



Humanitarian Education Curriculum Guidebook

LESSONS AND RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

August 2022



Purpose and Background

THE CANADIAN RED CROSS (CRC) helps people and communities in Canada and around the world in times of need and supports them in strengthening their resilience. The CRC is mandated by the Statutes of the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement to promote understanding and respect for International humanitarian law (IHL). Given this mandate, the *Humanitarian Education (HEd) Curriculum Guidebook* was developed by the Canadian Red Cross to help teachers integrate international humanitarian law (IHL) and humanitarian issues that are linked to armed conflict into the classroom with the aim of informing and empowering youth toward alleviating human suffering.

The HEd Guidebook aims to develop social awareness in young people and enhance their sense of global civic responsibility. It emphasizes the importance of protecting life and human dignity, particularly during armed conflict. Thus, it makes a unique contribution to citizenship education at every level: local, national and global. It can be used in any political context and educational system and its flexible framework allows for easy incorporation of future developments in IHL.

Teachers are encouraged to use the *HEd curriculum guidebook* in tandem with ForcedToFight.ca. *Forced to Fight* is an interactive, choose-your-own-story resource designed for students between the ages of 13-18. The resource helps facilitate understanding of IHL and humanitarian issues and allows the user to experience what it is like for young people living in situations of armed conflict around the world. If preferred, teachers can use *Forced to Fight* independently of the *HEd guidebook*, as a stand-alone activity to trigger critical thinking and classroom discussion on issues related to armed conflict.

In addition to new lesson plans and activities, *the HEd guidebook* borrows from Exploring Humanitarian Law (EHL) and Canada & Conflict (C&C) produced by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the CRC, respectively. EHL is an international education program and toolkit designed to enhance the respect of youth for human dignity, their understanding of and respect for international humanitarian law, and their development as humanitarians. The C&C manual was developed to supplement the EHL toolkit with Canadian content. If teachers are looking for additional activities beyond those available in the current *HEd guidebook*, EHL is available in multiple languages and can be downloaded for free at icrc.org/en/doc/what-we-do/building-respect-ihl/education-outreach/ehl/exploring-humanitarian-law.htm.

The C&C manual is free and available in English and French at redcross.ca/crc/documents/Canada-Conflict-April-29-2.pdf.

The creation of *The Humanitarian Education Curriculum Guidebook* was made possible, in part, by the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross. The CRC would like to thank all educators, legal experts, consultants, interns, and staff who contributed invaluable research, insight, time and effort into making this curriculum guidebook which hopes to inspire and teach students about the importance of humanitarianism. To view resources like *the HEd Guidebook* and professional development training for teachers visit redcross.ca/how-we-help/international-humanitarian-law.

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Red Cross (CRC) aims to protect the dignity and lives of people affected by armed conflict by encouraging respect for International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in Canada and around the world through education, training and advocacy. The CRC helps build awareness of the Rules of Armed Conflict and IHL-related issues to academia, teachers and youth. We organize events across the country to engage Canadians on the importance of IHL and to encourage dialogue on issues such as refugees, child soldiers, sexual and gender-based violence and attacks on civilians, hospitals and schools. We also produce resources, such as *the HEd Guidebook* among our efforts to engage Canadians on the importance of IHL.

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is a set of written and unwritten rules which aim to protect life and human dignity during armed conflict to prevent and reduce the suffering and devastation caused by war. It applies to wars between states and civil wars but not to violence that happens during peacetime, such as violent crimes or riots. War is an inherently violent and destructive phenomenon, and the aim of IHL is to mitigate the worst of the violence and destruction for both those engaged in the conflict and those not involved in the fighting.

With a few notable exceptions, today's armed conflicts are mostly internal or non-international. They are often fought between a uniformed armed group, perhaps the military forces of a country, and a non-government armed force. Groups with vulnerabilities (women, children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, etc.) are especially at risk and populations already living in poverty carry a heavy burden during and post-conflict. Armed conflict causes the displacement of millions of people every year.

This *guidebook* is based on the premise that education in International Humanitarian Law is relevant, meaningful, and useful for young people in all societies. The subject is pertinent and timely everywhere, regardless of a particular country's experience with armed conflict or other situations of violence for a number of reasons:

1. Armed conflicts and other situations of violence are taking place in many parts of the world today and young people are increasingly affected by them.
2. Many societies appear to be becoming more prone to various forms of violence.
3. Young people, in greater numbers than ever, are exposed to media coverage of violence, and forms of entertainment that desensitize viewers to the effects of violence.
4. Education programmes focusing on IHL and respect for human dignity may impact the decisions and behaviours of youth who go on to become Canadian politicians, military, lawyers, policy analysts, academics, private sector professionals and voters who all play important roles in IHL compliance.
5. States party to the Geneva Conventions have an obligation, both in times of peace and in times of war, to spread knowledge of international humanitarian law (IHL) as widely as possible, including to the civilian population. The world's 196 States have all ratified the Geneva Conventions, making those treaties the first in modern history to achieve universal acceptance.

STRUCTURE & METHODOLOGY

The HEd Guidebook comprises five modules for teachers and learners, designed to enhance exploration of the following subject matters :

Module 1 : What is International Humanitarian Law (IHL)?

Module 2 : Lessons for Ana : Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)

Module 3 : Lessons for Tam : Child Soldiers

Module 4 : Lessons for Nora : Refugees and Forced Migration

Module 5 : Lessons for Miguel : IHL and Protections for the Environment

Module 6 (Coming Soon) : The importance of social action and youth engagement

In addition to the core lessons in Module 1, this guidebook contains thematic lessons in (Modules 2-5) that help educators explore the themes highlighted in each of the four corresponding stories in *Forced to Fight*. *The HEd Guidebook* provides insight into complex experiences in armed conflict. Canadians directly and indirectly affected by war share their experiences throughout the resource. Activities focused on youth social action are also integrated into each module.

The HEd Guidebook provides lessons that can be integrated into secondary curricula as a subject of its own, or as complementary components for the various subjects listed under '**Curriculum Linkages**' below. Most lessons in this resource are adaptable to in-person, online and hybrid teaching environments. This can also be delivered as an optional after-school activity as part of a Global Issues Club, for example or be used for educational workshops by non-governmental organizations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

The Humanitarian Education Curriculum Guidebook seeks to help young people understand, value, and apply the principles of humanity and global citizenship in their daily lives. In particular, it fosters :

- understanding of the need to respect life and human dignity,
- understanding of humanitarian issues and the principles of IHL, as well as the complexities of their application,
- understanding of gender inequities in armed conflict and the importance of equitable access to protections and humanitarian assistance,
- interest in current events and humanitarian action and the ability to analyse them knowledgeably,
- capacity to view conflict situations at home and abroad from a humanitarian perspective,
- understanding of the concept of a dilemma by learning that there are no easy answers in armed conflict,
- active involvement in global issues.

CURRICULUM LINKAGE :

The content of *the Humanitarian Education Curriculum Guidebook* is directly complementary to academic subjects such as civics, social studies, literature studies, philosophy, history, law, health, environmental sciences, Indigenous perspectives and the humanities. The interactive teaching methods

and pedagogical approaches reinforce many important academic and life skills including communication, respectful disagreement, reasoning, research, problem-solving, and critical thinking.

THE ACCOMPANYING RESOURCE : FORCED TO FIGHT

Setting up your students to explore the stories in *Forced to Fight* :

Teachers are encouraged to use the interactive resource *Forced to Fight* in tandem with many of the activities in the various modules of this guidebook.

Forced to fight can either be explored in a classroom setting in a large group or through virtual instruction with the teacher projecting the story for students and helping them progress through the narrative. Students can vote every time they encounter a choice in any of the choose your own adventure stories.

To explore *Forced to Fight* in small groups, divide students into groups of 3-5 with one electronic device each. Assign one leader per group to operate the device and guide their group members through the scenario. The group leader will be responsible for reading the scenario out loud while clicking through for their group members. The group leader will also be responsible for seeking consensus from their group members on the appropriate choice for their character every time that they encounter a dilemma, and for clicking on and assigning rotating group members to read aloud each of the learning points encountered marked by a yellow question mark.

Forced to Fight can also be explored by students independently if they each have access to an electronic device.

ADDITIONAL INTRODUCTORY RESOURCES TO SUPPORT MINI EXPLORATIONS OF *FORCED TO FIGHT*.

A brief summary all 4 choose your own adventure stories follows this section, in addition to a mini lesson summary sheet with discussion questions. A matrix worksheet on the Basic rules of International Humanitarian Law is presented after the discussion questions and can also be found in the Appendices of Module 1. This worksheet complements the mini-lesson discussion questions and includes a blank worksheet for students along with an answer sheet for teachers.

The remaining modules in the *HEd Guidebook* include lessons that support a more in-depth exploration of the themes in *Forced to Fight*.

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Introduction

Forced to Fight Character Summaries

Ana, a 15-year-old girl in Africa, finds herself and her sister abducted by an armed group that is in conflict with government forces. At the camp of the armed group, she is separated from others and approached by an armed man who says that he needs a wife. She is afraid for herself and her sister and knows that she will likely be killed if she refuses yet ostracized by her village, if she agrees and eventually gets free. How will Ana resolve this dilemma?

Tam, a 13-year-old boy in Southeast Asia, lives in an area where two armed groups are fighting. He has a friend in a neighbouring village named Rafi who was hurt in an attack and who urges Tam to join the opposing group with him. Tam's village is destroyed, his father killed and his sister taken. In an effort to find his sister, he winds up at the camp of the group Rafi has joined. They are forced to work in various capacities and eventually to kill, aided by the drugs they are made to consume. Must he do what he knows is wrong, or risk death himself trying to escape and find his sister?

Nora, a 17-year-old in the Middle East, lives with her parents who fled conflict many years ago and were welcomed into the community where they now live. There is a refugee camp nearby and children from the camp begin to attend Nora's school. This results in strains on resources in the school and the community. Nora becomes friendly with Dani who comes from the camp to Nora's school, but other students bully the refugees. Will Nora stand up for Dani against her classmates or side with her old friends and alienate Dani in her new life?

Miguel, 18 years old and from South America, comes from an Indigenous community. He lives with his 13 year old sister and his father, who is chief of the village. An armed resistance group is in conflict with the government as well as a second rival armed group. The government has recently burned a large parcel of land near the village, and the armed groups continually encroach on the community's territory. Villagers blame a mining company that is aligned with one of the armed groups for polluting the river and causing illness. Miguel's sister is badly injured by a land mine. Miguel must choose to help his sister, or risk his life by taking action against the armed groups, and protect the environment on which the villagers depend.

See Appendix p.18 for a stand-alone classroom activity that can be done while students explore any or all of the Forced to Fight stories.



MODULE 1 : What is International Humanitarian Law (IHL)?

Introduction to International Humanitarian Law

This section includes lessons that apply to all of the *Forced to Fight* stories. These lessons will help students to a) understand what constitutes International Humanitarian Law (IHL) ; b) understand how IHL is applied in action during armed conflict; c) identify IHL violations in all of the stories, distinguishing IHL from other bodies of law ; d) understand what can be done after violations occur, considering both judicial and non-judicial avenues for justice; and e) begin to understand the myriad elements of principled and ethical humanitarian responses. In addition, the stories will help to clarify when bodies of law other than IHL are more applicable to situations of violence that are not classified as armed conflict.

The first lesson-Rules of War-examines the definition of IHL, its basic rules, and the distinctions and similarities between IHL, and human rights law, and other bodies of law. Thus, this lesson underpins all of the remaining lessons in the *guidebook* and likely should be undertaken prior to any of them. The other elements of this section might best be used following any of the stories as they deal with consequences of armed conflict.

The next pair of lessons considers violations of IHL, and judicial and non-judicial ways of addressing them. Each of the characters in the *Forced to Fight* stories experiences such violations. While the enforcement of IHL is not taken up in the stories, students may broach this topic. Victims of IHL violations require closure to begin the healing process and it is worthwhile to contemplate together what types of measures might bring the characters in *Forced to Fight* peace of mind. The final lesson considers the humanitarian response to armed conflict and ethical humanitarian action.

Background

International humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights law are complementary. Together, they provide a framework for the comprehensive protection of people in situations of violence.

What is International Humanitarian Law? ¹

International Humanitarian Law is a set of rules, established by treaty or custom, especially adapted to situations of armed conflict. **The purpose of IHL is to protect the lives and human dignity of people who are not or are no longer taking part in the fighting and to set limits on conducting war. It thus aims to limit the suffering and the damage caused by war.** The rules of IHL may never be restricted or suspended, precisely because they were conceived for the extreme situation of armed conflict. Thus, IHL is a set of fundamental rules to protect people affected by armed conflict, which necessarily includes the 'hard core' of human rights as well.

The 1864 Geneva Convention laid the foundations for contemporary international humanitarian law. Since this treaty's adoption, the law has continued to evolve in stages to limit the devastation caused by technological advances in weapons and new types of conflict. Today the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their Additional Protocols of 1977 are the main IHL treaties.

IHL strikes a realistic and pragmatic balance between military necessity and principles of humanity. It does this by prohibiting the infliction of suffering, injury or destruction not necessary for accomplishing legitimate military goals.

IHL is applicable only in armed conflicts. The rules of IHL regulate both international and non-international armed conflicts. However, they do not cover situations of internal disturbance and tension, such as riots or isolated and sporadic acts of violence that do not reach the level of armed conflict.

IHL addresses the reality of armed conflict and regulates only those aspects of the conflict which are of humanitarian concern (*jus in bello*). It does not consider the reasons for or the legality of resorting to force (*jus ad bellum*); the provisions of IHL thus apply equally to all warring parties.

All parties to a conflict must respect the rules of IHL. In addition, States party to IHL instruments are obliged to ensure respect for IHL and to prevent and suppress violations of the law as well as to search for and punish those committing 'grave breaches' of IHL.

Human rights law is a set of international rules, established by treaty or custom, which applies to everyone at all times and in all circumstances. The purpose of human rights law is to protect the lives and human dignity of individuals from arbitrary behaviour by their own governments. Human rights law therefore continues to apply even during armed conflict.

Some human rights treaties, however, permit governments to limit or suspend certain rights (e.g., freedom of movement, liberty and security, freedom of association) during public emergencies, although only to the extent strictly required by the situation.

¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

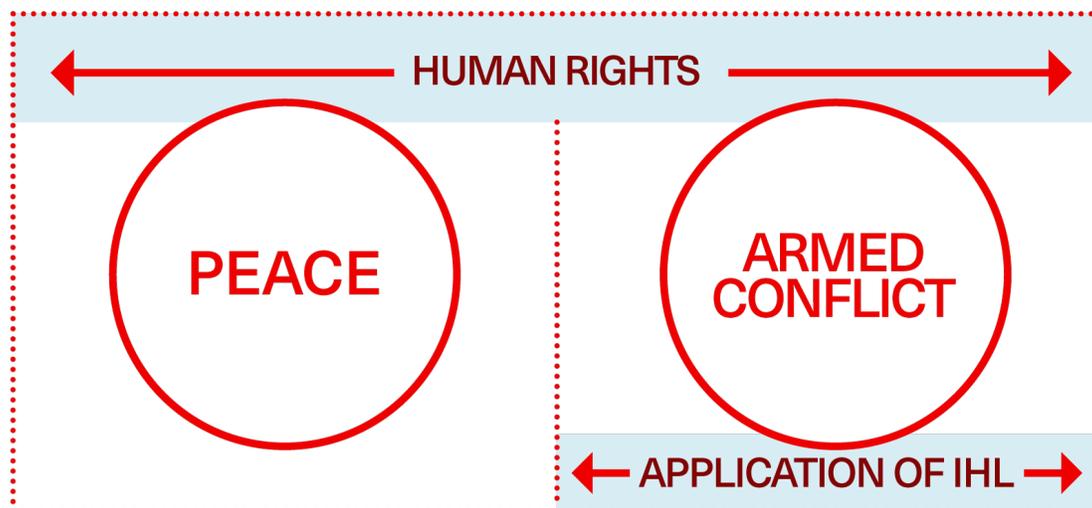
Nevertheless, there remains a 'hard core' of human rights that may never be limited or suspended under any circumstances, not even during public emergencies or armed conflict. The 'hard core' of human rights includes :

- the right to life;
- the prohibition against torture;
- the prohibition against cruel or inhuman treatment or punishment;
- the prohibition against humiliating or degrading treatment or punishment;
- the prohibition against slavery;
- the prohibition against convicting or punishing someone for an act that was not a crime at the time it was committed. ²

	IHL	HUMAN RIGHTS LAW
What is the nature of the law?	code of conduct for belligerents	assertion of rights
When does it apply?	during armed conflict	at all times
Can it be limited or suspended?	not possible	possible during public emergencies, except for 'hard-core' human rights
Who is protected?	individuals who do not or who no longer take part in fighting	individuals from the arbitrary power of the government
Who is bound?	governments, armed groups, individuals	governments

HUMAN RIGHTS AND IHL

Both have a common goal: the protection of human life and dignity.



² International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

LESSON 1 : Rules of War

SUMMARY :

This exploration introduces the basic rules of international humanitarian law (IHL). Students examine the reasons for these rules and compare them with rules that they suggest. The exploration also describes the relationship between IHL and human rights law and how human rights law complements IHL in armed conflicts. Understanding of this lesson is important prior to undertaking any *Forced to Fight* story.

FORMAT : in person or online ; 60 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- Students will analyze why rules are needed in armed conflicts.
- Students will determine how IHL and human rights law complement each other.
- Students will be able to provide examples and illustrations of the basic rules of IHL.

CONCEPT : civilian/combatant distinction; human dignity; limits in armed conflict; multiple perspectives; relationship between humanitarian law and human rights law

SKILLS : discussion; legal reasoning; perspective taking; supporting opinions with reasons; working in groups

MATERIALS :

- *Rules of War in a Nutshell* video
- Blindfolded captive photo
- Photo Collage 2A
- What are the basic rules of international humanitarian law?
- *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
- Projector

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. International Humanitarian Law (10 minutes)

Show the video [*Rules of War in a Nutshell*](#).

Discuss video, then the definition of IHL below :

*International humanitarian law (IHL) is a set of written and unwritten rules which aim to protect life and human dignity during armed conflict to prevent and reduce the suffering and devastation caused by war. It applies to wars between states and civil wars but not to violence that happens during peacetime, such as violent crimes or riots. War is an inherently violent and destructive phenomenon, and the aim of IHL is to mitigate the worst of the violence and destruction for both those engaged in the conflict and those not involved in the fighting.*³

2. The experience of captives and captors (10 minutes)⁴

Present the photo “**Blindfolded captive**” from the appendices. Ask students to imagine themselves in the shoes of the captive or his guards. Have them write down their thoughts.

³ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law: Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict* (2009).

⁴ Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Possible question :

What might the captive be thinking? The guards?

Have each student discuss his or her thoughts with a partner. Suggest these points, one at a time :

- Imagine that the captive is your brother. How would you want him to be treated? Why?
- Imagine that the captive killed your friend in battle. How would you want him to be treated? Why?
- Suppose the prisoner has important information. Should that affect their treatment?
- In what ways are the prisoners' human dignity at risk? A guard's?

The most dominant emotion is of bewildering fear at the alien surroundings and uncertainty of one's ultimate fate. Embodied in this sense of loss (friends, family) is the uncertainty of time. How long? Forever?

– a captured aircraft pilot

The captive is your brother. It is by the grace of God that he is in your hands and working for you. Since he is at your mercy, see that he is fed and clothed as well as you are. Do not demand from him work beyond his strength.

– The Prophet Mohammed (570-632 AD)

3. What rules should there be to protect prisoners in armed conflicts? (5 minutes)

Ask students to suggest rules that they think are needed to protect prisoners in armed conflict and to give their reasons for each rule.

4. What other rules are needed in armed conflict? (10 minutes)

Present “**Photo collage 2A**” from the appendix. Have students examine the photos and suggest other rules that might be needed.

Then, discuss the full list of students' suggestions. Identify those rules with which the group either agrees or disagrees, and explore the reasons for students' views.

Possible questions :

- How would each of your rules change the experience of war?
- What might be the difficulties in implementing them?
- Which of your rules apply to combatants who can no longer fight (e.g. captured, wounded, sick or shipwrecked combatants)?

5. Examine the basic rules of IHL (15 minutes)

Present the rules under the “**Basic Rules of IHL**” in the IHL Matrix for the 4 characters in *Forced to Fight* in the appendices.

Use the following question to guide the discussion :

- Which of these rules are similar to the ones that you suggested?
- Which ones did you not think of?

6. IHL and human rights law (15 minutes)

Point out that there is another body of law that seeks to protect life and human dignity: human rights law.

Ask students to brainstorm about some human rights to which everyone should be entitled, in all circumstances. Then, present “**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights**” from the appendices, and have students compare their list with the rights it identifies.

Challenge students to find a couple of examples of human rights that match protections found in “**What are the basic rules of international humanitarian law?**”.

Point out that such matches exist because these two sets of rules provide complementary protections. Explain that human rights law applies at all times, whereas IHL applies only in armed conflict. Stress that during armed conflict, therefore, human rights law and IHL both apply and in a complementary manner.

Display and discuss the following chart : ⁵

	HUMAN RIGHTS LAW	IHL
What is the nature of the law?	assertion of rights	code of conduct for belligerents
When does it apply?	at all times	during armed conflict
Can it be limited or suspended?	possible during public emergencies, except for 'hard-core' human rights	not possible
Who is protected?	individuals from the arbitrary power of the government	individuals who do not or who no longer take part in fighting
Who is bound?	governments	governments, armed groups, individuals

Possible questions :

- Can you think of any circumstances in which any of these rights could be limited or suspended? Why? Which rights?
- Which of these human rights do you think may never be limited or suspended?
- How do you think these two bodies of law work together?

Explain that in contrast to certain human rights, the rules of IHL may never be restricted. This is because the rules of IHL were developed deliberately as minimal rules so that they could realistically be applied even under the extreme conditions of armed conflict.

⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

7. Conclusion (5 minutes)

How do you think war would be different without these rules? Do you think additional rules are needed due to the changing nature of wars and weapons? ⁶

ASSESSMENT :

- Observe students' responses in discussion to reasons for rules in war for depth of analysis and appropriate connections to IHL. Use the discussion rubric if desired.
- Observe students' discussion of the complementarity of IHL and human rights law for appropriate reasoning.
- Assess students' examples and illustrations of IHL rules for logic.

Links to *Forced to Fight* stories :

- Which basic rules of IHL are violated in the cases of Ana, Dani, Miguel and Tam?
- Which areas of human rights law are violated in the cases of Ana, Dani, Miguel and Tam?
- What might the perpetrators of these violations have been thinking to justify their actions?

KEY IDEAS :

- IHL aims to protect the lives and human dignity of people affected by armed conflict and to limit the suffering caused by war. It is a set of international rules that restricts the means and methods of warfare and protects those who are not or are no longer fighting.
- Human rights law also aims to protect life and human dignity. While IHL is specifically designed for armed conflicts, it does not replace human rights law, which applies at all times; the two bodies of law are complementary.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; brainstorming; using stories photos, and videos; small groups

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES ⁷ :

Rules for armed conflict in the news

- Collect a news item (press or television) about an armed conflict that makes you feel "There should be a law against that." Write down what that law should be.

OR

- Bring in a news story about a situation to which the rules of international humanitarian law (IHL) apply.

For each situation, write an explanation giving the rule and how it was or was not followed. Prepare a wall display or slide show of the news stories to which additions can be made over time.

IHL awareness slogans or posters

- Create ways to raise awareness of the basic rules of IHL by turning the phrases or slogans developed in the exploration into posters or by performing radio spots, songs or raps.
- Brainstorm ways of publicizing these 'basic rules' to the school or community. Choose one as a project.

⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009)*.

⁷ Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Appendix - Module 1

Blindfolded captive



Raymond Depardon/Magnum Photos

A soldier of the armed forces of Mali captured by rebels. The fate of this prisoner depends on the orders that the officer in charge gives his men. ¹

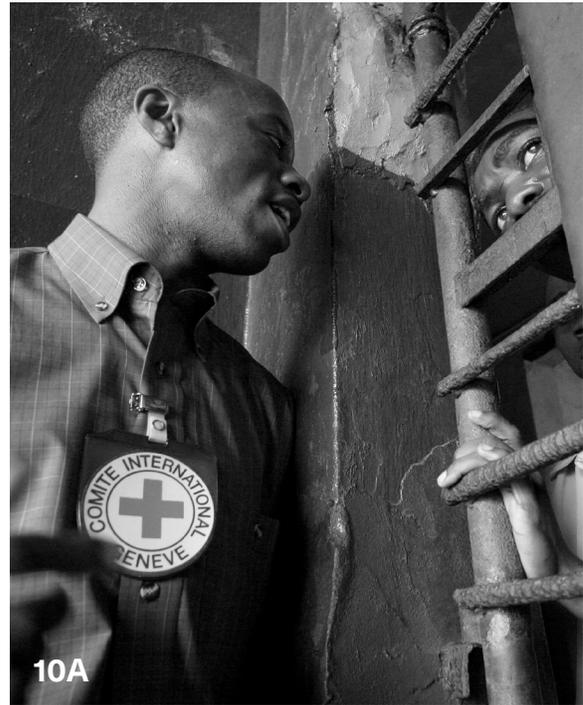
¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Photo Collage : Limiting the Devastation of War



1A Assisting Rwandan refugees, Goma, Zaire, 1996. Bo Mathisen/Verdens Gang. **2A** Sign indicating minefields, Nicaragua, 1998. Mary Anne Andersen/ICRC. **3A** Arrival of refugees in Nong Chan, Thailand, 1980. Jean-Jacques Kurz/ICRC. **4A** Damaged cemetery, Beirut, Lebanon, 1982. Luc Chessex/ICRC. **5A** Damaged ICRC vehicle, Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1992. Roland Sidler/ICRC. ²

² International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.



6A House devastated by the army, East Jerusalem, 1997. Thierry Gassmann/ICRC. **7A** A mosque destroyed during conflict, South Lebanon, 2006. Marko Kocic/ICRC. **8A** Refugee in Hadrut, Armenia/Azerbaijan, 1991. Zaven Khachikian/ICRC. **9A** A 13-year-old Karenni soldier prepares for an imminent ground offensive, Myanmar, 1999. Dean Chapman/Panos Pictures. **10A** ICRC prison visit, Monrovia, Liberia, 2006. Boris Heger/ICRC

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³ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mini Lessons for *Forced to Fight* stories : Discussion Questions

The questions below can be used as a discussion guide for teachers who wish to facilitate a mini lesson on any one of the 4 stories in *Forced to Fight*. The subheadings below represent themes that intersect with all 4 stories. Additional background reading and supporting lessons on each theme can be found in Modules 1 and 4. A Basic Rules of IHL Matrix accompanying the questions under the first subheading can be found below and is reproduced in the Module 1 Appendices :

Basic rules of IHL

- Using the basic rules listed in the matrix in the handout on p. 19, which basic rules of IHL are violated in the cases of Ana, Nora, Miguel and Tam?
- Using the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Summary on p. 21, can you identify any human rights you think might have been violated?
- What might the perpetrators of these violations have been thinking to justify their actions?

Violations of IHL and enforcement

- Which of these rules is most important from your perspective? (see left-hand column of the matrix 'Basic Rules of IHL on p. 19 and p. 20. Discuss using violations you identified in one of the stories.
- Should there be a trial for the perpetrators?
- Can you think of any circumstances where it would be justified to violate any of these rules? Indicate all for the violations that occurred in the F2F story you read with all relevant rules of war in the matrix.
- Do you think that Ana, Nora Miguel, and Tam would have closure if the only thing that happened was a trial, even if the perpetrators were found guilty?
- What additional specific things would you suggest to help Ana, Nora, Miguel, and Tam heal and move forward with their lives?

Displaced persons

Nora, Miguel and Tam fled their homes in the *Forced to Fight* stories.

- What were they able to take with them?
- What would be their most critical needs immediately after they fled?

Nora, Miguel and Tam found themselves and/or their family members in a camp for displaced persons at some point in their story.

- What kinds of needs did Nora, Miguel and/or Tam experience while they were in the camp? Did the needs of the 3 characters differ?
- Would your plan for a camp be different for the *Forced to Fight* character in any way?

How would being in a camp impact Nora and her success as she attended Nora's school?

Matrix : Basic rules of International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Use this worksheet to help students identify violations of International Humanitarian Law in each of the 4 stories of *Forced to Fight*. After students explore multiple pathways in one or more of the 4 choose your own adventure stories, they can mark an X next to any rule they feel was violated in each character's story under the character's name. Have students complete this worksheet for one, multiple or all characters. A blank worksheet for students is presented below, and an answer sheet for teachers follows.

The basic rules listed in the matrix comes from Exploring Humanitarian Law Module 2, p. 17. The listed rules summarize codified law in the [Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocols](#), as well as additional treaties, conventions, and [customary law](#).

	Ana	Tam	Nora	Miguel
Basic Rules of IHL⁴				
Distinction: between civilians and civilian objects and military targets				
Attacking civilians is prohibited.				
Attacking civilian objects (houses, hospitals, schools, places of worship, cultural or historic monuments, etc.) is prohibited.				
Before an attack, every possible precaution must be taken to minimize the potential harm to civilians and civilian objects.				
The use of weapons that are not able to distinguish between civilians and military targets is prohibited.				
Treatment : Civilians and combatants hors de combat (out of action due to injury) must be treated humanely.				
Murder, torture, and cruel or degrading treatment or punishment are prohibited.				
Sexual violence is prohibited.				
Forced displacement of civilians is prohibited.				
Starving civilians is prohibited.				
Using human shields to protect military objectives is prohibited.				
Wounded, sick, or shipwrecked enemy combatants must be searched for, collected and cared for. There should be no preferential treatment, except on medical grounds.				
Captured civilians and enemy combatants must be given adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care and must be allowed to correspond with their families.				
Everyone must receive a fair trial.				
Weapons and tactics : The only legitimate objective of war is to weaken the enemy's military forces.				
The use of weapons that cause unnecessary suffering is prohibited.				
Taking hostages is prohibited.				
Killing or wounding a surrendering enemy is prohibited.				
Ordering or threatening that there shall be no survivors is prohibited.				
Pretending to be a civilian while fighting is prohibited.				
Destroying objects necessary for the survival of civilians (foodstuffs, farming areas, drinking water installations, etc.) is prohibited.				
Attacking medical and religious personnel and objects lawfully using the red cross/red crescent/red crystal emblem is prohibited.				
Misusing the red cross/red crescent/red crystal emblem is prohibited.				
Specific protection : Certain categories of people and objects must receive additional protection.				
Recruiting or using children under the age of 15 in armed conflict is prohibited.				
Medical personnel and facilities (hospitals, clinics, ambulances, etc.) as well as religious personnel must be respected and protected.				
Humanitarian relief personnel, supplies and operations must be respected and protected.				
Cultural property must be respected and protected.				
The specific protection, health and assistance needs of women affected by armed conflict must be respected.				

⁴ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

IHL Matrix Answer Sheet	Ana	Tam	Nora	Miguel
Basic Rules of IHL⁵				
Distinction: between civilians and civilian objects and military targets				
Attacking civilians is prohibited.		X		X
Attacking civilian objects (houses, hospitals, schools, places of worship, cultural or historic monuments, etc.) is prohibited.		X		X
Before an attack, every possible precaution must be taken to minimize the potential harm to civilians and civilian objects.				
The use of weapons that are not able to distinguish between civilians and military targets is prohibited.				X
Treatment : Civilians and combatants hors de combat (out of action due to injury) must be treated humanely.				
Murder, torture, and cruel or degrading treatment or punishment are prohibited.				X
Sexual violence is prohibited.	X			X
Forced displacement of civilians is prohibited.		X	X	X
Starving civilians is prohibited.				
Using human shields to protect military objectives is prohibited.		X		
Wounded, sick, or shipwrecked enemy combatants must be searched for, collected and cared for. There should be no preferential treatment, except on medical grounds.				
Captured civilians and enemy combatants must be given adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, and medical care and must be allowed to correspond with their families.	X	X		
Everyone must receive a fair trial.				
Weapons and tactics : The only legitimate objective of war is to weaken the enemy's military forces.				
The use of weapons that cause unnecessary suffering is prohibited.				X
Taking hostages is prohibited.				X
Killing or wounding a surrendering enemy is prohibited.				
Ordering or threatening that there shall be no survivors is prohibited.				
Pretending to be a civilian while fighting is prohibited.				
Destroying objects necessary for the survival of civilians (foodstuffs, farming areas, drinking water installations, etc.) is prohibited.		?		X
Attacking medical and religious personnel and objects lawfully using the red cross/red crescent/red crystal emblem is prohibited.				X
Misusing the red cross/red crescent/red crystal emblem is prohibited.				
Specific protection : Certain categories of people and objects must receive additional protection.				
Recruiting or using children under the age of 15 in armed conflict is prohibited.	X	X		X
Medical personnel and facilities (hospitals, clinics, ambulances, etc.) as well as religious personnel must be respected and protected.				X
Humanitarian relief personnel, supplies and operations must be respected and protected.				X
Cultural property must be respected and protected.				
The specific protection, health and assistance needs of women affected by armed conflict must be respected.	X			X

⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

On 10 December 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The first of its 30 articles proclaims that :

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

It further provides that everyone – without distinction – has the right to :

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. live, and to live in freedom and safety ; | j. seek protection from persecution in another country ; |
| b. be free from slavery ; | k. get married and have a family ; |
| c. be free from torture and from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment ; | l. own property ; |
| d. be treated equally under the law; | m. freely practice their own religion ; |
| e. be free from arbitrary arrest and detention ; | n. think and express themselves freely ; |
| f. receive a fair trial, and be considered innocent until proven guilty ; | o. organize or take part in peaceful meetings ; |
| g. not be convicted or punished for an act that was not a crime at the time it was committed ; | p. take part in their country's political affairs and have equal access to government services ; |
| h. have their privacy respected ; | q. work, and to work in favourable conditions ; |
| i. move about freely within or outside their country ; | r. have adequate living standards; |
| | s. go to school. |

While exercising these rights, everyone must respect the rights of others. No one may take away any of these rights. ⁶

⁶ ICRC. (2012). *Mini EHL : The essence of humanitarian law*. Geneva, SW : ICRC.



MODULE 2 : Lessons for Ana : Sexual and Gender Based Violence

Introduction

Warning : *The following content is sensitive and may be difficult for some students. Please review the lesson and all videos prior to delivering it in your class. Because of the mature content, the lessons should at minimum only be delivered to students 13+. Please make sure you have the name and contact information (phone numbers and email addresses) for individuals and organizations that are able to provide services to students who may need them after participating in the lessons.*

“Despite clear legal prohibitions, sexual violence remains widespread and prevalent during armed conflicts and other situations of violence, as well as in detention. It occurs in various contexts and has grave humanitarian consequences. Sexual violence is often utilized as a tactical or strategic means of overwhelming and weakening the adversary, whether directly or indirectly, by targeting the civilian population.

Sexual violence is rarely an isolated issue. It is usually part of a pattern of violence linked to other violations of international humanitarian law, such as torture, killings, looting, child recruitment or destruction of property.

When linked to situations of conflict, it can exacerbate existing sexual and gender-based violence – such as marital rape and child marriage – among civilians.

These factors may also lead to the emergence of new trends or patterns, such as transactional or survival sex and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation or abuse.

Disproportionately, survivors of [sexual violence are often women](#), girls and sexual and gender minorities, but it can affect anyone. Given the destructive and wide-ranging consequences that sexual and gender-based violence has on individuals, [a survivor-centred response](#) (encompassing comprehensive health, mental health and psycho-social care, legal aid, and protection services) to support those affected, is essential.

*The ICRC offers services and referrals to coordinated networks of specialists to implement this response. Furthermore, the ICRC ensures that the risks of sexual and gender-based violence are mitigated in its programming, and aids survivors such as through community-based livelihood programming — including a [discussion with ICRC mental and psychosocial health delegate to address the prevention of sexual violence](#)”.*¹

¹ International Committee of the Red Cross. Addressing Sexual Violence (2020). From the [website](#).

LESSON 1 : Sexual and Gender-based Violence (SGBV) in Armed Conflict

Sexual violence in conflict needs to be treated as the war crime that it is; it can no longer be treated as an unfortunate collateral damage of war.

– Former UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura)

SUMMARY :

- Students will learn about SGBV during armed conflict
- Using “*Forced to Fight*” and through group discussions, students will explore the dilemmas faced by the character “Ana” and the impact on her, her family and her community
- Students will increase their understanding of SGBV through the eyes of survivors
- Students will use these survivor stories to examine IHL violations
- Students will use their acquired knowledge of IHL to assess what is a war crime

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- To understand how armed conflict affects boys & girls, men & women
- To understand how dealing - or not dealing - with IHL violations can affect the well-being of a society during and after armed conflict
- To increase awareness of humanitarian issues and IHL, as well as the complexities of their application.
- To understand and analyze gender differences, gender inequities and SGBV in armed conflict and the importance of equitable access to protections and humanitarian action assistance
- To increase awareness of international current events and humanitarian action and the ability to analyze them knowledgeably.
- To encourage active involvement in community service or other forms of engagement with the most vulnerable members of society.

CONCEPTS : human dignity; obstacles to human behaviour; non-combatants; war crimes; multiple perspectives

SKILLS : perspective taking; story analysis; dilemma analysis; problem analysis; identifying solutions; working in groups; digital literacy

LIST OF MATERIALS :

- Chart paper
- Markers
- Internet access
- [Basic Rules of IHL](#) chart from Exploring Humanitarian Law Module 2A, or the IHL Matrix from Module 1 Appendices.
- [Dilemma Worksheet](#) from Canada and Conflict SR 3.8, pg. 75
- [What is a War Crime?](#) from Exploring Humanitarian Law Exploration 4A

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : research; storytelling; group discussion

ACTIVITY 1 : (30 minutes)

Exploring Ana's story in "*Forced to Fight*"

Read the following introduction of Ana :

Ana, a 15-year-old girl in Africa, finds herself and her sister abducted by an armed group that is in conflict with government forces. At the camp of the armed group, she is separated from others and approached by an armed man who says that he needs a wife. She is afraid for herself and her sister, and knows that she will likely be killed if she refuses and ostracized by her village, if she agrees and eventually gets free.

1. Divide students into small groups. Each group will need to assign a leader and a group notetaker. Each group will need a device to access the "*Forced to Fight*" website.
2. Instruct each group to follow Ana's story. They will need to agree as a group how to solve each dilemma they encounter.
3. Using the Dilemma Worksheet from Canada and Conflict SR 3.8, pg.75, have the group recorder record each of Ana's dilemmas, the group's decision, how they arrived at each decision, and what was the outcome for Ana.
4. The group leader will share with the class the group's decision-making process and the outcome.
5. As a class, discuss what rules and laws should be in place to protect Ana and connect to specific examples from her scenario.
6. **Traffic Light Activity** : discuss each scenario Ana encountered and determine the following :
 - a. "Green" light = proceed, no violations
 - b. "Yellow" light = proceed with caution, possible violations of rules
 - c. "Red" light = STOP, violation of rules
7. Discuss if it would ever be appropriate to not follow these rules? Explain.
8. Review the Basic Rules of IHL (EHL 2A, pg. 17). Did your rules match? Are there other areas that should be addressed?

ACTIVITY 2 : (60 minutes)

Background Activity

1. Have students view the following infographic : "*Rape in War by the Numbers*".

Have students research what the current estimated numbers are for select countries. Why could these numbers be an underrepresentation? Why do you think sexual violence may be underreported?

3. Group Discussion Questions (or short-answer written task) :

- Does it matter under IHL whether the rape victim is a civilian, a combatant, a fighter, a militant sympathizer, or a terrorist? Why?

4. What protection does IHL confer against rape and other forms of sexual violence? Does IHL also protect men against sexual violence? How? Have students select a testimonial from "[*In their words*](#)" [*Voices of Survivors of Conflict-Related Sexual Violence and Service Providers*](#)".

- Complete the following chart : how does sexual violence during armed conflict affect each person?
- Students can be divided into small groups and each group completes the chart from the perspective of a different survivor.
- Have each group share the survivor story they selected and summarize the chart they completed.

	Economic	Social	Emotional	Health
Survivor				
Survivor's family (spouse, children, siblings, parents)				
Accuser				

The following questions are adapted from [*Facing History and Ourselves \(2021\)*](#) For additional background reading ahead of the lesson, and additional research for your students, consider pairing the questions below with case examples from the [*ICRC Casebook on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*](#).

- What is implied by calling rape "a weapon of war"? Why might this term be problematic from a legal perspective according to IHL? How would you characterize the physical and psychological injuries suffered as a consequence of rape as a method weapon of warfare? What role do power dynamics play?
- How would you compare sexual violence to other wartime injuries?
- Why have previous postwar courts treated rape as secondary and have been tolerated as part of soldiers "abusive" behaviour?
- In 1995 the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women specified that rape by armed groups during wartime is a war crime ([britannica.com, 2021](#)). The first conviction under international criminal law did not come until 1998, even though rape has existed as a **war crime** for centuries. At a 2014

summit on Sexual Violence in War Time, actress and activist Angelina Jolie explained that rape is not an “inevitable part of war.” What needs to happen to break the cycle?

- What role can law play?
- What other actions or initiatives can play a role in changing this heinous practice?

ACTIVITY 3 : (60 minutes)

1. Have students compare and contrast rape and sexual violence using a Venn Diagram
2. What are the causes of sexual violence in war?
3. Where does sexual violence fit in the Rules of IHL?
4. Distribute “What is a War Crime?” EHL 4A pg. 13 or CC pg. 88
5. Should sexual violence be a war crime? Explain.
6. Have students watch the following video : “[Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War and Genocide](#)”, (9:23 minutes)
7. What are the judicial options of dealing with sexual violence in armed conflict? Refer to Judicial options [Canada and Conflict](#) pg. 8
8. Provide students with the following articles as an example of a judicial option :
 - “[Munyaneza gets life in jail for Rwandan war crimes](#)” (cbc.ca, 2009)
 - [Her Majesty the Queen \(Prosecutor\) v. Désiré Munyaneza](#) (International Crimes Database, 2013).
9.
 - a. Provide a brief summary of the case
 - b. Does the punishment equal the severity of the crime?
10. Reviewing non-judicial options : Divide students into groups and assign each group one term.
 - Apology
 - Amnesty
 - Forgiveness
 - Reparation
 - Truth Commissions
 - Truth and Reconciliation
 - a. Provide a brief summary of the case
 - b. Does the punishment equal the severity of the crime?
 - c. How could they be applied to sexual violence violations of IHL?
11. Have students watch the following video, “[Ending conflict-related sexual violence : what the UN is doing](#)” (United Nations, YouTube, 2020) 6:00 minutes
 - a. From the video, what do you believe will be the most effective tactic to end conflict-related sexual violence?
 - b. Do you have any other suggestions to end conflict-related sexual violence?

ASSESSMENT :

- Is rape prohibited during international armed conflicts? How?
- What about during non-international armed conflicts? How?
- If rape was indeed committed as part of an “ethnic cleansing” policy, what crimes would that entail?
- Who could be found criminally liable for those crimes?
- What additional measures could help put an end to the practice of rape in armed conflicts?
- Would an additional international instrument be useful? What provisions should it contain?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

[“Current Trends and Emerging Concerns of Sexual Violence in Conflict”](#)

Students can watch this video as a starting point to discuss other potential IHL violations not discussed in these lessons.

[Sexual Violence in Conflict Fact Sheet 2020.](#)

Students can review this fact sheet to continue the discussion about conflict-related sexual violence and examine other areas of concern. This could be used to lead into the next lesson regarding sexual violence in armed conflict of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

LESSON 2 : IHL Violations and the impact on 2SLGBTQI+ people escaping armed conflict

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- To understand the need to respect life and human dignity;
- To understand and analyze of the vulnerabilities and violence facing 2SLGBTQI+ communities in armed conflict and the importance of equitable access to protections and humanitarian action;
- To understand the gender inequities in armed conflict and the importance of equitable access to protections and humanitarian assistance;
- To increase the interest in international current events and humanitarian action and the ability to analyze them knowledgeably;
- To increase the capacity to view conflict situations at home and abroad from a humanitarian perspective;
- To increase active involvement in community service or other forms of engagement with the most vulnerable members of groups facing inequities in society;
- To understand how dealing – or not dealing – with IHL violations can affect the well-being of a society during and after armed conflict;
- To understand how armed conflict affects boys & girls, men & women differently;

CONCEPTS: human dignity; obstacles to human behaviour; dilemma; consequences; multiple perspectives; civilian/combatant

SKILLS : perspective taking; story analysis; dilemma analysis; identifying consequences; problem analysis; estimating scope; estimating effort; identifying solutions; working in groups; digital literacy

LIST OF MATERIALS :

- Projector
- Internet access
- Basic Rules of IHL EHL 2A, pg. 17

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON :

- Students will explore the difference between gender identity and sexual orientation
- Students will examine the factors that contribute to 2SLGBTQI+ conflict-related sexual violence
- Students will discuss the IHL violations that have and continue to occur around the world against 2SLGBTQI+ persons

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : research; group discussion

2SLGBTQI+ persons During Armed Conflict (Backgrounder)

The following is adapted from : *Still a blind spot : The protection of LGBT persons during armed conflict and other situations of violence* by Alon Margalit

In some of the texts used, the facts may not always be proven; nevertheless, they have been selected because they highlight interesting IHL issues and are thus published for didactic purposes.

“The effects of armed conflict on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people

(LGBT) persons have made headlines in recent years, as human rights bodies, civil society and the media are increasingly documenting these effects in various conflicts around the world. Looking at the accumulating reports, it is evident that LGBT individuals are exposed to violence and discrimination during peacetime and in situations of violence which do not amount to an armed conflict. When it comes to circumstances of armed conflict, LGBT persons, who are often among the least protected of all groups, face additional perils created by the chaotic environment and breakdown of law and order.”

“LGBT persons in armed conflict and other situations of violence

Recent reports demonstrate the humanitarian suffering of LGBT people during armed conflict. In Syria, among other places, information has been gathered on the persecution of individuals assumed to be gay or lesbian. Many of the reports concern sexual violence,. Incidents of physical assault and harassment against men and women, on the basis of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity, were also recorded in areas controlled by armed groups. Testimonies of LGBT individuals revealed that in some cases, as the conflict in Syria escalated, their neighbours, friends, former schoolmates and even family members had threatened them or “sold them out” to various armed groups. Indeed, the risk to LGBT persons in areas controlled by armed groups seems particularly grave. In Iraq and Syria, men accused of homosexuality or same-sex sexual relations were executed.

Conflict-related sexual violence against men and boys has been documented during recent and ongoing armed conflicts. While an assailant may not consider a male victim to actually be an LGBT person, the motivation behind the violent act is to gain power and dominance over the enemy by imputing a feminine identity or “homosexual behaviour” to the victim, which is conceived as weakening and dishonouring the latter.

It has been reported that armed groups which have gained control over territory, for instance in Colombia and in Iraq, have distributed pamphlets demeaning those perceived to be LGBT persons or LGBT defenders, threatening to kill them or declaring them military targets.

Reports by human rights bodies and civil society maintain that LGBT persons, especially trans women, are more vulnerable to violence by armed groups and organized crime in Central America. Among other forms of violence, many cases of “corrective rape” against lesbians and trans women have been documented, for example, in Colombia.

LGBT persons are particularly vulnerable while in detention. Various reports have documented ill-treatment, especially sexual violence, against LGBT persons held by government forces or by armed groups. The abuse may be perpetrated by the detention facility staff (e.g., guards, doctors) or by fellow detainees. Under IHL, detainees, are entitled to humane treatment and protection from torture and humiliating or degrading treatment, including from sexual violence and unnecessary medical procedures which are not justified by the medical condition of the detainee. IHL also prohibits disciplinary penalties which are inhuman, brutal or dangerous for the health of internees, taking into account, among other factors, the internee’s sex, and by implication, his/her sexual orientation or gender identity. In order to ensure the protection of LGBT detainees and minimize the risk of physical or sexual assault, it might be necessary to hold such individuals separately from other detainees or from specific staff members, in particular those who seem hostile to LGBT persons, and at least when it comes to sleeping or shower and toilet arrangements.”²

The following has been adapted from, **“They Treated Us in Monstrous Ways” Sexual Violence Against Men, Boys, and Transgender Women in the Syrian Conflict (2020).**

² Margalit, A. *Still a blind spot : The protection of LGBT persons during armed conflict and other situations of violence.* International Review of the Red Cross (2018), 100 (1-2-3), 237–265.

Since the Syrian conflict began in March 2011, men and boys and transgender women have been subjected to rape and other forms of sexual violence by the Syrian government and non-state armed groups. Heterosexual men and boys are vulnerable to sexual violence in Syria, but men who are gay or bisexual—or perceived to be—and transgender women are particularly at risk.

Why has the Syrian war lasted so long?

ACTIVITY : (30 minutes)

1. Students will review the LBGTQ2S glossary and “genderbread person” handouts.

[LGBTIQ2S Glossary](#)
[Genderbread person](#)

2. In small groups, students will contrast a [world map that provides an overview of sexual orientation laws](#) with a [map that profiles where active armed conflict is occurring](#).
 - a. Are there any noticeable patterns? Discuss.
 - b. Why might members of the 2SLGBTQI+ community be targeted in armed conflict?
3. Have students view the following video to provide them with a brief overview of the conflict in Syria : [Decade of Death in Syria's Civil War](#) (2021) 10 mins

Students are to also read the following article to increase their understanding of the Syrian conflict : [Why has the Syrian war lasted so long?](#)

After viewing the video and reading the article, ask the students what information was new, what was surprising and what they would like to learn more about.

4. Have students read the following article, “[Hidden survivors of sexual violence during Syria's war must not be left behind](#)” After reading the article, ask students what is contributing to the violence towards 2SLGBTQI+ persons? How does this make them vulnerable to conflict-related sexual violence?
5. Group Discussion questions or written short-answer assignment questions :
 - a. What might be the factors that contribute to the under-reporting of 2SLGBTQI+ violence during armed conflict?

Possible student responses :

- cycle of oppression
- cultural norms
- stigma from family and friends

6. What are the specific IHL rules of armed conflict that are being violated? Refer to the Basic Rules of IHL from Exploring Humanitarian Law Module 2A, pg. 17
7. What legal tools can help stop the cycle of oppression for 2SLGBTQI+ persons affected by armed conflict? What else will enable change?

LESSON 3 : Prosecuting perpetrators who use sexual violence as a method of warfare : a Canadian context

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- To understand the need to respect life and human dignity ;
- To understand humanitarian issues and the principles of IHL, as well as the complexities of their application ;
- To increase the capacity to view conflict situations at home and abroad from a humanitarian perspective ;
- To gain an awareness of the importance of IHL
- To recognize that there are a number of ways of dealing with IHL violations ;
- To recognize Canada's role in dealing with IHL violations ;
- To understand how dealing – or not dealing – with IHL violations can affect the well-being of a society during and after armed conflict.

CONCEPTS : implementation; enforcement; civilian; combatant distinction; social pressure; war crime; consequences

SKILLS : perspective taking; identifying violations; identifying consequences; legal reasoning; identifying solutions

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : research; group discussion

LIST OF MATERIALS :

- Chart paper
- Internet access
- Projector
- Copy of the [Basic Rules of IHL Exploring Humanitarian Law Module 2A](#), pg. 17

SUMMARY OF THE LESSON :

- Students will develop an understanding of the role of the International Criminal Court (ICC) process as it relates to war crimes
- Students will explore the consequences of violating IHL
- Students will examine the criminal process for members of the Canadian military accused of committing a war crime

ACTIVITY : (60 minutes)

Opening discussion questions :

1. What are some potential reasons violations involving SGBV happen within the military and government during conflict? What are some reasons these violations occur with other groups, like Non-State Armed Groups? (systemic issues, lack of accountability)
2. Do you think that one violation can lead to another? Explain.
3. What are some ways to prevent violations or limit their consequences? (bystander involvement)

4. How should violators be prosecuted? Who should be prosecuted?

[For example : the accused combatant, the commanding officers, etc]

5. Have students watch the ICC Process video (11:31 mins) to learn about the [ICC judicial process](#)

6. Have students review the “ICC at a glance” fact sheet.

- [ICC at a glance](#) (English)
- [ICC at a glance](#) (French)

7. Divide students into groups, using the ICC website, have students research a case that recognizes sexual violence and/or rape as a war crime. Have each group gather the following information they will present back to the class :

- Case name
- Date of offence and country
- Date of trial
- Charges
- Verdict
- Retribution to the victim(s)
- As a group, discuss if you agree or disagree with the verdict. Explain

*A Canadian Perspective*³

8. Introduce the Somali affair, wherein Canadian soldiers are said to have committed war crimes.

[“The Somalia Affair”](#)

9. Have students watch the clip (2:36) from the CBC Archives, "[Canadian soldiers under investigation](#)"

Warning : Verbal (use of racial slurs by military personnel) and visual content may be disturbing to some students.

While watching the video, consider the following questions :

- a. What are the soldiers accused of having done?
- b. Which rules of IHL have they allegedly been broken? Refer to the IHL Matrix on pgs. 19 & 20.
- c. Provide students with “Basic protections for prisoners” [Exploring Humanitarian Law Student Resource 5C](#), pg 34.
Which protections were not provided?
- d. What can happen if the military or government tries to cover up or hide a situation like this from public view?

10. Students are to watch a second clip (2:18) from the CBC Archives, "[The Sentencing of Private Kyle Brown](#)"

- a. What was Private Kyle Brown accused of having done?
- b. What was his punishment?
- c. Did you learn anything about the Canadian government’s response to the accusations against other soldiers?
- d. Was the punishment adequate? Explain

³ Canadian Red Cross. *Canada and Conflict, a Humanitarian Perspective : Module 4 : Dealing with Violations* (2016). Canadian Red Cross, Ottawa, Canada.

ASSESSMENT :

Considering the media clips and the Somalia Inquiry text, invite students in small groups to consider the responsibilities of the following groups towards dealing with violations of IHL :

- Commanders of armed forces or groups
- Governments
- Domestic and international courts

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES :

My Lai - What went wrong? What went right? [Exploring Humanitarian Law Module 3D](#), pgs. 33-57

[What we did in My Lai](#)



MODULE 3 : Lessons for Tam : Child Soldiers

Background : Child Soldiers and IHL

Using children in armed conflicts is prohibited by International Humanitarian Law. As of 2002, under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child governments must take all possible measures to ensure that persons under 18 years old do not take a direct part in fighting nor can they be compelled to join the armed forces. Children under 15 cannot enlist voluntarily. Nonetheless, between 2005 and 2020, more than 93,000 children were verified as recruited and used by parties to conflict, although the actual number of cases is believed to be much higher, and at least 25,700 children were verified as abducted by parties to conflict in the same time period. Roles assumed by these children include working as cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes, in addition to active participation in combat. ¹

The intent of this section is to emphasize the importance of International Humanitarian Law in protecting young people at or near the students' ages. Organizations like the ICRC take active roles in ensuring respect of IHL to protect children and helping them to re-integrate into a more normal life after being used as soldiers.

The *Forced to Fight* story featuring Tam will allow students to feel as if they are accompanying Tam on a dangerous journey into conflict, making decisions for him and then seeing possible consequences. Tam, a 13-year-old boy in Southeast Asia, lives in an area where two armed groups are fighting. He has a friend in a neighbouring village named Rafi who was hurt in an attack and who urges Tam to join the opposing group with him. Tam's village is destroyed, his father killed and his sister taken. In an effort to find his sister, he winds up at the camp of the group Rafi has joined. They are forced to work in various capacities and eventually to kill, aided by the drugs they are made to consume. Must he do what he knows is wrong, or risk death himself trying to escape and find his sister?

This theme includes two lessons, the first of which introduces the topic of child soldiers, how they fit into the basic rules of IHL, and the current state of child soldiers around the world, why they are sought out to become soldiers, and how their basic needs to grow and develop are interrupted by their participation in combat. The second lesson takes the students through Tam's story, from setting the stage to debriefing.

¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Background : Child soldiers and international law

Both human rights law and international humanitarian law (IHL) extend protections to children affected by armed conflict. While protections under human rights law are provided within the general framework of children's fundamental rights, IHL addresses the specific needs of children in situations of armed conflict.

Both bodies of law contain rules regarding the participation of children in armed conflict. As child soldiers, their involvement may range from helping combatants (carrying weapons, conducting reconnaissance missions, delivering messages, etc.) to actually fighting.

The two Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions (Additional Protocol I and Additional Protocol II) of 1977, were the first international treaties to address these issues. Additional Protocol I, which provides rules for international armed conflict, requires governments to take all possible measures to prevent children under 15 from taking direct part in fighting. It expressly prohibits their recruitment into the armed forces and encourages governments, when recruiting children between the ages of 15 and 18, to give priority to the oldest. Additional Protocol II, which provides rules for non-international armed conflict, goes even further. It prohibits not only the recruitment of children under 15 but also their actual participation in fighting.

Human rights law subsequently addressed the issue in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), again using 15 as the minimum age. In fact, this law mirrors the rules of IHL that are applicable in international armed conflict. Thus, like Additional Protocol I, it obliges governments to take all possible measures to prevent children under 15 from taking direct part in fighting and prohibits their recruitment. It also encourages governments to give priority in recruitment to the oldest when choosing from among those aged between 15 and 18. From the very beginning, these sections of CRC drew considerable criticism. For one thing, they are the only part of the CRC that depart from the general definition of a 'child' as anyone under 18, in spite of the fact that they deal with one of the most dangerous situations that children can be exposed to – armed conflict. Moreover, these sections added nothing new and even risked distracting attention from the stronger standard contained in Additional Protocol II, which provides absolute and more comprehensive prohibitions in non- international armed conflicts.

In light of the criticisms, and in keeping with the international community's growing awareness of and concern for the plight of children affected by armed conflict, an initiative to raise the minimum age for recruitment and participation to 18 years was taken only a few years after the CRC entered into force.

After more than 10 years of international effort, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict entered into force in 2002. Under the Optional Protocol, governments must take all possible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces below the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in fighting. The Optional Protocol also raises the minimum age for compulsory recruitment into armed forces to 18 years, and requires governments to increase the minimum age for voluntary enlistment from 15 years as well. In addition, under the Optional Protocol, non-State armed groups should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in fighting persons under the age of 18.

Raising the age limit from 15 to 18 for participation in armed conflict represents a strengthening of the protection previously provided by IHL. It reinforces the world's desire to shield all children from the horrors of armed conflict, and, particularly, to prevent them from taking part in fighting.²

² International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Key facts : Children affected by war

- In 2020 alone, explosive weapons and explosive remnants of war were responsible for at least 47 per cent of all child casualties.
- Between 2005 and 2020, more than 104,100 children were verified as killed or maimed in situations of armed conflict, with more than two-thirds of these verified since 2014.
- Between 2005 and 2020, more than 93,000 children were verified as recruited and used by parties to conflict, although the actual number of cases is believed to be much higher.
- Between 2005 and 2020, at least 25,700 children were verified as abducted by parties to conflict.
- The United Nations verified at least 14,900 incidents of denial of humanitarian access for children between 2005 and 2020, with eighty per cent of those verified cases taking place from 2016 to 2020.
- Between 2005 and 2020, parties to conflict raped, forcibly married, sexually exploited, and committed other grave forms of sexual violence against at least 14,200 children.
- Sexual violence disproportionately affects girls, who were victims in 97 per cent of cases from 2016 to 2020.

(Source : UNICEF)³

Overview of trends and patterns: Children and armed conflict

In 2020, the situation of children in armed conflict was marked by a sustained high number of grave violations. The United Nations verified 26,425 grave violations, of which 23,946 were committed in 2020 and 2,479 were committed earlier but verified only in 2020. Violations affected 19,379 children (14,097 boys, 4,993 girls, 289 sex unknown) in 21 situations. The highest numbers of violations were the recruitment and use of 8,521 children, followed by the killing (2,674) and maiming (5,748) of 8,422 children and 4,156 incidents of denial of humanitarian access. 3 Children were detained for actual or alleged association with armed groups (3,243), including those designated as terrorist groups by the United Nations, or for national security reasons. Escalation of conflict, armed clashes and disregard for international humanitarian law and international human rights law had a severe impact on the protection of children. Cross-border spillover of conflicts and intercommunal violence affected children, in particular in the Sahel and Lake Chad basin regions.

The highest numbers of grave violations were verified in **Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, the Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen**. Verified cases of abduction and sexual violence against children increased alarmingly by 90 and 70 per cent, respectively. Abduction is often combined with the recruitment and use of children and sexual violence. Continued high levels of denial of humanitarian access to children remained a concern. While attacks on hospitals decreased and attacks on schools increased, both continued to endanger children.

Grave violations affect boys and girls differently. Whereas 85 per cent of children recruited and used were boys, 98 per cent of sexual violence was perpetrated against girls. Sexual violence remained vastly underreported, owing to stigmatization, cultural norms, absence of services and safety concerns (see also S/2021/312). Abduction and killing and maiming also affected boys more severely (76 and 70 per cent, respectively).

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic aggravated existing vulnerabilities of children, including by hampering their access to education, health and social services, limiting child protection activities and shrinking safe spaces. The socioeconomic impact of the pandemic exposed these children to grave violations, notably recruitment and use, abduction and sexual violence. Attacks on schools and hospitals, and the military use thereof, exacerbated the plight of children.

³ UNICEF : Protecting Children in Humanitarian Action. From the [website](#).

While engagement to end and prevent grave violations was challenging, my Special Representative and country task forces made progress in Afghanistan, the Central African Republic, Nigeria, the Philippines, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic. Engagement with parties to conflict resulted in the release of 12,643 children from armed groups and armed forces.

As emphasized in Security Council resolution 2427 (2018) and by the Secretary General, the protection of children affected by armed conflict is crucial to prevent conflict and sustain peace...

Countries where infractions against children have occurred, 2015-2021 (Compilation of the reports of 2018 — which covers 2012-2017 — and 2021)

Situations on the agenda of the Security Council

Afghanistan
Central African Republic
Colombia
Democratic Republic of the Congo
Iraq
Israel/Palestine
Lebanon
Libya
Mali
Myanmar
Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan
Syrian Arab Republic
Yemen

Situations not the agenda of the Security Council or other situations

Burkina Faso
Cameroon
India
Lake Chad Basin
Nigeria
Pakistan
Philippines
Thailand

(Source : [UNGA](#))⁴

⁴ UNGA, [Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict \(2021\)](#).

LESSON 1 : The Issue of Child Soldiers

SUMMARY :

This lesson looks in depth at one evolving area of IHL : the rules governing the recruitment and use of children by armed forces or groups. It begins by posing a dilemma taken from a true situation, then considers childhood and the needs and capabilities of children. As such, it provided context for the *Forced to Fight* story about Tam.

FORMAT : online or in-person ; 55 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- Students will connect the exploitation of child soldiers to the basic rules of IHL.
- Students will make difficult decisions in dilemma situations and justify their choices.
- Students will analyze multiple perspectives and trace chains of consequences.

CONCEPTS : chains of consequences; dilemmas; needs of children; multiple perspectives

SKILLS : dilemma analysis; discussion; identifying problems; identifying solutions; tracing consequences; working in groups

MATERIALS :

- Dilemma worksheet
- Photo collage
- Basic Rules of IHL
- *What does international law say?*
- Maslow's hierarchy of needs

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. Introduction (15 minutes)

Read aloud the dilemma scenario, then divide the students into small groups, providing access to the scenario. Have each group discuss, then use the "Dilemma Worksheet" from the appendix to record several possible courses of action. Finally ask the groups to record their consensus on a best way forward.

The Dilemma : Written by a Canadian soldier who served in Sudan

My team of United Nations (UN) military observers entered a village to meet with a Sudanese Colonel who was responsible for reducing the number of weapons available to the civilian population in his area of control. As we entered the grass-walled army compound we could see a number of uniformed troops squatting under nearby trees and along the sides of buildings in an attempt to escape the mid-day sun. We were directed towards a group of white plastic lawn chairs positioned in a circle under a large acacia tree on the bank of the Nile River.

There we were met by the Colonel and his staff. After exchanging pleasantries and introductions, the Colonel motioned for me to sit next to him. He gave instructions to a young boy who promptly ran off towards a nearby mud-walled hut. It was common in Sudan to see soldiers' families living near military bases, but

what struck me about this boy was his uniform and the fact that he was carrying a weapon. I couldn't help but notice that this young boy's uniform fit him perfectly. I was used to seeing adult soldiers with poorly fitted and mixed uniforms, and couldn't help wondering who makes combat uniforms for children? I began explaining the purpose of our visit when the young soldier returned, holding a bottle of pop in one hand and his AK-47 in the other. As he approached to give me a bottle of orange Fanta, he stumbled and exhaled a heavily alcohol scented breath. Quickly recovering, the soldier stood up with an apologetic look and it was then that I realized that I was face to face with an armed, drunken child soldier who was no older than 11.⁵

When the small groups have had time to come to their decisions, debrief as a large group.

Possible questions :

- What did your group decide and why? You might post the responses so that everyone can see the trends, if any. Discuss individual responses as you deem necessary.
- How did the scenario make you feel?
- What circumstances do you think contributed to the 11 year old in the story finding himself in the situation he is in in this scenario? What choices did he make, if any? What choices were made for him by other adults?

Over 2 million adolescents are estimated to have served in World War II as soldiers. In the face of huge losses in manpower, German boys became soldiers.

When the German army was retreating in the face of the Allied advance in 1944, as a leader in the Hitler Youth, I was told I had been put in charge of several fighting units made up of 600 - 800 adolescents. I was to replace a veteran of World War I who had been moved to help set up defences on the Rhine. 'That's impossible,' I responded, 'I'm not quite 17.'

– a German child soldier

2. Think about a minimum age (10 minutes)

Present “**Photo collage 2C**” of child soldiers from around the world. Have each student or group choose one photo and be ready to explain why they chose it. Ask several to share.

Possible questions :

- What are your reactions?
- How old are the children in these photos?
- Should there be a minimum age before someone may be recruited or used by an armed force or armed group?
- What should this be? Why?

3. What does international law say? (10 minutes)

Have students connect the issue of child soldiers to the basic rules of IHL. Aside from the specific protection for children, what other rules might apply in this situation?

⁵ Canadian Red Cross, *Canada and Conflict: A Humanitarian Perspective* (2016). Ottawa, Canada. Canadian Red Cross.

Present “**What does international law say?**”. Solicit student reactions. Ask students how they think children might be used in armed conflict. Have them give examples.

[For example : as combatants, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes]

Explain that the protections provided by international law cover all of these uses of children in armed conflict.⁶

4. The global use of child soldiers (5 minutes)

Point out that, despite the rules on the recruitment and use of children in armed forces and groups, this practice continues in many parts of the world. Refer to Background materials in the additional resources and share statistics and geographical connections.

Possible questions:

- What countries do you know of in which child soldiers have been used?
- What conclusion(s) do you draw from this reading?
- What can you say about the use of child soldiers in your part of the world?

[For example, that child soldiers are being used in many countries, on four continents, in both the Northern and Southern hemispheres, and not just in ‘developing countries’]

5. Why do children become combatants? (10 minutes)

Discuss :

- In your opinion, why do armed forces or groups want to use children in armed conflict?
- Why would a young person join an armed force or group?

Sample responses follow :

Why Commanders Want Them :

- they don’t ask questions; they follow orders
- they can be easily controlled
- they can be made martyrs
- need for fighters
- they are not fully aware of the risks

Why Young People Might Join :

- revenge, anger
- no parental/family support
- self-protection
- poverty, means of survival
- their societies value warfare, heroism, martyrdom
- peer pressure⁷

⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law: Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009).

⁷ Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Share the following quote :

There are children who join for so-called voluntary reasons. But I think one has to be very careful to recognize that there is truly no voluntary joining, in the sense that the vast majority of children who join willingly do so out of necessity or victimization, fear for their security. Unaccompanied children who have no parents to protect them, people who are fearful that they will die of hunger or who have inadequate health care, all may seek military activity.

– Dr Mike Wessells, professor of psychology and author of *Child Soldiers : From Violence to Protection*

Solicit student reactions. Share Maslow's hierarchy of needs in the appendices, and ask the students to consider each need and how it might be satisfied or ignored in the situation of child soldiers.

6. Conclusion : (5 minutes)

Discuss :

- What are the most surprising facts you have learned today?
- Discuss the meaning of the word “dilemma” in relation to child soldiers.
- How do you see the future unfolding for the children we have discussed?

Preview the next lesson by saying that we are going to accompany a child soldier into conflict from his viewpoint through a simulation.

ASSESSMENT :

- Listen to students' responses in discussion for appropriate and logical connections to the basic rules. Use the Discussion Rubric as you deem fit.
- Circulate and listen for rational justifications to student responses to the various dilemmas in the lesson, in both small groups and large group discussion, using the Discussion Rubric if you like.
- Listen for student responses that show empathy for various perspectives and logical projections of consequences of decisions.

KEY IDEAS :

- Children must be protected in armed conflicts.
- One form of protection is setting and respecting a minimum age for recruiting children into armed forces or groups or using them in armed conflict.
- Under IHL and human rights law, a person under the age of 15 may not be recruited by armed forces or groups or used for any purpose in armed conflict.
- A more recent law raises this minimum age to 18 years.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; using dilemmas; using stories, photos, and videos; small groups

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

[Convention on the Rights of the Child \(1989\).](#)

[Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict \(2000\).](#)

[Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts \(Protocol I\) \(1977\).](#)

[Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts \(Protocol II\) \(1977\).](#)

[UNICEF - Protecting children in humanitarian action \(2021\).](#)

[United Nations General Assembly - Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict \(2021\).](#)

[Vancouver Principles - On Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Children \(2017\).](#)

LESSON 2 : One Child Soldier's Experience

SUMMARY :

Through a *Forced to Fight* interactive story, this lesson involves students in the choices children in conflict situations are forced to make, dramatically portraying the consequences for children, their families, and their societies.

FORMAT : in-person; 50 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- Students will make difficult decisions in dilemma situations and justify their choices.
- Students will analyze the experiences of child soldiers, the chains of consequences resulting from their choices, and the impacts on them, their families, and the community.

CONCEPTS : chains of consequences; dilemmas; needs of children; multiple perspectives

SKILLS : dilemma analysis; discussion; identifying problems; identifying solutions; tracing consequences; working in groups

MATERIALS :

- Appendices : Voices of Child Soldiers
- *I Don't Want to Go Back*
- Vancouver Principles summary

Other materials : one computer for each group, internet access

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. Setting the stage (5 minutes)

Share one or two of the stories from "**Voices of Child Soldiers**".

[Suggested: Renuka and/or Malar].

- How easy or difficult might it be for children in this type of situation to refuse to become a soldier?
- What kind of consequences might the children not consider in deciding to become a soldier?
- Review the definition of a dilemma (see glossary).

2. Explore the simulation (25 minutes)

Have the students complete the *Forced to Fight* story about Tam. Summary of Tam's story:

Tam, a 13-year-old boy in Southeast Asia, lives in an area where two armed groups are fighting. He has a friend in a neighbouring village named Rafi who was hurt in an attack and who urges Tam to join the opposing group with him. Tam's village is destroyed, his father killed and his sister taken. In an effort to find his sister, he winds up at the camp of the group Rafi has joined. They are forced to work in various capacities and eventually to kill, aided by the drugs they are made to consume. Must he do what he knows is wrong, or risk death himself trying to escape and find his sister?

Ask them to repeat the simulation making different choices until it appears they have exhausted all possibilities, or until time is called. Refer to the [Forced to Fight Instructional Guide](#) for tips on exploring a choose your own adventure story in *Forced to Fight*.

3. Debrief (10 minutes)

Discuss the following questions, as you deem appropriate :

- How was Tam affected by the armed conflict? Or... what did Tam experience?
- What losses has he suffered?
- What do you think the effect on Tam's community would be?
- What immediate needs does he have? What needs does his family have? His community?
- What sorts of humanitarian activities could meet those needs?
- What kinds of action might help people cope with the consequences of armed conflict?
- How did becoming a soldier affect Tam's life and his future, and Mai's and Rafi's lives and futures?
- Was the scenario an effective way of helping you understand the predicament of child soldiers?

4. Video analysis (5 minutes)

Introduce and view the video [I don't want to go back](#), in which students will meet two former child soldiers (a boy and a girl) and a commander.

Debrief :

- What do you learn about the situation for children in war from the commander's remarks?
- Compare Tam's experience with those of other child soldiers—Comfort and Abraham from the video.
- (Additional first-person narratives of child soldiers may be found in the following resources: Books *A Long Way Gone* by Ishmael Beah or *War Child* by Emmanuel Jal; Films *Beasts of No Nation* on Netflix or [Grace, Milly, and Lucy](#))
- What did you learn about the situation for children in war from the experiences all of the child soldiers you have learned about?
- What consequences might Tam face for his actions?
- Why are child soldiers likely to behave differently from adult soldiers?

5. Conclusion (10 minutes)

Summarize or have the students read the [Vancouver Principles](#).

Discuss :

- What is your reaction to these principles having been enacted in Canada?
- Do you think they include everything they should? If not, what should be added?
- Do you think they will be effective in minimizing the use of child soldiers? Why or why not?

Have students write a journal entry (minimum 250 words) from the perspective of either Rafi or Mai five years after the scenario. Include some reflection on their experiences during the conflict and where life took them in the next five years.

ASSESSMENT :

- Circulate and listen to students justify why they should make a given choice during the scenario. Assess for logical reasoning.
- Assess students' oral and written responses related to chains of consequences and impact. You are looking for logic and whether or not students' can communicate cogently from another person's perspective.

KEY IDEAS :

- Children must be protected in armed conflicts.
- Children do not have the developmental maturity to foresee all of the consequences resulting from a difficult choice.
- Many nations of the world are working to prevent the use of child soldiers.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; using dilemmas; using stories, photos, and videos; small groups

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

[Convention on the Rights of the Child \(1989\).](#)

[Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict \(2000\).](#)

[Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts \(Protocol I\) \(1977\).](#)

[Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts \(Protocol II\) \(1977\).](#)

[UNICEF - Protecting children in humanitarian action \(2021\).](#)

[United Nations General Assembly - Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict \(2021\).](#)

[Vancouver Principles - On Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Children \(2017\).](#)



Appendix

Dilemma worksheet ¹

DILEMMA #		
PROBLEM :		
Possible action:	Reason for choosing it:	Reason for not choosing it:
A:		
B:		
C:		
Action we would take :	Reasons:	

¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Photo Collage : Child Soldiers ²



1C



2C



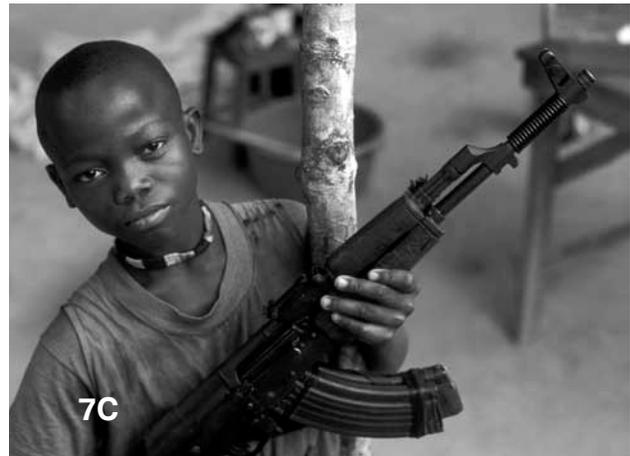
3C



4C

1C Child soldier, Yemen, 1999. Giacomo Pirozzi/Panos Pictures. **2C** Mujaheddin child soldiers, Afghanistan, 1990. Didier Bregnard/ICRC. **3C** Teenage Karenni soldiers heading for the combat zone, Myanmar, 1999. Dean Chapman/Panos Pictures. **4C** A young soldier, Cambodia, 1997. Ou Neakiry/AP.

² International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.



5C Jamie, 14, plays with a parrot while she rests from duty, Colombia, 1999. Ricardo Mazalan/AP. **6C** Young soldiers of Zairian rebel army, Goma, Zaire, 1997. Remy de la Maunière/AP. **7C** A 12-year-old member of government-allied Kamajor (Civil Defence Force), Sierra Leone, 1998. Giacomo Pirozzi/Panos Pictures.³

³ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

What does international law say?

Human rights law defines a 'child' as anyone who is younger than 18, unless adulthood is reached earlier under national law.

Both human rights law and international humanitarian law (IHL) have taken up the issue of children's involvement in armed conflict. Human rights law has included related protections within children's fundamental rights in general, while IHL has developed special rules that apply to children caught in situations of armed conflict. As in other areas, the two bodies of law are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

The most widely accepted rules require governments and armed groups to ensure that children below the age of 15 do not take part in fighting. This also means that children may not be recruited into armed forces or groups until they are at least 15 years old. In addition, when they are recruiting 15-18-year-olds, governments are required to give priority to older children.

Some governments have gone one step further by agreeing that no one below the age of 18 years may be lawfully recruited or used in any way by armed forces or groups.

Source : Paraphrased from Article 77 of Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions, Article 4 of Protocol II additional to the Geneva Conventions, Article 38 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Articles 3 and 4 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. ⁴

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



Source ⁵

⁴ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

⁵ University of Pennsylvania. *A Worthwhile Question to Ponder on your Career Journey* (2021).

Voices of child soldiers ⁶

Zaw Tun's story

I was recruited by force, against my will. One evening while we were watching a video show in my village, three army sergeants came. They checked whether we had identification cards and asked if we wanted to join the army. We explained that we were under age and hadn't got identification cards. But one of my friends said he wanted to join.

I said no and came back home that evening, but an army recruitment unit arrived next morning at my village and demanded two new recruits. Those who could not pay (...) had to join the army, they said. I [my family] could not pay, so altogether 19 of us were recruited in that way and sent to (...) an army training centre.

Source : [Children of Conflict](#)

Myo Win's story

We were drugged and ordered to move forward on the battlefield. We did not know what sort of drug or alcohol we were given but we drank it because we were very tired, very thirsty and hungry. We had walked for two whole days under very hot burning sun. The hill [battlefield] had no shade, trees were burnt and artillery shells were exploding everywhere. We were so scared, very thirsty, and some of us collapsed due to over-tiredness. But we were beaten from behind [by the officers] and had to move forward. One [of us] got killed.

Source : [Children of Conflict](#)

Susan's story [‘Susan’ is not her real name]

One week after I was abducted, [139 girls were taken one night from her school] I was given to a man. (...) He was 30 years old. Two girls were given to him. He was trying to be nice to me, to make me feel happy and not want to run away, but all I wanted to do was go home.

One boy tried to escape, but he was caught. They made him eat a mouthful of red pepper, and five people were beating him. His hands were tied, and then they made us, the other new captives, kill him with a stick. I felt sick. I knew this boy from before. We were from the same village. I refused to kill him and they told me they would shoot me. They pointed a gun at me, so I had to do it. The boy was asking me, ‘Why are you doing this?’ I said I had no choice. (...)

I feel so bad about the things that I did. (...) It disturbs me so much that I inflicted death on other people. (...) I still dream about the boy from my village who I killed. I see him in my dreams, and he is talking to me and saying I killed him for nothing, and I am crying.

Source : The Scars of Death – Children abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda, Human Rights Watch, 1997.

Renuka's story

The rebels came to our school every month and talked to us. They said it was our duty to join them and help save our people from the government army. Because we are so poor, my family often had little to eat. One day, when I was 11, I was so hungry that I left home without telling my parents and went to their camp. I was well fed; but I could not go to visit my family until I fought on the front lines.

After two years, I was assigned to an all-female fighting group to go into battle. Under the assault of the

⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 2 Limits in Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

government army, everyone in my group was killed except me. I was supposed to swallow my cyanide pill if I could not avoid being captured, but I didn't want to die.

Source : Celia W. Dugger, Rebels without a childhood in Sri Lanka War, New York Times, 11 September 2000.

Malar's story

My father died of a heart attack when I was three and my mother got sick when I was six and she never came home from the hospital; so I lived with my uncle. When I was eight, a woman from the rebel group came and told me they would educate me and care for me.

I thought it was better to go with her because of our poverty. I also wanted to contribute to freedom.

When I was 12, I volunteered to go to war. I wanted to save the country.

Last month the government soldiers threw a grenade in our bunker. All ten of the girls with me there died. The soldiers finished them off. Now I am here in jail, but I will fight again because of the army's attacks on our people.

Source : Celia W. Dugger, Rebels without a childhood in Sri Lanka War, New York Times, 11 September 2000.

Vancouver Principles : Summary ⁷

- Support UN efforts to monitor, report, identify and address early warning signs of the recruitment and use of child soldiers
- Create focal points for training and certification, and encourage communication and cooperation among them
- Ensure that all our peacekeepers receive training on child protection prior to their deployment and guidance on interactions with children associated with armed forces or groups
- Ensure that peacekeepers report incidents of Grave Violations against children in situations of armed conflict
- Ensure that all children who come into contact with peacekeepers are treated in accordance with IHL and human rights law
- Act effectively in response to credible information to protect children at risk of recruitment or use as child soldiers and other Grave Violations
- Ensure that all children who are temporarily detained are treated according to the special status, needs, and rights of children; that they are detained for as short a period as possible and that they are then handed over to child protection authorities
- Hold our own personnel to the highest standard of conduct
- Recognize the essential contribution of women to peacekeeping operational effectiveness
- Ensure that child soldiers are a priority in disarmament and demobilization efforts, assist in their successful transition to normal life and prevent their re-recruitment
- Promote and support research on the trauma experienced by personnel confronting child soldiers and interacting with children affected by armed conflict
- Support the inclusion of child protection provisions within the terms of peace processes
- Include prohibition of child recruitment in sanctions aimed at supporting settlement of conflicts
- Share best practices among member states
- Develop operational guidance for implementation of these principles

⁷ Government of Canada : [The Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers](#) (2019).



MODULE 4 : Lessons for Nora : Refugees and Forced Migration

Background : Consequences of Armed Conflict : Displaced Persons

Attacking civilians or civilian objects (such as houses, hospitals, schools, places of worship, cultural or historic monuments, etc.), forcibly displacing civilians from their homes and destroying things necessary for the survival of civilians are all violations of International Humanitarian Law. It is therefore shocking that there are at least 82.4 million people around the world that have been forced to flee their homes—this is about 1 in every 95 people on earth. Among them are nearly 26.4 million refugees, around half of whom are under the age of 18 (UNHCR, 2021)¹. As with all of the *Forced to Fight* stories, this issue directly impacts people the same age as secondary school students in Canada.

Theme 4 is built around the *Forced to Fight* story of Nora, a 17-year-old in the Middle East, who lives with her parents that fled conflict many years ago and were welcomed into the community where they now live. There is a recently-established camp for displaced persons nearby, and young people from the camp begin to attend Nora's school. This results in strains on resources of various types. Nora becomes friendly with Dani who comes from the camp to Nora's school, but other students bully the displaced persons. Nora faces the dilemma of standing up for Dani against her classmates or siding with her old friends.

There are three lessons in Theme 4. The first lesson considers the scope of the crisis, the needs of persons who have been displaced from their homes, and ways in which others (notably, humanitarian organizations) are trying to meet those needs. Students are also tasked with deciding how to meet various types of special needs within the overall population of displaced persons, such as the very young, the very old, and those with disabilities or injuries. The second lesson involves students in a simulation where they plan a camp for displaced persons, requiring them to consider the myriad needs and logistics required to establish and maintain a temporary home for thousands of traumatized people. The third lesson takes the students through Nora's and Dani's story, focusing on the importance of bystander action. Students will be faced with a number of dilemmas and will see the ramifications of their choices.

¹ UNHCR. [Figures at a glance](#) (2021).

LESSON 1 : Fleeing due to armed conflict ²

SUMMARY :

In this lesson students will consider the resources that families lose as a consequence of war and the needs arising from such losses. Then they reflect on what is required to address those needs. Students also consider the experiences of people who have been forced to leave their homes due to war, such as Tam, Miguel and Dani (from the Nora story) in *Forced to Fight*.

FORMAT : in-person ; 75 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- Students will analyze the range of needs of persons who are displaced by armed conflict and the range of resources required to meet those needs.

CONCEPTS : basic needs; human dignity; multiple perspectives; non-material needs; refugees and other displaced persons

SKILLS : assessing needs; discussion; estimating scope; problem analysis; perspective taking; role playing; working in groups

MATERIALS :

- Photo collage-Limiting the Devastation of War
- UNHCR Figures at a Glance
- video and transcript for [*Forced from home*](#)
- projector
- *Perspectives on Displacement*
- *Humanitarian Action*

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. The experience of fleeing (25 minutes)

More than other reasons that cause people to leave their homes (loss of shelter or possessions, absence of water or electricity, lack of jobs, etc.), the loss of security forces people to make quick decisions as they flee. People may flee their homes without knowing where they are going, how long they will be away or even whether they will ever return.

Refer to “**Photo collage-Limiting the devastation of war**” in the appendices. Think about what these people left behind and what they now need. This exercise is designed to help you understand the impact of flight on victims’ lives. In a small group, imagine the following situation.

- You are a family or group of neighbours.
- Your area is under devastating attack.
- You must leave now in order to save your lives.
- You do not know where you will be going and whether you will be able to return.

You have only 10 minutes to prepare to leave. Take 30 seconds as an individual to decide on your gender, age, and any special characteristics that might affect you as you flee.

² International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

As a group, decide what you can actually take, why it is necessary and how to carry it. Write down the group's plans.

Give the groups 10 minutes to impress upon them how little time they might have. You might intersperse "updates" such as "I hear gunfire" or "the neighbours are leaving now" to increase the urgency. Reconvene.

- Compare your group's plan with those of other groups.
- What did your group take and why?
- What thoughts or feelings did you have as you made these decisions?
- What difference would it make to your plan if your group included elderly people? Infants or toddlers? People with disabilities? Sick or wounded people?
- How would the chaos of armed conflict affect your decisions? [In one class, a student said that he would go to a bank and take his money out. The teacher asked, 'Who would be working in the bank?']
- Do the needs/supports differ for people displaced by conflict vs. disaster?

Provide the following definitions to the students :

'Refugees' are people who have fled their country for fear of being persecuted because of their race, ethnicity, religion, political opinion or membership in a particular social group. This includes people fleeing an armed conflict, generalized violence or massive violations of human rights.

People who are forced to leave their homes for similar reasons but who remain in their own countries are known as 'internally displaced persons.' --UNHCR

Ask the students for examples of how the needs of the two groups might differ.

Provide some current statistics on displaced persons, their demographics and the geography involved from UNHCR Figures at a Glance.

Discuss :

- Why do you think nearly 80% of all displaced persons are women and children?
- What risks might women, children and the elderly face in a camp for displaced persons?
- How can these risks be avoided?

I would like to go back to my home. But in some cases, whole villages have been destroyed, so an individual doesn't have any chance of going back to that village.

– a displaced woman, Bosnia-Herzegovina

When the troops arrived, we left. We had been making tortillas when we left. We fled, leaving everything we owned in the house. When we returned, everything had been destroyed, we were dying of hunger.

–a displaced woman, El Salvador

2. Where do we go? (10 minutes)

Ask students to suggest different options for where refugees and other displaced persons might go.

[For example : establishing a spontaneous settlement, moving in with a host family, seeking refuge in a camp for displaced persons]

Focus the discussion on people who have sought refuge in a camp for displaced persons.

Possible questions :

- Why do you think people would choose to seek refuge in a camp over other possibilities?
- Does everyone who flees want to go to a camp?

Present the video "*Forced from home*", in which Medin and Damir (two boys aged 12 and 13) tell what it was like to flee their homes and Saba (a 30-year-old mother of three) tells of her journey to a refugee camp.

Possible questions :

- How were the boys affected by the armed conflict?
- What needs did they have?
- What sorts of humanitarian activities could meet those needs?
- What losses has Saba suffered?
- How will life in the refugee camp be different from what Saba was used to?
- How do you think people in the camp might be able to help each other?

3. Displacement and special considerations (15 minutes)³

As a small group, select one of the following displaced persons :

- Girl, aged 10, displaced by conflict, international ;
- Female farmer and mother, displaced by conflict, international ;
- Surgeon with International Committee of the Red Cross, working in displaced-persons camp ;
- Boy, aged 12, learning to walk on a prosthetic leg, displaced by conflict, international ;
- Female community leader, displaced by disaster, Canada ;
- Volunteer with Canadian Red Cross, in displaced community in Canada ;
- Male youth aged 16, displaced by disaster, Canada ;
- any other character.

Create additional qualities/characteristics of the character and complete the "**Perspectives on Displacement**" chart in the Appendix.

Meet with another group who considered a different character.

Discuss :

- How do personal characteristics intersect with the experience of displacement?
- How does this impact the work of agencies who serve the needs of displaced persons?

³ Canadian Red Cross, Canada and Conflict : A Humanitarian Perspective (2016). Ottawa, Canada. Canadian Red Cross.

4. Responding to needs (15 minutes)

Explain to students that governments have the primary responsibility for responding to the needs arising from the devastation of war. Many humanitarian organizations, working together, assist them in this task. Emphasize the fact that under international humanitarian law (IHL), countries must allow civilians access to humanitarian relief.

[Examples of humanitarian organizations are listed in Additional Resources.]

Ask students, working in their small groups, to brainstorm ideas for specific humanitarian activities in one of the humanitarian programme categories, using the chart “**Humanitarian Action**” in the Appendix. Use examples from the background material, if necessary, to help students get started.

Note : IHL requires the warring parties to facilitate access to humanitarian relief for civilians in need. They must allow humanitarian workers the freedom of movement necessary for them to do their jobs.

Reconvene the class to share ideas.

Possible questions :

- What difficulties might humanitarian organizations encounter in carrying out these activities? Why?

[For example : security problems; civilian population trapped in combat zones; difficulties in bringing relief convoys due to the lack of permission from local authorities or neighbouring countries; access denied to population in need because they are regarded as the enemy; overwhelming scale of the task when hundreds of thousands of people are displaced in a very short period of time; armed combatants mingling with civilians in need; bad roads; flooding during the rainy season; lack of funds]

- What precautions should be taken when planning and carrying out humanitarian activities?

[For example : contacting armed forces and groups to ensure that they consent to and support the planned actions; conducting detailed assessments to ensure that victims are served according to their needs; trying to determine who is at risk of being excluded from receiving aid and why, and taking measures to reduce this risk; planning to cover the most urgent needs first (checking the means available for cooking before bringing dry food, treating the water to avoid an epidemic); using local experts whenever possible]

- What can be done to avoid further consequences?

[For example : pointing out the consequences of not respecting IHL rules; reporting the situations of prisoners or civilians to the authorities and helping them find solutions; informing the victims of the services provided by humanitarian organizations and the way to benefit from them; helping military officers or leaders of armed groups to train combatants to respect IHL rules]

5. How to protect human dignity and ensure identity (5 minutes)

Mention that we are going to focus on biological needs in Lesson 2. Here, discuss the needs other than biological that humanitarian workers must consider while helping displaced persons to recover, to assume responsibility for themselves and to preserve their human dignity.

Read the following excerpt :

For refugee and displaced children, boredom and absence of education (...) is a dangerous combination. It produces unstructured days where traumatizing memories linger, fears thrive, and violence is always possible. (...) Girls may be threatened with rape and boys with recruitment into gangs. Adolescents may get pregnant at a very early age. The lives of children, in short, start to fall apart very quickly...

– Marc Sommers, Emergency Education for Children

Possible questions :

- What social, psychological and spiritual needs must be addressed?

[For example : education, information, recreation, religious and cultural practices]

6. CONCLUSION (5 minutes)

Discuss :

- If you found yourself living in a camp, what could you do to continue feeling like the same person you were before?
- In what ways might living in a camp undermine people's human dignity, confidence and ability to look after themselves? How can these elements be overcome?
- What job categories would be involved in responding to the needs of people in this situation?

[For example : doctors, nurses, nutritionists, physiotherapists, social workers, agronomists, veterinarians, economists, engineers, trainers, logisticians, pilots, secretaries, office managers, truck drivers, mechanics, media experts, lawyers, interpreters, information technology specialists]

- How do you think the needs of the people in a camp might vary depending on if they were refugees or displaced persons?
- Do the extent of the needs involved and the types of resources required surprise you?

Link to *Forced to Fight* stories :

- Dani, Miguel and Tam fled their homes in the *Forced to Fight* stories. What were they able to take with them? What would be their most critical needs immediately after they fled?

ASSESSMENT :

- Assess students' lists of items to take when fleeing, responses in discussion, and charts for the range of needs and resources, their relation to reality, and logic. Use the discussion rubric as desired.

KEY IDEAS :

- Fleeing one's home due to conflict or disaster affects every aspect of a person's life.
- In addition to their immediate biological needs, the social, psychological and spiritual needs of displaced persons must also be addressed to enable them to regain their human dignity, sense of identity, and independence as quickly as possible.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; brainstorming; role playing; using stories, photos and videos; small groups

REFERENCES :

- *ICRC Annual Report and press releases from 2006*

LESSON 2 : Planning a camp ⁴

SUMMARY :

In this lesson, students plan a camp for people who have been displaced by war. This activity enables them to grasp the scale of the effort required to restore ordinary supports of life in such circumstances. Students take on the role of humanitarian workers, estimating needs, allotting tasks and making plans for getting supplies.

Note to teacher: This lesson might be expanded into a summative assessment.

FORMAT : in-person ; 65 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- Students will utilize information about needed resources to plan a camp that demonstrates the scope and multiple dimensions of a camp for displaced persons.

CONCEPTS : basic needs; human dignity; refugees and other displaced persons

SKILLS : assessing needs; discussion; estimating scope; planning actions; problem analysis; perspective taking; working in groups

MATERIALS :

- post-it notes
- pipe cleaners
- chart paper
- markers and other materials to represent elements of a camp
- projector
- Planning a camp-a report, page 2"
- *Information and instructions for camp planners*
- *Planning report-entire camp*
- *Planning report-need area*

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. The big picture (15 minutes)

Tell the students that today we shift perspectives from that of a displaced person to that of a humanitarian worker. Divide the class into small groups. Instruct half of the groups to list specific ideas about what is involved in setting up a camp for displaced persons.

[For example : site selection and layout, ensuring access and warehousing, acquiring building materials and equipment, organizing the main services or responding to environmental concerns]

Instruct the other half of the groups to list specific ideas about the main services that should be provided to meet the basic needs of displaced persons in a camp.

[For example: water supply and drainage, shelter, food supply, collection and disposal of refuse and human waste, medical facilities, lighting and energy, internal security and communication]

⁴ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

After about 5 minutes of work, direct students to examine “Photo collage 5B in the appendices,” and ask students to add to their lists any ideas the photos bring to mind.

2. Planning the details (45 minutes)

Distribute “**Planning a camp-a report**” and both pages of “**Information and instructions for camp planners**” from the appendices to all groups.

At this point you can choose one of two directions, or allow each small group to choose their task :

- Create a map of entire refugee camp, or
- Make a plan for a camp based around a specific area of need (e.g. food, water, shelter)

Those groups choosing to map an entire camp should also receive “**Planning report-entire camp**”. They should make sure to include some provision for all of the major categories on “Information for camp planners”, taking special care to attend to shelter, water, and sanitation. You may want to provide chart paper and multi-coloured post it notes for these groups.

Groups planning for specific areas of need should receive “**Planning report-need area**”. They should calculate the quantities of supplies needed and think about how to obtain and distribute them to people in the camp, taking into account the stipulations of six months and 10,000 people.

Reconvene the large group and debrief, beginning with the groups who addressed specific areas of need. Guide the groups in comparing and contrasting the ways in which each group handled specific concerns. Move to the groups who mapped entire camps, and point out ways in which the specific needs intersected with the plans of these groups.

To carry out its operations in 2006, the ICRC operated 3,500 trucks and other vehicles, two vessels, 300 warehouses and over 15 aircraft.

– ICRC, Annual Report 2006

3. Conclusion (5 minutes)

Discuss :

- What surprised you as you were doing this activity?
- Provide some current statistics on the size of some refugee camps :

In 2021, according to the UNHCR, the largest refugee camp is Kutupalong, Bangladesh, home to over 800,000 people. According to 2020 data from Refugee Council USA, other large refugee camps include Kakuma Refugee Camp, Kenya (184,550); Hagadera Refugee Camp, Kenya (105,998); Dagahaley, Kenya (87,223); Ifo, Kenya (84,089—Hagadera, Dagahaley and Ifo are all part of the same complex called Dadaab); Zaatari, Jordan (77,781); Yida, South Sudan (70,331); and Katumba, Tanzania (66,416—this camp was established in 1972).

- What resources/strategies are required to consider sustainable practices that respect the integrity of the environment?

Links to *Forced to Fight* stories :

Miguel, Tam and Dani (see the following lesson) found themselves and/or their family members in a camp for displaced persons at some point in their story.

- What kinds of needs did Dani, Miguel and/or Tam experience while they were in the camp? Did the needs of the 3 characters differ?
- Would your plan for a camp be different for the *Forced to Fight* character in any way?

ASSESSMENT :

- Assess groups' plans for their camps for reasonable estimations of scope of needs of displaced persons and resources required to provide for those needs.

KEY IDEAS :

- The primary responsibility for restoring ordinary supports of life lies with governments, but humanitarian organizations, working together, assist in this task.
- Responding to the needs of people uprooted as a result of armed conflict requires a great deal of planning and effort and ample resources.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; role-playing; using stories, photos and videos; small groups

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

Hale, E. (2020). [The 7 largest refugee camps in the world](#)

[Inside the 5 largest refugee camps](#) (2021)

LESSON 3 : Exploring the scenario : Nora

SUMMARY :

Through a *Forced to Fight* interactive story, this lesson involves students in the challenges young people must face as they live in refugee camps and try to get on with their lives. In addition, this story involves students in a school that refugee students start to attend and the subsequent strain on resources. Choices about humanitarian and ethical treatment of others must be made.

FORMAT : in-person; 70 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

- Students will evaluate a range of reactions to displaced persons and their needs.
- Students will weigh the risks for bystanders of taking humanitarian actions against the impact to be made.

CONCEPTS : bystander, human dignity; humanitarian act; multiple perspectives; needs of children; refugees and other displaced persons; social pressure

SKILLS : discussion; planning actions; problem analysis,; perspective taking,;story analysis; working in groups

MATERIALS :

- Access to *Forced to Fight* story—Nora
- one computer per group
- *Displacement for Dani*
- *Villagers ease pain in camps*

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. Setting the stage (10 minutes)

Point out that some camps for displaced persons are sometimes located near populated areas. This means that the displaced persons will come into contact with populations residing in the area. In what ways might they interact? Explore for a few minutes what tensions might result. How might the tensions differ depending on if the camp is refugees or internally displaced persons?

2. *Forced to Fight - Nora story* (25 minutes)

Divide the students into groups and have them complete the *Forced to Fight* scenario regarding Nora and Dani. Ask them to explore different pathways until time is called or they exhaust all the possibilities.

Summary of the story : Nora, a 17-year-old in the Middle East, lives with her parents who fled conflict many years ago and were welcomed into the community where they now live. There is a recently-established refugee camp nearby and children from the camp begin to attend Nora's school. This results in strains on resources of various types. Nora becomes friendly with Dani who comes from the camp to Nora's school, but other students bully the refugees. Nora faces the dilemma of standing up for Dani against her classmates or siding with her old friends.

3. Debrief (10 minutes)

When the groups have finished exploring the scenario, debrief using questions such as the following :

- How was Dani affected by the armed conflict? How was Nora? Her friends?
- What losses has Dani suffered?
- What needs does she have? What needs does her family have? Her community?
- Does it seem as if the camp where Dani lives is integrating the types of supports you came up with in your camp planning? Are there areas where her camp is going beyond what you envisioned?
- What sorts of humanitarian activities could meet those needs?
- What humanitarian activities could help her family?
- What is life like for Dani in her new school? Her new community?
- How would being in a camp impact Dani and her success as she attended Nora's school?
- How do you think students at the school might be able to help each other?
- How do you think our school would react in this situation?
- How would students at our school be likely to treat the refugees?
- What would you be prepared to do to help?

4. Trends (5 minutes)

Provide the following statistics :

Some 251,000 refugees and 3.2 million internally displaced persons were able to return to their country of origin in 2020, continuing a downward trend from the previous two years. Impediments to returns in many countries of origin include ongoing insecurity, the absence of essential services and the lack of livelihood opportunities, leaving millions in protracted displacement... 34,400 refugees were resettled to third countries in 2020, compared to 107,800 the year before...

– UNHCR, 2020 Global Trends ⁵

Have students speculate on the reasons for these trends.

Have students complete the chart “Displacement for Dani” from the appendices at this point.

Have students reflect on how they might wish to be treated if they were displaced, and the role of human dignity in displacement. Consider if there are families who have been displaced living in your community. What are their needs? How could your class come together to help meet those needs?

5. Role of bystanders (10 minutes)

Nora is a bystander in Dani's story. Provide the definition of a bystander: someone aware of an incident, without being involved, where the life or human dignity of others is in danger.” A bystander may decide to intervene.

Discuss :

- How would being in a camp impact Dani and her success as she attended Nora's school?
- What obstacles, pressures, and risks does Nora face as she decides whether or not to help Dani?

⁵ UNHCR. [Global Trends](#) (2021).

Read the following quote :

Bystanders can exert powerful influence. They can define the meaning of events and move others towards empathy or indifference. Psychological research shows that a single deviation from group behaviour can greatly diminish conformity. In emergencies, the likelihood of helping greatly increases when one bystander says the situation is serious or tells others to take action. Even the behaviour of governments can be strongly affected by bystanders, individuals, groups or other governments.

– Ervin Staub, *The Roots of Evil* ⁶

Discuss.

6. Conclusion (10 minutes) ⁷

Present the story “**Villagers ease pain in camps**” from the appendices.

Discuss :

- How did ethnicity play a role in this story?
- What obstacles did the rescuer face?
- What decisions do you think each person made?
- What do you think was going through the heads of those causing the danger?
- What effect did the humanitarian act have?

ASSESSMENT :

- Observe students’ choices and reasoning during the interactive story and their comments in discussion for evidence of humanitarian and ethical perspectives relating to reactions of others to displaced persons and their needs. Use the discussion rubric if desired.
- Students will weigh the risks for bystanders of taking humanitarian actions against the impact to be made.

KEY IDEAS :

- Assistance should be provided in a manner that aims to minimise any unintended harm it may cause.
- A humanitarian act is done to protect someone whose life or human dignity is in danger, especially someone whom one would not ordinarily be inclined to help or protect. Such acts are likely to involve personal risk or loss.
- Performing a humanitarian act may be difficult in some social contexts, particularly when it involves a person who is considered to be part of an ‘enemy’ group.

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion ; using dilemma; role playing; using stories, photos and videos ; small groups

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

- UNHCR. (2021). [Global trends : Forced displacement in 2020](#)

⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 1 The Bystander Perspective* (2009).

⁷ Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.



Appendix

Photo Collage: Limiting the Devastation of War ¹



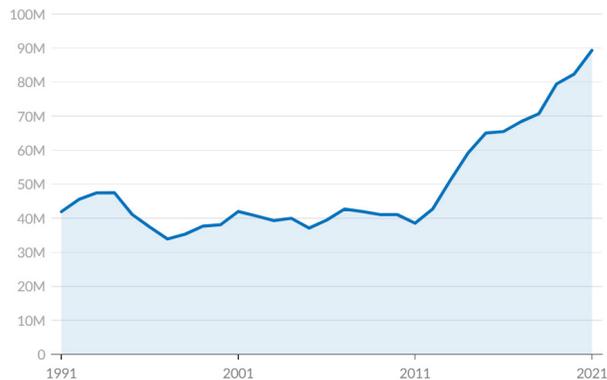
1A Assisting Rwandan refugees, Goma, Zaire, 1996. Bo Mathisen/Verdens Gang.
2A Arrival of refugees in Nong Chan, Thailand, 1980. Jean-Jacques Kurz/ICRC.
3A House devastated by the army, East Jerusalem, 1997. Thierry Gassmann/ICRC.
4A Refugee in Hadrut, Armenia/Azerbaijan, 1991. Zaven Khachikian/ICRC.

¹ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

UNCHR Figures at a Glance ²

89.3 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced

at the end of 2021 as a result of persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations or events seriously disturbing public order.



16 June 2022

Source: UNHCR Global Trends 2021

Refugees (under UNHCR's mandate)

21.3M

Palestine refugees (under UNRWA's mandate)

5.8M

Internally displaced people*

53.2M

Asylum seekers

4.6M

Venezuelans displaced abroad**

4.4M

16 June 2022

* Source: Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre

** This number excludes Venezuelan asylum seekers and refugees.

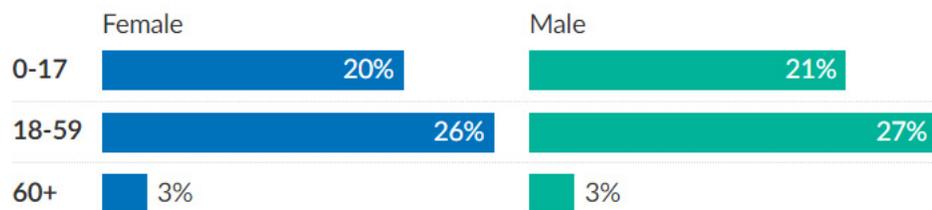
How many refugees are there around the world?

At least 82.4 million people around the world have been forced to flee their homes—this is about 1 in every 95 people on earth. Among them are nearly 26.4 million refugees, around half of who are under the age of 18.

Demographics of people who have been forcibly displaced

Children account for 30 per cent of the world's population, but 41 per cent of all forcibly displaced people *

■ Female ■ Male



16 June 2022

Disclaimer: figures do not add up to 100 per cent due to rounding

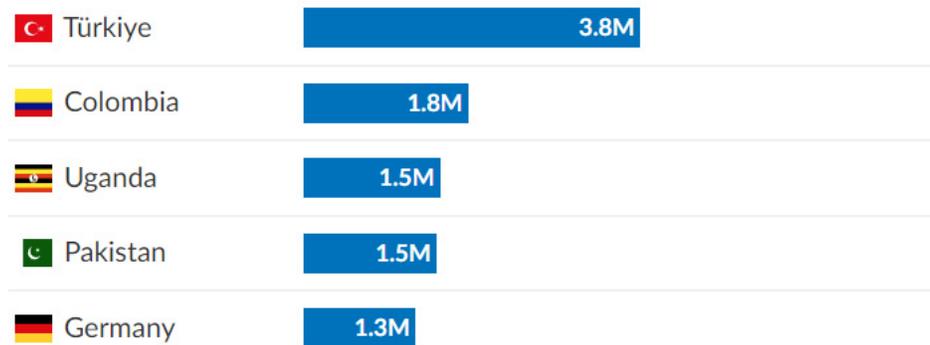
* Sources: Estimation of IDP demographics (IDMC); Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate (UNRWA); Refugees, people in a refugee-like situation, asylum seekers and Venezuelans displaced abroad are based on the available data (UNHCR) and World Population estimates (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs).

Source: UNHCR Global Trends 2021

² UNHCR. Figures at a Glance (2021).

Major hosting countries

Türkiye hosted nearly 3.8 million refugees, the largest population worldwide. Colombia was second with more than 1.8 million, including Venezuelans displaced abroad.

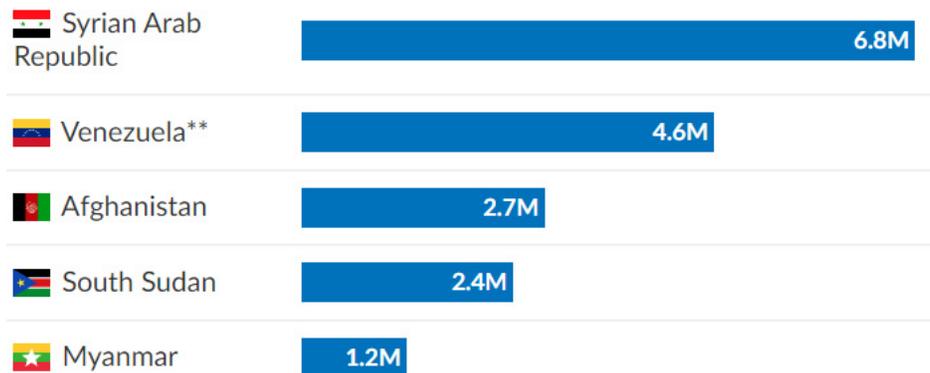


16 June 2022

Source: [UNHCR Global Trends 2021](#)

Major source countries

More than two thirds (68 per cent) of all refugees and Venezuelans displaced abroad came from just five countries *



16 June 2022

* Excludes Palestine refugees under UNRWA's mandate.

** This is the number of Venezuelan refugees and Venezuelans displaced abroad.

Source: [UNHCR Global Trends 2021](#)

Forced from home ³

War disrupts civilian life. Many people are displaced.

Damir's and Medin's story

Narrator : Damir and his cousin Medin used to be refugees, but they have recently returned to their homes in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Damir : It was hard. I cried because I was leaving my home.

Medin : We got on a bus and went to the first place. When we arrived there, we were hungry. We had nothing to eat because all our food was left behind. People told us to go to the next town. When we arrived there, they said there was no place for us.

Narrator : During the war in ex- Yugoslavia, millions of people had to flee and take refuge wherever they could. Like so many who left, Damir and Medin believed that they would never see their homes again.

Damir : I thought we would never return here, because they told us to be ready in two hours and that a bus would be waiting for us.

Medin : I brought some things when we left – I took the radio, photos and some blankets so we'd be covered when we went to bed. I think the worst thing is when the other children start teasing you and call you 'refugee' and when you go to school they start shouting 'Look! Here comes the refugee.'

Saba's story

Saba : My name is Saba. I am 30 years old. I have walked 50 kilometres from our village. I have come with my children. In our village we were farmers, but the rain didn't come, and the crops didn't grow.

My husband isn't with us. I only have my children now. And I miss him. I don't know where he is. Some people tell me he's gone far away to trade incense.

But I don't think it's true. Soldiers took him away. I haven't heard of him since that day. Maybe he is dead. I don't know.

We just wait here, but I don't know what we are waiting for. The nights follow the day just as they did in our village, but the days are different and in the night I cry.

³ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Perspectives on displacement ⁴

Complete the chart – How would displacement affect your character? What needs/resources/support would you require during the first days of displacement? After 1 month? And consider after years.

Name, age, gender and role of character in community:

	One Day of Displacement	One Month of Displacement
Needs		
Wants		
Resources or Skills		
Barriers		

⁴ Canadian Red Cross, Canada and Conflict: A Humanitarian Perspective (2016). Ottawa, Canada. Canadian Red Cross.

Humanitarian actions ⁵

Humanitarian Programme	Proposed Humanitarian Action
Food and agriculture	
Medical	
Community infrastructure projects	
Protection of civilians and prisoners	
Restoring family links	
Mine action	
Raising awareness	

⁵ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Photo Collage : Planning a camp for people displaced by war ⁶



1B



3B



2B



4B



5B



7B



6B

1B Lining up at the dispensary, Nyarushishi camp, Rwanda, 1994. Thierry Gassmann/ICRC. **2B** Water distribution, Quiha camp, Ethiopia, 1985. Thierry Gassmann/ICRC. **3B** School near the front line, Azerbaijan, 1997. Boris Heger/ICRC. **4B** Food distribution to internally displaced people, El Salvador, 1984. Thierry Gassmann/ICRC. **5B** Victim of an anti-personnel mine, Kien Khlaing, Cambodia, 1994. Marcus Halevi/ICRC. **6B** A woman checks the list of people who have received Red Cross messages, Mogadishu, Somalia, 1995. Anne Nosten/ICRC. **7B** Distribution of bread to refugees from Kosovo, Albania, 1999. Lionel Langlade/ICRC.

⁶ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Planning a camp-A report ⁷

A camp planner described their work.

Our main difficulty in setting up this camp was the very short time we had to complete the job.

First we had to choose the site. We had to find the right slope and make sure that the wind would blow the smell from the latrines away from the camp.

Then we had to install a water supply system. We ran a two-kilometre pipe off the major road. The water, which comes from the Jordanian mains, is then stored in large tanks we set up. The water flows downhill from the tanks (which can hold 390,000 litres) to 30 distribution points. We are also laying drains – hence the importance of building the camp on a slight slope so that waste water can flow into the large soak-away pits that we will dig downhill from the site.

The camp should accommodate 30,000 people and has been divided into sectors. Every sector is made up of a number of squares, each providing shelter for 500 people. We have dirt roads around each of the squares so that vehicles can drive in to remove rubbish, deal with any technical problems and bring food to the distribution points. Latrines have been dug for the camp population, and we are installing electric lighting so they can be used at night.

Source : ICRC, Setting up a refugee camp, Geneva, 1991.

Setting up a camp involves :

- Site selection and layout
- Ensuring access and warehousing
- Acquiring building material and equipment
- Organizing the main services

Main services are :

- Water supply and drainage
- Shelter
- Food supply
- Refuse and human waste disposal
- Medical facilities
- Lighting and energy
- Internal security
- Communication

⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.



Roland Sidler/ICRC



Michel Schroeder/ICRC

Information and instructions for camp planners ⁸

Refugee population to come to this camp : 10,000 (3,000 women, 1,000 men, 5,000 young people, and 1,000 children under five)

- Unaccompanied children: 2,000
- Pregnant and nursing women: 800
- Sick and wounded: 1,000
- Widows or women whose husbands are missing: 2,000
- Disabled: 500
- Elderly: 2,000

Camp location : a hilly, open field, 200 kilometres from the nearest city

Time of year : autumn

Length of time to assist this population : six months

Water : Count on average 20 litres of water/day for an adult. (3 litres/day = only drinking water for survival)

- How much water will be needed?
- Does the drinking water have to be treated?
- How will water be obtained for the population?
- How will water be provided?

Medical supplies and treatment : Expect 100 patient consultations per day.

- How many sick, wounded or elderly people and pregnant women are in the camp?
- What kinds of medical supplies will be needed?
- Calculate the quantity of medical supplies needed.
- What medical personnel are needed?
- What procedures need to be set up?

Food : Consider that every adult needs the equivalent of 2,250 calories and a standard ration of almost 0.6 kg per day. This can be broken down into :

- ▶ 500 grams of wheat
- ▶ 30 grams of edible oil
- ▶ 30 grams of powdered milk
- ▶ 20 grams of sugar
- ▶ 3 grams of tea

- How much food is needed?
- How will you acquire it?
- How will you distribute it?
- Will it be necessary to cook? If so, how will it be done? What kinds of equipment will be required?
- List the various types of food you will provide.
- What will you do if you have people with special dietary restrictions (due to disease, malnutrition, religious or cultural practices, etc.)?

Recall the food distribution you saw in the video *Forced from home* and in some of the photos. Think about all of the planning that was necessary.

⁸ International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Sanitation : Since poor sanitation can lead to medical/health problems, your plans should consider how to prevent disease.

- How many latrines need to be constructed?
- Where will they be located?
- What tools and materials will be needed to construct them (e.g. wood, branches, zinc)?
- What are your plans for cleaning and maintaining them?
- How will solid waste be disposed of?
- Where will people wash?

Clothing : Clothing should be appropriate for weather conditions and take into account cultural and religious practices.

- What types of clothing are required?
- If there are infants in the camp, how many diapers or substitutes are needed?
- Is bedding needed? What can be used?
- How will people wash their clothes?

Shelter : Ideally, each person should have 30 square metres of space. When circumstances do not allow this, the amount of space allotted to each person can be reduced to 10 square metres. In very difficult situations, such as in mountainous or urban areas, it can be reduced to three square metres per person.

- Calculate the total space that you will require.
- If a tent measures 150 square metres, how many tents will be needed?
- What effect will the weather have on your plans for shelter?

Fuel : Fuel is necessary for such things as cooking, heating, lighting and running a generator.

- What fuel needs do you estimate your camp will have?
- What fuel will be used? How will it be supplied?
- What are some dangers that need to be avoided? What precautions do you plan?

Planning for an entire camp ⁹

Considerations :

What should be considered in choosing a location for the camp?

How will you ensure safety and security for residents of the camp?

Where will resources come from and how will they get to and around the camp?

How will you make resources easy to access for residents?

How many tents will you need?

How will you plan for sanitation and hygiene?

Will the residents cook their own food?

What "special areas" will you need to serve sub-populations of residents?

What additional things will you need to consider as the seasons change?

Special plans for certain vulnerable groups:

Pregnant women :

Children :

Persons with disabilities :

Elderly persons :

Other :

⁹ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Planning for a specific area of need in a camp ¹⁰

Category of need :

Supplies/services needed :

Quantity :

Plan for acquiring them :

Plan for distributing them :

Special plans for certain vulnerable groups :

Pregnant women :

Children :

Persons with disabilities :

Elderly persons :

Other :

¹⁰ International Committee of the Red Cross, Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 5 Responding to the Consequences of Armed Conflict (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.

Displacement for Dani ¹¹

Complete the chart – How do you think Dani’s experience changed over time? What needs/resources/support would she require at each stage?

	One Day of Displacement	One Month of Displacement	One Year of Displacement
Needs			
Wants			
Resources or Skills			
Barriers			

¹¹ Canadian Red Cross, Canada and Conflict : A Humanitarian Perspective (2016). Ottawa, Canada. Canadian Red Cross.

Villagers ease pain in camps ¹²

Batkovic, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 24 January 1993

All last summer, buses and trucks packed with Muslim and Croat prisoners trundled down the narrow farm road past Ilija Gajic's vegetable farm. The army never consulted the villagers when it set up the camp in the state grain-storage sheds. Gajic feared that the worst of Balkan history was repeating itself.

"Concentration camps never bring anything for anyone," said the 62-year-old Serb who presides over the village assembly in this village of 4,000. "I felt bad watching this happening."

As reports emerged of beatings and deaths, he and other leaders of the village decided to protest. His is one of the untold stories in this war of unremitting cruelty – the story of Serbs who took a risk to improve conditions for their fellow citizens. "We wanted to make a goodwill gesture. We wanted them to be treated as we would wish the other side to treat our prisoners," he said.

Early in September, Gajic led a delegation to the nearby army headquarters in Bijelina and demanded that guards who had been beating prisoners be replaced. "They were not from around here. They had had victims in their families and wanted to exact revenge," Gajic said. "So we asked the authorities to put in local people."

The military command at first refused even to say who was in charge of the camp, he recalled. The tone of the discussion sharpened. One of the delegation told the military commanders, "We don't want a Jasenovac," a reference to the concentration camp set up by Croat fascists during World War II, where tens of thousands of Serbs, Jews and gypsies were put to death.

"Any good man would say that," said Gajic. "We didn't want to let the village be blamed for whatever happened. We wanted to save the reputation of the village."

In the presence of guards, prisoners were still reluctant to talk about the cruelty of the earlier period. But they confirmed the stories told by released detainees of beatings with two-by-fours, rampant dysentery fed by terrible sanitary conditions and elaborate ruses devised to fool visiting delegations into thinking there was no one under 18 or over 60 in the camp.

According to detainees, at least 20 had died of beatings or maltreatment up to September, but conditions improved significantly after the intervention of the villagers.

The conditions remain primitive, but several hundred detainees now go to work six days a week in a nearby factory, where they have better meals, although no pay. The detainees compliment the guards, and the guards welcome the praise. "We feel we don't have to beat the prisoners," said Dragolic, one of the new local guards. "We talk to them." There is now even a television set in each of the sheds, and over the New Year, the guards brought the detainees bottles of slivovitz, a plum brandy. "I think Serbs are not so bad as everyone wants to make them out to be," Gajic said. "There are probably other examples of that, not only in Batkovic."

Source : Roy Gutman, *A Witness to Genocide: The 1993 Pulitzer-Prize Winning Dispatches on the 'Ethnic Cleansing' of Bosnia*, Macmillan, New York, 1993.

Question : What choices and social pressure did bystanders have?

¹² International Committee of the Red Cross, *Exploring Humanitarian Law : Module 1 The Bystander Perspective* (2009). Geneva, Switzerland. International Committee of the Red Cross.



MODULE 5 : Lessons for Miguel : IHL and Protections for the Environment

Background : How IHL Protects the Natural Environment

There is an undeniable link between armed conflict and climate change. Often, countries susceptible to climate change are also ones that are experiencing armed conflict. Climate change and environmental degradation can cause or increase the severity of an armed conflict. Often climate change leads to the destruction of food supply chains or access to drinking water, therefore causing, or perpetuating, tensions within a region. Such tensions can rise to the level of an armed conflict.

Conversely, the environment is often a ‘forgotten victim’ of armed conflict; practices in armed conflicts such as deforestation, damage to water sources, and the burning of farmlands, can exacerbate the impact of climate change. In some situations, these can constitute violations of international humanitarian law.

International humanitarian law offers both direct and indirect protection of the natural environment during armed conflict. Customary international humanitarian law prohibits the destruction of any part of the natural environment unless required by imperative military necessity. The *First Additional Protocol to the Geneva Conventions* requires States to take care to protect the natural environment during an international armed conflict, including a prohibition of the use of methods or means of warfare which are intended or may be expected to prejudice the health or survival of the population by causing widespread, long-term, and severe damage to the natural environment.

The ICRC has taken an active role in forming the rules and recommendations surrounding the protection of the environment in an armed conflict. In 1992, the United Nations Security Council passed a resolution that asked the ICRC to create guidelines for States that outlined their obligations to protect the natural environment during an armed conflict. These guidelines were passed in 1994 and updated in 2020. They are becoming increasingly cited by international actors, including States.

Miguel’s story in *Forced to Fight* shines a light on the human and environmental impacts of armed conflict. It also profiles the parallel issue of climate change and illustrates how these issues can affect one another. Miguel is an 18-year-old indigenous man living in South America, whose traditional territory is being encroached upon by a non-state armed group that is funded by a large mining company operating near the territory. Miguel and the rest of his community subsist off the land on which they reside, but the ongoing conflict makes it difficult to protect their land and its inhabitants. Students will have the opportunity to step into Miguel’s shoes and make decisions to try and ensure the safety of his home, his family, and himself.

Miguel's story provides the backdrop for Module 5 which is composed of three lessons. The first lesson analyzes the protections that international human rights law and international humanitarian law provide to Indigenous peoples in Canada. The second lesson focuses on the natural environment and international humanitarian law. The third lesson allows students the opportunity to analyse how these issues materialize in a real-world situation. After students have a chance to explore Miguel's story, teachers are encouraged to select the lesson(s) from Module 5 that best meet their classroom objectives.

LESSON 1 : Pass or Fail? The Protections Provided to Indigenous Peoples by International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law conventions Canada

SUMMARY :

From time immemorial, Indigenous peoples have inhabited the land that is today known as Canada and the United States . As early as 15,000 years ago, the first Indigenous populations arrived on this land via a Coastal Route of Migration along the Western continental coast . These groups lived in this region for thousands of years, existing and thriving within their traditional territories, many of which have not been surrendered or ceded to the settler populations. Despite having built their lives on this land for generations, when the settler population arrived, the lives of those Indigenous peoples to North America were changed forever. The *Royal Proclamation of 1763* was initially issued by King George III to set out guidelines for European settlement of Indigenous territories; it guaranteed the rights of Indigenous peoples living in what the settlers called “British territory in North America”. Even though the *1763 Proclamation* explicitly states that Indigenous title has existed and continues to exist, and that all land would be considered Indigenous land until ceded by treaty, these rights and titles were still infringed upon, with many Indigenous peoples in Canada and the United States living in extreme poverty on land that has never been ceded and where there were non-Indigenous settlements. Such deplorable conditions are exacerbated by the fact that basic human rights of Indigenous peoples are often not met, including, for example, the right to safe drinking water.

In view of the fact that the 30 universal rights designed to protect every individual, everywhere, found in the 1949 *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR), the United Nations adopted in 2007 the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP). Indeed, the UDHR, adopted in the shadow of the Second World War, was conceived as a global road map for freedom and equality; although it laid the necessary foundation of International Human Rights Law, it fails to mention collective rights, hence limiting the protection due to Indigenous Peoples and their culture in the face of a colonial context. After opposing the implementation of the Declaration into national laws for many years, Canada adopted the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, which came into force on June 21, 2021. UNDRIP is not intended to replace the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights* but can instead be looked at as a complementary instrument providing additional nuance and protection to the rights of Indigenous peoples. UNDRIP seeks to provide a framework for the worldwide preservation of robust Indigenous cultures.

FORMAT : in-person; 180 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) :

Students will analyze the range of needs of persons who are displaced by armed conflict and the range of resources required to meet those needs.

- Understand the basic premise of three international legal instruments linked to the protection of human welfare and dignity, where they overlap, and how they differ.
- Build an understanding of the experiences of Indigenous populations in Canada with respect to the application of these rights and obligations.
- Appreciate the personal and social value of internationally protected rights.

CONCEPTS : human dignity; multiple perspectives; basic needs

Obstacles to promoting human welfare and dignity and to implementing the belief in the fundamental value of human life i.e. “humanitarianism”.

SKILLS : perspective taking; story analysis; identifying solutions

MATERIALS :

- Copy of United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) ¹
- Copy of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- Copy of International Humanitarian Law Fact Sheet
- Computer technology as needed (projector, computer, speakers)
- White Board, markers etc.
- Printed 3-part Venn Diagram

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (45 minutes)

- Hand out the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights to students. Have students read through the 30 universal human rights in the declaration and choose the top 5 most important to them. 15-20 minutes needed for this. Adjust as needed with your students.
- While students are reading through and picking out their top 5 rights, on the board, write the numbers 1-30 in a grid.
- When they are done, have students go up to the board and put a check mark in the grid beside their top 5 human rights.
- With the class, analyze the distribution of check marks. What patterns have emerged? Why do you suppose particular rights are more valued by the class than others? If you could add a right to this list, what would it be? Are there any that no one has selected? Review those ones with the class and let them know that for the purposes of the exercise, they have just lost those human rights, then cross them off the board. Note for teacher - if your students did not save #30 do not axe it quite yet, this activity will lose its effect if all their human rights can be taken away right away.
- Let the students know that we will only be keeping the top 5 that as a class we have identified as important. Go through the remaining human rights that are being taken, starting from the least supported and discuss what specifically will be lost using a concrete example for each right lost E.g. The loss of Article 10 “Everyone has the right to a fair trial”, means that you could be imprisoned without being able to argue your innocence.
- Let students know that the removal of Human Right #30 (Nobody can take away your rights and freedoms) would mean that the government or other State authorities would have the right to take away any and all of their rights.
- Sharing circle from students, how did this experience make you feel? Which one of the human rights was the most concerning for you to lose? Were there any rights that you didn’t know you had prior to the activity?

2. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (45 minutes)

- Hand out United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to students.
- Let students know that they will be watching a film called “Invasion” about the fight of the Wet’suwet’en to protect their traditional unceded territory. Teacher note - the film has some expletives that are part of the emotion of the film.
- Have students read through the UNDRIP handout and then review it with them. Explore the notion of individual rights (UDHR) vs collective rights (UNDRIP) and why a special declaration for Indigenous People collective rights (versus other demographic groups) was required.
- Introduce and watch the film *Invasion* with students. Explain to students that as they’re watching the video to mark off as many violations of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous

¹ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

Peoples as they notice. Students should be prepared to share at the end specific examples of rights that have been violated.

- In small groups or as a whole class, review the experiences of the Wet'suwet'en people with respect to specific UNDRIP rights and protections that were violated.
- Why do you suppose that Canada opposed signing the UNDRIP declaration for many years? Why do you think they eventually signed it in 2021? What are the implications for Canada? What are the implications for Indigenous Peoples?

3. International Humanitarian Law (60 minutes)

- Hand out a copy of the Rules of IHL fact sheet to students along with a copy of a Three Topic Venn Diagram.
- In pairs or small groups, students spend time comparing and contrasting what rights and responsibilities the human rights and humanitarian law instruments afford to people :
 - a. What do these 3 instruments have in common? (a minimum of 2 characteristics in the centre where the 3 Venn diagram circles overlap)
 - b. What is a characteristic that is shared by or similar in the UDHR and UNDRIP yet is not shared by IHL? In other words, how is IHL different from the other 2 instruments? (Place a minimum of 2 characteristic in the intersection between the UDHR circle and the UNDRIP circle). Repeat for the intersection where the other circles intersect. Refer to the appendix on pg. 10, "When Laws Apply."
 - c. What is unique to each of the instruments? (Place these points in the space that does not intersect with the other circles).
- Discuss the results as a class.

ASSESSMENT :

- Formative assessment recommended for this assignment. It is not possible for students to become experts on these huge topics. Their open and honest discussions in class are sufficient.
- If assessment for this assignment is necessary, collect and mark the completed Venn Diagram

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; brainstorming; "no easy answers"; using dilemmas; role-playing; using stories, photos and videos; writing and reflecting

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES :

Indigenous People have often been targeted or caught in the middle of armed conflict situations between government forces or militias and/or non-state armed groups. Examples include, the Maya in Guatemala, the B'laan in the Philippines and the Batwa People in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

- To give students a better understanding of the devastating impact of war on Indigenous Peoples, encourage them to explore Miguel's scenario in the [ForcedtoFight.ca](https://www.forcedtofight.ca) interactive resource.
- Students can also read this [news article](#) about the impacts of war on Indigenous communities in Colombia.
- Students will then be better equipped to write an essay, social media blog or news story for the school newsletter that includes the alleged or confirmed IHL violations that are impacting Indigenous Peoples in a country of their choosing that is experiencing armed conflict. Students write a compare and contrast essay focusing on the differences and similarities between the different legal instruments explored.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

OPSEU – [30 Basic Human Rights List](#)

Here is an alternative to the above but made for youth :

Youth for Human Rights – [United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#)

[United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)

Oxford Public International Law – From : The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples : A Commentary – [Part I The UNDRIP's Relationship to Existing International Law, Ch.3 Relationship to Human Rights, and Related International Instruments.](#)

[UNDRIP Implementation Braiding International, Domestic and Indigenous Laws](#)

Taylor & Francis Online – [The rights of indigenous peoples under international law](#)

The New Humanitarian – [Five years after 'peace', the Colombian communities living in forced confinement](#)

LESSON 2 : The Environment and International Humanitarian Law

SUMMARY :

With rapidly changing environmental factors resulting in the decimation of ecosystems, it is increasingly important to have systems and protocols in place that protect the environment. International Humanitarian Law affords some of those protections. Indeed, this body of law requires that parties to an armed conflict take reasonable precautions to ensure that the environment is protected when launching an attack. It also restricts the weapons that can be used during war to prevent: for instance, the use of chemical weapons, and the hazardous chemicals that are often left behind. IHL also contributes to the preservation and sustainable use of forests, waterbodies, and fauna in favor of populations by limiting their misuse, destruction or overharvesting in times of armed conflicts.

FORMAT : online or in-person; 90 minutes

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) (3-5) :

- understand the environmental consequences of war
- understand the elements of IHL that connect to the environment
- understand the aggravating effect of wartime environmental damage on global warming
- understand the links between global warming, violence and armed conflict

CONCEPTS : project goal; basic needs; refugees & other displaced persons; dilemmas, human dignity

SKILLS : perspective taking; story analysis; identifying solutions

MATERIALS :

- printed assignment sheet
- science experiment materials
- PowerPoint
- video link
- Disposable plates
- Whole milk
- Dish soap
- Food colouring
- Qtips
- Bowl or a bucket for clean-up
- Paper towel

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

You will want to have kits set up for students to make the distribution of supplies easier. Students will work in pairs or small groups based on your classroom needs and availability of supplies.

1. Brainstorm with students on the board responses to the following questions:

- How might climate change provoke violence and armed conflict?
- What are possible consequences to the environment from armed conflict?

2. Background Information

(Have students read this background information to build on their learning). The majority of countries most vulnerable to climate change are also at war (refer to [video 1](#) or [video 2](#)). This is, in part, because conflicts sharply increase the fragility of the institutions, essential services that are critical to strengthen people's resilience to a changing climate and environment. For example, as the temperatures continue to rise, along with the sea level, damage to food supply chains are increasingly evident and will impact those who struggle with food insecurity the most, even when they are not living in the immediate area of the impact. For example, the agricultural losses due to flooding or drought as a result of global warming can result in famine and forced migration. This can lead to increased internal or trans-national turmoil and eventually armed conflict.

Armed conflict itself can also have devastating impacts on the environment and threaten the survival of civilians. The burning or clear cutting of forests, for surveillance purposes or otherwise, can cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment, which is prohibited under IHL. Likewise, destroying or rendering useless objects indispensable to the survival of the civilian population, which is what is likely to happen if a party to an armed conflict floods hundreds of square kilometers of agricultural land, is also prohibited. Furthermore, the use of indiscriminate chemical weapons, such as poisonous, biological, chemical, incendiary, nuclear weapons, and landmines, are all specifically prohibited because their impact on the natural environment also gravely impacts the civilian populations.

From a scientific perspective, most of the devastating effects from the above examples involve a phenomenon called '[diffusion](#)', which can be defined as a "process resulting from random motion of molecules by which there is a net flow of matter from a region of high concentration to a region of low concentration". A familiar example is the perfume of a flower that quickly permeates the still air of a room.

The experiment, below, will showcase how quickly diffusion can work, resulting in the spread of contaminants over a large distance. This is especially true of poisonous gases, toxins that can quickly cause death or long-lasting damage to vegetation, livestock and ocean creatures relied on for sustenance.

3. Introduce the scientific definition of diffusion (e.g. britannica.com/science/diffusion) or get students, individually or in small groups, to write their own definition of diffusion based on their understanding of the term. You can use the analogy of a tea bag steeping in a clear cup of hot water to reinforce the concept.
4. Have one student from each group grab a supply pack and instruction sheet from the front. Ensure that students do not work ahead.
5. Showcase the supplies that are in the kits, and have students check to make sure that they have all of the required supplies.
6. If students are not familiar with the Scientific Method reviewing this [sheet](#) together to help students track their results.

7. Instructions :

- In the disposable bowl/plate, students should place half a cup of milk.
- Place in the milk, drops of different variants of food colouring (6-7 drops in total should be sufficient)
- On the Q-Tip students should dip into the liquid dish soap
- From there place the Q-tip in the water. What happens to the food colouring? What happens if you add more liquid dish soap? Why might this be? Explain how the soap breaks the surface tension and “pushes” the water away promoting diffusion)
- Clean up! and have students submit their completed Scientific Method sheets.

8. Students should write a reflection on the experiment and how diffusion and ocean currents can impact the disbursement of chemicals and oils within the ocean. Using the Rules of IHL chart, identify the rules of armed conflict that help help minimize the impact of armed conflict on the environment?

ASSESSMENT :

- In addition to submitting their Scientific Method sheets, students can write a reflection on the experiment and how diffusion and ocean currents can impact the disbursement of chemicals in air and bodies of water and oils within the ocean.
- Using the Rules of IHL chart, identify the rules of armed conflict that help minimize the impact of armed conflict on the environment?

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; brainstorming; “no easy answers”; using dilemmas; role-playing; using stories, photos and videos; writing and reflecting

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES :

- Students are asked to consult the ICRC report titled, *When Rain Turns to Dust* and draft a brief case study report illustrating the impacts of climate change and war on civilians in either Mali, Iraq or the Central African Republic.
- Have students read the testimonies of survivors of gas, chemical and nuclear attacks at the end of this activity (EHL Exploration 2D.2, page 59). Then research the physiological effects of exposure to one of the chemical or agents profiled to better understand why indiscriminate weapons are prohibited under IHL.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES :

[Overcoming the disconnect: environmental protection and armed conflicts](#) (ICRC, 2021)

[When Rain Turns to Dust](#) (ICRC, 2020)

[Conflict and Climate Change](#) (video, ICRC, 2021)

[Climate Change and Conflict Explained](#) (video, ICRC, 2020)

[Exploring Humanitarian Law, Module 2D](#)

[Guidelines on protection of natural environment in armed conflict](#), p. 7-11 & 16 Updated (2020)

[IRRC No. 879](#) September 2010, Environment

The Environment and International Humanitarian Law : [Case Study: Protecting the Environment During Armed Conflict](#)

LESSON 3 : What Would You Do?

SUMMARY :

In our lives, we are regularly faced with tough decisions regularly. Those decisions often do not involve making life or death decisions. What would you do if you had to step up to protect the land and save your family or the people in your community? Could you rise to the occasion ? How would you make the right decision?

FORMAT : online or in-person; 120 to 180 minutes (depending on approach)

LEARNING OBJECTIVE(S) (3-5) :

- To understand the dilemmas that are faced by people in situations of armed conflict
- To understand the environmental impacts of war to appreciate the courage that it takes to take a stand

CONCEPTS : dilemmas; consequences; multiple perspectives

SKILLS : perspective taking; story analysis; identifying solutions

MATERIALS :

- ForcedToFight.ca
- Computer access, projector
- Printed assignment sheet
- 2 different coloured pieces of paper for students to vote (or an online poll)
- Chromebook cart or access to computer lab for day two
- The IHL Matrix on pgs. 19 & 20.

COMPONENTS OF THE LESSON :

Day one

1. On the board write the question: "What Does Courage Mean to You?"
2. Lead the students in a discussion about what the word 'courage' means to them. One recommendation is to use a talking circle format for this discussion, giving each student a safe space to share. Depending on time and comfort level, this can be done by calling on students or asking for contributions.
3. Quick Write prompt : When have you experienced courage in your life?. Quick Writes are 3-5 minute written pieces designed to get students thinking and gauge their immediate understanding of a concept. Students should spend the entire time writing. If they run out of things to say about the prompt, they should discuss something else. Quick writes are never marked for spelling, punctuation, grammar. They should be marked for ideas and concepts only.
4. Ask students to raise their hands if the story of courage they wrote about involved a dilemma? Explain the concept of 'dilemma' if required. Ask a couple students to share the dilemmas and the courage in their stories.

5. Provide students with an example of a decision tree template found online. Explain to the class they will create their own decision tree to track the dilemmas of Miguel, an 18 year old man, trying to save his people and the environment from the armed conflict taking place in his South American Indigenous community.
6. Hand out three pieces of coloured paper to each students and explain the voting process or use online polling. Move through Miguel's story on ForcedToFight.ca online, basing the direction of the story on how the class votes on each dilemma or decision point. Show students how to track the class decisions on their decision trees.

Day two

1. Review with students the results of the day before and explain that they will now have the opportunity to fully control Miguel's journey either on their own, in pairs or in small groups. Ensure that students have their decision tree sheet from the day before. Students who were not present in class the day before can pair up with someone who was present. Circulate the classroom and check in with students. Ask questions about why they're making the decisions that they're making and be sure to encourage them to click on the flashing yellow question marks to learn about IHL.
2. After students have completed their second run-through of Miguel's story, they should begin working on a written reflection. Prompts: How did this process make you feel? Why do you suppose the government and the armed groups are engaged in violent armed conflict? What did you learn about IHL? If you were in this situation, do you think you would have the courage to stand up for your people and protect the land? What questions do you have about Miguel and IHL moving forward?
3. Have students read through the IHL Fact Sheet and circle those rules of armed conflict that were violated in Miguel's story. Put an 'X' beside those rules that help protect the environment either directly or indirectly.

ASSESSMENT :

- Quick Write – collected for completion marks only (recommended)
- Reflection written at the end on Miguel's journey

METHODOLOGICAL TOOLS : discussion; brainstorming; “no easy answers”; using dilemmas; role-playing; using stories, photos and videos; writing and reflecting

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES :

- For older students turn the decision-making process into a mini-debate, giving students the opportunity to argue their point at various opportunities. Time constraints will prevent this from happening for every decision, so be selective and use when votes are really close or when you view the decision as being very difficult.
- Have students research one of the following :
 - a. An example throughout history where people have stood up against powerful forces to help protect their people or their land. Students should look at similarities between their research topic and Miguel's story. Example topics: The Underground Railroad, The Holocaust, The Oka Crisis, The resistance of the Wet'suwet'en people.
 - b. A current armed conflict in the world as identified on the website rulac.com. Document the parties and the apparent causes to the armed conflict, the impacts of the war on civilians and the environment including alleged or confirmed breaches of IHL.