

# Annual Report | 2018



THE ROMÉO  
DALLAIRE



**CHILD  
SOLDIERS**  
INITIATIVE

 DALHOUSIE  
UNIVERSITY

# Dallaire Initiative Strategic Aims

From the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan

## Aim 1

Improved operational effectiveness of the security sector in nations contributing to peace support missions through a Children’s Rights Upfront Approach.

## Aim 2

Reduce the number of states where children are recruited and used as soldiers.

## Aim 3

Increase and empower global champions for a Children’s Rights Upfront Approach.

## Aim 4

Strengthen the operational effectiveness of the organization to achieve our strategic aims.



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**FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION OFFICER – SOUTH SUDAN**  
Mary Anon

**PROJECT MANAGER – RWANDA**  
Megan Toussau

**We have moved!**

Last year we relocated within the Dalhousie University campus to accommodate our growth in staff, and now occupy a century house on LeMarchant Street. It is an excellent location near the library and makes it very easy for students to stop by and engage with our work by volunteering or taking on work placements through their courses.

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Staff members in front of the new location of our headquarters on LeMarchant Street on Dalhousie's campus in Halifax.

Photo credit: Michael Tompkins.

# A Year in Review: Reflections from our Executive Director

The recruitment and use of children as soldiers continues to be a pervasive problem globally. According to the United Nations (UN) Special Representative to the Secretary-General’s most recent report on Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC), seven national armies and 56 armed groups operating in 14 countries recruit and use children as soldiers. These sobering statistics make it crystal clear that our work remains critical.

The year 2018 marked a significant change in scale and visibility for the Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative (Dallaire Initiative). Three major government and multilateral grants were awarded, propelling the organization into a new phase of programmatic output and growth and entrenching our presence in strategic countries. Today, we are reaching more complex environments more consistently than ever before. In April 2018, we signed a grant with Global Affairs Canada (GAC) for critical work in South Sudan, where child soldiers continue to be used in one of the world’s gravest conflicts. In November, we established our first-ever country office, located in Juba, South Sudan. Our work with the Government of Rwanda and security forces was further strengthened and solidified through the signing of a new multi-year agreement with the German Federal Foreign Office to support the country to become a regional leader on the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers. And, a new partnership agreement with UNICEF was launched in January 2019, which will extend and build on our security sector training in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Somalia and Sudan. To complement public funding, we received our first million-dollar philanthropic donation from Intact Financial Corporation (TSX: IFC) to support a regional training and learning centre based in Kigali, Rwanda.

**To date, our training programs have been delivered to nearly 8,000 participants from over 55 countries. We are particularly proud of having trained more than 2,800 members of the Rwanda Defence Force (RDF) in 2018 alone.** This significant jump in numbers is attributed to increasing demand from UN peacekeeping forces for our training before being deployed on missions where child soldiers are being recruited and used. For instance, we trained six battalions in Rwanda over the past year, four of which were directly preparing to deploy to the UN peacekeeping mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Despite having a small team to tackle this significant demand of our work, we have upheld the quality of our training, and have consistently received excellent feedback from participants in course evaluations (see “Spotlight” on page 16).

We were extremely proud to demonstrate our work to a group of special supporters during a study trip to Rwanda in May. These individuals had the opportunity to witness first-hand Rwanda’s commitment to implementing Dallaire Initiative training in its current peacekeeping operations.

These successes run in parallel with our increasingly influential international advocacy efforts that seek to address the importance of preventing the recruitment and

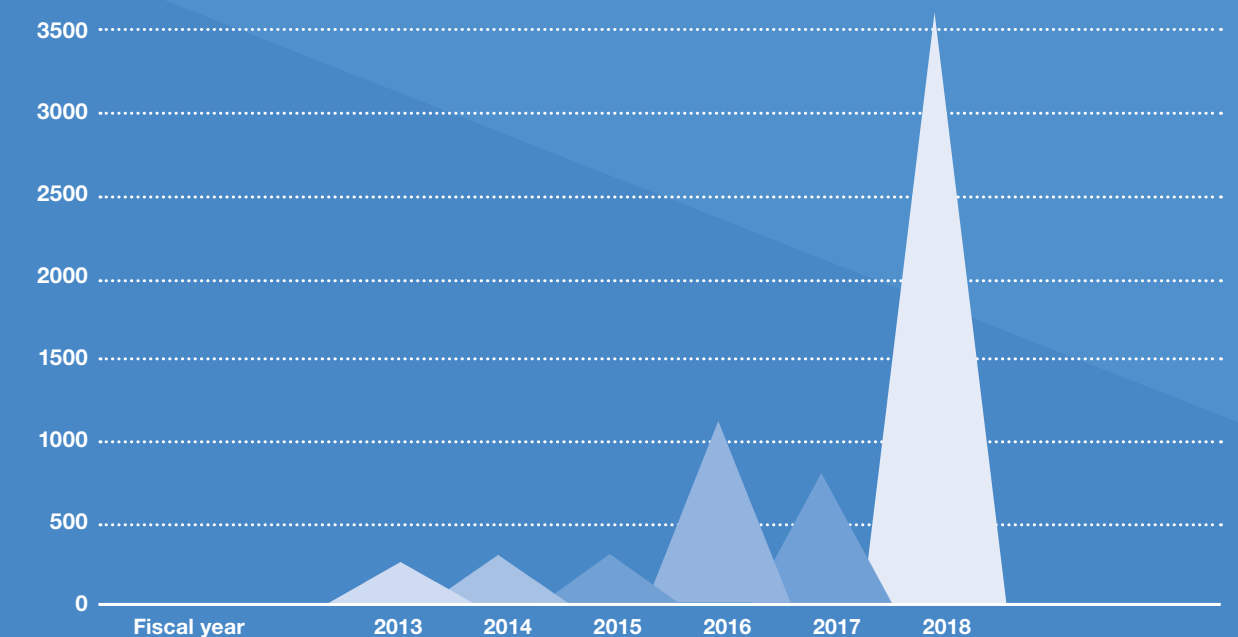
use of children as central to achieving peace and stability. The international response to the *Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment and Use of Child Soldiers* far surpassed the original expectations of the Government of Canada, which had hoped for an initial endorsement of 15 countries. **Today, the Vancouver Principles have been endorsed by 89 UN member states, making the commitment to implement these principles a truly global phenomenon.**

To say I am proud of the achievements of this organization and the hard work, tenacity and flexibility of the Dallaire Initiative team over the past year would indeed be an understatement. These milestones would not have been possible without the tremendous support and backing of our champions, donors, and partners. Put in the context of the statistics above, our work remains urgent and imperative. However, we also remain hopeful: we are witnessing an increased understanding around the world that by placing children’s rights upfront, we can find sustainable inroads to peace.

## Spotlight

### Number of Participants Per Year

This graph shows the total number of participants in all Dallaire Initiative programming over the past five fiscal years. The drastic increase in FY2018-19 is due to the Dallaire Initiative starting pre-deployment training with the Rwanda Defence Force, resulting in six battalions (approximately 500 individuals each) trained who were then being deployed into peacekeeping missions in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and Sudan.





## Our Growing Influence



### Children's Rights Upfront

Over the past year, the Dallaire Initiative has crystallized and refined the Children's Rights Upfront (CRU) Approach into our advocacy strategy. A CRU Approach seeks to elevate children's well-being higher up on the international peace and security agenda both in terms of making it a priority for all actors, and by ensuring that children and youth participate in peace processes that impact their future. In the first instance, efforts focus on creating points of collaboration by highlighting the need to protect the rights of society's most vulnerable – children. By agreeing to make children a priority, this approach can build bridges between parties in peace processes and within political debate and policy making, leading to the creation of spaces for dialogue in what may appear to be an intractable conflict or across divergent political opinions. This can then lead to building increased confidence and trust, commitment of dedicated resources, as well as the implementation of concrete and measurable steps on the road to peace and increased security.

By prioritizing the needs of children, we can also begin to address the underlying factors that contribute to the vulnerability of children to being recruited and used as soldiers. Almost half of the world's population is under the age of 24 years. Many countries in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, the Middle East, and North Africa have predominately young populations. This means that children are coming of age in societies that lack access to education, employment opportunities, healthcare, reliable supplies of food and water, shelter, and/or have experienced displacement of their families. These factors make many children and youth vulnerable to recruitment by armed forces, groups and gangs.

While children are often victims of armed conflict and the grave violations that accompany war, they also have the potential to be agents for peace. Therefore, the CRU Approach also recognizes the tremendous capacity of children and youth to be leaders and to help build sustainable peace. They can play a vital role in the peace process on a local, national, regional and international level – processes that will essentially determine their future. Through children, we can create a rallying point for peace, as well as increase stability and security.

### Our Theory of Change

At the heart of our theory of change are children and our CRU Approach. Our commitment to elevate and protect the rights of children is evident in every aspect of our work. As such, we are focused on four core activities:

- Developing a network of champions;
- Applying research to practice;
- Influencing policy and doctrine;
- Training and building capacity.

Our work in these areas seeks to change the behaviour of individuals by increasing knowledge, skills and attitudes of those who directly and indirectly influence a child's environment. In conflict affected countries, a child's environment is often shaped by the work of security sector actors. Therefore, we are seeking a critical mass of people in the security sector, along with support from civilian policy makers and practitioners, to prioritize the safety of children. This will significantly contribute to progressively ending the recruitment and use of child soldiers, beginning with the youngest children first, and then over time, all those who are underage. A sustained level of effort in this area will, one day, create a world where the recruitment and use of children as a weapon of war is unthinkable.

### Vancouver Principles on Peacekeeping and the Prevention of the Recruitment & Use of Child Soldiers

Through the creation and implementation of the Vancouver Principles, the Dallaire Initiative is increasingly being called upon as subject matter experts on children and armed conflict. The Vancouver Principles were jointly created by the Dallaire Initiative and the Government of Canada in November 2017 and are a set of political commitments for nations to take a more assertive stance on preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers during peacekeeping operations.

The Vancouver Principles provide the framework through which we implement the CRU Approach, pursue our theory of change, and achieve our strategic aims. While the Vancouver Principles are directed firstly toward peacekeeping contexts, through implementation of the principles at the national level, endorsing nations around the world will be better prepared to encounter these issues at home. Critically, implementation of the Vancouver Principles is meant for every country around the globe, given every country is concerned with radicalization leading to violence, trafficking, and criminal networks that foster youth and gang violence. Preparation to operationalize the Vancouver Principles can benefit nations both at home and abroad to help build a more safe, secure and peaceful world.

Over the past several months, our team has been deeply involved with the Government of Canada in the writing and review process for the Implementation Guidance for the Vancouver Principles, a practical guide for endorsing states to implement the Vancouver Principles at the national level, which will be launched by the Government of Canada in 2019.

### A Successful Year in International Advocacy

On December 5, 2018, our work in this domain culminated in a high-profile event in New York City at the new location of Canada's Permanent Mission to the UN (PRMNY), where one of the rooms has recently been named after General Dallaire. More than 80 government representatives, international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), UN agencies and Dallaire Initiative supporters gathered at PRMNY to mark the one-year anniversary of the Vancouver Principles. It was at this event that Intact Financial announced their \$1 million commitment to support our work. The thought-provoking evening was organized by the Dallaire Initiative in conjunction with Canada and Rwanda's Permanent Missions to the UN. It was moderated by Nahlah Ayed, CBC's London-based correspondent, and featured our Executive Director, Dr. Shelly Whitman, as well as Dallaire Initiative advisers and human rights advocates, Ishmael Beah and Michel Chikwanine. These powerful speakers shared their personal experiences of being affected by conflict in Sierra Leone and the DRC, and practical ways security sector actors can better protect vulnerable children. As Michel Chikwanine aptly commented during the panel discussion, "No more pledges; what we want now is action. It is easy to invest in war, but we need to invest in peace."



Jason Patuano (Intact Financial), Michel Chikwanine, Dr. Whitman, General Dallaire, Ishmael Beah, and Charles Brindamour (CEO, Intact Financial) at the funding announcement in December 2018. Photo credit: Greg Kessler.



Dr. Shelly Whitman, Ishmael Beah, Michel Chikwanine and moderator Nahlah Ayed at the Vancouver Principles Anniversary Event at Canada's Permanent Mission to the UN in New York in December 2018. Photo credit: Greg Kessler.

### Private Audience with the Pope

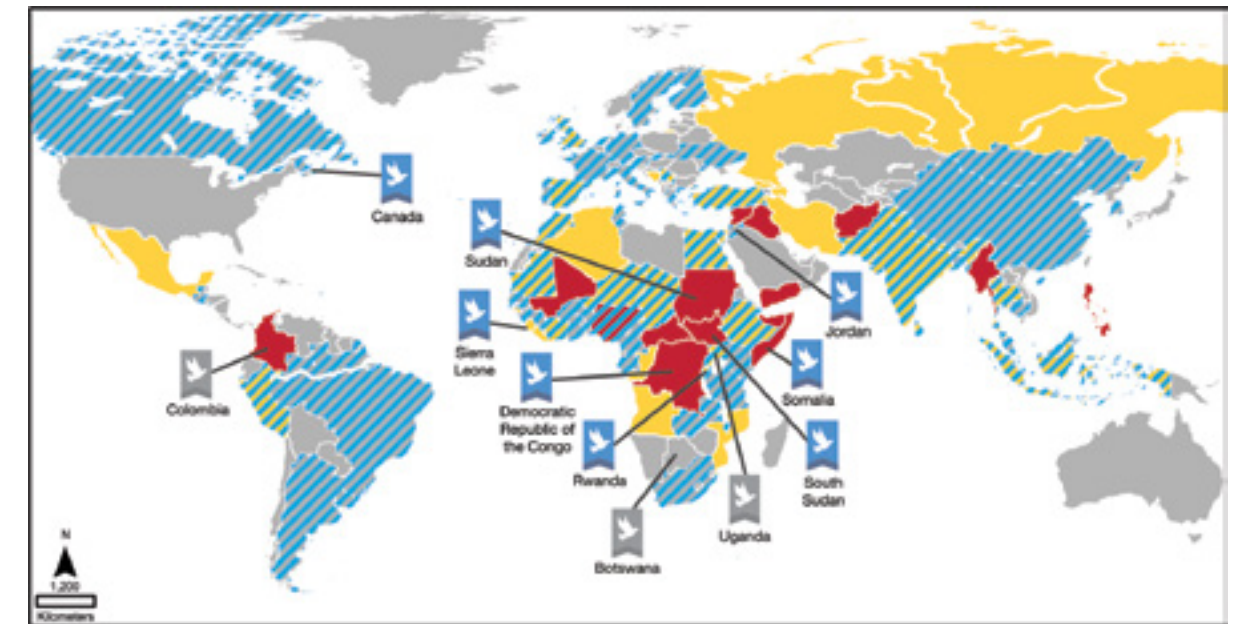
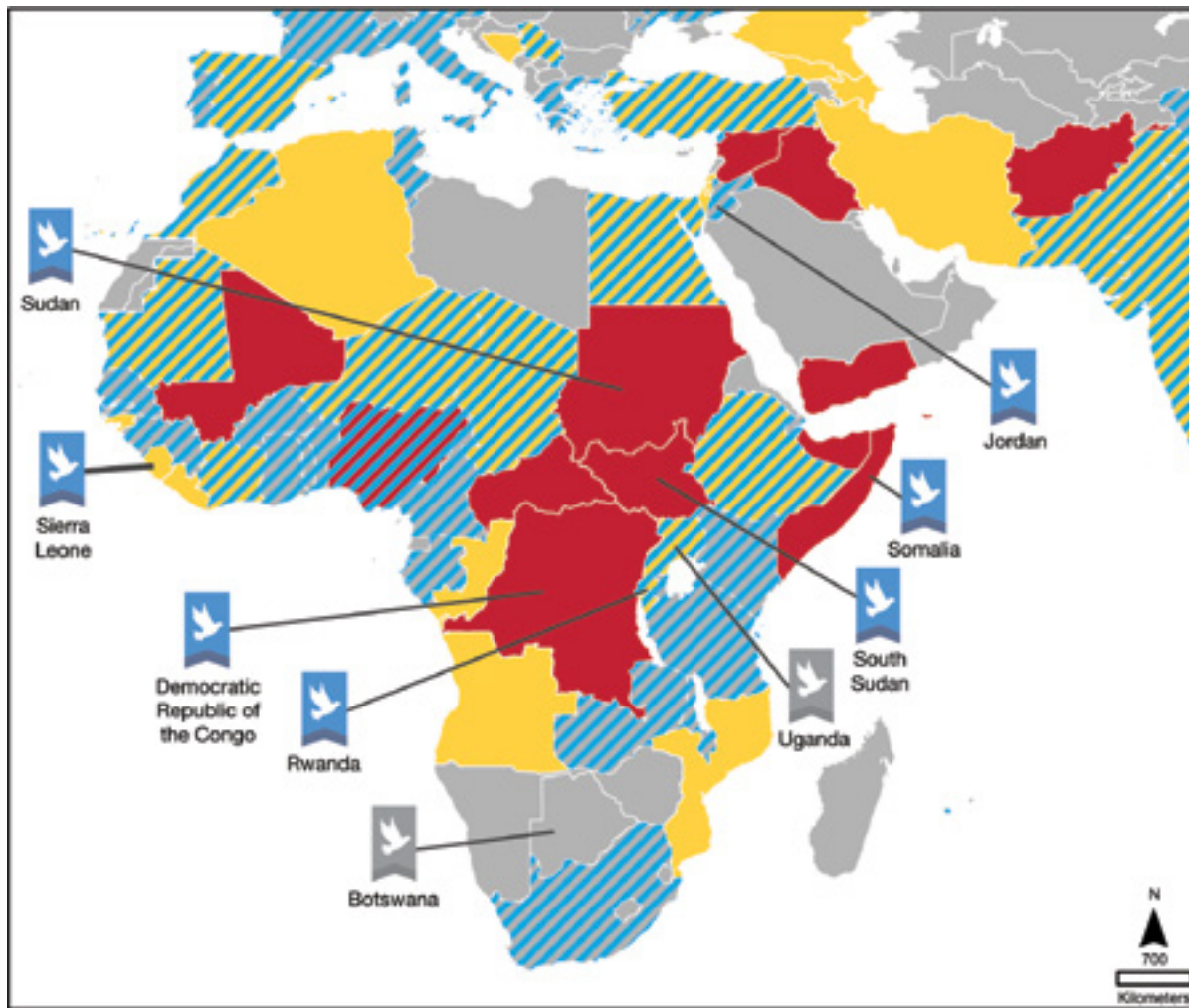
Our increasing visibility has led to our expertise and unique perspective being sought by a range of audiences. In January 2019, General Dallaire and Dr. Whitman were invited to the Vatican for a private audience with his Holiness, Pope Francis, to discuss our mission of preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers around the world, and in particular, the need for sustained peace in South Sudan. Pope Francis has expressed deep concern on the issue of child soldiers, and we were proud to stand with him in support of his call for a more peaceful world: one where the use of children as weapons of war is unthinkable.



General Dallaire and Dr. Whitman meeting with his Holiness, Pope Francis at the Vatican in January 2019



# Where we work



**Where we work currently**  
 Where we've worked previously

**Children Recruited and Used as Soldiers**  
 Children recruited and used as soldiers since 1989 (Haer & Böhmelt, 2016)  
 Children recruited and used as soldiers in current conflicts (verified numbers are from the UN Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, 2018)

**Countries Contributing 150 or More Peacekeepers to UN Missions**  
 150+ peacekeepers contributed

Author: Daniel Bryce

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## 2018 Countries of Focus



Welcome! Our Juba team standing in front of our new country office.



Meeting with South Sudanese senior government officials in Juba.

### A Children’s Rights Upfront Approach for South Sudan

In April 2018, the Dallaire Initiative was granted a three-year, \$3 million CAD project from GAC to conduct work to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers in South Sudan, and to help sustain the peace agreement in the country. This was a huge milestone for the organization as it is currently our largest, multi-year government grant.

The project builds upon the mutual priorities of the Dallaire Initiative and GAC with regard to gender and child protection, with a focus on ending the UN’s Six Grave Violations against children, particularly the recruitment and use of child soldiers. We concentrate on this grave violation as we believe it is a key factor in reducing the risk of children to the remaining five violations.

The project is designed around three sets of interconnected activities that enhance and fill gaps in child protection efforts underway in South Sudan. Overall, the project seeks to enhance children’s rights within the overall peace process, strengthen knowledge and skills of security sector actors to improve their encounters with boy and girl child soldiers, and work with civil society to protect at-risk boys and girls from being recruited as child soldiers within their communities.

#### Spotlight

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005) highlights Six Grave Violations against children in armed conflict:

- i. Killing and maiming of children;
- ii. Recruitment and use of children as soldiers;
- iii. Sexual violence against children;
- iv. Abduction of children;
- v. Attacks against schools or hospitals; and
- vi. Denial of humanitarian access for children.

#### Key Achievements

Over the past year, key project activities focused on becoming a fully operational organization in the country, including hiring national and international staff, securing office space, and building key partnerships.

In November 2018, our organization was formally registered in South Sudan, becoming our first, official field-based office. Sitting within UNICEF’s compound in Juba, it has become home to our full-time project staff members.

This permanent presence has helped us gain legitimacy within the country, allowing us to conduct sustained engagement with government officials and peace process actors. In this context, we have identified and forged relationships with key partners in the national and international security sector – including the state military, police, and within the UN peacekeeping mission – as well as community stakeholders that can support our work.

In November, a high-level visit from General Dallaire and Dr. Whitman helped pave the way for public commitments to our work from government and national security forces – including the country’s Vice President, Ministers of Defence and Veterans Affairs, and State Governors – to collaborate to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers. As a demonstration of their commitment, we began our training work through a joint UNICEF and UNMISS training of more than 50 senior officers from South Sudan’s national military (SSPDF).

While our collaboration with the military continues to grow, we are also focussed on working with both national and international police forces. A joint partnership with UN police (UNPOL) peacekeepers resulted in a training of officers from ten different countries serving in South Sudan, from El Salvador to Norway to Burkina Faso. The UN’s Police Commissioner attended the course and emphasized the need for this work on child protection in South Sudan and around the world.

**“This goes beyond child soldiers in South Sudan. This will help us deal with those young kids who are in conflict with the law at home, particularly for my country and sub-region where we are dealing with countering violent extremism. Those people are using the same tactics. So many things are going on in my head: How best can I use these things back home? How do we integrate this into our own domestic training programs at home? We are facing this problem, seriously. Something needs to be done.”**

UNPOL training participant from Burkina Faso.

Our work in South Sudan extends beyond its borders. A key element of our ability to influence change within the country is by partnering with key peacekeeping contingents outside of the country. As the largest peacekeeping contributor to UNMISS, the Rwandan military and police forces remain one of these critical partners. Given the majority of their peacekeeping training takes place within their home countries, referred to as pre-deployment training, it is imperative we work with them within their own borders before their troops are sent on missions. In 2018 alone, we trained more than 2,000 troops being deployed to South Sudan, as well as over 450 troops in South Sudan itself from November 2018 to March 2019.



## National Capacity Building in Rwanda

The Dallaire Initiative has been working with the Rwanda Defence Forces since 2013, growing the country's influence in the region to become a model of excellence when it comes to prioritizing the protection of children. Rwanda's experience with the 1994 genocide, its recovery, and the professionalization of its military make it a strong and influential voice for peace. As the third largest troop contributing nation to the UN, they have become a world leader in peacekeeping. Rwanda's security forces are currently deployed in missions within the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Darfur (UNAMID), Haiti (MINUJUSTH), and South Sudan (UNMISS); all areas where children's rights are significantly at risk.



Dallaire Initiative trainers staging an interaction with the RDF.

Our partnership has seen notable progress over this past year. We have successfully conducted six pre-deployment trainings, eight basic courses and one TOT for a total of 2,866 military personnel, who are now trained on the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers during armed conflict. As previously noted, this includes six battalions in Rwanda, four of which were directly preparing to deploy to South Sudan as part of UNMISS.

Our track record in Rwanda and our achievements in the country over the course of 2018 resulted in new funding from both Intact Financial Corporation and the German Federal Foreign Office. We are now in the position to deliver a more tailored and intensive approach to support Rwanda as they work towards the implementation of

### Spotlight

#### Overview of Dallaire Initiative Training Programs

**Pre-Deployment Trainings (PDT):** PDTs are five days in length and an important element of our training program due largely to the ability of participants to immediately use the skills learned. Participants are typically deployed to regions where children are being used as soldiers shortly after completing the course.

**Basic Courses:** A five-day basic course provides an overview of the child soldier phenomenon, why child soldiers are a unique concern for security sector actors, and the need for collaboration with civil society organizations and other actors working on the overall protection of children.

**Training of Trainers (TOT) Course:** A ten-day TOT course builds on the foundation provided by the Basic Course and offers a greater depth of understanding and practice on the unique facilitation skills required to effectively relay important information related to child soldiers.

#### Quantity and Quality

Course evaluations are administered to all Dallaire Initiative participants at the end of each course. The average response rate from course evaluations in FY 2018-2019 was 92% for the Basic Training and 87% for the TOT, with an average of 91% from all core courses combined.

- 100% of Basic Training respondents said they increased their knowledge on the subject matter and the training was useful to their line of work; 87% noted that they improved their skills relevant to their role as a security sector actor in preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers; 99% indicated that they were satisfied with the course.
- 100% of TOT respondents said they increased their knowledge on the subject matter and noted that they improved their skills relevant to their role as a security sector actor in preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers; that the training was useful to their line of work; and that they were satisfied with the course.

### Spotlight

#### Training Battalions

Prior to deploying internationally, a battalion of troops (roughly 700 to 800 personnel) participate in a pre-deployment training for the mission. In addition to the basic military tactics learned during this time, the Dallaire Initiative training adds value by preparing the troops on what to expect in the field, including where the use of child soldiers is most prevalent, as well as providing them with prevention-oriented, practical training tools that emphasize positive and effective interactions with child soldiers and children in the mission area.

### Spotlight

#### Our Training: Theory into Practice

One of our TOT graduates, deployed from the Uganda Peoples Defense Force (UPDF) to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) in 2017, told us about a moment where they used their knowledge from the Dallaire Initiative training to prevent a situation from escalating. They noticed a young girl was loitering around the military base waiting for soldiers to let her inside. At the time, soldiers would allow some women and girls inside the base to sell small trinkets and food. The Dallaire Initiative graduate thought something was suspicious about the girl and decided to not allow her onto the base. Instead, they reported the situation to their superior, who looked further into the situation. In doing so, they discovered the child was actually a boy, disguised as a girl, trying to access the military base in order to gain information to pass along to his commander. The child was acting as a spy and messenger for a non-state armed group, making him a child soldier by definition of the Paris Principles. An intervention took place and the child was given to the relevant child protection agency. In this situation, the child benefited as they were removed from their armed group and handled appropriately by the child protection agency. Additionally, the soldiers on the military base benefited as confidential information was not shared with the non-state armed group. Ultimately, the Dallaire Initiative graduate explained that if they did not have the training, they would not have been suspicious of the situation at hand and, consequently, would not have reported it.

the Vancouver Principles through national doctrine adoption and training integration. We will continue to work in collaboration with our Rwandan partners to position the country as a regional leader on the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers, while strengthening advocacy for the Vancouver Principles within the African Union, and serving as a regional centre of training and learning for endorsing countries.

In May 2018, we had the opportunity to impress upon some of our longstanding donors Rwanda's commitment to preventing children from being used as weapons of war. On the study tour, our supporters got to hear first-hand the impact of our work in Rwanda from senior level military officials, participate in training, as well as by witnessing interactions staged on a military training base by our trainees showcasing what they had learned. The donors were extremely engaged in all of the exercises and asked a lot of meaningful and challenging questions, allowing us to view our work through a new lens.

## An Integration Plan for Sierra Leone: Our Lasting Impact

### The relationship between the Dallaire Initiative and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) continues to be strong after six years of cooperation.

Through diligent effort on both sides, a skilled nucleus of TOTs have been delivering training to prevent the recruitment and use of children as soldiers in areas where the RSLAF deploys. These efforts have built an excellent foundation for our methodology and are now having an impact elsewhere in the world as RSLAF officers are being deployed to assist in the training of other militaries.

Consistent and sustained funding from our long-term supporters at Unifor has enabled the Dallaire Initiative to build relationships with and train hundreds of security sector actors on the basics of the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Due to our consistent presence and collaboration in the region, the Dallaire Initiative has signed MoUs with military, police and corrections in Sierra Leone, and has gained a solid understanding of the geopolitical and financial realities of the security sector in Sierra Leone, which is essential to the effectiveness of our programming.

During the year, we conducted a thorough curriculum assessment, co-developed curriculum and created an integration plan with our partners. We are now entering the final phase of this plan and aim to complete the transition from direct delivery of training to integrated curriculum in 2019, whereby Sierra Leone security sector actors are responsible for the training within their existing training academies. This final phase includes conducting TOT workshops with the training academies in each sector, as well as the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework to ensure the integrated programming is resulting in changes in knowledge, behaviours, and attitudes as it relates to the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

The Dallaire Initiative currently employs two master trainers from Sierra Leone. Major Musa Gbow has been working with the Dallaire Initiative since 2016, and in 2018 became our Regional Training Manager for Africa. He is now based in Kigali, Rwanda, and tasked with initiating the development of the regional centre of training and learning on the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Major James Tucker was appointed as the Child Protection Advisor to South Sudan in 2018, and is currently working with national and international security sector actors to build capacity on the prevention of the recruitment and use of child soldiers.



### Peace Club Radio Programs in Sierra Leone

As a critical element to sustaining efforts on the path to consolidating peace, ensuring that children have safe school environments to continue to build a peaceful Sierra Leone is essential.

In 2016, the Dallaire Initiative launched Peace Clubs in the Bombali, Moyamba and Port Loko districts to help students learn how to resolve their differences through dialogue without resorting to violence. The Peace Clubs enable school pupils, teachers, community members, radio broadcasters and local journalists to use radio as a tool for peace, develop their ability to constructively influence conflict by organizing radio discussion programs, and facilitate workshops highlighting various peacebuilding methods that have shown to be effective. The Dallaire Initiative has also developed and distributed a peace building curriculum to improve peace education in schools. In 2018, we produced radio shows with key messages that focused on nonviolence during tightly contested Presidential, Parliamentary and local council elections in Sierra Leone. Happily, the elections turned out to be very peaceful.

**“The only time my parents listen to me is when I talk on the radio; they hear a lot of sense and that makes them feel proud.”**

Saffiatu Bah, Peace Club Member and victim of bullying.

In Sierra Leone, radio is by far the most effective media platform for reaching a wider audience. With 81% of Sierra Leoneans having access to radio, it reaches a greater proportion of the population than TV (45%) or the internet (16%). It has the ability to help effect changes in knowledge, attitude, and behaviour, particularly in communities where people are often receptive to information presented through discussions or news programs. Currently, the Peace Club radio program broadcasts on radio stations that have an estimated 2.5 million listeners across the country.



Peace Club radio training in Moyamba, Sierra Leone



## New Programming



Training with Somali security sector.

### Joint partnership with UNICEF to support more AU states

In partnership with UNICEF, we have commenced vital work supporting three other African Union member states – the DRC, Somalia, and Sudan – to strengthen their technical and institutional capacity to improve child protection, and to end the recruitment and use of child soldiers in some of the world’s gravest conflicts.

Launched in January 2019, the project is working to establish and renew partnerships within the AU’s Peace and Security Department, UNICEF country offices, and with national-level security sector actors. Over the course of the project, we will train more than 100 security sector personnel in the DRC and Somalia on children’s rights and child protection curriculum, support the Sudanese Armed Forces to develop and implement a domestic child protection training manual, and continue high-level advocacy efforts to integrate children’s rights and child protection into African Union Commission policies and programs.

This also builds on our past achievements in Somalia, where we continue to provide mentorship support to certified Dallaire Initiative trainers from the Somali National Forces to observe and report violations against children and share best prevention practices.

## Building on our research: Knowledge for Prevention (K4P)

As previously noted, children are recruited and used as soldiers in most modern conflicts, reflecting a process which the UN has described as a ‘pervasive problem’ in at least 14 countries. While the recruitment and use of children in conflict is an evolving and growing problem around the world, including here in Canada, reliable and timely information to inform prevention efforts is still lacking. To address this knowledge gap, the Dallaire Initiative officially launched the Knowledge for Prevention (K4P) Project in February 2019. As a multi-year project, K4P aims to: develop predictive models to more accurately estimate the number of children being recruited and used as soldiers; improve early warning systems of mass atrocities by including child-centred indicators; and, provide reliable and accessible information on specific countries through up-to-date country reports (for the Central African Republic, DRC, Mali, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan). These activities will contribute to a CRU Approach, and, in turn, will assist our organization and partners with developing better strategies, policies and programs aimed at progressively ending the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

As part of the K4P Project, the Dallaire Initiative intends to hold two international symposiums to engage on knowledge production related to preventing the recruitment and use of child soldiers. Planning is currently underway for the first symposium which will be held in Oslo, Norway in October 2019. Bringing together a global collective of relevant practitioners and academics, the symposium will introduce K4P to a wider audience, seek input related to data collection, early warning systems and predictive modelling on child soldiers, and develop potential opportunities for project collaboration and networking.

The K4P Project Team will also draft two working papers on methods applied to estimate the number of child soldiers recruited and used, and on the inclusion of children in early warning systems of conflict and mass atrocity.



Former child soldiers enlisted by Al Shabaab are handed over to the UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) after their capture by forces of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). November 2012

## Cross-Cutting Issues

### Combatting Sexual & Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) through a security sector approach

**Women and children in conflicts around the world continue to face an increased threat of extreme sexual violence, including rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage.** In this context, an estimated 40% of child soldiers are female, many of whom are forcefully recruited and made to fill different roles, such as frontline fighters, cooks, porters, spies, messengers and sexual slaves. Most often, the victims of sexual slavery are young women and girls, and survivors of such forms of violence frequently live with long-term psychological wounds.

SGBV survivors in war zones are among the most vulnerable populations to other forms of exploitation. In addition to living with physical and psychological wounds, many survivors must also confront the long-term burden of stigma and blame, which can be manifested through rejection and targeted humiliation from families and communities.

In the past, many peacekeepers in conflicts around the world have been accused of either overlooking or perpetrating SGBV crimes. In order to combat this, and to increase awareness among communities, an emphasis needs to be placed on effective training, as well as viable prevention and protection strategies, by both governmental and humanitarian agencies.

The Dallaire Initiative recognizes these challenges, which is why the organization continues to work with the security sector to help end cases of SGBV in conflict zones. Through the development of new training modules on SGBV, the Dallaire Initiative will continue to work with security sector actors to build capacity and skills to address this issue across communities, countries and regions. In particular, our training focuses on the specific protection needs for those at a heightened risk of experiencing SGBV, and provides guidance to security sector actors in recognizing their responsibility to prevent and protect against SGBV abuses during armed conflict. The Dallaire Initiative also works to raise awareness on the issue globally at academic, political and community levels. For example, Dr. Whitman is in the process of publishing a book chapter that details the experiences of SGBV survivors in conflict settings, including the challenges and long-term effects they face.

In March 2019, our team had the opportunity to meet with survivors of SGBV from Sierra Leone to learn about the struggles and stigma they faced in the aftermath of the conflict. One of the people we interviewed stressed the critical role security sector actors can play in preventing conflict-related sexual violence:

**“If I had one message to global leaders interested in building peace around the world, it would be to professionalize their peacekeepers, give them the training on how to react to children in conflict. The Dallaire Initiative has taken the lead on this; why not follow?”**

SGBV Survivor  
Sierra Leone



### Three years of training Canadian veterans

Based out of the Dallaire Initiative's institutional home, Dalhousie University, the Veteran Trainers to End the Use of Child Soldiers (VTECS) program delivers education and skills transition training for veterans of both the Canadian Armed Forces and Canadian policing organizations. VTECS combines academic, fully-credited university classes with specialized training that build on veterans' skills, expertise and experience.

The VTECS program provides an opportunity for veterans, competitively chosen, to acquire a deep and broad understanding of the skills, knowledge and attitudes required of security sector actors to legally, humanely and effectively interact with children/child soldiers in domestic or foreign operational areas. Program participants also develop academic and facilitation skills, which may be of benefit for veterans transitioning from military to civilian life and employment.

The program has been funded by Wounded Warriors Canada (WWC) since 2016, with support from the Air Canada Foundation. In that time, we have developed a strong group of graduates who have gone on to do incredible work with their newly acquired knowledge and skills.

#### Rob Lewis: 2017 VTECS Graduate

Rob Lewis, an RCMP officer from British Columbia (BC), regularly deals with youth involved in gangs and holds passionate views on how to tackle this growing problem in Canada. "You've got to start treating them with respect; find out what they want and what they need. You've got to start bringing in your social workers and community members," he says.

But Rob did not always feel this way about young people engaged in conflict. "Before, I always thought the child soldier was the kid in Africa with the AK 47," Rob says. "I didn't know the roles girls played, I didn't know it was happening in South America and other parts of the world, and how the same things are happening here with gangs and organized crime." Rob's perspective changed after participating in the VTECS program in 2017. "I was unaware of the similarities between child soldiers and youth involved in gangs/criminal organizations. I would say that after attending the program, there is no difference between the two. The only difference is what we call them," he says.



Rob Lewis, 2017 VTECS Grad and RCMP officer at the Building Connections Conference.

Since graduating from VTECS, Rob went back to work with the RCMP with new ways to approach youth involvement in gangs. "I have raised awareness regarding the issue of child soldiers, especially when dealing with immigrant youth gangs in BC. The standard approaches we've been using would not be appropriate as these youths have been exposed to, or may have been involved with, child soldiers overseas." He has also been working with the Dallaire Initiative on some of the organization's police programming in Canada. The aim of the work is to better equip a range of frontline workers with the knowledge and skills to identify, respond to and prevent radicalization leading to violence among youth in Canada.

#### Linda Chouinard: 2016 VTECS Graduate

Linda Chouinard, from Pohenegamook, Quebec, still has clear memories of the difficult experiences she went through as a woman while serving in the Canadian Armed Forces. From Chouinard's perspective, the armed forces felt like a boys' club: a place where male colleagues made the experience awkward and frustrating for women.

"I got a lot of complaints about harassment from other women, but I always told them we should stand up, speak up and continue to fight for our rights," says Chouinard.

Being a woman in uniform was challenging, but it was not the reason she left the forces. She left the army as a Major in 2009, after she suffered Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of her deployment to Bosnia, where she first experienced children used as soldiers. "PTSD left me with cognitive problems and a big self-esteem problem, as well." Chouinard says it was not easy, but she made an exceptional step forward by joining the VTECS program.

According to Chouinard, VTECS provided her the opportunity and space to think through her own experiences. "I never realized that I met some types of child soldiers while I was in Bosnia; my knowledge was a small part of a bigger reality. The VTECS program broadly opened my mind and my understanding to this burning issue," she says. Chouinard also found the intercultural experiences of the VTECS program extremely rewarding and worthwhile.

Since her graduation from VTECS in 2016, Chouinard has become an advocate for the program through local media. She has also been given the unofficial title of the Dallaire Initiative's "artist in residence," having crafted and contributed sculptures and plaques for our award ceremonies. Thankful to WWC for their contributions to VTECS, she has also fundraised for their signature Battlefields Bikeride.



Linda Chouinard with General Dallaire

## Additional Highlights of 2018



In 2018, the Dallaire Initiative team worked together on challenging, cross-sectoral and interrelated global issues, and enjoyed a number of wonderful achievements in the process. It was a year full of change, growth, progress and opportunity. Our Founder and Executive Director received prestigious honours, the organization expanded the scope of its research and publications, and we welcomed talented new staff.

### Awards & Honours

- General Dallaire received the prestigious Scotiabank Ethical Leadership Award, which recognizes ethical leaders who, through their actions and decisions, have demonstrated character, courage and adherence to ethical principles. General Dallaire was especially touched to learn that the recipient of the Scotiabank Ethical Leadership Award is chosen by a panel of student leaders.
- Dr. Whitman was officially named to Public Safety Canada's National Expert Committee on Countering Radicalization to Violence. Dr. Whitman was also honoured to be named the Intact Financial Senior Fellow in 2018. The fellowship is an opportunity for Dr. Whitman to expand her research on the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

Above: Some members of the Dallaire Initiative team gather in Halifax to celebrate General Dallaire and his receipt of the Scotiabank Ethical Leadership Award in November 2018.

### Creative partnership profile: DHX Media

DHX Media created two animated shorts for the Dallaire Initiative called "Checkpoint" and "Detention". Both were released in 2018 and are now used regularly in our trainings around the world. Both shorts are incredibly powerful in their ability to transcend barriers. Regardless of language, culture, or level of education, these emotive training videos vividly demonstrate the difference between an interaction with a child soldier with and without Dallaire Initiative training.



A peacekeeper salutes child soldiers in the Checkpoint video.

**“We are in the business of creating feelings in the stories we tell. Usually the feelings we aim to create are joy and happiness with imaginative content for young children. The animated films we have created with the Dallaire Initiative have certainly been focused on creating feelings, but of a very different sort. When presented with the task of depicting the complex and often subtle emotions of this very difficult subject matter, we knew it would be unlike anything we had done before. While the technical skills we used in creating these videos (“Checkpoint” and “Detention”) are the same as the ones we use daily, the message and the audience could not be more different. This has challenged us in the most meaningful way. For the entire team it has been the most gratifying and powerful work of our careers.”**

Phillip Stamp, former Vice President of DHX Media, now Creative Director of Island of Misfits, on why DHX Media decided to support the Dallaire Initiative.



## New Publications

### Allons-y

- The Dallaire Initiative published its third volume of the student journal "Allons-y" with articles focused on sexual violence faced by children in the DRC, the troubled demobilization process for child soldiers in the DRC, the psychosocial challenges faced by refugee children in Canada, and the militarization of children in North Korea.

### Child Soldiers and Cyberwarfare

- Senior Research Officer, Dustin Johnson, and Dalhousie PhD candidate, Ben O'Bright, presented their research on the use of child soldiers in cyberwarfare at the NATO Operations Research and Analysis conference in Zagreb, Croatia in October 2018, in advance of a working paper on the topic to be published by the Dallaire Initiative in 2019.

### Child Soldiers and Immigration

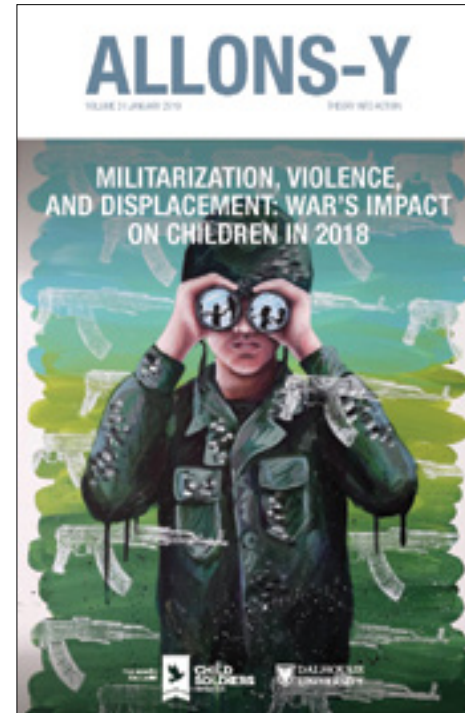
- Education Program Manager, Joëlle Badman, and Senior Research Officer, Dustin Johnson, presented a paper on the challenges faced by former child soldiers who immigrate to Canada, at a conference on immigration and diversity at St. Mary's University in June 2018.

### Child Soldiers as Refugees

- Dr. Whitman and child protection expert Kasey Tyler published a chapter on refugee youth from South Sudan who had been used as child soldiers in the edited volume "Protecting Migrant Children: In Search of Best Practice."

### Youth and Peacebuilding

- Director of Training, Dr. Catherine Baillie Abidi published her book "Pedagogies for Building Cultures of Peace: Challenging Constructions of an Enemy," which focuses on pedagogical approaches for peacebuilding and countering the normalization of violence among youth.



## 2019: Looking Ahead

### Child Soldiers International

The Dallaire Initiative was saddened to hear that Child Soldiers International (CSI) would be closing its doors in June 2019. CSI has played a significant role in advocating for the prevention of the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict globally.

We are honoured that CSI has requested our help in ensuring that the important work they started lives on through a handover of key existing programs and resources. This includes CSI's projects in DRC and South Sudan, the World Index, Red Hand Day and their research publications.

In particular, the World Index has made a critical contribution to the field of child protection and, as such, the Dallaire Initiative is looking forward to taking on this project and combining it with new and existing work. We are proud that the valuable research conducted by CSI will be carried forward and housed within the Dallaire Initiative, and that CSI's legacy will continue to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on the subject of child soldiers, while better informing our own work.

The Dallaire Initiative is grateful to the CSI staff and Board who have dedicated their time, hard work and passion to these projects. We are determined to honour this commitment as we continue these projects through our unique approach.

### 2019 Country of Focus: Nigeria

In October 2017, Dr. Whitman and General Dallaire travelled to the city of Maiduguri in northeastern Nigeria, to learn more about the pervasive use of child soldiers in that region's conflict, and to conduct initial meetings and briefings with officials from the Nigerian government, the Nigerian Armed Forces, and the Navy and Civilian Joint Task Force. As a result of this scoping mission, we have developed a partnership with the Centre for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC) to train the region's Civilian Joint Task Force on child protection and strategic issues to address the growing vulnerability of children in northeastern Nigeria.

### All-Women Training

One of the Dallaire Initiative's objectives is to achieve a gender balance among our training participants. This is a challenge when working in the male-dominated security sector. We are nonetheless proud to report that 6% of Dallaire Initiative training participants over the past year were female. To compare, as of February 2019, 5.4% of UN police and military peacekeepers were women.

In the coming year, we will be partnering once again with the British Peace Support Team (BPST), this time to provide an all-women training in East Africa. The training is designed to enhance the gender analysis of our training methodology and materials, and, in doing so, connects with all four aims of our strategic plan. The all-women training will bring security sector actors from various countries in the region for a basic course and to continue to enhance our partnership and collaboration with BPST. The training will take place in Rwanda at the Rwanda Peace Academy.



## Financial Overview

Total Annual  
Operating Budget:  
**\$2,321,634**

**Program  
Activities**  
\$1,488,850

**Operating  
Expenses**  
\$404,821

**Advocacy  
& Research**  
\$427,963

## Extraordinary Collaborators – 2018

As a growing organization, we recognize that there are countless supporters who make the work we do on a day-to-day possible. All financial contributions to the Dallaire Initiative help us to conduct our security sector training and capacity-building, undertake new research to broaden national and international academic and policy debates, and continue to strengthen our advocacy efforts in championing the rights of children globally. At this time, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude for supporting us in our vision towards progressively ending the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

ANONYMOUS X 117	Paul Calder	Manhui Li	Melanie Cheng Kai On
Jamie Aalbers	Tiffany Camota Reis	Chelsea Lin	Lise Cheng Kai On
Marius Alfred	Michael Camroux	Kendal Lo	M Chenier
Maryam Amin	Peter Carver	Long Range Patrol Association	Laurene Cheungseekit
Paul Anderson	Carlo Castellano	Kathryn Ludlow	Tony Chiu
Tara Andronek	Jackie Horowitz	Guohui Luo	Helene Chung
Armstrong Family Foundation	Craig Jacobson	Gia Dung Ly	Shane Cobb
Auswaertiges Amt/ Federal Foreign Office	Taha Jaffer	Romy Terkel	Valerie Connor
Arvin Banitachi	N Jared	The Gerald Schwartz & Heather Reisman Foundation	Sheryl Cronk
Margaret Bann	Laura Johnson & Jonathan Lowe	The Parish of St Philip's Vancouver	Stephanie Cross
Maryam Baruch	Michael Kaplan	The Rumi Foundation	Susie Daides
Karen Barzley	Gia Kapoor	Michael J Tims, CM	LGen Roméo Dallaire (Ret'd), OC, CMM, GOQ, MSC, CD
Robert Batherson	Lala Karimova	Kevin Tod	Roni David
Barbara Baxter	Sergey Kartsev	Victor Tran	Anjana Dhaliwal
Corrado Belfiore	Faryaz Kassam	UNICEF	Benjamin Dolatnia
Cameron Bell	Aparna Khodifad	Stephan Unruh	Tal & David Dovas
Elinor Benjamin	Christina Koudlai	Heidi Van	Sabrina Souza
Kirill Berlin	Cindy Kowaluk	Madonna van Vonderen	Amanda Dudek
Rebecca Betts	Jill Kowaluk	Gerard Veilleux	Elina Dvorkina
Vinay Bhalla	Oleksandr Ksyendzov	A Webber	Ecole Secondaire Rive-Nord
Ina Bhalla	Seetha Kumaresh	Sharna White	David Ellins
Indij Bhalla	Nadara Kumaresh	Erika M. Wien	Ellna Elwan
Vinod Bhalla	Leo Kurz	Crystal Anne Wiens	Enterprise Rent A Car Canada Foundation
BiSema Corporation	Alex Kushnir	Catholic Women's League Holy Name Parish Council	Ian Fafard
Paige Black	Mariana Kushnir	Tatyano Chabauyuk	Nicola Falconer
June Bourque	KUTOA	Henry Chan	Nicholas Ferrar
Brian Bronfman Family Foundation	Veronique Lampotang	Vanessa Chan	Dieu Ly
Charles Brindamour & Josee Letarte	Lisette Lampotang	Amy Chan	Jill E. MacLean
Sandi Brinker	Tim Lau	Charities Aid Fdn America	Ruth Mandel
Anita Bryce	Ji Min Lee	Anaya Chaudhori	Ruth Mariano
Barry Butaria	Sherran Lee	Miing Chen	Norrena Mariano
Karen Butaria	Ada Lee	Tracy Cheng	Irving Markovitz
Monika Cadar	Sharon Leenor	Daniel Cheng	Glenna Marra
	Ludmila Leonov		Quentin Martin
	Ann V Levey		

Bruce McKean	N. Witane	Kamala Raja	Zhiwei Wang
Leslie McLean	Gail Wong	Manraj Rana	Jane Wang
A Anne McLellan	Jason Wormald	Christopher & Jean Rath	Lori Ward
Christian Mihai	Adam Fisher	Moiz Rawala	David Watson
Suraj Mistry	Joelle Fisher	Monika Rehan	Aimée White
Dharmesh Mistry	Roy Fisher	Reinstein/D'Aguilar Family	Wounded Warriors Canada
Narendra Mistry	Stanley Fok	Christine Rollo	Betty Wright
Ravish Mitra	Lorne Fox	Alireza Ronaghi	
Murli Mitra	Jane Frank	Dr Gerald Rosenstein	Yuan Wu
Maria Ann Moro-Blackburn	The Honourable Myra A Freeman	Rotem Regev	Kevin Wu
James Mossman & Danielle Leinroth	Alex Fridman	Jamila Russ	Ling Wu
Yana Nachimovitch	Lyn Furman	Hamsa Saleh	
Ruth Anne Nicholson	Ramin Ganji	Patrizia Saleh	
Jacqueline Nissanov	William Gard	Guy Savard	
Janet M Noble	Jacky Gashabi	Beatrix Schirner	
Alain Nolet	Anna German	Bogdan Semyaniv	
Lise Olds	Susan Gibson & Mark Bergman	Ami Shah	
Casey Onysko	Lynda Giordano	Priya Shah	
Carol Ann Oster	Illia Golzman	Nisha Shah	
Margaret Ostrowski	Jennifer Gomes	Katherine Dove Sherren	
Our Lady of Peace CWL	Caleb Goodman	Siarhei Sholkavich	
Jamie Oyler	Aurelia Gradus	Milana Sholkovick	
John Wesley Parker	Mela Grande	Irit Shoval	
Joyce Peria	Monty Grunebaum	Iryna Shuryhina	
Natahsa Phinney	Rita Halbright	Amanjot Sidhu	
Joey Poirier	Morris Ham	Arlene Silver	
Roberto Portlese	Robert Harlang	Avina Silver RMT	
Liam Power	Mandy He	The Slaughter Family Foundation	
Power Corporation of Canada	Arlene Hensel	Maxim Smirnov	
Saar Yaacov	Prof Nancy Hermiston	James M Stanford	
Inga Yakhnin	Bin Hong	Andrea Suelto	
Charlie Yan	Renee Horowitz	Christine Sundberg	
Rommel Yao	Michael Hsu	Jenny Ta	
Liang Ye	Maggie Huynh	Queeny Tam	
Sung Joon Yeon	Intact Foundation	Yingbo Tan	
Ling Zhang	Isles Foundation Incorporated	James Venneear	
Jihong Zhang	Maya Ismail	Mo Vikrant & Elle Patille	
Zhaosheng Jason Zhang	Mike Ismail	Roy Voogel	
Hui Zhang	Mohemad Ismail	Patricia Voogel	
Karli Zschogner	Doug & Debby Ives	Dawn Voogel	
Michael Zubkov	Elizabeth Pump	Yilian Wan	
Shaul Wisebourt	Kourosh Rafizadeh Noori	Jin Wang	
		Eui Hyun Wang	



THE ROMÉO  
DALLAIRE



**CHILD  
SOLDIERS**  
INITIATIVE



DALHOUSIE  
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[childsoldiers.org](http://childsoldiers.org)