

Follow the other Steps described above.

Becoming agents of social change: Awareness raising in the community

SCREAM was designed to empower young people, to give them knowledge and skills to take action. This activity is the culmination of all the previous activities. Based on what they have learnt, it aims to provide the young people with the opportunity to reach out to their community and become agents of social mobilization and change. The SCREAM education process should help the young people to realize that they have a very definite role to play in eliminating child labour and that part of this role is to reach out and touch the hearts and lives of other members in the community around them and generate further support to help exploited children everywhere. Given the focus of this Module on armed conflict, the community outreach activities will play a significant role in promoting community acceptance of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups, reducing stigmatisation and recognizing that these children as victims, not perpetrators of crimes.



There are many creative and innovative ways of organizing awareness raising activities and events to involve the wider community. Activities will depend on individual contexts and environments. Factors such as tradition, culture, available resources, commitment and motivation will play a significant role in what you decide to do. However, the main point is that the young people in the group must be involved in the decisions.

Awareness raising activities and events are often organized on or around the World Day Against Child Labour on 12 June. This World Day is marked in many different countries around the world and the aim of the Day is to raise public and political awareness on child labour and to build support for work on child labour among a wide range of partners. Planning awareness-raising activities on this or other significant dates, such as Universal Children's Day on 20 November or Red Hand Day (which draws attention to the situation of child soldiers) on 12 February, will strengthen their impact on the community and help in mobilizing the media.

Getting started

We have now reached the crucial stage in this project where confidence is boosted, ideas are generated and motivation put in motion to take SCREAM outside of the classroom and into the community. If your group have been moved by SCREAM, mobilized and inspired, it is now time for them to really become a part of the global campaign to eliminate child labour and make a change in mindsets and attitudes in their society.

Read through the ideas below, refer to the relevant modules in the original SCREAM Pack (available on the CD ROM), in particular the Drama, Debate, Media and Community Integration modules and discuss with your group in which direction they would like to go.

Making the most of the work done so far

The first thing to consider is whether the work done throughout the Module is being used to its full potential. Have the group managed to organize a public display somewhere of their artwork from the "Me and the others" activity? If not, then this is a great place to start (see Art exhibition below). Perhaps your group will be inspired to be more ambitious with their efforts and produce a series of posters or leaflets explaining what they are doing. Challenge them to come up with effective ideas to get their messages out to the public.

Art exhibition – create a canvas or mural



Begin with a discussion to decide upon the theme of the canvas or mural. The group may want to take the theme of the "Let's make a picture!" activity and create a canvas on how young people feel returning home after experiencing life in an armed force or group, or they may decide to choose a different theme related to child labour and conflict. If selecting a new theme, ask the group

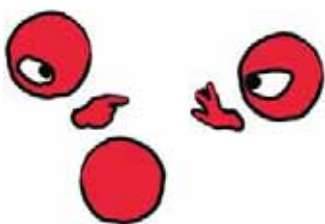


Note to user

Consider inviting a local art teacher or artist to assist with the creation of the canvas or mural.

to sketch drawings which best captures their message. Once the sketches are complete, invite them to discuss their drawings. Stimulate the discussion by asking them to reflect and comment on each others' work. Make sure each individual in the group is given the opportunity to speak. Based on the discussion, ask the group to come up with and agree upon a group sketch for the final canvas or mural and to come up with a title and caption. After the final group sketch is complete, using large marker pens/paint transfer the final sketch on the canvas or wall. Make sure everyone participates in this process. After the group has completed transferring the final sketch, ask them to start painting. Once the canvas or mural is complete, organize a public event to unveil the artwork, if possible in the lead up to the World Day against Child Labour or on another significant day. Invite the media, the mayor/local authorities and local schools to attend.

Debate – organize a formal or a public debate



The Debate module in the original SCREAM Pack also provides an opportunity to integrate the community into your awareness raising activities. Organizing a public debate or panel discussion is more than raising awareness, it fosters the sharing of knowledge between people, including the circulation of expert opinions on a given subject.

The group should be responsible for the organization of the event, from start till end. They must consider the topics, the rules, the invited guests, a venue, publicity, the media and all the other little obstacles that will crop up. It is a great experience for young people to take this amount of responsibility over such a positive cause and see the results with their own eyes. You are there to facilitate your group in achieving this and provide guidance wherever necessary.

There are two types of debate to consider:

1. **Formal Debate:** Establish a topic for debate related to child labour and armed conflict and put together two teams who will argue either “for” or “against” that topic. For example, the topic could be “Should a child be held accountable for criminal acts committed while associated with an armed force or group?” The two teams research and prepare their side of the argument (whether it is an argument that they agree with is irrelevant, they must argue their point). The teams must be careful not only to prepare their own speeches, but also to try to predict what the opposition’s argument will be so that they can respond.

The facilitator of the debate is responsible for maintaining order and she/he eventually chooses a winner based on who made the most compelling argument.

2. **Panel Discussion:** A panel of “experts” is invited to sit at the front and respond to questions from the chair of the discussion and sometimes the audience as well. Panelists should be chosen who have different fields of expertise and perhaps even conflicting interests on important issues. However, the discussion is not about fuelling an argument but exploring the issues and it can serve as a highly interesting event.

If you carry out a public panel discussion as a community integration event, discuss with your group who you would invite as your special guests. You might – for example - invite someone who is involved in humanitarian and emergency work, or in child protection, or any other person that could have added value for the discussion. You may also try to invite an official from either local or national authorities who would be relevant for the panel discussion. The opportunities are many; you can take this activity as far as you are able.

Remember not to lose sight of the objective of participation in this activity, even though debating teams or panels might only consist of small teams, try to find ways to make sure that the rest of the group are not left idle. You might divide up the organizational tasks or perhaps run multiple debates simultaneously so that everyone is busy preparing at the same time.

Drama

Use the Drama module in the original SCREAM Pack to put on a public drama production on the theme of worst forms of child labour in conflict affected areas. The module is a highly practical and informative guide to assist you to facilitate this with your group. The public drama production allows your group to directly access their target audience with the messages they have been developing and to aim to strike an emotional chord with them.



Right from the spark of an idea to the logistics of the stage show, this activity holds a series of big challenges for your group in what will be an exhausting project, but the module is designed to assist you through this process with lots of advice.

Putting on a Drama production is a real step up from the role-play activities on many levels, and will take an enormous amount of motivation from yourself, your group, and as many hands of external support that are willing to help out. However, ultimately it is a rich and rewarding experience for your group. The drama will be a memory that they carry with them for the rest of their lives and is also their opportunity to make an impression on the mindset of people in their community. Needless to say this is yet another opportunity to involve the media in what you are doing.

If you are working in an area where the issue of worst forms of child labour in conflict affected areas and especially, but not exclusively, sexual violence and exploitation is affecting lives of some or more, then the Drama module must be handled extremely sensitively. It is not something that can be rushed, and it takes a special amount of support on the behalf of the educator to enable them to get through it. You might once again consider an expert in psychosocial issues, child protection, or other actor involved in humanitarian work for advice if you have access to one. The main aim of the drama should be to promote community acceptance of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups and understanding of what they have been through. However, if your group should include one of these children, then you must be aware that the drama should not make them re-live difficult and traumatic experiences but enable them to feel empowered as advocates in their community.

Nurture your group, build their confidence and motivation, inspire them to define the problems related with worst forms of child labour in conflict affected areas and think about what they can do to be part of the solution. Let them know that they are the generation that can make a difference in the way the world handles this issue for the fate of thousands of children, now and in the future. The captive audience of the theatre presents them with a chance to make a difference in people's lives, so they should rise to the challenge and take their opportunity.

Music – use music to say “No” to child labour



Music is a highly effective means of raising awareness in the community. Youth and children's orchestras and choirs have played a significant role in reaching out to their communities on issues such as child labour. If the group is interested in music, encourage them to learn the lyrics of the song "Child Soldier" (see below, the lyrics (in English and French), the instrumental accompaniment and original French sung version are all available on the CD-ROM provided with this Special Module). They may also want to write their own song. Invite local musicians and popular singers

to be involved and assist in the process. The song/s can then be sung at a local event, or combined with other awareness raising activities, such as those mentioned above.



Note to user

Maybe a local radio station would be interested in supporting your group and invite them to participate in a radio show on child labour with some special guests.

CHILD SOLDIER

(Chorus)

They had no right to do
What they have done to you.

Oh child soldier

These words to which you're tied
Should not go side by side.

Oh child soldier

Oh child soldier

-1-

They wiped out your life, at one stroke, with one round.
And the blood of your love they spilled out on the ground.

All that's left of your heart is a tight ball of rage,
And your eyes now no longer reveal your true age.

Soldier

Kadogo, Little Bee or Bébé Lucifer

You're branded, a new name is engraved on your flesh.

They've defiled you, transformed you, they've made you their tool,

You've murdered your kin, they've stolen your soul.

Oh child

They had no right to do
What they have done to you.

Oh child soldier

These words to which you're tied
Should not go side by side.

Oh child soldier

Oh child soldier

-2-

You're drugged to feel strong, you're violent to excess
Kill a man or a chicken : you couldn't care less.

You wield your machete, you shoulder your gun
You finger the trigger, what power you have won.

Soldier

The warlords take care, they're not there to be killed
And you are the one they send out in the field.

While you brave the front line and get blown up to bits
They sit dreaming of power, and of tailor-made suits.

Oh child.....

They had no right to do
 What they have done to you.
Oh child soldier
 These words to which you're tied
 Should not go side by side.
Oh child soldier
Oh child soldier

-3-

To escape from that hell is not paradise won
 You feel helpless, you're lost when not holding your gun.
 Tomorrow's a word you must learn once again
 And accept the embrace of your own fellowmen.
Soldier

The nightmare still haunts you, the future seems unreal
 We live in peace, we can't know how you feel.
 Let us hear the lost soldier, waking from his dream :
 « How often I have wept at the sights I have seen. »
Oh child

They had no right to do
 What they have done to you
Oh Child soldier...
You're disarmed, you're reborn!
 May there be never more
 Child soldiers...

Lyrics and music : Daniel Beaume

Translation into English : Anne Ferrato

Media: Press and Media: Radio & Television

The Media section is an integral component of the SCREAM Pack's structure and should be made full use of in this Special Module on child labour and armed conflict. Do not underestimate the potential level of interest that the media might have in your project, even at the national level in newspapers, television and radio stations.

Particularly in countries where conflict or post-conflict situations exist and children are caught in the worst forms of child labour due to such situations, the media have a social responsibility to provide a sufficient level of coverage of these vital themes. Many media institutions are often lagging behind their responsibilities in bringing these imperative issues to the attention of the public, but there are very many out there who have a strong desire to fulfill their duties.



SCREAM provides news related to (the worst forms of) child labour, but with a positive spin. It raises the level of awareness about the issue by bringing important facts to the fore. Under the lead of young people making a difference in their communities, the impact of SCREAM is multiplied. Your SCREAM programme is a great story!

Perhaps if there is an interesting news item in the press on child labour that is causing some controversy, you can challenge your group to write letters to newspapers expressing their point of view on the issue. You can then assist your group in sending their letters to the media outlets to try to get them published. This would be a wonderful example of youth participation.

You may encourage your group to make contact with a local university, in particular with the departments of mass media, communication or journalism, to form some sort of working relationship whereby students come volunteer to educate your class on the media. In this way your group could increase the outreach of their SCREAM programme.

The two media modules provide vital information and advice on targeting the media, understanding the field and publishing an article, interview or report. They provide guidance on how to write a press release, how to behave and prepare for media interviews and how to deal with journalists and media types. This field of education is unique for young people and also empowering. Above all, it enhances their campaigning and advocacy capabilities and is another boost for their bids to become young agents of social change.

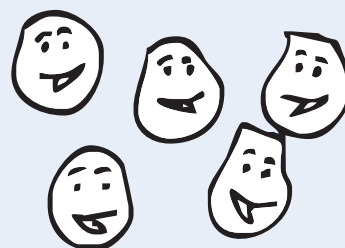
Appendix

Energizers

There are many energizers that can be used throughout the SCREAM activities. Often the facilitator or the participants may know of good energizers. The examples given below can be used in whatever country the SCREAM module is used, however the specific statements or gestures that are often required need to be chosen with care in order to remain respectful towards cultural norms and values.

1. Shout Out!

You can use this activity to get everybody active and shouting opinions or knowledge about children associated with armed forces or groups/other worst forms of child labour related to violence and conflict. It can be used to assess how well the group have grasped the key messages of the activities and to see how their attitudes may have changed without singling out certain individuals. The facilitator can find out what positive or negative values the group holds. In all cases, the facilitator must take care when choosing probing statements!



Step 1: Ask the group to stand in the centre of the room, facing the front.

Step 2: Call out a statement clearly. Interweave fun statements with statements related to child labour and armed conflict.

Step 3: If they think the statement represents a FACT they should jump in the air and shout "Yes!"; if they disagree they bob down and touch the floor, shouting "No!" The use of other words with affirmative and negative connotation (rather than "Yes" or "No") could enhance the fun of the activity. The group could decide which words to use, e.g. "Goal" versus "Out" or "Bravo" versus "Bloopers."

Everyone must move at the same time on the count of three.

Step 3: Reveal whether the statement is indeed true or false or an opinion, giving reasons and explaining facts. Alternatively, one or two from the group could be asked to explain why they "voted" for or against the statement.

Step 4: Ask the group to recall all the important points from the discussion and write them up on the flipchart/blackboard.

2. Ice-Breaker

The group stands in a circle, facing inwards. The leader will say aloud a characteristic (e.g. “all the boys” or “all those who have an older sister”), and all those people to whom the statement applies must step into the circle and walk across the middle to fill a space that has opened up on the other side. The result is that groups of people must enter the circle and move across it.

It’s not a good idea to suggest any embarrassing, demeaning or personal characteristics (such as big ears) – this game is about getting people moving and providing an opportunity for us all to get to know basic characteristics about each other. For example you could state: all those who like football, or all those who prefer books to movies, or all those with a pet dog, or all those who like chocolate, or all those who can dance.. etc. A fun statement is to say something that will apply to everyone, so that they all enter the circle at the same, e.g. all those who have one or more legs. After a while, ask the group to come up with their own statements to find out information about each other.

3. Hello

Divide the group into two. The two lines of groups stand opposite each other and one by one introduce her/himself by mentioning her/his name. When everyone has given her/his name, the facilitator asks one of the participants to call someone from the opposite line by her/his name. If the name is correct, the person called does the same and as long as names are called out correctly, the game continues until all people have been called. However, if someone calls out the wrong name for a person chosen, she/he steps out. The larger the group, the more difficult it will be for the participants to remember each other names. When the game is over, the “stepped out” persons will start the same game amongst themselves. The cycle repeats itself, perhaps even a few times until all names have been correctly called. Try to keep the game(s) moving quickly and be as silly as possible.

4. Digits

Everyone stands in a circle. The simple objective is for the group to count from 1 to 20, taking it in turns to shout out the numbers. The catch is that there is no order to who shouts out which number at what time, and individuals must elect themselves randomly to be the next to contribute. However, if two people shout out a number at the same time, the group has failed and must start again from 1.

Usually the first attempt goes well, but then individuals end up shouting out numbers at the same time. The group realizes that randomly deciding who goes next without talking becomes very difficult and everyone collapses in laughter.

5. Popcorn

Similar to digits, in this game the group must stand in a circle. Each person chooses randomly to jump up in the air and clap, if two people jump or clap at the same time they have failed and must start again. The group must try and put together a sequence of 20 claps without clashing. The rules aren’t important

in this one, it's just good to get everyone jumping up and down, clapping. As the claps become more frequent and faster (encouraged by the leader) the group looks like – you've guessed it – popcorn.

6. Group stop

Everyone mills around the room in a smallish space. Make sure that people do not just walk around in a circle but in all directions. Randomly and without signal, one group member chooses to stop – to freeze – and as soon as one person has stopped, everyone else must stop and freeze as soon as they notice. The last person to stop is out. The person to initiate the stopping must not attract attention to his or herself but must do it silently and subtly, the idea of the game is to make the group switch on their attentiveness. When an individual is out, they become "spotters" for the next round, helping to spot who is the last to stop in the next round. As the game moves on, start to impose restrictions on those playing. For example, they must cover one eye, walk backwards, frog-jump, hop on one leg, etc. When there are only two left, they are the winners.

7. What do you mean?

A volunteer from the group stands in front of the group and picks an animal (easy) or a profession (more difficult) without telling the group what she or he has picked. When done, the other participants try to find out which animal or profession is "kept" quiet by asking questions that can only be answered by YES or NO. If the questions cannot be answered with a YES or NO, the "keeper" does not answer the question. The person who received two NO answers to her or his questions steps out from the game. Gradually, with all more and more YES and NO answers, the group will find out what was thought or at least get closer to the solution. The participant that guesses correctly what was "kept" wins the game and takes over as word "keeper."

8. What are you doing?

This energizer is similar to the above but allows for far more dramatic expression. A volunteer from the group stands in front of the groups and mimes a situation, a profession or whatever activity she/he chooses. What is mimed should not necessarily be a real reflection of the activity, but could also express an emotion or the title from a famous book. When done, the other participants try to find out what the meaning of the mime is by asking questions that can only be answered by YES or NO. From here on the same rules apply as under energizer number 6.

9. Pass catch

Everyone stands in a circle. Person A performs a simple mime (pulls a silly face, or does a silly action) and directs it at someone else in the group (Person B). B must then reflect the same mime right back at Person A, and then think of a new mime that he will throw across the group to Person C. Person C will once again reflect the first mime to B and come up with a new one to throw to Person D. The result is that people are throwing mime's and silly expressions across the group at each other.

10. My Mime Your Mime

Everyone stands in a circle starts marching on the spot. Person A (chosen by the facilitator) does a mime of anything she or he likes (such as dancing/animal impressions/facial expressions) and everyone in the circle has to copy her. The mime only lasts a few seconds. The marching continues and the person to the right does a mime that also has to be copied by each and everyone. The marching/miming continues until everyone has been able to do his mime. Warning: this can end up like an aerobics session.

11. Yes lets!

Everyone mills around the room, walking in all directions. Randomly one person comes up with an idea, such as Let us Frog Jump!, or Let us act like monkeys!, or Let us sit down! Then the group responds by shouting YES and LETS and proceed to do the action that was suggested. The game usually ends when some smart-alec shouts Let us Stop wasting our time playing this stupid game.

Information section

1. Armed conflict and its impact on children

1.1 The changing nature of armed conflict

The typical characteristics of armed conflicts have transformed with the passing of time. Historically, armed conflicts were fought between the official forces (militaries) of two or more states with a recognizable beginning and end. Therefore, conflicts in their nature were interstate. Take for example, World War II, lasting for six years from 1939-1945. World War II was considered a global war fought between many States that aligned themselves with one of two sides and employed their official forces to fight for their respective side, largely based on ideological reasons. Armed conflicts, like World War II, were typically fought by professional soldiers in fields at a distance from civilian populations using traditional military tactics.

Armed conflict transformed in the years following 1945. Today armed conflicts are characterized quite differently. Examples of contemporary armed conflicts include Afghanistan, Liberia and Sri Lanka. In comparing these conflicts to those of the past, it becomes clear that they differ in their motives, parties involved, forms of violence perpetrated and duration. These conflicts are characterized as being intrastate in their nature, while simultaneously having the ability to transcend borders and impact neighbouring countries. Typically, the fighting in contemporary armed conflicts is more one-sided and occurs between the military forces of a government and at least one organized armed group. These fighting forces are often borne out of ethnic, religious or cultural divisions within their societies. Behind contemporary armed conflicts are economic motives, the exploitation of natural resources for economic gain, linkages between non-state actors and transnational organized crime and/or political parties, influences of terrorism, and wide-spread availability of small arms.

Armed conflict has essentially transformed into a lucrative business, which has meant that conflicts are prolonged and kept alive in an attempt to exploit the monetary benefits as much as possible. The tactics employed are not of a traditional military style, but rather are much more brutal and horrific in their nature, which leads to massive dislocations and an overall chaos and lack of control. As a result of the fact that fighting is widespread and traditional rules are neglected, civilians become targets, which will be discussed in more depth in a forthcoming section.

1.2 Consequences of armed conflict

On society and economy

Contemporary armed conflicts affect every aspect of society, having grave consequences for the social and economic structures that, under other circumstances, collectively serve to protect the people. The violence perpetrated during armed conflicts creates an atmosphere of extreme insecurity and instils fear in the entire population, which has no choice but to witness the atrocities, due to the fact that they take place within the communities and even in the homes. Widespread violence, resulting in insecurity and fear everywhere, leads to the displacement of people, separation of families and loss of human lives, thus breaking down the social structures.

As a result of weakened and destroyed social infrastructures and ever-rising insecurity, availability of and access to local resources and services is affected. The people are unable to access basic services

(water, electricity, etc) and social services (healthcare, education, etc.), if these services still exist, because they have lost their means of income, an armed force or group has taken control of resources, etc. People lose their sources of income when fleeing their communities, as a result of losing a family member that provided for the family, etc. Irregardless of the reason for not being able to access the services and resources or the reason for losing income, the result is the displacement of the labour force, leading to a loss of knowledge and expertise. Therefore, the collapse of economic frameworks occurs alongside the destruction of social infrastructures.

The nature of contemporary armed conflict lays the groundwork for the social and economic destruction described above, which serves to increase the vulnerability of the population to such things as poverty, malnutrition and diseases. These socio-economic consequences of armed conflict have a trickle down effect in that they affect society as a whole and then, subsequently, have specific implications for groups and individuals living within that society.

On civilians

Studies note the drastic rise in civilian casualties in contemporary armed conflicts, which are now estimated to surmount to 90 per cent of the overall casualties of war. Despite the fact that there are fewer military battle deaths in today's armed conflicts, the overall human costs of conflict are much higher. Civilians are targeted and not only suffer from the direct violence, but are also victims of the socio-economic destruction that leaves them even more vulnerable to such things as poverty and diseases. Although it is difficult to calculate the human cost of contemporary conflict, it is clear that the human suffering endured by civilians is increasingly grave and the trauma that results has impacts on the people and the country that extend far beyond the conflict itself.

On children

The impact of armed conflict is particularly difficult to measure due to the precariousness of the issue and lack of available statistics. However, it is clear that children suffer greatly as a result of armed conflict and are directly and indirectly forced to endure violence and all its repercussions. Children are increasingly vulnerable to physical, social, psychological and economic exploitation and violence as a result of the destruction of family and community mechanisms and the disappearance of basic services, social services and livelihood options.

In addition to suffering the consequences of armed conflict above mentioned, a child is exposed to unlawful recruitment, illegal detention, trafficking, sexual violence, separation from family, displacement, injury, and death. Therefore, they are not only forced to witness and endure violence, but there is an imminent danger that they will also be manipulated directly by armed forces or groups or indirectly by societal conditions to perpetrate violence.

Additionally, conflict often results in the disruption and even complete destruction of educational systems. This has short and long-term consequences for the development of the children because education not only serves as a protection mechanism for children while they are enrolled, but also serves to ensure that they have options in the future. The 2011 Education for All Global Monitoring Report, focusing on education and violent conflict, reveals that in conflict-affected poor countries, 28 million children of primary school age are out of school. This is 42 per cent of the world total.

In short, conflict systematically destroys every aspect of the child's safety net and leaves him/her vulnerable to the atrocities committed during armed conflicts.

2. Child labour and armed conflict

2.1 Child labour and its worst forms

Child labour is work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and that is harmful to physical and mental development. It refers to work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children; and interferes with their schooling by depriving them of the opportunity to attend school; obliging them to leave school prematurely; or requiring them to attempt to combine school attendance with excessively long and heavy work.

Not all work done by children should be classified as child labour that is to be targeted for elimination. Children or adolescents participation in work that does not affect their health and personal development or interfere with their schooling is generally regarded as being something positive. This includes activities such as helping their parents around the home, assisting in a family business or earning pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays. These kinds of activities contribute to children's development and to the welfare of their families; they provide them with skills and experience, and help to prepare them to be productive members of society during their adult life.

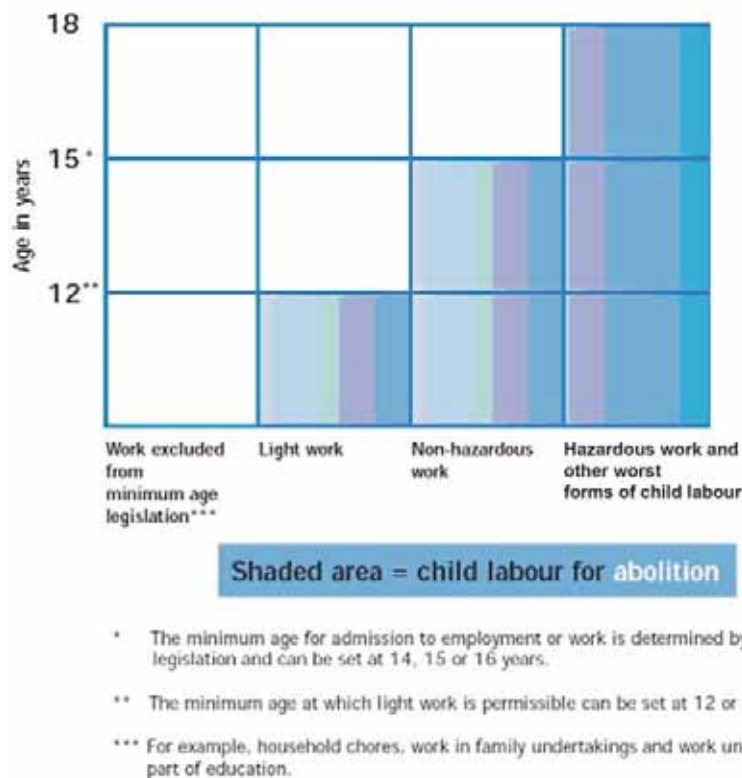
Whether or not particular forms of "work" can be called "child labour" depends on the child's age, the type and hours of work performed, the conditions under which it is performed and the objectives pursued by individual countries (see box below). The answer varies from country to country, as well as among sectors within countries.

In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves, sometimes on the streets of large cities – often at a very early age. The ILO's Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182) defines the worst forms of child labour as it applies to persons under the age of 18 years in Article 3:

- (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict;
- (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances;
- (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties;
- (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

What is child labour for abolition? A snapshot

The international standards on child labour (ILO Convention on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No. 138), ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182)) provide a normative system that helps distinguish between child labour which must be targeted for elimination and acceptable activities and work for children. As illustrated in the table below, there are plenty of activities that are acceptable for children and this is reflected in the ILO Conventions. The table provides an overview of the types of work that constitute child labour and against which action should be taken. The white squares represent work that is acceptable for children of a specific age group.



Light work is work that is not likely to be harmful to the health or development of children; and that is not such as to prejudice their attendance at school or their participation in vocational orientation or training programmes, and if a country opts to permit it as an exception, the detailed conditions should be nationally set.

Hazardous work is work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to jeopardize/harm the health, safety and morals of children. The detailed list of hazardous work must be determined at national level after consultation with employers' and workers' organizations.

Source: adapted from ILO-IPEC. *Child Labour: A Textbook for University Students*. Geneva. 2004

The ILO estimated in 2010 that 215 million children are engaged in child labour with 115 million children in hazardous work. This latter figure is often used as a proxy for measuring the extent of the worst forms of child labour, as there are no reliable statistics on numbers of children engaged in the worst forms of child labour. Most child labourers work in agriculture (60 per cent). Only one in five working children is in paid employment. The overwhelming majority are unpaid family workers. The situation is particularly alarming in Sub-Saharan Africa, where one in four children aged 5-17 are child labourers, compared to one in eight in Asia-Pacific and one in ten in Latin America and the Caribbean. Sub-Saharan Africa is also the only region where child labour has increased over the past four years.

2.2 Effects of armed conflict on child labour

Circumstances leading children to become involved in child labour, including its worst forms, are likely to be exacerbated during conflict, resulting in more children becoming involved and – where they are already working – increasing the potential for involvement in more dangerous and harmful forms of work.

The increased vulnerability of children, young people and families including the loss of livelihoods, family separation, displacement and lack of access to education, will increase the supply of child labour. The scarcity of adult manpower and opportunities for illicit activities made possible by the breakdown of law and order will increase demand for child labour. With few opportunities for households to subsist or to earn money, children and young people may become involved in child labour to provide for the family economy. Separated and unaccompanied children may also do so to provide for their own food, shelter and survival.

The specific forms of labour that children find themselves involved in or enter into will depend on the circumstances before the conflict and on the nature of the conflict. For example, where mining for minerals is taking place, children may be forced into work because of lack of manpower, or the nature of the labour may be new and related to the conflict, such as children scavenging on buildings destroyed by bombs, or children protecting their communities.

The impact of armed conflict on the worst forms of child labour: results from a research project

A study undertaken by the Department of Peace Studies in Bradford University in conjunction with the ILO looked at child labour in conflict and post conflict settings through an analysis of five regions in Africa and the Middle East (Angola, occupied Palestinian territories, the Casamance region of Senegal, Sierra Leone and Southern Sudan). The findings of the study throw light on emerging themes and categorises these as possible causal pathways drawn from the country experiences, and patterns or conditions—markers—that may indicate that the pathways are actually in operation. Their findings are summarised below:

Displacement as a socioeconomic shock: Conflict was associated with displacement of families in each of the countries included in the research and respondents were virtually unanimous in viewing this condition as a contributor to the incidence of worst forms of child labour. An understanding of the precise mechanisms that lead from displacement to child labour could be helpful in informing programs that either try to return families to their former homes or support them in new locations.

Shocks to family well-being, quite apart from poverty in a general sense, are likely to lead to children leaving school and/or entering inappropriate forms of work. Their labour is effectively a buffer, available when other buffers fail. Displacement, especially when families lose homes and livelihoods, the breadwinner is killed or injured and they experience violent conflict, is an example of such a shock.

The risk of bonded child labour in particular increases if displaced families are forced to incur debts in order to survive the transition to their new environment; the labour of children may serve as collateral for loans or domestic labour, particularly of girls, bartered for emergency support.

Thinking of displacement as a shock calls attention to the role of potential shock-absorbers or safety nets. The availability of credit at reasonable cost would be one possible buffer; extended family networks provide relief for some families, but even in countries with a long history of such networks widespread conflict can cause them to break apart.

Important markers include the extent of displacement itself as the single most important factor, also the amount of time families have to organize their departure and the amount of possessions they can take with them, whether the home and host regions are culturally similar and the availability of economic and social “space” in the host communities. In many cases, the number of displaced girls placed into domestic labour may serve as an indicator of the broader social crisis, as well as constituting a serious child labour problem in its own right.

Cultural impacts of conflict: The changes effected by violent conflict in a society’s culture are often subtle and difficult to quantify, but they can undermine the social norms that would otherwise limit the spread of worst forms of child labour. The precariousness of life in times of war may lead children and their parents to be less concerned about the risks posed by hazardous work. The presence of child gangs and militias adds risk to outdoor work performed by children and opens up additional pathways to smuggling, prostitution and other illicit activities.

The direct cultural manifestations of conflict also interact with the effects of displacement. Support networks essential for children, including extended families and traditional community leadership, are fragmented when populations are compelled to flee.

Girls affected by conflict, particularly where they have been abducted by armed forces or groups or subject to sexual violations, are frequently stigmatized within their communities, seen as unmarriageable and forced into prostitution or other worst forms of child labour as their only means of survival.

Breakdown of the rule of law: This was common to all the countries in which the research was undertaken - as conflict recedes, law may reclaim its social role, but this process takes time and resources. Lawless environments are environments in which the worst forms of child labour will proceed unchecked.

The limitations to the rule of law stemming from communal or ethnic hostilities may be very specific: laws might be enforced everywhere except in particular locations, or when parties are from competing ethnic groups.

Family separation: Widespread separation of children from their parents had occurred as a result of displacement in most countries examined in the study with the immediate effect of putting many children on the street, where both their survival activities and surrounding environment pose unacceptable risks. Some children are taken in by unrelated families, but usually in exchange for domestic labour—another source of potential risk. Separated children are also vulnerable to abduction and servitude.

Reuniting children with their families is difficult in societies where many or even most are not registered at birth. Separation itself creates psychological barriers between the generations: after a period on their own, children may not want to go back, and parents may not accept them. Parents may also remain in the grips of their own relocation crisis and be unable to offer their children support. While separation contributes to worst forms of child labour, reunification can be challenging in such circumstances.

Prevalence of firearms: Post-conflict disarmament is normally viewed as a core aspect of demobilizing militias, but weapons in the hands of non combatants presents a problem as well. Guns can find their way to children, leading to gang dynamics that exacerbate several worst forms of child labour: harsher conditions on the street, recruitment into illicit activities, and a general threat to the security of children whose work takes them outside their homes.

Legacy of landmines: These constitute an immediate hazard to children working in agriculture or traveling through rural areas to procure water or fuel. The research highlighted this issue and provided further documentation of the scale of the threat from landmines.

Conflict debris and scavenging: Particular risks were documented in the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) where children scavenging were at risk because of the use of targeted munitions in urban areas. Children who sort through debris face risks from unexploded ordnance and from the possibility of damaged buildings collapsing on them. Partially demolished structures may not be secured by public authorities in the immediate aftermath of conflict and present a risk to children who will sort through the debris for saleable items, even at great personal risk.

Mobility and transport under conditions of insecurity: Barriers to the movement of goods and people can present risks to children forced to pass through them seeking work. In the OPT child labour is used to build illegal tunnels, placing them at risk of injury from collapsed structures and Israeli attack on suspected tunnel locations.

Conflict and Education: Conflict adds a further dimension to both education and child labour. Access to schooling is disrupted in numerous ways: schools are demolished, teachers are often targeted by combatants, large-scale relocation creates a mismatch between school and student locations, government resources are diverted, and multiple age cohorts are crowded into the same facilities. On the household side, conflict-generated poverty inhibits enrolment when families can no longer afford school costs or must rely on their children to work excessive hours. Conflict causes an immediate, simultaneous drop in the proportion of school-age children actually attending school.

This study found, not unexpectedly, that labourers, especially those engaged in worst forms of child labour, are far less likely to attend school. In relation to the goal of returning children to education the study suggests that the disruptions to educational progress associated with conflict are more difficult to reverse because of the movement of children into worst forms of

child labour and that (i) engagement in worst forms of child labour has long-lasting effects on the emotional development and self-perception of children, and (ii) transitions from education to worst forms of child labour are predominantly one-way.

Source: IPEC and ITC. The worst forms of child labour in conflict and post conflict settings: results from a research project. Turin. 2010

3. The use of children in armed conflict

The recruitment of children for use in armed conflict is defined in ILO Convention No. 182 as one of the worst forms of child labour. Addressing this violation of the most fundamental rights has been a concern and an obligation for the ILO ever since the coming into force of the Convention in 2000.

3.1 Children associated with armed forces and groups: Who are they?

The Paris Principles and Guidelines define a child associated with an armed force or armed group as “any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities”. While this definition applies to children who have used a weapon and fought, it also encompasses a much broader group of individuals that are often overlooked because they fall outside of the traditional image associated with children used in armed conflict, e.g. those that are used in supportive roles or for sexual exploitation. Other roles that are more characteristic of certain conflicts and regions include the use of children as suicide bombers and human shields. It is for these reasons that the term “children associated with an armed force or armed group” is preferred to the term “child soldiers”.

Children associated with armed forces or groups are boys and girls. It is estimated that girls comprise up to 40 per cent of children associated with armed forces and groups worldwide. They are at high risk of gender-based violence. Reports indicate that teenagers are most often targets of recruitment because of their relative size and strength, their advanced mental and cognitive development and their role in many societies. However the age of recruitment for children appears to be trending downwards worldwide²⁰. Some children as young as seven years of age are reported to have been recruited.

3.2 Where are children being used in armed conflict and by whom?

Tens of thousands of girls and boys are associated with armed forces and groups worldwide. Every year, the UN Secretary-General establishes a list of parties to conflict that use and recruit children. In 2010, this “list of shame” included 57 parties in 14 conflict situations around the world. Most of the parties that recruit and use children are non-state armed groups, however, the list also includes government armed forces and armed groups who receive the backing of Governments. The map below indicates countries where children were being used in armed conflict in 2010. Be aware that it is updated every year.

20 T. Betancourt et al.: *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups*. op. cit.



3.3 How are children recruited?

The issue of recruitment is very complex because it is dependent upon many factors ranging from the context of a specific conflict zone to the economic status of the family from which the child is recruited. A specific armed force or armed group's reasons for electing to recruit children vary from situation to situation. However, commonly recognized reasons for soliciting the use of children include the fact that children are typically obedient, learn quickly, are easily influenced, are cheaper to feed/clothe/pay, and have the potential to create a moral dilemma for an opponent that may be hesitant to attack children. Additionally small arms are becoming increasingly and more easily available, thus providing circumstances in which children are able to manage weapons with little to no difficulty. However horrific this is, many groups are said to recruit children because they view them as the most expendable group in society, which is why it is not uncommon for these forces to send children to the frontline of battles. They are also viewed as a means to prolong and sustain the fighting.

Boys and girls may be abducted, forcefully recruited or may personally decide to enrol. **Abduction** refers to situations in which children have been taken forcibly or under threat of arms.

"I was enrolled when I was 16 and was attending school. One day, during class hours, a vehicle carrying armed rebels drew up and took away all the pupils. All those between 15 and 25 years of age were arrested and driven to Dogo. On the way there the soldiers taught us to manipulate weapons. Two weeks later we were sent to the front." - Ngoy, DRC

Forced recruitment applies to cases in which the child did not have a choice. This could be because of moral pressure or the obligation to enlist.

"Rebels came to the house to recruit me and warned me of dire consequences if I refused to follow them. I accepted, knowing that even if I escaped death at their hands, the army soldiers would kill me anyway." –Donat, Burundi

Some children take the **personal decision** to become a member of an armed force or group. This may seem like a voluntary decision however, a deeper look reveals that children have little to no choice in the matter. The reasons for joining vary from a situation to another but they usually include social, cultural, political or economic pressures or a combination of any or all of these factors.

Children may be driven to join armed forces or groups for *social, political or ideological reason*. This may include the honour and prestige that their culture holds for military service or the need to identify with and be part of a group. Armed forces and groups may provide youth with a sense of belonging and a space in which they can earn power and respect, which is very appealing to some youth and compels them to join. In some communities where local defence forces have been established to protect the community, a social pressure may exist that all able-bodied children participate in the local force along with youth and adults; parents may even actively push their children to join. A child may also be attracted to the ideology of the group and believe that fighting alongside them will end repression and make his/her country a better place.

Economic pressures also serve as a motivation for joining an armed force or group. For example, a child or his/her family may view the life in an armed force or group as better than their lives outside of it because the groups serves as a job opportunity that may provide a salary, food, clothing, shelter and/or improved access to social services. The children themselves recognize the importance of this economic dimension driving recruitment.

"I joined the militia because I thought I could get paid work after the war. I knew I was risking my life, but I had no other choice. My mother, a farmer, was finding it hard to feed us. While other youths joined the group for ideological reasons, I joined in order to have a job." – Sylvestre, Congo

It is clear that one of the most basic reasons driving voluntary recruitment is *survival*. Conflict situations are characterized by extreme poverty, violence, social inequality or injustice. Economic and social infrastructures have been destroyed. When children have no food, are unable to go to school, are separated from their families and fear for their lives, what choice do they have but to join?

"Ever since my mother and brothers had died in fighting in the village, I wandered about in the bush. It was difficult to find food. When the FPR passed near my hiding place, I ran towards them so that they would take me with them." – Juvénal, Rwanda

3.4 What is the impact on children?

Children's association with armed forces and groups has physical, psychological, social, educational and economic consequences and may have a long term impact on their well-being and livelihood.

The level of brutality and conditions of daily life are extremely harsh for children. Many of them are maimed and injured during the conflict, sometimes resulting in a permanent disability. Furthermore, carrying heavy loads, walking long distances, malnutrition, diseases, punishments and heavy beatings have **physical** and health related consequences on children. Some also contract sexually transmitted diseases, which may include HIV and AIDS. Drugs and alcohol are used as mechanisms

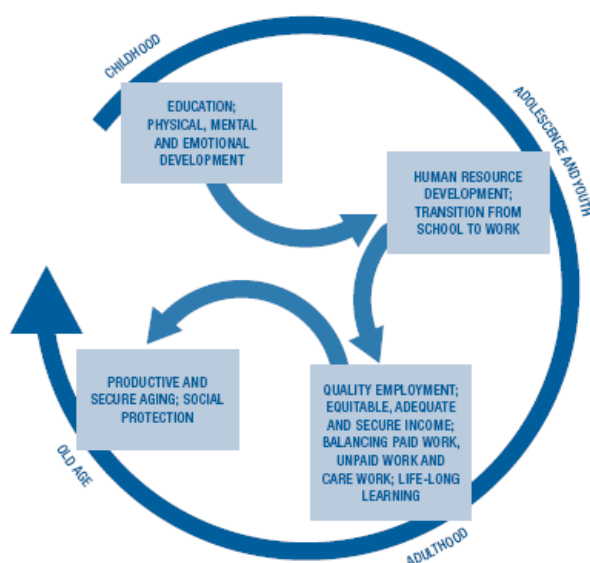
to control the children and numb them to the fear and pain during the conflict. Dependency on such drugs and alcohol continues after the conflict has ended.

The **psychological** impact of children's association may even be greater. It will depend on the level of exposure to violence (children are not only victims of violence, but they are often trained and expected to perpetrate violence against their own communities, people and families), on the method of recruitment and the role within the armed force or group and on the length of time with the armed force or group. Children may manifest their experiences through engaging in high risk or aggressive behaviour, eating or sleeping disorders, social withdrawal or addictions.

In some contexts, children encounter **hostility from community members** which can take the form of isolation, stigmatization or use of unfriendly language. This may result from the fact that children have perpetrated atrocities against their own communities. Girls often face double discrimination due to the fact that they are perceived as having been sexually abused and being immoral. Their children are also at risk of being rejected from society.

Children who were associated with armed forces or groups did not go to school and will grow up with greater limitations and **fewer prospects for decent work**. Some have indicated that years of lost educational and economic opportunities are more problematic than the actual experience of war.²¹ The figure below illustrates the impact that armed conflict may have on young people. It shows that they are at one stage of life that is influenced by and also affects other stages of life. During childhood, adolescence and youth, personal development takes place that can affect whether an individual "succeeds" or "fails" in the later stages of life. Armed conflict has influenced children during these formative years. They generally have low levels of basic education and vocational skills training than other children in the community.

Decent work in the cycle life



Source: ILO Bureau for Gender Equality

21 T. Betancourt et al.: *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups*. op. cit.

4. Efforts to end the use of children by armed forces and groups

4.1 Legislative and policy framework

In the last fifteen years, the importance of addressing the situation of children and armed conflict, including the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups, has been recognized by the international community and efforts to end it have intensified.

Legislation

New international legal instruments have been adopted to protect children in armed conflict: the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 1998, the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention (No. 182) in 1999 and the Optional Protocol to the Convention of the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict in 2000.

Legal instruments providing protection to children in armed conflict

The use of children in armed conflict is a violation of International Humanitarian, Human Rights, Criminal and Labour Law. In the last 15 years, the importance of addressing the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups has been recognized by the international community and efforts to end it have intensified. New international legal instruments have been adopted to protect children in armed conflict:

- The Additional Protocols I (arts. 77[2] and 77[3]) and II (art. 4-3 c) to the Geneva Conventions call for the protection of children in armed conflict, forbid the recruitment and use of children under the age of 15 in conflict. They also call for the provision of special treatment for children in detention.
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict raises the age for direct participation in hostilities from 15 to 18 years. It prohibits conscription or forced recruitment and use by governments below the age of 18 and calls on States Parties to raise the minimum age for voluntary recruitment to 15 and above. It prohibits all recruitment — voluntary or compulsory — of children under 18 by other armed groups. Under article 6, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons within their jurisdiction recruited or used in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol are demobilized or otherwise released from service.
- The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court makes it a war crime, leading to individual criminal prosecution, to conscript or enlist children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or use them to participate actively in hostilities, in both international and non-international armed conflicts.

The role of the UN

Since the 1990 World Summit for Children, the UN has increasingly sought to draw international attention to the horrendous plight of children affected by armed conflict. In 1996, Graça Machel, an independent expert appointed by the Secretary-General, submitted her landmark report "Impact of Armed Conflict on Children" to the General Assembly. The **Machel Report** laid the groundwork for a distinction in warfare with regards to children stating that "violent conflict has always made victims

of non-combatants. The patterns and characteristics of contemporary armed conflicts, however, have increased the risks for children.”

The report led to the establishment, in 1997, of the **mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict**. The office’s mandate includes serving as a moral voice and independent advocate, working with partners to enhance the protection of children and armed conflict, building awareness on the issue and acting as a facilitator.

Prior to 1999, there were no **Security Council Resolutions** that dealt specifically with children affected by armed conflict. However, since 1999, the Security Council has adopted seven significant resolutions on this topic²². These resolutions are not confined to the actions of the warring parties but call on all actors that might influence or affect the conflict to take measures to provide protection for children. They establish a framework for addressing grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

- Security Council Resolution 1539 (2004) calls on parties named in the Secretary-General’s report to prepare, within three months, concrete time bound action plans to halt the recruitment and use of children in collaboration with the UN²³.
- Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) was a major and ground-breaking development in that it established the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) and its country level task forces addressing six grave violations against children during armed conflict.

The six grave violations against children during armed conflict

During times of conflict, international humanitarian law and human rights law must be respected, with special regard to children who often have no means to defend themselves against abuses. While the full range of children’s rights should be respected, protected and promoted, the Security Council identified six categories of violations that warrant priority attention. These categories were selected due to their ability to be monitored and quantified, their egregious nature and the severity of their consequences on the lives of children:

1. Killing or maiming of children
2. Recruitment or use of child soldiers
3. Rape and other forms of sexual violence against children
4. Abduction of children
5. Attacks against schools or hospitals
6. Denial of humanitarian access to children

The prohibition of these six grave violations is enshrined in international humanitarian law, therefore implying the protection of children is non-derogable. In order to ensure that grave violations reported through the MRM receive consistent and ongoing attention from the Security Council the first-of-its kind Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict was established. The Working Group is an official subsidiary body of the Security Council, which consists of all 15 Members of the Security Council. It is empowered to take concrete actions

22 Security Council Resolutions dealing specifically with children and armed conflict: S/RES/1261(1999), S/RES/1314 (2000), S/RES/1379 (2001), S/RES/1460 (2003), S/RES/1539 (2004), S/RES/1612(2005) and S/RES/1882(2009)

23 As mentioned above, the UN Secretary-General submits every year a report on children and armed conflict to the Security Council which establishes a list of parties to conflict that use and recruit children

towards halting violations and holding perpetrators accountable, and it can make recommendations for concrete actions to the Security Council.

- Security Council Resolution 1882 (2009) expands the triggers for the implementation of the existing MRM on grave violations committed against children caught up in conflicts. It stipulates that the annual report to the Security Council will now list parties that engage in patterns of killing or maiming and rape or other sexual violence against children in conflict situations. In this Resolution, the Security Council also calls for enhanced communication and information-sharing between its Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and relevant Security Council sanction committees as a step towards targeted measures against persistent perpetrators.

Since the adoption of its first Resolution, the actions taken by the Security Council have produced tangible progress. As of 2011, eleven action plans have been signed with parties to conflict to identify and release children and to prevent further recruitment plans (e.g. with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in the Philippines; the Sudan People's Liberation Army in Southern Sudan; the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist in Nepal and the Afghan National Security Forces in Afghanistan). Thousands of children associated with armed forces and armed groups have been released. Dialogue on action plans with parties to conflict is also ongoing in other situations.

It is the **UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations** (UNDPKO) that plans, prepares, manages and directs UN peacekeeping operations. Based on a strong partnership between UNDPKO and the Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, children's issues have been incorporated in peacekeeping operations, including child rights and protection in training for peacekeepers and the deployment of child protection advisors in peacekeeping missions. As of 2010, there are 60 child protection advisors in nine peacekeeping/political missions. These child protection personnel ensure systematic training for peacekeepers and in many locations have been instrumental in the implementation of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism.

The fight against impunity

In order to create national reconciliation and lasting peace, it is important to obtain justice against the wrong doers and recognize the victims. Such a process can take a number of forms including national and international courts where the perpetrators of war crimes are tried and punished or truth and reconciliation commissions where the details of what took place during the conflict are established and recorded.

Before the International Criminal Court (ICC) was established in 2002, two national ad hoc tribunals – the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) – were established by the UN Security Council as a response to the extensive human rights abuses committed during the two conflicts. There has been a growing recognition that children are specifically being targeted in armed conflicts.

Another tribunal, the Special Court for Sierra Leone, has convicted and sentenced several rebel leaders for, among other crimes, the recruitment and use of child soldiers during the civil war in Sierra Leone. The Special Court of Sierra Leone is currently trying, in The Hague, the case against Liberia's former President, Charles Taylor, for 11 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including conscripting or enlisting children into armed forces or groups and using them to participate actively in hostilities. This action against a former President sends a clear message that no individual is beyond the reach of justice for crimes against children.

Another way of obtaining justice is through the ICC, an independent, permanent court located in The Hague (Netherlands) that tries individuals accused of the most serious crimes of international concern, namely genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. By now, 114 countries have

joined the Court to help end impunity and gross violations of international humanitarian law. The ICC is a court of last resort which means that it will not act if a case is investigated or prosecuted by a national judicial system unless the national proceedings are not genuine. In addition, the ICC only tries those accused of the gravest crimes.

In January 2009 at the ICC, a trial commenced against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo who is allegedly responsible of enlisting and conscripting children under the age of 15 years into an armed group and using them to participate actively in hostilities in the context of an armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Under the Rome Statute, the treaty that established the ICC in 2002, these offences are considered to be war crimes. The trial against Thomas Lubanga Dyilo is a landmark case in the sense that for the first time someone is charged only on the grounds of enlisting and conscripting children into an armed group.

Non-judicial truth and reconciliation commissions are increasingly recognizing the importance of addressing children in their proceedings, not least due to the Security Council's emphasis. With the aim of preventing further abuses, the work of truth commissions can help societies understand and acknowledge a contested history, while bringing the voices and stories of victims to the public at large. For children, this process enables them to tell their stories and participate in the process of national reconciliation. By allowing this participation, society acknowledges the huge impact the conflict has had on its children and reinforces the importance of their role in their communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Sierra Leone was the first with an explicit mandate to pay "special attention" to the experiences of children during the conflict and the first with child participation.

It should be noted that the UN position regarding the prosecution of children formerly associated with armed forces and groups is that children should not be prosecuted for war crimes. There is no strict international prohibition against prosecuting children, but there is a general consensus on the issue, namely that it is disfavoured.

The Paris Principles and Guidelines

In 2007, the international community expressed a strong commitment to address the use of children in armed conflict by adopting the *Paris Commitments to Protect Children Unlawfully Recruited or Used by Armed Forces or Armed Groups* and the *Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*.

The **Paris Commitments** are a policy document aiming to strengthen political action to prevent association of children with armed forces and groups and to ensure their successful reintegration. The Paris Commitments seek to reinforce international consensus that recruitment against applicable law is not acceptable and reiterate measures States can take to protect children who are, or at risk of becoming involved in hostilities, and help them reintegrate in their families and communities. The Paris Commitments complement existing legal and political mechanisms already in place. In the Paris Commitments, States commit themselves, *inter alia*, to make every effort to uphold and apply the Paris Principles. As of September 2010, 95 countries had endorsed the Paris Commitments.

The **Paris Principles** are a set of operational guidelines for all actors on the ground implementing programs in support of affected children. They are intended to both foster greater programmatic coherence and promote good practices among States and international organizations. The Paris Principles are based on global experience in working to prevent recruitment, protect children, support their release from armed forces or groups and reintegrate them into civilian life. The

principles address the need for long term prevention strategies in order to definitively end children's involvement in armed conflict.

4.2 Release and reintegration of children

Release

The release is the part of the process through which an individual changes his/her status from involvement in an armed force or group to civilian. The process varies from country to country based upon the context (as explained below) but there are two key characteristics: **physical separation** of the individual from the control of the armed force or group and the subsequent **psychological transformation to a civilian mindset**. Upon release a child is immediately separated from adult combatants and then placed in a cantonment camp while the documentation process takes place. The documentation process includes identification, verification and registration of the child. Children also receive medical attention and their basic needs are met while in the cantonment camp. This portion of the process is meant to be as short as possible because the primary focus is returning them to their communities. However, if more time is needed for the documentation process or for the tracing of the family, a child may be sent to an interim care centre.

In some countries, formal **disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes** for ex-combatants are put in place upon the signature of a peace agreement. They are under the responsibility of the Government that sets-up a national DDR Commission and are often designed and implemented with the support of the UN. Where relevant, DDR programmes would have a component for children. In a formal DDR process, disarmament is the first step and, in its most basic form, is the removal of weapons from individuals, thus ending their role as a combatant and securing the environment. However, it must be understood that children do not need to turn in a weapon to be eligible for DDR.

The release of children is, however, not dependant on any formal peace process and is not contingent on the establishment of formal DDR programmes. It is prioritized at all times, including where hostilities are ongoing. Experience has shown that the majority of children do not leave armed forces and groups through formal DDR processes even when they exist and are accessible to them. While many are separated through **informal release processes**, others leave or escape on their account and melt back into their communities. Fear of stigmatization and rejection by the communities to which they want to reintegrate, are reasons for children to shy away from the very high-profile, transparent nature of formal DDR. This is particularly true for girls.

Reintegration

The return of a child to his or her family and community is the end of an exploitative situation but is the beginning of a long and sometimes difficult process aiming to find a viable alternative to involvement in armed conflict, resume life in the community and make a transition to civilian life. This process is called reintegration. Its aim is for children to be like their peers in all positive aspects. Experience has demonstrated that the longer a child remains in a group, the more difficult it will be for him or her to reintegrate successfully.

Programmes are put in place to support and facilitate the reintegration of children into their communities. These programmes aim to foster community acceptance and involve children in education, training or employment promotion activities.

Elements of reintegration programmes for children

The UN Integrated DDR Standards outline the main elements of release and reintegration programmes for children:

- **Family tracing and reunification** which requires mediation to help the family recognize and deal with problems of alienation, addiction, aggression and resistance to civil forms of authority, and involve them in decisions regarding the child's readaptation, education, learning and training. Children need to be reassured that their families want them back and accept them as they are. Assistance should not only consist of money and other forms of material assistance, but also include social support and follow-up.
- **Psychosocial support** to help children develop new patterns of behaviour, improve their self-esteem, develop their capacity to make decisions about the future and enable them to express emotions should they want to do so.
- **Special care.** Some children may need specific assistance to overcome particularly negative or harmful experiences during their stay with an armed force or group. Injured and disabled children and the terminally ill, in particular, need care that is specifically adapted to their needs and environment, which should include assistance for community-based rehabilitation and long-term care projects.
- **Education.** The higher a child's level of education, the more their reintegration is likely to succeed. It is therefore important for children to try to reach (or recover) as high a level of education as possible, often starting with basic literacy. However, returning to school is often difficult and even impossible, not only for financial reasons, but also because of the adjustments both teachers and learners have to make. After a relatively long stay within armed forces or groups, or because of the difficulties they previously experienced in school, children may not be able to adapt to traditional teaching methods. Schooling programmes should be developed in liaison with the ministry of education that are specifically designed for such children, and that achieve the same results as other official programmes, and teachers should receive specific training in order to provide better support to children with learning difficulties. Short-term accelerated learning classes and other remedial schooling programmes for children who have been out of school for long periods can provide catch-up education.
- **Vocational training and income generation projects.** Programmes should be designed to include vocational training activities (skills training and apprenticeship) that are suited to local conditions (the type of jobs that are available, etc.). There should be a wide range of professional training options available to children to help them adapt successfully to civilian life, but income-generating activities for children should be in line with laws on child labour (minimum age, working conditions, etc.)

Source: Adapted from United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR, Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), Module 5.30 on children. New York, 2006.

Child protection agencies which implement release and reintegration programmes for children have adopted an **inclusive community-based approach to reintegration**. This means that a broad cross-section of children should receive support, in addition to children formerly associated with armed forces and groups and that the community be actively involved in facilitating reintegration efforts.

This inclusive approach promotes greater equity in the delivery of assistance and recognizes that formerly associated children, while often vulnerable, are not always the most vulnerable children in their community. It helps to ensure no additional harm is done by targeting and further stigmatizing one particular group at the exclusion of another during reintegration and will avoid creating further divisions in a potentially already torn community. This approach will also ensure that children facing protection risks may be prevented from re-recruitment and other forms of exploitation.

Economic reintegration

This section looks at the economic dimension of reintegration, the importance of which is highlighted in the Paris Principles and Guidelines. It is important to note however that there is no successful economic reintegration without social reintegration. These two components are interlinked and need to be coordinated.

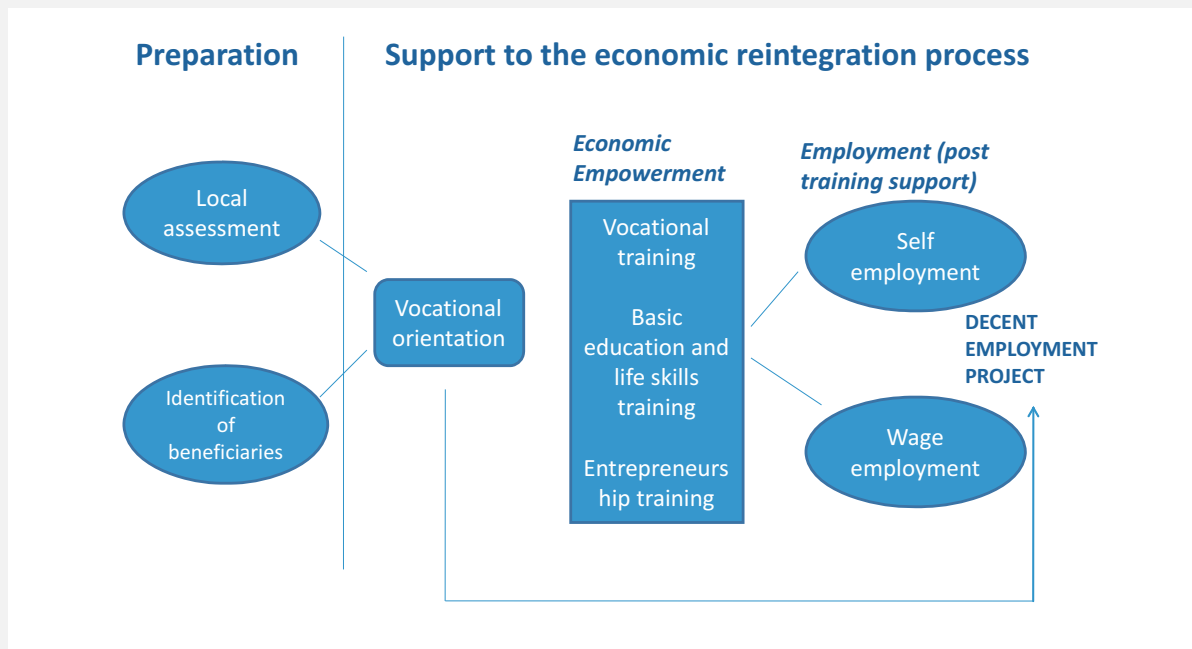
Many of the children released from armed forces and groups are young persons for whom going back to school is not an option. Their needs and aspirations are instead to acquire new skills in view of earning a livelihood. This is particularly true for those with dependents, including girls. Providing these older children with long-lasting employment opportunities does not only help them meet their needs and achieve personal goals but it also contributes to peace, stability and growth in their community. The absence or inadequacy of such programmes will limit the potential of these young people and may reinforce a vicious cycle of poverty and social exclusion, potentially exposing them to exploitation, violence and re-recruitment.

These children, however, face specific labour market disadvantages due to their low level of education and lack of work experience. They are at a critical stage in their lives and will be permanently disadvantaged if they do not receive appropriate support. The latter includes a strong component of economic empowerment based on vocational skills training, basic education and life skills training and entrepreneurship training, as well as employment services to support the transition to work.

Economic reintegration is more than just the possibility to earn one's living. It is the possibility to access **decent work**, that is "work that is productive and delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men".

The box below illustrates the economic reintegration process and the way in which the various technical components interlink and build on each other in view of ensuring decent work.

Support to the economic reintegration process of children



- The local socio-economic assessment should be conducted as early as possible in the preparatory phase. The aim is to identify decent work opportunities in the area (in particular attractive and innovative jobs) but to also identify and assess the capacity of specialized service providers (e.g. vocational training agencies).
- Vocational orientation draws on the results of the local assessment and is the process of matching a young person's aspiration with individual constraints and the local economic reality. The outcome of vocational orientation is a decent employment project and the identification of services that will need to be provided to young people in order to help them achieve their project.
- The first set of services required aim at the economic empowerment of young people. In addition to vocational skills training, it includes basic education, life skills training and entrepreneurship training.
- However, additional support is needed to ensure that young people actually access employment, in particular, in situations with low labour demand and high competition to access jobs.
- Young people in self-employment will need the following support to start and maintain a business: (i) physical and administrative support in setting up the business, (ii) information on available resources, opportunities and services in the locality and how to access them, (iii) business connections, (iv) technical support, and (v) business management skills. It is important that these young people receive regular professional coaching during this initial phase (at least one year).
- Young people will also need support to access wage employment (such as the provision of incentives to the private sector employers, negotiation of employment conditions and monitoring to ensure that these are respected).

Finally, facilitating access to micro health insurance and ensuring occupational safety and health at the work place are key element of decent work.

Conflict resolution

Non-violent conflict resolution is an important tool to consider when addressing issues of child labour and armed conflict. Tools of conflict resolution can be used by actors and implemented at all levels, from the international, to national, to community, to individual level. Use of these tools not only helps to ensure that the reintegration of war-affected children is sustainable, but also plays a role in the prevention of recruitment.

Conflict resolution refers to an overarching, comprehensive approach to address the roots of conflicts, while conflict prevention forms a part of conflict resolution and is an approach that is said to be used while the conflict is forming in order to prevent it from becoming violent. With that being said, conflict prevention can also be viewed as a tool used at many points during a conflict in order to prevent further escalation of the conflict.

Another commonly used tool for addressing conflicts is negotiation. Negotiation refers to a very specific process within conflict resolution, defined as a process through which those involved in the conflict seek to settle or resolve the conflict.

Mediation is similar to negotiation, but involves the intervention of a third party. Despite the fact that a mediator is involved in resolving the conflict, the parties themselves maintain control over the outcome. It is important to know that a mediator's role is to help the involved parties navigate their way towards a solution and it is not their role to dole out resolutions. The essence of this process is that resolution needs to come from within, from the involved parties with a mediator available to guide the process.

All of the tools above are highly dependent on the specific context surrounding the conflict. There is no set way to resolve a conflict, prevent one, negotiate one and/or mediate one, but rather there are many ways to use these tools at different points and across many levels to foster peace, whether that peace is between two individuals, two military forces, or two governments. It is in this atmosphere of peace that children will be able to return to being children and will be protected from further harm and injustice.

Definition of key concepts

"Child" refers to any person less than 18 years of age in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

"A child associated with an armed force or armed group" refers to any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes. It does not only refer to a child who is taking or has taken a direct part in hostilities.

"Armed forces" refers to the armed forces of a State.

"Armed groups" refers to groups distinct from armed forces as defined by Article 4 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

"Recruitment" refers to compulsory, forced and voluntary conscription or enlistment of children into any kind of armed force or armed group.

"Unlawful recruitment or use" is recruitment or use of children under the age stipulated in the international treaties applicable to the armed force or armed group in question or under applicable national law.

"Release" Includes the process of formal and controlled disarmament and demobilisation of children from an armed force or armed group as well as the informal ways in which children leave by escaping, being captured or by any other means. It implies a disassociation from the armed force or armed group and the beginning of the transition from military to civilian life. Release can take place during a situation of armed conflict; it is not dependent on the temporary or permanent cessation of hostilities. Release is not dependent on children having weapons to forfeit.

"Disarmament" is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilians population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

"Child Reintegration" is the process through which children transition into civil society and enter meaningful roles and identities as civilians who are accepted by their families and communities in a context of local and national reconciliation. Sustainable reintegration is achieved when the political, legal, economic and social conditions needed for children to maintain life, livelihood and dignity have been secured. This process aims to ensure that children can access their rights, including formal and non-formal education, family unity, dignified livelihoods and safety from harm.

"Formal DDR process" is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilisation may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilisation encompasses the support package provided to the demobilised [adults], which is called reinsertion.

ILO Conventions are international agreements on a subject, that are drawn up by Governments, employers and workers, setting out basic principles and rights at work.

(Minimum) Working age children. *The Minimum Age Convention defines a range of minimum ages below which no child should be allowed to work and stipulates that: (a) the minimum age for employment should normally not be less than 15 years, but exemptions can be made for developing countries which may fix it at 14; (b) the minimum age for permitting light work should be not less than 13 years, but developing countries may fix it at 12; c) the minimum age for admission to hazardous work should not be less than 18 years, but under strict conditions may be permitted at 16. (ILO Minimum Age Convention 138, 1973)*

Decent work is productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Decent work involves opportunities for work that is productive and delivers a fair income; provides security in the workplace and social protection for workers and their families; offers better prospects for personal development and encourages social integration; gives people the freedom to express their concerns, to organize and to participate in decisions that affect their lives; and guarantees equal opportunities and equal treatment for all.

Worst forms of child labour Article 3 of ILO Convention 182 defines the worst forms of child labour as: (a) all forms of slavery or practices similar to slavery, such as the sale and trafficking of children, debt bondage and serfdom and forced or compulsory labour, including forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict; (b) the use, procuring or offering of a child for prostitution, for the production of pornography or for pornographic performances; (c) the use, procuring or offering of a child for illicit activities, in particular for the production and trafficking of drugs as defined in the relevant international treaties; (d) work which, by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.

Useful sources of information on child labour and armed conflict

RESOURCES TO READ

On the impact of armed conflict on children:

- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict and UNICEF. *Machel Study 10-year Strategic Review, Children and Conflict in a Changing World* (New York, 2009)
- UNESCO. *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2011. The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education* (Paris, 2011)

On child labour:

- ILO. *Accelerating Action against Child Labour : Global Report under the Follow-up to the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work : Report of the Director-General* (Geneva, 2010)

On child labour and armed conflict:

- ILO. *The worst forms of child labour in conflict and post conflict settings: results from a research project* (Turin, 2010)

On children associated with armed forces and groups:

Legislative and policy framework

- International Bureau for Children's Rights. *Children and Armed Conflict. A Guide to International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law* (Montreal, 2010)
- Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. *The Six Grave Violations against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation* (New York, 2009)
- *The Paris Commitments to Protect Children Unlawfully Recruited or Used by Armed Forces or Armed Groups* (Paris, 2007)
- *The Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups* (Paris, 2007)
- United Nations. *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards. Module on children* (2006)

Economic reintegration

- ILO. *Prevention and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and groups. Strategic framework for addressing the economic gap* (Geneva, 2007)
- ILO. *Children formerly associated with armed forces and groups. "How-to" guide on economic reintegration* (Turin, 2010)
- ILO. *From Hell to Hope. Giving child soldiers a chance to start over (video)* (2007)

Studies

- ILO. *Wounded Childhood: The Use of Children in Armed Conflict in Central Africa* (Geneva, 2003)
- T. Betancourt et al. *Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups: the state of the field and future directions* (Psychology beyond borders, 2008).
- Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers: *Returning Home. Children's perspectives on reintegration. A case study of children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in Teso, eastern Uganda* (London, 2008).
- S. McKay et al.: *Community-Based Reintegration of War-Affected Young Mothers: Participatory Action Research (PAR) in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda* (2010).
- Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers. *Briefing Paper. Democratic Republic of the Congo. Mai Mai child soldiers recruitment and use: entrenched and unending* (2010)

TIPS TO FIND INFORMATION ON CHILD LABOUR IN A COUNTRY/AREA

On the internet:

- The International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the ILO (www.ilo.org/ipec). Look for the pages on information resources and statistics.
- Understanding Children's Work project (<http://www.ucw-project.org/>). Look for country reports and statistics.
- The yearly report of the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Conventions and Recommendations (<http://www.ilo.org/global/standards/>). Look for the comments of the Committee on the application of Conventions No. 138 and 182 for the countries concerned.
- The ILO database on national labour legislation (<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/natlex/>). Look for the profile of the country you're interested in.
- ILO photo gallery (<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/media/>). Look for pictures of child labourers, possibly in the country you're interested in.

From institutions/organizations in the country:

- Contact the Ministry of labour which may have a child labour unit.
- Employers' and workers' organizations may also have a child labour focal person.
- Contact the ILO office and the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) if present.
- Contact the child protection section of UNICEF as well as other child protection agencies.

TIPS TO FIND INFORMATION ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT IN A COUNTRY/AREA

On the internet:

- The ILO-IPEC page on child labour and armed conflict (<http://www.ilo.org/ipec/areas/Armedconflict/>). You will find various publications as well as multimedia tools on the issue.

- The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (www.un.org/children/conflict/). Look for the description of the issues faced par children in armed conflict, the country pages, the working documents and so on. Look in particular for:
 - the annual **global report** on children and armed conflict that the UN Secretary-General submits to the Security Council. The parties to conflict that use and recruit children are listed in the annex.
 - the **country reports** on children and armed conflict that the UN Secretary-General submits to the Security Council on a regular basis.
- Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (www.child-soldiers.org/). You will find information on individual countries or regions, facts against child soldiers and themed reports.
- Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict (www.watchlist.org/). You will also find some country reports.

From institutions/organizations in the country:

- If there is a **national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) commission**, contact the unit in charge of the release and reintegration of children. In countries where there is no formal DDR programme in place, contact the Ministry of social affairs or other Ministries concerned.
- Contact the child protection section of the **peace keeping mission** in the country (if there is one).
- Contact the **UNICEF** child protection section and more specifically the staff working on emergencies.
- Contact other **child protection agencies** (e.g. Save the Children).

CONTENTS OF THE CD ROM

The CD ROM attached to this Module includes the following material:

- The SCREAM – Supporting Children’s Rights through Education, the Arts and the Media - Education Pack
- The SCREAM Special Module on HIV, AIDS and child labour
- The SCREAM Special Module on child labour and armed conflict
- The feedback form for this Module
- The drawings enclosed in this Module
- The song “Child Soldier” (in French), an instrumental version of the song as well as the lyrics and musical score in French and in English
- The youth-orientated versions of the ILO Convention on the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (No. 138), ILO Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (No. 182)
- The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict
- The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
- Paris Commitments to Protect Children Unlawfully Recruited or Used by Armed Forces or Armed Groups
- Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups



Stop Child Labour

Feedback form

The Feedback form enables the participants to reflect on the activities they have participated in, what they have learned and the behavioural changes it may have brought about. At the same time, it allows the facilitator to assess the outcomes of the SCREAM activities. Take the time to go through the questions with the participants to ensure that they are understood. Allocate sufficient time for the group to reflect on the questions and complete the form.

Here is an anonymous feedback form that can be copied (or downloaded from the CD-ROM) and handed out to your group at the end of the activities (or another appropriate time).

1. Which activities did you enjoy the most?

2. Which activities did you enjoy the least?

3. Which activities do you believe were most rewarding for you?
(i.e. The activities from which you learned a lot or developed yourself the most)

4. Were there any activities in which you felt you learned little or nothing at all?

5. Has SCREAM changed your perception about children associated with armed forces and groups/ other worst forms of child labour related to violence and conflict?

6. Please try to think of an idea or thought you had before the SCREAM activities and – that as a result of the SCREAM activities – changed. Give a short description of the “before” and changed “after” thought or idea.

7. And, if your perception has changed, do you think it will also change your actual behaviour? If possible, give an example.
(i.e. Has it changed the way you would respond in certain situations?)

8. Were you happy with how much you personally contributed to the group activities or could you have contributed more?

9. What was the most difficult thing about the SCREAM activities for you?

10. Did you already pass on your new knowledge and understanding on children associated with armed forces or groups/other worst forms of child labour related to violence and conflict? And if so, how?

11. How will you make use of what you have learned through SCREAM in the future?

12. Do you believe that you have learned and understood enough to change the attitudes and behaviour of other people regarding children associated with armed forces or groups/other worst forms of child labour related to violence and conflict?

13. Is there anything you would like to learn more about or to reach a better understanding about?

14. Were there any activities that needed more time? And if so, which activities?

15. Is there anything the facilitator could have done to make the SCREAM activities better?

16. Did you feel that the method of learning was very participatory?
(i.e. Were you involved in the learning process?)

17. Was there anything about the participatory way of learning that you think should be done in all your lessons and learning activities?

18. If you were the facilitator, what would you like to change about the SCREAM activities and the way it is presented?

19. Are there any further comments that you have about this SCREAM Module on child labour and armed conflict?

Thank you!

BURMA: Case Study 1

Recruitment

Htun Htun Oo recalls being recruited by the Burmese Army saying, "A Burmese soldier asked me for my ID card, but I didn't have one because I hadn't applied for one by then. So they took me away." Htun Htun Oo was forcibly recruited in this way in June 2007 when he was minding his own business and simply on his way to visit his uncle.

Life in the Burmese Army

Htun Htun Oo's time spent with the Burmese Army was characterized by injustice and suffering, including sleep deprivation, hunger, economic exploitation and harsh working conditions. He describes this lifestyle saying "Everything morning we had to get up at five and do military exercises. Around three in the afternoon we would be ordered into the jungle to cut bamboo and collect leaves to make temporary shelters." While he was compensated, it was very minimal, receiving only 7,000 kyat (\$6.40) a month after the senior officers made their deductions from the 21,000 kyat (\$19) that he was supposed to be earning. Htun Htun Oo described the working conditions further, "The Burmese officers would continually punish us and order us to do additional duties – we were no better than slaves." Not only did he endure harsh labour conditions, but he also suffered from hunger and sleep deprivation. According to Htun Htun Oo, "They didn't give us enough food, and when we were too exhausted to follow orders, they liked to beat us. I was beaten three times for falling asleep when I was on guard duty at night." Yet another danger that he faced during his time in the army was the very stark possibility of becoming a victim of sexual abuse. Htun Htun Oo recalled a younger boy telling him that higher ranking officers had sexually abused him on multiple occasions.

Release

Senior officers warned them that escaping and surrendering to the Karen rebels would result in them being tortured and even killed. Despite these warnings, Htun Htun Oo decided to escape, stating, "I couldn't take it anymore and decided to run away." In July of 2009, he escaped from the Burmese Light Infantry Battalion 341 in Papun District in northern Karen state, recalling, "Whether I lived or died didn't matter anymore. All I wanted to do was escape. I was ready for anything so long as I didn't have to stay another day in that battalion." Risking death every step of the way, he travelled through the forest to the KNLA (Karen National Liberation Army) territory.

Reintegration

Htun Htun Oo made it to the KNLA territory, nestled on the Burmese bank of the Salween River. He was 16 when he escaped, and he found a renewed sense of hope when he was told that he could leave the KNLA soldiers that took care of him. Htun Htun Oo sends a message to the youth by saying, "I have one message for the youth of Burma – don't even think about joining the Burmese army. It is like being in a living hell. You will go so far from home that you will forget it even exists." He survived this hell and now has a second chance at life outside of the army and the prospect of going back to school to study.

*Adapted from "The Story of a Child Soldier" by Saw Yan Naing (The IRRRAWADDY: Covering Burma and Southeast Asia)

COLOMBIA: Case Study 2

Life prior to recruitment

Maria suffered beatings and sexual abuse as a child, making her home life unbearable. When she was only nine years old she was forced to work without pay. Maria recalls how she was never able to talk to her father and mother in the way that most children are able to confide in their parents. Despite the fact that she was raped and beaten at home, her mother refused to believe that Maria's stepfather was responsible. Maria recounts, "I could not cope any longer."

It was her home life that would later push her to join a paramilitary group in Colombia. She recalls this saying, "If my father and mother had loved me and had been able to talk to me, I would never even have thought about joining the paramilitaries. What made me do it in particular was the situation at home."

Recruitment

Maria worked as an assistant at a shop, and this is where she gained her first exposure to guerrilla fighters. She would observe them as they stood outside of the shop laughing and having a good time. She became so curious, that she even asked them one day if they were paid.

Maria reflects that "I saw how they were laughing with each other, that they were happy and playing around, and I thought 'they do not even let me play at home!' So I decided, 'this is the life I need, I want to be left alone and treated properly.'" The allure of a better life, combined with the opportunity to escape her abusive home life pushed Maria to get in the car with and join the paramilitaries when she was just eleven years old.

Life with a Colombian paramilitary group

Maria's expectations of a better life were not met by the paramilitary group. Instead, she was trained by guerrilla fighters to kill. She describes this training saying, "They let you watch when they murder people, showing you how they cut them in pieces and throw them away. And if they see that you are terrified or trembling, they give you some of the blood or get you to kill dogs or other living creatures. They forced me to kill a dog – the little dog I used to play with when I had time. The commander ordered me to do this because it would make me strong. He told me that if I started to cry, he would throw me into a hole. I managed to kill the dog." Maria was forced to kill this dog. Had she not done it, she may very well have been killed or punished.

Maria knew that she must follow orders in order to survive. She tells of a time when they raided a village and were order to kill everyone. She stumbled upon a house with a pregnant lady and her two year old child and could not bear to kill them, instead ordering them to run away. Maria ran an enormous risk in letting them go, knowing that if they were caught both she and the mother and child would be killed. Her fear was solidified when the commander entered the room to find Maria pretending to search for the woman. He said he knew that a female guerrilla was hiding there and that if Maria had let her escape, he would find out.

The commander then forced Maria to help him open a space to throw the bodies of people they had killed, which made her start to cry. She vividly recalls, "He told me to stand still and said that this was my last chance to tell the truth. As I started to cry, he put his gun against my head and told me that he preferred to kill me because I was crying. I closed my eyes and he pulled a trigger, but the gun was not loaded. He said that next time there would be bullets in it."

Maria not only had to live with the fear instilled in her by the commanders and follow their every order, but she also had to endure the fact that people were scared of her, always thinking that she would kill them. Due to this, it was always difficult to make friends, unless it was others in the group. Unfortunately, often times, her friendships within the group were spoiled by the fact that many became obsessed with the killing and even started to yearn to kill.

Release

She became tired of the fighting, of being forced to go to the frontline, of walking for days with little to no sleep, of going hungry, and of watching her friends die in front of her eyes. At age thirteen Maria decided risk her life by running away because she could no longer endure these things. She decided to run when she was sent ahead of the group as a scout. Just prior to deciding to escape, she recalls how her courage left her and she just sat down and cried. However, when she heard music in the distance, she suddenly stopped crying and started running and just kept running.

*Adapted from testimonies provided in *Child Soldiers: The shadow of their existence*

CONGO: Case Study 3

Before

Augustine had a difficult childhood in Congo, losing his father when he was just 8 years old. He was left with no other choice but to leave school because his unemployed mother could not afford the fees. As a result of the conflict, August and his mother had to leave their hometown. Upon returning to their hometown, with the ongoing conflict surrounding him, Augustine searched for work. However, during their absence, the conflict had destroyed the local economy, making his job search futile.

Recruitment

As a result of the death of his father, the unemployment of his mother, the destroyed economy and his inability to find alternate forms of earning a living, in 1999, Augustine began to view joining an armed group as a viable option to earn a livelihood and his only option. He asked his friends when different factions would be recruiting and decided to enrol in exchange for being promised a permanent post in the army following the war. Upon notification of his decision, his mother agreed that his choice would better their lives and provide stability for their future.

Life in the armed group

At the beginning of his time spent with the armed group, Augustine had a positive outlook; viewing the experience as a sort of apprenticeship to the permanent post he had been promised. However, his life within the armed group was characterized by suffering in combat, wounded friends, looting,

raping and taking drugs. Despite his difficult time with the armed group, during which he did take drugs, loot and rape on two occasions, Augustine stayed with the group until the end of the war.

Release

Even though Augustine tried to remain positive about his future career with the army in the face of much suffering, when the war was finally over, he returned to his mother because they did not incorporate him into the army as promised. Upon returning to his mother, tensions became high between them because she too had been counting on him receiving a permanent post and refused. She even refused to accept the things that he brought home because she knew that they had been looted from others.

When Augustine could no longer bear the tensions at home, he left, rented a room in town and decided to invest his savings in a small business. At this point in his life, Augustine was very much alone, receiving support neither from his family nor from outside sources. As a result of not receiving expert or material help, his business failed and he lost everything, leaving him idle and without money. He began a downward spiral and reverted back to the old habits he had acquired while in the armed group, including taking drugs and looting. He was ashamed of himself, so much that he would not go home and began to withdraw more and more from society and into himself.

Reintegration

To his relief, a reintegration programme for ex-combatants reached out to 17 year-old Augustine and offered him the option of vocational training. He viewed the technical training as a way to be able to take care of his mother again.

Augustine has the same goals and aspirations as he did three years before, prior to enrolling in the armed group, and he hopes to find an occupation that will yield an income for his family. He places his trust in the reintegration programme because it offers technical training that suits him and provides him with the chance to satisfy his family's needs.

* Adapted from: The story of a child from the Congo: CASE STUDY NO. 2 (ILO Wounded Childhood: The Use of Children in Armed Conflict in Africa, pages 32-33)

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