



GPC and AoR ANNUAL PROTECTION CONFERENCE **23 -24 May 2019, Pullman King Power Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand**

Plenary Session - **Protection of children in conflict and armed violence**

23 May 2019, 11.00 - 12.30

Background

Violence against children takes many sinister forms. In homes, schools, communities and online around the world, it manifests itself in debilitating physical and emotional abuse. In humanitarian emergencies – be it those driven by relentless armed conflicts or in situations of chronic violence – violence can result in death, severe injury and lasting trauma.

Children are being recruited into armed gangs and killed and maimed through exposure to organized crime and violence. Despite the numbers, which can surpass some armed conflict settings, such violations do not receive attention for prevention and response. They are frequently seen as part of the domain of development work, despite the level of violations, and the occurrence in mixed settings where children are on the move. In the absence of CAAC equivalent agreed legal and monitoring frameworks to monitor and report, and structure a response, we are struggling to see predictable responses to armed violence that reflect the scale of needs.

Such violations of child rights are frequently seen as part of the domain of development work, despite the level of violations, and the occurrence in mixed settings where children are on the move. In the absence of CAAC-equivalent, agreed legal frameworks to monitor and report, and structure, we are not seeing an adequate response.

Other situations of violence also pose coordination challenges, so what are the main factors to be considered? What are the overarching principles that apply to coordination in such settings with serious violations against children?

Purpose of the session

This plenary provides an opportunity for field colleagues to learn and exchange on current issues regarding the protection of children in conflict and armed violence. With increasing humanitarian needs and proportionally decreasing resources, how do we adapt to effectively protect children in situations of armed conflict and violence? Key questions proposed for the panel are:

- Reflecting on contexts such as those in central America and South Africa, how can our response frameworks for situations of armed conflict translate to those of armed violence?
- What are the drivers for child protection violations in contexts of armed violence, and are they different to armed conflict?
- Given the trend toward viewing children, especially teenage boys, as security threats, how do we ensure that all children are afforded protection in situations of violence and conflict?
- Are the frameworks for Children and Armed Conflict vs Armed Violence reflecting current realities for children?



- How can we advocate more effectively to highlight protection emergencies which may not include the usual scale or dimensions of need for other sectors?
- How can we improve our multi sector approach and coordination for prevention and response?

Intended outcome

Setting the scene for the overall conference, which is dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the CRC.

Identifying key challenges for working with children in armed conflict and violence settings, as well as recommendations /solutions.

Format

The session will include brief interventions by the panellists (7-10min), followed by a moderated panel discussion with Q&As with the plenary of about 250 Coordinators, ProCap/GenCap, donors and more.

Speakers

- Fiona Barnaby, Legal Advisor, ICRC
- Julia Elsa, Director, Corporación Infancia y Desarrollo, Colombia
- Brigid Kennedy Pfister, Senior Adviser Child Protection, UNICEF
- Moderator: CP AoR

Background reading

- United Nations University, Children and Extreme Violence - The Recruitment and Use of Children by Non-State Armed Groups in Contemporary Conflict: <https://unu.edu/children-and-extreme-violence>
- Guns and Recruitment: Learning from conflict and peacebuilding to address youth violence in urban setting a global review of practices to prevent and reduce armed violence, April 2019