

THE DALLAIRE INSTITUTE'S REGIONAL APPROACH TO PREVENTING THE RECRUITMENT AND USE OF CHILDREN IN ARMED VIOLENCE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While the Dallaire Institute is headquartered in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, it has an African Centre of Excellence (ACoE) located in Rwanda, a Latin American Centre of Excellence (LACoE), located in Uruguay as well as a direct partnership with the Dallaire Centre of Excellence within the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF CoE), based in Ottawa, Canada. These Regional Centres of Excellence (CoEs) are hubs for the Dallaire Institute's security sector trainings, community engagement programs, advocacy, and applied research on preventing the recruitment and use of children in armed violence. Operating out of these regional CoEs allows the Dallaire Institute to work with local partners to develop programs that are contextually relevant and culturally sensitive.

AFRICAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE ON CHILDREN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

The Dallaire Institute recognizes that preventing the recruitment and use of children requires an understanding of the fragile contexts that increase children's vulnerability to recruitment, including the recognition that these contexts differ within and across regions. As such, the Dallaire Institute is committed to adopting and implementing regional approaches to its prevention work. In 2019, the Institute established an African Centre of Excellence (ACoE) based in Kigali, Rwanda, in partnership with the Rwandan Ministry of Defence. The Dallaire Institute's ACoE is leading continental efforts to deliver tactical, prevention-oriented training to African security sector personnel and build the capacity of local communities to prevent the recruitment and use of children, recognizing that addressing this issue requires a whole-of-society approach. The ACoE also represents the Dallaire Institute in important regional forums like the African Union. In 2022, the Dallaire Institute signed a Host Country Agreement with the Government of Rwanda, giving the ACoE a permanent base and strengthening its capacity to prevent grave violations against children across Africa.

WHY RWANDA?

Having experienced a genocide in 1994, Rwandans understand the devastating impact that conflict has on children. As one of the first African nations to endorse the Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers and the third largest troop contributing country to UN and AU peacekeeping operations, Rwanda is uniquely poised to inspire other African countries - Anglophone or Francophone - to adopt action-oriented approaches to prevent future conflicts.



THE IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL COOPERATION

While the recruitment and use of children in armed violence is sadly a global problem, the fragile contexts that make children susceptible to recruitment and use vary across contexts and so developing responses that are adapted to these contexts is important. Through the Dallaire Institute's CoEs, countries with similar development trajectories and historical realities come together to build the capacity of security sector actors, engage local communities and advocate to intervene early in conflicts to prevent the recruitment and use of children and improve broader child protection mechanisms.

Our regional approach helps strengthen localized and regional solutions as well as anti-colonial and inclusive strategies which help challenge the legacy of racism and injustice that permeates the humanitarian sector.

The regional centres will connect to one another so that they may learn from each other. Through exchanges in information, personnel, and research, the CoEs will form a global network led by the Dallaire Institute. This network will include advocates of the Dallaire Institute's work such as peacekeepers we've trained, who when deployed, are champions of change who carry the Dallaire Institute's mission of preventing the recruitment and use of children forward.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For more information on The Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace and Security visit us at:



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LATIN AMERICAN CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR CHILDREN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

The Dallaire Institute's Latin American Centre of Excellence (LACoE) was established in Montevideo, Uruguay, in February 2022. Working with the Government of Uruguay and the Association of Latin American Peacekeeping Training Centres (ALCOPAZ), the LACoE provides training for the increasing number of troop contributors from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Paraguay, Peru, and Uruguay. Grounding our research and work in the region, the LACoE will serve as a hub bringing together Latin American security sector personnel, civil society organizations, practitioners, and researchers to develop and implement approaches to prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed violence across the region. As the regional representative of the Dallaire Institute, the LACoE participates in important regional bodies like ALCOPAZ.

WHY URUGUAY?

Uruguay has had a military presence in peacekeeping operations since 1952 and has risen to become one of the most consistent top providers of peacekeepers from Latin America to the United Nations. The country's provision of peacekeepers to missions around the world has become a source of national pride and an integral part of the country's foreign policy objectives. Given that Uruguay was among one of the first nations to endorse the Vancouver Principles and that Uruguayan peacekeepers are currently deployed to countries where the Dallaire Institute has programming, the LACoE is well placed in Montevideo to advance the Dallaire Institute's mission across Latin America.

