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brief *24*

Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons:
Regional and International Concerns

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gtz
Deutsche Gesellschaft für
Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH

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Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons:

Regional and International Concerns

Vanessa A. Farr,
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july *2002*

Vorwort

von Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul,
Bundesministerin für wirtschaftliche
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Die Publikation „Geschlechts-spezifische Perspektiven zu Kleinwaffen unter regionalen und internationalen Aspekten" betrachtet die Probleme, die mit der leichten Verfügbarkeit von Kleinwaffen zusammenhängen, aus einem geschlechtsspezifischen Blickwinkel. Gewalt und insbesondere die mit Kleinwaffen verübte Gewalt, hat weltweit gravierende Folgen. Diese betreffen die Situation der Menschenrechte wie auch die Entwicklungschancen von Menschen in Entwicklungs- und Transformationsländern.

Frauen sind Opfer in mit Waffen ausgetragenen Konflikten, und sie sind auch die Leidtragenden von häuslicher Gewalt durch Partner und Ehemänner, die in einem durch die Verfügbarkeit von Kleinwaffen gewaltgeladenen Umfeld entsteht. Nach Ende von militärischen Konflikten werden Frauen oftmals weniger in Demobilisierungsprogramme einbezogen, obwohl sie im Konflikt mitkämpfen. Für den Abbau von Kleinwaffenbeständen sind es weltweit immer noch mehrheitlich Männer, die Führungspositionen an militärischen Schaltstellen und bei bewaffneten Gruppen besetzt halten. Aus Sicht der Konfliktforschung zeigt sich jedoch: Wenn Frauen zu diesen militärischen Fragen ihre Stimme nicht erheben, und beim Abbau von Kleinwaffen nicht mitreden und mitentscheiden können, wird es keine tragfähige, geschlechtsübergreifende Lösung der Probleme geben.

Entwicklungspolitische Maßnahmen können einen Beitrag zur Verhinderung von gewaltsamen Konflikten, zur Förderung von ziviler Konfliktlösung, zur Kontrolle der Kleinwaffen durch einen ganzheitlichen Ansatz und zur besseren Einbeziehung von Frauen in allen gesellschaftlichen Fragen leisten.

So unterstützt das BMZ seit Jahren die Eigenanstrengungen seiner Kooperationsländer, die Diskriminierung von Frauen abzubauen und die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter zu verwirklichen. Die Planung und Durchführung von Projekten und Programmen der staatlichen deutschen Durchführungsorganisationen erfolgt nach Geschlechtern differenzierend, wie wir es in unserem Gleichberechtigungskonzept verbindlich festgeschrieben haben.

Den privaten Durchführungsorganisationen, die vom BMZ gefördert werden, dient das Konzept als Orientierung. Die Arbeit des Internationalen Konversionszentrums Bonn (BICC) trägt, vor allem durch ein Projekt zur Kontrolle von Kleinwaffen am Horn von Afrika (SALIGAD-Projekt), in vorbildlicher Weise zur Aufarbeitung des Skandals der Kleinwaffen bei.

Die vorliegende Veröffentlichung ist das erste Ergebnis der Bemühungen des BICC, solche Lösungsansätze in der Kleinwaffenproblematik zu finden, um eine ganzheitliche Gesamtstrategie zu erreichen. Mein Dank geht an die Mitarbeiterinnen und Mitarbeiter des BICC, die sich dieses Themas angenommen zu haben, sowie an die Autorinnen und Autoren und die GTZ. Den Leserinnen und Lesern wünsche ich eine aufschlussreiche Lektüre.

Foreword

by Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul,
Federal Minister for Economic
Co-operation and Development

The publication "Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Regional and International Concerns" addresses problems related to the easy availability of small arms from a gender-specific angle. Violence, especially violence practised with small arms, has grave world-wide consequences.
These affect the situation of human rights and people's development prospects in developing and transformation countries.

Women are victims of conflicts involving the use of arms, and they are the ones who suffer from domestic violence by the hands of their partners and husbands, violence which develops in an environment fraught with aggression through the availability of small arms.

Once military conflicts are over, women often are included to a lesser degree in demobilization campaigns although they took part in the conflicts. As to the reduction of small arms stocks it is still mostly men worldwide who keep leading positions occupied at the military power centres and within armed conflict groups. However, conflict research has shown: if women do not raise their voice on military issues, if they do not have a voice or say in matters involving the reduction of small arms, there will be no sustainable cross-gender resolution of the problems.

Development co-operation measures can make a contribution to preventing violent conflicts, to enhancing civil solutions of conflicts, to controlling small arms by means of a holistic approach, and to a greater participation of women in all social issues.

Thus, the BMZ has for many years been supporting its co-operation countries' own efforts to reduce the discrimination of women and to achieve gender equality.

The planning and implementation of projects and programmes run by German official implementing organizations is based on a gender differentiation as spelled out in a binding manner in our gender equality concept.

The private implementing agencies supported by the BMZ use the concept as an orientation aid. The work of the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) contributes in an exemplary manner to addressing the scandalous situation regarding small arms with a project to control small arms at the Horn of Africa (SALIGAD project).

The present publication is the first result of BICC's efforts to identify such solutions within the small arms problem complex so as to arrive at a holistic overall strategy. I wish to thank all members of staff of BICC who have taken up this issue, and also the authors and GTZ. I hope readers will find this publication informative and worth reading.

Einleitung

von Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold und Vanessa A. Farr

Die Idee eine Tagung zu organisieren und durchzuführen, die als Schwerpunkt Kleinwaffen aus einer geschlechtsspezifischen Perspektive beleuchtet, entstand aus der Arbeit des SALIGAD-Projektes[1]. Dieses Projekt wird gemeinsam vom Internationalen Konversionszentrum Bonn (BICC) und der International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG) getragen, finanziert wird es durch die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) und Brot für die Welt. Details über das SALIGAD-Projekt sind in der Publikation des BICC *Small Arms in the Horn of Africa* (brief 23), März 2002, oder auf der Internetseite www.saligad.org zu finden.

Die Tagung mit dem Titel „Klein- und Leichtwaffen in Uganda: Dynamik, Konzepte und Perspektiven für Aktivitäten" fand in Jinja, Uganda, vom 14. bis 17 April 2002 statt. Die über 30 Teilnehmer mit unterschiedlichem gesellschaftlichen und beruflichen Hintergrund waren unter anderem:

◼ Praktiker aus der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit,

◼ Regierungsvertreter,

◼ Beamte aus dem Sicherheitssektor,

◼ Vertreter aus Kirchen und Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen (NROs),

◼ Forscher und

◼ Mitarbeiter aus dem Gesundheitssektor.

Mehrere der hier veröffentlichen Texte wurden zum ersten Mal während des Jinja Workshops – unter dem thematischen Schwerpunkt „Gender Perspektiven zu Kleinwaffen"- vorgetragen und beschäftigen sich mit der Kleinwaffenfrage am Horn von Afrika aus eben der Gender-Perspektive.

Die Gefahr, die von der unkontrollierten Verbreitung von Kleinwaffen für Frauen und Mädchen ausgeht, ist jedoch eine globale Herausforderung. Oft erfahren Frauen waffengestützte, geschlechtsspezifische Gewalt nicht nur in Kriegs-, sondern auch in Friedenszeiten. Um diese komplexe Realität entsprechend widerzuspiegeln, wurde die Bandbreite der Themen in dieser Publikation erweitert. Dadurch soll ein möglichst umfassender Überblick entstehen, in wie weit lokale, geschlechtsspezifische Ideologien bestimmte Einstellungen gegenüber Kleinwaffen determinieren und somit gleichzeitig soziale und politische Praktiken, die Frauen weltweit durch Gewalt verwundbar machen, untermauern.

Geschlecht und Kleinwaffen: Ein vernachlässigtes Thema

Lange vor dem Jinja-Workshop wurde, während das SALIGAD-Projekt in verschiedenen Ländern am Horn von Afrika angewandte Forschung zur Kleinwaffenproblematik betrieb, deutlich, dass wir bis dato einen wichtigen Aspekt ausgeblendet hatten. Viele Studien in der Region aber auch weltweit hatten die Kleinwaffenproblematik so behandelt, als beträfe sie nur Männer. Auch das SALIGAD-Projekt hatte in der Regel Männer im arbeitsfähigen Alter interviewt, die im militärischen und Sicherheitssektor tätig sind. Erst als wir begannen, die Daten systematisch auszuwerten und die Auswirkungen von Kleinwaffen zu dokumentieren, wurde uns klar, dass Frauen, Kinder und alte Männer in diesen Ergebnissen nicht genügend erfasst waren.

Im BICC und bei Konsultation mit unseren lokalen Partnern reifte die Idee heran, durch diverse Aktivitäten wie weitere Feldforschung und Workshops Geschlechterrolle und Kleinwaffen unter einem gemeinsamen Blickwinkel zu untersuchen. Der Jinja-Workshop ist die erste Initiative, die aus dieser Herangehensweise entstand.

Zur Struktur der Studie

Die vorliegende Publikation umfasst drei Kapitel. Der **erste Teil**, *„How is gun proliferation gendered?"*, beleuchtet aus internationaler Perspektive, wie Einschätzungen und Vorgehensweisen zur Kleinwaffenproblematik die Geschlechterfrage stärker berüksichtigen sollten. Vanessa Farr von der *African Women's Anti War Coalition* analysiert internationale Protokolle zu Kleinwaffen unter der Fragestellung, ob sie ein effektives Mittel darstellen, die Geschlechterfrage in diesem Zusammenhang als Querschnittsaufgabe einzubeziehen.

Wendy Cukier, Mitglied des *Small Arms/Fireams Education and Research Network* (SAFER-Net) der Ryerson University in Kanada, erklärt in ihrem Aufsatz *„Gendered Perspectives on Small Arms Proliferation and Misuse: Effects and Policies"*, dass für Frauen und Mädchen, unabhängig davon, ob sie unter Kriegs- oder Friedensbedingungen leben, die leichte Verfügbarkeit von Kleinwaffen stets massive Auswirkungen auf den Kampf gegen geschlechtspezifische Gewalt hat.

Der **zweite Teil** *„The Politics of SALW: Mainstreaming Gender in Policy-Making,"* konzentriert sich auf die Region am Horn von Afrika. In diesem Teil schreibt die ugandische Ministerin für Geschlechterfragen, Arbeit und Soziale Entwicklung (MGLSD) Zoë Bakoko Bakoru über *„Personal Reflections on Small Arms and Light Weapons"*. Dieser Bericht gibt einen Einblick, wie ugandische Frauen von der Verbreitung von Kleinwaffen betroffen sind. Darüber hinaus diskutiert dieser Artikel, wie regionale und internationale Abkommen stärker genutzt werden könnten, um die Kleinwaffenplage zu bekämpfen.

Bakokos Kollegin, Jane Sanyu Mpagi, Direktorin für Geschlechterfragen und Kommunalentwicklung im o.g. Ministerium widmet ihren Artikel *„Creating Gender-aware Policies on Small Arms and Light Weapons"* der Frage, wie eine geschlechtsspezifische Perspektive auf die Sicherheitspolitik auf nationaler und regionaler Ebene entwickelt werden kann, und schlägt Strategien des Umgangs mit Klein- und Leichtwaffen vor, die den Geschlechteraspekt ebenfalls stärker berücksichtigen.

Der dritte Artikel in diesem Teil, *„Gendering the Management of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Sudan"*, stammt von Amani El Jack, Doktorantin an der York University in Toronto, Kanada. Basierend auf Interviews mit vertriebenen sudanesischen Frauen, die innerhalb eines SALIGAD-Projektes 2001 und 2002 im Sudan, in Uganda und Kenia durchgeführt wurden, untersucht sie, in welcher Weise die Zirkulation von Kleinwaffen am Horn von Afrika ein kulturell-ideologisches und geschlechtsspezifisches Rollen verhalten zugrunde liegt.

Im **dritten Teil** mit dem Titel *„SALW Proliferation and Gender-Based Violence"*, untersucht Ruth Ojambo Ochieng, Direktorin von Isis- Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange (WICCE) Uganda, Hinweise auf Folterungen in den Kriegsgebieten von Uganda. Ihr besonderes Augenmerk liegt dabei auf dem Gebrauch von Kleinwaffen im Zusammenhang mit der Ausübung von geschlechtsspezifischer Gewalt. Ihr Artikel *„A Gendered Reading of the Problems and Dynamics of SALW in Uganda"* wird durch die Arbeit von Olive C. Kobusingye, Direktorin des *Injury Control Centre Uganda* (ICC-U), ergänzt.

Ihre Analyse der *„Effects of SALW Proliferation in Gulu District, Uganda: A Public Health Approach"* zeigt, wie insbesondere die öffentliche medizinische Versorgung durch die Verbreitung von Kleinwaffen beeinträchtigt wird.

Der **vierte Teil** dieses Briefs konzentriert sich auf *„Lessons Learned and Practical Tools"*, also auf Schlussfol gerungen und konkrete Schritte. Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold beschreibt einige praktische und konzeptionelle Maßnahmen, die im Laufes des SALIGAD-Projektes am Horn von Afrika entwickelt wurden. Seine Erkenntnisse werden durch den *„Call for Action"* des Uganda-Workshops ergänzt.

Neben den wissenschaftlichen Analysen der Auswirkungen von Kleinwaffen auf Frauen und Mädchen informieren einige kurze Texte in einem breiteren Sinne. Enthalten sind persönliche Berichte, wie Kleinwaffen und die geschlechtsspezifischen Ideologien, die ihre Verbreitung begünstigen, das Leben von Männern und Frauen beeinflussen. Hinzu kommen weitere, eher akademische Analysen, wie die Verbreitung von Kleinwaffen Frauen in Ländern, die vorgeblich friedlich sind, tangiert. Diese Beiträge verdeutlichen, wie tiefgreifend die Auswirkungen von Waffengewalt gegen Frauen wirklich sind, und unterstützen geschlechtsspezifische Aktivitäten, um diesen Problemen zu begegnen.

Ein **Anhang** am Ende dieser Publikation umfasst verschiedene, für eine breitere Öffentlichkeit nützliche Dokumente. Empfohlen werden Vorschläge für weitere Lektüre und Informationsquellen für Intressierte, die sich auf dem Gebiet der Kleinwaffenkontrolle entweder auf lokaler, nationaler oder supra-regionaler Ebene engagieren.

Für das SALIGAD-Projekt und BICC stellt diese Publikation einen Anfang dar. Die Tagung in Jinja schuf einerseits eine Plattform um unserere Arbeit zu vertiefen und weiter zu entwickeln. Sie stellt uns andererseits vor die Aufgabe, uns für die Wirksamkeit von Geschlechterrollen zu sensibilisieren und Programme zu entwickeln, die diese Perspektive beinhalten.

Durch diese Publikation hoffen wir diejenigen, die in die Kleinwaffenproblematik involviert sind, zu überzeugen, dass eine geschlechtsspezifische Perspektive beim Versuch, die Verbreitung und die Auswirkungen von Kleinwaffen besser zu regeln, absolut notwendig ist. Der komplette Tagungsbericht des Jinja workshops ist unter:
http://www.saligad.org/workshops/jinja/jinja_proceedings.html

Ein Wort des Dankes

Diese Publikation wäre ohne die kollektiven Anstrengungen in Uganda nicht möglich gewesen. Unser Dank geht an die Regierung von Uganda, an das MGLSD, an alle Referenten sowie das SALIGAD-Team vor Ort (Abeba Berhe, Isabelle Masson, J. Kimani). Herr Kimani hat als regionaler Leiter nicht nur einen speziellen Beitrag zu diesem Workshop durch die karthografische Darstellung von Konflikten geleistet, sondern auch durch die Lösung zahlreicher logistischer und praktischer Probleme im Vorfeld des Treffens. Ebenso danken wir Frau Ida Kikionya vom MGLSD für ihren Einsatz und ihre Unterstützung in der Planung und Durchführung dieses Workshops.

Natürlich wäre auch dieser Workshop nicht ohne die Hilfe des IRG Büros in Nairobi und der Mitarbeiter des BICC möglich gewesen, die die Logistik und Finanzierung eines solchen Projektes regeln.

Beim BICC möchten wir Renée Ernst für die Beschaffung von Finanzierungsmöglichkeiten sowie für ihre moralische Unterstützung danken. Des weiteren danken wir Peter Croll, der als neuer Direktor des BICC das SALIGAD-Projekt und unsere Arbeit zum Thema 'Gender und Konflikt' von Anfang an gefördert hat.

[1] SALIGAD steht für „Small Arms and Light Weapons in the IGAD countries". Die IGAD-Länder sind Äthiopien, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda.

Introduction

by Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold und Vanessa A. Farr

The idea to organize and conduct a workshop at which we would discuss the issue of small arms and light weapons from a gender perspective was originated from within the SALIGAD project [1], a joint initiative of the **Bonn International Center for Conversion** (BICC) and **the International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa** (IRG). The funding came from the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and Bread for the World. Details on the SALIGAD project can be found in the BICC publication *brief 23*, March 2002, or via the website: www.saligad.org.

The workshop, which was entitled "Small Arms and Light Weapons Issues in Uganda: Dynamics, Concepts and Perspectives for Action," took place in Jinja, Uganda, from 14-17 April 2002 and brought together more than 30 participants with various backgrounds and professional responsibilities.
These included:

■ field practitioners;

■ government officials;

■ security sector officials;

■ church and NGO representatives;

■ researchers; and

■ health practitioners.

Several of the texts in this publication were first presented during the Jinja workshop in the sections on "Gender Perspectives on Small Arms," and focus on questions raised in the Horn of Africa. The particular danger to women and girls of the proliferation and abuse of small arms is, however, a global problem. Moreover, females experience gender-based violence at the point of a gun in times of peace as well as in times of war. To reflect this complex reality, the ambit of this publication has been widened in order to give a comprehensive overview of how local gender ideologies not only determine attitudes to small arms, but underpin social and political practices which make women more vulnerable to violence everywhere.

Gender and small arms: A neglected issue

Well before the Jinja workshop, while the SALIGAD project was conducting applied research in various countries in the Horn of Africa, it became clear that we were missing out on an extremely important issue. Most studies in the region, and globally, have undertaken assessments of the small arms problem as if it only affected men.
In SALIGAD's own work, since those whom we interviewed in the military and the security sector were mostly men of a working age, they constituted the majority of our interviewees. It was only when we came to analyze and document the impact of small arms that the mostly missing perspectives those of women, children, and older men became apparent.

Within BICC, and in consultation with our local partners, the idea was born to focus, through various activities (such as applied research and a workshop), on gender and small arms. The Jinja workshop is the first major initiative that has resulted from this thinking.

Outline of the publication

This publication comprises three main sections. The **first part**, *"How Is Gun Proliferation and Misuse Gendered?"* gives international perspectives on how assessments and policies on small arms and light weapons (SALW) should be made more gender-aware. In her paper *"A Gendered Analysis of International Agreements on Small Arms and Light Weapons,"* Vanessa Farr, of the *African Women's Anti-War Coalition*, analyzes existing international protocols on SALW and draws conclusions about whether they offer an effective means to mainstream gender.

Also in this section, Wendy Cukier, of the *Small Arms/Firearms Education and Research Network* (SAFER-Net) at Ryerson University, Canada, in her paper *"Gendered Perspectives on Small Arms Proliferation and Misuse: Effects and Policies,"* explains that for women and girls—living in war zones as well as in countries that are at peace—the easy availability of SALW has profound implications in the struggle against gender-based violence.

The **second** section, *"The Politics of SALW: Mainstreaming Gender in Policy-Making,"* focuses on the Horn of Africa. Here, the Ugandan Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development (MGLSD), Hon. Zoë Bakoko Bakoru, offers some *"Personal Reflections on Small Arms and Light Weapons."* This paper gives an insight into how Ugandan women have been affected by SALW proliferation, and discusses how regional and international agreements could be more effectively used to combat this scourge.

Her colleague, Jane Sanyu Mpagi, Director for Gender and Community Development in the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, describes the steps that can be taken in *"Creating Gender-aware Policies on Small Arms and Light Weapons."* This paper aims to develop the means to integrate a gender perspective into security policies, at both national and regional level, and to propose gender-aware strategies for dealing with illicit small arms and light weapons.

The third paper in this section, *"Gender Perspectives on the Management of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Sudan,"* is by Amani El Jack, a Ph.D. Candidate at York University, Toronto, Canada. Drawing from practical fieldwork with displaced Sudanese women that was conducted within the SALIGAD project in 2001 and 2002 in Sudan, Uganda and Kenya, this researcher interrogates the extent to which cultural ideologies about gender-appropriate behavior lie at the heart of SALW proliferation in the Horn of Africa.

In the **third** section, *"SALW Proliferation and Gender-based Violence,"* Ruth Ojambo Ochieng, Ruth, Director of Isis- Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange (WICCE) Uganda examines evidence of torture in the war-torn regions of Uganda, focusing in particular on the use of SALW in the perpetration of gender-based violence. Her paper, *"A Gendered Reading of the Problems and Dynamics of SALW in Uganda"* is complemented by the work of Olive C. Kobusingye, Director of the *Injury Control Centre Uganda* (ICC-U), from whose analysis of *"The Effects of SALW Proliferation and*

Abuse in Gulu District, Uganda: A Public Health Approach," we learn how public health work is particularly affected by SALW.

The **fourth** part of this *Brief* focuses on *"Lessons Learned and Practical Tools."* Here, Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold offers some practical and conceptual tools that have been developed during the course of SALIGAD's work in the Horn of Africa. His insights are complemented by a *"Call for Action"* written by the gender caucus at the Uganda workshop.

Interspersed with the formal analyses of the effects of SALW on women and girls are a number of short texts which offer a wide range of information. These include personal accounts of how firearms—and gender ideologies which support them—affect women's and men's lives, as well as more academic analyses of how the proliferation and misues of firearms impacts on women in countries that are supposedly peaceful. These texts show how widespread the effects of gun violence against women really are, and support gender-aware activism to address this problem.

At the end of this publication, we have included a list of resources which draws together useful documents for a wider audience. It offers suggestions for further reading for those engaged in small arms control and management, whether at village, national or sub-regional level.

For the SALIGAD project, and BICC more broadly, this publication represents a beginning. The workshop in Jinja gave us the platform to further explore and develop our own work, to ask ourselves what differences are made to our findings and practical programs when we develop these from a perspective that measures the effects of gender ideologies.

Through this publication, we hope to convince all those involved in the small arms issue, in all its aspects, that a gender perspective is essential for the betterment of our attempts to manage proliferation and its effects. The overall proceedings of the Jinja workshop, can be found under:
http://www.saligad.org/workshops/jinja/jinja_proceedings.html

Some words of thanks

[1] SALIGAD stands for "Small Arms and Light Weapons in the IGAD countries." The IGAD countries are Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

1 How is Gun Proliferation and Misuse Gendered?

Photo: Nita Bhalla, Mother and Child Victim, Dire Dawa/ Ethiopia, Hospital, August 2001

A Gendered Analysis of International Agreements on Small Arms and Light Weapons

by Vanessa A. Farr

The urgent need for gender mainstreaming in the arena of small arms and light weapons

In recent international protocols on small arms and light weapons (SALW), signatories typically assert that they are "[a]ppalled by the devastating effects of armed conflicts particularly on women and children" (Nairobi Declaration). Yet beyond statements such as these, no further recognition or assessment is offered of

1) the specific effects on women and girls of the proliferation of SALW during periods of armed conflict;
2) how women and girls are impacted by the continued presence of such weapons in the aftermath of war; or
3) what women and girls are doing to resist persecution at the point of a gun.

In this paper, I shall offer a detailed analysis of why most of the existing Protocols, Declarations, Reports and other such documents on SALW, even when they mention women and girls, are not useful instruments for gender mainstreaming as they stand. I shall focus on women in conflict zones, but I do not mean

Firearm availability and female homicide rates in the United States

In a recent study by David Hemenway, Tomoko Shinoda-Tagawa and Matthew Miller, which aimed to determine the association between firearm availability and the extent of female homicide in high-income countries, it was discovered that where there are large numbers of household firearms, female homicide rates are considerably higher.

The study covered twenty-five countries, and data for the most recent available years (1994-1999) were assembled from the official reports of the ministries of health for those countries that had more than two million inhabitants. Rates of female victimization from homicide, firearm homicide, and nonfirearm homicide were compared with a validated proxy for household firearm ownership (the percentage of total national suicides that are committed with firearms).

Possible confounding variables included in the analysis were the percentage of the population living in urban areas and income inequality.
The United States accounted for 70% of all female homicides and 84% of all female firearm homicides, and female homicide victimization rates were significantly associated with firearm availability largely because of the high number of firearm-associated deaths in the United States.

In high-income countries, the researchers concluded, an increase in the availability of firearms leads to an increase in the number of women homicide victims. Women in the United States are at higher risk of homicide victimization than are women in any other high-income country

(The full study was published in the Journal of the American Medical Women's Association (JAMWA. 2002; 57:100-104). For more information, see http://jamwa.amwadoc.org/vol57/57_2_8.htm)

to imply that women in areas not in a state of war are safe from gun violence, since there is ample evidence from countries such as the United States and South Africa to prove that this is not the case (Hemenway, 2002; Gun Free South Africa, 2000).

Shortcomings in existing tools for policy-making, research and activism

Recently, both SALW and gender mainstreaming in conflict prevention have found a prominent place on the international agenda, and a spate of agreements have been ratified in the decade. It is in assuring women's full-scale involvement in social and political movements, especially that of women living in conflict zones, that such agreements should wield their greatest power. Indeed, this was the most important priority agreed on at the UN Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995. Among the Strategic Objectives in the Beijing Platform of Action devised at this meeting were the following:

■ To increase the participation of women in conflict resolution at decision-making levels and protect women living in situations of armed and other conflicts or under foreign occupation;

■ To promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce the incidence of human rights abuse in conflict situations;

■ To promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace;

■ To provide protection, assistance and training to refugee women, other displaced women in need of international protection and internally displaced women;

■ To encourage the production and distribution of research about how women and girls experience warfare.[1]

Then in May 2000, after a seminar on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations" which was organized by the Lessons Learned Unit of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations and hosted by the Government of Namibia, the Windhoek Declaration and Namibia Plan of Action on "Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective In Multidimensional Peace Support Operations" came into being. This Declaration deals with gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions, taking up the challenge set in Beijing. It states that:

> *"[T]he principles of gender equality must permeate the entire [peace] mission, at all levels, thus ensuring the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace process—from peacekeeping, reconciliation and peace-building, towards a situation of political stability in which women and men play an equal part in the political, economic and social development of their country."* [2]

The Windhoek Declaration sets out practical ways in which the UN and member states can begin the process of promoting women's central involvement with matters pertaining to national security and the planning and implementation of peacekeeping missions, negotiations, the

monitoring and evaluation of programs, and raising public awareness about how gender mainstreaming affects the success of peacekeeping missions. What is not mentioned is the possible effects on women of the proliferation of illicit weapons after war, and no reference is made to how increasing gun violence might mitigate against women's increased participation in peacebuilding efforts. In the build-up to the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons held in New York a year later, in July 2001, there was a flurry of meetings, at both government and civil society level, to develop appropriate protocols and plans of action to combat the further proliferation of SALW and the devastating effects of their misuse on post-conflict reconstruction. African nations played a particularly significant role in articulating the problems of proliferation and developing strategies to combat their effects. In March 2000, two months before the Windhoek Declaration, "The Nairobi Declaration on the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa" was ratified. In it, the signatories expressed their "concern that the easy availability of illicit small arms and light weapons escalates conflicts and undermines political stability," and acknowledged that these weapons "have devastating impacts on human and State security." The promotion of human rights, good governance and democracy, as well as the importance of regional strategies to combat the circulation of SALW, receive prominence as strategies to curb the scourge, while the importance of "[r]ecognizing the relationship between security and development and the need to develop

comprehensive and effective peace-building and other measures aimed at reducing the resort to arms" is acknowledged in this Declaration. However, even though the Declaration promoting women's contribution to peacebuilding efforts was being drafted in Windhoek at almost the same time as this meeting was held, the Nairobi Declaration mentions women once, and then only alludes to them as passive victims of the effects of SALW. No attention is paid to how women's particular experiences and understanding of the effects of SALW might be mobilized in the struggle against their proliferation and abuse; and while the list of concrete actions that can be taken to combat the circulation of weapons recognizes that firearm violence is worsened by poverty and political strife and thrives in areas where human and political rights are regularly violated, it is oblivious to the nuances of gender.

At the end of November 2000, member states of the Organization of African Unity met to devise the "Bamako Declaration on an African Common Position on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons."[3] Expressing their "grave concern that the problem of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons continues to have devastating consequences for stability and development in Africa," the signatories recognize how SALW:

■ sustain conflicts, exacerbate violence, contribute to the displacement of innocent populations and threaten international humanitarian law;

■ promote a culture of violence and destabilize societies by creating a propitious environment for criminal and contra-band activities;

■ have adverse effects on security and development, especially on women, refugees and other vulnerable groups, as well as on infrastructure and property;

■ have devastating consequences on children, a number of whom are victims of armed conflict, while others are forced to become child soldiers.

While this Declaration presents a much more holistic picture of how SALW affect the countries and regions of the continent, there is, once again, only a passing mention of women, who are again buried in a brief reference to "the most vulnerable groups of society." There is no careful reflection on how women's lives, in particular, are impacted by illicit weapons, or any explicit commitment to involving women in the mechanisms that are being devised to combat the problem.

That the Bamako Declaration could be effectively gender-blind in both its analysis and its recommendations is all the more disturbing because, only a month before, in October 2000, the UN adopted Resolution 1325, which formally recognizes that achieving gender justice is as central to social transformation as any other form of reparations after war. Resolution 1325 came about as a result of years of campaigning by the international peace community, and draws from a body of feminist scholarship which proposes that, when demilitarization begins after violent conflict ends, understanding

the effects of gender ideologies is essential to successful peacebuilding. The following groundbreaking assertions are made:

■ civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements which impacts significantly on the possibility for durable peace and reconciliation;

■ women play an important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, must therefore participate equally and be fully involved in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and deserve an increased role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution;

■ international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts must be reaffirmed and fully implemented;

■ mine clearance and mine awareness programs must take into account the special needs of women and girls;

■ a gender perspective must be mainstreamed into peacekeeping operations, as set out in the Windhoek Declaration;

■ the specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations must be prioritized;

■ further research must be undertaken to deepen our understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls; and

■ the development of effective institutional arrangements to guarantee the protection and full participation of women and girls in the peace process so that they can, in future, significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security, must be instituted.

While Resolution 1325 was hailed by the international women's movement as a break-through because it made sure that "Women Count At Last!"[4] the attention it pays to the special efforts needed to highlight women's presence as active participants and not only as passive victims of conflict had no effect at all on the discussions and the Report of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects, held in New York City in July 2001.[5] Once again, this document fails to implement the mainstreaming of gender that is called for in Resolution 1325 and the Windhoek Declaration. Instead, it dispatches everyone who is not male, young and fit in one brief sentence in which its signatories state themselves to be

"[g]ravely concerned about [the] devastating consequences [of small arms proliferation] on children, many of

whom are victims of armed conflict or are forced to become child soldiers, as well as the negative impact on women and the elderly. "

The fact that illicit small arms are smuggled and abused by people–whether they be men, women and children, old and young–who gain access to them and find cultural, traditional and political justifications for their use; and the fact that those who use illicit weapons and ensure their circulation are often beyond the jurisdiction of any political party nation-state or regional controlling body, is not adequately reflected in the "Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" with which the Report concludes. Instead, States declare themselves to be committed to abstract national, regional and global strategies to combat the impact of SALW, and focus on the technicalities of weapons control–an approach which appears only to divorce the problem from the real people who are displaced, maimed and killed on the ground, and to reinforce the chasm between the politicians and those who must endure the misery of war.

What is obvious in a close analysis of the Windhoek and Bamako Declarations, Resolution 1325 and the Report on the small arms conference, is the fact that although weapons proliferation is often culturally sanctioned and upheld by the manipulation of gender ideologies, gender goes entirely unremarked in all documents which were not explicitly conceived to focus on gender mainstreaming. The development of gender-aware analysis and strategies to combat the

unprecedented effects of armed conflicts on civilians in the past few decades would appear to be little more, then, than a public relations exercise. In the end, even the newest international protocols on the effects of SALW have failed to commit themselves in any meaningful way to countering the power of existing social divisions to exclude women from positions of authority or to protect children from the effects of weapons of mass destruction.

Gender identities in times of conflict

The world's women desperately need international agreements which are subtle in their analysis of how gender ideologies work to suppress women, have substance and power, and are committed to the real transformation of existing systems of gender inequity. After all, it is a universally observable truth that the oppression of women, both in wartime and after wars have officially ended, takes many forms.

SALW play a particularly egregious role in maintaining male dominance, and it is not an exaggeration to say that almost every form of violence perpetrated against women in conflict zones is facilitated by the widespread presence of firearms, both legal and illicit. This is one reason why we urgently need existing international agreements, with the support of effective international coalitions, to make real progress in curbing small arms and light weapons proliferation.

It is not, however, the only reason. Although, as we have seen, the relationship between the violation of women's rights and the abuse of

weapons is alluded to in Declarations, Protocols, Plans of Action and other such attempts to manage SALW, the majority of these documents mention the impact of gun proliferation on women in such a way that they do little to challenge existing gender ideologies about "women as victims" and "men as perpetrators." Such an unreflective endorsement of gender stereotypes offers no space in which to analyze the real complexities of gender roles in wartime, including the fact that women are frequently very active in periods of struggle, as fighters and supporters, and that war sometimes allows women to take on roles that might not be open to them in times of peace. These roles may include women's participation in the proliferation and normalization of guns, either because they carry and use light weapons, or because they participate in liberation struggles by smuggling arms or hiding weapons and/or their bearers.

As feminist analysts maintain, one of the most egregious effects of gender stereotyping is to make invisible women's complex participation in social events and political processes. While feminist activists in non-conflict situations have made some progress in correcting women's exclusion from influential public arenas by contending gender ideologies that identify women with the domestic arena alone, it has proven much more difficult to extend the same right to women who are caught up in violent conflicts.

In a world where poverty and dispossession are on the rise, armed violence is increasingly the result of contestations of identity. It is essential, then, to understand how gender identities are mobilized in

support of the machinery of war. In assessing this issue, feminist theorists have proved that ideas about women and femininity form an essential part of the process of constructing a male identity that is deemed appropriate for a warring society. Cynthia Enloe notes that the manipulation of notions of gender-appropriate behavior is a central component of ethnic nationalism (Enloe, 1998), and holds that the "militarization of women has been crucial for the militarization of governments and of international relations. The militarization of women has been necessary for the militarization of men" (Enloe, 2000 p. 3). Yet while significant attention has been paid to the ways in which men and ideas about masculinity are mobilized as part of the war machine -and this attention has not always been critical- it is only in recent years that we have begun to understand that women, and deeply-held beliefs about femininity, are also both militarized and mobilized in support of the ideology of war (Cock, 1991; Goldstein, 2001).

While recognizing a pattern in the ways in which societies manipulate gender ideologies, feminist scholars have also worked to nuance our understanding of how women find ways to be active in determining their roles and the identities they take on to fulfill these roles during the build-up to war, in wartime, and afterwards. They have pointed out that even in the duress of conflict, women's identities are strategic and shifting (Cockburn, 2001). Arguing against the predominant stereotypes of women as innately peaceful and men as inevitably warlike (Fukuyama, 1998; Goldstein, 2001), feminists have urged that we recognize the complexity of gender

ideologies and the multiple roles they play in drawing different social actors into war.

In peacetime, as in wartime, women display a wide variety of responses to organized and/or state-sanctioned forms of violence. There is a long and much-celebrated history of feminist pacifism (Schreiner, 1911), and some women, as peace activists, play essential roles in maintaining social connections, build coalitions across communities divided by violence, and therefore are ideally positioned to play important roles in rehabilitation, reconciliation, reintegration support and peacebuilding roles in the aftermath. It is important to remember, however, that their power is somewhat tempered by the fact that their influence will only be felt if adequate provision is made to include women in peace ne-gotiations and reconstruction planning (Anderlini, 2000; Farr 2000).

At the same time, however, that women are celebrated as the peacemakers -whether or not they find opportunities to do any meaningful peacebuilding work- there are also many examples of women embracing "revolution with hope and war with enthusiasm" (Hill, 2001 p. 21). Even if they do not enlist as soldiers, women can, and do, participate in conflict through supporting and maintaining guerrilla forces. They supply the essentials of war: information, food, clothing and shelter. They nurse soldiers back to health.

Women, then, are active in times of conflict in a variety of ways, whether in building peace or in supporting violence. Yet their contributions are all too frequently overlooked after conflict has come to an end. As Linda Grant De Pauw writes:

> *"Women have always and everywhere been inextricably involved in war [but] hidden from history….During wars, women are ubiquitous and highly visible; when wars are over and the songs are sung, women disappear"*
> (De Pauw, 1998 p. XIII).

While many feminists have remarked that women's peacebuilding activities receive too little recognition in the period of reconstruction (Anderlini, 2000; Enloe, 2000), it is also true that women who were active participants in the struggle are not always allowed to participate, as leaders, in the development of transition and reconstruction processes. Ultimately, their support is only recognized in relation to what is expected from their kinship to male soldiers: they are acknowledged, but as mothers, sisters, wives or daughters. However varied their levels of involvement in the business of war, they remain at the margins of political, economic, and social power, and their voices and experiences tend to disappear when peace processes begin (Goldblatt and Meintjes, 1996).

In the end, women's contributions are overlooked in the country emerging from war; and because of this, their presence is reduced to a single line in the documents which spring up to counter the effects of armed conflict. In this way, the complexity of their experiences is boiled down to a single ideology that women are more vulnerable than men, and thus deserving of a kind of protection and security that is decided by men.

Gender-based violence in war

In reality, of course, it is male power over females that makes women and girls vulnerable in the first place: the most widely recognized problem faced by women in the world today is sexualized violence. Years of research by feminist peace activists has shown that in conflict zones and supposedly peaceful societies alike, this violence takes a variety of forms depending on the state of mobilization of a society and the ease of access to SALW (Cukier, 2000; Hemenway, 2002).

In the build-up to war, women often suffer the loss of their physical well-being and bodily autonomy. They may lose access to adequate healthcare, including safe contraceptive methods, because a greater and greater portion of available money is directed to the machinery of war. But women also lose control of their own fertility because their sexual reproductive functions are appropriated to fulfill pro-natalist policies. As part of their "war effort," they are expected to produce more children who will either replace those lost in battle or be able to carry on the nation's cultural traditions after the war (Mertus, 2000; Shikola, 1998; Turshen and Twagiramariya, 1998).

In an extension of the "mother of the nation" ideology, in times of crisis, women as mothers are elevated as "the bearers of the cultural heritage of a nation or community" (Byrne, 1996 p. 16). Paradoxically, this means that their vulnerability as targets of sexualized violence increases, because they can become subject to mass rape and/or forced prostitution "as a calculated part of war strategy" designed to defile the nationhood of an enemy (Mertus, 2000 p. 7). Examples of this tendency are almost too numerous to mention, but in recent years, rape as a form of "ethnic cleansing" has been practiced in conflicts as diverse as those in Cambodia, Haiti, Peru, Rwanda, Somalia, Uganda, and the former Yugoslavia.

The tragic effectiveness of rape as a war strategy is that the official end of the war may not signal the end of women's suffering. For many women, the horror of their ordeal in wartime does not end with the announcement of peace. They need to live with the agony and indignity of the terrible injuries that are inflicted on their genitals, with unwanted children, and with the pain and disgrace of sexually transmitted diseases. After war, raped or sexually enslaved women continue to suffer because they are perceived as "damaged goods," living symbols of a nation's humiliation and bearers of "enemy" children. They may, as a result, find it impossible to experience psychological healing, reintegrate into their community and resume their lives (Farr, 2002).

Gender ideologies which promote a sense of male "ownership" of women's productive and reproductive capacities add another dimension to women's suffering after war, and this suffering is worsened when firearms are readily available. Especially when they have been defeated, it is often a matter of pride for male survivors to assert their masculinity through demonstrating their control over

women. To do this, they appeal to cultural and religious customs that restrict women's mobility and visible participation in social and political structures. Women's human rights rapidly deteriorate in societies which, when conflict ends, take an extremely conservative turn in an effort to restore an imagined "Golden Age" before the war in which men were men and women knew their place. In many such communities, it is considered quite proper for men to kill women who are seen to be disobedient. Vivid recent evidence of this tendency can be seen in women's extreme oppression in Afghanistan under the reign of the Taliban.

The appropriation of women's labor in periods of conflict

I want to be careful about focusing exclusively on the tragedy of sexualized violence, however, as it is not the only form of tyranny that is perpetrated against women in conflict zones. As I mention above, I am concerned that discussions about women's particular vulnerability to gender-based violence have made it all too easy to do two things: one, to so powerfully reinforce stereotypes about women as the "weaker sex" that no other identity is possible for women in wartime; and two, to make it all too easy to overlook other ways in which women are made to suffer.

In my view, analysts need to focus on how women are afflicted by war in ways that are invisible because they are easily overlooked as "normal" parts of women's experience. For example, an analysis of issues such as the gendered division of labor will allow us to challenge the ways in which nations

Women soldiers in post-conflict Eritrea

Eritrea is often held up as an example of gender equality in the armed forces. Yet an examination of its recent demobilization exercises shows the extent to which predominant gender ideologies can negatively affect women's lives in countries that are reconstructing after war.

When the Eritrean army began its first demobilization exercise in 1993, its guiding principle was that women ex-fighters should be treated as equals to men. To accurately reflect their presence in the armed struggle, it was decided that at least one third of the trainees in each program should consist of women. Additionally, women were trained in traditional fields such as mat weaving, basket making, tailoring, embroidery or typing. Neither measure was as successful as expected: training in traditional female skills did not provide sufficient income generating opportunities (and therefore this support measure was phased out in 1995), and training them in male trades did not automatically make them employable using these skills.

Most male ex-combatants were able to find employment in construction, which started to boom in Eritrea after the war. Female ex-fighters who want to enter the mainstream job market still face many constraints, mainly due to their lack of mobility and to the reassertion of traditional norms according to which sectors such as construction are seen as being exclusively men's domain. Programs have been instituted to

train women for non-traditional roles, not only so that they can earn an income, but also to contribute towards shifting society's gender biases.

Despite the history of gender equality in the Eritrean People's Liberation Front, after the war the situation of Eritrean women in general, and that of women ex-fighters in particular, is not much different from that of other post-liberation societies. During the armed struggle it was usually perceived that social transformation—and thus gender equality—had improved. After independence, however, Eritreans have increasingly been forced to see that what was done was only window dressing and that the male bias is still well entrenched.

(Adapted from Amanuel Mehreteab, "Veteran combatants do not fade away: a comparative study on two demobilization and reintegration exercises in Eritrea. Full text available at www.bicc.de).

and societies construct the militarized identities that make them warlike in the first place.

Feminists have long mobilized to resist the phenomenon of occupational segregation, by which women's labor is systematically undervalued in the public workplace and entirely overlooked in the domestic sphere. Only a few studies, however, have asked what this devaluation of women's labor means in times of war. Cynthia Enloe, in her book *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives (2000)*, observes that women are essential to the maintenance of the war machine, both in the military sphere where they work as fighters, nurses, cooks, and sex-workers, and in the civilian sphere, where they work as caregivers, providers of nutrition, organizers, managers, and protectors of men and children. Yet almost all this work is unpaid and trivialized as "non-essential," a habit which not only preserves the usual gendered division of labor, but the militarized ideology that only combat and the leading and management of fighters can be considered essential work (Enloe, 2000; Goldstein, 2001).

This undervaluing of women's labor has particularly serious consequences in the post-war period. After conflict ends, as we saw in Europe after World War Two and more recently in Afghanistan, a society may go to great lengths to restore ideologies of appropriate male and female roles. This means that women are supposed to give up their temporary occupation of jobs which returning (male) combatants expect to reoccupy. When economic recovery is slow and few jobs are generated, the loss of their source of income is a particularly pressing

concern for women, especially those who head households (Lundin, Chachiua et al., 2000; Mehreteab, 2002). Unlike men, women in the aftermath, both civilians and ex-combatants, are expected not to anticipate any rewards—such as pensions, promotions, or other financial recognition—for the work they have undertaken (Shikola, 1998). They are expected to return meekly to doing "women's chores," and reconstruction projects are often explicitly designed to achieve this objective (Mehreteab, 2002).

It is in their most invisible role of all, that of caregiving, that women bear the heaviest responsibility in wartime and in the aftermath. Because they are traditionally associated with nurturing and care, it is women who have to look after the victims of violence and take care of the disabled. This work is made even more difficult when the social, economic and cultural infrastructures of care have been destroyed so that there is little or no formal medical or psychological support for home-based caregivers.

Women's unpaid labor and firearm-related violence

A final blow to women's sharing in peaceful development after war arises from the proliferation and abuse of small arms and light weapons in the post-conflict era. Again, women are affected in two ways: firstly, by a rise in levels of domestic violence involving small arms, which comes about because the vast majority of gun owners are men and much of the violence that is encouraged in times of war is transferred to the domestic sphere when conflicts formally end (Cukier 2000; De Abreu, 1998). Secondly, when small arms and light weapons

continue to circulate freely, causing on-going casualties, it falls to women not only to care for the injured but also to protect the vulnerable. Women bear the heaviest burden of nursing the casualties of gun-related violence back to health or taking care of those who have become permanently disabled. Whether at home or as volunteers or underpaid supporters in civil society structures that focus on the rehabilitation of victims, their labor subsidizes over-stretched or non-existent governmental healthcare and legal systems. Their work is often dangerous if it takes them into courtrooms to give testimony, and in the absence of witness protection programs or an efficient judicial system, women may also have to shield survivors from their attempted killers.

Often, women affected by ongoing gun violence take on the responsibility to organize opposition rallies, marches, petitions and other such forms of public protest against the proliferation of SALW.[6] In South Africa, for example, where more than thirty five people a day die from gunshot wounds, Gun Free South Africa organized a huge rally on Women's Day, 8 March 2000, to say "Women Say No to Gun Violence." They were urging the government to put into practice a new Firearms Control Act, which was passed in October 2000 but is still in the process of implementation.

All of this work is highly stressful, takes time from other productive labor, and yet, like much of women's work, goes unrecognized and unrewarded. It can also make women feel even more vulnerable, since those who work in organizations

that oppose gun proliferation and misuse often become the specific targets of anger from men who support gun ownership.

Disarmament after conflict: a gender perspective

Since the proliferation of firearms affects women in such specific ways, it is logical to assume that disarmament policies should be carefully gender-aware in their approach. Yet in reality, the technical management of SALW is an area in which masculine expertise and opinions are absolutely privileged.

Disarmament in a post-conflict situation is defined as "the collection, control and dispersal" of various kinds of weapons, light and heavy, as well as "the development of responsible arms management programs" (DPKO, 2000 p. 15). As sensible as it sounds, this approach implies that weapons control can be undertaken in a rational and orderly manner in a post-conflict period, and that gun-holders will willingly give up their weapons and develop arms management structures in the interests of peace.

Yet, since the ownership and utilization of arms is profoundly attached to perceptions of masculinity in many cultures, successful disarmament support will only be likely if cultural constructions of manliness are squarely addressed. This has implications for how disarmament programs are designed and implemented. The circumstances of the conflict, the extent to which traditional control mechanisms have broken down, and the degree to which armed men have learned to

rely on violence to secure their economic interests and social status, will also dictate whether rational arms control programs are possible.

In cases where a regulated army or armies have been engaged in conflict, or in rarer cases such as Eritrea, where a liberation army responded positively to a call to hand in its weapons, it has been possible to collect arms in a comparatively orderly manner (Mehreteab, 2002). However, in the majority of situations in which guerillas or members of liberation movements have been involved in armed conflict, the problem of weapons proliferation after war is one of the most severe threats to peace. Fleeing gunmen often throw their weapons away or hide them in places where they can later be retrieved, and liberation struggles sometimes end without the full approval of every armed faction in the region. In such cases, enormous effort is needed to win arms' handlers belief that it is safe to reveal the location of caches or give up their weapons, to assure them that their security can be guaranteed by the state and that there are economic alternatives to crime, and to block arms from circulating across permeable (and lucrative) smuggling or trade routes.[7] In Southern Africa, for example, although there has been some success in destroying arms caches in Mozambique through a combined effort of the Mozambiquan and South African defense forces, the circulation of illegal weapons and continued poverty and unemployment all contribute to high levels of violent crime. Gender-based violence in this region is steadily on the increase (Cock, 2000; Cock, 2001; Meintjes, 1998; Turshen and Twagiramariya, 1998).

A conscious strategy of disarmament should be to engage with both women and men on the subject of SALW, but this is complicated by women's often paradoxical relationship to firearms. While it is true that their proliferation makes women's safety much more precarious, it cannot be assumed that women will not participate in the smuggling and storage of small arms and ammunition. In Sierra Leone, for example, women were very active movers of light weapons (Mansaray, 2000 p. 148). In the liberation struggles in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, while relatively few women formally entered the armed struggle, large numbers were engaged in supporting the conflicts by other means such as arms smuggling (Goldstein, 2001 p. 82). In the struggle years, the ownership and usage of arms was perceived as a legitimate means of supporting a political cause. As a result, *laissezfaire* attitudes to weapons became normalized. In South Africa today, the price for casual attitudes to gun ownership is being paid in a spate of armed banditry as well as accidental deaths from gunshot wounds, the latter often involving children.

At present, it is a matter of speculation whether women are more actively opposed to the proliferation and misuse of small arms in a society than are men, because there is a surprising lack of gender-disaggregated research on attitudes to small arms. Therefore, we cannot assume that, when a conflict ends, women might lead the way to the establishment of civilianinitiated supports for arms reduction. In her discussion of the demilitarization of Sierra Leone, Binta Mansaray proposes, however, that women are morally responsible

for reversing the effects of their weapons-smuggling activities. In her view, women also need to exert their "influence and moral authority" as mothers to persuade and sensitize their sons to the need to surrender their weapons, and to act as "good neighbourhood watchdogs" to observe and report gun-running activities (Mansaray, 2000 p. 157).

If women are indeed to become a resource in the struggle for the control of weapons after war, their political advancement must be prioritized. While women may succeed in offering some input into decisions made at the local level over how small arms are managed, there is a danger that their ideas, experiences, and wishes will not move beyond this informal sphere. In cases where women's political goals are perceived as secondary to other development issues and become sidelined, as they have after national liberation struggles in countries like Zimbabwe and, to a lesser extent, Eritrea; and when women are left out of peace negotiations, as they were in Burundi, they have had few opportunities to encourage and support long-term disarmament programs or to help reduce the destabilizing effects of small arms in the time of social reconstruction (Anderlini, 2000; Turshen and Twagiramariya, 1998).

Conclusion

Feminist analysis has shown that gender roles are not fixed in stone but are adapted to meet changing social circumstances and that it is therefore possible to develop a social and political environment that facilitate positive changes in women's status. This insight is enormously important for the

success of peacebuilding processes, since there is growing evidence that there is a higher rate of success in peace processes in which women play a significant part (Anderlini, 2000; Cock, 2001; Hill, 2001).

Both the Windhoek Declaration and Resolution 1325 commit international organizations such as the United Nations, governments and civil society, to finding ways to help women, old and young, participate meaningfully in peacekeeping efforts and post-war reconstruction. Although neither agreement has had the effect of revolutionizing other international protocols on the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and the management of their aftermath, they are a step in the right direction, sending a powerful signal to the world community that women's essential social contributions have been recognized and will be upheld. From this recognition, if we remain active in its promotion, will come an ever greater commitment to ensuring women's full participation in social trans-formation projects which aim to facilitate the coming into being of a peaceful world.

[1] For the complete and original text of the Beijing Declaration, see http://www.undp.org/fwcw/plat.htm.

[2] See www.reliefweb.int/library/GHARkit/FilesFeb2001/windhoek_declaration.htm

[3] Available at http://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/othr/rd/2000/6691.htm

[4] This was the title of an information brochure on Resolution 1325 published by the Hague Appeal for Peace, c/o IALANA, Anna Paulownastraat 103, 2518 BC The Hague.

[5] See http://www.un.org/Depts/dda/CAB/smallarms/

[6] I am grateful to Adele Kirsten and Margie Keagan of Gun Free South Africa (GFSA) for discussions of these points (Interview, Cape Town, South Africa, 13 May 2001).

[7] Small arms trafficking, in itself, demands a gendered analysis, since there may be connections between the structures and routes used to traffic both arms and women and children abducted into sexual slavery.

[8] The need for further research is suggested by this paper, and BICC and AWAC are therefore preparing to undertake a series of joint research projects. These will 1) analyze whether international protocols on SALW are compatible with domestic violence laws and/or firearms management laws in individual countries; and 2) analyze the dynamics between different civil society organizations, and between CSOs and governments, on how to approach the problems of SALW proliferation and misuse.

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Gendered Perspectives on Small Arms Proliferation and Misuse: Effects and Policies

by Wendy Cukier, with Alison Kooistra and Mark Anto

Introduction

Some studies have explored the ways in which conflict and violence involving small arms have different effects on men and women (Summerfield and Toser, 1991; Pereira, 2002). They have also explored the different roles of men and women as combatants and the challenges of post-conflict reintegration. Some have examined the role of women and women's groups in developing strategies to reduce conflict and violence (in spite of their exclusion from many formal political processes). Others have examined initiatives aimed at increasing women's participation in such processes.[1]

The proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons have not been widely considered in current discussions, yet SALW have significant gender implications (Cukier, 2001a), including the following:

1) Women represent a significant proportion of small arms victims. They are often as much at risk in areas considered peaceful as they are in conflicts. They are also considerably more at risk from their intimate partners than are men.

2) Efforts to draw hard lines between "conflict" and "crime" are not particularly relevant from women's perspectives. Since women are more at risk from the misuse of small arms than from "illegal" weapons, from their perspective, efforts to control illicit weapons without controlling licit weapons not only fly in the face of the reality that virtually every illicit weapon begins as a licit weapon, but also are largely irrelevant. Finally, efforts to exclude discussions of national controls and in particular, measures aimed at regulating civilian possession of small arms, not only ignore the fact that the majority of small arms world wide are in civilian possession but the fact that without appropriate controls over civilian possession, women remain at risk.

3) Women represent a much smaller proportion of small arms users and abusers than men, and women's attitudes to small arms are significantly different from men's. Small arms are strongly associated with cultures of violence and with notions of masculinity.

4) Women are more likely to support strong measures to control access to small arms, and have played a major role in initiatives aimed at reducing the availability and misuse of weapons world wide.

5) However, processes purportedly aimed at reducing the misuse and proliferation of small arms are heavily male-dominated, which impacts significantly on their outcomes.

Gendered perspectives on the effects of small arms

In recent decades, the nature of conflict has changed significantly and fragmented into a plethora of small-scale conflicts fueled by small arms and effecting, even targeting, civilians to a much greater extent (ICRC, 1999). Although data are

incomplete, the often-made statement that 90 percent of victims are civilians appears to lack supporting evidence. Nevertheless, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has concluded that a minimum of 35 percent of casualties during recent conflicts are civilians (defined as men over 50, children under 16 or females). In some cases, the proportions are much higher.

What is unique about small arms, in contrast to many other weapons systems -whether nuclear weapons or landmines- is the fact that there are many more in civilian possession than in the hands of states, police or paramilitaries (ICRC, 1999). In most countries, civilian possession of small arms is permitted for a variety of activities -sporting, protection, pest control, collection. In addition, the evidence is clear that while in contexts such as the Horn of Africa, the principal risk is the AK-47, in other regions such as South Africa or Colombia, handguns (revolvers and pistols) are the weapons most often used to kill. In countries like Canada and

Finland, the principal risk, particularly to women and children, is the hunting rifle. Consequently, in most countries in the world, women are victims of small arms even in times of peace.

Approximately 500,000 people are killed each year with small arms: 300,000 of these die in "conflict" situations and 200,000 in murders, suicides and accidents (Cukier 2001b). In its recent study, *Small Arms and Global Health*, the World Health Organization (WHO) examined small arms data in 52 high- and mid- income countries. Of 115,593 deaths reported, women accounted for 11,110, including roughly 10 percent of homicides. However, in many countries data are not disaggregated by gender (WHO, 2001).

Conflict

The evidence is strong that the unrestrained availability of small arms is directly linked to levels of lethal violence in both conflict and non-conflict contexts. Research

conducted by the ICRC shows that if small arms are not removed following the cessation of conflict, interpersonal violence substitutes for violence between warring factions. One study which compared levels of injury during conflict and after conflict in the Kandahar region of Afghanistan in 1996 revealed that levels of small arms injury declined only 30 percent following the cessation of conflict (Meddings and Connor, 1999; Markus, Meddings, Ramex and Fisac, 1999).

Another study conducted by ICRC compared small arms death rates in two regions of Afghanistan, one which was engaged in conflict and one which was not. Even in the non-conflict region, small arms death rates were extremely high. Scholars working on peacebuilding and disarmament argue that the link between violence levels and access to weapons is self-evident (Renner, 1997). When small arms are not removed following conflicts, mortality rates remain high as interpersonal violence substitutes

Figure 1: Annual Incidence of Weapon Injuries During Conflict and Post-Conflict Periods (Meddings, 1997)
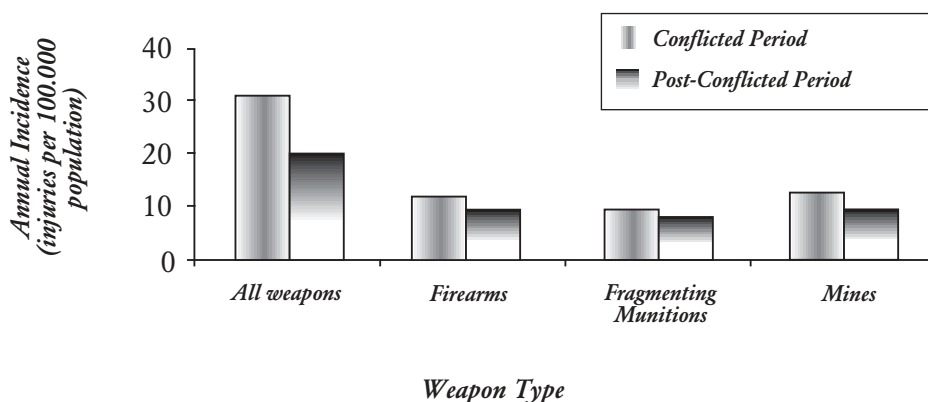
Figure 2: Firearms Possession and Intentional Firearm Deaths
(male and female) in 15 Countries
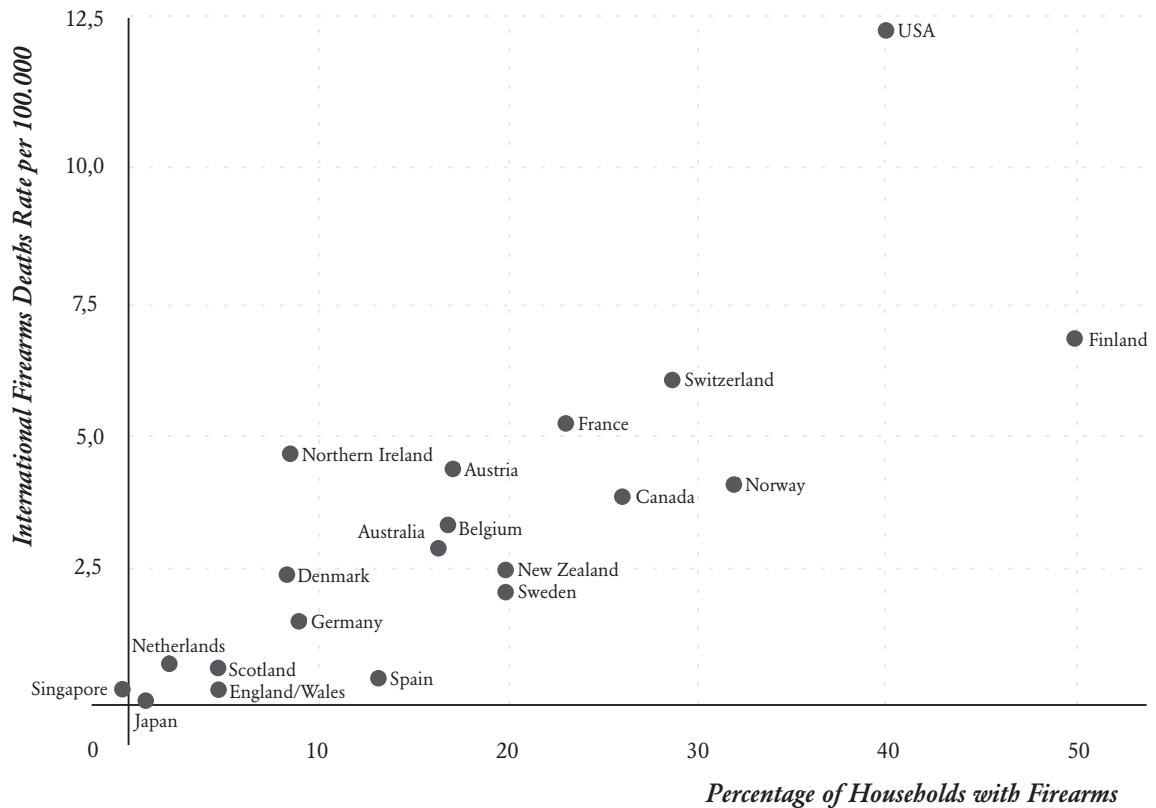
Source: Cukier, W. cited in: ICRC, "Arms Availability and Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict", Geneva: ICRC, 1999.

for war. The proliferation of small arms also leads to an escalation of a domestic "arms race," widespread criminality and the breakdown of legal norms (ICRC, 1997).

Gender is relevant to understanding the effects of conflict with small arms because the experience of violence is different for men and women. Women may have more in common with women from opposing sides than with the men in their own societies. In Kashmir, for example, one female respondent noted: "Both sides have guns, they shoot each other, they both die. But the problem remains" (Naraghi-Anderlini, Manchanda and Karmali, 1999).

In addition, women are often strategic targets in conflict, suffering rape and sexual abuse. These intimidation strategies, often facilitated by small arms, have been used in conflicts in Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Sudan and elsewhere.[2] A recent study in Sierra Leone, which surveyed 991 households, revealed that 94 percent reported one or more human rights abuses and 13 percent reported some war-related sexual violence. The Revolutionary United Front was reported as the perpetrator of 51-71 percent of the abuses. While 91 percent indicated that they were quite a bit or extremely worried about future sexual violence to themselves or their family members

by combatants, a substantial proportion (39 percent) indicated that they were quite a bit or extremely worried about future sexual violence to themselves or family members by "non-combatants," again reinforcing the fact that risks to women are not confined to war (Reis, Lyons Vann et al, 2002).

Gender and crime

The majority of victims of gun violence are men (Gartner, 2000). However, men also represent a disproportionate percentage of the perpetrators of violence and users of small arms. In addition, women are targets of certain types of violence as a result of their gender.[ ] These include domestic violence and sexual violence, which may be facilitated by the availability of small arms.

There is extensive research showing a relationship between the availability of firearms and death rates in high-income countries (Cukier, 1998; see Figure 2 below). The risk of death increases substantially if firearms are in the home (Kellerman et al, 1992). Studies comparing the rates of death from firearms across regions (Miller and Cohen, 1997), cities (Sloan, Kellerman et al, 1985) and high-income countries (Killias, 1993), along with respondents to victimization surveys (van Dijk, 1997), reveal a relationship between access to firearms and firearm death rates and crime (Gartner, 1984). While other factors shape the demand for firearms, such as socioeconomic conditions, equity, criminal activity, drug use, parental factors, etc. (Falbo, Buzzetti and Cattaneo, 2001), in countries with high rates of firearms ownership, firearms are often the weapon of choice when men kill their intimate partners (UN, 1998).

World wide, women are more at risk from violence at the hands of intimate partners while men are more at risk from male acquaintances (Gartner, 2000). In four out of five intimate partner homicides in Australia, the perpetrator is male and the victim

Figure 3: Number of Children under 15 killed with firearms (per 100,000)
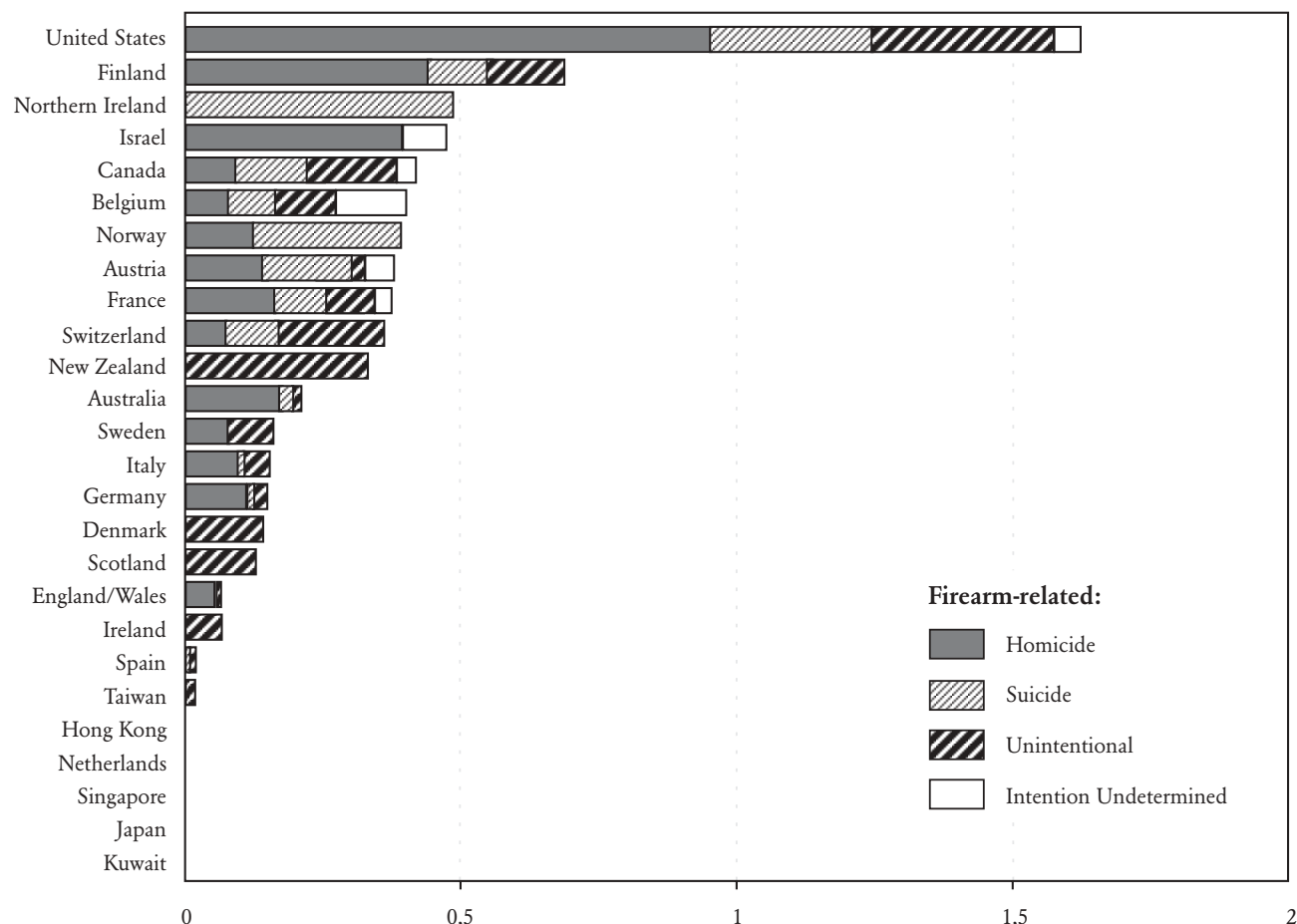
Source: Centers for Disease Control, "Rates of Homicides, Suicides and Firearm-related Death Among Children
– 26 industrialized countries." MMWR, 1997; 46 (5).

female (Australia Institute of Criminology, 1998). A number of studies have suggested that the risk of being murdered by an intimate partner increases with the availability of firearms. Consistent with other international studies, research in South Africa suggests that more women are shot at home in domestic violence situations than are shot by strangers on the streets or by intruders (Ryan, 1998). In the United States, 55 percent of women killed by their intimate partners are shot; in Brazil it is 46 percent and in Canada it is 25 percent, principally with legally owned hunting rifles (UN, 1998).

Recent reports on violations of women's human rights in the four former Soviet republics of Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan indicate that domestic violence is treated less seriously than comparable crimes outside the home. The legal system discourages women from taking legal action, and abusive husbands and partners are rarely punished.[4] While there has been research on the flow of weapons through and from the former Soviet Union, and while many of these countries have particularly high firearm homicide rates (e.g. Estonia), there has been little exploration of the ways in which women are affected. Emerging research from Turkey recognizes the dangers that gun ownership poses for married women, as firearms are increasingly being used to harm or murder spouses (Ozcebe, 2002). Although the results are not conclusive, a study of 1173 incidents of small arms injuries in Cambodia indicated that the armed victims were more likely to be killed than unarmed victims. It also indicated that in the case of women, most knew their

assailants (Lin, 2001). For every woman who is killed or injured with a small arm, many more are threatened: "Even when a gun is not fired, it has the power to inflict serious psychological damage on the people threatened with shooting" (Peters, 1995). For every case where women are killed or physically injured with firearms, there are many more where they are threatened. The patterns of threatening are astonishingly similar across cultures and include such behaviors as shooting the family dog as a warning, or getting the gun out and cleaning it during an argument. Studies of abused women in many corners of the world -Australia (Peters, 1995), South Africa (Ryan, 1998) and Canada (Danys Consultants, Inc., 1992)- report remarkable similarities.

According to a recent study by the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, among countries responding, firearm-related sexual assaults were the worst in South Africa with an increase in reported rape of 81 percent between 1990 and 1995 (Ryan, 1998). The percentage of women who reported being assaulted in the past year is high in both countries in conflict and those which are not. For example, 20 percent of women in Colombia reported being assaulted compared to 28 percent in the US (WHO, 2001). Many of the assaults are by individuals known to the victim.

Traditional constructions of "crime" and "the criminal element" and the media focus on random acts of violence have tended to downplay domestic violence. Feminists have argued that "[m]ost homicides are not random acts of violence and most guns used to commit murder

are not smuggled or illegally owned. In fact, in most cases they are owned by legitimate gun owners. [Is it not true] that domestic abuse and domestic homicide are criminal acts? The men who commit these crimes are usually perceived by their friends and neighbors as law-abiding, responsible people, and many of them own guns legally. But when a man abuses his spouse, he commits a crime, whether he is prosecuted or not."[5]

Children

Studies on child soldiers and on children as victims in conflict do not often provide gender-based analysis. Nevertheless, it is clear that children account for a substantial percentage of victims in conflict. In 1995, Red Cross workers in Chechnya reported that children made up 40 percent of the dead between February and May of that year, many bearing the mark of systematic execution -a bullet through the temple. Small arms also enable children, who otherwise would lack the physical strength required, to become combatants. There are an estimated 300,000 child soldiers worldwide and in many countries there are incidents where the availability of small arms has enabled children to become killers. There is ample evidence that children raised in conflict (or violence), particularly male children, demonstrate a willingness to use small arms to resolve disputes and so fuel the culture of violence.[6] Little research has been undertaken, however, on the differences in the ways in which male and female children respond to violence outside of industrialized countries. Indeed the tendency to discuss "children" rather than exploring the different responses of male and female children is a serious gap in the literature.

What evidence we have shows clearly that the risk from small arms is not restricted to countries in conflict. For example, a study from the CDC comparing firearm death rates in industrialized countries showed that the US had higher rates of small arms death among children than Israel and Northern Ireland. Countries such as Canada have regions where the rate of children under 15 killed with firearms is higher than the rate in Israel and Northern Ireland combined. (Cukier, 1998. See Figure 3 below). Children killed in homicides are often victims of domestic violence. When guns are involved there are more likely to be multiple victims (Hung, 1997).

Gender and fear of violence

Freedom from fear is a fundamental human right and women in most societies express more fear about violence than men, which in turn has secondary effects. For example, one must not forget the responsibilities that women have as mothers and as family care givers. The psychological trauma of small arms, as well as their actual disruption of social cohesion and family safety, often impacts women much more profoundly than men, given their roles in society and in the family (WHO, 2001). Despite the fact that, statistically, men are more likely to be victims of violence, women often express more fear. For example, a Canadian study revealed that 36 percent males and 59 percent females feared that "you or someone in your household would be threatened or injured with a firearm" (Reid, 1993). Indeed, there have been efforts to exploit this fear in marketing guns to women.

Gendered perspectives on the supply side of small arms

There is strong evidence to suggest that widespread availability of small arms, whether in the context of "conflict" or "peace" increases the risks of lethal violence aimed at women and children. It is very clear that the patterns of small arms misuse vary from region to region— in some areas the principal problem is conflict; in others it is crime; in others, such as Colombia and South Africa, it is a combination of political and criminal violence. The types of small arms that are misused vary from region to region, as do the sources. From the perspective of women, however, many of the distinctions between crime and conflict, between military and non-military weapons, between legal and illegal weapons are not particularly meaningful. The evidence is quite clear -the small arms used to threaten and kill women in a region are the small arms which are most readily available. While violence against women is pervasive, the availability of small arms increases the chances that it will be lethal. Consequently, comprehensive strategies are essential.

The impact of the "legal" arms trade to conflict zones has been well documented. Sales in violation of international embargos and covert operations during the cold war period have fuelled the proliferation of small arms worldwide (Small Arms Survey, 2001). There is a wide range of methods by which small arms held legally by states, organizations and civilians are diverted to illegal markets (Cukier, 2001b). In many countries, the majority of small arms recovered in crime appear to have been at one

time legally owned by states or by civilians. States that establish strict controls on civilian possession of firearms are still vulnerable to weapons illegally imported from other states. Surplus weapons create another source for illicit trafficking. There are many documented cases of post-conflict weapons, surplus military weapons, police weapons and weapons recovered in crime re-entering the secondary market. Weapons collection programs in post-conflict areas are critical to the establishment of lasting peace - otherwise the risk of high levels of violence remains (Meddings, 1998; ICRC, 1999). Misuse and diversion occur through a variety of mechanisms, but generally the evidence suggests that illegal small arms fall into three broad categories:

■ legally held small arms that are misused by their lawful owner (whether states, organizations or individuals);

■ legal small arms that are diverted to the "grey" market by being sold by legal owners to unauthorized individuals, illegally sold, stolen or diverted through other means; and

■ illegally manufactured and distributed small arms (although these account for a small fraction) (Cukier 2001b).

The types of weapons used, and their sources, vary by context. In Kenya and many other post-conflict regions the principal problem is military assault weapons such as the AK-47 (Cukier, 2001b; Cukier, 2001c). However, while landmines and conventional weapons tend to be concentrated in the hands of states and warring parties, it has been estimated that more small arms are in the hands of civilians than

possessed by governments (Cukier, 2001b). For example, in a country such as South Africa, criminal violence has far outstripped overtly political violence as a threat to human rights. Despite the widespread claims made regarding the proliferation of military assault weapons in South Africa, the bulk of the weapons used are actually handguns, many of them at one time legally owned by civilians in South Africa. Military-style weapons, such as assault rifles, have represented a small proportion of guns used in crime in that country (Chetty, 2000). Similarly, in Brazil and Colombia most of the weapons recovered are actually handguns, not military assault weapons (DEFAE, 1999). In Latin America, small arms diverted from legal markets appear to be the principal problem: 80 percent of illegal small arms in Mexico originate in the US. In Canada, approximately 50 percent of illegal handguns originate in the US. Proximity is not the only factor, however; for example, many of the small arms possessed by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) originated in the US. Guns in Japan come from the US and China but also from South Africa. In Asia and parts of Europe, state supplies from the former Soviet Union appear to be the major problem both in ethnic conflict and in crime (Handleman, 1995).

Gendered perspectives on interventions to reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms

Global, regional, national and local approaches

Many states and most Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), including the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA),[7] have maintained that much more needs to be done to prevent the diversion and misuse of small arms. According to IANSA, an international network of 350 NGOs, a comprehensive approach to dealing with the problem of small arms proliferation and misuse should include:

■ preventing and combating illicit transfers by developing legally binding instruments on marking and brokering;

■ controlling legal transfers between states to reduce the risk that weapons will be used in human rights violations;

■ controlling the availability, use and storage of small arms within states, including strong domestic firearms regulation and a ban on civilian possession of military weapons;

■ collecting and destroying surplus weapons from both civil society and regions of conflict;

■ increasing transparency and accountability;

■ increasing resources to support effective implementation;

■ supporting research and information sharing measures to counter demand;

■ improving co-ordination between government and civil society at all levels (IANSA, 2000).

The final Program of Action developed by the UN 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects made a number of recommendations aimed at preventing and combating illicit transfers. However, a number of critical elements were deleted from the final program of action. For example, no binding agreements were developed regarding state-to-state weapons transfers, marking or brokering. In addition, the United States forced the removal of references to the duty of states to provide adequate regulation over the possession and use of firearms from the final program of action under pressure from the National Rifle Association (Goldring, 2001). This has significant implications for the safety of women worldwide. Strengthening domestic regulation of firearms is important to fighting illicit trafficking by preventing the diversion of civilian guns to illegal markets. More importantly however, strengthening domestic legislation will improve the safety of women who are equally, if not more at risk from legal guns since "the distinction between 'the criminal element' and 'law abiding citizens' is meaningless in the context of violence against women."[8]

Although it did not receive the follow-through needed, the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice recognized the need to strengthen regulations on firearms in order to address violence

against women. Its resolution of 1997, sponsored by 33 countries,[9] "requests the Secretary-General to promote, within existing resources, technical co-operation projects that **recognize the relevance of firearm regulation in addressing violence against women**, in promoting justice for victims of crime and in addressing the problem of children and youth as victims and perpetrators of crime and in reestablishing or strengthening the rule of law in post-conflict peacekeeping projects." While the Commission made specific recommendations regarding the need to strengthen domestic legislation, subsequent efforts in the Firearms Protocol associated with the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime have focused only on developing standards for marking and controlling the import/export/ transfers of firearms.

Several regional conventions have attempted to control the trade in small arms. The European Union (EU) Code of Conduct of 1998 establishes clear guidelines aimed at restricting the sale of arms to areas in conflict, human rights abusers, and the like. The Organization of American States (OAS) reached an agreement in 1997 to harmonize import/export and in-transit controls on commercial shipments. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) also adopted a Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2000 with the US at the table.

In 1998, several West African nations, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), signed a moratorium on the production and trade of small arms. Unfortunately, it did not affect countries importing

to the region. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has put forth a regional initiative to help curb the illegal transfer of small arms by framing the problem through a cross-border crime perspective. The Nairobi Declaration represents East Africa's effort to limit the proliferation of illegal small arms. It is notable that most of the regional initiatives from arms-affected areas such as Africa or Latin America (for example, the Antigua Declaration), stress the importance of ensuring adequate regulation over civilian possession (Cukier, 2001c). In contrast, initiatives which include the US, including the OAS Agreement, the UN Conference Programme of Action, and the OSCE's proposal on small arms, do not.

Efforts to control SALW are also underway at the national level. Most countries regulate weapons possession by civilians. Many have also undertaken initiatives aimed at improving controls over civilian firearms ownership in order to reduce the risk of misuse through measures such as licensing, registration and safe storage. Some countries, such as South Africa, have specifically targeted domestic violence in their legislation.[10] Temporary weapons bans have been implemented in Cali and Bogota, with measurable results (Villaveces et al., 2000). Gun Free Zones have been prescribed for locations such as schools and drinking establishments in South Africa and this move is supported by new legislation which also tightens licensing requirements and restricts the number of weapons an individual may possess. Efforts in Brazil have focused on increasing controls over sales and, in some states, pressure is on for a wholesale ban on possession.

Gendered perspectives on small arms controls

Worldwide, most small arms owners and users are male. Men dominate the military and the police. Men also dominate domestic firearms ownership (Cook and Ludwig, 1997; Reid, 1993). Women represent a very small proportion of gun owners, but tend to be victims of gun violence in greater proportions. This imbalance has been one of the arguments advanced for positioning this debate in the context of human rights and equity (Cukier, 1991).[11]

In many countries, surveys show a significant gender split in attitudes toward firearms. In a study of three high crime communities in South Africa, for example, 34.4 percent of women wanted to own firearms compared to 44.9 percent of men (Jefferson, 2001). Similarly, a recent survey conducted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, in an area with high rates of firearm injuries, indicated that 43 percent of men would own a gun if it were legal compared to 31 percent of women (Kappell, Lin and Yem, 2002). Polls in industrialized countries also show that women are less likely to own guns and more likely to support stricter regulations. Indeed, women have played a critical role worldwide in movements for stricter regulation.[12]

The NGO community is indicative of the gender division as well. In several war-torn countries, women have been at the forefront of movements to demand disarmament. In Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, various women's groups have called for disarmament as the first step towards solving any of their problems. Similarly, the "Women in Liberia demanded disarmament before elections because elections taking place under militarised conditions are not free nor fair."[13] In Mali, women played a major role in the weapons collection program (Maiga, 1999).[14] Various women's groups in that country have pursued their work, promoting a culture of peace by holding conflict prevention workshops, micro-disarmament projects and acting as bridge between various social adversaries.[15]

In areas free of conflict, the Coalition for Gun Control in Australia, the Coalition for Gun Control in Canada, the Snowdrop Petition and Gun Control Network in Great Britain, *Waffen-Weg* in Austria and Gun Free South Africa are all led by women (Cukier, 2000). Women's organizations have also been active in lobbying for gun control in all of these countries. The United States' Million Mom March is a significant indication of the potential power of women to effect change. In Brazil, the Viva Rio initiative looks to reduce the availability and use of firearms, notably in the poor areas of Rio de Janeiro, which has some of the highest rates of firearms deaths in the world. One of their approaches has urged "Choose gun-free: It's your weapon or me!" It seeks to mobilize the female population to refuse weapons and deconstruct the

myth that firearms equate protection (Fernandes, Phebo and Dreyfus, 2002).

The African Women's Anti-War Coalition and Women Waging Peace are initiatives connecting women addressing conflicts worldwide and the latter acts as a forum for various peace-building projects.[16] Such movements tend to adopt holistic, broadly based approaches, and small arms/gun control is usually an important component of their message.

However, these efforts are often unable to overcome the discrimination that women face in society. This discrimination often carries over in the conflict and peace cycles, including disarmament processes. In Sierra Leone, despite being leaders of the peace movement and playing an instrumental role in bringing the warring factions to the negotiation table, women's groups faced constant challenges to ensure that their viewpoint was included in the formal peace negotiations. Quite often, since men dominate the activities of war and violence, there is a tendency to assume that men should be the ones responsible for solving these problems, leaving women on the outside, capable as NGOs in helping forge the peace, but unable to address the serious issues once it is time to negotiate the future (Mazurana and McKay, 1999). Women may be seen as actors, but not necessarily as "experts" (Carter, 1996). This discrimination is found in the small arms debate as well. Most political institutions at all levels remain male dominated, so there is a systemic bias against the introduction of more rigorous controls on small arms. As Canadian Senator Janice

Johnson said, "If there were more women in parliament, we would not even be having this debate" (Cukier, 2001a). The way in which expertise is defined (e.g. technical knowledge of the weapons themselves rather than knowledge of violence or conflict prevention) also shapes the way in which the issue is addressed.

Despite these challenges, women have played critical roles throughout the world in successful community-based and advocacy efforts to address the problem. Many of these efforts have involved building coalitions that bring together players from across various sectors. Generally speaking, many gender-based approaches include small arms control and other disarmament measures as part of a greater framework encompassing women's rights and embracing a culture of peace over one of violence.[17] Not only are women's groups involved in many of the advocacy efforts, but they are also involved in educational initiatives (such as Peace in the City) as well as weapons collections programs (such as in Mali). Furthermore, there have been efforts to ensure that international small arms instruments adopt a gendered perspective, notably when the recommended policies are being implemented. For example, at a joint BICC / Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development workshop in Uganda, which united several NGOs working on small arms in Africa and the world, delegates stressed the need "to lobby and organize to gender sensitize the Nairobi Declaration."[18]

There is also a need to recognize the needs of women ex-combatants. Within the dialogue of "women as victims" and "women as peace-builders," those women who took

up arms are often left out of the picture, even though they may have represented 10, 20 or even 30 percent of the combating forces. The needs of women ex-combatants in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) processes must be addressed. Soldiers are often shunned by communities, as they have few or no employment skills or education, and are despised for their previous actions; for women, this exclusion is likely to be worse. It has been suggested that a DDR process for women should work in tandem with a broader post-conflict framework that encourages gender-sensitive social and economic mobility and empowerment.[19]

The gender lens provides a unique perspective which crosses traditional boundaries that encourage dichotomies such as crime/conflict; licit/illicit; north/south; domestic/international. It promotes an integrated and holistic approach to the problem of small arms that includes addressing both demand and supply. As we have seen, the regrettable truth is that women are often as much at risk of violence from small arms in contexts described as peaceful as they are in conflicts, and in as much danger from licit small arms as from those that are illicit. In terms of improving the safety of women and children from small arms, measures aimed at strengthening control over civilian possession in order to reduce diversion and misuse are as critical as those aimed at strengthening controls over state-to-state transfers or imports and exports. Consequently, a gender analysis reinforces the need for an integrated and holistic plan of action, both issues that arose from the 2001 UN conference.

Gender and gun culture

This paper has shown that women have a very different relationship to weapons than men and are more likely to support legislation that severely limits access to weapons. Their exclusion from many of the diplomatic processes aimed at addressing the problem of small arms has, therefore, contributed to the lack of action on this problem, particular where domestic regulation is concerned. The culture of violence is both a cause and a consequence of violence and small arms figure in this culture of violence (Cock, 1997). While violence is not an exclusively male practice, it is linked to masculine identity and guns are a part of the dominant masculine code in many different cultures. In South Africa, for example, Jacklyn Cock argues that the demand for guns is embedded in culture and socially constructed. Dealing with the culture of violence is therefore an essential part of a strategy to counter violence. The values, social practices and institutions which together constitute this gun culture include: "consumerist militarism" -the normalization and even glorification of war, weaponry, military force and violence through TV, films, books, songs, dances, games, sports and toys (Cock, 1997; Cukier 1991a; Cukier, 2000). A Cambodian study reported that, in areas with high frequencies of weapons possession, youth threaten people with guns when there is a small traffic jam; those tending cows keep a weapon handy for protection; and women fear that males in the house, especially if intoxicated, will use a gun on a family member.[20]

Some criminologists, such as Gartner, have argued that empirical evidence supports the notion that cultural factors are stronger predictors of violence than economic factors. She notes that societies that are frequently at war consistently have higher rates of interpersonal and within-group violence. Homicide rates have consistently increased after wars within participant nations whether the war was won or lost. Similarly, societies with violent sports and corporal and capital punishments tend to have higher levels of interpersonal violence. In such societies, male children are typically socialized for aggression, in part to equip them for adult roles as warriors (Gartner, 2000). Empirical research into attitudes towards killing in a number of contexts also revealed a strong association between attitudes (willingness to kill to protect property, to avenge the rape of a child and support for capital punishment), homicide rates, and attitudes to gun ownership (McAlister, 2001). Gun violence against women in South Africa has been analyzed in the context of the culture of violence (Ryan, 2000). The intense and emotional arguments that emerge among opponents to regulatory measures aimed at controlling small arms can be understood in this context. Few people object to the regulatory schemes in place to control cars, dangerous products or even pets with the intensity that they oppose regulations on firearms (Cukier, 1991a).

White men with weapons

by Adèle Kirsten, Director, Gun Free South Africa (GFSA)

After the first week of the public hearings into the Firearms Control Bill in South Africa, the gun lobby's favorite claim that a gun is just a piece of metal, and that it would be a gross infringement of civil liberty to limit the distribution of firearms, was in need of careful assessment. The claim has always been that guns are necessary for protection -to defend, in the male idiom, your possessions, your women and children.

An advertisement for the South African Gunowners' Association in Magnum Man magazine shows a farmer type, his wife and child cowering behind him, firing off his gun, only to have a cork pop out instead of a bullet. Yet research shows that the gun women, and, by association, children most need to fear, is the one owned by their husband, boyfriend or father.

While there may be no proven links between men who love guns and men who see women as either "good" (mother/wife) or "bad" (slut), some of the contact that Gun Free SA have had with the gun lobbying public paints a different picture. At our office, run mostly by women, we field phone calls and hate mail daily, often from anonymous gun lobbyists. What has struck us most

forcibly is this: the most venomous calls are almost always from white men, and they are often sexual or racist in nature.

Recently, a caller who argued that guns were inanimate objects and we should rather concentrate on changing human behavior (a view to which we actually subscribe), drew this crude analogy. "Let me put it this way," he told me, "as a woman you have the equipment to become a prostitute, but you choose not to use it in that way." He then tried to extricate himself from the affront by adding that he didn't mean me personally, he meant all women— which I found even more insulting.

This caller may be an extreme example, yet many of the men who call our office manage to get in some derogatory reference to sex or race: we are either called "bitches" or suffer racial slurs. We will, they promise, remember their words of warning when we are being raped.

There is a car bumper sticker doing the rounds in the country. It says "GFSA Suck my Glock." This explicit image of the gun as penis is an association gun lovers themselves are making.

Because of the extraordinary crime levels in South Africa, it's been easy for the gun lobby to choose not to focus on the "hidden" crime of intimate femicide that sees women

being killed by guns fired by their boyfriends or husbands. Instead, they've focused, selfishly, on their "right" to own guns as a "means of protetion." Some in the gun lobby see the Firearms Control Bill as an attempt to remove their civil liberties, not a means to protect all of us from the dangers of living in a culture so saturated with firearms that most citizens fail to be shocked by their proliferation and the violence they spread.

And I'm disturbed by the psychological threats often directed at female Gun Free SA campaigners because we're women rather than because we're anti-guns. I sense that this hostility is roused by the fact that we challenge some men's images of women. We're not helpless and defenceless, because we're making a hell of a lot of noise. We're tough but, unlike the South African white teen males' favourite cyberbabe, the big-breasted gunslinger Lara Croft, we don't pack a firearm.

Even though there are women who are passionate about guns, in reality, gun-ownership is still a male domain. The problem is, most people in South Africa don't hear what we hear in the gun-free zones we're trying to create. It's when the gun "enthusiasts" are having safe, one-on-one conversations with us that the public image they usually try to project is seen for the artifice it is.

The "culture of violence" described here appears to play a role in promoting actual violence and the proliferation of weapons, in a pattern that can easily become a

selfperpetuating cycle. I shall reiterate, however, the fact that evidence suggests that women's responses to victimization by guns is usually different from that of men.

Further exploration of the gendered dimensions of gun culture and the differentiated impacts of gun violence on male and female victims (including children) is needed.

Conclusions

1) Women are effected by small arms in different ways from men and are often as much at risk during "peace" as they are during "conflict";

2) Women account for a higher percentage of victims than users of SALW;

3) Women generally have more negative attitudes towards weapons than men and are, generally, more committed to measures to reduce their misuse and proliferation;

4) As in other studies of peace negotiations, post-conflict reconstruction processes reveal an under-representation of women (Naraghi-Anderlini, 2000). Women have been underrepresented in the formal decision making processes which affect weapons deployment, use and control at the local, national and international levels;

5) However, as women have significantly different views of the costs and benefits of weapons, they have exerted significant influence, if not led, many of the movements aimed at reducing the proliferation and misuse of weapons.

1 Portions of this paper are included in Gender and Weapons, a report for the United Nations Secretary General's study by Dyan Mazurana and Sandra Whitworth, Women in Peace and Security, forthcoming.

2 See Human Rights Watch. "Women in Conflict and Refugees," www.hrw.org/wr2k1/women/women3.html.

3 See World Health Organization. "Violence against women: A priority health issue," "Violence and Injury", "Gender Based and Sexual Violence During Armed Conflict and Displacement", www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/vaw/infopack.htm.

4 See Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights www.mnadvocates.org.

5 Essex S. "Testimony to the standing committee on justice and legal affairs." YWCA of Canada, May 16 1995.

6 Biting the Bullet, Putting Children First. Basic, International Alert, Saferworld, 2001.

7 International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA). Focusing Attention on Small Arms: Opportunities for the UN 2001 Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. 2000. See also International Alert, Saferworld, BASIC. Biting the Bullet Briefings. 2001

8 Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, Affidavit, Reference re the Firearms Act, (Canada) (1998) 128 C.C.C. (3d) 225 at 339 (Alta. C.A.).

9 United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, Sixth Session, Criminal Justice Reform and Strengthening of Legal Institutions Measures to Regulate Firearms, Resolution L.19 (E/CN.15/1997/L.19/Rev.1), Vienna: United Nations, May 9 1997. This resolution was co-sponsored by Angola, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Burundi, Canada, Columbia, Croatia, Fiji, France, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Haiti, Italy, Japan, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Tanzania, Russian Federation.

10 The Handgun Epidemic Lowering Plan Network (HELP) and the Small Arms/Firearms Education and Research Network (SAFER-Net). Nation Status Reports on Violence and Small Arms. Toronto: HELP and SAFER-Net, September 2001.

11 Reference re the Firearms Act, (Canada) (1998) 128 C.C.C. (3d) 225 at 339 (Alta. C.A.). For example, when Canada's firearms legislation was challenged in the courts, the decision of the Alberta Court of Appeal noted: "Though gun control affects all Canadians, the point has been made that women tend to experience guns and gun possession differently than men. As with other legal issues, perspective is vital. Focusing almost exclusively on property rights concentrates primarily on the owners and possessors of ordinary firearms. But equally important is the perspective of those put at risk by guns. It has been argued with considerable force that characterizing the law for the latter perspective is more consistent with equality rights."

[12] Recent polls conducted in Canada illustrate that support for mandatory firearm registration shows a much wider gap between men and women: 84 percent of women and 65 percent of men favored restricting access to ammunition. Polls in the US show similar gender splits; a recent poll showed 45 percent of men and 66 percent of women wanted stricter controls. These gender splits are observed in the voting behavior of elected politicians. The final vote on the Brady Bill also highlighted this phenomenon. In the House, 51 percent or men voted for passage, compared to 81 percent of women. In the Senate, the split was 60 percent of men in favor, and 100 percent of women. The Brady Bill passed in 1993 and was to provide for a waiting period before the purchase of a handgun, and the establishment of a national instant criminal background check system to be contacted by firearms dealers before the transfer of any firearm (see Reid, 1993; n.a. 1999; Jones, 1994; The Brady Center, www.bradycenter.org/ler/leg/brady.asp.)

[13] Hill F. "Gender perspectives on disarmament", March 14 2001, www.un.org/Depts/dda/gender/14marilpf.htm.

[14] The National Women's Movement for the Maintenance of Peace and National Unity (NWMMPNU) has been active in demobilization of combatants, weapons collection and destruction.

[15] See the Association des Femmes pour les Initiatives de Paix, www.ib.be/grip/afri/afip.html and the International Committee of the Red Cross. "Mali: Les femmes et la guerre", June 20 1996, www.icrc.org/icrcfre.nsf/348044732c2ab34e412563fe005ab50c/da0e18fc21c44752c125638e0027ed9f?OpenDocument.

[16] See Women Waging Peace, www.womenwagingpeace.net

[17] See Ngangoue N. "Femmes et paix", June 8 2000, www2.womensnet.org.za/beijing5/news1/ show.cfm?news1_id=66

[18] See Schroeder E., www.reachingcriticalwill.org/genderdisarm/womenanddisarm.html Bonn International Center for Conversion. "Small arms and light weapons issues in Uganda: dynamics, concepts and perspectives for action," Jinja, Uganda, April 14-17 2002.

[19] Department for Disarmament Affairs. "Gender perspectives on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)", Briefing Note 4, Prepared by the Department for Disarmament Affairs in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, UN, March 2001, www.un.org/Depts/dda/gender/note4.pdf

[20] "Residents of dangerous areas are less likely to exercise", Washington Post, February 26 1999: A7; "Possibilities to reduce the number of weapons and the practice of using weapons to solve problems in Cambodia", STAR Kampuchea (Phnom Penh), July 23 1998.

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2 The Politics of Small Arms and Light Weapons: Mainstreaming Gender in Policy-Making

Photo: Nita Bhalla, Child Victim of Small Arms,
Dire Dawa/ Ethiopia, Hospital, August 2001

Personal Reflections on Small Arms and Light Weapons

by Hon. Zoë Bakoko Bakoru

As one who has experienced the effects of unlawful small arms at first hand, I feel honored to share with you my experiences. Maybe together we can find a lasting solution to this scourge on peaceful development.

Integrating a gender analysis in our efforts to control illicit small arms and light weapons is very important if we are to address the ills of our societies today. As you know, Uganda has experienced several wars which could probably have been avoided if we were more aware of the effects of gender injustice. This workshop stands out, then, as an important initiative which will further strengthen the community's role in gun control -especially that of marginalized and disadvantaged groups (women, youth, children, the elderly and people with disabilities) who are severely affected by gun proliferation. We want these groups to take a central role as partners in the peacebuilding process, and for them to contribute to sustainable peace and nation building in the region.

Decades of conflict have ravaged Africa and shattered lives indiscriminately, and the consequences of these wars have seriously undermined our efforts to ensure long-term stability, prosperity, human rights observance and gender equality for our people. Africa has witnessed, in the post-independence years, economic and social deprivation, an uneven distribution of wealth and opportunities among people, violent conflicts, military coups, political instability, dictatorships and corruption. Underpinning many of these ills is the illicit use of small arms, and the result of this instability is well known to us: abject poverty, gender inequality, policies of exclusion, illiteracy, lack of social, economic, religious and political security and the limited participation of women in the democratization process.

You will agree with me that, in most conflict situations, men are at the forefront of using illicit arms to shoot, kill and intimidate, while women and children bear the consequences of conflict and civil unrest in the form of disability, displacement, loss of property, and family fragmentation. In all these circumstances, women have continued to be specific targets of rape, forced pregnancies, sexual slavery and assault. They have continued to suffer massive violations of their fundamental human rights and have had to shoulder the burden of sustaining communities and households, while at the same time handling traumas, miseries, violence and social injustice.

My own experience of armed conflict in the region taught me about exile. It saw me witness the loss of life, property and well-being in both individuals in my community and the nation as a whole. My lived experience of the effects of violent conflict helped convince me that we must make the issues of gender equality and women's participation a salient feature of conflict management. It is vital, in my view, that attempts at managing violent conflicts, or preventing them altogether, must bring both men and women into the process at all stages as social mobilizers, contributors and active participants. The neglect of men and women's equal participation in peace processes and conflict resolution in the past has led to widespread violence against women, poor representation of women at higher decision making levels, and stereotypic attitudes towards gender roles. We must remain resolute to fight on against this record, to ensure that issues of gender integration in the peace process are given priority by both individuals and nations.

We in Uganda have had our own share of violence, but we are yet to learn the lessons this should have brought. We continue to instigate more wars even when we are aware of the bitter impact. Our countrywomen and their young children continue to be exposed to the trauma of abduction, rape, forced marriages and other forms of gender-based violence.

As you are aware, however, the present Government is committed to and mindful of its people and has expressed the political will and social responsibility to ensure that we all live in peace and harmony. It continues to encourage good neighborliness and peace in the region, and promotes the roles of men and women alike in achieving these desirable states. This is because the Government understands the role played by women as home and community caretakers, health providers and producers of the bulk of our wealth. In supporting women, it has put in place mechanisms to ensure that society is not disrupted again.

Yet, while measures such as these have been established to ensure gender equality, both at a local level and more broadly by the United Nations and its agencies whose resolution after resolution have emphasized the full and equal participation of women in the promotion of peace, it is disheartening to note that our efforts have remained scattered, duplicating each other and wasting our scarce resources. This is why I am gratified to note today that there is a National Focal Point on Small Arms which will be coordinated by both government and civil society in the region. I am happy to inform this meeting that my Ministry is

coordinating Uganda's National Action Plans on Women, Children, Youth and People with Disabilities whose thematic areas include, among others, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. I am sure that with the support of all of you, the interests of all these groups will form a major component in the National Focal Point.

My appeal and request is therefore that:

■ We should work closely with the National Focal Point to come up with a National Action Plan on small arms and lights weapons whose various components we should implement in our sectors or organizations.

■ We should condemn the proliferation of arms that fuel conflicts and wars and jeopardize the development of Africa, and call upon African governments to put in place mechanisms for the reduction and control of the arms trade.

■ We continue to condemn the use of African children as soldiers and commit ourselves to help release, demobilize, resocialize, protect, and integrate these children into constructive development processes.

■ We support the sub-regional initiatives on demilitarization, disarmament and drug control, such as the ECOWAS moratorium on the importation, exportation and manufacture of light weapons and its Programme of Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development.

■ We support disarmament programs as a necessary tool for lasting peace and help mount a massive international campaign to collect all illicit arms to ensure that Africa becomes a zone free from all types of weaponry, including landmines and radioactive materials.

■ We continue to appeal to African governments and parliaments to reduce military expenditures and re-channel these resources to meet people's basic development needs.

Girl soldiers tells of rape, forced killing
Feature: International

*By Jennifer Friedlin -
WEnews correspondent,
(abridged by BICC for this publication)*

New York (womensnews)

Fourteen-year-old Betty Ejang was at her desk studying her lessons when Ugandan rebel soldiers charged into her school and rounded her up at gunpoint along with 83 of her classmates.

It was 1996, and tensions were running high between the Lord's Resistance Army and the Ugandan government the rebels were trying to overthrow. Shivering with fear, the children, from Uganda's northern district of Apac, were taken to a camp in Southern Sudan.

There, the Lord's Resistance Army spent two days teaching its newest pawns to use guns. On the third day, the girls were distributed to male leaders to serve as slaves. Over the next three years, Ejang would be forced repeatedly into sex with rebel leader Joseph Kony (pronounced *"Kohn"*) and ordered to kill. Of the approximately 12,000 Apac children abducted between 1986 and 2000, Ejang is among the fortunate: After a harrowing escape, she is now free. And last month she was in New York for the United Nation's special session on children, hoping to encourage international leaders to save the estimated 7,000 people who still remain in captivity.

Escape is especially treacherous for the captive girls, a recent report by the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children states, especially those who have borne children. They must make a terrible choice--leave their children behind or increase the danger of their escape by trying to bring them along.

About 40 percent of those abducted are female, according to State Department estimate, but only 10 percent have escaped and an accurate number of how many remain in captivity is unknown.

Ugandan ambassador acknowledges government may be killing child soldiers

The urgency of the situation has intensified recently. In March, Sudan, which once supplied the rebels with military and financial support as a way of undermining Uganda, struck a peace deal with its former foe. Sudan agreed to allow the Ugandan army to cross the border in order to carry out a military operation against the rebels. Since then, the Ugandan military has dedicated 10,000 troops to destroying the Lord's Resistance Army in Operation Iron Fist.

But none of the captured children have been returned.

"This is the longest-running hostage situation in the world," said Jane Lowicki, senior coordinator of the Children and Adolescents Project at the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, which sponsored Ejang's visit.

"If the LRA is suddenly on the run, then the people who have been abducted will be prone to increased dangers."

The Women's Commission fears that the rebels may have abandoned their captives in dangerous and rugged terrain as they fled the encroaching army. Advocates for the children say that the Ugandans, viewing the abducted youngsters as indoctrinated soldiers, may have killed rather than rescued them. Semakula Kiwanuka, Uganda's ambassador to the United Nations, did not disagree with this assessment.

"The purpose of the LRA is to turn them [the captives] into child soldiers, so if they have been turned into soldiers, they are the ones doing the fighting and when they fight they get killed," Kiwanuka said. *"How is the Ugandan army going to know the difference between the abducted, the Sudanese, the Konys?"* he said.

"Since he can kill you, you must do what he says"

International aid workers object to Kiwanuka's position, saying that children who are abducted to fight should be freed because they never chose such a path. Some local and Ugandan activists are calling for immediate action to ensure the safe release of any person who was captured by the Lord's Resistance Army, but the request has resulted in little action.

Trained to fight, Ejang said daily life for the captive girls and boys often consisted of raiding villages and battling the Ugandans. Some girls, having become pregnant through forced sex with their captors, fought with their children strapped to their backs. Caught in the crossfire, Ejang wears the scars of battle on her leg and back.

Life in the camp was not much better than on the battlefield. Unlike the verdant landscape of Ejang's village, Iceme, the rebels and their abductees lived in the desert. There was little food or water and the children often resorted to eating leaves and drinking their own urine. Children who came from the same village were forbidden to speak with one another for fear that they might conspire against the leaders. Anyone who tried to escape was murdered. At any time, Kony might force Ejang to have sex, always with his gun by his side.

"He would force you to have sex with him, even though you are too young," Ejang said as Atyam gave her a supportive caress. *"But since he can kill you, you must do what he says."* On one particularly grim day, Kony brought into Ejang's hut a man who had tried to escape and ordered her to kill him. Believing she had no other option, Ejang fired a bullet into the man's head. *"I had no quarrel with the man. I didn't even know him,"* said Ejang, averting her deep brown eyes.

A Chance Moment, and Ejang escapes

Although not a day passed when Ejang did not think of escaping, it took three years before the opportunity emerged. One night, while the rebels and their captives were on the road heading back to the camp after a looting rampage, Ejang suddenly found herself alone in the middle of a long line of soldiers. She quickly snuck off to the side of the road and hid, and immediately strangled the two hens she had been carrying to make sure their squawking would not betray her.
Ejang waited eight hours in the rain for the soldiers to pass. At one point, a soldier came over to the side of the road and relieved himself on her. She did not move and he did not notice her.
Then she found her chance to run. Leaving behind her weapons and the other items she was carrying, Ejang headed deeper into Uganda until she came upon government troops. Three weeks later, Ejang's father, who had held a bodiless funeral for the eldest of his nine children, arrived to take her home. Upon seeing Ejang, he broke down. *"He saw me and he began to cry,"* Ejang said smiling shyly.

Freed girls return to where they carry social stigma

After years of psychosocial support provided by various non-governmental organizations, Ejang said her nightmares have receded. Now, she concentrates on not thinking about the past as she puts the pieces of her life back together. She will complete high school this year and hopes to study medicine. But some scars remain. Like many of the thousands of other abducted girls, Ejang said the only man she trusts is her father. She says that she has no intention of marrying, but the reality is that the social stigmas abducted girls carry stick with them for life, making them by and large unmarriageable in a society that expects women to marry and raise children.
Ejang plans to keep sharing her story with anyone who will listen in the hope that the children being held against their will by the Lord's Resistance Army and the approximately 2,000 babies born into captivity will be rescued.
"I was brought here to talk," Ejang said. *"People should do something to help those who remain behind in the bush."*

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For more information:

Human Rights Watch - THE SCARS OF DEATH: Children Abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army - in Uganda:
http://www.hrw.org/reports97/uganda/

Human Rights Watch Condemns Abduction and Killing of - Children by Ugandan Rebel Group:
http://www.hrw.org/press97/sept/uganda.htm

Children As Peacebuilders (CAP) International - Action Alert: petition for return of child soldiers:
http://www.childrenaspeacebuilders.ca/index.cfm?page=News&section=Alerts&id=6

Creating Gender-aware Policies on Small Arms and Light Weapons

by Jane Sanyu Mpagi

Introduction

Gender issues are often ignored in the formulation of policies on security. The aim of this paper, then, is to develop the means to integrate a gender perspective into security policies, at both national and regional level, and to propose gender-aware strategies for dealing with illicit small arms and light weapons. I will discuss the Gender and Development policy environment within both the Ugandan and the international contexts. My recommendations will offer insights into how best to put gender on the small arms and light weapons agenda that has been proposed by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Region through the Nairobi Declaration on small arms and light weapons, and more broadly, by the Bamako Declaration on the Illicit Proliferation, Circulation and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons which gives Africa a common position on this issue.

Gender is a term used when describing sex differences from a sociological rather than a biological point of view. In other words, it sheds light on the social relationships between men and women, boys and girls as ascribed by their social and cultural setting, rather than describing sex from a biological point of view.

In this context, it is worth noting that social relationships are spatially distributed and are shaped by ideological, historical, religious, ethnic, economic and cultural determinants. There is therefore no single standard definition of the term 'gender'. The National Gender Policy of Uganda defines it as "the social relationship between women and men as opposed to biological sex differences," which meaning of the term I employ in this paper.

The definition of small arms and light weapons is beyond the scope of this paper. However, I wish to point out that in preparing it, I could not draw a demarcation between licit and illicit arms. In many African countries, the illicit arms that are in circulation started out as licit arms acquired by those entitled to them. Where governments change by means of a military coup, however, security agents also change: and what was licit suddenly becomes illicit. Moreover, new governments come into power with their own weapons. It is because of these shifts in ownership that this paper focuses on the adverse effect of SALW on women and men rather than focusing on where these weapons come from.

The relationship between gender and SALW

That there is a relationship between small arms / light weapons and gender issues may not be immediately obvious, but recognizing it is of great importance. One reason for this is that it has become increasingly common in recent years that in situations of armed conflict, civilian victims often outnumber casualties among combatants. While entire communities suffer the consequences of armed conflict and terrorism, women and girls are particularly affected because of their status in society and their vulnerability to sexualized violence.

The impact of violence against women and the violation of the human rights of women in conflict situations crosses the boundaries of age, class and religion. In wartime, all women suffer displacement, the loss of home and property, the loss or involuntary disappearance of close relatives and loved ones, poverty, and family separation and disintegration. They are also victims of acts of murder, terrorism, torture, abduction and sexual slavery, sexualized violence, and sometimes forced pregnancies. Women often experience difficulty in countries of asylum or are not recognized as refugees.

The culture of violence is both a cause and a consequence of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Researchers in the Great Lakes region have shown that while violence is not an exclusively male practice, it is linked to masculine identity. Weapons are a part of the dominant masculine code in many different African cultures. This code frequently links guns to men's perception of their roles as protectors and defenders. The demand for guns is therefore embedded in the cultures of the Great Lakes region, and is both socially constructed and reinforced by the ongoing violence in this area.

Dealing with the culture of violence must, therefore, be an essential part of all strategies to counter illicit small arms in the region. The values, social practices and institutions which together constitute and maintain gun cultures need to be identified. Paying attention to the films children watch and the toys they play with is also important, as these form part of the invisible culture that perpetuates the problem. In most of our countries, male children are typically socialized for aggression in order to equip them for adult roles as warriors. Female children, by contrast, are socialized to be passive and submissive, which reinforces their vulnerability to male aggression.

The abundance of small arms and light weapons in our communities has been raised as an important issue in the Great Lakes region. SALW contribute to violent crime, instability and banditry, all of which have a negative effect on the livelihood and development of women and children. At the same time, women are targets of certain types of violence involving small arms, particularly in the domestic sphere.

Besides, the gender dimension of the small arms and light weapons is also reflected by the crucial role women play in conflict situations. During times of armed conflict and the collapse of communities, the role of women is crucial. They work to preserve the social order and make an important but often unrecognized contribution as peace educators both in families and in society more broadly. Women are also predominantly involved in the health management of casualties and those displaced by violence, and work as caregivers within socially integrated communities.

The proper management of the problem of illicit small arms and light weapons must be inclusively planned, in recognition of the numerous roles women are playing. It is important to note that a planning process is meant for people who are not homogeneous. Their needs vary from geographical area to area, from community to community, and from person to person. Often the planning process ignores this kind of diversity, overlooking gendered needs and interests as well as intra-community group needs. It is essential to recognize that these needs are not so obvious unless a gendered analysis is carried out. Therefore, in implementing the Nairobi Declaration on the problem of the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, the practical and strategic needs of both women and men should be analyzed so that we can avoid the usual planning for "people" which does not recognize that they have different needs and interests. Such research will allow us to determine how to differently prioritize issues in order to set in motion successful programs.

A gender-aware analysis works on two levels. Firstly, it determines practical gender needs, by which I mean those resources and facilities that women and men need to perform their present roles more easily, effectively and efficiently. However, measures to address these needs run the risk of preserving or reinforcing traditional gender relations. Secondly, strategic gender needs have to be identified, by which I mean those actions designed to challenge women's and men's subordination and domination in society in order to transform their existing roles and relations in a manner that can be sustained and equitably implemented.

Even if gender issues are known to vary from place to place on the African continent, the subordination of women and children is consistent. This fact is acknowledged by the Nairobi Declaration in the preamble (Bullet 10), which recognizes both the devastating effects of armed conflicts on women and children, and the unconscionable exploitation of children in armed conflict. Likewise, the Bamako Declaration recognizes the problem of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons which continue to have devastating consequences for stability and development in Africa. It further recognizes that this problem:

◼ Promotes a culture of violence and destabilizes societies by creating a propitious environment for criminal and contraband activities, in particular, the looting of precious minerals and the illicit trafficking in and abuse of, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and endangered species;

◼ Has adverse effects on security and development, especially on women, refugees and other vulnerable groups, as well as on infrastructure and property;

◼ Also has devastating consequences on children, a number of whom are victims of armed conflict, while others are forced to become child solders.

What both these Declarations observe is how important it is that decision makers and implementers of all actions regarding the proliferation of small arms and light weapons address the appalling situation of women and children in relation to men.

The policy environment

Uganda, as one of the countries in the IGAD region, is committed to ensuring that women and men participate fully in, and benefit equally from all development initiatives. The formulation, approval and ratification of various International Conventions and National policies on SALW bears a clear testimony of the government's political commitment to developing strategies to combat this problem, and these agreements have been signed in the spirit of democracy and good governance.

Uganda is also bound by conventions and Platforms for Action at the international level. Firstly, it ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in July, 1985. This Convention reinforces the existing international Human Rights Instruments designed to combat continuing discrimination against women and proposes measures for its elimination in all spheres. Specifically, Article 6 addresses the issue of armed conflict, which has a profound effect on women. This Article mandates governments and state parties to take appropriate measures to protect women in conflict zones, including legislation to eliminate all forms of trafficking in women. While many existing Human Rights instruments reflect male values, CEDAW calls the attention of all people to women's issues and intends to shape a new human rights practice that fully addresses women's human rights in all spheres: that is social, economic, cultural and political. By ratifying this convention, Uganda has committed itself to the protection of the human rights of all citizens and opened the way to specific interventions related to small arms.

Another useful instrument is the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was adopted at the fourth UN World Conference on Women in Beijing China in 1995. It sets out an agenda for removing obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life. This should be achieved through ensuring their full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. The Platform for Action states that:

Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programs so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men respectively.

One of the 12 critical areas in the Platform points out that urgent attention must be paid to the situation of women in armed conflict. It recognizes that human rights are often violated in situations of armed conflict, during which civilians, especially women, children, the elderly and the disabled, are most severely affected. The effects of small arms and light weapons proliferation cuts across all other areas of concern that are addressed in the Platform for Action. These are:

◼ The persistent burden of poverty on women and girls;

◼ The education and training of women and girls;

◼ Violence against women and girls;

◼ Equality in economic structures and policies in all forms of productive activities and in access to and control of resources and benefits;

◼ Women in power and decision-making;

◼ Women and the media;

◼ The human rights of women and girls;

◼ Women and the environment;

◼ The girl child.

The third useful instrument is the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which mandates all member states to protect and promote the rights of children. Uganda ratified the Convention in 1990, and recently accepted two optional protocols: namely the Option Protocol on Prevention of Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, and the one on Prevention of Child Sale, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. Within this framework, the country is supposed to protect the rights of boys and girls.

At national level Uganda has put in place the following laws, policies and Action Plans:

1) The 1995 Constitution of Uganda, as the supreme law of the country, provides a legal basis for ensuring equality and equity between women and men in all aspects of life. This is clearly expressed in the national objectives and directive principles of State policy which, among other things guarantees the fair representation of marginalized groups, gender balance and the recognition of the significant roles that women play in society. There are also specific provisions on women's rights, which include Affirmative Action as well as equal treatment for women and men.

2) The National Gender Policy, approved by Cabinet in 1996, and launched in 1997, is part and parcel of the National Development Policy Framework and compliments all sectoral policies and programs. It mandates all stakeholders to address the gender imbalances within their respective sectors. The aim of the policy is to guide

and direct planning and resource allocation at various levels. It emphasizes commitment to gender responsive planning and is designed to ensure the integration of gender perspectives in all mainstream areas of development. The specific objectives include:

■ To identify and establish an institutional framework with the mandate to initiate, coordinate; implement, monitor and evaluate national gender responsive development plans;

■ To redress imbalances which arise from existing gender inequalities;

■ To ensure the participation of both women and men in all stages of the development process;

■ To promote equal access to and control over economically significant resources and benefits;

■ To promote recognition of the value of women's roles and contributions as agents of change and beneficiaries of the development process. The Decentralization policy provides an adequate environment in which to address the effort of small arms and light weapons. Through this policy, political, administrative, financial and planning authority are transferred from central to local government. The transfer of these powers to the points where services are actually delivered improves accountability and effectiveness and promotes people's feelings of ownership of programs. Local leaders, who include both

women and men, have a mandate to address the effects of small arms and prevent their proliferation.

These and other policies give the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development the mandate with which to ensure that gender issues are consciously targeted by all actors in government, private sector and civil society. This positive policy environment should therefore be utilized at all levels to see that gender is integrated in all the plans and programs of the Nairobi Declaration.

Gender awareness in the coordinated agenda for action on SALW in the great lakes region and IGAD

I shall now reflect briefly on the Nairobi Action plan in order to highlight the need for developing gender responsive actions, and make some recommendations for actions that will benefit communities. I note that the Nairobi Declaration acknowledges the effects of small arms on women and children. However, there are no specific actions in the Implementation Plan of the Coordinated Agenda for Action to address this problem. The Action plan is therefore gender neutral, and may lead to the development of gender blind programs, activities and tasks if no deliberate initiative is taken.

The **Institutional Framework of the Nairobi Action Plan** requires governments to put in place National Focal Points. However, gender considerations are not taken into account, since gender is not reflected in the Terms of Reference for the National Focal Points. Unless this is done, implementation

may not be gender responsive and based on a gender analysis in which the different needs of women and men are properly reflected. The gender-neutral way in which the responsibilities of the National Focal Points and the Secretariat have been expressed will definitely lead to gender blind programs and actions in the name of targeting 'people.'

In order to develop, implement and sustain a comprehensive strategy to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, there is need to identify **the practical and strategic gender needs of women and men.** This is because men and women suffer the effects of small arms differently, which requires the development of various strategies to solve their different needs. It is also important that sex and age disaggregated data and gender-relevant information is collected, because this will show the range of effects that are brought about by arms proliferation.

Operational and capacity building is an important area in the plan, especially for the formulation of database which should capture issues of sex, age and gender. Proper analysis of these data will allow us to develop better planning and implementation. Gender training sessions are important, as these will provide know-how and skills based on a wide range of methodologies and tools that can be used to generate gender-disaggregated data and information from community level to international level.

Lastly, all the above actions indicate the need to develop a **gender mainstreaming strategy**, which will guide the overall process of implementing the Coordinated Agenda for Action. The strategy would include the

identification of gender gaps and issues for women and men, boys and girls on small arms and light weapons; the formulation of goals and objectives to address the gaps and issues; and the definition and establishment of structures, mechanisms and strategies to respond to the gender gaps and issues. Gender-aware implementation and operations, the identification and inclusion of gender responsive process and impact indicators to show changes in the status of women and men, should be included while monitoring and evaluating the Nairobi Declaration Plan of Action.

The way forward to addressing the adverse effects of small arms and light weapons on communities from a gender perspective, is to ensure that, among other things, the following approaches are implemented:

◼ Ensure the collection of sex disaggregated data so that gender relevant information on the casualties of small arms proliferation can be made available;

◼ Hold sensitization sessions with women, men, boys and girls to improve their understanding of how socially accepted ideals of masculinity help to maintain cultures of violence;

◼ Sensitize people to how small arms and light weapons are used to maintain cultures of violence, and demonstrate how SALW differently affect people;

◼ Generate gender relevant information through carrying out a gender analysis to establish sustainable and practical disarmament measures;

◼ Investigate issues relating to children and small arms;

◼ Promote and involve women at all levels through identifying and using their expertise in small arms issues, and increase gender the balance in decision making from community to international levels;

◼ Promote the equal participation of women and offer equal opportunities for women to participate in all forums and peace activities, at all levels;

◼ Carry out gender-aware research on various dimensions of the Nairobi Declaration, with particular reference to poverty eradication within the PEAP context; and finally,

◼ Take deliberate actions to protect women living in situations of armed conflict.

Conclusion

This paper highlights the significance of developing a gender-aware understanding of the adverse effects of small arms and light weapons. The proliferation of small arms and light weapons affects women and men differently, yet women's experiences are often overlooked. So, while the entry point for changing this exclusion lies within grassroots communities, there is a need for supportive national, regional and international legal frameworks, which should explicitly emphasize the fact that the problem of the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons must be approached from a gender-aware point of view.

Gender Perspectives on the Management of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Sudan

by Amani El Jack

Introduction

Women in the Horn of Africa are often characterized as passive victims of the conflicts caused by small arms proliferation, intensive militarization, and civil wars. This study, however, stresses the fact that African women have agency. Using the Sudan as a site of engagement, the study problematizes current ideas about the capacities of women in wartime. It examines both women's implication in armed conflict and their use of small arms as recruited fighters in national liberation struggles, as well as the active roles women play in peace building processes.

By highlighting the different ways in which women engage in war and peace, the study allows for a closer analysis of the interconnections between Small Arms and Light Weapon (SALW) proliferation, disarmament and peace building processes. It challenges essentialist views that depict women as 'innately peaceful' by identifying women's vulnerability in circumstances where their mobilization to use SALW as actors in the conflict endangers them and their communities.

At present, the scholarship on SALW lacks an integrated gender analysis. This may lead to a common problem in peace research, in which gender is " added" but describes only women's "traditional" roles within the family or their association with peace building processes. As a result, researchers fail to address the social construction of gender roles as they are informed by "masculinized" notions of maleness and femaleness.

Women and men and girls and boys are differently caught up in armed conflicts through their differential access to and control over resources of power. To more accurately reflect the different experiences of different social actors in times of war, this study highlights the various ways in which SALW proliferation has served to increase gender disparities, redefined appropriate gender behavior in a way that constrains Sudanese women's activities and activism, and exacerbated the gendered nature of the conflict. I offer practical insights into how to gender the theories and practices of SALW by integrating a gender relational approach into all research processes, including the concepts, methods, bureaucratic practices and policy guidelines that govern SALW.

Furthermore, I investigate how armed conflict can prove to be a site of transformation. I show that despite the severe impact of SALW, Sudanese women, either those who have been internally displaced or those who are refugees in countries such as Kenya and Uganda, are playing a significant role in strengthening civil society and in capacity building. They are organizing and taking initiatives at the local, regional and international levels to reduce the circulation of SALW and to mediate in the conflicts resulting from them.

Methodology

Throughout this study, I employ qualitative feminist methodological perspectives, which offer the best means to challenge the "grand" theories and assumptions of male dominated social inquiry. Such methodologies also serve to reinforce the link between women in the community and in academia, and insist on an integrative gender analysis from the perspective of the interviewees' own experiences.

My findings are derived from participatory research conducted with women in the Horn of Africa, and draws from a questionnaire, in-depth interviews, life histories and on-site observations. These research methodologies emphasize the commonalities as well as the differences in the strategies adopted by the interviewees in organizing in conflict and conflict resolution. I have engaged in the interview process as someone who is personally committed to and involved in feminist community activism.

In my fieldwork in the Sudan, Kenya and Uganda, I interviewed about thirty women, men and children from Southern and Northern Sudan who are associated with SALW (combatants and ex-combatants) as well as those involved in disarmament and peace building campaigns. I asked the interviewees broad questions such as:

■ How do women access SALW?

■ In what ways does the proliferation of SALW impact gender relations in the processes leading to the conflict, during armed conflict, and in post conflict situations?

■ How do the social and cultural notions of maleness and femaleness influence Sudanese people's access to and usage of small arms?

■ How do women organize to resolve armed conflict and build peace?

■ What brings different categories of women together?

■ What strategies do they adopt to organize in disarmament campaigns at the grass roots, local, regional and international levels?

■ Are women's inputs and recommendations taken seriously when formulating legislation that curbs SALW?

Small arms and light weapons in the Sudan

Illicit trafficking and the accumulation of small arms and light weapons have sustained the gendered conflict in the Sudan. The armed conflict in that country is attributed to a complex interweaving of three factors. The first is the historic civil war between northern and southern Sudan that erupted after independence in 1956;[1] the second is the increased militarization of the country due to the discovery of oil in 1983; and the third is the rise of militant Islamization implemented by the National Islamic Front military government since 1989.

The extensive use of SALW by liberation fronts as well as by different rebel groups in Sudan has both directly and indirectly exacerbated the armed conflict.[2] SALW are directly responsible for most of the killings and injuries, and the displacement of the Sudanese population, particularly the Dinka, Nuer, Nuba and other marginalized groups. Amnesty International states that since 1984 about 2 million people have been killed and 4.5 million women, men and children have been displaced due to the armed conflict (Amnesty International 2000). Indirectly, the large-scale purchase of SALW in the Sudan is diverting resources from

restoring positive socio-economic conditions and enhancing Sudanese well-being.[3] The moral calculus of the armed conflict in Sudan obviously does not take into account the interests of those directly and indirectly impacted by SALW. It only works to serve the demands of the military governments as well as militant opposition groups in Sudan and the ends of the countries/ companies that supply SALW.

SALW impact harmfully on all levels of society; on young and old women and men, and on children. Entire communities are targeted and killed or displaced as a result of the easy accessibility of small arms. However, women who are already subordinated by the structural inequalities of male dominated Sudanese society tend to be disproportionately impacted by the widespread use of SALW. Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that SALW do not affect all women the same way. Dinka, Nuer, Nuba and other groups of women in the south and the Nuba Mountains, are particularly disadvantaged by SALW because of the civil war that is raging in their territories. These women face distinct disadvantages within their households and communities and constitute an increasing number of war fatalities or casualties.

Sudanese women who are internally displaced within the Sudan as well as those displaced in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Kenya and Uganda, have suffered most through enduring the traumas of relocation caused by the armed conflict. In addition, they often experience various forms of physical and sexual violence. They also suffer poverty, stigmatization, marginalization and disempowerment.

Gendering analyses of small arms and light weapons

There are different perceptions about how gender as a category of analysis is understood or defined by local populations in different geographical, cultural, religious, and social settings. The findings of my fieldwork reveal that gender is often misconceived or rejected by my interviewees on the grounds that it is a western construct and therefore culturally inappropriate. As a result, both men and women in the Horn of Africa resist gender-aware frameworks. Men take this line because they believe that it advocates absolute equality between women and men and therefore threaten men's power and control over women within the family and in the society, and some of the women I interviewed are concerned that gender frameworks divert scarce resources away from programs that focus specifically on women and girls in order to focus more broadly on women and men. They stress the need to concentrate on institutions such as the police, prison and the military where women are misrepresented and have lesser access to decision making processes concerning SALW.

In contrast with these views, I believe that gender analysis contributes to the study of SALW by pointing out the structural imbalances of relations of power that permit armed conflicts. By engendering SALW frameworks, it becomes possible to draw attention to people as individuals, and thus to raise questions about who distributes SALW? Who owns them? Who uses them? Who is killed, wounded and sexually violated by SALW? The answers to all these questions offer us important insights into the gender regime in the area under scrutiny. In the end, a gender analysis is essential in addressing SALW proliferation because it allows us to understand the politics of exclusion and articulate how it facilitates gender-based violence.

Moreover, a gender analysis problematizes the perception of a community as a homogeneous group of women, men and children. It highlights the different ways in which women, men and children are constructed within communities as well as how they are differently impacted by the proliferation of SALW. The key insight in gender analysis is not merely the articulation of gendered differences, but more significantly, how to address the inequalities between women and men and girls and boys which is manifested in the fact that globally, women have less access to power, resources and decision-making processes than do men. Furthermore, it provides us with analytical tools that address and find solutions to structural inequalities between women and men and girls and boys.

Reinforcing gender stereotypes

Armed conflicts reinforce gender stereotypes that contribute to the subordination of women. In wartime, considerable emphasis is placed on women as wives and mothers who are responsible for reproducing and socializing the next generation of soldiers. As long as women perform socially accepted gender roles within their societies they are praised for carrying out a valuable function for the national cause (Enloe 1993). In the Horn of Africa generally, and the Sudan more specifically, the social construction of masculinity and manhood is connected with weapons and arms. A man without a gun in zones of conflict is often not considered "a real man". Masculinity and femininity are defined in a way that suits and privileges patriarchal military states and nationalist movements and at the same time subordinates women. In one of my interviews with a senior SPLA official, he states that:

> *"I don't think I would like to have a daughter who is an amputee, or see my wife with one arm. That decreases the value of woman for us. I would rather come home with one leg. So, we felt [in the SPLA] that it is our duty as men to do the fighting, the dirty job. We do it, and the women take care of the children. Therefore most of the women are discouraged from the army. When we told them that fighting is not your work, they didn't quarrel. They just went away in peace and got married and they have children now "*
> *(Nairobi, September 2001).*

This quote relies on a familiar discourse that stresses masculinity in terms of encouraging men to use SALW in defense of their nation and women. In this construction, the appropriate role for women is to become the bearers of culture and to socialize the next generation of male fighters.

Another senior SPLA officer stated:

> *"We have never come across a woman who is not a soldier buying a gun to protect herself. This is simply because she doesn't need it. Protection is the duty of men. The man is supposed to protect her as a woman, to protect her children and to protect her properties. So women are not supposed to be exposed to danger. In all the*

communities in Southern Sudan arms are carried by men, not by women and I have never heard of a woman from one community moving to attack other women, that simply does not exist. So women are passive victims in a game, which they understand to be a game of men" (Nairobi, September 2001).

In spite of his assurances, the stereotypical image of men packing their small arms and light weapons to fight wars while women safely stay with children and the elderly at home has not been realistic for some time. In many countries in the Horn, the battlefield comes to women working on their land, targets their homes, and kills, abducts and displaces their children. Furthermore, characterizations of women as passive victims of armed conflicts is problematized by the fact that women, like men, are actors in times of war in their direct or indirect support of armed conflicts, including their active participation in liberation movements.

That being said, it is important to emphasize that when military or liberation movements recruit women and men, they usually do so in a manner which reflects what are seen as appropriate gender roles. Although women in the Sudan are sometimes trained to use SALW, they rarely engage in combat activities. Instead, they are often required to play support roles which are seen as appropriately feminine: they are wives, mothers, nurses, social workers and prostitutes, while men undergo masculine initiation ceremonies and are socialized into aggressive and violent war ethics.

Gender-based violence

Sexual violence against women is particularly prevalent during armed conflict and takes many forms including rape, forced impregnation, and forced prostitution. Rape is now commonly identified as a war weapon. The rape of women and girls in conflict zones is not only considered as violence against women but also as an act of aggression against the men who fail to protect their women/nations.

This pattern shows how complexly the social construction of masculine identity is embedded in the concept of the male as the "protector" of women and children. To support this ideology, femininity and feminine identities are constructed under the premise that females are vulnerable, dependent, unable to protect themselves and therefore in need of male protection. The dichotomy of protected/protector that is thus created is then used to justify the reliance on SALW as a significant means to uphold such identities! The worst irony of this circular logic, however, is that in conflict zones generally, and in the Sudan specifically, the easy accessibility of SALW has led to an increase in gender-based violence in the home. The very guns that are meant to protect women are all too often turned on them by their protectors themselves.

High rates of rape, as well as various other patterns of women abuse, reflect the reality that the discrimination against women that exists in all societies during times of peace is exacerbated during periods of armed conflict. Dinka, Nuer, Nuba and other groups of marginalized Sudanese women who are internally displaced within the Sudan as well

as those displaced in the Horn of Africa, particularly in Kenya and Uganda, are often physically and sexually abused by male spouses who are demeaned by the armed conflict and crippled by guilt and anger at having failed to assume their perceived "duty" of protecting the women and children.

All the same, the emphasis on the severe impact of SALW on women and girls should not be confused with a perception that men and boys are privileged in war zones. Men are also targeted in armed conflicts, and they make up the majority of casualties caused by SALW. That refugee populations are dominated by women-headed households is a graphic illustration of men's specific vulnerability. Men, too, are raped during armed conflicts, and this form of violence represents the ultimate act of aggression because it is designed to shatter men's conception of their masculinity and power. The stigma of male rape runs so deep that addressing the problem is almost impossible; it is a cultural taboo that is deeper than the conflict itself. Nonetheless, our growing knowledge of how men, too, are the victims of sexualized violence lends even greater urgency to the need to interrogate the cultural constructions of masculinity/ femininity, and to establish a gender-relational framework that articulates how women, men and children are differently constructed and differently violated as a result of armed conflicts.

Displaced and refugee women

Forced evictions are frequently used as a strategy of war, and a new dimension is added to the vulnerability of women when they become refugees. As the home is where many women live out their lives and carry out their responsibilities, the loss of their home impacts women harshly and distinctly. Moreover, women are most severely impacted by the disintegration of communities, kinship and support systems, especially since this leads to the reorganization of gender roles and a shift in the responsibilities of men and women. In the absence of adult men due to death, injury or displacement resulting from the armed conflict, an increasing number of Sudanese households in the Horn of Africa are headed by females who bear the major responsibility of maintaining and providing for their families under severe circumstances. When they are displaced into refugee camps, women also have to manage an added danger, the circulation of SALW, which significantly increases levels of insecurity.

Women's agency in conflict periods and/or in conflict resolution

Examples of women's initiatives to achieve peace are often cited as evidence to prove that women are innately nurturing in contrast to men, who are characterized as innately aggressive and warlike. In the Sudan, it is often argued that "war is a foolish game, invented by men and played by men—and it should be stopped by women." Yet some of the most interesting work that has been done by African and third world feminists has contributed to challenging the so-called peaceful nature of women by examining their direct involvement in wars as fighters in Eritrea, Ethiopia and the Sudan, as well as exposing women's implication in genocide in countries such as Rwanda (Byrne 1995). The recent examples of Palestinian female suicide bombers in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict further illustrate this point and document the fact that women, too, are capable of carrying SALW and inflicting pain, wounding and killing civilians in zones of conflict.

Furthermore, as with other feminists working in this field (Byrne 1995), my own case study points to a contradiction in the representation of women in peace building processes, because formal peace negotiations tend to be dominated by men.

> *"Sudanese women are not represented in IGAD, they are only part of the secretariat and they are told that their opinions are not necessary to be taken seriously. Most of our men are military-oriented in their thinking; they see the solution in fighting wars. But most of the women in our organization (Sudanese Women Voice for Peace), say that we want to struggle.*
> *And struggling for them means engaging in many ways for a better life" (Nairobi, September 2001).*

Despite their marginalization, Sudanese women are doing a lot to curb SALW proliferation. Some of the women I interviewed told me that it is easiest to organize explicitly as women and to work with various women's groups, and then to negotiate as a collective with male leaders in government or the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). They said "when women and children were forced to fight in the war as human shields, we all demonstrated and publicly opposed such acts. We are insisting on being trained for peace activism and demand to be fully involved in the IGAD process". One of the women I interviewed asked:

> *"How can we talk about women's rights in the context of war? In the patriarchal Sudanese society, a husband forbids his wife to attend women's meetings. Then he gradually allows his wife to go to a meeting when she might come home with aid (sugar, milk and food). Men used to beat their wives when they come to home empty-handed after attending a women's meeting. Now men allow their women to attend meetings. This is new and a big step that was not there before" (Nairobi, September 2001).*

Her statement is a reminder that, in spite of the severe impact of SALW on women, it is important to emphasize the fact that Sudanese women are not passive victims, and their courage is beginning to change the society in which they live. Sudanese women have always been active in resisting SALW through disarmament campaigns at the local, national and international levels. In exile in the Horn of Africa, they are carrying out significant political organization work in war zones, and in the liberated areas of southern and eastern Sudan. Organizations such as "The Sudanese Women's Voice for Peace," established by women from southern Sudan, have been influential in integrating women's perspectives in governance, emphasizing the need for women's leadership and representation in conflict resolution and peace building, and highlighting, negotiating and challenging the gendered impact of SALW. The process of negotiating

gendered relations of power is very challenging in Sudan, and it is made especially difficult in the context of the ongoing civil war. Nevertheless, Sudanese women have been effective in establishing regional and international links with women's peace building networks, such as the "African Women's Anti War Coalition" and "Women Waging Peace" and asserting their agency.

Recommendations for practical actions

I shall conclude this account with some measures that will help to combat current gender-blind practices in curbing SALW proliferation:

1) We need to improve and deepen our current understanding of the role of masculinity in the culture of weapons. More work needs to be done on how masculinity is relevant in individual decisions to obtain guns. This will help us develop strategies to counter the problem that in post conflict situations, men are often reluctant to surrender their weapons because doing so is seen as symbolic of surrendering power and male identity. That is especially true in cases where states (such as Sudan) fail to protect their citizens.

2) The role of women in disarmament needs to be explored as part of gender analysis. Men have always dominated studies of this issue, as well as the technical fields of SALW and arms control. Promoting women's expertise in small arms issues would ensure gender balance in decision-making processes

and therefore enhance the creation and implementation of gender sensitive legislation.

3) There is also a need to examine whether or not a gendered division of labor in the production of small arms is a relevant issue. In looking at the supply side, it is important to ask who works in the factories and arms industry? Who has vested interests in the continuation of arms production?

4) There is a need to link disarmament discourses and policies with women's empowerment. Permanent peace can only be built on the basis that women and men have equal rights. Peace does not mean the absence of war, but should rather emphasize the achievement of security for both women and men, which implies the eradication of gender-based violence generally, and violence against women specifically.

5) The last issue that I would like to address is the following: Do we need to lobby for the equal representation and participation of African women in SALW issues? Current feminist debate is contesting this question on the grounds that the military as an institution is hierarchal in relationship to both women and men, since it discriminates against homosexual and minority men who are not believed to be "manly" enough. Moreover, the military is also hierarchal and patriarchal in relationship to women. That being said, I strongly believe that women should not take the advice of their male counterparts and focus on peace building

work alone. There are two reasons to support this view: The military is a fact of our lives and whether we like it or not, as an institution, the military provides economic securities and benefits on which women rely.

Gender-aware women should comprehensively be represented in the military in order to influence decision-making processes and therefore facilitate the growth of gender sensitivity in all aspects of SALW.

[1] The civil war in Sudan was caused by uneven development between the north and the south as well as by the politicization of religious, ethnic, racial, linguistic, political and cultural differences maintained through a 'divide and rule' strategy adopted by the British colonizers and sustained by the post-colonial regimes in Sudan.

[2] By liberation fronts I mean the recent merger between the Sudan People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M) representing southern Sudan, the Sudanese Alliance Forces (SAF) representing northern and central Sudan, and the Beja Conference representing eastern Sudan. Other Sudanese armed opposition groups involved in territorial armed-conflict in the Horn of Africa include the Anyuae and the Nuer.

[3] Such purchases include buying surplus weapons such as revolvers, self-loading pistols, sub-machine guns, machines guns, grenades, anti-tank weapons and anti-aircraft weapons.

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Young men and gun violence in South Africa

Adapted from Claire Taylor, "Guns Power and Identity," Gun Free South Africa, 2002.

Young men and women in the townships of South Africa often see firearms positively—as a source of power and as a means of getting what they want. Guns, in their view, can get them food, clothes or respect. The Zimiseleni Boys, a group of youngsters between 12 and 16 years, were commissioned by Gun Free South Africa to research what guns mean in the lives of boys living in Kathorus. In a country where more than 35 people a day die from firearm-related violence, their research gives valuable insights into why people want and own firearms, and sets a challenge to seek alternatives to guns for young men at risk.

These are some of their views the boys reported:

- "A gun is a way of getting money"

- "People don't argue with a gun"

- "I feel very weak when I put the gun down"

- "When you carry a gun you feel like you are a human being"

In reality, despite the fact that they link guns to power, youngsters like the Zimiseleni Boys are the group most at risk of being the victims of gun violence in South Africa: the second annual report of the National Injury Mortality Surveillance System (NIMSS) shows that firearms are the leading cause of death for young men between 15 and 34 years of age. Those in the 15 to 24 year age group are particularly likely to be shot dead.

While the research produced by the Zimiseleni Boys refers specifically to the meaning of firearms for at-risk township youth, the reasons for gun ownership they identify are not limited to their context of poverty and social isolation. Their research also gives insight into attitudes to and perceptions of firearm ownership in South Africa more broadly.

Explains Adèle Kirsten, the Director of Gun Free South Africa, "the epidemic of gun violence, in which you stand more chance of being shot and killed in South Africa than dying in a car accident, is fuelled by a high demand for firearms coupled with all too easy access to them. While the effective implementation of the Firearms Control Act [of October 2000] will reduce the availability of guns, it is only by understanding why people want guns that we can begin to shift the demand for firearms. We need to reduce both the supply of and demand for firearms to stop the gun-violence epidemic in our country."

3 Small Arms and Light Weapons and Gender-based Violence

Photo: Nic Dunlop / Panos Pictures, Landmine Victim,
Siem Reap Provincial Hospital, Cambodia, 1999

A Gendered Reading of the Problems and Dynamics of SALW in Uganda

by Ruth Ojambo Ochieng

Preamble

Isis-Women's International Cross-Cultural Exchange (WICCE) is an international women's resource center that works towards building a well-informed society in which women's achievements and status are well documented and valued, and their capacities fully utilized. At its founding in 1974, the organization began work around various issues relating to women's empowerment, with its core emphasis being placed on the generation and distribution of information on and about women. The enablement of women, especially those from the global south, was emphasized; and the organization's mission, to help women acquire skills that will facilitate their empowerment in all aspects of their lives, was declared. The aspects covered included women and appropriate technology, media, debt-crisis and health, among others.

The 1993 UN Vienna Conference recognized the need to respect women's human rights. It was then that Isis-WICCE opted to carry out all its activities within the human rights framework. During the 1995 UN Conference in Beijing, the question of women's experiences of armed conflict, particularly internal conflict, was discussed. With the organization's relocation from Geneva to Africa (Uganda) in 1994, and in line with the Beijing Platform of Action Section 129 a and b, [1] Isis-WICCE found it pertinent to focus attention on documenting the conditions and needs of women living in situations of armed conflict.

Internationally, Isis-WICCE collaborates with other women's organizations working on issues concerning women's human rights, especially in situations of armed conflict. This involves carrying out similar small projects in their respective countries. Training takes place during the annual Isis-WICCE International Exchange Program Institute, at which a select number of activists from conflict zones learn how to conduct research using a human rights framework . The countries so far covered under this arrangement include Togo, Sierra Leone, Liberia, DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, Sudan, and Somalia, as well as refugees staying in Kenya, Kosovo, Albania, Colombo, Mexico, India and the Philippines.

Given the diverse documentation that Isis-WICCE has produced on armed conflict situations, this paper will focus only on the impact small arms and light weapons have had on human development in Uganda. I shall quote the testimonies of the affected individuals and make use of the quantitative data and visual aids from our various studies to illustrate my presentation. From the Ugandan organization's initial survey, it has become clear that too little is known about women's experiences in situations of armed conflict in Uganda, let alone in Africa more broadly, and so we have decided to focus on the subject as a matter of urgency.

Uganda's never-ending internal conflicts and civil strife have taken place over three decades and have affected individuals, communities and the nation at large in various ways. The most notable of these events are:

■ The 1966 civil strife that saw the removal of Edward Mutesa II;

■ The 1971 coup that saw the overthrow of Milton Obote's first regime by Idi Amin;

■ The 1972 - 1979 insurgencies that led to the ousting of Idi Amin in 1979;

■ The 1980 - 1985 insurgency that eventually brought in Yoweri Museveni in 1985;

■ The 1987 to 1992 Uganda People's Army (UPA) insurgency, unsuccessfully led by Peter Otai in the Teso region;

■ The ongoing Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebellion which began in 1986 in northern Uganda under the leadership of Joseph Kony;

■ The Allied Democratic Force rebellion in Western Uganda which began in 1996 and continues to this day; and

■ Economically-driven cattle raiding, using small arms.

These can be considered the main armed conflicts that have taken place in various parts of the country. They have had a devastating impact on women and men alike, and have severely compromised the social, political and economic development of the country as a whole since independence.

In Uganda, Isis-WICCE's documentation mainly covers the period between 1980 and 2002. The focus of the documentation has been the experiences of women in situations of armed conflict, and the districts that have been covered by the studies are Luwero in central Uganda; Gulu in the north; Katakwi, Soroti and Kumi in the east; and Kasese in the west. Our researchers have deliberately included men in their work. This not only broadens our perspective on the women's testimonies, but also offers men an opportunity to tell their own experiences. In this way, our studies have been able to gather rich data about armed conflict and gender.
Our findings indicate that the motives and actors in Ugandan

conflicts have been as diverse as the wars themselves. Most of them have been politically motivated, having been aimed at the government in power with the "liberators" claiming to be seeking "democratic and good governance and the rule of law." The duration and intensity of the conflicts, the level of destruction and the impact on the social and economic development of the region, as well as the geographical extent of the fighting, have been quite varied. However, the effects of these conflicts on the population have been consistent in that they have left the affected communities physically, mentally and psychologically devastated, and have made little or no contribution to individual and national development.

Small arms and light weapons have been broadly defined to include pistols, rifles, carbines, machine guns, mortars, rocket-launchers, hand grenades and others in that class. In the case of Uganda, I would also include tools like bayonets and machetes, since from the findings of our studies, it is obvious that they have played a major part in killing and maiming men, women and children. Therefore, the main types of small arms and light weapons that have been used, and are still being used, in the internal conflicts in Uganda include guns (mostly AK-47), grenades, landmines, bayonets and machetes. These weapons have invariably been used to take lives of individuals, to cause bodily harm and disabilities (i.e. maiming), and for psychological torture, including the intimidation and humiliation of individuals and communities. There are many forms of torture that have been used by the different perpetrators to punish civilians. However, this paper will focus

mainly on those cases where the torture involved the use of small arms.

How SALW have been used in Ugandan conflicts

Bayonets and machetes

In Gulu, 56 (55 percent) of the respondents reported having had one or more forms of injuries inflicted upon them by the use of guns, bayonets or pangas (machetes). "For those trying to escape or those who were disobedient, punishment by the LRA was severe," we were told. "It included stoning, clubbing or cutting to pieces with machetes till they died." Most respondents reported having lost a relative through bayonet or machete injuries. The testimonies that follow will serve to give an insight into the use of bayonets and other cutting implements to torture victims:

"I was busy preparing supper for my family of three, when I saw a group of rebels in our compound. My husband had not returned from his drinking place. I was asked the whereabouts of my husband…after which one of them asked for money which I said I did not have….One slapped me saying, "how can you not have money when your husband works for Museveni?" – you know my husband works for the district…. He then got a very sharp kind of knife and chopped off my hand saying, "go to Museveni to buy you a new one." [She then began weeping]. "…I was cut by a machete for failing to say where my husband had gone…."

"…My sister and I had gone to look for some food. We fell into a gang of rebels who asked us what we were doing at that time. They then got bayonets and skillfully chopped off my ears, nose and mouth. They did likewise to my sister."

The people of Luwero and Teso experienced similar atrocities being inflicted on civilians as is reported in the following extracts:

"The government soldiers became very wild in our villages…they raped a girl…we did not know how old she was. After raping her they cut her private parts…. She died later. Again, they brought some woman from Kalagala and after raping her; they pierced her private parts with a bayonet. She was taken to a health center but later died".

"There were people whose mouths, noses, and ears were cut off by the rebels. Even the mouth could be sewn together….Even women suffered the same fate. If you were found talking, especially about things related to the rebels, your lips would be padlocked. They would use a sharp object for creating holes, and then they would lock them. You would be beaten and sent away. They would ask you to choose between being gloomy and laughing. If you say you want to laugh, your mouth would be cut off. If you say you want to be gloomy, they would create holes in your lips and fix a padlock there.

Landmines - A woman from Gulu narrated:

"On 3 August, I woke up early and prepared food for my two children…I got a jerry-can, went to the bore hole drew water…There was a sudden loud explosion. I found myself on the ground, dazed and confused, lying on my back. People were running in all directions…. I did not know what had happened to me…it was only when I tried to get up that I realized that my legs were no longer there. When this hit me, I fainted…."

Since then life has become a nightmare for Grace and her two children. Her husband abandoned her and the children, leaving the family welfare and the children's education as a sole responsibility of the victim, despite the fact that she could no longer farm and had no resources to start up some income generating activities. Grace's story is just one of the tens of stories we have documented of landmine victims in northern Uganda.

Hand grenades - A respondent from Gulu narrated as follows:

"The rebels attacked us late in the night…shooting randomly…. After they had gone, I heard my neighbors calling for help…. I went out to help them…. As I moved, I stepped on a foreign object which blew off my left leg. I was later told it was a grenade…."

Gun shots - several of Isis-WICCE's respondents had been injured by gunfire. These are some of their testimonies:

"The soldiers would do whatever they wanted. One time they disagreed on who would take a girl….They therefore shot her…but we could not tell the Red Cross people for fear of being killed too." Luwero district.

"I was imprisoned by the government soldiers after I was found to be collaborating with the rebels ….Every night they could come for prisoners to be taken for killing …one day I was selected with another five but they killed only one. We were then ordered to lift the dead body…. There was a time when we were ordered to lift a dead body…and they shot it. Imagine shooting a dead body!" Luwero district.

"When they came to my home, they shot at me right here. The bullet went through here. You can see the bullet right here….Another bullet went through here. When I fell down one of them came over me and tried to pierce me with a bayonet, but his friend stopped him. He said, 'don't kill that woman—she is the one who has been helping us in Kapelebyong.' These were soldiers based at Okoboi." Katakwi district.

The above narratives came from a few of those who were lucky enough to survive. However, from the findings of our different study areas, large numbers of civilians lost their lives through the barrel of the gun. For example, in the case of Luwero district, (Luwero report, June 1998), out of the 82 who responded to the question on the nature of the death of a relative or friends, 70 percent mentioned that they had been gunned down. In Katakwi, of the 70 women interviewed, 37 had lost at least one person who had been shot in the 1987/92 uprising. The Mukura and Kapelyabong massacres on 8 March 2001 are another vivid example of the power of the gun (Gulu Report, July 2001), offering evidence that many people were shot dead. Another example is the Atiek massacre, a general view of which is given here:

"…. Like the rebels, government soldiers have committed serious human rights abuses during the on-going war. These included gunning down civilians, burying people in latrines and mass graves, looting property, raping, and the Kandoya torture, which means cutting the victim's arms and leaving them to die. Those who do not die become permanently paralyzed."

The AK-47 and the abuse of human rights

In the six districts where the study was carried out, our findings show that all the warring factions used guns or rifles (mostly AK-47s), to coerce and intimidate both women and men, and to commit devastating atrocities on vulnerable people. Whereas both men and women faced similar forms of torture under the threat of the gun, i.e., being forced to rape a family member, walking naked in front of family members and tying kandoya, the threat of the AK-47 brought women and girls long-term suffering because they were sexually abused at gunpoint. This abuse included forced marriages, sexual slavery, and various forms of rape that were used by men at the frontlines as a means to destroy society.

In Luwero, 48 percent of respondents indicated having known some woman who was married off forcefully. Of the 81 who responded to the question on rape, 56 percent indicated having been raped or having known a woman or girl who was raped. Out of the 92 respondents to the question of sexual abuse, 88 percent reported having suffered it, and out of 81 respondents who reported having known someone who was sexually abused, 27 percent reported their daughters having been abused. The following extracts provide further testimonies on how the warring factions used the gun to violate and destroy the dignity and cultural norms of individuals and their families or communities.

1) Humiliation at the point of a gun:

"At around 10 a.m. the soldiers found us in the market….They pointed a gun at me…. They ordered me to remove all my clothes and ordered me to get back to where I came from…. This was in front of my wife, children and my mother… I was stark naked!" (He bows his head and nearly sheds tears)

Another respondent testified how he was paralyzed:

"They hit my door open using the gun…and I was ordered to lead them to where my sons were hiding…. I could not because they had joined the cause and I was sure they would be killed…. After an hour of torture …they decided to tie two blocks on my private parts, tied me Kandoya and I was ordered to get up…. This destroyed my manhood. I got paralyzed…. I cannot help myself …my wife ran away…. It is neighbors who provide me with food… My sons never returned from the war…. It is UNICEF who built me this house …my house was destroyed during the war."

2) Forced sexual violence against family members:

"They tried to force me to have sex with my daughter …I refused …. They ordered my son…. For the fear of a cocked gun he complied …. I was then forced to have sex with a hole they had dug in the floor using a knife…. They forced my private part in the hole several times… the skin was totally destroyed…. It was impossible to fight someone who was armed …. This was all done in front of my wife, son and daughter…my wife went mad, and is mad to date."

3) Rape

"I was temporarily separated from my husband when we were fighting for the cause….We were attacked by the government soldiers…. We fled to the bush….Six of them found me hiding and pointed a gun at me, ordering me to lie down….All six raped me for about three hours…. I got torn everywhere. I developed backache…I could not control my urine or even my feces…. Before I recovered I was gang raped again at a military checkpoint by 15 armed soldiers….My fellow male combatant was taken as a prisoner of war…".

This story was narrated by Devota, who developed HIV/AIDS, and with little or no support, despite the fact that she was a combatant, died in July 1999. She left 4 children.

A respondent from Gulu told us of this experience:

"One day in 1996 I went out briefly into the night….A government soldier was outside my hut…he spoke Kiswahili….I told him in Luo that I could not understand him….He took my hand….I tried to make an alarm but he covered my mouth and started dragging me to the bush….I pulled him towards the Lieutenant Colonel's house. The LC came out and spoke to the soldier but after a while, he went away. Then the soldier pulled me into the LC's house. The wife of the LC ran of the house. The soldier raped me, and then slept….I picked up his gun and took it to my brother-in-law who raised the alarm and neighbors gathered. The solider was reported to his superiors only to be transferred. And that was the end of the case".

This victim testifies that even after having had the courage to take the soldier's gun to her brother in law,

Types of torture experienced during the war in Gulu

Variable	Total N=1018		Sex				Chi square P-Value
			Male	(n=372)	Female	(n=646)	
		percent	number	percent	number	percent	
Experienced at least one torture event**	905	88.9	346	93.0	559	86.5	<0.00*
Physical torture Beating and kicking	445	43.7	216	58.1	229	35.4	<0.00*
Bayonet injuries	56	5.5	45	12.1	11	1.7	<0.00*
Forced to perform hard labor	173	17.0	104	28.0	69	10.7	<0.00*
Tying (Kandoya)	128	12.6	102	27.4	26	4.0	<0.00*
Deprivation of food, water and medicine	195	19.2	99	26.6	96	14.9	<0.00*
Gunshot injuries	60	5.9	39	10.5	21	3.3	<0.00
Burnings	22	2.2	11	3.0	11	1.7	<0.19
Sexual Torture	134	13.1	24	6.4	110	17.0	<0.00*
Completed rape	49	4.8	6	1.6	43	6.7	<0.00*
Attempted rape	50	4.9	9	2.4	41	6.3	0.01*
Forced marriage	35	3.4	9	2.4	26	4.0	0.18
Relative killed in war**	612	60.1	262	70.4	350	54.2	
Spouse	61	6.0	15	4.0	46	7.1	
Children	144	14.1	59	15.9	85	13.2	<0.00*
Others (aunt, uncle, grandparent)	407	40.0	188	50.5	219	33.9	
Psychological torture** Verbal threats	472	46.4	192	51.6	280	43.3	<0.01*
Interrogations	112	11.0	76	20.4	36	5.6	<0.00*
Military detention	226	22.2	112	30.1	114	17.6	<0.00*
Sleeping in bush/swamp	629	61.8	238	64.0	391	60.5	<0.28
Abduction	339	33.3	159	42.7	180	27.9	<0.00*
Destruction/ looting of family property/ livestock	528	51.9	231	62.1	297	46.0	0.00*
Forced to fight in war	50	4.9	40	10.8	10	1.5	<0.00*
Forced to kill	25	2.5	19	5.1	6	0.9	<0.00*

Key: *Statistically significant associations
       **Some respondents reported more than one torture event

and telling him what had happened in order to seek justice from the political structures, she did not receive justice. The response she got reflects the high level of corruption in the army, and also tells us that rape, in war situations, is seen as a minor issue. The rape resulted in pregnancy, and she bore twins. Then the survivor's husband abandoned her, leaving her with the responsibility of caring for both the pregnancy and the children.

Another respondent from Gulu said:
"The worst thing about the NRA soldiers was that they forced women to have sex one after the other….Men and women were collected during a screening exercise to flush out rebels from the community. They were put in separate groups. In the evening, the NRA soldiers would sexually abuse the women in the compound….One woman could be forced to have sex with six NRA men. This went on for two days".

A 25-year-old woman in Teso region who was raped by 45 men from all four warring factions in separate incidents testified as follows:

"…What bothers me most is my poor health. From the time I was raped I get frequent swellings in my vagina and suffer heavy and painful menstruation lasting 14 days ….I was told to go to the hospital to remove my uterus… but I have no money. I am waiting to die…."
(She died of HIV/AIDS in 2001).

Our research found that a few men had also been sexually violated. In Gulu, respondents gave testimonies of government soldiers raping men. This was seen as the worse torture inflicted on the men of Acholi.

"The government soldiers raped men in Alero, Gururgururu and Amuru…Most raped men were later killed".

In Toso region and Apac district however, it was reported that the rape of men was carried out by Karamojong cattle raiders.

4) Sexual slavery

"I was hiding under the bed with my father. I was about 14 years old. A soldier pulled me out and took me with him….He raped me for a full day while other girls he had abducted were watching….When he was transferred he sold me to another soldier for one thousand shillings. This was to happen to me three times"….

One girl who had been abducted to the Sudan and returned in 1996 reported that most of the young children who were abducted were exchanged, for guns and landmines, as slaves to Arabs in the Sudan.

Illnesses suffered during 1987-92 insurgency and currently

Type of illness	Insurgency of 1987 – 1992 in percent		Current IDP Crisis in percent	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Genital ulcers/wounds	15.7	40.6	17.1	37.5
Swellings in the private parts	12.9	43.8	17.1	40.6
Itches	32.9	75.0	54.3	71.9
Discharges	20.0	9.4	18.6	6.3
Pain during urination	25.7	50.0	35.7	50.0
Broken limbs	8.6	6.3	8.6	0.0
Loss of limbs/body parts	2.9	3.1	2.9	0.0
Untreated/septic wounds	11.4	34.4	5.7	28.1
Hernia	8.6	31.3	12.9	25.0
Genital ulcers/wounds	7.1	18.8	15.7	18.8
Rectal or vaginal fistulae	7.1	6.3	8.6	6.3
Pelvic inflammatory diseases	18.6	0.0	31.4	0.0

Source: Teso Women's Experiences of Armed Conflict study, 2001

5) Forced marriage

"*He took me away from my husband …. I had a breast-feeding baby…. When the war intensified, he took me to his home as his wife. On the way we* went on robbing people of their property…. He forced me to carry the gun….He showed me how to use the gun to attack our victims….On reaching his home, his wife poured boiling water on me…. I was hospitalized in Lacor hospital for one year… After the liberation war I escaped and returned to my home area…."

Psychiatric disorders as seen by the mental health team at Awer camp, Gulu

Variable	Total (N=198)		Male (n=66)		Female (n=132)		Chi square P-value
Disorder**	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	
Post traumatic stress Disorder (PTSD)	79	39.9	26	39.4	53	0.2	0.92
Depression	104	52.5	35	53.0	69	2.3	0.92
Alcohol abuse	36	18.2	17	25.8	19	4.4	0.05*
Generalized anxiety Disorder		4.5	4	6.1	5	.8	0.47
Panic Disorder	120	60.6	36	54.5	84	3.6	0.22
Agoraphobia	80	40.4	17	25.8	63	7.7	<0.00*
Social phobia	40	20.2	18	27.3	22	6.7	0.08
Somatoform Disorder	144	72.7	44	66.7	100	5.8	0.18
Having suicidal thoughts	45	22.7	16	24.2	29	2.0	0.75

Key: *statistically significant associations
          **Some respondents suffered more than one psychological disorder.

Psychological disorders in Katakwi

Description	During Insurgency 1987-1992		Current	
	Female (N=70) in percent	Male (N=32) in percent	Female (N=70) in percent	Male (N=32) in percent
Abduction	40	43	36	75
Another attack	24	31	62	78
Rape	47	9	66	12
Being Killed	74	78	90	100
Loss of Property	54	34	72	50
Danger to Spouse	25	17	26	19
Danger to Children	30	19	51	19
Starvation	27	19	62	19
Disease	20	0	46	6

## The socio-economic consequences of SALW

Effects on health

The health needs of women in situations of conflict vary from those of men. However, our findings reveal that the health complications suffered by both women and men after conflict-related injuries have gross repercussions on family and community development. Because during conflict situations women's sexual vulnerability is targeted, many of the crimes committed against them damage their reproductive organs and/or infect them with numerous sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV/AIDS. Their suffering is exacerbated by a lack of health services due to insecurity. Below is a table highlighting some of the health complications that were noted in the Katakwi study.
All respondents were asked whether they had suffered any of the illnesses name below during the insurgency of 1987- 1992, as well as whether they had suffered them during their current displacement. The table below indicates the illnesses suffered by camp Residents in Katakwi District in the 1987 to 1992 insurgency and at the time of survey. In general, most men and women had suffered sexually transmitted infections. Men, women and children, in all areas of the study, presented psychological trauma as the major health complication.

Psychological Effects of War

The psychological torture the survivors of armed conflicts have suffered cannot allow them to actively participate in post-conflict development. Our study shows that men lost their self-esteem, suffered

Distribution of cumulative clinical AIDS cases per 100.000 people by district of residence as December 1998
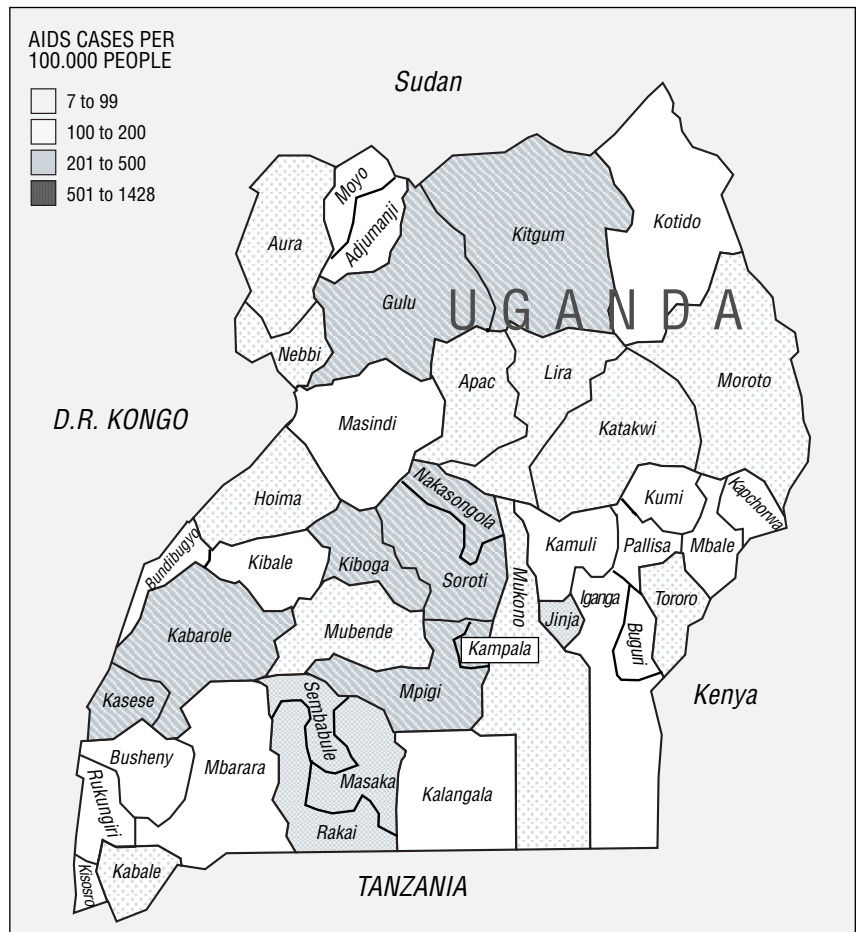
Source: Computed from HIV/AIDS surveillance Report, 1999 and some selected populations and development Indicators for Uganda, Pop.Sed

from withdrawal and were in a state of denial. Women were left with heavy burden of carrying out their traditional gender roles and were forced, in addition, to take on tasks normally performed by men. The unusual pressure inflicted on women, combined with the stereotype that men are the breadwinners in families, has caused frictions that have led to increased levels of domestic violence. Women testify that as a result of the fighting between men and women, some children have opted to run away from homes in search of a "safer" environment. In most cases

psychiatric disorders have been overlooked despite the impact to people's well-being, participation in production, and interaction with others. In Katakwi, men and women presented with a variety of fears which stemmed from Karamojong raids. Living with this kind of fear has limited this community's opportunities to plan for production and other development activities.

Average number of meals eaten in a household per day

No.	1987-92		2000	
	No. of households	*percent*	*No. of households*	*percent*
One meal	67	77.9	55	55
Two meals	15	17.4	42	42
Three meals	4	4.7	3	3

Source: Teso Women's Experiences of Armed Conflict study, 2001

AIDS prevalence

Uganda is known to have one of the worst incidences of HIV/AIDS. It is important to note, when considering this statistic, that there is a very clear pattern of HIV/AIDS prevalence and armed conflict. [2] A study commissioned by the Uganda AIDS Commission argues that the common characteristic in the affected districts is the fact that they have been affected by war, thus suggesting that war situations aggravate the spread of HIV/AIDS (See map).

Nutritional impact

Malnutrition has remained a major problem amongst the entire population in areas affected by armed conflict, and it is unrealistic to expect an unhealthy mind and body to participate in agricultural and other food production. A clear testimony is the case of Luwero, where development has been slow despite fifteen years of peace as well as several rehabilitation projects in the area.

Increased poverty

One of the leading effects of armed conflicts is poverty. Not only are affected regions the poorest, but also their household wealth has been looted and destroyed in the different insurgencies, and their income base has been eroded. This obviously has a negative impact on community development and on the nation as a whole. For example, before the war, northern Uganda was known for its high yield of cotton, simsim and other horticultural produce, which greatly contributed to both the national GDP and the national food basket. Similarly, Kasese was known for its high yield of potatoes and ground-nuts, which is not the case anymore. Luwero had a high output of coffee and bananas–but today, gets its bananas from Mbarara, which is on the other side of the country, to the north of Kampala.

The people of Teso region, like most war torn areas, have experienced a double tragedy as a result of the use of small arms. The arms have not only taken the lives of their people, but have also left them poor and unable to develop new economic means. From time immemorial, the people of Teso, to give one example, depended on cattle for a living. The Karamojong raids have not only left the population displaced, but have taken away their cattle. In addition to rustling cattle, the Karamojongs torch homesteads as well as looting foodstuff. All this is done through the barrel of a gun, significantly impacting on the social and economic well being of the communities who live in this region.

Demographic effect and changes in patterns of fertility

Isis-WICCE's three studies indicate that all warring factions, using various firearms, directly or indirectly caused the deaths of unarmed civilians, thus distorting normal patterns of population growth and development.

Average number of livestock owned by households in Katakwi 1985 – 2001 (N=102)

Livestock	1985	1989	2001
Cattle	27	10	3.4
Goats	16	11	3.1
Pigs	0	4	1.5
Sheep	11.1	7	4.3
Chickens	33	24	7

There has also been an increase in early marriages and pregnancies in the war-affected areas of Uganda. This has come about partly because of the affected communities' belief that they need to produce more children to replace the dead. In addition, many girls are married off early in the false hope that this will protect them from abduction and sexual abuse. They are thus bearing children at very young ages. This early reproduction is not only a burden to the community because of the increased health risks to young mothers and their babies, but an increase in population size when there is little or no food security has serious implications for a community.

The fertility of young women also became a bargaining chip: we came across cases in all the study areas in which parents had given their daughters to soldiers as a way to protect the family, or as a means to gain access to food and other basics.

Forced migration

The insecurity that has continued to linger on in war-affected districts has forced many people to migrate to other districts where there is relative peace. This has not only brought economic hardship to the households that receive them, but in the long run, leads to further conflicts that arise because of inadequate access to land for farming. Those who migrate to urban centers find themselves with no economic activities to engage in, and as a result, are lured into lawlessness including joining other rebel groups. Many, especially in Kasese, Gulu and Katakwi districts have been forced into the famous "protected camps" where they are denied access to their farmland due

to the prevailing insecurity. In this situation, they too end up being a liability rather than a population which can be expected to contribute to their individual economic development and the growth of the community. Due to the movement of displaced people, huge chunks of land in war-torn areas have fallen fallow, attracting pests such as tsetse flies and wild animals into the areas. This will in the long run have serious developmental effects.

The spread of violence

The findings of our studies reveal that the population in war affected areas; especially children, have developed a culture of violence and lack the values that would help them peacefully co-exist. This culture has spread to all parts of Uganda, where people have become increasingly aggressive and impatient, and have retained little or no respect for cultural values that in the past supported harmony.

Gender perspectives on the breakdown of cultural values

It is evident that in Uganda, the impact of armed conflicts has exacerbated a tendency towards violent sexual behavior. Many respondents interviewed reported that the need to share one hut with adolescents, or to stay in the bush, has affected traditional habits of sexual behavior, which was only for adults and was practiced in privacy. Because of overcrowding, danger, and displacement, youths, especially the already vulnerable girl child, either want to try, or are forced by men, to have sex. It was observed that this new lifestyle had caused many young girls to go off with

men, both soldiers and civilians, at an early age. In Gulu, these girls are called "camp followers."

Due to the stigma associated with raped women, many men refused to take back their raped spouses. For example, in Gulu, of all the female respondents who had been married before the war, 40 percent had acquired new partners during and after the war. This has resulted in the destruction of the family, and has negatively impacted on the social, spiritual and economic development of communities.

The culture of dependency

Traditionally, Ugandan men were respected members of society who took responsibility for their households, providing for the basics as well as security. Baganda, Acholi and Iteso men were known to be proud and wealthy in terms of owning square miles of coffee plantations and large herds of cattle. Today they have been reduced to dependency, while the culture of work has been eroded. While there are many reasons for this, most of them can be attributed to untreated health complications resulting from their experiences of war, the most striking being psychological trauma. The long-term effects of their trauma can be ill-afforded by a developing nation.

Social effects

The most deeply war-affected social sectors are law enforcement, health and education, according to the findings of our research, which reveal that people in conflict areas have lost faith in law and order and have no value for life. As a result, they are engaged in many unlawful activities that result in death and other forms of injuries. Drunkenness has caused high rates of domestic violence. The values and responsibilities of family units have been eroded, causing children to flee in search of safer havens. Many of them end up on the street. The education of children in conflict areas has deteriorated drastically, and girl children suffer in particular. The health situation is appalling, and in camps for the displaced, sanitation leaves a lot to be desired.

Economic growth

It is abundantly clear in the case of Uganda that the proliferation of small arms is undermining the development of the individual and the economic growth of the society while jeopardizing social and economic rights such as the right to work, to health care, to adequate social services and to education. War has disrupted the production of both cash and food crops in all conflict-affected areas. Most markets where economic activities used to take place have been burnt down. Due to insecurity, few investors will venture to such places. As a result, the least developed districts are mainly in north and north-eastern Uganda where armed conflicts have persisted for more than 15 years now. As we have seen, wars also cause the displacement of people, their belief systems and their normal

coping mechanisms. All of this has far reaching implications for the development of individuals, communities, and indeed, the national economy.

Recommendations

Having looked at the way small arms have been abused in Uganda and the consequences of their misuse on the well-being of the individuals affected and the country at large, the research team at Isis-WICCE recommends as follows:

■ Because of the misuse of small arms, the people of Uganda have suffered a lot at the hands of the various parties to armed conflicts and cattle raiding. The Nairobi declaration therefore, comes at an opportune time and must be embraced by all peace loving people.

■ Peace and reconciliation can only be attained if justice is done. Therefore, in order for the deliberations of the Nairobi Declaration to be effectively implemented there is a need to ensure that psycho-social interventions are carried out in all conflict areas, to prepare the affected persons to embrace the said process.

■ We call upon the secretariat to use all the available data produced by both governments and Civil Society Organizations as tools to help in the implementation of the Nairobi Declaration. Isis –WICCE is willing to participate in this cause.

■ Women play a crucial role in attitude change since they are the mothers, sisters and wives of those involved in the proliferation of arms. It is important to include women, especially women leaders from the affected areas, in all initiatives concerning conflict resolution and reconciliation. The use of law alone will not succeed if the attitude of the affected people is not changed.

■ A number of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the region, including Isis-WICCE, have been involved in various peace and reconciliation initiatives. It is crucial that the Secretariat and the governments in the region collaborate closely with these CSOs in various peace building initiatives, including sensitization about the causes of war and cross-border consultative meetings and negotiations. This will help to enhance the call for peace building and reconciliation within the affected communities.

■ Armed conflicts have become a global problem. It is therefore important that this region itself takes the initiative to address the effects of wars within its borders, since the rest of the world is preoccupied with other matters like the Israel and Palestine crisis and the global fight against terrorism. In this global climate, IGAD's role in resolving conflicts within the region becomes more crucial than ever before.

■ It is important that the Nairobi Declaration Secretariat sets up discussions with countries that manufacture small arms in order to follow strict regulations and codes of conduct on the transfer of small arms. This could reduce the number of small arms crossing our borders and inflicting such havoc.

Conclusions

From the above discussion, we can see that it has become difficult to convince affected communities that the state is capable of exercising its role of providing security while enforcing the rule of law, democracy and good governance. Ugandan society will only appreciate a system of good governance when peace and tranquility are openly enjoyed in all the parts of the country.

Since the conflicts in Uganda overflow to some neighboring countries, all countries in the region must endeavor to implement the Nairobi Declaration and end the proliferation of small arms. This is essential if genuine democracy and the rule of law are to be meaningful for the people of this region. I therefore call upon all governments in the region to respect human rights, exercise transparency in democracy, and accommodate alternative views which will bring peace to the region.

[1]These Sections seek to promote research, data collection and the compilation of statistics relating to the prevalence of different forms of violence against women and to encourage research into the causes, nature, seriousness and the consequences of this violence, and the effectiveness of the measures implemented to combat it. It also undertakes to publish the findings and studies widely.

[2] The National Strategic Framework of HIV/AIDS Activities in Uganda 2000/1 to 2005/6. Uganda Aids Commission, 2000.

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Children facing firearms

The particular vulnerability of girl children in societies in which firearms proliferate was first recognized at the World Summit for Children in 1990. When that meeting was held, the cold war had recently come to an end and the leaders gathered at the summit expressed great optimism that a new era of peace had dawned. They undertook both to do everything in their power to protect children from the scourge of war, and to take measures to prevent further armed conflicts, declaring their commitment to giving children everywhere a peaceful and secure future. The cessation of East-West hostilities would, it was anticipated, facilitate a peace dividend, and members of the Summit firmly believed that moves towards disarmament would mean the release of significant resources for non-military purposes. The improvement of children's well-being, it was decided, must be given the highest priority when these resources were reallocated.

In the end, the peace dividend has not materialized exactly as anticipated, and even though global military spending has decreased, children have not been the primary recipients of the resources that were freed. In the 1990s, the world saw an unprecedented number of ethnic conflicts and civil wars, in which children were both the targets and, as child soldiers, the perpetrators of violence. Children were malnourished, displaced, abducted, tortured, maimed and raped in unimaginable numbers, and girl children, in particular, became the target of criminal activity in conflict zones.

International instruments which directly focus on children in conflict zones have now been put into place, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, and International Labor Office (ILO) Convention No. 182, which prohibits all recruitment of child soldiers in war-torn areas. It has also been acknowledged that illicit weapons have played an enormous role in the suffering of the world's children, so much so that by the time of the "We the Children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children," held in May 2001, it was recognized that the "global commerce in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons, along with landmines and unexploded ordnance, continue to threaten children's lives on a daily basis." As a result, exerting control over the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons and ensuring the implementation of the ban on the production and use of anti-personnel mines has been declared as one of the "Priority Actions for the Future."

The "specific fate of girls" in war zones was also a point of attention at the review meeting, although it was recognized that "the lack of gender- and age-disaggregated data and research on war-affected children has hindered effective programming." To overcome these lacunae, all activists and researchers concerned with the promotion of peace, and not only those who focus on the specific plight of children, must make concerted efforts to understand the multiple and complex ways in which gender ideologies facilitate and underpin the waging of war.

For more information, see http://www.unicef.org/specialsession/about/sg-report.htm. All quotes are from this source.

The Effects of SALW Proliferation and Abuse in Gulu District, Uganda: A Public Health Approach

by Olive C. Kobusingye

Background

There has been armed conflict in Gulu (and neighboring districts) since 1986. People began fleeing the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) when its activities reached their worst in 1996, and were also forcibly moved by the army. It is estimated that by February 1997, 80 percent of the population of Gulu were living in camps. The following tables describe the population of people in Gulu. The dilemma facing healthcare workers in this district is that interventions are needed because SALW have led to a disruption of livelihoods and services. Yet these same small arms severely complicate efforts to deliver humanitarian interventions. Such interventions would include the following:

■ Activities and efforts to improve on the well-being of people;

■ Activities to promote security and freedom of movement;

■ Health projects;

■ Projects aimed at rehabilitating habitats and the environment;

■ Education projects;

■ Recreational activities.

What humanitarian interventions are needed, and why?

There has been mass displacement to unprepared camps as well as mass cattle raids. These have disrupted the economy, exacerbating high rates of unemployment and causing severe malnutrition. An elder in Pabo explained:

> "We are interested in farming as it is the sole backbone of the Acholi. But now, hunger has entered. This has weakened people and our children have become thieves. People fear cultivating because of mines. We have become beggars …it pains…."

In addition to the disruption of livelihoods, people in the area have witnessed the destruction of the local education system. Rural schools have been destroyed, the children abducted, the teachers killed by the LRA. It is estimated that 53 percent of school age children have never attended school at all.

ICC-U's findings

In 1999, Gulu experienced a period of relative peace, and some left the camps in order to try to return to their earlier lives. It was in this 'peaceful' period that a community survey was undertaken by the Injury Control Center (ICC-U). It covered all five counties in Gulu and was aimed at determining the public health impact of injuries, especially those caused by landmines. Quantitative and qualitative methods were used. The tables below explore living conditions in Gulu district and causes of injury.

Results: what the people said

> "They plant mines in our compounds, fields, kitchens. We are held captive in the camps. They think by using mines they get territory. They want us to leave our food for them. In my village under the mountain if you meet rebels going to get food, they whip you. They say we are supposed to find what we need in the camps…so they lay them (mines) on the footpaths, in gardens."
> LCI Chairman, Amoro

> "In cases of grudges the rebels can do anything. They can kill you, abduct your children, plant mines in your home, in your kitchen, so that your wife or child is blasted. This may come from a long term grudge or when someone reported you to have some connections with government troops."
> FGD participant, Amoro

Age distribution

Age	Male	Female	Total number	Total percent
< 5	389	392	781	13.0
6 -15	1193	1068	2261	37.5
16 -25	614	516	1130	18.7
26 -35	353	381	734	12.2
36 -45	257	274	531	8.8
46 -55	164	149	313	5.2
56+	155	125	280	4.6
Total	3125	2905	6030	100.0

81.4 percent of the population are aged 35 years and below

Number of rooms

Number of rooms	Household	percent
1	423	30.2
2	462	33.0
3+	517	36.9
Total	1402	100.0

Type of dwelling of the survey population
Dwellings in which the sample population lived

	number	percent
Temporary	1016	73.5
Semi-permanent	303	21.9
Permanent	60	4.3
Tent		40.3
Total	1383	100.0

Primary source of lighting

Commonest source of light	number	percent
Electricity	46	3.1
Paraffin	335	22.7
Candles	54	3.7
Wood	1038	70.5
Total	1473	100.0

"They are usually used for military purposes …but landmines are being buried in our kitchens. Governmentroops do not cook in our kitchens, they do not use our bathing shelters. Yet last year a child was blasted in a bathing shelter."
FGD participant, Pabo

The observations of the research team, in 1999, were that living conditions in Gulu were grim. Injuries, especially those resulting from SALW, were a huge problem, but because of isolation and an inadequate and eroded infrastructure, the capacity to deal with them was very poor. In the absence of proper medical facilities, the survival and treatment of those who were injured depended, to a large measure, on whether they had family or friends around who could help them.

We found that women and children were vulnerable to injury, as the tables show, yet the few awareness efforts we heard of had reached mostly men. Finally, any efforts at rehabilitation and the social reintegration of the war injured were lacking.

As can be seen from this chart, injuries occurred mostly in homes, schools, and places of entertainment, which is a clear indication that civilians were deliberately targeted.

Cooking facilities

Cooking facilities	Household	percent
Charcoal	164	11.1
Wood	1312	88.9
Total	1476	100.0

Education of head of household

Education	number	percent
None	173	20.07
P1 – P4	187	21.69
P5 – P7	353	40.95
S1 – S4	123	14.27
S5 – S6	11	1.28
College +	862	100.00

Place where injury happened

Place	Burns in percent (n=183)	Stabs / cuts (n=113)	Gunshots (n=165)	Landmines (n=97)
Home	22.4	47.8	57	75.3
Farm / field	3.3	12.4	7.9	4.1
Town road	2.7	0.0		0.0
Country road	22.4	5.3	0.0	0.0
School	29.5	17.6	4.8	8.2
Sport	0.0	0.0	9.1	0.0
Entertainment	0.0	0.0	17.6	0.0
Other	11.5	2.7	2.4	12.4

Causes of injury, 2001

Age	Traffic	Falls	Burns	Gunshots	Other Assault	Land mines	Others
0-10	83	118	26	3	38	0	17
11-20	89	52	1	22	42	0	19
21-30	108	34	2	32	48	1	24
31-40	67	13	1	12	23	0	10
41-50	34	9	0	4	14	0	4
51+	18	14	0	0	15	0	3
Totals	399	240	30	136	180	1	154

Organizations working in Gulu, and the impact of SALW on their work

While conditions in Gulu were grim, a number of local and international organizations were trying to make a difference. These include World Food Program (WFP), World Vision, CPAR, United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF) , Save the Children, Government, Local NGOs, GUSCO (Gulu Support the Children Organization).

Part of our aim in conducting our research was to assess the impact of SALWs on the work they were doing. We found that all the organizations we talked to had either been attacked, robbed, or threatened, and that staff feared for their lives. Travel in the district was hazardous, and meetings and field visits were often cancelled due to "insecurity." In December 1999 ICC-U itself was forced to halt visits to Gulu.

The testimonies we collected speak volumes about how dangerous and unstable Gulu is, and show some of the real costs of SALW proliferation in unstable regions. As Gulu

disintegrated, we observed the following effects: the cost of interventions increased dramatically as people began to rely on air travel instead of roads. The costs of moving people to safer areas for meetings mounted. Finally, interventions began to be cancelled altogether when it became clear that the safety of humanitarian workers could not longer be assured.ICC-U's response was to launch an appeal to other NGOs to step up, or begin rehabilitation. We also began training health workers in Acute and Emergency Trauma care, and trained Uganda People´s Defence Force (UPDF) and Police in First Aid and

rapid, safe evacuation of injured persons and lobbied for more support from government.

Our conclusions have been that humanitarian interventions only come at great human and monetary cost, and that the proliferation of SALW is centrally responsible for the deterioration of the conditions in which such missions take place. It is our fervent desire that we are working, here, towards a situation in Uganda where we do not need such interventions at all.

Causes of injury in Gulu Distric, 1994-1998
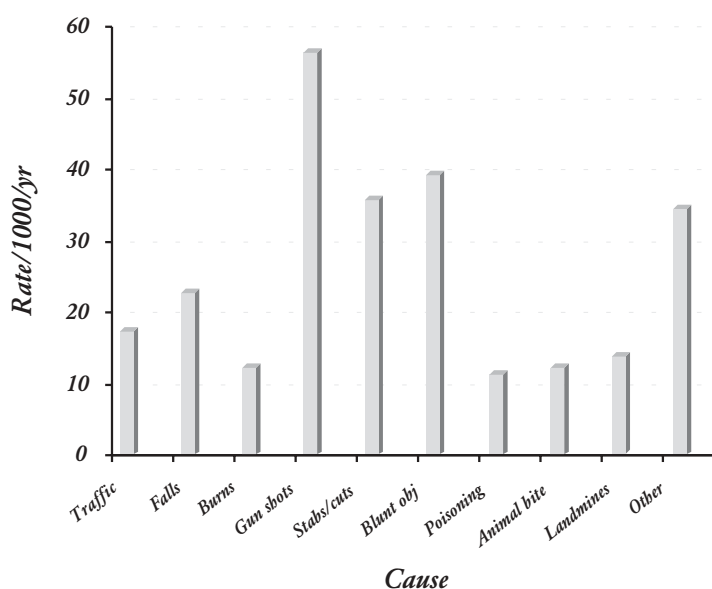
Time taken to get to the health facility

Time less than	number	percent
1 hour	86	12.52
1 - 6 hours	208	30.28
7 - 24 hours	155	22.56
2 days or more	114	16.59
Not taken to health facility	124	18.05
ALL	687	100.00

Initial help to injured persons

Category	number	percent
Bystander	86	10.41
Friend/Family	425	51.45
Police	7	0.85
Ambulance	23	2.78
Fire Brigade	1	0.12
No help	215	26.03
Other	56	6.78
Unknown	13	1.57
Total	826	100.00

4 Lessons Learned & Outlook

Security Dilemmas in the Horn of Africa: Reflections from the SALIGAD Project

by Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold

The idea of holding a workshop on how to better understand the impact of gender ideologies on the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) was born from the work completed by SALIGAD in the Horn of Africa. In this paper, I shall offer a brief overview of the "security-architecture" of the region and comment on what we have learned so far.

The Horn of Africa exemplifies the destabilizing effects of allowing disparate political conditions and expectations to lead to violence. After decades of destruction and massive human suffering due to long and interrelated wars, the 1990s saw major changes in conflicts and peace in the member countries of the **Inter-Governmental Authority for Development** (IGAD).¹ While the civil wars in Eritrea, Ethiopia and Djibouti have recently ended and major demobilizations have taken place (or are underway), in other parts of the region war continues. Furthermore, new intra-state confrontations, as well as localized conflicts, have either arisen or present a threat to the region's stability.

The war between **Ethiopia** and **Eritrea** (1998-2000) not only had a devastating effect on the people of these states, but virtually blocked programs and discussions on the issue of disarmament—an extremely neglected topic in this part of the world, in any case. Both countries became heavily indebted in the course of this last clash, which added to the already heavy burden they bore due to their poorly performing economies. The full extent of the human suffering brought about in this war, the possible effects of the long term animosities to which it has given rise, and the impact of further small arms that are circulating have not yet received adequate analysis and documentation.

Violent conflict in the **Sudan** continues, with massive bombing and killings in south Sudan. The main guerilla group and the Sudanese government do hold talks occasionally, but so far with little effect. In the aftermath of September 11, 2002, the government of the United States has involved itself in bringing about 'lasting-peace' in this country, and the IGAD appears to have renewed its efforts to sustain the so called "Sudan-Process," which is supported by envoys from the IGAD states.

In **Somalia**, signs of a peace process are visible and a "Hotel" government has been established in Mogadishu, though the ARTE process which brought about this new government is contested by other groups.

In **Djibouti**, internal guerilla groups have, to a certain degree, come to terms with the government. However, it cannot be conclusively said that all conflict between the Afar and Issa groups has come to an end.

Uganda has, for the last 17 years, seen a relative period of stability. However, parts of the country are still effected by armed conflicts or their aftermath. From 1987 to 1992, the **People's Army** (UPA), led by Peter Osai, unsuccessfully embarked on an insurgency in the Teso region. The **Lord's Resistance Army** (LRA) started a rebellion in 1986 in northern Uganda under the leadership of Joseph Kony. This rebellion seems recently to have come to an end after the leadership of the Sudan (the zone of retreat for the LRA) began to allow the **Ugandan People´s Defense Forces** (UPDF) to conduct operations in or on the border.

Kenya is the only country that has not seen outright armed conflicts since independence, except for the "Shifta," a struggle which involved ethnic Somalis and the government of Somalia in the sixties. One aim of the armed conflict was to cede the

North Eastern part of Kenya to Somalia. While this conflict has remained muted, the relative tranquility has not meant the absence of internal disturbances and ethnic arming. Since the 90s, around the period of the first and second general multi-party elections, so-called "ethnic clashes" have been rampant, especially in the Rift-Valley region.

As is evident from this overview, every country in the region continues to endure some level of conflict, although this varies in scope, intensity and nature. Those societies which are post-war are fragile and tend towards recurring armed conflicts, and some states have not been able to fulfill their fundamental security obligations. The long, almost uncontrollable borders are one geo-graphical reason why small arms can easily circulate from country to country, often with the help of the same ethnic group on both sides of the border. A broad peace-building process still needs to take shape and gain momentum in the whole region.

Despite significant progress in parts of the region, several major security issues still persist in many areas. These security concerns and the general problems of conflict prevention and management have direct bearing on the day-to-day development efforts in the region, as well as for the implementation of **post-war rehabilitation and development** (cooperation) policies.

One serious security issue is the availability and circulation of large numbers of small arms and light weapons in the region. After the end of wars, large quantities of small arms and light weapons become surplus weapons, which are easily diffused. Often during demobilization, small arms can be acquired by individuals

or groups or be shipped from state to state. Uncontrolled possession and utilization of arms generates armed conflicts. These conflicts can be found at the domestic level and continue via local to sub-regional and regional level.

The understanding of the dynamics of small arms and light weapons as a conflict triggering factor as well as the control and management of these weapons are the subject of the SALIGAD project.

The SALIGAD project-understanding the demand for small arms and developing capacities

The Small Arms and Light Weapons in IGAD Countries (SALIGAD) project is a joint venture of the Bonn International Center for Conversion and the International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (BICC/IRG), and is intended to address the question of the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. SALIGAD endeavors to facilitate dialogue and build capacity for managing small arms and light weapons so that they do not become the tools of choice in conflicts in the IGAD countries.

SALIGAD is a pilot project and follows these lines:

General objectives

■ To reinforce humanitarian approaches to development;

■ To emphasize the central impor-tance of building peace-enabling conditions conducive to crisis prevention;

■ To encourage non-violent approaches to conflicts in the region

Specific objectives

■ To promote indigenous data gathering mechanisms and the study of arms diffusion within the region, with an emphasis on its humanitarian and regional security impact;

■ To offer an open information exchange platform, and help conduct debate and awareness creation among grass-root initiatives, policy makers and researchers;

■ To generate policy options from national to regional level on small arms and light weapons; and

■ To directly support researchers in the region working on the issues outlined above.

SALIGAD's programmatic approach includes:

a) Action research including a literature review, conflict mapping and thematic research. This is achieved through undertaking research and offering a platform and forums for the exchange of information, and helping to promote discussion and awareness among development practitioners, policymakers and researchers.

b) A dialogue program including workshops, conferences and roundtable discussions. Policy options regarding small arms and light weapons at both national and regional levels are generated through dialogue among governments, NGOs and grassroots initiatives.

c) Capacity building through Learning Sessions with Knowledgeable Peacemakers. This builds local capacity by directly supporting small arms researchers from the region through training and raising awareness at the community level.

In the year 2002 we shall focus on the following activities.

Planned activities

To date, no proven and documented approaches for weapons collection in the IGAD region exist. The development of such approaches is difficult due to the rapidly changing dynamics and mostly volatile circumstances attributable to specific situations in which weapons are applied and/or in evidence. In addition, the situation in the region is complicated by, among other issues, widespread insecurity and poverty, poor infrastructure development, rising criminality etc. To address this, one of the proposed project activities for SALIGAD is the "development of tested tools for conflict mapping, SALW demand side analysis and weapons collection."

In order to develop tools that are practical and that can be realistically applied in the region, SALIGAD will adopt, with local partners, several activities:

■ The documentation of Lessons Learned and Experiences Gained from case-studies of weapons collection in the Uganda weapons collection program;

■ Conflict mapping exercises in Kenya to document conflicts in which small arms are used and also to use conflict mapping as a tool to access small arms issues;

■ Conducting topic-specific workshops which take on issues like gender and development;

■ The publication and distribution of research and dialogue program results;

■ Designing and conducting training sessions for trainers in collaboration with local partners.

Some of the issues which we have come across in the course of the last two years (2000-2001) in the SALIGAD project in the Horn of Africa (HOA) are:

■ The gender dynamics of arms possession are extremely important: while weapons are already in the region and in the hands of individuals (in many households) and state authorities, they often tend to become 'tools of violence' when un- or underemployed young males gain access to them;

■ Gender ideologies play a part in the demand for arms. We need, therefore, to understand why people seek arms (for example, in order to pay a bride price through cattle raiding, or to move from one age group to the next, which requires the acquisition of small arms as a sign of moving from boyhood to adulthood);

■ Urban crimes with small arms are rampant in major cities, and in the rural areas some kind of integration of small arms in the daily life of people, especially in nomadic society, is quite evident (see *brief 23*);

■ SALW circulation has different dynamics in countries with porous borders, like Kenya and Somalia, than in border areas like the one between Ethiopia and Sudan, where the role played by the liberation front SPLA is quite significant (*brief 23*);

■ The circulation of arms rather than the influx of new shipments is significant, which means that existing stocks flow from conflict to conflict (*brief 23*);

■ A permanent and yet untouched issue in terms of research and policy is the problem of ammunition for small arms, which actually makes them 'tools of violence'; and finally,

■ The whole issue of small arms and its ultimate control and management should be seen from the perspectives of the social embeddedness of small arms, which implies a careful assessment of how gender ideologies are used to support and normalize weapons proliferation.

Our greater knowledge of these issues will be useful in :

A) determining our better understanding of the dynamics of small arms, which is important for any kind of engagement with communities in the sphere of small arms control;

B) enabling us to start a dialogue program with the security sector, and ensuring that civil society is involved and participates in the dialogue program; and

C) designing policy recommendations that can produce tangible results and are practicable.

The Nairobi Declaration (ND)

The governments of the greater Horn of Africa region have adopted the Nairobi Declaration (ND) on small arms. Based on this declaration, local Plans of Action were adopted in 2000. So far, however, out of the 11 signatories, only three or four have actually established **National Focal Points** (NFP), which are meant to be the central organs to cover all aspects of small arms control and management issues. The "Friends of the Nairobi Declaration" has recently been established to seek funds and other means of implementing the terms of the Declaration. The decisive issues regarding the outcome of the ND will be:

a) the establishment of a cross-sectoral representation of members of the NFP, which also should strive for competence;

b) agreement on the scope and type of representation of NGOs and the depth of their engagement;

c) agreement on the actual coverage of the topics and issues of the NFP; the key issue here being whether the coverage is limited to illicit weapons, or also deals with legally held weapons.

While many other issues could be vital, these are central for a joint NGO-government cooperation on curbing small arms.

During the workshop in Jinja, we had amongst us the coordinator of the Ugandan NFP, which led to fruitful discussions with the representatives of other government ministries, including our main partner, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, and representatives from the ministries of Health, Education, Justice, and so on. The workshop offered a major opportunity for government representatives to specifically engage with issues on the role of the NFP and its members.

Besides offering this opportunity to government representatives, the workshop also brought together key NGO practitioners, who are actively engaged in various projects in conflict-prone areas. For them the NFP is not only a main means to channel their practical experience, but also a forum in which to spell out the impact of small arms from a humanitarian point of view.

The experience we have gained in the SALIGAD project leads me to believe that the following steps should be adopted in order to make the NFP a central national clearing house on small arms:

■ Transparency regarding small arms issues must be practiced both by government and civil society within the NFP;

■ An agreement that leaves no room for misinterpretation must be established on the role of civil society;

■ A national agenda for the NFP, with specific topics to be covered and a time line, must be developed;

■ Carefully researched information must be brought to the attention of the NFP on relevant topics;

■ Practical implementation steps for curbing and actually reducing small arms must be agreed upon;

■ A national survey and registration scheme of all arms held legally by police, military, and paramilitary institutions, must be designed;

■ A system must be developed to ensure the legalization of illegal small arms and ensure the registration of those that are held legally.

A thorough discussion should take place on the question of the ultimate goal of the NFP. Does it intend to:

■ ban an entire weapons category?

■ devise a manageable and reliable control mechanism?

■ devise a national and regional disarmament regime aimed at reducing weapons holdings?

It is only when government representatives and civil society exchange ideas and harmonize their views on how to curb the demand for small arms that the NFP will bear fruit.

What is clear is that the possible role of traditional informal authorities, especially in rural regions where civilians hold small arms, will also have to be on the agenda. On an ongoing basis, as the NFP starts to be operational in each country, many other points will need assessment and strategic responses will continuously need to be developed.

[1] IGAD members are: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda.

[2] The term "crisis prevention" is understood here as avoiding armed confrontation. This term, rather than "conflict prevention", is considered more appropriate for the IGAD region.

Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation: A Gender-aware Call for Action

produced at Jinja, Uganda, 16 April 2002
Gender Caucus, Jinja Workshop

The men and women of the gender caucus at this meeting, recognizing that this is an historic occasion and accepting our responsibility to move forward from this point, argue that the existing UN definition of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), Resolution A/54/258, which is focused on technical issues, should be refined in a manner that links the equipment and the outcome of its use.

While we want to continue to target manufacturers of lethal weapons, we also want it to be recognized that in times of violent conflict, implements such as machetes and knives gain the status of SALW. We insist that the human dimension – the outcome of small arms proliferation – must be central to the definition of SALW.

We therefore resolve:

1. To lobby and organize to gender sensitize the Nairobi Declaration and its stakeholders as well as the country focal points that arise from this Declaration;

2. To continue to discuss and refine the existing UN definition of SALW;

3. To continue to explain that "a gender analysis" embraces the reality of men and women, boys and girls, and therefore represents a full picture of the human suffering that is caused by SALW;

4. To continue to finds avenues to promote women's participation at leadership levels in discussions and decision-making processes, even when these take place in militarized contexts;

5. To determine how to better address the connections between SALW proliferation and rape;

6. To lobby the UN, the International Criminal Court and national governments to include the sexual assault of men and boys under the definition of rape as a war crime;

7. To lobby relevant organizations to hold an international conference on gender and small arms;

8. In order to develop appropriate strategies to overcome their effects, to undertake further research on how the construction of masculinity and femininity, and the socialization of women and men, girls and boys, is tied to the proliferation and use of SALW;

9. To identify successful strategies or best practices in the control and management of SALW, and to determine how these can be replicated in different parts of the world;

10. To create local definitions of the problems arising from SALW proliferation and develop culturally appropriate strategies for curbing SALW proliferation and their effects.

Source: Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Dynamics, Concepts and Perspectives for Action.

Further Resources

Windhoek Declaration
http://www.reliefweb.int/library/
GHARkit/FilesFeb2001/windhoek_
declaration.htm

Bamako Declaration
http://www.state.gov/t/pm/rls/othr/
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Nairobi Declaration
http://www.ploughshares.ca/
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Action
http://www.undp.org/fwcw/
plat.htm

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Property in Post-conflict Situations
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Global Overview."
http://www.unifem.undp.org/public/
landrights/

UN WomenWatch
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http://www.cwgl.rutgers.edu

United Nations Development Fund
for Women (UNIFEM)
http://www.unifem.undp.org

Strategies from the UNIFEM Trust
Fund to Eliminate Violence Against
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Women Building Peace: From the
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women/default.html

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http://www.icrc.org/eng/women

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The Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)

an independent non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the transfer of former military resources and assets to alternative civilian purposes

The transfer of resources from the military to the civilian sector represents both a social and an economic challenge, as well as offering an opportunity for the states concerned. The sustained process of disarmament during the decade following the end of the Cold War has made defense conversion an important issue in many countries today. This process has now slowed down considerably, but the problems faced by those affected are far from solved. BICC's main objective is to make use of the chances offered by disarmament, whilst at the same time helping to avoid—or lessen—the negative effects.

This issue concerns a number of areas: What can scientists and engineers who were formerly employed in weapons labs do today? What is the fate of the roughly eight million employees who lost their jobs in the defense factories? Why are so many defense companies faring better today than they did ten years ago? Will all demobilized soldiers or former combatants find a future in civilian society? What action must communities take when suddenly faced with the closure of a huge military base? How does one solve the problem of the ready availability of small arms and light weapons?

It is BICC's task to tackle these questions, to analyze them on the basis of scientific research, to convey the necessary information, and to give advice to those involved – in short, to **manage disarmament**.

International think tank. BICC conducts research and makes policy recommendations. In-house and external experts contribute comparative analyses and background studies.

Project management and consulting services. BICC provides practical support to public and private organizations. For instance, BICC staff advise local governments confronted with the difficult task of redeveloping former military installations. BICC also combines development assistance with practical conversion work by helping in the fields of demobilization, reintegration and peace-building.

Clearinghouse. In its capacity as an independent organization, BICC supports and assists international organizations, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, companies and the media, as well as private individuals. It hereby mediates and facilitates the conversion process at all levels – local, national and global. BICC collects and disseminates data and information on conversion to practitioners in a wide range of fields and institutions. BICC strives to reach researchers and practitioners as well as parliamentarians, the media, and the general public by means of a variety of tools including its library, its extensive on-line documentation services and its internet service (www.bicc.de). Furthermore, the Center documents the course of disarmament and conversion in its annual *conversion surveys* and produces a variety of publications.

The Bonn International Center for Conversion was established in 1994 with generous support from the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). The Center's Trustees include the two German states of North Rhine-Westphalia and Brandenburg as well as the Westdeutsche Landesbank – Girozentrale (WestLB), Düsseldorf/Münster and the Landesentwicklungsgesellschaft NRW (LEG).