

UNICEF FUNDING PROPOSAL TO KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT - MONITORING
AND REPORTING ON GRAVE VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN TO TAKE ACTION



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Submitted by UNICEF
Child Protection Programme Team

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1. PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Title of Programme	Enhancing the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Grave Violations against Children
Donor	The Kingdom of Belgium
Total Proposed Budget	Euro 4 million
Programme Duration	4 years
Programme Impact and Outcome	<p>Impact: Grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict are prevented in line with the UNSCR 1612 monitoring and reporting mechanism</p> <p>Outcome: Countries experiencing conflict are better able to document, analyze and use data about grave child-rights violations/other serious rights violations for prevention and response</p>
Relevant SDGs, UNICEF Strategic Plan Outcome Areas	<p>SDG Target 8.7: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms.</p> <p>SDG Target 16.2: End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.</p> <p>SDG target 5.2: Eliminating all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation.</p> <p>UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025 Goal Area 3: Every Child, including Adolescents, Is Protected from Violence, Exploitation and Harmful Practices; Result area 1: Children, including those affected by humanitarian crises, are protected from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect</p> <p>UNICEF Strategic Plan 2026-2029 Impact Result 4: 350 million children protected from violence – which includes at-risk children, including those in conflict settings and which references UNICEF continued central role in monitoring, reporting and responding to grave violations against children in situations of armed conflicts.</p> <p>UNICEF Child Protection Strategy 2021-2030, which includes protection against grave violations in armed conflict as one of UNICEF’s seven thematic priorities.</p>
Geographical Focus	Global support to at least six countries selected based on need
Key Partners	Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG CAAC); United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations; United Nations Entities and Child Protection NGOs supporting human rights monitoring in situations of armed conflict; Government, communities, children in target countries.
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2. ACRONYMS

AoR – Area of Responsibility

CAAC – Children and Armed Conflict

CoP - Community of Practice

CSI – Core Standard Indicator

CTFMR – Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting

DDR – Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

DPO – Department of Peace Operations

ERM – Enterprise Risk Management

MRM - UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict

MRMIMS+ - MRM Information Management System

NGO – Non-governmental organization

TRG - Technical Reference Group

OSRSG-CAAC – Office of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict

PPSG – Paris Principles Steering Group

RCSA – Risk and Control Self-Assessment (RCSA)

SCR – Security Council Resolution

SCWG-CAAC – Security Council working group on children and armed conflict

SRSR – Special Representative of the Secretary-General

3. BACKGROUND AND SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

The 2025 Secretary-General Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict (S-G's Annual Report) included the highest number of grave violations against children since this agenda began - a 25 per cent increase from the previous year, which was already the previous highest total ever recorded. In 2024, over 473 million children — more than one in six globally— were living in areas affected by conflict. Between 2005 and 2024 the UN verified more than 392,000 grave violations against children. This included more than 123,000 children associated with national armed forces and non-state armed groups; more than 144,500 children verified as killed or maimed, including by landmines and unexploded remnants of war; more than 42,000 children abducted, often for specific purposes that may include recruitment and use, forced marriage or sexual exploitation; 20,000 verified instances of sexual violence against children; 20,500 verified attacks on schools and hospitals; and more than 35,500 instances of denial of humanitarian access.

The prolonged duration of conflicts often results in children being continuously exposed to violence from early childhood into adulthood. The impacts are wide-ranging and increasingly complex, posing significant challenges to child protection. These include heightened risks of gender-based violence, repeated displacement, separation from family members, disruption of education and essential health services, child labor, and severe psychological distress.

The Security Council has mandated the United Nations to implement its Children and Armed Conflict Agenda (CAAC) established by fourteen Security Council Resolutions¹ including by establishing a monitoring and reporting mechanism (MRM) on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict. This mechanism is intended to increase compliance by parties to conflict with their obligations under international law to protect children in conflict-affected situations. The MRM verifies six specific violations that occur in situations of armed conflict that have been identified by the Security Council as particularly grave:

1. killing and maiming of children
2. recruitment or use of children
3. rape and other forms of sexual violence against children
4. attacks on schools or hospitals
5. abduction of children
6. denial of humanitarian access

The MRM also monitors related issues of concern, such as deprivation of children's liberty for their alleged or actual association with parties to conflict or on national security-related charges in the context of armed conflict, and the military use and occupation of schools and hospitals. The analysis of patterns and trends on grave violations against children is used to inform the engagement with parties to conflict, programmatic response for conflict affected children as well as to increase accountability of parties to conflict for grave violations against children.

UNICEF is mandated by the Security Council to co-lead the implementation of the CAAC agenda at country level including documenting and verifying grave child rights violations in all situations included in the S-G's Annual Report. The UN verified information which is produced through the monitoring and reporting mechanism is one of the most solid and trusted sources of information on which the United Nations relies. Documenting the impact of armed conflicts on children and gathering evidence on how children are affected, the risks and violations they endure informs UNICEF's programmes and advocacy and helps the organization respond to children's needs through an intentional, and targeted approach, as well as prevent violations in the first place. Similarly, in line with its Core Commitments for Children, and its obligations to children before, during and after conflict, UNICEF initiates monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children and other serious rights violations when

¹ United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015), 2427 (2018), 2601 (2021), and 2764 (2024)

an armed conflict begins, prior to a country becoming a situation of concern in the S-G's Annual Report.

UNICEF collects and verifies the vast majority of data on grave violations globally and supports establishment of processes that enable the production of timely, objective, and accurate reports to the Security Council that convey the scale and gravity of the impact of conflicts on children and to trigger political, response, and advocacy actions to end and prevent violations against children and to address their needs.

UNICEF maintains a secure information management system to protect the confidential data of individual children, survivors, eyewitnesses, and human rights monitors. UNICEF has a responsibility to safeguard the information collected according to the highest standards to prevent putting involved individuals at risk. This is a unique area of work, which is specialized, and human resources intensive, requiring technical expertise combined with political sensitivity.

4. UNICEF'S ROLE AND ACCOUNTABILITIES UNDER THE SECURITY COUNCIL MANDATE ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

In all countries included as a situation of concern in the S-G's Annual Report, monitoring, verification and reporting processes must be established at country level to collect information on the six grave violations. In addition, after any party to an armed conflict has been listed in the Annual Report, a formal MRM must be established, along with a UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR). When no parties to conflict are listed in the annexes of the S-G's Annual Report, a Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, equivalent to the CTFMR is established.² CTFMRs are responsible for regular monitoring and reporting and for engaging with all parties to conflict to adopt measures including legal frameworks, policies and practices to end and prevent grave violations against children.

UNICEF is the Child Protection sector lead and provider of last resort in humanitarian situations and is at the forefront of global efforts to monitor and report on grave violations against children, in accordance with its mandate and responsibilities under UN Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005). At the global level, UNICEF and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC) co-chair the MRM Technical Reference Group (TRG), which serves as a platform for consultation and agreed guidance on technical issues pertaining to the development of working tools and implementation of the MRM. The most recent examples of technical guidance developed and disseminated by the TRG include the 2022 *Guidance Note on Abduction*³ and the 2025 *Guidance Note on Denial of Humanitarian Access to Children*⁴ which were prepared through extensive consultation to provide technical guidance to the country teams on the ground.

UNICEF HQ engages closely with OSRSG-CAAC on development of the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, the quarterly Global Horizontal Notes and periodic country specific report to perform quality assurance and supports UNICEF country offices and CTFMR co-chairs throughout the review processes. UNICEF is responsible for presenting the quarterly updates to the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict (SCWG-CAAC) on the situation of children and armed conflict (Global Horizontal Notes) and is a technical resource on monitoring and

² There are six situations of concern (Cameroon, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, Niger) included in the Secretary-General's annual report on CAAC where no parties to conflict are listed in the annexes of the report, which means these countries do not have formal MRMs established. In these countries, UNICEF co-leads the equivalent of CTFMRs, and maintains similar roles and responsibilities as in situations with formal MRMs.

³ https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/22-00040_Abduction-Guidance-for-CAAC_FINAL_WEB-1.pdf

⁴ <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Guidance-Note-on-the-Denial-of-Humanitarian-Access-to-Children-WEB.pdf>

reporting, and child protection, including in support of developing the conclusions of the Secretary-General's country specific reports on Children and Armed Conflict.

At country level, UNICEF co-chairs CTFMRs, or equivalent working groups on CAAC, both at principal and technical levels, which are accountable to operationalize the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict. In addition, UNICEF supports country operations to safely collect, store, analyze and report data on grave violations through the deployment of the secure MRM Information Management System (MRMIMS+)⁵. UNICEF invests significant resources and efforts in training UN agencies, CTFMRs members and partners to enable the effective roll-out of the MRMIMS+.

UNICEF supports CTFMRs to play their role in preventing and responding to grave violations against children, through both active and strategic engagement with parties to conflict, and through support for, and delivery of, programmatic interventions, including humanitarian assistance⁶. Dialogue with parties to conflict aims at negotiating and signing formal agreements including action plans, prevention plans, or other types of documents that list the timebound measures that a party to conflict will take to end and prevent grave violations against children. These may include military directives, or capacity building for instance and, in the case of State actors, law and systems reform. For example, in recent years, three new Action Plans to prevent and end grave violations against children were signed between the United Nations and non-state armed groups in Yemen (2022), Iraq (2023), and Syria (2024). In addition, in Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Haiti, and Nigeria, UNICEF engaged with the government to develop and sign protocols for the handover of children encountered during military operations.

This project contributes to Goal Area 3 - protection from harm, in the current UNICEF Strategic Plan 2022-2025, and is included in the Impact Result 4 of UNICEF next Strategic Plan 2026-2029. The work of the MRM is central to the UNICEF Strategic Plan, particularly within the context of protecting children in armed conflict. In essence, the MRM serves as a critical tool that allows UNICEF to understand the scope and nature of grave violations against children, advocate for their rights, hold perpetrators accountable, and implement effective responses, all of which are aligned with the overarching goals of the UNICEF Strategic Plan.

5. MONITORING AND REPORTING THE IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICTS ON CHILDREN AT A CRITICAL TIME FOR THE CAAC AGENDA: KEY CHALLENGES

While the Children and Armed Conflict agenda has demonstrated its ability and effectiveness to protect children living in situations of armed conflict, the number of grave violations verified is at its highest, and national authorities are showing increased sensitivity to the documentation of grave violations against children in their countries, and particularly by their national armed forces. Governments' reaction to the work of the UN based on the Security Council's mandated agenda on CAAC has grown across situations, ranging from administrative to programmatic bottlenecks, to access impediments, which are creating bigger and more complex challenges for the child protection teams on the ground. These challenges include:

Continued demand for sustained monitoring, reporting, and engagement

Monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children constitutes a unique area of work, which is demanding, highly sensitive and human resources intensive. Critical challenges currently facing UNICEF include resource constraints and increasingly complex operating and political environments as well as the reduction or closure of Peace Operation and Special Political Missions. As of June 2025, there are twenty two situations of concern included in the S-G's Annual Report, (Afghanistan, Burkina

⁵ The MRMIMS+ is an interagency tool that was officially adopted as the information management system to document grave violations against children by UNICEF, the United Nations Department of Peace Operations (DPO) and the Office of the Special-Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC).

⁶ In accordance with their mandate per UN Security Council resolution 1612 (2005).

Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Haiti, Israel and the State of Palestine, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, Yemen), and one sub-regional situation (Lake Chad Basin) of enhanced monitoring, resulting in a demand on UNICEF to address a variety of human resources needs for both monitoring and reporting, and engagement with parties to conflict. These may include demands to immediately gather information as conflicts emerge or escalate, to quickly set-up monitoring systems in new situations of concern, improve remote monitoring methods in situations where access is highly constrained, handle politically and operationally sensitive information, and engage with parties to conflict, and governments.

Up until 2025, more parties, more countries, and more violations were included in the Secretary-General's Annual Report on CAAC. Between 2014 and 2024 the rate of addition of new situations was greater than the rate of countries which were removed. Whilst this trend slowed and was partially reversed in 2025, the intensity of the conflicts in some situations resulted in a higher number of incidents of grave violations to document and verify. Ongoing violent escalations in long-standing conflicts (in Democratic Republic of the Congo, Israel and the State of Palestine, and Sudan), as well as coups or the sudden collapse of government have resulted in significantly changed conflict dynamics with severe impacts on children (Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Myanmar, Niger). Countries in which UN Peacekeeping or Special Political Missions have closed (Mali) or are currently in a drawdown process ahead of anticipated closure (DRC and Somalia) require significant adaptations on the ground to maintain coverage and reach to document grave violations against children. The increasingly protracted and complex nature of current conflicts, as well as the emergence of new situations or expansion of existing ones (including across borders) have put a heavier pressure on UNICEF capacity to deliver its monitoring and reporting mandate.

Technical and programmatic support

Everyone who is involved in monitoring and reporting on grave child rights violations – from field monitors to CTFMR co-chairs and other UNICEF senior management at country, regional, and global levels – must be provided with the necessary skills and skills-development opportunities, the required technical tools, and the support and guidance necessary to fulfill the mandate. As national authorities increasingly challenge the Security-Council mandate and threaten the implementation of humanitarian programmes by questioning UN verified data, sustained guidance becomes necessary, including and particular for UNICEF Senior managers and Country Representatives, so that they can receive the necessary and timely support and advice on how to navigate these challenges. Regular exchanges take place between UNICEF HQ and the MRM Child protection specialists in country and regional offices, and guidance is provided on key issues such as risk management, engagement with diplomatic corps, development and implementation of action plans, prevention plans, and handover protocols, how to interview children and families, handling of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), and protection of children and their rights in situations where counterterrorism measures are being implemented, among other key thematic issues. The range of grave violations being monitored and followed up with parties to conflict also increasingly requires UNICEF staff in other sectors to be trained to understand the framework so that they can contribute. This includes emergency, education, health, communication specialists, in addition to leadership.

The MRM Community of Practice (CoP) established in 2020, remains in operation and continues to constitute a vital forum which enables communication and experience sharing amongst this unique group of UNICEF specialists working within the field, as well as country and regional offices. This virtual online community provides a platform for learning and sharing best practices, and for discussing common issues of concern. Over the past 12 months, meetings have focused on priority issues identified by the field colleagues, and dedicated sessions were held on the Guidance Note on Abduction, on the preparation of the inputs for the S-G's Annual Report, as well as on conducting age assessments, amongst others.

Evidence generation, data management and use

Monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children require confidential and secure systems to collect, manage, analyze, and store data. While all CTFMRs have established systems to manage data in their respective countries, UNICEF has led the development and implementation of a standardized and secure information management system – the MRMIMS+. This system has been adopted by the TRG as the recommended data management tool for all situations included in the S-G’s Annual Report, promoting consistent and harmonized documentation and data analysis.

Over the past eight years, UNICEF has continued to invest in this tool, adapting it and upgrading it based on the feedback provided by users, to better respond to the documentation and reporting needs of the teams on the ground. MRMIMS+ roll-out continued and increased over the years, always based on countries demand and never imposed on a country team, to ensure maximum sustainability.

Since 2023, with the support of the Kingdom of Belgium and other funding sources, UNICEF rolled out the MRMIMS+ to 15 conflict-affected countries: Afghanistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, the State of Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Ukraine, and Yemen (listed alphabetically; not in order of deployment). Each rollout included tailored customization to country-specific operational contexts as well as comprehensive training for users, covering both UN staff and NGO partners, the finalization and dissemination of the User Manual, and Terms of Use. In total, 136 users have been trained, supported by on-the-job technical assistance to enable an effective adoption of the new system and a smooth transition to a secure data management, documentation and reporting tool. In 2025, a set of new features was developed to ease the reporting work of CTFMRs, including updated categories in drop down menus for some grave violations (i.e. killing and maiming and rape and other sexual violence), and to enable a more specific analysis in the reporting for recruitment and use, in relation to the context in which the violation takes place and the response provided to the child. Another round of feedback is planned to ensure the system remains fully fit for purpose.

At country level, effective analysis and subsequent use of data on grave violations is critical to inform targeted advocacy initiatives and engagement with parties to conflict, as well as to inform UNICEF’s programmatic responses. There is a continued need to support evidence-generation processes as well as the production of global and regional trends and analysis on grave violations against children. With the previous support the Kingdom of Belgium, UNICEF completed development of an internal database and dashboard, which is being made available to Child Protection Specialists working on the MRM. In the next phase of the project UNICEF will update the dashboard with additional data, and discuss with the SRSR CAAC office how to make it live for MRM staff and leadership, and test its reporting utility.

6. PROGRAMME RESULTS

To address these critical areas, over the next four years, ***UNICEF will sustain its investment to strengthen its monitoring and reporting capacities on grave violations against children at all levels of the organization*** – through 3 Outputs:

1. High-need countries are provided with skills, knowledge and capacity to document the impact of armed conflicts on children
2. Data management systems and tools are made available to CTFMRs and working groups to effectively and safely store, manage and analyze data to enable advocacy and programming
3. Global technical support and coordination for the children and armed conflict agenda is reinforced

Output 1. High-need countries are provided with skills, knowledge and capacity to document the impact of armed conflicts on children

Over the past five years, the number of situations of violence and armed conflict has increased. Emerging or intensifying situations of armed conflict require reinforced capacities as conflict dynamics change, while protracted low-intensity international armed conflict situations escalate into full blown crises, and non-international armed conflicts expand as a result of the activity of non-State armed actors and of national armed forces responses. All these situations require UNICEF to strengthen, establish or expand the capacity of its country offices to document grave violations. With the support of the Kingdom of Belgium, support will be provided to six high-need UNICEF country offices in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Myanmar, South Sudan, Sudan, and Syria, so that that they can strengthen their monitoring and reporting mechanism by:

1. Map existing networks to identify gaps, and to strengthen and expand existing or establish new monitoring and reporting mechanisms on children and armed conflict.
2. Conducting training for NGOs, local civil society organizations, human rights institutions, UN partners and other stakeholders on safe monitoring and reporting and on proper monitoring standards.
3. Providing timely objective analysis and reports on incidents to UN headquarters quarterly and annually.
4. Engaging with parties to conflict to agree on measures to end and prevent grave violations against children and develop and implement action plans, handover protocols or other measures as required.

Output 2. Data management systems and tools are made available to CTFMRs and working groups to effectively and safely store, manage and analyze data to enable advocacy and programming

The MRMIMS+ will continue to play a key role in securing the data collected at country level. With the MRMIMS+ already rolled out to 15 countries (Afghanistan, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, Ethiopia, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, the State of Palestine, Somalia, Sudan, Ukraine, and Yemen), the tool will be refined and rolled out into as many additional situations as it feasible. In addition, UNICEF will update its global repository of all MRM data to facilitate global, regional, and national analysis and advocacy, based on the public data available in the Secretary-General's annual report and country specific reports, and will use that data to support systematic and reliable evidence-based insights into trends and patterns of grave violations as well as rigorous, accurate and use for evidence-based advocacy and programming.

With the support of the Kingdom of Belgium, the following activities will be completed:

1. Roll out the MRMIMS+ into at least six new monitoring situations, as feasible.
2. Refine the MRMIMS+ tool based on regular user feedback, including reviewing and revising as necessary, reporting features.
3. Update the internal database and develop six analytical data products to inform advocacy and programming.

Output 3. Global technical support and coordination for the children and armed conflict agenda is reinforced

At the global level, UNICEF HQ CAAC team reinforces the work of UNICEF country offices implementing the CAAC agenda through sustained and systematic engagement with the Office of the SRSR-CAAC, the SCWG-CAAC, and Member States. The UNICEF HQ CAAC team works to influence interlocutors to maintain and bolster the robustness of the CAAC framework and ensure the protection of children is prioritized in the work of the Security Council. The HQ CAAC team will provide direct technical support to staff who are directly implementing the MRM across all contexts. This includes supporting the reporting requirement, liaising between technical field colleagues and the Office of the SRSR-CAAC

and supporting MRM colleagues to establish and strengthen their networks. Five years after its establishment, the Community of Practice (CoP) continues to be attended by 90 per cent of the registered colleagues, a testament to its need and usefulness. For the CoP to continue to be meaningful and effective, a constant and dedicated effort is required so that discussions focus on the most relevant issues of interest and need of MRM child protection specialist, and so that it becomes a forum that goes beyond exchanges on existing practices but also an active environment where both experienced and new colleagues can find the resources they need. Through the CoP, UNICEF will survey MRM colleagues to identify their most pressing areas of technical guidance needed and plan to address those needs by developing necessary resources.

In addition, through the Technical Reference Group (TRG), discussions with UNICEF senior management at country, regional or HQ level, will identify technical support needs. The TRG brings together technical experts from UNICEF, Office of the SRSR-CAAC, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), and the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPA). The TRG reviews and validates content, provides strategic direction, and ensures alignment with evolving field realities and global standards

To ensure that colleagues have the knowledge, tools, and guidance they require, UNICEF HQ will:

1. Support UNICEF Representatives and Child Protection Chiefs to develop, implement and monitor the results of UN action plans with parties to conflict to end and prevent grave violations of child rights.
2. Train UNICEF protection, education, health, communications, and emergency chiefs of section and any other relevant specialists at country and regional levels to support UNICEF's role in monitoring, reporting, engagement and advocacy on grave violations against children in armed conflict.
3. Support and enhance the UNICEF MRM community of practice and provide other support as required to UNICEF MRM staff including through face-to-face workshops to foster cross-learning, peer-to-peer support, and consistent implementation of MRM standards.
4. Develop at least three technical guidance products on topics such as interviewing child survivors, interviewing sources to determine credibility of source and reliability of information, recruitment and use of children, use of and sharing of MRM data, and remote monitoring.

These actions will not be limited to the selected countries covered by Output 1.

7. HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY

Addressing and responding to human rights violations is a key aspect of this proposed project. Children affected by armed conflict are at high risk of violence and violation of their basic human rights. Through this project, UNICEF will directly document and verify rights violations and contribute to improving the situation of highly vulnerable children. The project will also contribute to creating a more protective environment in conflict settings and to supporting duty bearers to as they engage with the UN to prevent and end grave violations.

Protecting human rights and principles of non-discrimination and gender equality are central to protecting and assisting children affected by conflict. By using child-sensitive data collection tools and improving the protection of data collected, the project promotes the rights of all children, including girls and disabled children.

This project recognizes the challenges and limitations posed to monitoring, reporting, and responding to child rights violations and is designed to enhance the capacity of UNICEF and its partners in the longer term to respond to the protection needs of boys and girls. Technical support, trainings and

advocacy will be integrated within the project to stimulate changes in structures and systems that increase the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

UNICEF will mainstream age, gender, diversity and protection principles in both the design and implementation of its interventions. UNICEF and its partners will design interventions with an emphasis on meaningful access, safety and dignity, and non-discrimination.

Local sensitivities (security, social and cultural) are critical and will be considered at every stage, particularly as this project involves some of the most sensitive protection issues both politically and socially. Protecting human rights and gender equality are central to protecting children affected by conflict. UNICEF's dual humanitarian and development mandate, its operational presence before, during and after conflict, as well as its national and sub-national programmes centered on social services that reach the community level deliver tangible peace dividends in the lives of people and address conflict factors that put children at risk.

All UNICEF programming is informed by the principle of 'Do no harm' and the application of international standards promoting protection, through understanding the vulnerabilities and resilience of women and girls affected by conflict and other situations of violence.

8. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

UNICEF will partner with Member States, the Office of the SRSG-CAAC, Department of Peace Operations, Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, UN sister agencies, and where relevant, NGO partners including Watchlist for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, Save the Children, War Child, amongst others. This programme will work with already existing partnership arrangements, including the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on Children and Armed Conflict Technical Reference Group (UNICEF, DPO, OSRSG-CAAC); interagency humanitarian coordination structures and the following inter-agency working groups: Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR, and Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action. At country level, offices will work with the CTFMR, the UN peacekeeping and political missions, humanitarian and development partners, government line-ministries, bodies and authorities at all levels, as relevant.

9. UNICEF'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE

UNICEF will harness the organization's full range of expertise and capacity to leverage partnerships to promote the rights and wellbeing of children and their families. This strength infuses each of UNICEF's roles in preventing, monitoring and addressing child protection concerns during situations of armed conflict. These roles are, namely, to provide leadership, facilitate coordination, promote technical excellence and mobilize attention and support for the protection of children.

Identifying the impact of conflict on children and using data collected to respond to children's needs is lifesaving. UNICEF's humanitarian mandate and principled engagement in conflict situations provides acceptance and space to engage with all actors in an independent, impartial and neutral manner. UNICEF's dual humanitarian and development mandates results in strong and sustained field presence before conflicts erupt, during the height of conflict, and long after conflicts cease. This places the organization in a unique position not only to monitor the protection concerns for children and women, including grave violations, but also to develop and implement the most contextually appropriate interventions across the humanitarian, development and peace nexus.

UNICEF has a specific mandate and significant role for implementation of SCR1612, as described under section 3. In addition, UNICEF is the global co-Chair of the Paris Principles Steering Group (PPSG), the focal agency on children and youth within the United Nations Inter-Agency DDR Working Group, sits on the steering committee for the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, and has a

mandate and mission that is rights-based and holistic. Globally, UNICEF is the lead agency engaging with member States and non-State armed groups on release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces and armed groups and actions to prevent recruitment of children in the first place.

10. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring, evaluation and documentation of results, good practices, and lessons learned is critical to better inform programme strategies, and for accountability at all levels (including to beneficiaries, partners, donors and other stakeholders), advocacy and knowledge exchange. UNICEF in concert with its partners, is committed to supporting systematic monitoring, analysis and assessment of performance against benchmarks as stipulated in the Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs). This entails monitoring and analysing the situation of children, supporting humanitarian action based on rapid assessments conducted with partners and affected populations, including children, adolescents and women and measuring progress to identify and address results for children and women.

Through this project UNICEF obtains access to and manages very sensitive data related to children, including personal-identifiable information. As such, UNICEF Country offices are provided with guidance on how to manage this information, including storing the data and reporting on it, in line with UNICEF Policy on Personal Data Protection (POLICY/DFAM/2020/001). Furthermore, UNICEF provides specific guidance to its Country Offices on the development of Data Protection and Information Sharing Protocols, which regulate how data protection and information sharing should occur in the context of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on children and armed conflict based on agreed-upon guiding principles and general provisions and apply appropriate practices for safe, secure, and ethical collection, processing, storage, sharing and destruction of personal and non-personal data of vulnerable children.

Consistent with approved policy and practice the project will be continually monitored, and information will be documented and shared in various formats, including progress updates. UNICEF will use standard UNICEF donor reporting schedules (annual progress, utilization report and final report).

11. SUSTAINABILITY

Long-term sustainability of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) requires a strategic focus on capacity building, institutional ownership and systematic integration. This includes addressing the financial, political, and operational challenges to build a strong, resilient national system that can continue protecting children affected by armed conflict even after international actors depart.

A core pillar of sustainability lies in strengthening national capacities and ensuring long-term knowledge transfer. By delivering targeted technical assistance to country teams and cultivating a global community of practice among CAAC specialists, the MRM promotes national ownership and helps retain expertise at global, national, and field levels. Complementing this, the development of technical guidance notes provides standardized procedures for documenting and reporting grave violations, promoting coherence and consistency across contexts and supporting sustainable implementation.

Also, the MRM and broader CAAC agenda present a unique opportunity to advance an integrated cross-sectoral approach to child protection. At the country office level, UNICEF will enhance cross-sectoral collaboration particularly with education, justice, health, and social affairs sectors. This integrated model strengthens the overall protective environment for children while helping to institutionalize child protection monitoring within national structures.

Sustained advocacy within the UN system, Member States and donor community is essential to mobilize and secure extra-budgetary funding particularly for reintegration response and key child protection staff positions which are fundamental to the long-term viability of the MRM. The implementation of the MRM, especially the response component, is highly reliant on donor support.

While not formal members of the CTFMR, national governments play a central role in implementing prevention, response, and accountability measures. Strengthening their institutions is thus vital to achieving a durable, locally anchored child protection response.

Together, these measures aim to embed sustainable systems, skills and practices that will endure well beyond the project's timeline- ensuring the continued protection of children in conflict-affected situations.

12. RESULTS FRAMEWORK

IMPACT: Grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict are prevented through sustained engagement based on safe and secure data generated through the UNSCR 1612 monitoring and reporting mechanism.					
Outcome	Indicator(s)	Baseline	Target (end of 4 years)	Means of Verification	Responsible Party
Outcome: Countries experiencing conflict are better able to document, analyse and use data about grave child-rights violations/other serious rights violations for prevention and response.	Percentage of countries experiencing conflict having a system in place to document, analyse and use data about grave child-rights violations/other serious rights violations for prevention and response ⁷	Baseline 2024: 76% Milestones: 2025: 76% 2026: 79% 2027: 82% 2028: 85% SP Target 2025: 76% (SP 2026-2029 target under development)	Target will be based on baseline established for the UNICEF strategic plan	Core Standard Indicator (CSI) (Annual data available in June of each year)	Partners, UNICEF Country Offices, UNICEF HQ CAAC team
Output	Indicator(s)		Target (end of 4 years)	Means of Verification	Responsible Party
Output 1. High-need countries are provided with skills, knowledge and capacity to document the impact of armed conflicts on children	Indicator 1.1: Number of countries with increased verification rates for grave violations of child rights	4 (2022-2024 project)	6	Narrative and financial reports	Country Offices
	Indicator 1.2: Number of trainings conducted for NGOs, human rights institutions, UN partners and other stakeholders on safe monitoring and reporting and on proper monitoring standards.	42 trainings	80 new trainings	Training Records	Country Offices
	Indicator 1.3: Number of reports submitted to SRSR CAAC during project period	20	120 new reports	Tracking of quarterly and annual reports to SG, counted cumulatively	

⁷ This indicator is found in UNICEF's new Strategic Plan 2022-2025. Given that this project involves global level support, this indicator will involve all countries reporting on this strategic plan indicator, not only the 7 countries that receive direct support from this project.

			<i>Year 1: 30 - Year 2: 30 - Year 3: 30 - Year 4: 30</i>		Country Offices / HQ CAAC Team
Output 2. Data management systems and tools are made available to CTFMRs and working groups to effectively and safely store, manage and analyze data to enable advocacy and programming	Indicator 2.1: Number of MRMIMS+ roll outs at country level	4	6 new countries	deployment documentation	HQ CAAC Team
	Indicator 2.2: Number of analytical data products on CAAC to inform programming and advocacy	6	<i>Year 1: 1 - Year 2: 1 - Year 3: 2 -Year 4: 2</i> 6	copies of products	
Output 3. 1. Global technical support and coordination for the children and armed conflict agenda is reinforced	Indicator 3.1: Number of UNICEF personnel at country and regional levels that have been capacitated on understanding and implementing UNICEF's role in monitoring, reporting, engagement and advocacy	118	Additional 150	Training reports/agendas/# attendees	HQ CAAC Team
	Indicator 3.2: Number of technical notes, or guidance documents to address emerging issues for the CAAC agenda disseminated or developed	3	Additional 3	Published documents / dissemination events	HQ CAAC Team
	Indicator 3.3: Number of face-to-face workshops on MRM processes and issues for UNICEF MRM staff.	3	At least 3	Workshop agendas, reports	HQ CAAC Team

13. RISKS ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION PLAN

The country offices and HQ regularly assess risks and implement relevant mitigating controls. Under UNICEF's Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) policy, each office has performed a Risk and Control Self-Assessment (RCSA). The RCSA is a structured and systematic process for the assessment of risk to an office's objectives and planned results, and the incorporation of action to manage those risks into workplans and work processes. The risks and their mitigation measures are recorded in a risk and control library.

The table below summarizes the analysis of main risks: operational, developmental, financial and political, reflecting those in the medium to high range.

Risks	Impact	Mitigation	Rating
Operational			
Capacity of Implementing partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient and weak capacity of implementing partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This programme has a strong component of strengthening the technical capacity and capacities monitored for effective programme delivery 	Low

Security of monitors and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on network of monitors – willingness and ability to continue to monitor and report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constant awareness and consideration of security and political impacts. Investment in a range of modalities and partners to diversify sources 	High
Vacant key posts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lateness in recruitment and deployment of staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive recruitment plan in place 	Low
Delayed start of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constrained timeframe for completion of activities and expenditure of contribution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UNICEF strategic plan includes all the project activities, preparations are underway for swift implementation and quick expenditure of contribution 	Low
Financial			
Corruption and misuse of funds by key partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient assessment and mitigation of fiduciary risks Decreased impact of the programme Damaged reputation of partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> HACT assurance activities including audits of implementing partners (both Government entities and NGOs), and macro-assessment of the country's financial management system. Every implementing partner is assessed following UNICEF procedures and ranked 	Medium
Developmental			
Poor application of best practice approaches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repetition of program mistakes of ineffective strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document and disseminate best practices standards Circulate and train staff in core strategies Provision of technical support 	Low - Medium
Political			
Escalation of violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reverse of progress achieved Gaps in learning for MRM staff and personnel Challenges in accessing operational areas and programme participants due to conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner strategies to mitigate impact of crisis and rapidly restore programme activities Establish early warning systems and risk analysis and mitigation measures Develop a comprehensive business continuity plan(s) to include relocation of programme assets and resources 	Medium - High
Lack of Political will to prevent and end violations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on engagement with parties to conflict 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to identify and engage through various fora, engage with all relevant actors at all levels who may be influential on certain parties conflict 	Medium - High
Natural Disasters Public Health Crises	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access and logistics challenges by staff and programme participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risks assessments and early warning systems are usually developed at country level by UNICEF 	Medium

14. BUDGET

For the proposed four-year programme, a total budget of Euro €4,000,000 is projected. The budget is aligned with the results framework and presents the budget requirements per programme output.

Budget Items	Amount Requested (USD)			
	2025	2026	2027	2028
Outcome: Grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict are prevented in line with the UNSCR 1612 monitoring and reporting mechanism.				
Output 1: High-need countries are provided with skills, knowledge and capacity to document the impact of armed conflicts on children	€ 562,004.63	€ 509,629.63	€ 427,629.63	€ 509,629.63
Output 2: Data management systems and tools are made available to CTFMRs and working groups to effectively and safely store, manage and analyze data to enable advocacy and programming	€ 45,000.00	€ 50,000.00	€ 50,000.00	€ 50,000.00
Output 3: Global technical support and coordination for the children and armed conflict agenda is reinforced	€ 272,625.00	€ 320,000.00	€ 402,000.00	€ 320,000.00
Programme management, support, knowledge management, planning.	€ 46,296.30	€ 46,296.30	€ 46,296.30	€ 46,296.30
Total Programmable Amount	€ 925,925.93	€ 925,925.93	€ 925,925.93	€ 925,925.93
Recovery Cost (8%)	€ 74,074.07	€ 74,074.07	€ 74,074.07	€ 74,074.07
Total programme cost	€ 1,000,000.00	€ 1,000,000.00	€ 1,000,000.00	€ 1,000,000.00