

## Security Now: Addressing the Needs of Darfur's Children

By Nicole Judd

In the Darfur region of Sudan, over 2.3 million children have been affected by the ongoing genocide (UNICEF 2008). Unlike their adult counterparts, children are impacted more severely by the consequences of warfare as they are undergoing a fragile developmental process. While each one of the affected children has had their basic human rights violated in some form, the narrative of trauma differs between groups. Sexually-exploited girls, boy soldiers, unaccompanied children, and those who remain in under-resourced camps have experienced the protracted violence in unique ways. To mitigate the effects of war, each group should receive individualized humanitarian assistance as pertaining to their particular needs. However, as the conflict wages on, the one unifying factor that would benefit all of the children is the immediate and lasting promise of security.

In April 2003, the Government of Sudan (GoS) enacted an organized campaign to destroy native black Africans of Darfur's Fur, Zaghawa, and Masalit tribes in response to a rebel attack.<sup>1</sup> Manipulating tensions caused by poverty and ethnic divide, Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir armed and abetted Arab militia groups known as the *Janjawiid*, and provided orders to "change the demography of Darfur and empty it of African tribes" (Flint and de Waal 2007, 128). Following aerial bombardment by the Sudanese army, the "Devil on Horseback" (a common name for the *Janjawiid*) would commonly surround and charge the smoldering village, kill adult males, rape women and girls, and abduct boys for later use as child soldiers. Cattle and other critical foodstuffs would either be looted or destroyed, and wells were often poisoned by the bodies of the dead. Although particular details may vary, this scenario serves as a consistent and general pattern of attack; one which reflects the very definition of genocide. The impact of such terror on a child is exponential.

During the height of the Darfur genocide, from 2003-2004, the attacks on villages subjected children to each and every type of the United Nation's Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict. Though not an exhaustive list of grievances, these six violations are considered by the Security Council to "warrant priority attention" and include: killing or maiming of children; recruitment or use of child soldiers; rape and other forms of sexual violence against children; abduction of children; attacks against schools or hospitals; and the denial of humanitarian access to children (Office of the Special Representative 2009). In cruel irony, Sudan has ratified both the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

After the majority of rural villages were razed and their inhabitants displaced, the Khartoum regime shifted its genocidal strategy. Since 2005, the GoS has ordered the tactical relocation of citizens into displacement camps, the manipulation of inadequate humanitarian aid provisions, and the maintenance of a disjointed *Janjawiid* presence. In doing so, the GoS has instilled just enough fear to prevent people from returning home. In what has been labeled "genocide by attrition," insidious state policies facilitate new forms of rights abuses that harm children's long-term development. Most detrimental to the growth of young minds and bodies is the lack of access to

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this publication, a more complete history of the conflict could not be presented. The reader should note, however, that entire books have been dedicated to the precursors of the genocide and that the events of April 2003 served as the spark to an historical powder keg. For more information, please reference Daly (2010); Prunier (2007); Flint (2008); and Steidle (2007).

food, water, education, housing, medical care, basic physical security, participation in cultural life, and necessary social services. Currently, there are an estimated 4.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sudan with over 2.7 million of them languishing in overcrowded, unsanitary camps (Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2010).

As an act of defiance to external pressure, Omar al-Bashir expelled thirteen international, and dissolved four national, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in March 2009, leaving millions of children exposed to starvation, malnutrition, and slow death. Even when food is available, certain youth may be unable to access aid due to their status as unaccompanied minors. These children may have crossed the hostile terrain of Africa's largest country alone, and the absence of family often compounds the stress of displacement. An intact family unit is one of the most important predictors for a child's psychosocial well-being during complex emergencies. Separated youth lack the enormous benefit of family guardianship, including: emotional solace; the ability to navigate access to humanitarian aid; and shelter from predatory recruitment into armed services.

In 2007, the United Nations (UN) reported that 7,000 to 10,000 Darfuri children were forcefully conscripted from refugee camps on the eastern border of Chad (Waging Peace 2008). As the conflict has deteriorated, the two main rebel groups have fragmented into what are now over 30 individual factions. Paramilitaries like the *Janjawiid* grow increasingly alienated from government sponsorship. In need of operational resources, these groups patrol the borders of refugee and IDP camps. Vulnerable children, whose hunger necessitates a life-or-death trip to collect firewood, are abducted to fill the dwindling ranks of both *Janjawiid* and rebel troops. Forced conscription violates children's rights as articulated in the minimum military recruitment age of Article 38 of the CRC and Articles 1- 4 of the Optional Protocol. In addition, the everyday life of a child soldier is wrought with abuses that violate the right to be cared for by family, to be protected from physical and mental violence, to freedom from torture and cruel treatment, to education, and the inherent right to life. Child soldiers face an ongoing assault on human rights which, even amongst the high level of suffering, is particularly deplorable.

The plight of female children warrants unique attention as well. Rape has been a "dominant characteristic of the humanitarian crisis" (Watson 2007, 1), and the abduction of girls by the *Janjawiid* for bondage as sexual slaves and service as 'wives' is rampant. During village raids, Arab militiamen used rape as a weapon to 'purify' the race and to extinguish African viability, compounding the trauma of abuse with the possibility of HIV infection and the likelihood of pregnancy. Along with the severe psychological harm of gang or multiple-episode rapes to young girls, children born of wartime rape will undoubtedly suffer myriad developmental complications. Heightened stress and malnutrition during pregnancy may cause neurological disabilities for the child, while mother-to-child HIV transmission is a direct threat to life. After birth, the maternal bond necessary for a child's healthy emotional growth may be severed by feelings of resentment. Finally, in a culture where sexual relations out of wedlock are considered reprehensible, rape victims may be driven from their communities and deprived of a critical social support network.

Confronting the horrific accounts of abuse, what are we to expect for the future of Darfur? Over 700,000 children have grown up knowing nothing but a life of war (UNICEF 2008), and a "refugee-camp childhood" can rob young boys and girls of critical life-skills, such as formal education or learning the trade of their agricultural heritage. The capacity for a child's resilience should not, however, be underestimated. Young brains are malleable -- a characteristic that generates

proclivity to adaptation and healing-- but in order for positive results to prevail, certain interventions must be implemented at once. First, children in displacement camps deserve a sense of security that is tangible and intractable. Family tracking programs must be put in operation to reunite children with their most essential safety structure. Schools can also serve as a multifaceted system of protection, particularly during emergencies. Education actively combats the detrimental effects of war, even as it is waged just outside the walls of the camp. School serves as a source of consistency in a chaotic environment; it is an important feature of a child's ability to trust and feel secure. A holistic educational program can distribute nutritional supplements to combat malnutrition and to equip adolescents with vocational skills for a viable future. Most importantly, children in classrooms are children out of danger. Opportunities within the camp must inspire substantial promise to outweigh the lure of military recruitment.

The government of Sudan bears the responsibility to protect children, yet is simultaneously responsible for acts of violence against them. Inability to implement the suggested protections is not for lack of initiative by NGOs. In addition to the 2009 mass expulsion, al-Bashir recently ordered the removal of top leadership staff from the International Organization for Migration, the UN High Commission for Refugees, and the famously neutral International Committee of the Red Cross-- among others (Reeve 2010). Scant remaining agencies are restricted from accessing entire regions of Darfur<sup>2</sup> and are inadequate to provide the necessary humanitarian aid even to those within their reach. Despite the presence of the world's most expensive peacekeeping mission, the African Union/United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) has been unable to deter attacks by uniformed GoS soldiers on its own UN forces, let alone safeguard Darfur's vulnerable populations.

For Darfur's children, a long-term humanitarian goal is to provide psychosocial assistance to each group, tailored to the unique ways in which they have suffered. Yet the immediate need to be safe and protected from re-traumatization is a short-term remedy that can benefit children of all kinds, regardless of background. The international community must dismantle Sudan's shelter of impunity and demand the presence and unfettered operation of humanitarian aid and peacekeeping troops on the ground. The future and very existence of Darfur's children depend on it.

### **Annotated Bibliography**

Betancourt, Theresa, Jessica Agnew-Blais, Stephen Gilman, David Williams, and Heidi Ellis. 2010. "Past Horrors, Present Struggles: The Role of Stigma in the Association between War Experiences and Psychosocial Adjustment among Former Child Soldiers in Sierra Leone." *Social Science & Medicine* 70 (1):17-26.

Annotation: Based on a review of Betancourt's articles, it is apparent that the author is contributing greatly to the library of empirical literature regarding conflict-affected children. In this article, Betancourt teams with other authors to explore the role of stigma in the reintegration process of former child soldiers. The authors explain how discrimination against former child soldiers underlies the relationship between past involvement in wounding/killing and subsequent increases in hostility. Not only an interesting topic of

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<sup>2</sup> Specifically the Eastern Jebel Marra mountain range of Darfur, currently under the control of the Sudanese Liberation Army (SLA); a rebel group considered to be an enemy of the GoS.

research for anyone in the human rights field, this is a great piece to segue into more specific issues, such as post-conflict peacebuilding with children.

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\_\_\_\_\_ and Kashif Tanveer Khan. 2008. "The Mental Health of Children Affected by Armed Conflict: Protective Processes and Pathways to Resilience." *International Review of Psychiatry* 20 (3):317-328.

Annotation: In this article, resilience as a one-dimensional concept is dismissed through the authors' argument that a child's propensity for resilience is based on a number of contributing factors. In support of their point, the authors adapt Uri Bronfenbrenner's Social Ecological Model to illustrate the interaction of both risk and protection factors, and how they relate to children in armed conflict. Although they have yet to be fully understood, the issues addressed in this article are pressing matters in the human rights field. In addition, Betancourt's willingness to embrace such issues is credited to a developed background in child psychology within uniquely hostile environments.

Crilly, Rob. 2010. Saving Darfur: Everybody's Favourite African War. London: Reportage Press.

Annotation: This portrait of the crisis in Darfur is quite unlike most publications on the topic. Crilly is a critic of the celebrity-endorsed Save Darfur movement that has developed into (the subtitle of the book) "everybody's favourite African war." The author spent many years as a journalist in Darfur and now challenges the perception of the crisis the mainstream media has disseminated. Opposed to the idea that what is happening in Darfur is a simple war between the "good" rebels and the "evil" government, this book goes into depth on the events leading up to the genocide to dispel the reader's misconceptions. While his account is rather controversial, it presents an important viewpoint from a credible source and is therefore worth reading. I would recommend this book both to those who are unfamiliar with the conflict, and to those who consider themselves well-versed but in need of a fresh perspective.

Daly, M.W. 2010. Darfur's Sorrow: The Forgotten History of a Humanitarian Disaster. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Annotation: The purpose of this book is to correct the current misconception that the conflict in Darfur began with rebel attacks in April of 2003. By providing a wealth of documentation, Daly explains that the roots of the genocide date, in fact, centuries back. Placing the Darfur crisis within a larger historical framework, the reader is able to understand the motivations of the National Congress Party and how the North-South Civil War is at once an entirely separate, yet directly influential, issue. This publication is useful in the difficult task of understanding how a group of human beings can possibly devolve into a government and society of *génocidaires*. Chapter 12, "The Destruction of Darfur," may be appropriate for those interested in the conflict's more immediate origins, beginning with the 1989 accession to power of Omar al-Bashir.

de Silva, Harendra, Chris Hobbs, and Helga Hanks. 2001. "Conscription of Children in Armed Conflict—A Form of Child Abuse. A Study of 19 Former Child Soldiers." *Child Abuse Review* 10 (2):125-134.

Annotation: In this study, de Silva, Hobbs and Hanks interview 19 former child soldiers from Sri Lanka to evaluate their lives both before and after conscription into the armed forces. By means of informal interview, the authors provide a stark perspective on the experiences of child soldiers, and the inevitable rights violations that occur as a result. Besides the foremost violation of being a member of the armed forces under the age of 18, other abuses documented include: exploitation for labor when punished by superiors; physical abuse by beatings, as well as becoming vulnerable to injuries and casualties during war; and the severe psychological manipulation inherent in the recruitment and training of children to become murderers. Sexual assault, commonly experienced by child soldiers, was not reported. This may be due to fear or pride in reporting such instances and thus highlights the small sample size and absence of girls in this study.

Flint, Julie and Alex de Waal. 2008. *Darfur: A New History of a Long War*. London, New York: Zed Books.

Annotation: Experts on the subject of the Darfur conflict, Flint and de Waal can be counted on to provide a brief but comprehensive account of the genocide. This book is recommended for anyone who would like to gain a more in-depth understanding of Darfur's history as each chapter covers an additional aspect of the conflict. The authors explain Sudan's different tribes and groups, as well as all of the individuals who have held or are seeking power in the country. The regional players, such as Libya, Chad, and Eritrea, who are seeking to keep Sudan destabilized for their own personal gain are also examined. Finally, the context of the North-South civil war and the complications stemming from the international community's reaction are explained. Personally, I find some of de Waal's work to be controversial since he has criticized the international community for labeling the conflict 'genocide,' but the reader should be compelled to form their own opinion on this matter. For more of de Waal's writings about Sudan and criticisms of the aid industry in Africa, the reader should reference *War in Darfur and the Search for Peace* and *Famine Crimes: Politics & the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa*.

Halvorsen, Kate. 2005. "Alone and Far from Home: Are Separated Refugee Children Adequately Protected?" *Human Rights Review* 7 (1):76-91.

Annotation: This article exposes the ways in which people resort to increasingly dangerous means of escaping violence due to declining refugee acceptance in host countries. Looking only to remove their children from immediate harm, parents within conflict zones are searching for alternative means of repatriating their children with the hope of reuniting at a later time. Bypassing legitimate asylum-seeking procedures sometimes requires parents to put their children in the hands of human traffickers and smugglers. Halvorsen points out the increased probability that a child will endure severe human rights violations while en route, and explains the effects of prolonged separation from family on child development. The author proposes a significant augmentation of protection services for unaccompanied and

separated children, and the renovation of such services currently espoused by international legal standards.

Hepburn, Amy. 2006. "Running Scared: When Children Become Separated in Emergencies". In Boothby, Neil, Allison Strang, and Michelle Wessells (eds.). A World Turned Upside Down: Social Ecological Approaches to Children in War Zones. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press, Inc.

Annotation: In her chapter on separated children, Hepburn breaks down the nature of separation in emergencies by type and specification. Differentiating between voluntary and involuntary separation, the author suggests that plans to reunite a child with his or her family should be evaluated on an individual basis and tailored to the unique set of circumstances experienced by the child post-departure. Hepburn elucidates both the long and short-term impact of separation on a child's emotional, social, and developmental well-being. A portion of the commentary is dedicated to particularly vulnerable children such as those with disabilities or chronic medical needs (including HIV/AIDS), female children, those living in child-headed households, and children under five years of age. The author believes prevention is the optimal method of ensuring a child's best interests are maintained and therefore urges humanitarian aid providers to be aware of factors that may unintentionally separate children from their families. However, as separation is often unpreventable in times of crises, current and aspiring aid workers would be wise to understand the factors that both strengthen and threaten a child's psychosocial resiliency.

Ismail, Omer and Laura Jones. 2010. "Neglecting Darfur." Enough Project. Available online: <http://www.enoughproject.org/publications/neglecting-darfur>.

Annotation: The Enough Project is a subdivision of the Center for American Progress, which operates with the goal to end genocide and crimes against humanity through advocacy work and by building a permanent anti-genocide constituency. This organization is a leading source of information for not only the Darfur genocide, but also for conflicts in a number of African countries including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Somalia, Chad, and Zimbabwe. The Enough Project publishes regular reports based on information collected by their agents on the ground. In this publication, Ismail and Jones provide an update of events in the region and focus on the expulsion of humanitarian aid workers by President Omar al-Bashir, as well as describe how recent events are further jeopardizing the safety of the Darfuri people. The two authors go into detail about how al-Bashir's new plans for relocating internally-displaced persons (IDP) camps serve as a facade to the international community for the further destruction of IDP livelihoods. The report goes on to discuss the possible failure of the Doha Peace Process, as well as the referendum that will decide whether or not Southern Sudan will secede from the North.

Mapp, Susan C. 2011. "Children Affected by War and Conflict". In Global Child Welfare and Well-Being. New York: Oxford University Press.

Annotation: Mapp's opinions and evaluations of global child well-being are formed by only the most recent research undertaken within the human rights field. Chapter 5 focuses on rights violations of children who are affected by war and conflict and includes well-resourced information to substantiate the author's claims. Touching on a child's right to physical and psychological recovery following armed conflict, education, protection from landmines and sexual violence, and assistance as a refugee, Mapp analyzes the intricacies of rights protection for children during times of war and exposes gaps in the delivery of such protection. Well-written and backed by progressive and numerous sources, the material in this chapter provides the reader with a comprehensive analysis of the current plight of conflict-affected children.

McEvoy-Levy, Siobhán. 2007. "Human Rights Culture and Children Born of Wartime Rape". In R.C. Carpenter (ed.), Born of War: Protecting Children of Sexual Violence Survivors in Conflict Zones. Bloomfield, CT: Kumarian Press Inc.

Annotation: Conceptualizing the development of a 'human rights culture,' McEvoy-Levy lists three levels of necessary activity. First, legal and political activity must be established to protect human rights. Second, a resulting transformation of culture and values surrounding human rights must occur. Third, there must be mechanisms available for individuals or groups to process and reconcile past events. Based on this context, the author of this chapter goes on to explore the role of children born of wartime rape in creating a human rights culture in post-conflict societies. McEvoy-Levy presents three types of 'conflicts over rights' faced by children born of war and states that they must each be resolved in order to attain the first step in creating a human rights culture. Provocatively, the reader is also confronted with the dissonant notion that the line between victim and perpetrator is oftentimes blurred in war, particularly in the case of child combatants as rapists. The author then discusses additional conceptual and practical dilemmas to the creation of a human rights culture and concludes by envisaging children born of wartime rape as active agents for creating and sustaining new human rights cultures.

Mendez, Perinaz Kermani. 2007. "Moving from Words to Action in the Modern 'Era of Application': A New Approach to Realising Children's Rights in Armed Conflicts." *International Journal of Children's Rights* 15 (2):219-249.

Annotation: In this article, the author is clearly frustrated with the current state of protection for Children in Armed Conflict (CAC) and communicates that despite the strong international standards and initiatives developed in recent years, violence against children continues relentlessly on the ground. Considering current challenges, Mendez scrutinizes the role of the United Nations Security Council and criticizes the ways in which the permanent members of the UN are handling the issue of CAC, referring to the situation as a "cruel dichotomy" Not merely presenting grievances, Mendez goes on to prescribe a detailed solution which involves new approaches to non-compliant state actors, improving the established normative framework for CAC, and revising information gathering techniques. Going so far as to brainstorm possible challenges to her proposed solution, it is evident that the author has spent a great deal of time compiling a well-documented and well-researched critique and proposal.

Nanda, Ved. 2004. "History and Foundations for Refugee Security, Health, and Well-Being under International Law". In *International Law, Human Rights, and the Well-Being of Refugees and Displaced Persons*. Edited: University of Hawaii.

Annotation: Nanda, a professor and J.D. at the University of Denver's Sturm College of Law, begins this chapter by reviewing the legal foundations of International Refugee Law. To explain the framework of international protection for refugees, the author refers to historical documents, including the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, Organization of American States (OAS) Cartagena Declaration on Refugees (1984), UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969), and the UN Declaration on Territorial Asylum (1967). Despite the established mechanisms to protect refugee rights, Nanda warns the reader that full protection for this population is far from complete. Neglecting their obligations of treaty and customary law, some host countries continue to deny the rights of due process and *non refoulément* to the vital detriment of those fleeing persecution. In a realistic assessment, the author suggests that co-financial burden-sharing between Northern and Southern countries to ameliorate the need for strict entry regulations, and an increased respect for non-refoulément and asylum by host countries are, perhaps, all that can be done at the present time. Conclusively, as a preventative measure, Nanda calls on the international community to enforce accountability for massive violations of human rights even if threats of economic sanctions and collective humanitarian intervention are required.

The New York Times. 2008. "UN officials say Darfur conflict is worsening." *The New York Times* (23 April). Available online: [http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/world/africa/23iht-darfur.1.12258799.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/23/world/africa/23iht-darfur.1.12258799.html?_r=1).

Annotation: John Holmes, the under-secretary general for Humanitarian Affairs at the United Nations, is quoted in this article as making a more realistic assessment of the toll of death and destruction in Darfur than had previously been supplied. Earlier figures were significantly outdated and underestimated. It should be noted that while statistical data is merely an abstract account of the reality of human suffering, it is, unfortunately, required in order to make valid arguments in favor of political action. Also, while the figures were put forth by an official UN representative, they have yet to be published in a formal UN statement or document.

Ngokwey, Ndolamb. 2004. "Children's Rights in the Central Africa Sub-Region: Poverty, Conflicts and HIV/AIDS as Context." *International Journal of Children's Rights* 12 (3):183-216.

Annotation: A major point made in this article is that the challenges to development faced by the sub-region of Central Africa are immense. While some progress has been made, the reality of realizing the rights of children to survival, development, protection, and participation follows a generally downward trend. The author demonstrates this with examples such as the implications and difference between ratification of the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and

Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) created by the Organization of African Unity (currently referred to as the African Union). Yet the underlying tone is surprisingly optimistic. The author gives realistic recognition to the challenges ahead, while forbidding defeatism as an option. As a basis for hope, Ngokwey points to the shift from a focus on children's needs to their basic rights through changing the international community's motivation to act from moral charity to legal obligation.

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. 2009. "The Six Grave Violations Against Children During Armed Conflict: The Legal Foundation." Available online: <http://www.un.org/children/conflict/documents/SixGraveViolationspaper.pdf>.

Annotation: The Convention on the Rights of the Child enumerates a list of standards that must be respected by signatory governments. However, the United Nations Security Council has recognized that during times of war, not only are the basic rights of children ignored, but that there are six specific violations that amount to a grave breach of human rights. These include: killing or maiming of children; recruitment or use of child soldiers; rape and other forms of sexual violence against children; abduction of children; attacks against schools or hospitals; and the denial of humanitarian access to children. In this report, the six grave violations are considered in depth and their basis in international law is explored. In doing so, the Office of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict attempts to clarify the six violations so that civil society, non-governmental organizations, national governments, and other groups can better identify and report them when they occur.

Office of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. 2010. "Darfur: Beyond Emergency Relief." Khartoum, Sudan: United Nations: Sudan.

Annotation: This report captures trends and priorities for all United Nations agencies working in Darfur. It highlights specific areas of environment, livelihoods, education and human capital, governance and capacity development, and structure and approach. The strength of this publication is that it provides empirical data within each of these topics and incorporates the data to make policy recommendations for the future. For the purposes of this paper, the report was referenced in order to discern the number of internally displaced persons within Sudan.

Prunier, Gérard. 2007. Darfur: The Ambiguous Genocide. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Annotation: For a comprehensive history of the conflict, Prunier's book is recommended in conjunction with the works of Flint & De Waal, Daly, and Steidle. These publications provide a wide array of interpretations on the domestic and regional events leading up to the April 2003 rebel attack that is widely seen as the beginning of the Darfur conflict. Prunier's version of events, though a bit tedious, is well-written and well-chronicled. The author does a good job of presenting Darfur not as an Arab versus African conflict, but as a multi-ethnic mosaic whose intricacies defy simple explanation. As an "ambiguous genocide," Prunier also delves into the controversy surrounding the label of genocide and whether or not it applies to the case of Darfur.

Reeves, Eric. 2010. "Darfur Humanitarian Update." *Sudan Tribune* (31 August). Available online: <http://www.sudantribune.com/spip.php?article36141>.

Annotation: Eric Reeves is one of the most prominent experts currently writing on the topic of Darfur. Reeves works closely with Sudanese information sources and his analyses are always based on up-to-date, reliable information. In this article written for the *Sudan Tribune*, the author explains the current medical crisis in Kalma camp, a refugee settlement in Southern Darfur. The weakness of African Union/ United Nations Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID) in providing protection in this situation is criticized, as is the Sudanese government's restrictions on humanitarian operations in Darfur. Reeves has consistently served as a watchdog against the abuses of the Khartoum regime since the conflict first made headlines. He is a dedicated intellectual and activist who provides weekly updates and commentary. Anyone interested in the Darfur crisis is encouraged to visit [www.sudanreeves.org](http://www.sudanreeves.org).

Sossou, Marie-Antoinette. 2006. "Mental-Health Services for Refugee Women and Children in Africa: A Call for Activism and Advocacy." *International Social Work* 49 (1):9-17.

Annotation: This article is particularly relevant to readers who want to gain a more in-depth understanding of problems within refugee camps, specifically in Africa. The author has a solid working knowledge of the issues at hand as well as the history of the countries and continent of Africa. Sossou applies this knowledge to the treatment of individuals with mental health disorders and advocates for social-work interventions for African women and children in refugee camps. To expand on this topic, the interested reader might follow material referenced in the article (specifically that of Potocky-Tripodi).

Steidle, Brian and Gretchen Steidle-Wallace. 2007. *The Devil Came on Horseback: Bearing Witness to the Genocide in Darfur*. New York: PublicAffairs.

Annotation: Brian Steidle is a former U.S. Marine and one of the first outside observers to document the genocide in Darfur. Working with an independent group known as the Joint Military Commission, the author was hired in 2004 as a patrol leader to monitor the North-South ceasefire. Although he was not assigned to report on happenings in Darfur, the American soldier incidentally found himself witness to government attacks on the rural villages of Darfur. The Steidles' book is a quick and interesting read. With no prior text upon which to base their knowledge, the authors' narrative is based entirely on first-hand accounts. After viewing the brutal attacks and speaking with survivors, Steidle felt compelled to publicize his knowledge so that the world might take action in the interest of the Sudanese people. The author, with the help of his sister Gretchen Steidle-Wallace, broke many rules in order to bring photographs and documents back to America to publish. While much has unfolded in Sudan since the writing of this book, it remains one of the most accurate and reliable descriptions of *Janjawiid* and Government of Sudan attacks to date. The international community owes much to Mr. Steidle and Ms. Steidle-Wallace, for providing some of the only empirical evidence upon which substantial claims of genocide could be made in the early years of the "Save Darfur" campaign.

UNICEF. 2008. "Darfur: Overview." Available online:

[http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sudan\\_darfuroverview.html](http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/sudan_darfuroverview.html)

Annotation: Found on UNICEF's website, this overview on Darfur is brief but contains a plentitude of statistics that refer specifically to children. In the first paragraph of this paper, I combined two separate statistics to come up with the opening statement that over 2.3 million children have been affected by the conflict, that some 4.7 million people are currently directly affected by the conflict, and that half of those affected are children. I drew from this website's statistics once again when referring to the number of children under five years of age who have grown up knowing nothing but war. I recommend this webpage for anyone who wishes to learn more about the impact of the genocide on children, although it appears as though the last update was in December of 2008.

UNICEF. 2009. "Machel Study 10-Year Strategic Review: Children and Conflict in a Changing World." New York.

Annotation: The first Machel Report was drafted in 1996 by Graça Machel, the former minister for education and culture of Mozambique. Intended to answer the call of the secretary-general's request for an in depth study into the impact of armed conflict on children, the report was considered groundbreaking at the time and continued to serve as a relevant resource for policymakers for years to follow. Based on a 10-year strategic review in 2006, this most recent publication was created by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to evaluate existing gaps in services and to include nascent conflicts that were previously unaccounted for. The 2009 strategic review has been updated to incorporate the impact on children of global terrorism, evolved systems of trafficking and sexual exploitation, and the rise of piracy. It has, as an essential component, recommendations for improved protection ranging from stricter reporting requirements for civil society actors to the participation of children in Truth and Reconciliation commissions.

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. 2007. "Children and Armed Conflict". In Law Reform and Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Florence, Italy: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Annotation: This section was a small part of a larger publication on law reform and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). While this section was used to gain a rather specific bit of information regarding the age limit to recruit children into the armed forces, the greater publication may be helpful in understanding how the CRC is implemented in conflict zones today, and how it affects the lives of children including child soldiers, sexually-exploited girls, and other vulnerable groups.

United Nations General Assembly. 2005. Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (25 May). Available online: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/pdf/crc-conflict.pdf>.

Annotation: This international treaty was created to codify the rights of children as they apply specifically during times of war. The optional protocol was referenced in this paper regarding the minimum age at which an individual can be voluntarily recruited into, or enlist in the armed forces.

\_\_\_\_\_ 1989. Convention on the Rights of the Child, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577 p.3.

Annotation: The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is considered the definitive standard for human rights as they apply specifically to children. For the purpose of this research paper, the CRC is referenced to measure what rights of refugee children may be violated by circumstances produced during times of conflict and complex emergencies.

United Nations Treaty Collection. 2010. "Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General Database: Status of Treaties. UN Charter Chapter IV, 11 and 11b." United Nations.

Annotation: This database includes over 500 major multilateral instruments deposited with the secretary-general of the United Nations, including the texts of reservations, declarations, and objections. It is updated in real-time so that if a country should sign or ratify, the database is automatically revised. This is a great resource for anyone interested in which countries have ratified a given treaty, and what conditions have been declared by each signatory. The only criticism I have of the database is that you cannot search for dissenting results: while you can see who has ratified a treaty, you cannot see who has not.

van Ommeren, Mark, and Mike Wessells. 2007. "Inter-Agency Agreement on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings." *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* 85 (11):822-A.

Annotation: Recognizing a history of poor coordination of mental health and psychosocial support in many emergencies, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has created guidelines intended to mend the division between conflicting approaches in the field of humanitarian aid. Whereas in the past, some organizations would treat disaster-affected populations using a clinical model, others focused more on community self-help. With an emphasis on cooperation, the guidelines have produced 25 minimum-response action sheets that establish an overarching protocol to be implemented during the acute phase of complex emergencies. The action sheets are a feasible complementary approach based on the inclusion of disaster-affected people to organize their own support systems and to participate fully in the aid process. The guidelines also provide examples of good practice, targeted to reduce the risk that aid is provided in harmful ways.

Waging Peace. 2008. "Trafficking and Forced Recruitment of Child Soldiers on the Chad/Sudan Border: A Waging Peace Briefing." Available online: [http://www.wagingpeace.info/files/20080606\\_WagingPeaceReport\\_ChildrenSoldiers.pdf](http://www.wagingpeace.info/files/20080606_WagingPeaceReport_ChildrenSoldiers.pdf).

Annotation: This briefing was published by a non-governmental organization known as Waging Peace. The agency had been working with refugees on the Chadian border and

found that children as young as nine were being actively trafficked and used as child soldiers, despite the presence of peacekeeping troops in the region. The briefing was cited in a number of highly-visible publications and continues to be one of the few sources of statistical information on the use of child soldiers in this conflict. More research and investigation needs to be implemented to address this issue.

Watson, Alison M. S. 2007. "Children Born of Wartime Rape: Rights and Representations." *International Feminist Journal of Politics* 9 (1):20-34.

Annotation: Relatively absent from current international discourse, the unique plight of children born of wartime rape-- known as 'war babies'-- is an issue introduced by Watson in this article. By means of acute reflection, Watson presents the reader with the possibility that the conception of a child used by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is based on a fundamentally Western understanding. As food for thought, the author argues that outside of conventional socio-political structures, many children assume the role of caretaker, employee, or even soldier as young as six or seven years old. This claim is then used to culminate the author's overall argument that the current structure of international protection fails to account for the particular needs of war babies. Although children born of wartime rape fall outside of the mainstream framework, Watson presses that these children must be included in international policy in order for their rights to be secured.

Wessells, Michael G. 2009. "Do No Harm: Toward Contextually Appropriate Psychosocial Support in International Emergencies." *American Psychologist* 64 (8):842-854.

Annotation: As one of the most prominent professionals in International Disaster Psychology, Wessells' research and theories are considered highly progressive. Within the discipline, there has been much debate concerning the appropriateness of Western psychosocial disaster intervention. Wessells is well-known for offering culturally sensitive alternatives to the basic Western model of treatment. In this article, he continues the conversation on the topic by reminding practitioners of their ability, though likely unintended, to jeopardize vulnerable populations with inappropriate Western-centric interventions. The work of Michael Wessells is recommended for every aspiring human rights practitioner who wants to abide by the motto "Do no harm."

Zwi, Anthony B., Natalie J. Grove, Paul Kelly, Michelle Gayer, Pilar Ramos-Jimenez, and Johannes Sommerfeld. 2006. "Child Health in Armed Conflict: Time to Rethink." *Lancet* 367 (9526):1886-1888.

Annotation: Zwi and his colleagues investigate the particular vulnerabilities of children under five years of age during complex emergencies. The focus of the article is primarily on medical health issues, yet a range of secondary threats to mental health, such as limited access to shelter, safety, education, and a consistent adult caretaker, are also considered. As conflict and instability create ever more complex humanitarian challenges, a child's ability to secure basic needs grow weaker. The cost of living below a minimum level of need is not only detrimental to the individual child, but also significantly impedes the ability for conflict-

affected regions to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. According to the authors, in order to confront these issues, those in the development and humanitarian aid fields will have to create innovative health programs that fully engage the community and provide children with a degree of independence in their healthcare choices.