



# SALW Control Training Manual for West Africa

Photo: UNDP Liberia

## Preface

The purpose of this Manual is to help strengthen the capacity of the West African community to deal with the devastating consequences of the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW). It is intended as a primer for those with little or no experience in SALW action, and as an *aide memoire* for those well versed in these issues.

This Manual evolved from the need to adopt a more practical approach towards realizing the objectives set out in the *ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials*, which was signed on 14 June 2006. It is the result of a collaborative effort between the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), the ECOWAS Small Arms Unit, the German Development Cooperation (GTZ) and the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), and was validated at an expert workshop on SALW at the KAIPTC in April 2008. The workshop was attended by representatives of ECOWAS, civil society organizations and government agencies from across West Africa and beyond.

Each of the eight Sections of this Manual can be read on its own or in a different order than presented here. For organizations and individuals new to the small arms issue, we recommend reading the entire Manual. For those well versed in small arms issues, we recommend using the Manual as a resource and selecting only those sections most relevant for your work. The manual is designed to be used by a diverse audience and easily adaptable to a variety of contexts.

The initial target group for this Manual was civil society actors and organizations engaged in the SALW issue. However, the expert workshop made clear the need to build capacity, trust and confidence between all key actors involved in this issue. Each section was therefore written with all three actors in mind. More specifically, Sections 6 and 7 discuss the interaction between civil society, security service personnel and government agencies on SALW control issues, and identify entry points for better coordination and cooperation.

The goal of this Manual is not only to serve as a backgrounder for SALW issues in West Africa, but also as a capacity-building tool. With this in mind, several features appear throughout the Manual to facilitate education and training on the SALW issue. For example, readers are provided with reminders, additional resources, tables and checklists to facilitate action and understanding. Boxes describe cases of SALW control in various West African countries. Finally, trainer notes are included where they can facilitate the structure and delivery of the issue at hand. The result is a highly practical, modifiable and flexible Manual on SALW Control for West African practitioners, policymakers and researchers alike.

## Foreword

ECOWAS has long faced the devastating consequences of the uncontrolled and illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the sub-region. Recognizing the need for a more definitive approach to reducing the threat posed by these weapons, the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials was signed on 14 June 2006.

The Convention is a legally-binding instrument that provides a comprehensive framework to effectively address the problem of SALW, their ammunition and other materials in West Africa. Subsequent to its signature, the ECOWAS Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP) was established for a period of five years to build the capacity of member states to implement the Convention to its fullest.

In April 2008, an expert workshop was held in Accra, Ghana at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KA IPTC) to exchange good practices and priorities for SALW control in West Africa. This KA IPTC workshop was supported by the ECOWAS Small Arms Unit, the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). It was attended by members of civil society organizations, government agencies and regional organizations from across the sub-region and beyond.

The SALW Control Training Manual for West Africa was validated at this workshop and reflects those issues considered the most pertinent for practitioners, policymakers and researchers on this issue. The authors have sought to effectively capture West African realities and experiences with SALW control and have produced a publication that is relevant to a broad spectrum of actors.

We are convinced that this Manual represents an important contribution to realizing the goal of the ECOWAS Convention. We hope it will be adopted as a standard manual for capacity-building in SALW control across ECOWAS member states and civil society.

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Sincere thanks go to all participants of the SALW workshop at the KAIPTC in April 2008 who validated the purpose and structure of this publication, and whose invaluable comments helped make this a truly West African manual.

A final thanks to all contributors at BICC and the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Department at KAIPTC for their hard work and dedication to finalizing this publication. With that said, only the authors are responsible for its contents.

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

AU	African Union
BICC	Bonn International Center for Conversion
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCSL	Council of Churches in Sierra Leone
CIMIC	Civil–Military Cooperation
CPMRD	Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Department
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DD&R	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
EC	ECOWAS Convention
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOSAP	ECOWAS Small Arms Program
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FOSDA	Foundation for Security and Development in Africa
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HERD	Humanitarian Emergency Response and Development
KA IPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MALAO	Mouvement contre les Armes Légères en Afrique de l'Ouest
NATCOM	National Committees / Commissions on SALW
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PMC	Project Management Committee
PoA	UN Programme of Action on Small Arms
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAS	Small Arms Survey
SEESAC	South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
SLANSA	Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms
SSR	Security Sector/System Reform
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TRESA	Training and Education on Small Arms
UN	United Nations
WAANSA	West Africa Action Network on Small Arms
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WIPNET	Women in Peacebuilding Network

## Introduction

Welcome! By reading this training manual you are taking an interest in creating a West African community, which is safe from small arms.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) are a threat to communities and regions all over the world. Be it a large war or a village argument, the presence of SALW will make the situation worse and lead to more people dying. In West Africa, the proliferation of small arms has contributed towards instability, violence and war in the subregion.

This training manual will give you some background information on SALW. The *goals* of this manual are:

- To provide an overview of the SALW issue and issues specific to West Africa;
- To promote action on SALW control in West Africa through the sharing of resources, good practice, case studies and tips from across the sub-region;
- To provide future trainers with sound background material to engage in training or capacity-building on SALW control.

This manual is intended for a variety of different audiences, most notably Civil Society Organizations (CSO) interested or engaged in issues of SALW control.

This manual is also relevant to members of the *security services*. While they may share the goal of SALW control, the relationship between CSOs and security services is often difficult. This manual offers suggestions of the types and limitations of cooperation to promote SALW control.

This manual is also useful for *decision-makers* in West Africa. Often decision-makers, while they subscribe to the idea of SALW control, are not terribly familiar with the details. This manual should help in educating decision-makers about the real and concrete problems of SALW, as well as specific potential solutions for West Africa and its people.

This manual is the *start* of the journey, not its *end*. We hope it will help strengthen the capacity of the West African community—CSOs, security services, and decision-makers alike—to deal with the SALW problem. This can only be achieved if willpower is translated to action by:

- Using this manual as an in-house training tool;
- Developing the capacity of organizations to cooperate;
- Demanding and developing training courses to strengthen capacity across the region;
- Providing us with feedback to keep the manual current and on-target.

We wish you every success in your endeavors.



## Section 1: Introduction to SALW

### What are SALW?

SALW is short for **S**mall  
**A**rms and  
**L**ight  
**W**eapons

SALW typically refer to military weapons and commercial firearms. Even though the term is frequently used, there is no universal definition of SALW. The most common definition was first put forth by the United Nations (UN) in 1997 and makes a distinction between 'small arms' and 'light weapons'. Broadly speaking, *small arms* are defined as "those weapons designed for personal use" and *light weapons* as "those weapons designed for use by several persons serving as a crew"<sup>1</sup>. The UN definition puts forth a list of weapons within each category to identify those weapons that are considered to be SALW.

Excluded from this list are weapons such as machetes, knives, spears, arrows, and other implements that can be used as weapons (sticks, clubs). While these weapons are equally deadly when misused, they are also common tools and household items and therefore need to be controlled in a different way. The UN definition of SALW refers only to weapons that use *explosive ammunition*.

The most comprehensive description of SALW is included in the ECOWAS "Convention on Small arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other Related Material" (ECOWAS Convention), which was signed in 2006. It covers a broad range of objects within its description of SALW, including ammunition, ammunition cartridges, and "all components, parts or spare parts for small arms or light weapons or ammunition necessary for its functioning; or any chemical substance serving as active material used as propelling or explosive agent; (...)"

### How many SALW are there?

It is estimated that there are over 600 million SALW in circulation around the world, one for every ten people on earth. Approximately 380 million of this is believed to be in civilian hands. It is assumed that 100 million are found in Africa. These weapons kill tens of thousands, possibly hundreds of thousands of people every year.

<sup>1</sup> You will find the UN definition of SALW in Annex I. Throughout this manual, the terms 'SALW', 'small arms' and 'guns' are used interchangeably.

### Case Study: SALW proliferation in West Africa

In West Africa alone, it is estimated that there are seven to eight million pistols, rifles and other small arms in circulation—about the same number as people living in Benin. However, the real quantity might be much lower (Vines, 2005).

How did so many small arms end up in West Africa? There are a number of factors that contributed to the proliferation of SALW in the subregion:

- Anti-colonial struggles;
- Superpower competition for allies and the massive flow of weapons into Africa from Central and Eastern Europe following the end of the Cold War;
- Military regimes and dictatorships;
- Local craft production of guns (gunsmiths);
- Lost or stolen weapons from state security services and leakage from government armories; and
- Returning peacekeepers.

A great deal of SALW and their ammunition are locally manufactured. One-third of African states factory-produce small arms or their ammunition. The number of countries producing SALW on a non-industrial scale is believed to be significantly higher. Different sources indicate that local production occurs in Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Senegal and Guinea, with Ghana being the most prominent case (Aning, 2005; Berman, 2007).

See Section 5 for more on the problem of local production.

### Why are SALW used?

The end of the Cold War in the early 1990s saw the emergence of new kinds of conflict, those characterized by ethnic, tribal or religious fighting that occurred within, as opposed to between states. Many of these wars were fought with SALW, which had become readily available through the downsizing and demilitarization of national armies. SALW are currently the weapons of choice of warring parties for a variety of reasons, including:

- SALW are cheaper than other conventional weapons;
- SALW are widely available;
- SALW are lethal;
- SALW are simple to use;
- SALW are durable;
- SALW are easily portable;
- SALW are easily concealed and transported across borders;
- SALW have legitimate military, police and civilian uses.

### What is the danger of SALW?

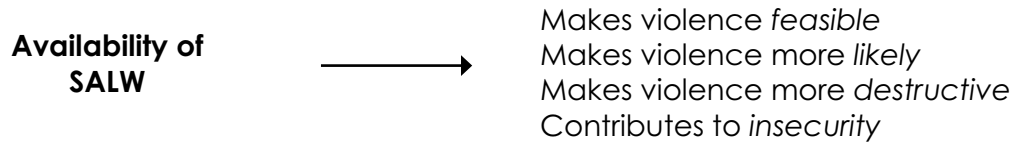
SALW have irrevocably shaped the landscape of modern conflict and daily life by presenting a threat to peace and security in every community.

Threats include:

- More deaths and injuries;
- Lack of development;
- No personal or community security;
- Destruction of property;

- Breakdown of law and order;
- Prolongation of conflicts.

SALW do not cause violence, but they can *contribute* to the escalation of violence. There is no automatic or causal relationship between SALW and violence, but one can say that:



The impact of the availability and proliferation of SALW varies in each country and conflict situation. In some (post-conflict) cases, the presence of SALW often perpetuates a 'culture of violence' where guns are used as problem-solving tools or are used to exert power and influence over others. Their presence and misuse can lead to a cycle of violence in which people acquire guns out of fear, which increases the likelihood of more SALW violence and insecurity. This, in turn, causes people to arm further.

In post-conflict situations, SALW violence can also hinder peacekeeping and peace-building efforts. It limits access to food, water, and livelihoods and also impedes humanitarian assistance. In resource-rich areas, SALW violence can drain away or divert these resources from rebuilding the community or country, causing continued economic hardship and a lack of economic opportunities.<sup>2</sup>

In other words, SALW violence affects everyone, from the individual to whole countries, regions and even the entire international community.

### Case Study: Problems related to SALW in Ghana

For the greater part of history, guns have been used in West Africa as part of tradition, especially during ceremonies such as burials and festivals. However, the problems of SALW, underdevelopment, violent conflict and human rights abuses in West Africa are interwoven. The spread and misuse of small arms helps fuel conflict, and conflict generates a market for more weapons.

Ghana, like many other countries in the region, has been affected by violent ethnic conflicts in the past. In the northern part of Ghana, ethnic violence in the mid-1990s caused over 1,000 deaths and more than 150,000 internally displaced persons. Various SALW, both imported and locally-produced, are reported to have been used in most of these conflicts.

Ghana also suffers from land disputes similar to many of its regional counterparts. There are multiple claims to land, and this problem has led to the use of youth as land guards. The function of these guards is to enforce the land claims of their employers, which is often done with the use of small arms.

Another manifestation of small arms violence is reflected by the consistent increase of armed robberies in Ghana. While the reason for this increase is subject to debate, it is argued that the availability of small arms is a major factor.

For more on the SALW problem in Ghana, refer to the selected bibliography for this section.

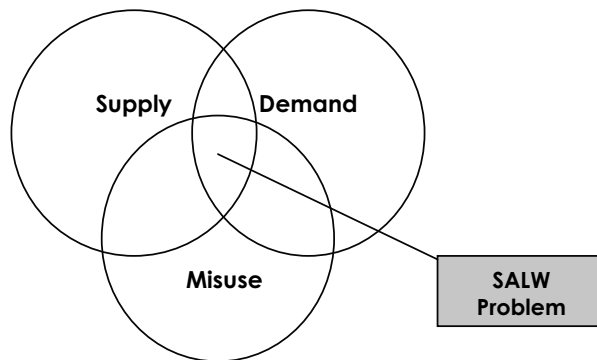
**Source:** Agboton-Johnson, Christiane, Adedeji Ebo and Laura Mazal. 2004. "Small Arms Control in Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal." *West Africa Series* No. 2. International Alert. Security and Peacebuilding Programme.

<sup>2</sup> See Section 4 for more on the relationship between SALW and development.

## Dimensions of the SALW issue

There are three inter-related dimensions of the small arms issue: supply, demand, and misuse.

**Figure 1: Dimensions of the SALW issue**



**Demand** is the reason *why* guns are acquired, owned and/or used. These can be:

- For income and/or part of a livelihood option;
- To extort money in criminal activities;
- To enhance personal security in places where the capacity of the state to do so is limited;
- For status, power and prestige;
- For traditional uses in celebrations, burials, and other ceremonies;
- Self-protection and defense in the absence of the state and/or during conflict situations;
- The protection of one's assets, including crops or cattle, against theft;
- National defense and security.

**Supply** is *where* guns come from and *how* they proliferate within a community, country or region. Sources are:

- Industrial production by licensed national and international producers;
- Illegal production by manufacturers without a license;
- Legal and illicit trade in SALW by sea and across borders;
- Diversion from state stockpiles;
- Migration of weapons from one conflict situation to another.

**Misuse** involves the use of guns to commit crimes and atrocities, such as:

- Murder, manslaughter, attempted murder, intimidation, or robbery;
- The settling of private scores and causing harm;
- Inter-ethnic violence, rivalry between clans, armed conflicts and civil wars;
- Land conflicts;
- Intimidation of political opponents during elections;
- Use by land-guards and armed robbers, and in 'contract killings';
- Domestic violence.

In order to combat the problem of SALW, all three dimensions of the problem must be addressed in a sustainable and effective manner.

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## Section 2: What is SALW control?

SALW control refers to the implementation, or a combination of measures, which aim to reduce and prevent their negative impact on people, communities, and countries.

The proliferation and misuse of SALW devastates countries at war, but these weapons also harm countries at peace, taking tens of thousands of lives and draining community resources. SALW violence has long-term consequences for the whole of society, including the economy and the functioning of state services.

We therefore need SALW control to:

- Reduce and prevent the illegal flow of SALW around the world, especially from conflict to conflict, and
- Reduce and prevent their irresponsible use and diversion into the wrong hands.

SALW control involves measures that address the three dimensions of *supply*, *demand*, and *misuse*. You can see from Table 1 below that a clear distinction between the activities is not always possible. As the dimensions are interlinked, so are control schemes. Moreover, successful attempts at control need to be able to identify these various activities, and deal with all three dimensions simultaneously.

**Table 1: SALW control measures**

SUPPLY	DEMAND	MISUSE
Brokering controls Transfer controls Marking and tracing Stockpile management SALW collection and destruction	Livelihood programming Understanding and targeting attitudes Education Awareness-raising	Regulation of civilian ownership Legislation and enforcement Awareness-raising Education Security sector reform (SSR) Community controls (social and technical)

Keep in mind that controlling only one of these dimensions will not lead to success. A broad approach encompassing elements of all three is necessary to tackle the problem of SALW.

### Controlling the supply of SALW

SALW spread through different channels. Almost all states participate in this proliferation, via:

- *Production* = the manufacture of weapons. This includes industrial or small-scale production of weapons;
- *Transfer / trade* = the import and export of SALW;
- *Transit* = the movement of SALW through a country's borders to reach a final destination;
- *Diversion* = the movement of SALW from the legal to the illegal sphere.

There are a number of entry points at the national level to control the supply of SALW through legal, political, or civic action. Table 2 below identifies some of these entry-points along with their relevant control mechanisms that can and should be applied at the national level. Not all States have done so despite having agreed to them in the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (PoA) and other regional agreements, such as the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials (see Section 3). It is therefore critical to identify these entry points in order to put in place the necessary control measures.

Table 2: Entrypoints for controlling SALW supply

Entry point	Control mechanism	Purpose	Challenge	Relevant provisions
Export	<b>National guidelines and legislation</b> to determine eligible countries for SALW export; <b>End-user certificates</b> issued by importing States to confirm the weapons' final destination.	To prevent irresponsible arms transfers; To confirm the legality of the transfer and assure that the weapons are not destined for unauthorized users.	States use different formats of end-user certificates. Without an internationally standardized form, they are easily forged.	<b>UN PoA</b> : Preamble, Section II, para. 2, 11–13 <b>ECOWAS Convention (EC)</b> : Articles 1, 3–6, 19, 20
Transit	<b>National guidelines and criteria</b> to monitor the movement of weapons through a territory, such as controlling end-user certificates, as well as respecting transport safety standards.	To prevent diversion and illicit transfers.	Risk of diversion due to a lack of appropriate regulation, personnel, and resources to apply existing laws and guidelines.	<b>UN PoA</b> : Preamble, Section II, para. 2, 11, 12 <b>EC</b> : Articles 1, 3–6, 9, 19, 20
Import	<b>National guidelines and criteria</b> to assess the need for and risk of misuse of the weapons imported, and to monitor the end-use of the weapons.	To ensure that the imported arms do not have a negative impact on security or development.	Lack of capacity, resources and political will of the importing state to effectively apply its national guidelines and criteria.	<b>UN PoA</b> : Preamble, Section II, para. 2, 11 <b>EC</b> : Articles 1–6, 9, 15, 18, 19
Circulation	<b>SALW collection and destruction</b>	To remove weapons from circulation and make communities safer. SALW collection programs are targeted at civilians and are typically organized after a conflict has ended or within SALW-saturated communities. Destroying weapons permanently removes them from circulation and, consequently, the threat of diversion and misuse.	Continuing insecurity and/or lack of confidence in the peace process, which limits the willingness of people to give up their guns voluntarily, and which can create more insecurity. Lack of legislation and political will to define and destroy surplus weapons.	<b>UN PoA</b> : Section II, para. 4, 16, 18, 21, 34, Section III, para. 6, 14 <b>EC</b> : Articles 11, 16, 17, 19
	<b>Stockpile management</b> , which involves the safe and secure handling of small arms and ammunition stocks.	To prevent diversion and safety hazards such as ammunition explosions.	Lack of adequate facilities, personnel, resources, and awareness of international standards.	<b>UN PoA</b> : Section II, para. 3, 6, 8, 17, 18, 29, Section III, para. 6, 8, 14 <b>EC</b> : Articles 16, 19



Entry point	Control mechanism	Purpose	Challenge	Relevant provisions
Cross-cutting	<b>Arms embargoes</b> at the international or regional level, which prohibit the transfer of arms to certain recipients.	To limit the availability of arms to certain actors in a particular conflict situation or to areas with persistent human rights abuses.	Arms embargoes are rarely respected by all Member States. Small arms are easily concealed and moved across borders, which makes monitoring and enforcement of embargoes difficult.	<b>UN PoA:</b> Preamble, para. 12, Section II, para. 15, 32 <b>EC:</b> Articles 1, 6, 21
	<b>Marking, record-keeping and tracing</b> <sup>4</sup>	To identify the point(s) of diversion of small arms from the legal to the illicit sphere in order to prevent such diversion in the future.	Poor implementation of international marking standards. Inadequate and/or inconsistent record-keeping. Lack of central registries. Lack of international cooperation on marking and tracing. Lack of political will.	<b>UN PoA:</b> Preamble, Article 1, 19, Section II, para. 4, 7, 8–11, 14–17, 21, 36, Section III, para. 6, 9–12, 14, Section IV, para. 1. <b>EC :</b> Articles 1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 15, 17–19
	<b>Regulation of the activities of international arms brokers</b> through licensing, the establishment of penalties, and information-sharing between countries.	To reduce the incidence of illegal arms transfers.	Lack of awareness and political will to enact legislation to regulate brokering activities. Lack of capacity to monitor brokering activities. Lack of international cooperation. <sup>5</sup>	<b>UN PoA:</b> Section II, para.4, 14, 39, Section IV, para.1 <b>EC :</b> Articles 1, 6, 20

<sup>4</sup> See Section 4 for more on the relationship between SALW and development.

<sup>5</sup> A Report of the Group of Governmental Experts, established pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 60/81, considers further steps to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons, p. 9. A/62/163, 30 August 2007. It is available online via <<http://disarmament.un.org/Library.nsf/>>.

To date, SALW production has not been a key entry point for controlling the supply of weapons. This is because inadequate national controls on production have not proven to be a major source of illegal SALW. However, this is changing—local craft production is increasingly a source of illicit proliferation and use of SALW, particularly in the West African subregion.<sup>3</sup>

### Controlling the demand for SALW

In order to reduce and prevent the demand for SALW, we need to answer the following questions:

- Why do SALW enter a particular community?
- What are the means used to acquire them?
- Who are the main weapons-holders?
- What do they do with the weapons?

Efforts to control the demand for SALW not only have to address the motivations for acquiring a weapon, but also the social, behavioral, environmental and economic conditions that make it possible. All of these are long-term solutions that cross-cut with many other development and security issues.

Unlike the supply of SALW, not enough attention has been paid to the issue of SALW demand in theory and in practice. Global and regional agreements on SALW focus more on supply-side measures (see Section 3). This is largely because addressing demand does not easily lend itself to clear-cut control mechanisms. Indeed, the reasons and ways in which SALW are acquired vary across individuals, communities and countries.

Nevertheless, patterns of SALW demand exist and should be considered carefully before engaging in any control activity. Table 3 provides some examples of these patterns and key ways in which they can be addressed.

**Table 3: Activities to control the demand for SALW**

Motivations for acquiring SALW	Issues to address
Livelihood, lack of alternatives	Livelihood programming, development projects, micro-credit programs, alternative skills training
Insecurity	Law enforcement, reform of the national security sector
Enhancing social status, image, power	Social and cultural substitutes for status, targeting attitudes and behaviors toward weapons
Economic investment	Micro-credit projects, lowering the value and raising the cost of keeping guns

A number of different activities can be used to address the motivations for acquiring SALW, which include awareness-raising, capacity-building, education and information dissemination. These activities must be carefully designed, targeted and appropriate to the audience at hand. A good place to start is a baseline survey on the reasons for SALW demand, upon which control activities can be carried out more systematically and effectively.

<sup>3</sup> For more on the issue of local production, see Section 5.

## Controlling the misuse of SALW

If we want to control and ultimately end the misuse of SALW, it is important to consider:

- Who is misusing SALW?
- Why are SALW being misused?
- In what way are SALW being misused?

These questions are closely linked to issues of supply and demand. The easy availability of SALW can increase misuse, particularly if these weapons are in civilian hands. However, a weak or poorly trained security sector also contributes to the misuse of SALW by the security forces themselves. In addition, a lack of adequate laws on SALW ownership and the enforcement of existing laws create a culture of impunity whereby there are no legal consequences or punishment for SALW misuse. This behavior therefore becomes harder to deter.

The key to controlling the misuse of SALW therefore lies in the establishment and enforcement of appropriate national legislation. These rules and procedures should include provisions on:

- **Civilian ownership and use:** This includes laws on who should be allowed to own and/or carry a weapon, the procedure for issuing licenses to these individuals, which type of weapons are eligible for civilian ownership and which are prohibited, and legal consequences for illegal ownership.
- **National ownership and use:** among other things, this includes laws regulating the production and transfer of SALW, coordination between national law enforcement and security agencies, the creation of national SALW registries, marking and tracing regulations, and capacity-building of responsible law enforcement agencies.

In a number of countries, national law enforcement agencies such as the police are unable to provide for the security of their people due to a lack of capacity, resources, training, or legislation. In some cases, these agencies may even contribute to or perpetuate insecurity through the abuse of power, corruption or the misuse of SALW. It is therefore critical that these agencies be properly trained and equipped so that they can be accountable to the security needs of their citizens. For more on the security sector, see Section 7.

Remember: The supply, demand, and misuse of SALW are inextricably linked. So are control schemes. Successful attempts at SALW control therefore need to identify relevant activities within all three dimensions and deal with them simultaneously.

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United Nations. 2005. "International instrument to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons." New York: UN DDA. Available at <<http://disarmament.un.org/cab/docs/International%20instrument%20English.pdf>>.

## Section 3: Agreements on SALW control

Many governments in the world have recognized that the small arms problem is not confined to their own countries and therefore cannot be tackled by them alone. Indeed, the SALW problem is a global one which requires global attention and the creation of solutions at all levels of political and social organization. As a result, many governments have signed a number of agreements at the global and regional levels to stop the illegal spread of SALW across borders.

The development of global and regional initiatives to curb the illegal trade in SALW emerged alongside a number of important global political events in the 1990s. These include the outbreak of civil wars in Somalia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Rwanda, all of which were fought primarily with small arms. The realization by the international community that small arms can cause mass destruction was one of the main motivations for attempting to diminish and control their proliferation.

There are two different types of global and regional agreements on SALW: legal and political. The most important difference between these two types of agreement is that a legal agreement is legally binding. By signing the agreement, states commit themselves to abide by and comply with its requirements. A political agreement is an expression of will and intent to behave in accordance with certain norms and principles.

There are two key international agreements dealing with the illicit proliferation and trade of SALW:

1. The UN Protocol Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition (UN Firearms Protocol);
2. The UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (UN PoA).

Both agreements are mutually reinforcing.

### **UN Firearms Protocol<sup>4</sup>**

The UN Firearms Protocol is the only legally binding document at the global level. It aims specifically at combating the illegal spread of commercial firearms and their use in criminal activities such as terrorism, drug trafficking and theft. The Protocol requires states to introduce legislation that criminalizes the illegal production of firearms, to strengthen national gun licensing procedures and to establish effective marking and tracing measures to prevent and reduce the diversion of these weapons into the black market.

The UN Firearms Protocol does not attempt to limit civilian possession of guns nor government-to-government transfers of weapons. Rather, it commits states to establish national regulations, which prevent the use of guns in crime. It does not deal with the global SALW trade nor the use and impact of guns in inter- or intra-state conflict.

To check whether your government has signed and/or ratified the UN Firearms Protocol, see <http://www.iansa.org/un/firearms-protocol.htm>. The full text of the Protocol is available at <http://www.iansa.org/un/un-firearms-protocol.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> The UN Firearms Protocol was agreed in May 2001 and entered into force in July 2005. Members of ECOWAS that have signed the Protocol are Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, and Sierra Leone (as of the date of publication of this Manual).

## UN Programme of Action (PoA)

The UN Programme of Action (PoA) is the first international agreement that deals with the problem of SALW more comprehensively. Agreed in 2001, the UN PoA establishes a set of norms and principles to address and prevent the *illicit trade* in SALW. It is not a legally binding document. Its effectiveness and impact on the ground therefore depends on the political will of states to fulfill its commitments.

Among other things, the PoA aims to:

- Develop agreed international measures to prevent illicit SALW manufacture and trafficking;
- Promote responsibility by states in the import, export, transit and retransfer of SALW;
- Raise awareness of the threat and international problems posed by illicit SALW.

The table below lists and explains the *key commitment areas* of the UN PoA. In most areas, the agreement requests governments to establish and/or enforce adequate national laws to ensure that the commitment is fulfilled.

**Table 4: Key commitment areas of the PoA**

Commitment Area	Explanation
Transfers	Transfer controls refer to the import, export, transit and retransfer of SALW across and within national borders. The PoA commits governments to regulate all transfers under their jurisdiction by establishing proper standards, and checks and balances.
Brokering	Arms brokers are individuals who coordinate the transfer of arms between two or more parties. The PoA commits governments to regulate the activity of brokers through registration, authorization and international coordination, among others, to prevent SALW from being used in illegal activities.
Stockpile management & destruction	The PoA commits governments to establish adequate standards and procedures for stockpile management and destruction. These standards are needed to prevent the diversion and theft of weapons from government stocks into the illegal market.
Disarmament	The PoA commits governments to disarm soldiers and civilians after a war has ended through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DD&R) and voluntary civilian disarmament programs.
Marking & tracing	The PoA calls on governments to ensure the adequate marking and record-keeping of SALW and to cooperate with other states in tracing weapons found in the illegal sphere. This measure is meant to help identify the point of diversion of a weapon in order to prevent future diversion.
Cooperation, assistance and transparency	The PoA calls on governments to assist other countries in implementing the provisions of the PoA. Transparency is also encouraged through the submission of <i>annual progress reports</i> to the UN on the implementation of the agreement.

The UN PoA calls for a biennial meeting of states to monitor progress and identify needs and challenges in implementing the agreement. To date, implementation has been inconsistent both within and across states and requires continued will and political engagement. At the same time, the UN PoA has contributed to greater awareness, understanding and policymaking on SALW control and has led to the formation of other global initiatives, such as the UN Marking & Tracing Instrument (see Section 2 for supply-side control mechanisms).

To check whether your government has submitted its annual report to the UN on the implementation of the PoA, visit <http://disarmament.un.org/cab/salw-nationalreports.html>. The full text of the UN PoA is available at <http://disarmament.un.org/cab/poa.html>.

### **ECOWAS Convention**

The ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Related Material (ECOWAS Convention) was adopted in 2006. It succeeded the ECOWAS Moratorium of 1998, the first political agreement on SALW in the sub-region that bans the illicit import, export and manufacture of SALW. Similarly, the ECOWAS Convention prohibits the illegal import, export, or manufacture of SALW, and is legally binding for its members.

The ECOWAS Convention reaffirms the basic principles of the Moratorium and includes a number of the same key provisions, including:

- The establishment of National Commissions;
- A regional arms register and database;
- The training of security personnel;
- The harmonization of laws;
- The enhancement of border controls;
- Arms collection and destruction.

Since the Convention is a *legally binding* agreement, States that have agreed to it must implement its provisions and can be sanctioned if they fail to do so through the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council or the ECOWAS Court of Justice. The Convention enters into force following ratification by the ninth Member State. To date, Niger, Mali, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Senegal have ratified the Convention.<sup>5</sup>

An overview of key provisions of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Related Material can be found in Annex II. A copy of the Convention can also be downloaded from <http://www.unrec-satcra.org>.

What is unique about the ECOWAS Convention?

To their great credit, ECOWAS members have succeeded to add several new elements to already existing measures. Among the most salient of these are:

- Inclusion of ammunition and other related material;
- Reference to non-state actors;
- Provision of a sanctions mechanism in the case of non-compliance.

<sup>5</sup> Ratifications as of June 2008.

The Convention seeks to achieve its mandate by:

- Enhancing the capacity of the ECOWAS member states through their respective National Committees on SALW, commonly called NATCOM;
- Obliging member states to undertake revisions of existing legislation.

Remember: The ECOWAS Convention is the most modern instrument on SALW control. The international community can take this as an example and should adopt a similar, legally binding agreement on an international scale.<sup>6</sup>

### Case Study: National legislation in Ghana

Most of the national legislations on weapons are outdated. Ghana's main legislation on the subject dates back to 1962. Over time and due to subsequent developments in the security sector, most of these legislations have become obsolete.

Existing regulations, which address issues of SALW in Ghana include the following:

- Arms and Ammunition Act (of 1962 amended in 1996 and 2001)
- Arms and Ammunition Regulations (1962)
- Arms and Ammunition Decree (1972)

These regulations address issues of 'arms' and 'ammunition' and their export and import, depositing and safekeeping, ownership conditions and penal provisions, while the ECOWAS Convention seeks to regulate all issues connected to SALW, ammunition and related materials. Ghana's national legislation also does not take into consideration illegal trans-border movements or transfers of such weapons.

**Source:** Kunbuor, 2007.

Is the Convention binding for your government?

Before international or regional agreements become legally binding for a particular government, they need to enter into force. This usually happens automatically, once a certain number of states have ratified the respective agreement. In the case of the ECOWAS Convention, it will only enter into force after the ninth ratification by a member state. Ratification means that ECOWAS member states that signed the Convention in 2006 need to pass it through Parliament and then deposit an 'instrument of ratification'—this is most often in the form of a signed document by the Head of State.

Even after ratification, there remains a gap between what West African governments have committed to and the actual process of implementing these commitments at home. A treaty or convention which exists purely on paper does not have an effect on the ground if its provisions are not turned into laws, policies or any other action.

The implementation of the ECOWAS Convention and other international agreements may therefore suffer from a number of obstacles, such as:

- Lack of awareness and / or understanding of the issue;
- Lack of political will;
- Lack of resources;
- Cultural barriers.

<sup>6</sup> A Group of Governmental Experts is currently deliberating the feasibility of an international, legally binding Arms Trade Treaty. It will submit its report the Secretary General of the United Nations in Autumn 2008.

For example, in some countries, the use of firearms in celebrations, such as funerals or weddings, as well as the production of SALW by local blacksmiths has traditionally been part of the society. These deeply entrenched features cannot be changed overnight.

The ECOWAS Convention makes licensing of firearms obligatory. Civilians owning a gun will need to declare it to the authorities and undergo safety training in order to obtain a license and make possession legal. This process may be hindered by fear of being prosecuted, mistrust of the authorities and ignorance of the provision. A complicating factor is a dilemma encountered by confidants of weapons holders: While they might be legally obligated to expose family and community members in the possession of SALW, their culture and community ties might prevent them from doing so.

What can civil society organizations do?

Civil society organizations can help overcome some of these challenges by:

- Creating awareness among the public and authorities of the problem of SALW and the need to implement the Convention (see Section 6 for more on awareness-raising);
- Organizing consultative meetings for communities and authorities on implementation processes;
- Enhancing ownership of SALW control programs;
- Offering consultancy and capacity development programs for implementing agencies;
- Creating awareness among potential donors helping to fund these activities.

What is the added value of the ECOWAS Convention?

It is too early to evaluate the effects of the ECOWAS Convention. Nevertheless, if properly and comprehensively implemented, the Convention promotes the destruction of surplus or seized illegal weapons, ammunition and other related materials; reducing transfers of illegal SALW to non-state actors; and limiting civilian possession of SALW. However, these benefits can only be realized if member states have the necessary will and resources to comply with the Convention's provisions.

**Remember:** It is relatively easy for governments to sign an agreement on SALW, but much more difficult to transmit those words into actions. Civil society actors and local authorities have a key role to play in making sure that the government lives up to its word.

### Useful resources

For an analysis of the ECOWAS Convention and a review of the ECOWAS Moratorium, see:

- Berkol, Ilhan. 2006. "Analysis of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons and recommendations for the development of an Action Plan." Note d'Analyse. Brussels: GRIP.
- Bah, Alhaji. 2004. "Implementing the ECOWAS Small Arms Moratorium in Post-War Sierra Leone." *Project Ploughshares Working Paper* 04-1. Waterloo: Project Ploughshares. Available at <[www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/WorkingPapers/wp041eng.pdf](http://www.ploughshares.ca/libraries/WorkingPapers/wp041eng.pdf)>.
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For more information on the issue of SALW marking and tracing, see:

- Ashkenazi, Michael, Christine Beeck and Elvan Isikozlu. 2008. *Marking and Tracing Small Arms and Light Weapons*. Bonn: BICC. Available at <<http://www.tresa-online.org/modules/module.php?id=15>>.
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## Section 4: SALW and other cross-cutting Issues

### Youth and SALW

#### Trainer Note

It is important to begin this section with a definition of youth. According to the United Nations, youth is anyone between the ages of 15 and 24. By contrast, ECOWAS defines youth as anyone between the ages of 18 and 35. It is up to you or your participants to define youth in your own setting. In some cases, the definition you choose may have direct implications for whether you can access youth program funding or not.

In the last decade, two million children died as a result of armed conflict and at least six million were permanently disabled or seriously injured. Estimates have put the number of child soldiers, (children under the age of 18) at 300,000 and their involvement has been documented in more than 30 conflicts worldwide (UNICEF, n.d). The roles of children in conflict situations range from actual combatants to messengers, cooks, porters and providers of sexual services. Children tend to be predominantly the victims of small arms use. Even when they are perpetrators of SALW violence, this is almost always at the instigation of (ir)responsible adults.

SALW violence also destroys infrastructure and generates insecurity. In this context, children and youth may not go to school for fear of abduction or death, or they may not have a school to attend. This impedes their overall development and provides a more fertile recruiting ground for paramilitaries and criminals, who may step in and provide their own type of education. For example, during the war in Sierra Leone, functional schooling broke down, which allowed the rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), to take over and provide their own education for children in revolutionary principles and bush warfare (McIntyre, 2003).

Youth, on the other hand, may have been recruited into violence as children, or may have chosen to engage in armed violence. They are equally as vulnerable as children to the threat of recruitment and the negative consequences of armed violence, but must be targeted as a separate group.

Why do youth get involved with SALW?

Broadly speaking, youth get involved with SALW for four reasons:

- Economics;
- Prestige;
- Display;
- Opportunities.

**Economics:** At the core of the youth and small arms problem is the struggle to survive. Economic incentives are the main reasons why youth get involved in SALW violence and crime. In order to address this problem, economic rewards, incentives and resources must be available to youth to turn them away from SALW violence. This can be in the form of small credits, honorariums, start-up grants, subsidies, scholarships, or facilities in 'gun-free' environments. Negative incentives for SALW violence should also be established in the form of law enforcement and punishment. Indeed, the cost of engaging in SALW violence needs to be greater than the benefits if the problem is to be combated effectively.

**Prestige:** The ready access to SALW can provide a feeling of empowerment to disenfranchised youth. As one South African youth explains, “When you carry a gun, you feel like you are a human being” (Taylor, 2002). SALW possession provides youth with the illusion of having reached adulthood, which is used to demand/gain attention and respect. Armed with weapons, youth are able to exert power and influence over others and acquire things—material or non-material—that would otherwise be unattainable.

**Display:** Much of what motivates young people is the need for establishing and maintaining social relationships with peers and with the opposite sex. The way to do so for most youth is to engage in social displays. These range from clothing and behaviors, to the consumption of liquor and consumer goods. Guns are also elements of display, marking hierarchies and exhibiting access to power, particularly for young men. Guns demonstrate masculinity directly, as instruments of force, and indirectly, as male peers react to the presence of guns. These display features are often felt to provide greater access to young women, as well as to prestige and power.

**Opportunities:** The lack of employment opportunities in the formal sector may provide an incentive for youth to enter the informal sector or black market to earn a living, educated or not. Unemployed youth tend to be idle youth that are easy targets for any group that is the first to approach them and use them. Youth, by nature, like to be the center of attention, so whoever grabs them first and uses them wins their loyalty and attention, particularly if they have no other options. These idle youth create a fertile basis for the recruitment into armed groups, gangs, or for political manipulation.

### Case Study: Youth as victims of power politics in Nigeria

In Nigeria, youth are victims of political manipulation and perpetrators of political violence. They are often recruited by local politicians to manipulate the electoral process in their favor through intimidation, violence, kidnapping, theft and other criminal acts. Youth are lured into these activities with cash and weapons, as well as a promise of impunity for their actions. As one interviewee told Human Rights Watch in a 2007 report, “The youth have no money—if you show them the bag of money or the bag of guns, they will work for you.” Apart for material incentives, participation in political violence offers otherwise disenfranchised youth a sense of purpose, excitement, power and relief from boredom.

While unemployed youth and criminal gangs are the primary targets, employed and educated youth are also vulnerable to recruitment. For example, another youth in the same 2007 report readily admits, “I earn money through my civil engineering and through politics. I get more money in politics.” The possibility of earning fast cash is often incentive enough to commit criminal acts, particularly under the shield of impunity. There appears to be no recourse for any crimes committed by youth on behalf of these public officials, and thus no negative incentives.

But these public officials are not working alone. Behind them are rich and powerful men, often referred to as political ‘Godfathers’, with the capacity to manipulate political systems at all levels of the government in Nigeria in favor of the politicians they sponsor. These Godfathers provide the resources necessary for public officials to run successful campaigns. In return, they exercise a degree of control over the government they helped put into place so they can continue to reap its benefits.

Godfathers therefore serve as mediators of violence perpetrated by youth in Nigeria. It is ultimately through them that many youth acquire weapons, which last far longer than any political campaign. In fact, several Nigerian states have suffered from lasting violence after politicians “either abandon or lose control over the gangs they initially employed”. A sustainable solution to the problem of youth in Nigeria requires not only the promotion of social and economic security for youth and their communities, but also the elimination of corruption and impunity in the Nigerian political system.

**Source:** Human Rights Watch, 2007, pp. 35–36. Available at <<http://hrw.org/reports/2007/nigeria1007/nigeria1007web.pdf>>.

#### Entry points for targeting youth

Within any given culture or context, youth are not a homogenous group. For example, there is a difference between educated youth and idle youth—those who are not employed, enrolled in any formal education and whose opportunities to earn a living are limited. Both groups are vulnerable to the above reasons and other incentives of taking up weapons, but must be targeted in different ways. The same goes for youth within different cultural groups and geographical areas.

Entry points are those points in space or time where a particular group can be effectively targeted. Identifying them is critical for any activity which aims to reduce and prevent the impact of SALW on youth in a sustainable way.

Entry points for educated youth include school curricula, social and political events (in the school or the community at large), sports events, academic clubs, and school campuses. The messages delivered will focus predominantly on the risk of gun violence to one’s education and future, and on the progress of one’s community and culture in general.

Entry points for idle youth include popular youth hang-outs, shelters, and community centers particularly during an election year. Organized sporting activities or the use of popular figures

to deliver anti-SALW violence messages—whether through song, performance or print—are also important entrypoints for these groups.

In both cases, an important entry point is the family itself. Rather than targeting the attitudes and behavior of youth alone, the attitudes and behavior of the family as a whole must be targeted so that any positive change is sustainable. A major challenge, therefore, is the breakdown of family structures. For example, in Sierra Leone, many youth migrated to urban centers to find work as a result of the civil war, and are now refusing to return to rural settings. Not only has agricultural production decreased, but traditional social structures have also broken down—many youth no longer respect the authority of their parents or elders. Strengthening these structures may therefore be another important entry point to prevent SALW violence by youth.

Perhaps the most important point is to start early. This means limiting children's exposure to violence and small arms, or educating them on the dangers of these weapons. Here again, the family unit and community is critical. Children already exposed to armed violence must be treated with priority.

What can you do?

Keep in mind that there is no single or easy approach to the problem of youth and SALW. Sustainable solutions require a multitude of efforts that need to be undertaken simultaneously. Prevention is the key to success over the long-term. However, youth already involved in SALW violence must be dealt with as a priority.

### Analyze and advocate

If youth and small arms is a problem in your country, find out what your government is doing about the problem. Do they have any dedicated programming or funding? Who is running the programs and what are the results to date? What more can and needs to be done? Are the needs and experiences of both young men and women being taken into account? If possible, partner with existing youth organizations and provide recommendations to the Ministry in charge of youth affairs, or turn these recommendations into a funding proposal (see Section 8) that your organization would like to implement. Whatever you suggest, keep in mind that your impact should be *replicable* and *sustainable*—the value added of your activities should be long-term and aim to last well after the funds have run dry.

### Get youth involved

Youth are also part of the solution to armed violence. Getting youth involved as agents of change will help them become responsible citizens, make new friends, feel proud of themselves, develop new skills and choose a more peaceful way of life. They can help to:

- **Reach other youth.** Youth can set a good example for their peers;
- **Provide expertise.** Youth affected by small arms and violence are the experts. They know how best to influence their friends to get involved;
- **Ensure sustainability.** Youth are the future of any society and country. Investing in them is investing in the future; and
- **Generate new ideas, energy, and capacity.** Young people bring new skills, ideas and knowledge to the table, and this energy should be put to good use.

### Case Study: Ride for peace in Ghana

In March 2002, Yendi witnessed one of the worst chieftaincy conflicts in the history of the Dagbon state which resulted in the death of the King of Dagbon, Ya-Na Yakubu Andani II and forty of his elders. This clash has induced a break-up among the people along clan, chieftaincy and partisan lines leading to a high level of suspicion among the people as well as a mass exodus of productive labor out of the district. Small arms are the most sought-after commodity. Armed violence among youth is high.

The Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA) initiated a conflict management program in the region in a bid to restore peace and reduce the negative effect of illicit small arms in the area. To achieve this aim, FOSDA and its partners embarked on various activities including workshops for youth, women's groups, opinion leaders, and other stakeholders. It was during one such workshop with the youth that participants suggested a cycling competition as a visible and practical means of sustaining the fragile peace which was beginning to manifest in the area.

Not only are bicycles a popular means of transport, but they also represent youth endurance and agility, which is measured by the distance one can cover non-stop on a bicycle. It is also a challenge of one's masculinity among young men. "Our energies and stamina would be stretched to the limit but no blood would be drawn," they stated. This was the main reason for choosing this sport to call for peace.

The first 'Ride for Peace' among the six Area Councils that constitute the Yendi Municipal Assembly was organized on 30 November 2004, a week to the 7 December 2004 general elections. Both men and women participated in the competition and it covered a distance of 15 kilometers from Adibo to Yendi. It was an event which brought together thousands of people without regard to chieftaincy or political affiliations. Ride for Peace has successfully become an annual event, and 30 November 2007 marked the fourth anniversary of this remarkable initiative. At this event, 715 students representing six junior secondary schools went on a peace march along the principal streets of the district capital holding placards with peace messages and came together at the 'Ride for Peace' durbar grounds. Some of the peace messages included 'Dagbon Needs Peace Now More Than Before', 'Bullets Do Not Discriminate', 'Chieftaincy and Politics Should Not Divide Us Unity is Dignity', 'War is Evil, Join the Peace Train' and 'Control Arms Now.'

For more information on FOSDA's work with youth, see [www.fosda.net](http://www.fosda.net).

*Contributed by Afi Yakubu, FOSDA*

As adults, community members, educators or authorities, it is our responsibility to ensure that all children and youth are protected and have the choice to live a life free of guns and violence.

**Remember:** Even if they are involved in armed violence as perpetrators, children and youth are always victims. There is always an adult responsible for making them use these weapons. The decision to join armed groups is often based on a lack of alternatives. Children and youth need support from the government and their community to find their way back to a peaceful life.

## Gender and SALW

Men, women, boys and girls, the elderly and the young feel and experience violence and conflict in different ways.

**Men** are the highest percentage of both *perpetrators* and *victims* of SALW violence. Often, society expects men to defend and protect their pride, reputation, families, country or property. Men frequently see weapons as symbols of 'courage', 'masculinity' and/or 'honor'. This helps to explain why men often perceive guns as generally positive and necessary for their survival.

**Women** are often targets of rape and killing in armed conflict situations, and victims of crime and violence in their homes. During armed conflict, women are responsible for the survival of their families and have to take over all kinds of responsibilities. They may also be forced to act as wives to combatants, cooks, spies, or messengers, and endure sexual violence.

But sometimes, women may play a role in encouraging small arms violence. For example, some women collaborate with armed groups to conceal and transport weapons. Also, if women view guns as symbols of masculinity, men may be more likely to carry and use guns. Therefore, women can play an important part in changing the image of gun ownership by showing that the use of weapons does not impress them.

Understanding the different ways men and women experience SALW violence is critical to designing actions that meet the needs of the whole population. Consulting community leaders, elders or government officials on the problem of SALW may provide only half of the story if these individuals are all men, which is the case in a number of male-dominated societies. Women may present an entirely different or new picture of the problem and therefore may need to be targeted specifically if their participation in social fora is limited.

Keep in mind the goal of gender equality. Every planned activity should consider the implications for both men and women to ensure that neither one is marginalized.

### Trainer Note

Since the mid-1980s, the United Nations has been promoting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all areas and levels of policy and programming. 'Gender mainstreaming' has become a catch phrase for the donor and development communities, and is often measured in practice by the percentage of female participation in any given process. It is therefore important to clarify to trainees the following two points:

- 1) Gender or gender +mainstreaming is not synonymous with women. Gender refers to socially constructed identities of women and men, while mainstreaming refers to the regular and consistent analysis of the different impact of any given activity on men and women.
- 2) Gender mainstreaming does not preclude activities that target women exclusively. If analysis reveals that women are on the whole marginalized and lack capacity to participate, then targeted action to remedy this situation is necessary. The ultimate goal is gender equality—not equality in numbers, but rather in opportunity.

In your training courses, we recommend that you integrate gender issues within each exercise, as appropriate. Trainees will then be able to practice the meaning of 'mainstreaming' rather than simply providing lip service.

### Case Study: The Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET)

#### Background

During the formative stage of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), women were invited to attend workshops along with men but it was soon discovered that a separate forum was required for women to fully express themselves. WANEP therefore created a deliberate space for women's capacities to be built to participate in peace and security issues: The Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET).

WIPNET focuses on enhancing the role of organized women's groups and women-based civil society organizations in peace processes at various sectors and levels within communities. It is deeply rooted in WANEP's concept of "Women Building Peace" and highlights its gender mainstreaming approach to capacity-building, one that ensures skills transfer and experiential learning without negating traditional value systems and social realities.

Among other things, WIPNET has:

- Improved access for women to basic skills and knowledge of community peacebuilding by translating existing training methodology into indigenous languages;
- Established a community radio program for women, ensuring their voice is heard at the grassroots level in conflict-prone rural communities.

The experience of WIPNET has shown the importance of women's traditional roles as *peacebuilders*. Women are highly skilled in mediation and conflict management. Their roles within nuclear families and local communities to intercede and encourage alternative dispute resolution mechanisms have reduced the deterioration of existing tension into violent conflict in most communities. A prevalent normative value across all communities in Nigeria, for example, is the use of advice from mothers, wives and elderly women. This has often served to minimize worst case scenarios in the face of emerging intra- and inter-group conflicts.

WIPNET's experience has further shown that *women's groups are informal sources of conflict prevention, management and resolution*. Most community-based women's groups across Nigeria have made a positive impact on promoting peace, particularly in preserving social order. They have often engaged in different forms of peace education and reconciliatory efforts with the support of formal institutions. Because of their sensitivities and keen approach to issues, women's groups have also been informal sources for early warning information on potential violent conflicts within communities. Furthermore, they play critical roles in conflict prevention because of their non-violent approach to addressing structural conflicts.

WIPNET was initiated by WANEP in 2001 to help women play key roles alongside men in building peace. For more information, see [www.wanepnigeria.org](http://www.wanepnigeria.org)

*Contributed by Bridget Osakwe, WANEP-Nigeria*

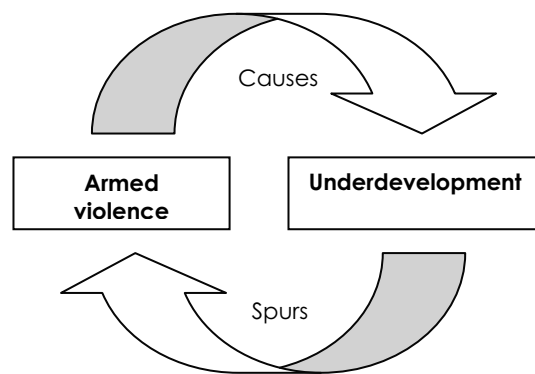


## SALW and development

Development is a long-term process which aims to improve the quality of life of all people in a country in order to satisfy the basic needs of the population.

Many efforts have been made to understand the effects of armed conflict on development. Far fewer studies have attempted to understand the precise effects of SALW on development. As a result, the effects of SALW are conflated with those of armed conflict and thus, either exaggerated or underestimated. Distinguishing between the two is critical to understanding the precise problem of SALW in a particular society.

There is a clear relationship between armed conflict and development. Evidence from conflicts over the last decades has shown that armed conflict reverses development, and that underdevelopment spurs conflict. This creates a mutually reinforcing cycle of violence and poverty that is broadly referred to as the 'conflict trap'.



As we noted in Section 1, SALW do not cause violence, but their availability and misuse makes armed conflict more likely, feasible and destructive. If armed conflict reverses development, then by extension, the availability and misuse of small arms are a contributing factor to underdevelopment.

More specifically, there are a number of direct and indirect effects of small arms on development which can be measured and analyzed.

**Direct** effects of the threat and misuse of SALW include:

- Deaths;
- Injuries, accidental wounding;
- Psychological consequences, such as trauma;
- Damage to property.

Each of these direct effects has short- and long-term consequences. In the short-term, individual lives are disrupted, whole communities are uprooted and social and political processes often break down. In the long-term, individuals are forced to change their overall lifestyle—for example, they may no longer be able to engage in productive activity, or they may divert their resources away from productive activity and into self-protection. The same is true for the delivery of services and the diversion of resources at the municipal or national levels.

**Indirect** effects of the threat and misuse of SALW include:

- Insecurity;
- Prolongation of armed conflicts;
- Greater likelihood of violence and armed criminality;
- Fragmentation of communities and loss of trust;
- Decreased willingness of foreign and local investors to invest;
- Decline in the economy and social services;
- Difficulty in implementing development projects or delivering humanitarian aid;
- Increase in the number of forced migrations and internally displaced persons;
- Prolonged dependency on international NGOs for relief services.

Once again, it is critical that a proper assessment of the effects of SALW on the development of a particular community, society or country take place. Removing small arms because they are generally associated with negative consequences is not a sufficient reason—doing so may in fact place people at more risk or do more harm than good. We need to understand in what ways small arms availability and misuse are affecting development, and design interventions accordingly.

**Remember:** Always consult local communities before designing a small arms activity. Often, humanitarian agencies and targeted communities have a different perspective of the needs and priorities for small arms action and why it is necessary for development. It is critical to first understand the effects of small arms availability before understanding whether their removal is a development priority or not.

Nevertheless, it is clear that controlling SALW is good for development. It is therefore up to you, your community and your government to control these weapons and minimize their negative effects—this manual can only give you some ideas and tools to do so.

### Useful resources

For more on the relationship between SALW and development, see:

- Bourne, Mike, Michael Ashkenazi, Christine Beeck, Julie Brethfeld and Elvan Isikozlu. 2006. *SALW and Development*. Bonn: BICC. Available at <<http://www.tresa-online.org/database/files/SAD-06A02.pdf>>.
- BICC and GTZ. 2005. *Organizing Civil Society Campaigns for Small Arms Action: A Manual for NGOs*. Eschborn: GTZ.
- Faltas, Sami and Wolf-Christian Paes. 2001. "The Problem of Small Arms in Developing Countries: The current international debate and recommendations for Development Cooperation, in particular Technical Cooperation." Eschborn: GTZ.
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- UNDP. N.d. "Arms for Development. Project Background." Freetown: UNDP Sierra Leone. Available at <<http://www.sl.undp.org/afd.htm>>.

## Section 5: SALW in West Africa

### Drugs and SALW

Across the world, the use and trade in certain classes of drugs is banned. As a consequence, manufacturing and trading in drugs have become a big business which is often defended by the use of firearms. In many cases drugs are manufactured and traded by non-state actors in exchange for guns.

Generally, six dimensions of the small arms-drugs nexus involving various actors can be distinguished (Honwana and Lamb, 1998):

1. **Criminal organizations:** Irrespective of the size and reach of a criminal organization, it can be involved in both the illicit weapons and drug trade. These organizations may act as intermediaries or even control the manufacture or production of weapons and drugs.
2. **Peasant farmers:** Especially in periods of heightened tensions or civil war, farmers who feel insecure may cultivate crops which are sources of drugs. These are sold or exchanged for weapons to protect the farmers.
3. **Guerilla or rebel movements:** For rebel movements, drug cultivation and trade can be a means of acquiring money to finance weapons purchases.
4. **States:** Like rebel movements, certain states have been suspected of cultivating and dealing with drugs in order to finance their military and its weapons.
5. **Drug lords:** Drug dealers need to protect themselves and their business operations and guarantee their supply routes. They often do so with the help of armed guards, frequently organized in paramilitary forces. The same is true for street gangs involved in drug dealing—they rely on small arms to secure their business.
6. **Individual drug addicts:** If an individual becomes addicted to drugs and has no alternative means to finance the purchase of drugs, he or she may rely on criminal activities, often using small arms for robbery.

Nevertheless, it is not appropriate to generalize these links by saying that, for example all drug traffickers are involved in trafficking SALW. There is too little evidence to support this claim. It has to be seen in individual cases whether drugs and SALW are illicitly traded through the same channels and networks.

In order to address the demand for drugs and SALW and the effects of their misuse, targeted policies are needed. However, the supply of drugs and SALW can largely be stemmed in a holistic approach by targeting weak law enforcement. By improving border controls, strengthening the police and the judiciary and reducing overall levels of corruption, the working environment of criminal networks can be made much less permissive (UNODC, 2007). United Nations member states have acknowledged this link in the preamble of the UN Programme of Action (PoA), expressing concern “about the close link between terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and precious minerals and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons” (UN PoA, Preamble, para. 7).

Transnational organized crime is increasingly operating in West Africa. Criminal groups usually rely on very loose networked structures, benefiting from community and family ties. Drugs destined for North American and European markets are transiting through West Africa, increasing its exposure to drug abuse. In a number of countries in West Africa there are rumors of the exchange of drugs manufactured from abroad for guns, also manufactured abroad.

Though the burden of disrupting the drug-SALW nexus is on official agencies—notably the police, legislature, and border control—civil society organizations (CSOs) can play a useful role:

- Serve as a community-level ‘tripwire’, alerting community leaders and possibly law-enforcement authorities that drugs and SALW are entering a community;
- Provide publicity campaigns on the deleterious effects of the drugs/SALW combination;
- Learn from the experience of other communities in West Africa and elsewhere, and disseminate those findings as examples.

## Ethnicity and SALW

Ethnicity has emerged as a major problem in the world in general, and as a particular problem in West Africa. The population of most African countries is made up of various ethnic groups, who often speak different languages, with different ways of making a living and lifestyles. In Guinea-Bissau, for example, twenty ethnic groups can be found in an area of 30,000km<sup>2</sup>.

Three things must be kept in mind about ethnic groups:

- An ‘ethnic group’ may be based on any combination of language, kinship, religion, geography, way-of-life, or political system. Members of a kingdom such as the Ashanti are an ethnic group, but so are Mossi who are divided into many sub-groupings.
- Membership in ethnic groups can be conscious, e.g. “I am a member of X” or can be ascribed by others: “These people belong to ethnic group X” and it is often the clash between these two views that causes conflict. For example, many West African rulers have tried to redefine all ethnicities living in their country as a single national ‘ethnicity.’
- Often, differences of language, religion, etc., do *not* cause problems between groups until someone attempts to mobilize people for political (and often egoistic reasons) as a separate ethnic group.

Ethnic groups, once they come into being, can compete for power and influence, economic livelihoods, and resources, which is one reason why they are popular as a political tool. In many cases in Western Africa, ethnic groups have turned to firearms to try and enhance their power, or, alternatively to try and get power or resources.

In summary, ethnicity is a human *construct*. To the degree that it is mobilized, it is one among many forms of differences among humans. In the modern world it has proven relatively easy to mobilize people along ethnic cleavages, some ethnicities of which were invented for the purpose of causing cleavages and divisions.

There are three dimensions you need to keep in mind in relation to SALW and ethnicity:

- 1. SALW and dehumanization:** In many ethnic conflicts, one way to motivate people to fight has been to dehumanize the enemy. This is particularly easy for leadership figures to manipulate, since, once the enemy is no longer seen as human, any kind of warfare and atrocity can be practiced. SALW, with their easy use and ability to kill from a distance, enhance this dehumanization.

One response by CSOs is the development of programs to ‘rehumanize’ the relationship between former opponents. Programs including cultural exchanges, mutual discussions, and explanations of one’s grievances and points of view can be very helpful.

- 2. Cultural behaviors:** There are some strong *social* differences between ethnicities in West Africa, measured in many dimensions. For example, some ethnic groups in West Africa are matrilineal (one's property is inherited by one's sister's sons), others are patrilineal (one's property is inherited by one's sons). Seen from one of these perspectives, the other appears to be bizarre. Another example is the specialist guild-like system, such as gun-smiths, which is closely related to traditional practices of some ethnic groups. Such underlying differences include very many *hidden* assumptions (which members of the group do not question), and which can lead to conflict *simply because two different groups are using the same word, but making different assumptions about its fundamental meaning(s)*.

In order to address this problem, CSOs can:

- Identify such issues by carefully 'untangling' these assumptions and making them overt; and
- Provide fora where these assumptions can be explored by both sides to a conflict.

The two sides in question could be two fighting ethnic groups, or an ethnic group and the state or its organs. In terms of SALW, this dialogue and understanding can help establish arms control mechanisms at the basic community level. For example, even members of an ethnic group that pride themselves on being 'warriors' may be amenable to other expressions of 'warrior-hood' than firing automatic weapons.

- 3. Safety of your staff:** Ethnicity may be an artificial modern creation in many ways, but it is nonetheless a fact that must be considered. When a CSO deals with SALW, the duty of care that a CSO owes its employees and volunteers is more stringent because dealing with SALW is inherently dangerous (see Section 8 for more on safety). Ethnic conflicts can engender aggression against *all* members of another ethnic group, even those who are trying to help. CSOs must very carefully weight whether or not to send staff who are members of an ethnic group that is party to a violent conflict in the area.

Entry points for SALW control and conflict management

Though ethnic conflict does not lend itself to reason, having an unbiased analysis of real ethnic differences *may* help to identify entrance points to start SALW control. A possible tool for analysis is provided in Table 4. Use it, or modify it, to provide yourself with a 'mapping' of the major differences between two ethnic groups in conflict. From the comparison of the answers of the two groups, you may find points of agreement, and other points of contention that can serve as useful entry points for managing the conflict more broadly, and designing SALW control activities more specifically.

**Table 5: A tool for interpreting ethnicity**

DOMAIN	QUESTION	ETHNICITY A	ETHNICITY B	CONTENTION OR AGREEMENT
<b>Kinship</b>	Are there restrictions on whom one from your group may marry, and what are they? Whom do you consider a member of the family?			
<b>Economic</b>	What is the best way to make a living? Are there ways of making a living that are absolutely unacceptable to you?			
<b>Politics</b>	Who is supposed to lead you? What is the relationship between a leader and the followers? Who <i>cannot</i> lead you?			
<b>Gender</b>	What are the obligations and rights of women? What are the obligations and rights of men?			
<b>Locale</b>	Where should you live?			
<b>Ethnicity</b>	What are your main problems as an ethnic group?			
<b>SALW</b>	Who may use firearms? Who may not use firearms? Against whom may you use firearms? Against whom may you not use firearms?			

The list of domains and of questions in Table 4 is not exhaustive. It represents a sample of questions which can aid you in identifying ethnic problems. Feel free to add or modify questions *to suit your needs*.

### Local production and craft guns

The basis of modern SALW control is formal national law maintained by a nation-state. However, in many societies, notably in West Africa, this may create a problem for two related reasons:

- State institutions can be weak and are often imposed from above on an already existing local, tribal, ethnic or community system of law and custom;
- Some states are so weak that they are completely unable to impose the law or to provide legal services.

One result is that in several countries in West Africa—the Volta River regions of northern Ghana and Burkina Faso are examples—local smiths and workshops produce and sell “craft guns”: weapons made in unlicensed workshops with local techniques. Often these are of very high quality. However, like all SALW, they frequently create more problems than they solve.

### Background to craft gun production

- Self-defense of the community is a long-held tradition in many West African communities, resulting from the slave-trade centuries as well as liberation struggles. Thus local production is viewed as an essential tool of community cohesion.
- In many communities, weapon-smiths are a caste-like group, and their activities are part of the ritual, economic and communal fabric.
- The state is often not, or hardly able to provide security to local communities and can easily be subverted.
- Guns are an essential feature of ritual life in many communities, and are displayed or fired in celebrations.
- Growing lawlessness in many areas has fueled the demand for weapons both by innocent civilians who want to protect themselves, and by criminals and their sponsors.
- Craft guns are often traded via long-established family and kin networks which are difficult to penetrate or disrupt.

### Reasons for production

- Craft production is skilled work, and is generally undertaken by professional, highly skilled craftsmen. Gunsmiths, again, have interdependent relations (economic, social, political, and ritual) with other occupational groups such as hunters and butchers, and, socially speaking, they are under an obligation to provide guns.
- Gun manufacture is also a family enterprise, and woven into family structure and activities, with skills passed from elder to younger generations, enhancing family solidarity.
- Criminals find it easier to acquire craft guns (which do not need to pass through customs) and such guns are difficult to trace if they are used in a crime. This fuels demand.

### Dealing with craft gun production

#### Craft gun production in Ghana

Some figures about craft production in Ghana:

- There are 75,000 craft guns in circulation.
- Three regions (Brong Ahafo, Ashanti and the Volta regions) host about 200 blacksmiths capable of producing guns (the highest concentration in Ghana).
- The profit from a craft gun is three to seven times the cost of production.

**Table 5: Production and sale costs of craft guns**

ITEM	PRODUCTION COST	SALE PRICE
Pistol	5,000	20,000
Single barrel shotgun	50,000	600,000
Double barrel shotgun	100,000	800,000
Prices in Ghanaian Cedi (GH)		

**Source:** Input from the Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Department, KAIPTC, March 2008.



Addressing and trying to control craft production thus requires a careful balance between the need to control SALW and limit its availability to criminals and socially destabilizing elements on the one hand, and preserving and maintaining the fabric of life and local tradition on the other.

### Understanding craft production in your area

The first step is to better understand craft production (if it exists) in your area. Refer to the section on research in this handbook, and ask yourself the following questions:

1. Why do people manufacture guns in your area? Are there purely economic reasons? Community needs for self-defense? Ritual reasons? Demand from criminals?
2. Where is the craft gun market? Are the products sold locally? Outside the community? Abroad? On order from e.g. a politician or a gang boss?
3. What items do they sell to whom? For example, shotguns locally, and/or pistols outside the community?
4. How are craft producers and their products viewed by the local population? Is craft gun production viewed with pride? Fear? Dislike?
5. What are the social relations between the gunsmiths and the rest of the population (for example, these may be indifferent or highly mutually dependent)?

### Developing a strategy about craft gun production

Your investigation will likely generate some data about craft production. In order to establish a strategy for action by your organization, you must balance a number of factors:

#### **Social/traditional importance ↔ economic importance**

Where gunsmithing is socially important, it may be easier to *control* but more difficult to *stop* since stopping may have disruptive effects on the community. The community is more likely to understand that the consequences of uncontrolled gun manufacture may be very serious for their own community and even beyond.

#### **Internal use ↔ external use**

Whether craft guns are only used within the community or outside of the community will be an important factor. Guns used outside of the community are a national problem which needs to be addressed by legislation as a national security issue. Guns used only within the community should be addressed at the community level.

#### **Socially approved use ↔ socially condemned use**

Where the use of guns is socially approved (for ritual, for self-defense, for hunting), craft gun production can be controlled by the community. Where craft guns are used by criminals, the community may be under threat itself, and may need national security bodies to take action.

When planning a strategy to control craft gun manufacture, you must balance these factors with the main objectives of (a) helping the community ensure that craft guns are used responsibly, (b) helping the community realize that their production is harming others, and (c) using national resources (law, police, courts) in a sensitive way so as not to disrupt local traditions and practices, provided (a) and (b) are realized.

Your program might include:

- Local public awareness-raising, emphasizing the damage caused by craft guns;
- Discussions with manufacturers to control or cease gun manufacture;

- Discussion with manufacturers to mark their guns and register their production;
- Lobbying the government to license craft gun manufacturers;
- Alternative forms of rituals without guns;
- Technical solutions to be implemented by manufacturers and users (e.g. reduced-charge ammunition, manufacturing trigger locks<sup>7</sup> and locked gun safes).

Trying to convince craft manufacturers to convert to other production will only succeed if:

- Alternative products yield as much profit, and
- Alternative products result in as much social capital (respect, contribution to the community, feeling of accomplishment) as manufacturing guns.

*This means you must understand the manufacturer's context, motivations, and needs!*

### Useful resources

For more on the drug trade in Africa and its impact (with special reference to Guinea-Bissau), see:

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2007. "Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa. The threat to stability and development." *Report*. Available at <[http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/west\\_africa\\_cocaine\\_report\\_2007-12\\_en.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/west_africa_cocaine_report_2007-12_en.pdf)>.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2007. "Cannabis in Africa. An overview." *Paper*. Available at <[http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Can\\_Afr\\_EN\\_09\\_11\\_07.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Can_Afr_EN_09_11_07.pdf)>.

For more on the relationship between ethnicity and SALW, see:

- Sislin, John, Frederic S. Pearson, Jocelyn Boryczka and Jeffery Weigand. 1998. "Patterns in Arms Acquisitions by Ethnic Groups in Conflict." *Security Dialogue* Vol.29, No.4, pp. 393-408. Oslo: PRIO.

For more on the issue of craft gun production and specific country cases, see:

- FOSDA. 2007. *Illicit Arms Production in Ghana: Supplementary Survey*. Accra: FOSDA.
- "Unpacking Production: The Small Arms Industry." In *Small Arms Survey 2005: Weapons at War*, pp. 46–49.
- Kante, Mamadou Sekouba. 2004. *De la fabrication locale d'armes au Mali: à travers la prolifération des armes légères*. Accra: FOSDA.
- "Workshops and Factories: Products and Producers." In *Small Arms Survey 2003: Development Denied*, pp. 26–36.

<sup>7</sup> A trigger lock is a simple device which is fitted inside the trigger guard of a weapon, equipped with a lock that does not permit the weapon to be fired without a key. Trigger locks can easily be designed and built by local craftsmen.

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## Section 6: Civil society and SALW

We use the term 'civil society' to refer to all those relationships, organizations, and networks which are neither part of the government (the 'public sector') nor part of the specifically economic sector. This basically means everyone *except* when they function as part of their office. For example, the president of a nation is part of the public sector, but when he kisses his little children goodnight, he is part of civil society.

We use the term 'Civil Society Organization' (CSO) to refer to organized groups which carry out organized activities on behalf of civil society, and which have no major standing in the public or economic sector: A church is a CSO, as is a youth club, and an association dedicated to controlling SALW in a community, region, or nation. Sometimes we use the term 'Non-Governmental Organization' (NGO) as a synonym for CSO.

Civil society groups are in a good position to engage in SALW control activities. They have a special place in society because they are an important interface between state authorities and individuals. Quite often they hold the respect of the community and therefore can be influential in bringing about solutions to SALW problems.



### Examples of civil society actors include:

- Registered charities or non-profit groups;
- Non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- Community groups;
- Women's organizations;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Professional associations;
- Trade unions;
- Self-help groups;
- Social movements;
- Business associations;
- Coalitions and advocacy groups;
- Schools, universities.

A central role of CSOs in SALW action is to implement strategies to introduce the issue of SALW into the mainstream, such as in schools, businesses, and other categories of society. This role complements the work of the government on SALW control and assists the rest of the security sector<sup>8</sup> in implementing its role. ECOWAS would like to see the role of CSOs as a monitoring mechanism for the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms: the Convention has a provision for input by independent groups of experts for this purpose.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Section 7 for an explanation of the 'security sector' and a discussion of security sector reform (SSR).

<sup>9</sup> See Article 28 of the Convention. Section 8 of this manual discusses how to do research and become an expert on SALW issues.

## Criticism and cooperation with government

Any small arms action you are planning to carry out should ideally be in cooperation with your local government and its agencies such as the police. By cooperating with them, you can positively influence their policies and actions. In turn, these actions can have a positive impact on your community.

CSOs need to actively lobby members of parliament by offering such benefits as capacity-building on SALW. MPs are very useful cooperators with CSOs because they are critical for legislative action, for international treaty ratification, such as the ECOWAS Convention on SALW, and because they have the mandate to monitor the performance of the security services.

You must, however, remember that you are *not* a state agency. Though you should cooperate with state agencies, you should also remain critical and alert. This is particularly important if the state agencies transgress the law or are not fulfilling their functions to the satisfaction of the population. Your first resort in such a case is to serve as an honest broker, and to try and bring both sides—state agencies and civil society—together, to discuss these issues in depth. There are benefits to working with government. By engaging the state, CSOs can work to build trust and transparency by assisting certain sectors to achieve their stated goals.

You should not limit your criticism to technical issues. Instead, focus on those issues that are of public interest, where CSOs can act as a conduit between the government and the civilian population, and issues of humanitarian and legal concern. Of course, in some issues, being both critical and supportive may be appropriate.

Keep in mind that 'criticism' is *not* a license for unbridled attacks on government efforts or activities. Criticism means a reasoned, informed, and sustained opinion expressed with reference to *actions* undertaken by the government or other bodies. A criticism *must* include the five Ws:

**What** happened? (An objective, research-based, factual account.)

**When** did the events happen?

**Where** did they happen?

**Who** was involved?

**Why** should it be opposed / dealt with?

If you cannot answer all of these questions with facts and reasoned analysis, you should not go public with your criticism.

### **Case Study: Cooperation between the security forces and the press in Burkina Faso**

A journalist reported to the scene of a crime where someone was murdered with a gun. He wrote a report which was sent to his editor in Ouagadougou and subsequently published. The police read the report in the press and demanded an explanation from the journalist. The regional police director then summoned the journalist, and the two argued over the issue. The police requested to be informed before any security-related information was published, and the journalist agreed that such information must be treated in a sensitive manner.

As a result of this incident, the National Commission on SALW in Burkina Faso organized a workshop with these parties. The challenge was to make them understand that in the fight against insecurity and the use of SALW, they are in fact, partners. After more than one hour of explaining the constraints of each side, both arrived at an understanding of one another's position.

The critical lesson learned here is the need to understand the different role, position, and perspective of civil society and security institutions so that their cooperation in the fight against SALW improves. Bad blood is most often born by the misunderstanding of one another's purpose, which leads to mistrust and conflict. In this case, both parties used dialogue to resolve their differences. They can now better work together to promote security.

*Contributed by Col. Paul Yameogo, Burkina Faso National Commission on SALW*

### **Relations with security services**

The involvement of CSOs in the security sector provides a vital mechanism for effective training and accountability of security institutions. CSOs can help improve governance and accountability because they often reflect the voice of local communities. CSOs can partner with security forces on a myriad of issues. For example, in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DD&R) process, CSOs can be used as local advisors in screening individuals for their eligibility in disarmament programs. They can also be sub-contracted to provide key services such as adult education, psycho-social support and technical training for people associated with fighting forces (i.e. women, children). CSOs can also assist security forces by independently monitoring the implementation of small arms protocols, which can even extend to monitoring the legal framework of implementation efforts within ECOWAS.

### **National security**

National security is a unique challenge. CSOs must understand the line between national security and the freedom of information on SALW issues. Civilians have a critical role to play in national security at the legislative level of oversight over the security services, and CSOs provide the infrastructure to organize civilian inputs. Beyond public awareness CSOs need to provide skills to assist in monitoring SALW stockpiles, since civilians are likely to be affected if standards are not maintained.

### Case Study: Ammunition explosion in Lagos, Nigeria

On 27 January 2002, there was a large explosion at a military ammunition depot in Lagos, Nigeria. At least 1,100 people were killed and another 20,000 displaced.

Prior to the explosion, Nigeria was in political ferment, with some groups calling for secession, others for revolution, and some for outright war for various reasons. This created a highly overheated and volatile situation.

Because of existing tension and insecurity, the lack of information about the explosion was devastating. Many people interpreted the explosion in a political context, fearing war or revolution. They therefore started hurrying towards what they considered to be a safe haven. Some found refuge in a canal near the site of the explosion, and perished as fumes and burning material filled the canal. A news bulletin giving information about the accidental cause, the location, and possible effect of the explosion would have saved many people from hiding in the canal that night.

WANEP-Nigeria has started a 'Contingency Plan' and a Humanitarian Emergency Response and Development (H.E.R.D) project with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) to effectively respond to such disasters in the future. The need for civil society involvement in disaster response and management in Nigeria has become necessary due to the identified lack of capacity by NEMA to respond to the multiple levels of disasters.

H.E.R.D is a project designed, developed and implemented by the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding in Nigeria (WANEP-Nigeria), as a platform to facilitate effective response by civil society to humanitarian crises during disasters in Nigeria.

It is imperative to deal with the issue of raising public awareness and providing timely information to the public on emergency events, and this is another area in which WANEP is attempting to bring about changes.

*Written by BICC with contributions from Bridget Osakwe, WANEP-Nigeria*

It is very important that CSOs *understand* the national concept of security, *analyze* its implications, and *define* their role within it. This will vary from state to state, and in different situations.

#### Coordination and cooperation with security services

Coordination and cooperation between CSOs and security services can take several forms. It does not mean cozying up to government offices and merely carrying out tasks that should be accomplished by the state. CSOs can provide independent and professional assistance by technically specializing in a myriad of activities which the government, due to lack of resources, cannot address. Avenues and suggestions for technical coordination and cooperation are as follows:

- Legislation on Security Sector Reform (SSR);
- Relations of stockpiles and neighboring communities;
- Reintegration of ex-combatants;
- Peacebuilding between ethnic or territorial groups;
- Reducing weapons possession among civilians;
- Training officers on crime and SALW desks in police stations;
- Training police officers in community relations.

Any of these can serve as entry points for CSOs to develop a set of good relations with the security services.

### CSO-Military interface

There is a need to build rapport, trust, and confidence between CSOs and the military in order to improve security on the ground. To develop the best interface between government, military and CSOs, all national military commands should have some type of CSO representation. This involves a delicate balance of CSO autonomy and cooperative information sharing.

How do we cultivate trust between the military and CSOs?

CSOs already have an entry point via ECOWAS and their Small Arms Program (ECOSAP). Each insist that the military and CSOs join efforts to provide comprehensive coverage of implementation requirements. This means that at higher levels of government, CSOs have a strong legal backing for their activities.

At the lower level—the police precinct or army barracks—CSOs can also be effective if they are patient and treat the security services not as an opponent, but as a constituency, whose needs and anxieties must not be ignored. Critically here, CSOs can serve as good brokers between the local community and the local security services.

#### Case Study: Building trust between civil society and the police in Sierra Leone

During the eleven years of conflict in Sierra Leone, the police were the hardest hit institution. Over two hundred police officers were killed, and every police station that the rebels came across was burnt down. The police withdrew from society, and civil militia and ECOMOG were forced to handle complaints in their place.

When the government returned in 1998, the advocacy desk of the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL)—a leading CSO in Sierra Leone—resumed its ‘Experience Sharing’ sessions. One of the first groups to be invited was the police. Two sessions of two hours each were organized. During the first session, police officers sat on one side of the hall and civilians sat on the other. The groups were asked to mix and discuss their perceptions of one another. The civilians complained of the following: the police were not helpful, they accepted bribes from public transport drivers on a daily basis, and they would arrest and/or delay anyone who did not give them money. The police complained that civilians were undisciplined, lacked control, and refused to obey traffic rules. At the end of the first session, it was agreed to meet again in two weeks to develop some joint solutions to these problems.

The second meeting was quite cordial. Civilians suggested a number of possible solutions to enhance local trust in the police. For example, the police should call attention to vehicle defects (i.e. faulty headlights) at least twice before taking action; they should stop demanding money from drivers and vehicle owners; they must display their identity for all to see; and they must treat complaints with seriousness and stop asking complainants to buy paper and pens in order to record statements. At the end of the session, both civilians and police shook hands and socialized with soft drinks.

The exercise was later repeated in all major cities around the country. These sessions contributed to the introduction of a Policing Charter and the establishment of a Community Police Department.

*Contributed by Florella Hazeley, CCSL, Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms (SLANSA)*



## Civil society organization and management

Civil society organizations must be structured to maintain effectiveness, promote transparency and retain financial credibility when carrying out SALW projects in the field. They must be able to demonstrate that their operational and financial structures are as efficient as, or better than government organizations. In order to meet these requirements, CSOs must have a clear organizational structure and sound system of management.

When dealing with small arms issues, it is also useful to add someone who is:

- Familiar with technical aspects of SALW, and
- Able to provide security and safety regulations for the staff.

Critically, each of these functions *must* have an operationally-defined, simple, and clear job description which will indicate:

- What are the main responsibilities of the position?
- Who supervises the position?
- Who is supervised by the position?

This is particularly important when dealing with SALW issues due to the inherent safety and security issues such programs entail (see Section 8 for more on safety and security).

### Cooperation between CSOs

CSOs have different motivations and backgrounds, often operate in different geographical areas, and have different objectives. CSOs also sometimes compete for donor money, and in that sense, are competitors. Nevertheless, CSOs can and should cooperate, particularly in the realm of SALW control, for more effective results. Cooperation with others creates *synergies* which mean better results for everyone concerned than the sum of separate operations.

#### Trainer Note

This is a good time to discuss the issue of capacities and comparative advantages with your participants. For cooperation between CSOs to flourish, it is important for CSOs to (a) analyze their own strengths and weaknesses, and (b) understand other potential partners. A SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis is the most common tool to perform (a). You can find this and a number of other helpful hints in the following resources:

- BICC's *Civil Society Action on SALW Control Training Module*;
- BICC-GTZ's *Organizing Civil Society Campaigns For Small Arms Action: Manual for NGOs*.

Full citations are provided at the end of this section.

## Raising awareness on SALW control

One of the easiest and most effective activities for a civil society group to be involved in is raising public awareness. The success of any SALW control action depends very much on making people aware of the local SALW problem and possible solutions to the problem.

Activities for raising awareness can be in the form of:

1. **Community meetings** to promote discussion, dialogue and cooperation on finding joint solutions to the small arms problem.
2. **Public performances** to help deliver your message in a more entertaining and enjoyable way.
3. **Drawing or designing** posters, signs, pamphlets or other forms of art to help deliver your message.
4. **Dances, celebrations, or festivals.** Ideas include a 'dance for a gun-free community', a celebration of peace or a community march to help promote your message (see also Box 5 on 'Ride for Peace', p. 29).
5. **Reaching out to children and youth** to educate them on the dangers of small arms.

### Case Study: Raising awareness in Senegal

The Movement against Small Arms in West Africa (MALAO) has developed a number of education and awareness-raising tools on SALW control, such as banners, posters, stickers, pens and T-shirts, as well as a comic book entitled "My Strength is in Peace." Each tool has its own advantage:

- **Comic books** are excellent sensitization tools for young people and people who are illiterate. Meaningful images attract and capture attention, particularly if they are a symbol within the community.
- **Banners** are excellent tools for raising awareness since they address a large public and are easily readable.
- **Posters** can address large groups, special groups or individuals. They can be posted on streets, doors (public or private), lounges and offices, on cars and other vehicles.
- **Pens** can target all different groups in society (children, teenagers, adults and women etc.). They are especially effective because they pass from one hand to another and spread the message far beyond the initial recipient of the pen.
- **T-shirts** are a great way to raise awareness on a particular issue given their universal popularity.

To run an effective awareness-raising campaign, messages must be clear, understandable and appropriate. These should be inspired by priorities identified at participatory meetings, training sessions, or other forms of contact and exchanges with the target population.

*Contributed by Khoudia Diop Koumé, MALAO*

Every good awareness-raising program should consider the following steps<sup>10</sup>:

### **Step 1: Do a needs assessment!**

What action you take depends on the context! Start by gathering information about the situation and analyze it. Make sure that your campaign responds to the needs of the situation.

### **Step 2: Define your target group and objective!**

Identify the target group of your campaign. This can include any one of the following: weapons holders, men, women, children, a community, NGOs, the media, decision-makers, the military, donors. Your campaign objective should be "SMART", which stands for:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**elevant
- **T**imetabled.

Organizing the aims of your campaign in a 'SMART' way helps you keep track of your results.

### **Step 3: Choose and design your messages, activities, material and media!**

Creating a campaign message is a skill in itself. The message depends on the target group of your awareness-raising program. It should therefore be based on your research to make sure it reaches the audience properly and is perceived in the intended way.

The target group is also a decisive factor for the choice of your communication channel: different target groups possess different levels of knowledge, interests and access to media. Even within the same target group, subgroups may best be reached in a different way. For example, idle youth can be attracted through concerts and sport, whereas educated youth can be reached through university debates.

The financial resources at your disposal will also have an impact on your choice of media. For example, the production of pens, T-shirts and posters bearing your campaign message can cost a lot of money. This must be carefully taken into account and planned for.

### **Step 4: Do a field test!**

Testing your messages, materials and activities in the field helps you identify potential weaknesses in your campaign that can be adjusted before the campaign is launched in full. For example: Do people understand your message? Are they attracted by the material? Do they have suggestions for changes? You can test it in the field through observations, questionnaires, discussions or focus groups.

### **Step 5: Implement your campaign!**

During this phase, it is important to keep an eye on whether implementation has the intended effects or should be adjusted.

### **Step 6: Evaluate!**

Did your program increase awareness, change attitudes and behaviors? Was the message appropriate? Did the campaign result in an improved security situation? It is critical to answer these questions so that you understand whether your objective has been reached, and can improve similar campaigns in the future.

<sup>10</sup> This section is modified from SEESAC, 2007.

## Writing a proposal

To conduct SALW control activities, you will most likely need funding. An excellent review of how to attract funding, how to write a funding proposal, and how to find sources of funding is provided in:

- BICC-GTZ's *Organizing Civil Society Campaigns For Small Arms Action: Manual for NGOs* (see end of section for full citation).

Remember never to send a proposal unless you are truly confident you have the resources—skilled people, time, knowledge, and experience—to accomplish what you committed to in the proposal.

## Media and SALW control

The 'media' are all the various forms of information that is transferred to the general public. They include *broadcast media* (radio, television), *print media* (newspapers, books, journals), and a new form, the *internet*.

Media are an excellent tool for getting a message across to masses of people. Many people, particularly in the rural areas, rely on media, such as the radio, to know more about the world and its events.

CSOs, the government, and the security services can benefit from using the media to help with SALW control campaigns. To make use of the media, however, one needs to understand the process by which these types of media work.

Broadcast media employ reporters who report from a scene with some or little editing. Getting to know such reporters and providing them with reliable information consistently is a good way to get a point across.

Print media employ writers, who write an article, then submit it to an editor, who then turns it over to be printed. There may be long delays, but stories can be much more in depth. A good entry point is to get to know both editors and writers, and encourage them to write in-depth stories about your activities in support of SALW control.

The internet is still relatively new. There is rarely an editor, and the writer/reporter could be you or your neighbor. It is less reliable than other sources of information, and the response to news stories can only be a response on the internet. Table 6 summarizes the differences between the media.

**Table 6: Different media and entry points**

MEDIA TYPE	COLLECT INFORMATION	PROCESS INFORMATION	SHOW INFORMATION	ENTRY POINT
Broadcast	Reporter	Slight editing by director	Reporter or presenter	Getting to know reporter
Print	Writer	Editor	In print	Getting to know writer or journal editor
Internet	Anyone	Some or none	Usually just information	Online blogs, comment boards or posted replies, if possible

### Dealing with the media

Being able to inform people about your program can be very important for its success. You want to inform the people you are working for—the population of the country, the communities—about upcoming issues, events, and other important information. You may wish to show the world how well you are doing. In order to ensure these stories go out, it is useful to cultivate relationships with the media of your choice. You should keep the following guidelines in mind.

What you should provide to the media:

- Inform the media in *good time* of events and issues you would like to raise;
- Be *concise* and *informative* with your information;
- Do not use a media handout as an advertisement;
- Provide *reliable* information. If your information proves to be unreliable once, you will not be trusted again.

What you should expect of the media:

- They should report honestly what you have said without changing the meaning;
- They should not sensationalize information;
- They should give opponents a right to respond;
- They should help you protect the vulnerable by not disclosing identifiable sources of sensitive information.

If a reporter or medium does *not* act in that way, you should consider not dealing with them again.

### Participation in weapons collection activities

Civil society organizations can also participate in voluntary weapons collection programs by helping to:

- Raise awareness of the program among the community;
- Identify needs for the program's success;
- Encourage communities to participate;
- Evaluate how they were carried out.

See Section 7 for information on arms collection programs.

### Case Study: Public awareness and sensitization for arms collection in Liberia

UNDP Liberia's Small Arms Control Programme is conceptually designed under the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP) and aims to promote the conditions for stability, human security and socio-economic development in Liberia. With financial assistance from the Government of Japan, the Programme supports grassroots communities, civil society organizations and national institutions in creating opportunities for the voluntary surrender of weapons in exchange for development projects.

The CSOs, initially selected to implement the UNDP's Public Awareness Campaign on the dangers of SALW throughout Liberia, were Monrovia-based and thus struggled to reach remote communities to collect weapons and deliver education. The Programme therefore decided to switch implementing partners from CSOs to community-based organizations (CBOs) and local Project Management Committees (PMCs), which are composed of ex-combatants, youth, religious leaders, women's groups, the national police, and elders. The CBOs and PMCs launched public awareness campaigns broadcast by community radio, which contained educative messages on SALW. They also asked a traditional musical team to deliver messages, organized sporting events and established public service emergency alert numbers.

The CBOs and PMCs proved extremely effective in disseminating information on the dangers of SALW to grassroots populations because of their reach, representation and credibility with the local populations. Identifying the right partners to effectively mobilize the community is therefore a critical factor for a weapons collection and sensitization program to succeed.

*Contributed by Robert Dorlaie, UNDP Liberia*

### Useful resources

For more on how to organize civil society action, as well as using media in SALW campaigns, see:

- Bourne, Mike, Michael Ashkenazi, Christine Beeck, Julie Brethfeld and Elvan Isikozlu. 2006. *SALW and Development*. Bonn: BICC. Available at <<http://www.tresa-online.org/database/files/SAD-06A02.pdf>>.
- BICC and GTZ. 2005. *Organizing Civil Society Campaigns for Small Arms Action: A Manual for NGOs*. Eschborn: GTZ.
- SEESAC. 2007. SALW Awareness Support Pack. SASP 3, p. 50. Available at <<http://www.seesac.org/docum/SASP%203.pdf>>.
- GTZ and MALAO, in cooperation with Handicap International and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung. 2006. *Les Armes Légères en Casamance*. CD-Ressource due microprojet de la Coopération Allemande. Dakar : GTZ. See [www.gtz.de/small arms](http://www.gtz.de/small%20arms) for more information.

## Section 7: The SALW-DD&R-SSR-CIMIC nexus

This section is designed to be of interest to CSO members, as well as security service personnel who must interact with them. The aim of this section is to help enhance cooperation between these actors.

Small arms and light weapons (SALW) control is closely associated with the following three activities:

1. **Disarmament.** Disarmament is most often part of a post-conflict disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DD&R) process. DD&R aims to decrease security threats by disarming members of armed groups (official and unofficial), demobilizing the fighters and disassociating them from the formations they were part of during the fighting, and completing a process of social, economic, political, and legal reintegration of the fighters into civilian life. Disarmament may also take place in a purely *civilian* context, in which case we refer to it as 'arms collection'. Arms collection focuses on individuals and communities, rather than members of fighting groups.
2. **Security Sector Reform (SSR).** SSR is a process of making the security sector<sup>11</sup> more responsive to the needs of the people, and thus more efficient and effective. SSR programs are *always* needed after a civil conflict, *sometimes* needed after inter-state conflict, but can take place at *any other time*.
3. **Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC).** CIMIC is usually a post-conflict process, particularly in cases of peacekeeping missions when democratic civilian control of a country needs to be re-established under the auspices of a peacekeeping force. However, CIMIC can also mean cooperation activities between and among all elements of the *security sector* in a non post-conflict environment.<sup>12</sup>

As you can see, each of these processes can take place in post-conflict and non post-conflict settings. Table 7 summarizes some of the key differences within each process according to the setting in which it takes place.

<sup>11</sup> The 'security sector' encompasses all those national agencies dealing with security issues, including police, military, intelligence agencies, prison service, judiciary, private security companies, customs and border management, immigration services, and civil society organizations.

<sup>12</sup> The term CIMIC is rarely used in the non post-conflict context. Nevertheless, for analytical purposes, it is relevant here to understand that "military" in this context means the totality of the security sector.

**Table 7: Post-conflict and non post-conflict disarmament, SSR, CIMIC**

PROCESS	POST- CONFLICT	NOT POST- CONFLICT
<b>Disarmament</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses mainly on armed, warring parties.</li> <li>• Part of a comprehensive arms reduction or DD&amp;R process.</li> <li>• In DD&amp;R, disarmament is run by the military.</li> <li>• Entire DD&amp;R process relates closely to development.</li> <li>• Part of post-conflict reconstruction.</li> <li>• Cooperation with development agencies is essential.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on individuals and communities.</li> <li>• Part of a violence reduction or arms control process, or may be a 'stand alone' issue.</li> <li>• Focus is often on criminality.</li> <li>• Run most effectively by police forces together with CSOs.</li> </ul>
<b>SSR</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focuses on reestablishing the impartiality and effectiveness of security services.</li> <li>• Reconciliation of warring parties is essential.</li> <li>• Focus is often primarily on the military.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on providing effective, legal, responsive security services to the population.</li> <li>• Legislation-led process.</li> <li>• Intended primarily to enhance democratic control of the security services.</li> </ul>
<b>CIMIC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most often focuses on the provision of essential services to the population.</li> <li>• Often requires dealing with multi national/cultural peacekeeping forces.</li> <li>• Is a stop-gap until local agencies can take care of domestic affairs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is an attempt to ensure that security services and CSOs can cooperate to produce effective domestic results.</li> <li>• Requires the development of trust and mutual support systems.</li> <li>• Requires education of both security services and CSOs about one another's needs and sensitivities.</li> </ul>

## Disarmament

'Disarmament' is the term used to describe the process of collecting arms which were used by armed groups in a conflict, and arms that are surplus to the requirements of national defense and security. 'Arms collection' is the term used to describe the process of collecting illegal/unlicensed weapons from a civilian population. West African CSOs and government organizations have been faced with both activities.

Most disarmament processes come about as the result of a peace agreement after a conflict. This has two implications for the disarmament process:

1. The peace agreement is the ultimate structure, which determines how the disarmament process, among others, *must* take place.
2. It is therefore important that both security services and CSOs be involved in framing a



peace agreement<sup>13</sup>, to ensure that what is written into the agreement is *doable* and *acceptable* to the public.

Several principles should be kept in mind when engaging in disarmament, most of which will be affected by the context in which disarmament takes place.

**Comprehensiveness:** It is important to ensure that when disarming parties to a conflict, *all parties are disarmed simultaneously and to the same degree*. A disarmament program which provides amnesty for one group or individual, and not others, will lead to more violence down the road.

- Disarmament processes must ensure that all groups feel they are treated equally, and that arms are collected to the same degree, and with the same timing, as all other groups.
- Arms collection programs must ensure that people feel the police are treating them fairly and according to the law.
- CSOs can provide overviews, pointing out flaws and inequalities in these programs, as well as successes.

**Security and safety:** People will not give up their arms if they feel insecure. This is true of armed groups as well as individuals.

- In disarmament programs, it is the responsibility of the military to ensure that those who are disarming are secure. They are also responsible for ensuring that the arms collected are kept securely and safely. The military should be held accountable if they fail in this regard, and if necessary, sanctions must be taken against them.
- The responsibility for the security of the population in arms collection programs rests with the police. Until security is established, arms control programs should not be initiated. Like the military, the police too should be held accountable.
- CSOs can provide an unbiased and 'bottom-up' perspective on whether people feel secure or not. They can and should report to the civilian authorities if or when the security forces fail to provide security, or when they succeed.

**Publicity:** Uncertainty and lack of information is a major reason why people keep their arms. A lengthy, well-planned and funded, and extensive publicity campaign should precede any disarmament or collection program. Such a program should provide *reliable, comprehensible* and *timely* information about the program.

- In military disarmament / DD&R processes, the military together with local CSOs should design programs to allay the fears of ex-combatants, including information on the process, the disposition of the collected weapons, and how the entire DD&R process will proceed.
- In arms collection programs, the police together with local CSOs should design programs to explain and publicize the upcoming campaign. This publicity should explain the benefits of collection in terms of security; report on amnesties for people bringing in illegal weapons; indicate clearly where weapons are to be collected and by whom; and detail the final disposition of these weapons.
- CSO's can play a lead role in informing the populace of DD&R and collection, since these actors are non-threatening and usually know the population and its sensitivities better than the security services. It is critical here that the security services give the lead, and offer support, to CSOs, who are most often better at designing and implementing public campaigns.

<sup>13</sup> The people who frame peace agreements are generally diplomats and lawyers who help conflicting parties reach an agreement on highly sensitive issues. In order to help reach an agreement, details are vague and commitments are left broad. In practice, this translates into unrealistic goals, immeasurable objectives, and processes which a majority of the population finds unpalatable. CSOs and the security sector alike may be able to influence this process by offering creative solutions which are acceptable to all sides. However, for their input to be acceptable, they must have demonstrated reliable and valid knowledge, impartiality, and trustworthiness.

**Consensus:** Disarmament and collection campaigns will not succeed unless there is a general national consensus that such activities are necessary. Consensus may be achieved by discussions, publicity, and thorough preparation and explanation. CSOs are better at this kind of work than any security service, since security services are hierarchical, and tend to operate on the basis of coercion.

**Types of reinforcement:** Research (SEESAC, 2004) has demonstrated that successful DD&R and/or arms collection campaigns use a mix of four kinds of reinforcements:<sup>14</sup>

1. Positive reinforcements, which include financial rewards, rewards in kind, good local publicity.
2. Negative reinforcements, which include fines, court appearances, and jail.
3. Collective reinforcements (positive or negative), which can be applied to a group of people; for example, digging a village borehole, paving a village road, or establishing a curfew.
4. Individual reinforcements (positive or negative), which can apply to anyone; for example, a lottery ticket, a voucher for a bicycle, or a jail sentence.

Generally speaking, CSOs are better placed than the security services to identify reinforcements which are likely to be most effective for communities. Security services are best placed to deliver negative reinforcements. However, collective negative reinforcements should *only* be undertaken through consultation with legal advisors, CSOs, and the community itself to limit negative repercussions.

**Disposition:** What is to be done with collected weapons? This question must be decided *before* a collection program is started. If this is not done, you run the risk that the confiscated weapons will be stolen, and add to the cycle of violence. The choices in descending order of preference are:

- **Destroy all collected weapons.** Ideally, this would be done in public, with the participation of those who gave them up. This builds confidence in the process, and ensures that the weapons will not become a threat again.
- **Keep the weapons for the use of the security forces.** This is undesirable and sometimes not feasible (i.e. wrong type of ammunition needed, poor condition of the weapons, and lack of suitability for their future use).
- **Resell the weapons.** This is strongly undesirable. If sold within the country, the weapons will help sustain a cycle of violence once again. If sold in other countries, it will export the problem to those countries.

CSOs should and can lobby for the *destruction* option—A destroyed weapon is a weapon which cannot be misused again.

Whichever option is chosen, collected weapons must be examined forensically to determine whether they constitute evidence in criminal or human rights cases, and all details must be recorded (even if they are intended for destruction!). Security forces *must* ensure that collected weapons are all safe and accounted for at any time.

**Remember:** *Only* authorized personnel from the relevant security service may handle collected weapons! CSO members should at all times avoid handling weapons.

<sup>14</sup> "Reinforcement" means any kind of activity which follows immediately upon action by a subject. There are two kinds of reinforcement: Positive reinforcement is an external stimulus that makes the subject want to experience it again, while negative reinforcement makes the subject avoid the stimulus.

## Disarmament stages

The stages of a military disarmament or arms collection process are detailed below as a template which can be modified according to the priorities, needs and details of the situation.

**Table 8: States of a disarmament and/or collection process**

STAGE	DISARMAMENT	COLLECTION	NOTES	
Before the process starts	Surveying number of SALW	Surveying number of SALW	Might only be rough estimate	
	Planning	Planning		
	Designing information campaign for ex-combatants	Design publicity campaign for various population categories		
	Acquiring funds	Acquiring funds		
	Decide on disposition of weapons		Decide on disposition of weapons	
			Legislating an amnesty for those handing in weapons voluntarily	
			Establishing legal basis for SALW confiscation	
Information campaign	Publicity campaign			
During	Establish collection points	Establish collection points		
	Record all weapons handed in	Record all weapons handed in		
	Weapons disposal	Weapons disposal		
		Follow-up (and negative reinforcements)		
After	Evaluate program	Evaluate program		
	Assess program success/failure	Assess program success/failure		
	Report to donor	Report to donor		
	Disseminate progress, evaluation, and impact findings	Disseminate progress, evaluation, and impact findings		

## Security Sector Reform (SSR)

Security sector reform is a process intended to ensure that the security sector functions *only* to provide security to the total populace of a country. A side benefit of this is that it also makes the security sector more efficient and lowers the cost of providing security. SSR is a multi-faceted activity. It intersects with SALW issues because it requires among other things:

1. Comprehensive legislation which provides for the security of all citizens without discrimination;
2. Oversight over the activities of the security forces to ensure they provide security to civilians and are not exceeding the boundaries of the law;
3. Improvements in the security sector's control over the national SALW stockpile;
4. Improving relations with communities and individuals to ensure that security needs of civilians and communities are protected as well as the state.

Table 9 illustrates the mutually supporting roles of the security sector and CSOs in SSR to support SALW control.

**Table 9: SSR actors**

SSR activity	Security Sector actors	CSO actors
<b>Legislation</b>	Provide honest, unbiased professional input for legislators to frame good laws relevant to state, community, and personal security.	Ensure a balance is met between security requirements of the state and of individuals and communities. Provide information to ensure security forces are restricted in their activities to comprehensive security alone.
<b>Security forces oversight</b>	Provide periodic, reliable data on security sector activities, needs, and problems to oversight agents such as controllers, legislators. Provide a truthful overview of failures to meet standards set by legislation, and by community demands.	Train themselves to understand the requirements of the security sector so they can support efforts to ensure comprehensive security for the state as a whole, and for individuals within the state. Examine the activities of security sector actors at the micro level, and provide feedback to the security sector and to its overseers, on these activities.
<b>Control over national SALW stockpile</b>	Ensure—through training, appropriate allocation of resources, and regulation—that <i>all</i> stockpiles are <i>secure</i> and <i>safe</i> . This means a goal of zero leakage and zero accidents.	Provide oversight and data on cases of leakage. Support public information campaigns to control arms theft, promote collection activities, and prevent accidents caused by unexploded ordnance.

<p><b>Providing 'internal security'</b></p>	<p>Ensure—through training, allocation of resources, and if necessary punishment of infractions—that people are secure in their person and property throughout the country.</p> <p>Ensure that people <i>feel</i> confident about the ability of the security sector to provide comprehensive security.</p>	<p>Provide data which will help the security sector improve its performance.</p> <p>Provide information to security sector on people's feelings. Help explain the problems and legal and operative requirements for good security provision to civilians.</p> <p>Explain and disseminate facts on the role and limitations of security sector actors to both the security sector and civilians.</p> <p>Help raise the involvement of civilians and security sector personnel in the social and informal spheres.</p>
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### Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

We shall use the term CIMIC here in a broad sense to mean two different processes:

- In **post-conflict situations**, CIMIC generally means joint activities between peacekeeping actors (AU, UN, ECOMOG) and local and international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) who provide necessary services to the population. These services may include medical, transportation, food, education and other services that a post-conflict population cannot provide for itself.
- In **non post-conflict societies**, CSOs that are responsible for security issues are *ipso facto* defined as a security sector actor. CIMIC in this context refers to the cooperation between CSOs and other security sector actors.

#### Post-conflict CIMIC

Generally speaking, SALW issues in post-conflict situations are dealt with as a military issue. The role of CSOs may legitimately be limited to two aspects:

1. Helping peacekeepers develop publicity and education programs for ex-combatants who have been disarmed.
2. Helping peacekeepers develop public campaigns to keep people away from explosive remnants of war (bombs, mines) and to encourage people to hand in arms found after the conflict.

#### CIMIC within the security sector (not post-conflict)

The role of CSOs as part of the security sector is far more complex and delicate. A number of actions should be undertaken whose general aim is *to enhance mutual understanding between CSOs and other security sector actors*. These activities can include:

- Mutual exploration of common interests and differences through joint seminars and workshops;
- Regular meetings between members of these organizations;
- Development of joint research programs on items of mutual interest;
- Familiarization and training by armed security sector actors on technical issues related to SALW;

- Familiarization and training by CSOs on social and cultural issues related to SALW holding and use;
- Coordination of public relations campaigns to control SALW, stockpile leakages, etc.

### **Useful resources**

For more information on disarmament and the DD&R process, see:

- Gleichmann, Colin, Michael Odenwald, Kees Steenken and Adrian Wilkinson. 2004. *Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration: A Practical Field and Classroom Guide*. N.p: GTZ, NODEFIC, PPC, SNDC.
- *UN Integrated DDR Standards*. Available at <[www.unddr.org](http://www.unddr.org)>.

For more information on SSR, see:

- *OECD-DAC Guidelines on Security System Reform and Governance*. Available at <<http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict/ssr>>.

### **Selected bibliography**

SEESAC. 2004. *Guide to Regional Micro-Disarmament Standards / Guidelines (RMDS/G) and SALW control measures*. Belgrade: SEESAC.

## Section 8: Research on SALW

### Trainer Note

This section is intended for those with *little* to *no* experience in SALW research who may a) need to interpret or support research on SALW, or b) engage in SALW research. The information provided here is an overview of key issues, elements and principles of SALW research, but is not exhaustive. Additional resources are therefore suggested. This section can also serve as an *aide memoire* for more experienced researchers who are, or will be engaged in SALW issues.

The objective of research is to provide a *reliable* and *valid* description of a situation or phenomenon. The research must be *useful* for you in your work.

Good research provides you with a means to support:

- A knowledge base about SALW problems in your area;
- Lobbying governments to control SALW;
- Applying to donors for funds;
- Assessing and disseminating the results of your activities and their impact.

Civil society organizations need to be able to:

1. Utilize research results critically: Draw on research from other regions and critically evaluate that research;
2. Collect data on local SALW issues: Analyze this data to draw operative conclusions.

Not all CSOs are able to develop *both* these capacities. This can be solved by collaboration between CSOs and regional organizations which concentrate on implementation, and those that have applied research capacities.

Organizations that can help you engage in such research include:

- KAIPTC Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution Department (CPMRD) ([www.kaiptc.org/conflict\\_prevention](http://www.kaiptc.org/conflict_prevention))
- ECOWAS SALW Program ([www.ecosap.ecowas.int/](http://www.ecosap.ecowas.int/))
- BICC ([www.bicc.de](http://www.bicc.de))
- West African Action Network on Small Arms (WAANSA) PO Box CT 3140, Cantonments, Accra, Ghana, Tel: +233 21 811291, Fax: +233 21 811322

Many national and regional universities can also help, particularly their social sciences faculties that may have a research project and/or an experienced researcher interested in the topic.

### Using research

The ability to use research results critically is the *single most important* aspect of research.

When using a document which purports to be a research document, a number of critical questions need to be asked if a CSO intends to make use of the findings:

**What were the objectives of the research?** Sometimes, the objective of a research process can be political, and the results slanted. Look at the objectives carefully to make sure this is not the case.

**Who did the research?** The experience and skills of the researcher(s) will give you a good idea of the *quality* of the research and whether it can be taken seriously.

**What was the research process?** How did the researchers get their information? A variety of methods should be used. Conclusions drawn from interviews alone may only have limited validity. If a household survey was done, did the researcher(s) speak the local language? Did they ask relevant questions? If they used desk research, make sure their sources are applicable to your area and time.

**What are the main conclusions the researcher reached?** Look for those issues that may be useful for you in your work.

### A practical approach to reading research reports

1. Read the introduction to the report (this should provide you with information on (a) the report's objective, and (b) how it was achieved.  
If that information is not there, you should be skeptical about the quality of the report!
2. Read the conclusions. This should provide you with the key messages the researcher wants to provide.
3. If you still have questions, or want to know more about the research or its results, read the rest of the text.
4. Look at the references (cited books, reports, and articles) the author has supplied: this might provide you with additional sources of information.

Always ask yourself: How is this information useful for my project?

### Doing research

If your organization has the skills—staff trained in field research techniques and someone who understands research methods—you may want to conduct research yourself. This may be the case particularly where no other organization has previously done research on the issue you are interested in.

It is important to remember that your reputation and reliability rests on the quality of your research. False reporting, flawed methods and/or poor fieldwork will ruin your credibility in this field. Therefore:

- Be objective about findings. Even if you don't like what your research has found, you are bound to report on them.
- Always ensure that your research can stand up to critical scrutiny.

Remember: Do not rely on some outside agency to do this job for you—it is your problem, not that of someone from outside your country!!



## Some general issues before starting research

You should ask yourself three questions *before* starting research:

1. Is it *really* important for our work to carry out this research? If the answer is 'definitely yes' then you should proceed.
2. Am I/Is my organization *able* to carry out the research (do we have skilled personnel, time, funds, good relations with the subjects)? If the answer is 'yes' you should do it yourself, if 'no' you should invite someone else to do it with you. A good strategy is to combine capacity upgrading in your organization as part of the research collaboration.
3. Do you understand the *ethical* implications of your research? If the results of your research are going to harm an innocent population (i.e. your informants, people who might be affected adversely by the results of the report, your own staff) you are under an obligation to ensure this damage is not done, even at the cost of not doing the research. You must never:
  - Disclose informant identity!
  - Sell the information gathered!
  - Be biased about the results (even if you do not like them)!
  - Report an estimate or a guess as a fact!
4. Always look for *mutually independent sources of information*. A report plus a document plus an eyewitness report are likely to be true. An eyewitness report on its own is not.
5. *Be careful out there!!* Research into SALW can be risky. People may resent your questions.
  - Try to avoid research in areas where you may be threatened, or may feel threatened.
  - Do not be aggressive about questioning people on sensitive subjects.
  - Be cautious in approaching people.

## Preparing your research

### The problem

The first step is to identify the problem:

- *What* small arms problem in your area are you trying to address? For example: "Why do people fire in the air during festivals and is there a substitute for that behavior?" or "What is the market for SALW ammunition in this town?" Always be as concrete as possible!
- *How* can you address the problem? Is it useful to interview people? (Would people answer such questions?) Can you use an anonymous questionnaire? (Are the people literate? Do you have the resources to construct a questionnaire, spread it around, collect it, and analyze the results?)

### Research instruments

There are a number of research instruments you can use. These include:

- a) Desk research:** Research based on reading a great mass of documents, on paper or the internet.
- Distinguish between opinion and fact.
  - Be aware that writers have biases: not everything published is true.
  - Make sure you use *more than one* source of information.

## Citation and referencing

Whenever you engage in desk research, you will need to *cite* the references you have used.

A citation is a clear indication of the source of any information (i.e. a borrowed idea, statistical data or anecdote) that you did not come up with yourself.

A “Reference” is the full information about the source of the citation. A reference must include:

1. Name of author(s) (last name, first name). This can be a person(s) or organization(s);
2. Date of publication;
3. Title of Publication (journal article, report, chapter or book);
4. If it is a journal article or book chapter, the pages it is on;
5. If it is a journal article or book chapter, the title of the journal or book;
6. Place of publication;
7. Publisher.

For example, this Manual would be cited in the body of a text as: (Ashkenazi, Isikozlu and Radeke, 2008).

It would appear as a reference in a report as:

Ashkenazi, Michael, Elvan Isikozlu and Helen Radeke. 2008. *SALW Control Training Manual for West Africa*. Accra: KAIPTC.

Keep in mind that if you do not provide references for *all* your citations:

- You may suffer legal consequences;
- Your reputation will suffer;
- Your research may be rendered useless.

**b) Observations:** Research based on what you (or one of your associates) actually see. Observations must include the following information:

- Where (location of observed event, items, or actions)?
- What (was observed—the events, items, or actions observed)?
- Who (was involved, and who did the recording)?
- When (was the observation recorded)?

**c) Questions:** This is research based on what people *tell* you. There are *three* main ways to get this information:

- **Unstructured interview:** You set a topic for the interview, and ask a series of questions, but allow the interviewee to follow whatever they think is important. Use when you have only a basic idea of the topic.
- **Semi-structured interview:** You set several questions, and also a selection of answers, from which the interviewee selects those agreed with. Use when you have a good grasp of the topic, have prepared questions, but want to explore the respondents' opinions or experiences.
- **Structured interview / Questionnaire:** A form, which is filled in by the interviewee or the interviewer (who reads the questions to the interviewee), and which often has multiple-choice answers, so the person filling it can quickly tick off correct answers. Use particularly when you want to collect a wide set of data. Very useful for statistical analysis particularly if multiple choice answers are provided by you. It requires good grasp of the subject.

## General principles for all research

- Always note the source of information—what you see or *hear*.
- Always *record* (don't try to remember) the facts.
- Keep good records. These should always include the four 'W's: Where, What, Who, When.
- Keep records safe: make duplicates, and keep both original and duplicates in separate places safe from loss and from outsiders, to protect your informants.
- The research *must* benefit the community as well. *Always* consult with the community to find out what they think is important, and try to *satisfy that demand within the framework of your research*. *Always* share the results of the research with the community you studied!

## Subjects for study

In the following, you will find some major issues of interest for SALW research. Each can be researched using a combination of the instruments above.

### 1. Production research

- Is anyone manufacturing guns or ammunition in your area?
- Who is it, what do they produce and how much?
- What happens to the product and is this production authorized by the government?

### 2. Stockpile research

Stockpile research is important, because if done accurately, one can repeat the study later and see whether SALW reduction campaigns have been effective and successful or not.

- Who owns SALW in the area?
- How many and what types of SALW are in the area?
- Are stockpiles (government and private) secure and are there good records?

### 3. Transfer research

- Is there a market for SALW in the area? What are the quantities offered of various types of SALW and ammunition? What are the prices demanded for various types of SALW and ammunition?
- Who are the sellers? (Manufacturers? Importers? Local people selling personal weapons? The government? Government security personnel?) Who are the buyers?

### 4. Use and effects research

- Who uses SALW?
- What for? (Intimidation? Robbery? Assault? Self-protection?)
- In what circumstances are they used?
- How often do different uses of SALW occur?
- Who are the victims?
- What is the result of use? (The perpetrator is arrested? Punished? Gets away? Is applauded?)
- How effective are community and personal SALW-control campaigns?

## 5. Attitudes

- What attitudes do people have about
- The presence of SALW?
- The uses of SALW?
- Do people have suggestions about how to control SALW in their area?

## Limits and pitfalls of research

Not all research is successful, and before embarking on research one must be aware of some of the pitfalls along the way.

1. The research may not be *valid*. This means that you have asked the wrong question. As a rule of thumb:
  - Do a pilot study with a small sample; check it against what you already know and what informants say. Then correct the research and do a full-scale project.
2. The research may not be *reliable*. This means that you drew conclusions from too few examples. Two good rules of thumb:
  - Try to ensure that your sample is representative of the population (age, gender, ethnicity, class, religion);
  - A survey should include a statistically valid number of respondents: about five percent in a small population (<1000 people) and as close to one percent as you can get of any larger population.

## Funding research

All research requires some funding. The larger and more complex the research, the more it will cost. You should try to estimate the cost of research *before* starting the project. You can copy Table 10 and Table 11 into an Excel spreadsheet as the basis of your calculations. Modify them as necessary.

**Table 10: Research activities**

ACTIVITY	PERSONS	EQUIPMENT	DAYS
Initial planning			
Desk research			
Designing instruments			
Pilot testing (travel incl.)			
Reviewing pilot results			
Full-scale research (travel incl.)			
Review of results			
(Possible re-survey if poor results)			
Analysis			
Writing			
(Retesting results in field)			
Editing, typesetting, printing			
<b>Total</b>			

**Table 11: Research costs**

ITEM	UNIT/DAILY COST	UNITS	DAYS	TOTALS
Principal researcher				
Researcher				
Surveyors				
Per-diem				
Travel to site				
Consumables (notebooks, bags, etc)				
Equipment				
Overhead				

## What to do with your research results

### Publishing research results

Once the research is completed, you will need to write up the results. You will then be faced with a dilemma: publish it or not, and if so, how.

Publication for internal consumption can be done in-house, and requires little effort. Do so if the research results are intended to form the basis for ongoing or future programs.

Restricted publications will be shared with selected partners—your donor(s), government, or other NGOs—on a confidential basis. Use this only if the report is sensitive, or is commissioned by another agency (e.g. a donor, a government).

General publications are useful lobbying and publicity tools. They also give you a reputation outside of your country, as a good research report might be cited by writers in other regions.

Remember: Your publication will be judged by its contents, not its appearance. Make sure your research is up to the mark!

### Disseminating research results

You will want to disseminate the results of your research to a variety of audiences. The two most critical audiences *whom you must inform about the results of the research* are:

- Your **own staff**; and
- The **community** where you did the research.

In addition, there are four other potential audiences:

- Your **donors** will be very interested in the results of your research. You probably will want to refer to research outcomes when you write grant proposals. Among other things, this both demonstrates the scope of the problem to the donor, and demonstrates to the donor that your organization is capable and reliable.
- Your **government**. Presenting the results of reliable research is an excellent lobbying tool, as well as an opportunity to engage government agencies in serious dialogue.
- Other **NGOs** in your region. They may want to share information on related issues for mutual benefit, or engage in a joint activity.
- The **general public**. While they may not be interested in the full report, the results could feed into the media and/or support public awareness campaigns.

## Safety in SALW research

All work with SALW is inherently dangerous. CSO working on SALW issues need to keep in mind two kinds of risks, and must be prepared to deal with both:

- Safety problems arising from the deadly nature of Small Arms and Light Weapons;
- Security risks arising from the sensitivity about SALW of many actors.

### Safety

During your work on SALW control as a member of a CSO, you may very well come into contact with weapons. This is particularly common if you are working on an actual disarmament campaign such as gun collection projects. It is not unusual in such projects (and is, indeed, a mark of success!) for a member of the community to walk up to a team member and simply hand them one or more weapons for disposal: pistols, rifles, ammunition, grenades. What to do then?

#### Always remember some basic safety rules<sup>15</sup>:

1. ALL FIREARMS CAN GO OFF (even if you THINK or someone has TOLD YOU they are safe).
2. AVOID HANDLING FIREARMS if at all possible.
3. NEVER POINT A FIREARM AT ANYONE, EVEN IN PLAY, DEMONSTRATION, OR IN FUN.

If for a specific reason you *must* handle a firearm:

- Hold pistols by the back of the barrel, muzzle pointing down, butt/grip towards you, fingers *outside* the trigger guard!
- Hold long arms by the narrow part of the stock (the back part), muzzle down, trigger assembly towards you, fingers *outside* the trigger guard!
- *Never put your finger inside the trigger guard!*
- *Do not handle grenades or explosive rounds at all.* If handed one, put it down slowly and carefully (ideally in a hole at least 50cm deep and as wide), mark its location as clearly as possible (use white tape, a circle of stones, some fencing), and walk away. Post a guard at a reasonable distance (at least 10 meters away if it is a grenade, 100 meters away for anything larger) to keep people away from it and find someone competent to deal with it (army, police, mine-clearance)!
- If you are working in an area which is saturated with SALW, ammunition and/or explosives, try to find out whom to contact in case you find those items, or they are handed out to you. Experts that might be able to help you are: local and international organizations working on SALW and related issues, a (national) disarmament program, the police, demining organizations, etc.

<sup>15</sup> For a more detailed treatment, please see the TRESA module *SALW Basics – Recognizing SALW and Ammunition* available at [www.tresa-online.org/modules](http://www.tresa-online.org/modules).

## Security

Many actors who possess firearms, and with whom you may have to work, are sensitive about relevant issues, and can pose a threat to you and your colleagues. Here are some security precautions, which you should exercise in addition to the normal security precautions in your area, country, or region:

- **Explain.** Make sure that the people you are dealing with know what your purpose is, and reassure them that their anonymity will be protected and their interests will have impact.
- **Be sensitive and aware.** You will very quickly see (by people's faces and stance) whether they find your activities (questioning, providing material, observing) threatening. In such a case, desist! You can change the type of questions you are asking, or talk about other things, stop photographing, etc. Make yourself seem as non-threatening as possible. Perhaps you can try later.
- **Inform others.** Always have a written plan which you follow, and indicate to colleagues where you are, what you are doing, and how you can be reached. This is not always possible, but should be adhered to as much as possible.
- **Consistency.** Make sure you fulfill *all* promises you may have made (to share the results of research, to be balanced in allocating implementation jobs). *Don't make any promises you cannot fulfill!*
- **Keep calm.** Security forces in some countries are notorious for harassing people whom they suspect of acting against their interest, or 'threatening national security'. Make allowances for that and *inform your colleagues*.
- **Coordinate.** Always coordinate your activities with local security services, communities, and other CSOs.

Remember: You WANT to do your job, but you MUST make sure you can do it for a long time yet: Your own personal safety is a major factor in any project.

## Useful resources

More detailed information on research methods and how to conduct SALW research can be found in:

- Khakee, Anna. 2004. *Basic Principles of Field Research on Small Arms Action*. Bonn: BICC. Available at <http://www.tresa-online.org/modules/module.php?id=1>
- BICC and GTZ. 2005. *Organizing Civil Society Campaigns for Small Arms Action: A Manual for NGOs*. Eschborn: GTZ.

## Conclusion

Since the early 1990s, wars have increasingly been fought within a country's borders with the use of SALW. But while these wars are mainly waged within national borders, SALW continue to flow easily across them. The West African region in particular has been devastated by the easy availability of these weapons, which have traveled from one conflict zone to the next. In each, they have left a similar path of war and destruction.

SALW are legitimate tools of national security. Used responsibly by the proper authorities and according to the law, they are tools of protection. Used by the wrong individuals or against the law, they become the enemy of human security and development.

Regulation is therefore key. All measures must be taken to combat the threat of SALW proliferation and misuse. The West African sub-region has an unprecedented tool to do so: the ECOWAS Convention. If implemented fully, the Convention can help reduce the negative effects of illegal SALW in the sub-region. The challenge remains for ECOWAS member states to really own the Convention, implement its provisions in the respective countries, and fulfill its intended purpose. Ratification is only the first step.

But it must also go beyond that. SALW control will have limited effect if not combined with broader violence reduction efforts, the promotion of non-violent conflict management, and education for a culture of peace.

Civil society is well placed to meet this challenge, and is indeed a success story for West Africa. It is due in large part to the actions of civil society organizations that the ECOWAS Convention exists today. Such accomplishments and progress must be remembered and celebrated; and the work to realize the goal of the Convention must continue and be sustained.

But you cannot do it alone. Cooperation and coordination between all affected entities—communities, civil society organizations, security agencies, governments, development agencies, donors and media organizations, etc.—is critical for success. Capacity must exist to share the burden of work.

This manual is an endeavor to support this important work. We therefore hope it will be useful on your journey to help make the West African community safe from SALW.

If you have any comments, questions or requests regarding this manual or SALW training in general, we would be happy to hear from you. Feel free to contact:

- ECOWAS ([info@ecowas.int](mailto:info@ecowas.int) or [www.ecowas.int](http://www.ecowas.int))
- KAIPTC ([info@kaiptc.org](mailto:info@kaiptc.org) or [www.kaiptc.org](http://www.kaiptc.org))
- GTZ ([info@gtz.de](mailto:info@gtz.de) or [www.gtz.de/en](http://www.gtz.de/en))
- BICC ([bicc@bicc.de](mailto:bicc@bicc.de) or [www.bicc.de](http://www.bicc.de))



## Annexes

### Annex I: UN Definition of SALW

In 1997, a Panel of Government Experts on Small Arms developed a working definition for its report to the United Nations (UN), which since then has been applied during negotiations at UN level. This is less a 'definition' and more a list of those weapons the participants in the panel hoped would be acceptable for definition as SALW to the governments concerned. The definitional elements most often drawn upon by both states and NGOs for documents, during SALW control campaigns, and for application in legal texts, are those in §25 of the report:

"[...] Broadly speaking, small arms are those weapons designed for personal use, and light weapons are those designed for use by several persons serving as a crew."

The weapons falling under this definition are named in §26:

"Based on this broad definition and on an assessment of weapons actually used in conflicts being dealt with by the United Nations, the weapons addressed in the present report are categorized as follows:

(a) Small arms:

- (i) Revolvers and self-loading pistols;
- (ii) Rifles and carbines;
- (iii) Sub-machine-guns;
- (iv) Assault rifles;
- (v) Light machine-guns;

(b) Light weapons:

- (i) Heavy machine-guns;
- (ii) Hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers;
- (iii) Portable anti-aircraft guns;\*\*
- (iv) Portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles;\*\*
- (v) Portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems;\*\*
- (vi) Portable launchers of anti-aircraft missile systems;
- (vii) Mortars of calibres of less than 100 mm;

(c) Ammunition and explosives:

- (i) Cartridges (rounds) for small arms;
- (ii) Shells and missiles for light weapons;
- (iii) Mobile containers with missiles or shells for single-action anti-aircraft and anti-tank systems;
- (iv) Anti-personnel and anti-tank hand grenades;
- (v) Landmines;
- (vi) Explosives.

\*\* These weapons are sometimes mounted."

You can find the report under the following link: <<http://www.un.org/Depts/ddar/Firstcom/SGreport52/a52298.html>>.

## **Annex II: Overview of key provisions of the ECOWAS Convention On Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition And Other Related Materials**

### **Ammunition and other related materials (Article 1)**

The ECOWAS Convention is the first international instrument to include ammunition and other related materials within its scope. As such, it provides a more comprehensive framework to approach the problem of small arms than any other existing international agreement on the issue.

### **Prohibition of SALW transfers (Articles 3-6)**

The ECOWAS Convention is the first international agreement on SALW to provide a definition of transfers. Here, "transfer" is defined as any movement of SALW, including use, transport, transit and transshipment (Berkol, p. 3). The transfer to non-state actors is also prohibited in the Convention, unless the importing state allows for such transfer.

### **Control of the manufacture of SALW (Articles 7-8)**

The Convention calls upon states to *control* local production of SALW. This includes the registration of local producers and the regulation of manufacturing activities through the submission of detailed requests (i.e. on the type, quantity, and marking procedure) to the ECOWAS Executive Secretary.

### **Register of arms for peace operations (Article 11)**

The Convention foresees the establishment of a regional arms register. This register aims to collect and compile information on SALW used in peacekeeping operations within and beyond the ECOWAS region, as well as those seized, collected and/or destroyed during peacekeeping operations in the ECOWAS region.

### **Dialogue with manufacturers and suppliers (Article 12)**

In order to obtain the support and compliance of national and international manufacturers and suppliers of SALW, the Convention calls on member states and the Executive Secretary to strengthen cooperation and dialogue with these actors.

### **Control of civilian possession (Article 14)**

Civilian possession, use and sale of *light weapons* are strictly prohibited. Civilian possession, use and sale of *small arms*, however, must be regulated by member states through licensing procedures, whereby individuals must meet a number of criteria to obtain a license.

### **Visitor's certificates (Article 15)**

States are asked to make sure that visitors who want to import arms for the duration of their stay in the ECOWAS region follow an application procedure and submit information on the purpose, type and marking of the weapon. Upon acceptance of the request, entry certificates and exit declarations must be issued.

### **Management and security of stockpiles (Article 16)**

The ECOWAS Convention is the first legally binding international instrument to include the control of military weapons (Berkol, p. 5). States are called upon to establish effective standards and procedures to ensure the safe and effective management, storage and security of their national stocks of SALW. Storage facilities and conditions of SALW held by security forces must be regularly reviewed in order to identify surplus stocks for disposal.

**Marking** (Article 18)

The Convention requires “security markings” to be applied to component parts of all weapons produced after the entry-into-force of the Convention in order to supplement “classic markings” that may have been destroyed or even falsified. The Convention is also the first international instrument which requires markings to be applied to ammunition and other related materials, which are excluded from the UN Marking and Tracing Instrument. For ammunition, “classic markings” must also be applied to the smallest unit of packaging.

**Tracing** (Article 19)

If a member state finds a weapon within its territory which it considers illicit, it can initiate a tracing request through the Executive Secretary. Other member states are obliged to cooperate and to respond to such a tracing request within one month. The compulsory nature of this provision is a novelty, since existing instruments such as the UN Marking and Tracing Instrument are only politically binding (Berkol, p. 6).

**Brokering** (Article 20)

The inclusion of this provision shows recognition of the presence of arms brokers within West Africa and the need for states to regulate these activities (Berkol, p. 6). The registration of brokers, the authorization of individual transactions and detailed information on these transactions are some of the measures included within this provision.

**Strengthening border controls** (Article 22)

In order to prevent the illicit circulation of SALW, the Convention calls on member states to strengthen sub-regional cooperation and build the capacity of defense and security forces, intelligence services and customs and border control officials.

**Public education and awareness programs** (Article 23)

The Convention recognizes civil society as an important stakeholder in SALW control and calls upon states to encourage CSO activities in awareness-raising and education on SALW.

**Complaint Procedure** (Articles 27, 31)

As the Convention is a legally binding document, it foresees a complaint procedure in the case of non-compliance. This procedure includes inquiries and sanctions to be administered by the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council and even the ECOWAS Court of Justice.

**Monitoring and implementation** (Article 28)

In addition to an annual report submitted by member states, the Convention calls for the establishment of a Group of Independent Experts to monitor the implementation of and compliance with the Convention. A follow-up conference will be convened upon the entry-into-force of the Convention following the deposit of the 9th instrument of ratification.

**Bibliography**

Berkol, Ilhan. 2006. “Analysis of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons and recommendations for the development of an Action Plan.” *Note d’Analyse*. Brussels: GRIP.

