

**TRAINING COURSE ON ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION OF CHILDREN AND
YOUTH FORMERLY ASSOCIATED WITH ARMED FORCES AND GROUPS
Turin, 6-10 February 2012**

**REQUESTED INFORMATION ON THE TARGET GROUP AND ONGOING/PLANNED
(ECONOMIC) REINTEGRATION SUPPORT**

**Please send a consolidated response for your country to deconinck@ilo.org
by Friday 20 January**

Target group

What is the estimated number of children (formerly) associated with armed forces and groups in the country? When possible, disaggregate:

- Numbers are difficult to obtain given the chaotic and changing nature of the situation. However, reports suggest that there are many children currently and formerly associated with armed forces and groups, primarily Al Shabaab (AS). It is recognized that recruitment of children is continuing. Reports from regions in south-central indicate that AS often recruits directly from school and community events.
 - by age: children up to 13 years of age and children aged 14-17
- Children under 13 in armed forces exist with reports of children as young as 11 being recruited recently in certain locations, but reports suggest the 14-17 age group is of much larger concern.
 - by sex,
- Boys are primarily recruited to be combatants. However, as in many conflict situations, young girls are recruited – often forcibly – to be wives of combatants. Girls are recruited in the same manner as boys, with AS going to individual houses and forcibly taking children into their ranks.
 - by location (province/state/region)
- Somaliland – very low numbers, conflict limited to disputed eastern border of the region with Puntland
- Puntland – increased presence of AS in southern Puntland (Galmudug region) which may see increased in child recruitment. Piracy is mainly conducted from this region, with

- South-central – primary region seeing CAAFG with both Mogadishu and other regions affected. In Mogadishu the high influx of IDPs and the lack of protection and opportunities means there is a large pool of children to be targeted by recruitment. Here, there is also work to ensure compliance by TFG and government forces to stop the recruitment of children. Some children are being held in facilities with adults on suspicion of working for AS. Outside of Mogadishu, recruitment is partially dependent on the changing nature of the areas under AS control. However, access to any of the regions outside Mogadishu is extremely difficult.
 - indicate the number of those already released and home and those still in the armed force/groups.
- Numbers fluctuate based on the capacity of AS to force or entice new members. There is some evidence that the crisis has led to AS not having enough resources to support its forces. However, this suggests the use of more brutal tactics to keep current members. It is believed that there is still a very high number of children still linked with various armed forces.

What is the estimated number of young people aged 18-24 (formerly) associated with armed forces and groups in the country? When possible, disaggregate:

- by sex,
 - Young men are primarily associated with armed forces, with women associated to a much smaller degree and generally not for fighting.
- by location (province/state/region)
 - Similar geographical spread as for children associated with armed forces and groups, with piracy a major issue in Puntland but the majority of fighting and conflict in south-central.
- indicate the number of those already released and home and those still in the armed force/groups.
 - The ongoing – and recently intensifying – nature of fighting in south-central means that many young people remain involved in the fighting. DDR efforts have been insufficient to address the number of youth involved in fighting and the institutional structure is lacking, which prevents adequate action. For instance, agreements with the TFG have been signed to prevent child recruitment into their forces but reports suggest that this continues to a certain extent.

Are children / young people to be reintegrated mainly in urban or rural areas?

- Both, rural areas see children targeted within the communities by AS. Many are forcibly taken from their homes by recruiters. In urban areas (primarily Mogadishu) there is a huge need to reintegrate children, but also to prevent recruitment of the large and increasing numbers of street children within the city.

Are children / young people to be reintegrated concentrated in communities or are they scattered around vast territories?

- Children/young people are fairly scattered (though largely with south-central), in large part due to the high levels of displacement which has not only separated communities but families and individuals.

Is there a significant number of children / young people with disabilities?

- Yes, though disability has been neglected as a priority issue, partly because of the other pressing needs. Mental disability has been identified as an area of huge concern, affecting a large portion of the entire population. The two decades of fighting and lack of services has

→ Please send mapping and other relevant documents on the target group if available

Planned / ongoing (economic) reintegration support

At what stage is the country programming for children and youth (adult) reintegration? Design? Implementation?

→ Please send relevant documents if available (DDR policy/strategy/programme, project documents etc.)

- Youth at Risk project – ILO's side targets youth
- Planned research on child labour – including CAAFG – in 3 regions of south-central that would contribute to designing interventions for reintegration support
- Proposal designed for Mogadishu project to target vulnerable households with a component supporting children formerly involved in or at risk of the WFCL through training and economic support

Have reintegration and/or institutional mapping been conducted as part of the DDR programme or other relevant programmes/projects?

→ Please send reports if available

- A mapping on non-state armed groups was undertaken by UNDP in preparation for the Youth at Risk project.
- Members of the Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) in Nairobi conducted a rapid assessment on child protection in their projects areas. One of the issues examined was children associated with armed forces and groups. Information from this assessment is related to community perceptions of the problem rather than a quantitative survey.
- The CPWG in Mogadishu has compiled a document listing the existing resources available in Mogadishu for referrals related to child protection and gender-based violence.

Are there any other documents relevant to economic reintegration of children and youth that you would like to draw our attention on? Please send them as well.