



# BAUMUN'24 UNICEF Study Guide

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# Letter from the Secretary General



Dear Participants,

On behalf of the Secretariat and the entire Organization Team, it is my honor to extend a warm welcome to you all for the BAUMUN'24. As Secretary-General, I am thrilled to see intelligent, driven people from diverse organizations come together to have fruitful discussions and diplomatic engagements.

You will have the chance to participate in inspiring debates, negotiation sessions, and social events during the conference. There is no doubt that the diverse range of experiences and perspectives that each delegate brings to the table will enhance the success and energy of this conference.

Our dedicated team has put in endless hours to make sure that every detail of the conference is well thought out to give every participant a fulfilling and unforgettable experience. Through our committees and social events, we hope to establish an atmosphere that promotes friendship, teamwork, and a profound understanding of the UN's principles.

I invite you to approach each session of this intellectual experience with an open mind, a cooperative spirit, and a dedication to finding common ground. Your enthusiastic and active participation is what will make this conference a success, and I do not doubt that your efforts will make it something remarkable.

Once again, welcome back to the BAUMUN'24 and Welcome Back to Bosphorus. May your time here be filled with meaningful discussions, lasting connections, and a sense of accomplishment as we work together to empower tomorrow.

Sincerely,

**İlgim Mina ABAT**

*Secretary-General of BAUMUN'24*

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# Letter from the Chairboard

As the Board Members of UNICEF Committee, we, Dođa Arıkan and Recep Eren Durgut welcome you to the committee.

First of all, we would like to remind you that the Guide you will read will give you general information. For more detailed information, please read UNICEF's official sources and/or other official sources.

As Recep Eren Durgut, I am writing this letter to you with the bitterness that MUN will hold the last conference of my life. We worked on this issue for quite a long time. We hope you like it too. I personally expect seriousness from the committee due to the seriousness of the issue. As the new generation, we will be looking for solutions to the difficulties that our younger versions, not so long ago, are currently experiencing. At this point, I would like to state that I have full confidence in the committee. I would like to thank Secretary General İlgim Mina Abat, Deputy Secretaries General Umit Tosunoglu and Mehmet Polat for their support and trust during this task process. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any questions you may have. Last but not least, I would like to thank my co-board member The Dođa Arıkan. Most likely no one was ready for this duo, but we created a truly wonderful work. I would also like to thank Ghena Abedalqader for her efforts.

Dear delegates, with many tragedies emerging around us every day, we believe that it is our responsibility to react and respond. I truly hope that each of you leaves this conference with widened perspectives and great experiences. Thank you all for being a part of the conversation. As a proud member of the BAUMUN family, I would like to thank our dear Secretary General İlgim Mina Abat and our Deputy Secretaries General Mehmet Polat and Ümit Tosunođlu. I would also like to thank my co-board member Recep Eren Durgut, it is a thrill sharing this title with him. And lastly, I would like to thank our Academic Assistant Ghena Abedalqader for all her contributions.

All the best, Dođa Arıkan.

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# Introduction to the Agenda Item

*“In conflict and disaster, children suffer first and suffer most. During emergencies and humanitarian contexts, children are especially vulnerable to disease, malnutrition, and violence. Children living in conflict areas are worst off – they are more likely to be living in extreme poverty, for instance, or not enrolled in primary school.*

*The chaos and insecurity of war threaten or destroy access to food, shelter, social support, and health care, and result in increased vulnerability in communities, especially for children. UNICEF focuses on these children and their families to provide them with the essential interventions required for protection, to save lives, and to ensure the rights of all children, everywhere.”*

*Although the issue mentioned by Unicef will be discussed, the focus should be on why children are important for the world and its future. Children are very important individuals for the future of a country and, when viewed as humanity, for the continuation of humanity. The failure of reproduction and/or the failure of children to complete their development and their physical and mental harm is a situation that will affect the whole world.*

*With the treaty adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child came into force, and in addition to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the extra rights that children have are stated here in 54 Articles. Again, with this agreement, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has taken on the position of expert in accordance with Article 45 of this agreement.*

*Although the problems will be discussed in detail in Title II, UNICEF will focus on the following Articles and may not be limited to these Articles:*

*“Article 4: States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social, and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation.*

*Article 6: States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.*



*Article 9: Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation, or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.*

*Article 11: States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.*

*Article 19: States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.*

*Article 22: States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights outlined in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.*

*Article 32: States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.*

*Article 35: States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral, and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of, or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.*



*Article 37 (a): No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offenses committed by persons below eighteen years of age*

*Article 39: States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect, and dignity of the child.”*

## **Defining the Problem**

When it comes to battlefields, the first problem that comes to mind is the right to life. This issue is not only a violation of the previously mentioned articles but also a violation of the law of war due to civilian casualties. In accordance with the Law of War, it is the responsibility of both parties involved in the war to protect and humanely treat any civilian left on the battlefield. In addition, the party who took the action that occurred during the war and caused the violation of this responsibility accepts the consequences of this situation and agrees to pay compensation.

Of course, another problem is that conflicts that cannot be considered wars in the real sense come into play. While the concept we call war can be defined as an armament situation initiated and managed by a management unit, conflict refers to the realization of this situation. In other words, conflict is when armed groups fight against each other. For this reason, many conflict zones in the world cannot be considered as war. For groups in conflict, the Law of War may not apply in such cases because there is no legitimate governance system, and/or this governance system is not recognized. In this case, just as there is no one responsible for civilian casualties, there is also no responsible body for the real problem, which is the rights of children.

The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, which works on this subject, has stated the violations that need to be reported in 6 articles:

- Killing and maiming of children;
- Recruitment or use of children in armed forces;
- Sexual violence against children;
- Abduction of children;
- Attacks against schools or hospitals;
- Denial of humanitarian access for children.

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Ending and preventing these six grave violations is the focus of the Special Representative's work and advocacy. These issues will be specified in Clause III in the form of a more detailed list of needs. However, as UNICEF, the main 6 points to focus on will be the items mentioned above.



## Active Emergencies Around the Globe Syrian Arab Republic

After thirteen years of conflict, almost 7.5 million children in Syria require humanitarian assistance. Years of conflict, the COVID-19 outbreak, and the recent earthquake have left millions of children exposed to long-term physical and psychosocial consequences. Despite the lack of coverage, Syria continues to be one of the most dangerous places for children to live in.

Half of the primary healthcare system in Syria remains offline. Two out of five sub-districts do not have functional primary healthcare facilities, forcing families to either delay medical care or take long trips if they can afford it. Only, 20,000 physicians remain in Syria. This translates into 2.4 health staff for every 1,000 people, compared to the international standard of 4.5 per 1,000.

Rates of malnutrition and diseases have increased markedly over the course of the crisis. Today, 90 percent of people in Syria live in poverty, most are unable to bring food to the table. Since 2019, the number of children under the age of five suffering from chronic malnourishment has gone up to 650,000.

Across Syria, some 2.4 million children, aged 5-17 years, are out of school. They make up about half of the 5.52 million school-age youngsters in the country. These kids are susceptible to child labor, early and forced marriage, human trafficking, and being enlisted in the armed forces. One in three schools in Syria is no longer used for educational purposes. They have been destroyed, or damaged, continue to shelter displaced families, or are being used for military purposes.





## Ukraine

On 24 February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine in an escalation of the Russo-Ukrainian War that had been going on since 2014. By January 2022, nearly 20% of Ukrainian territory was under Russian Military occupation. About 16 million Ukrainians were displaced, more than half feeling the nation entirely by April 2023. Resulting in Europe's biggest refugee crisis since World War II.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) verified a total of 30,457 civilian casualties during Russia's invasion of Ukraine as of February 15, 2024. However, OHCHR specified that the real numbers could be higher. As recent as of March 2024, at least 57 children were killed or injured, twice the number from February 2024. Which comes to shows that the situation in Ukraine is still as brutal as ever.

With the conflict erupting at such a rapid and severe rate, children and families were affected critically. "The war has caused one of the fastest large-scale displacements of children since World War II," said UNICEF Executive Director Catherine Russell. "This is a grim milestone that could have lasting consequences for generations to come. Children's safety, wellbeing, and access to essential services are all under threat from non-stop violence." Apart from substantial displacements, most families are still suffering from separations.

Family separation was an expected consequence of the war, and in preparation for this disaster, UNICEF trained thousands of people on how to shelter children separated from their families in Ukraine. However, no amount of preparation could have been sufficient to handle the magnitude of Ukrainian family separation that took place within such a short amount of time.

Most families are separated at borders during evacuations or forced immigration. There is a considerable amount of children stripped away from both parents or caretakers during evacuations. Another category is the unaccompanied children whose parents or carers were killed, injured, detained, or disappeared during the hostilities.

The reunification of Ukrainian children who have been taken to Russia and separated from their families or legal guardians back in Ukraine or in other countries is an extremely complex undertaking marred by different obstacles. The situation is rendered particularly difficult by the lack of a special mechanism for reuniting the children with their families and legal guardians.



Many families remaining in the Ukrainian territories were forced into underground bunkers, living in such harsh conditions indefinitely. Marking the second year of the war, over half of Ukraine's estimated 7.5 million child population is currently displaced. Thousands sheltering in basements and shelters are left without health, electricity, or access to running water.

As a result of such harsh living conditions, Parents across Ukraine report elevated levels of anxiety, excessive fear, phobias, and sadness, decreased engagement in school, sensitivity to loud noises, and sleep troubles among children. At a time when parental support is needed most, half of parents surveyed report that they are struggling to support their children.

Across Ukraine, schools have either been damaged or destroyed by shelling or lack adequate facilities. Around 40 percent of children across the country do not have access to continuous education. In areas nearer to the frontline, half of school-age children are unable to access continuous education. Since the war began, over 2,600 schools have been damaged and over 400 destroyed across Ukraine, according to the Ministry of Education. Only approximately 25 percent of Ukrainian schools nationwide have been able to offer full-time, in-person learning. Besides education, schools provide children of age with security and means of community. Most children in Ukraine are suffering from the psychological effects of the war. Yet, without reassuring environments such as schools or kindergartens, it is considerably harder for children to recover from shared trauma and stress.

## **Central African Republic**

Central African Republic (CAR) has been in a state of civil war since December 2012. Despite the 2019 peace agreement, the conflict between the CAR government and opposing militias remains critical. After the disrupted 2021 election period the conflict between military groups; Seleka, Anti-Balaka, and CAR governing organs has reached another peak point. With the recent military involvement of Russian and Rwandan forces, the civilian threat has once again heightened. Although conflict-related violence has decreased as of 2024, the humanitarian crisis in the Central African Republic remains high. An estimated number of 600,000 civilians, half of whom are children are internally displaced in CAR with an equal amount of people being displaced as refugees in neighboring countries.



Despite the decrease in violence in the area, a new report by the United Nations Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Central African Republic reveals that 1,432 grave violations against children were committed in CAR between July 2021 and June 2023. This represents a 14 percent decrease compared to the previous reporting period. However, access restrictions to areas of ongoing conflict may have contributed to a lower number of violations verified.

The recruitment and use of children remained the most verified grave violation, followed by abductions and sexual violence. Nearly all grave violations were committed by armed groups and about 20 percent were attributed to government forces, other security personnel, and pro-government proxies. Central African Republic has one of the highest number of child soldier recruitments in the world. In 2022, the UN reported the successful release of 134 child soldiers in CAR after discussions with militant groups. However, the removal of children from violent conflict does not equate to their immediate return to normalcy. Child soldiers are highly vulnerable to re-recruitment. Stigmatization of child soldiers in the Central African Republic may lead to their alienation from society as they are deemed dangerous. This also increases their chances of re-entering conflict and remaining in it until they are adults.

## Haiti

Haiti has been in a state of crisis for decades as a result of governmental disputes, economic disruption, and many social challenges. On July 7th, 2021, the last elected president Jovenel Moïse was assassinated, driving the country into political, humanitarian, and security chaos. In the absence of a functioning governmental system and police force, the armed gangs in the capital Port-au-Prince have seized most of the country under control. Escalating violence in the country has left civilians with limited access to essential needs such as; water, food, and fuel. UNICEF estimates that 3 million children across Haiti require humanitarian aid due to escalating violence, malnutrition, cholera resurgence, and basic services on the verge of collapse. Over a third urgently need protection, with this number expected to rise if conditions worsen. Haiti, already the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation, faces deepened vulnerabilities amidst this crisis. As of January 2024, over 170,00 Haitian children have been displaced internally. Haiti has over 750 orphanages that are home to more than 25,000 children who are vulnerable to trafficking and child labor.



A recent report indicates an alarming 19 percent increase in the number of children suffering from severe acute malnutrition (SAM) in Haiti in 2024 so far. The ongoing armed violence across the Artibonite department and the West department, which encompasses Port-au-Prince, has restricted aid delivery, posing a tremendous threat to the lives of over 125,000 children at risk of SAM. In March 2024, one of UNICEF's aid containers was looted at the capital's main port. The lost container held essential items for maternal, neonatal, and child survival, including resuscitators and related equipment. The Martissant road, the only humanitarian corridor from Port-au-Prince to the southern regions, remains blocked, leaving families in need helpless. The ongoing crises have left just two in five hospitals operational across the country. Meanwhile, only one in four health facilities are functioning in the Artibonite department.

Children and families are not only struggling with SAM, but there is an increasing risk of cholera, with an estimated 80,000 cases across the country, reported as of January 2024.

About eighty-five percent of children in Haiti are exposed to violent acts, one in four girls and one in five boys are affected by sexual violence. Children are vulnerable to gang violence but also to perpetrating violence and recruitment into gangs. Approximately, one in five children do not live with a parent, while 207,000 children live in inhumane conditions and are vulnerable to domestic labor.

With active gang-related violence, 500,000 children are kept away from education. Across Port-au-Prince, almost 1,700 schools remain closed or inaccessible due to clashes between rival gangs since April 2020.

## **Sudan**

Almost a year after the start of the Sudanese civil war, at least 15,000 people have been killed and over 30,000 have been injured. As of March 2024, approximately 8.5 civilians in Sudan have been displaced due to accelerating violence in the country, with about two million people fleeing the country altogether. Since April 2023, nearly 1 million children have crossed into neighboring countries, particularly Chad, Egypt, and South Sudan.

Beyond the escalating violence and displacements, children are threatened by hunger and diseases. About 14 million children are in need of urgent humanitarian aid, making Sudan one of the biggest emergencies around the globe.

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In 2024, almost 4 million children have been estimated to be facing malnutrition, including 730,000 classified to be suffering from SAM. With disease outbreaks such as cholera, measles, and dengue, so many children's lives are threatened. Spikes in mortality, especially among internally displaced children, are a forewarning of a possible huge loss of life. Currently, two-thirds of Sudanese lack access to health care services after 70-80% of hospitals ceased operation following a severe shortage of medical supplies, including crucial vaccines and lifesaving medicines.

The ongoing hostilities have resulted in a five-fold increase in reports of grave violations of children's rights from 2022 to 2023, especially the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and armed groups, killing, maiming, and sexual violence against children. 2023 saw the highest number of grave child rights violations verified in Sudan in more than a decade.

## **Yemen**

With years of conflict, Yemen remains to be one of the largest humanitarian crises around the globe. Approximately 9.8 million children are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance. The UN estimates that over 3,000 children have been killed as of December 2020, marking the fifth year of the civil war. Although the active hostilities have declined since April 2022, the situation remains fragile without any sustainable political settlements.

Over 4 million Yemeni civilians are displaced, 80 percent of whom are children and women. Yemeni children are highly susceptible to exploitation, sexual abuse, and maiming. As well as being subject to underage recruitment into combats.

Famine stands to be one of the deadliest outcomes of the civil war in Yemen. Over 17 million Yemenis are food insecure, while around 2.7 children face acute malnutrition.

## **The Gaza Strip**

October 7th, 2023 marks the start of the Israeli invasion of the Gaza Strip. As of April 2024 over 33,000 Palestinians have been killed, 70 percent being children and women. A study by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine in The Lancet estimated that 68.1% of casualties during the 7-26 October period were children, women, or elders, rather than combats. In December 2023, Israel's military revealed an estimated 66% of those killed to be civilians.



In the midst of active war, children in Gaza are defenseless and highly susceptible to killings and maimings. The Gaza Strip is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, more than 600,000 children in the area are seeking refuge in make-shift camps or open-air zones due to the lack of shelter. With forced evacuations and relocation orders seeking shelter in Gaza is getting challenging for families.

Out of 36 hospitals in Gaza only 6 of them are still operating partially while being used as shelters for civilians. Ambulances, medical aid centers, and access roads were also targeted by Israeli forces, further undermining the already damaged healthcare system. Malnutrition is one of the biggest threats to children in Gaza. According to recent reports, the entire population in the Gaza Strip is classified in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) Phase 3 or above.

Israeli Forces have been hindering the distribution of aid, food, and fuel in Gaza, depriving civilians of humanitarian assistance.

Gaza's Health Ministry reported as of April 1, that 32 people, including 28 children, had died of malnutrition and dehydration at hospitals in northern Gaza.

The emotional distress caused by bombs, loss, and starvation is leaving children increasingly unable to cope. The trauma the children are experiencing manifests in many ways, including anxiety, incontinence, nightmares, and insomnia.

Education in Gaza is also under attack. There are 625,000 registered students in Gaza but no child has had formal education since October as relentless bombardment and hostilities have left nearly 90% of all school buildings damaged or destroyed. About 261 teachers have been killed and 1.4 million people are now using schools as shelters.

## Definition of Needs

At this point, we return to UNICEF's definitions. In its data, UNICEF divided children's needs into 15 main headings. Among the 15 titles, Child and Adolescent Health, Early Childhood Development, Education, Migration, Nutrition, and Protection will be emphasized more.



## Child and Adolescent Health

Adolescence stands as a pivotal stage where individuals embark on their journey from childhood to adulthood. It's paramount to provide comprehensive support to adolescents, encompassing mental health and overall well-being, to facilitate this transition and establish the groundwork for fulfilling and prosperous adult lives.

Mental health issues pose a significant burden on adolescents worldwide. Statistics from 2019 suggested that approximately one in seven adolescents grapple with mental disorders, totaling an estimated 166 million individuals globally, with 89 million being boys and 77 million being girls.

When we look at the causes of death of individuals between the ages of 15-19, suicide ranks 4th among boys, with a rate of 6 per 100,000, while suicide ranks 3rd among girls, with a rate of 5 per 100,000.

Despite growing global recognition of the significance of mental health, progress in implementing programmatic and policy actions remains sluggish. UNICEF is spearheading the advancement of data collection techniques to gather insights into the mental health of adolescents across low- and middle-income nations. The adaptation and validation of these measurement tools will entail a blend of qualitative and quantitative methods. This includes translation, cross-cultural validation, and the use of clinical instruments considered as the 'gold standard' for assessing symptoms of depression, anxiety, suicidality, functional limitations, mental health care access, and social connectedness.

## Early Childhood Development

*Early childhood, which spans the period up to 8 years of age, is critical for cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.*

Early childhood development encompasses numerous aspects of a child's well-being, making its measurement a challenging task. UNICEF has been collaborating with countries to address this knowledge gap by developing specific indicators in three crucial areas of measurement.

- **Home Environment:** Optimal conditions include a safe and well-organized physical environment, opportunities for children to play, explore and discover, and the presence of developmentally appropriate objects, toys, and books.



- **Care and Education:** Access to good-quality care and education programs outside the home are also important in providing children with the basic cognitive and language skills they need to flourish in school.
- **Developmental Status:** Healthy development generally takes place in a series of predictable and common stages: As they grow older and their brain matures, children learn increasingly complex skills and become progressively more independent. However, children can develop at different paces and may reach developmental milestones at different times. What is considered normal child development also varies across cultures and environments, since expectations and parenting strategies may differ not only among countries but also among cultural, ethnic, or religious groups within the same country.

## Education

UNICEF underlines that; Every child learns. In line with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (ensuring inclusive and equitable education for all by 2030), UNICEF encourages member states to take steps in this regard. As mentioned before and will be mentioned later, the development of children is completed in line with the education they receive until they become individuals, and this education is very important for them to develop a healthy personality.

Every child has the right to learn. Although more children than ever before are enrolled in school, the duty-bearers obligated to realize this right for every child are collectively failing to improve learning, and this failure is deep and broad and has significant consequences. Many children lack the knowledge and skills to realize their full potential and maximize their contribution to their communities. In this context, UNICEF emphasizes that education is important not only for personal development but also for social development.

## Migration

According to 2020 data, there are 281 million refugees in the world. 36 million of these refugees are individuals under the age of 18. The biggest reason for migration seems to be economic reasons, again based on the data. 173.5 million refugees choose to go to high income destinations, regardless of their origin. 39% of the children with international immigrant status are distributed in the Asian region, 20% in the European region and the remaining regions.





The countries that host 1 million international child immigrants are as follows: Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, the United States of America, and Germany.

The important issue here is this: in the context of the issue we are working on, since the people whose security we are trying to ensure have this status, it is important that they have the rights that have been mentioned and will be mentioned. For this reason, this title is not in the context of a right but rather to give information about the obligations of the member states.

## **Nutrition**

Nutrition is one of the most important elements in terms of development. If proper nutritional resources are not taken, the desired development cannot be achieved despite the conditions such as education and environment mentioned above.

As a result of malnutrition, there will be problems in growing taller, and the possibility of obesity in undernourished children increases in later years due to short height.

Another negative effect of nutritional deficiency is a low immune system. Even diseases such as influenza, which can be easily overcome with modern medicine due to immune system weakness in individuals with nutritional deficiencies, can be fatal. This situation may become more fatal for individuals whose immune systems are at a more developing stage.

Considering that progress is made through children, precautions should also be taken regarding maternal nutrition. Low weight of newborn babies and inadequacies in the breastfeeding process also negatively affect the survival rate of newborns.

Another point that should be mentioned regarding nutritional deficiency is mineral and vitamin deficiency. In addition to the balance of carbohydrates, fats, and proteins, minerals such as iron, iodine, calcium, and magnesium that the body needs can lead to diseases such as skeletal muscle system failure, endocrine system failure, and neural development disorders.



## Protection

Under this heading, different subheadings will be included.

UNICEF follows several different methodologies to protect children. When it comes to the protection of children, UNICEF distinguishes it as keeping the registration of children, child labor problems, child marriage, and mental and physical violence against children.

In this context, the most important factor that can be addressed is determining the location of the children and checking their data securely. It is very important to keep proper records of newborn children in order to control and prevent situations such as feeding children, monitoring their vaccinations, employing them as workers, and even recruiting children into the army.

Making children work outside the rules stated within the scope of the Universal Declaration of Children's Rights is also a huge problem. At this point, studies carried out jointly with the ministries responsible for labor of the member states and keeping employee data properly are some of the measures taken.

UNICEF evaluates the measures taken by member states on the specified issues and informs the United Nations through reports at regular intervals or in situations that are inappropriate enough to cause an emergency. It should not be forgotten that UNICEF is not a decision-making authority and is a sub-body whose decisions can be taken as suggestions.

## Actions Taken by Authorities

### Afghanistan

The former government implemented policies in accordance with an action plan to put an end to the recruitment and the usage of children. This included the National Commission on the Protection of Child Rights endorsement in February 2021 of a national child protection policy in line with the Law on the Protection of Child Rights of March 2019 and a policy on the protection of children and armed conflict launched in June 2021 by the Office of the National Security Council for execution by the security sector. The action plan was signed in 2011 and implemented until 2021. However, after the Taliban takeover, there has been no mention of domestic legislation, such as the law on the protection of child rights, or policies, such as the national child protection policy, to help guide their efforts on child protection measures. The Taliban has taken no measures to guarantee compliance with international child protection standards.



In March 2022, the Taliban leader issued a decree prohibiting the recruitment of underage children into security institutions and authorized security officials to take serious measures to prevent the recruitment of minors. In accordance with that, the de facto Ministry of Defense instructed the de facto Inspector General to follow up and ensure implementation. However, a total of 635 children formerly associated with the Taliban were demobilized in 2022. No measures have been taken by de facto authorities to hold perpetrators of recruitment and use accountable. Due to the dire economic situation, the absence of birth registration, and the falsification of national identity documents, children were put at risk of recruitment and use.

## **Central African Republic**

Significant measures were taken by the government to eliminate and prevent grave violations. The country task force assisted the government in developing a draft strategy for a national plan to avoid serious violations against minors. The plan's execution will be led by the National Council on Child Protection which is made up of child protection focal points from key ministries as specified in the 2020 National Child Protection Code. The president of the Central African Republic signed an order for the establishment of the National Council on October 31st, 2023.

On April 15, 2022, the president signed an action plan to combat child trafficking in the Central African Republic with an emphasis on prohibiting the use of minors by armed forces. The army's Ministry of National Defence and Reconstruction issued a directive prohibiting minors from being present near armed forces and MINUSCA military posts. To raise awareness about this issue civilian and military officials visited armed forces bases.

## **Columbia**

In Colombia, the Intersectional Commission has prioritized 145 municipalities for preventing the recruitment and exploitation of children by illegal armed groups and organized criminal groups as well as a plan to strengthen immediate action teams to improve prevention effectiveness. The Commission began its work in April 2023 and published a statement reaffirming that child recruitment was always compelled and urging armed organizations to end both grave violations and sexual assaults against minors. A government policy was launched in many ministries focusing on providing specialized help including psychological treatment to victims of gender-based violence. The Colombian family welfare institution implemented an intersectoral strategy aimed at strengthening skills and capacities at the local level to prevent risks of violation of the rights of children. In August 2022 the ministry of National Defence forced the suspension of aerial attacks against armed groups camps where children were present

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## Democratic Republic of Congo

The United Nations and, the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) ensured an important role in child protection through the joint technical working group on children and armed conflict, chaired by FARDC, and joint screening mechanisms in FARDC recruitment and training camps to prevent child enlistment. In addition, the national task force continued its advocacy with the Government for increased efforts to reduce the adverse effects of military operations on children, especially through the immediate release of children from detention.

Following the declaration of the state of siege in May 2021, and its renewals, the national task force witnessed increased dangers related to children's safety in the context of intensified military operations. Leading the Minister for Defence to issue a directive on 18 May 2021 reminding FARDC of the necessity to follow the Government's obligation of child protection under the 2012 action plan. There was consistent supervision from the Minister of Defence to ensure the protection of children.

United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) trained 149 FARDC unit commanders and magistrates on preventing and combating conflict-related sexual violence.

## Syrian Arab Republic

In 2021, the government re-established the inter-ministerial committee on children and armed conflict to enhance future interaction with the United Nations. Senior government officials took part in a training aimed at raising awareness and understanding of the children and armed conflict mandate. The government and the UN agreed to an action-oriented dialogue to halt, prevent, and respond to grave violations perpetrated by the Syrian government and pro-government forces.

The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) have adopted a resolution declaring that training curricula must incorporate international humanitarian law, as well as steps to improve monitoring of recruiting processes, command orders, standard operating procedures, and the action plan. The SDF guaranteed access to detention, as well as healthcare for at-risk children. It has been claimed that the SDF found and freed 278 minors while preventing future recruiting. In 2022 the overall implementation of the action plan observed significant obstacles, causing difficulty with the engagement of the SDF. The operations of offices for the protection of children in armed conflict were suspended from May 22 and scheduled for reactivation in April 2023.



Children associated with armed forces and armed groups coordination mechanisms of non-governmental organizations in the northeast of the Syrian Arab Republic were suspended by the SDF. However further cooperation between the SDF and the United Nations led to the coordination mechanism being resumed, and the SDF committed to holding a joint review of the action plan and developing a road map for implementation.

In September 2021 the opposition Syrian national army issued a statement on possible measures to comply with international humanitarian law in order to protect children. The United Nations has engaged with the SNA. Following that meeting, an action plan for the opposition SNA has been discussed and requested.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic adopted a child rights law (No. 21/2021) that ensures the protection of children. The law covers a variety of aspects, including nationality, age of consent for marriage, child exploitation, protection against violence, and all forms of recruitment and use of children. A National child rights committee was established, and copies of the child law were distributed to civil society as a form of raising awareness.

## **Previous Attempts**

### **Afganistan**

In July 2022, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Violence met with a Taliban representative to address the status of children impacted by the violence in Afghanistan. Causing the country to raise awareness among 226 interlocutors about the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including knowledge of monitoring and reporting mechanisms, national international standards, ethical considerations, minimum verification standards, and risk avoidance. The mechanism's five regional task forces were reactivated and operationalized. Other United Nations agency funds and programs that are members of the country task force have been critical in reactivating the regional monitoring and reporting mechanism for children and armed conflict, thereby increasing the effectiveness of a United Nations-wide effort to protect children in conflict zones.



## Central African Republic

To support the reintegration efforts and prevent children from becoming victims of grave violations The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) supported the Ministry of National Education in setting up a vocational training Center for Children in Ouaka prefecture from the age of 14 years.

The MINUSCA juvenile task justice task team and its members continue to press for the implementation of the 2020 child protection code mainly focusing on the treatment of minors who were formerly involved with armed organizations or armed forces and committed major crimes as purely victims.

## Columbia

Ombudsman the High Commissioner for Peace and Representations of civil society met with the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict in Colombia in December 2022 in means to discuss potential solutions. The United Nations discussed a potential peace agenda and action plan opportunities to be set to include child rights, the reintegration of children formerly associated with armed groups, the prevention of recruitment and usage, and the protection of schools. This led the government to begin developing the country's first national action plan in line with the Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) which sets the agenda for women and peace and security.

## Democratic Republic of Congo

UNICEF and its partners continued to support activities related to identification, documentation, family tracing, and reunification, as well as providing temporary care and protection services as well as socioeconomic and school reintegration support to children previously associated with conflict parties, and to unaccompanied, vulnerable, and conflict-affected children from host communities.

UNICEF and its partners have also aided 16,449 children, 52% of whom were girls. As of December 2021, 20% of the children had gotten help to begin socioeconomic activities, while 6% had received support to return to school. Most of the survivors of sexual and gender-based violence were provided access to multisectoral response services by UNICEF and its partners. In addition, 4,297 boys and 730 girls who had been linked with warring parties were reunited with their families.



Children who were awaiting family reunification or a permanent long-term solution had access to extensive services such as medical care, psychological counseling, and recreational activities. While identification, temporary care, and reunification were the priority, the socioeconomic reintegration of children formerly associated with conflict parties remained a challenging task due to the lack of predictable funding and the very weak socioeconomic fabric prevailing in the children's areas of origin, which limited opportunities for reintegration.

UNICEF continued to promote access to childbirth registration within the 90-day legal timeframe, as well as the registration of more than 300,000 children after the legal time frame through supplementary judgments. Since 2020, financial problems have jeopardized these efforts. Despite this, UNICEF assisted at least 907 children released from armed groups with the issuing of birth certificates.

## **Syrian Arab Republic**

In 2020, the United Nations and humanitarian partners provided training to 14 civilian heads of offices for the protection of children in armed conflict in the northeastern Syrian Arab Republic on key priorities for the prevention of and response to the recruitment and use of children. The United Nations and humanitarian partners provided technical support to SDF in the implementation of the 2019 action plan and for the follow-up actions agreed upon under the 2019 road map. Training was provided to 550 officers to ensure the protection of minors under existing military command orders and standard operating procedures, including the release of children from the SDF. In addition, virtual training sessions were provided through 2020 and into 2021 on effective screening, including appropriate age assessment procedures, military-civilian demobilization, and separation procedures for SDF members working in recruitment centers. Capacity-building support also included the development of identification, demobilization, and separation procedures.

Humanitarian partners have assisted over 100 informally released minors in the northwest. As engagement with armed groups in the northwest proceeds, the United Nations and humanitarian partners aim to strengthen humanitarian service provision, bearing in mind the complex situation, including the continued lack of systematic and regular access alongside the prevailing insecurity, which has made these efforts challenging.



# Questions to be Addressed

As stated above, the regions where problems occur are not limited to a single location. For this reason, what is expected from the committee is to produce solution suggestions with an integrative approach. In exceptional cases, solution proposals are expected to be given on a member-state basis or by taking into account the neighboring states of the member states.

1. Providing the necessary support for children's education. (Not violating the member state's laws and discussing the integration of an integrated system in line with the existing regulations)
2. Providing necessary medication and nutritional support for mother and baby health. (In this regard, issues such as regional agricultural activities, logistics possibilities, security of the conflict area, and, if necessary, the security of the United Nations teams to be sent should be discussed in detail)
3. Improving the systematic keeping of newborn records. (As in the 1st question, it will not conflict with the laws of the member state, it will not violate the laws on the protection of personal data, and it will be important to prevent it from being used adversely by corrupt structures)
4. Protecting orphaned children, meeting their needs mentioned above, and ensuring their transfer when necessary.
5. Studies that can be done regarding children conscripted into the military at the point of armed forces.
6. Improving data collection and processing in areas of emergency and conflict

The fact that the questions in the specified articles can be answered without being obliged to answer them is very important for the course of the committee. Ideas that emerge from the progress of the committee may be accepted with pleasure by the board, but decisions that are beyond UNICEF's power or that must be taken by another sub-body may be rejected by the board decision.

Finally, this guide does not contain in-depth information about the subject, the purpose of the study guides is to provide general and need-to-know information about the committee and agenda. It does not provide information about all member states in the committee. For further studies, please do your research. If you have any questions about the subject, you can contact us via email in the Welcome Letter From Under Secretaries General section.





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