

2024 Annual Meeting for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action Abstract Submission Guidance

Date: 4-6 June 2024

Location: Panama City, Panama

Theme: Protecting Children in Escalating Conflict and Crises: Armed Violence, Climate Shocks, and Displacement.

Join us to contribute your valuable experiences, approaches, and innovations at the upcoming 2024 Annual Meeting for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action. Your insights are crucial in enhancing our efforts to ensure the protection and well-being of children before, during, and after crises.

In response to the perspectives of over 300 members and key stakeholders, this year's theme focuses on protecting children in escalating conflict and crises. This encompasses crises that are prompted by conflict or armed violence, climate shocks and natural hazards, and in many cases a combination. The impacts of escalating crises are most heavily felt by children, further complicating the child protection risks they face, whether in their communities or along migration routes.

PROTECTING CHILDREN IN ESCALATING CONFLICT AND CRISES AROUND THE WORLD

In recent years, we have witnessed a disturbing increase in both the frequency and severity of crises affecting the well-being of children. From armed conflicts and political unrest to the devastating consequences of climate change and socio-economic instability, the challenges faced by children have become increasingly complex and demanding.

One in five children globally live in or are fleeing from conflict zones¹. The Secretary General's 2023 report on children and armed conflict² included the highest ever numbers of verified grave violations against children throughout 2022. With the outbreak or escalation of conflicts during 2023 – particularly in Sudan and the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem - the number of violations against children throughout 2023 will almost certainly be higher.

Growing up in increasingly violent environments will be affecting children's well-being and mental and physical health. Particularly in contexts with already widespread community violence, or common use of corporal punishment in homes and schools.

Climate induced crises are increasing around the world, with 2023 the hottest on record³. From catastrophic flooding in Libya, to climate, conflict, and poverty induced migration, along extremely dangerous routes such as the United States-Mexico border⁴, children pay the heaviest price, yet are the least responsible for climate change.

Within the climate crisis agenda there is a need to ensure that the rights of children, including protection and participation rights, are not overlooked.⁵ The links between violence against children and climate shocks need to be further⁶ researched and existing evidence effectively communicated and used in preventative approaches, for example disaster preparedness and anticipatory action.

Escalating conflict and armed violence, as well as climate shocks, trigger and exacerbate migration and displacement, including across multiple borders, exploitation and trafficking, and community and family violence. This has a profound impact on the lives of children; their protection and mental and physical wellbeing, as well as their capacity to claim their rights.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR

We invite you to submit abstracts for stimulating posters, focused thematic presentations, and interactive sessions or panels that are clearly linked to the meeting theme.

¹ <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-live-world-increasingly-hostile-their-rights>

² <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/UNGA-CAAC-2023-N2322228-003.pdf>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2024/jan/09/2023-record-world-hottest-climate-fossil-fuel>

⁴ [https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/09/1140622#:~:text=The%20United%20States%2DMexico%20border,\(IOM\)%20said%20on%20Tuesday.](https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/09/1140622#:~:text=The%20United%20States%2DMexico%20border,(IOM)%20said%20on%20Tuesday.)

⁵ <https://alliancecpha.org/en/technical-materials/joint-submission-general-comment-26-committee-rights-child-childrens-rights-and-environment-special-focus-climate-change>

⁶ https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/STC_Global_Girlhood_Report_2023.pdf/ and [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196\(21\)00210-2/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanplh/article/PIIS2542-5196(21)00210-2/fulltext)

In light of the above you may want to think about...

What changes are child protection practitioners seeing? What approaches and strategies are being used to protect children in situations of escalating violence, such as in cross-sectoral collaboration? How can these intensified and protracted adversities be addressed in a context of reduced funding and decreasing humanitarian access? How can we advocate for strengthened accountability mechanisms to better protect children in armed conflict?

Our survey respondents highlighted the following **additional linked priorities**:

- Local and contextualised social service workforce strengthening.
- Accountability to children, including child participation and strengthened accountability mechanisms.
- Triple nexus investment priorities.
- Child protection system strengthening, including scale-up and improved access.
- National advocacy for emergency preparedness.
- Strengthening coordination across humanitarian response - including with actors outside the humanitarian sphere - to better protect children.

Please also feel free to take a look at the [Alliance's 2021-2025 strategy](#) for inspiration!

THE LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGION

This year's Annual Meeting is taking place in the Latin America region⁷. This will enable participants to share, exchange, and showcase learning, knowledge, and expertise from their distinctive perspectives and experiences around the world and across the region. Special attention will be given to the region's specific challenges.

A pivotal concern is the escalation of multiple crises across the region and the detrimental impact this is having on children. Increasing armed violence, political instability, and the impacts of climate change are exacerbating poverty and inequality and leading to increasingly complex protection risks for boys and girls across the region.

In Haiti, high levels of insecurity and gang violence, a cholera outbreak, and the long-term effects of the 2021 earthquake are having a detrimental impact on the lives of children. Nearly 3 million of whom need urgent humanitarian aid.⁸ Gang violence is surging across the region. The

⁷ Latin America includes Mexico and countries in Central America, the Caribbean, and South America.

⁸file:///C:/Users/USUARIO/Downloads/Save%20the%20Children%E2%80%99s%20efforts%20for%20children%20and%20their%20families%20survival%20in%20Haiti.pdf

adolescent homicide rate in Latin America is five times higher than the global average.⁹ In Mexico, the number of criminal groups doubled between 2010 and 2020, and in Colombia a fracturing of armed groups and rivalry over drug trafficking routes saw new conflict displacements increase in 2022, to a decade-high of 339,000.¹⁰ Ecuador, which was once a stable haven in the region, is experiencing a surge in violence and instability and witnessed an 86% increase in homicides between 2021 and 2022.¹¹

Spiralling violence is seriously impacting the lives of children and their families. Violence-related school closures and economic hardship are making children more vulnerable to gang recruitment and sexual and gender-based violence.

Adverse impacts of extreme climate events and disasters have affected 63 million children in the last 30 years, and an annual average of 2.1 million children facing the repercussions of disasters. Additionally, 46.2% of children aged 0-14 in Latin America live in poverty.¹²

Millions of children and families are migrating through Latin America and the Caribbean due to increasing violence, instability, poverty, and climate-related events. Three of the main migration points in the region are: the Darien Gap bridging Colombia and Panama (a remote, dangerous jungle crossing point that saw a seven-fold increase in the number of children crossing between 2022 and 2023)¹³, outward migration from Venezuela, and northern Central America and Mexico. Still, there are also many more interconnected and multi-directional routes.

The number of children and adolescents on the move in Latin America and the Caribbean has reached historic highs and now represents a larger proportion of the migrant population than any other region.¹⁴ Children crossing the region are from diverse countries of origin, including from as far away as Africa and Asia, and it is estimated that seven out of ten children on the move are below 11 years old.¹⁵

During their journeys, children risk of family separation, and without the care of families or other caregivers, children are at heightened risk of violence and exploitation, disease and injury, recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, child labour, and gender-based violence.

⁹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/colombia/statistical-profile-violence-against-children-latin-america-and-caribbean>

¹⁰ <https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/analysis/2023/05/17/gang-violence-latin-america-challenge-aid-sector>

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² UNICEF, Children in Latin America and the Caribbean Overview 2020.

<https://www.unicef.org/lac/media/21911/file/NNAINLAC2020-one-page.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2024/jan/03/record-half-million-people-crossed-darien-gap-2023>

¹⁴ <https://www.unicef.org/es/infancia-peligro/ninez-migrante-america-latina-caribe>

¹⁵ <https://www.unicef.org/lac/comunicados-prensa/siete-de-cada-diez-ninos-y-ninas-en-movimiento-en-america-latina-y-el-caribe>

IN PERSON ATTENDANCE

For those wishing to present at the Annual Meeting, please note that **in-person attendance and travel to Panama are prerequisites for all presenters, facilitators, and speakers**. We kindly request that all prospective participants carefully review the travel and logistics details available in the registration form, which can be accessed [here](#). To enable us to support any necessary visa applications in a timely way, we urge you to provide your personal information at this early stage. This ensures the success of the meeting.

The Alliance aims to support the attendance of local/national organisation representatives at the meeting. However, funds for this purpose remain limited, resulting in a small number of sponsorships available for those who have accepted abstracts. We require international collaborators submitting abstracts with local/national actors to consider covering the necessary travel expenses of their local/national counterparts. If organisations are in a position to cover the travel costs for additional local/national representatives, we welcome your support and encourage you to reach out to us at annualmeeting2024@alliancecpha.org.

Types of Submission: Like in 2023, we are inviting you to share your big ideas in the meeting theme in the following ways:

1) Display and discuss a Poster:

- Design and print a 1-page visual to bring an idea, summary of a project, practice, or piece of research, to life and communicate it simply and clearly to viewers. Posters work well for specific examples as they do not need to link with sessions.
- If selected, the author would need to be able to attend the meeting to display their poster at the Annual Meeting Venue. There will be an exhibition space for authors to share the content with participants during breaks.
- Selected posters presenters will receive further guidance on the poster design and printing requirements at the time of acceptance.

2) Contribute to a thematic session (*approximately 16-20 abstracts*):

- Submit a 15-minute presentation, which if selected will be combined with other similar-themed presentations into a 60-90-minute session led by an Alliance facilitator.
- Please identify one 'key takeaway' your presentation will provide: a good, new, or emerging practice, an unexpected outcome or solution, challenges, lessons learned, even failures. You may wish to explore positions, questions, and ideas.
- We welcome diverse ways of sharing your 'key takeaway'. If using PowerPoint we encourage short, visual slides, with limited text.

3) Lead an interactive session / panel (*approximately 8-10 abstracts*):

- Submit a 60 or 90-minute session to drive strategic discussion and collective action.
- Various formats may be used e.g. panel discussion, workshop.
- You will be responsible for leading this session, with support from the Alliance team.
- Sessions should have a clear objective and intended outcome.
- Sessions should have an identified facilitator and speakers.

NEXT STEPS

1) Mentorship: If you are a local / national / youth-led actor and would like a mentor to accompany you through abstract submission contact achieng.kokonya@alliancecpha.org copying annualmeeting2024@alliancecpha.org by **9 February**.

2) Submission: Use [THIS LINK](#) to complete and submit your abstract - **deadline 16th February**. If you have any difficulties accessing or completing the online form, please contact us at annualmeeting2024@alliancecpha.org.

Please remember! Many sessions will be recorded and live streamed. Please ensure that the content of your session does not put you or others you are working with at risk. This is particularly important for children and youth.

3) Selection: We will review your abstract according to the below criteria, to select those to be presented. Each year we receive more abstracts than we can fit into the agenda! It helps us to assess your submission against the criteria if you use the online form.

4) Preparation: See key dates for your diary below for those whose abstracts are selected.

CRITERIA FOR REVIEWING SUBMISSIONS

Required:

- Presented in either English or Spanish (as these are the languages, we are able to provide professional interpretation for this year).
- Relevance: to the meeting theme
- Usefulness: Child Protection actors and wider humanitarian and development actors can benefit from the gap in knowledge that the session addresses.

- Clarity and presentation: The abstract clearly describes key messages, outcomes, and target audience of the session.
- For interactive sessions / panels: Clearly described methodologies to make the session engaging / interactive.

Preferable / Encouraged - Abstracts that:

- Abstracts that focus on the Latin America and Caribbean region.
- Abstracts that share clear, relevant, and insightful challenges and lessons learned.
- Abstracts from local / national actors and / or highlighting the engagement of local / national actors in humanitarian action.
- Abstracts that include/provide a strong example from a women-led, child or youth-led, or local / national actor.

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **9 February:** Deadline for abstract submitters to request for mentorship.
- **16 February:** Deadline for abstract and poster submission.
- **15 April:** Confirmation of selected abstracts and posters (latest expected date).
- **15 and 16 April:** Briefings for session speakers and facilitators.
 - After this you will be linked with your Alliance focal point / facilitator, and you will need to be available for some online meetings to prepare your session.
- **22 May:** Briefing for poster presenters.
- **6 May:** Deadline for draft session content (session plan, speaker notes, biographies, and any PowerPoint slides).
- **13 May:** Deadline for final session content.
- **Monday, 3 June:** Registration on arrival at the conference venue. Please register as early as possible on Monday 3rd or Tuesday 4th June if you are presenting on Tuesday 4th June or if you need to display a poster.