

**INTERNATIONAL
SMALL ARMS CONTROL
STANDARD**

**ISACS
06.10**

Version 1.0
2017-10-05

**Women, men and the gendered nature of
small arms and light weapons**

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www.smallarmsstandards.org

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This document — one in a series of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) — was produced by the United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism in collaboration with a broad and diverse group of experts drawn from governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector. A full list of contributors to the ISACS project is available on the website listed above.

The production of ISACS was made possible by the financial support of the governments of Australia, Canada, Germany, Ireland, Norway and Switzerland, as well as by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate (CTED).

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Foreword

The United Nations (UN) Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism strives to improve the UN's ability to work as one in delivering effective policy, programming and advice to Member States on curbing the illicit trade, destabilising accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. Established by the Secretary-General in 1998 with the task of coordinating the small arms work of the United Nations, CASA today unites more than 20 UN bodies active in policy development and/or programming related to small arms and light weapons.¹

Building on previous UN initiatives to develop international standards in the areas of mine action (International Mine Action Standards)² and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards),³ the United Nations has developed a series of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) with the aim of providing clear and comprehensive guidance to practitioners and policymakers on fundamental aspects of small arms and light weapons control. The present document constitutes one of more than 20 ISACS modules that provide practical guidance on instituting effective controls over the full life cycle of small arms and light weapons (all ISACS modules can be found at www.smallarmsstandards.org).

ISACS are framed by existing global agreements related to small arms and light weapons control, in particular the

- *UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons In All Its Aspects* (UN PoA);
- *International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons* (International Tracing Instrument);
- *Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime* (UN Firearms Protocol); and
- *Arms Trade Treaty*.

Within this global framework, ISACS build upon standards, best practice guidelines, model regulations, etc. that have been elaborated at the regional and sub-regional levels. ISACS seek to cover the fundamental areas of small arms and light weapons control on which the United Nations may be called upon to provide advice, guidance and support.

ISACS were developed, and continue to be improved and supplemented, by a broad coalition of small arms control specialists drawn from the United Nations, governments, international and regional organizations, civil society and the private sector (a full list of contributors to ISACS is available at www.smallarmsstandards.org).

ISACS modules were drafted in accordance with the rules set out in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2, *Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards*, under the oversight of the CASA Working Group on ISACS, co-chaired by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

¹ For a full listing of CASA partners, see www.poa-iss.org/CASA/CASA.aspx.

² www.mineactionstandards.org

³ www.unddr.org

Introduction

With the Sustainable Development Goals, the international community has committed itself, *inter alia*, to achieving gender equality (Goal 5) and to significantly reducing illicit arms flows and violent deaths (Goal 16). These goals are inextricably interlinked.

Eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in all its aspects, and addressing the misuse of both illegally- and legally-owned small arms, requires paying attention to the human factors behind the supply, demand and misuse of such weapons at all levels of society. It also requires mobilizing and building the capacity of all actors and institutions that can contribute to collective solutions.

Looking at the uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons through a gender lens is to recognize that these weapons do not involve and affect men and women in the same way and that men and women have equal rights to participate in initiatives to control these weapons.

Gender mainstreaming means ensuring that the impact – on females and males – of all small arms and light weapons control initiatives is considered at every stage of assessment, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Gender mainstreaming allows for a better understanding of the roles that men and women play in relation to small arms and light weapons, in times of conflict, post-conflict reconstruction and peace.

Promoting gender-balanced participation in small arms and light weapons control protects men's and women's rights to participate in decision-making on an issue that affects everyone's security. As this has traditionally been seen as a male domain, ensuring equal participation by women requires a strong focus on the inclusion of women, especially from affected communities and civil society, and a commitment to gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation.

The integration of gender perspectives into small arms and light weapons control processes, as well as being mandated by international instruments, allows for a better understanding of the factors driving the demand for and misuse of small arms and light weapons, as well as their impact on everyone's human rights, development and security. As a result, gender mainstreaming makes possible the development of responses that increase the level of welfare provision, reinforce security and strengthen the political legitimacy of the peacebuilding process — in sum, responses that are holistic, better targeted and more effective.

Women, men, and the gendered nature of small arms and light weapons

1 Scope

Gendered impacts of the uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, as well as gendered dimensions of small arms and light weapons control, have been incorporated where appropriate into all modules of the International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS).

This document draws together the gender-related threads of other ISACS modules, establishes principles and provides guidance on implementing gender-responsive small arms and light weapons control programming.

It is intended to assist practitioners in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of small arms and light weapons control initiatives, whether they be at the level of legislation, policy, programming or projects. It offers advice on gender-sensitive interventions and actions that are designed to ensure that small arms and light weapons control initiatives are as effective and fair as possible.

Issues related to gender in the context of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants are covered in the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards – IDDRS 5.10, *Women, Gender and DDR* – and are not addressed in detail in this module.

Issues related to small arms and light weapons control as it relates to boys and girls are covered in ISACS 06.20, *Children, adolescents, youth and small arms and light weapons*.

2 Normative references

The following referenced documents are indispensable for the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

A Practical Tool for Integrating the Gender Perspective in SALW Legislative and Policy Frameworks, SEESAC

WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies, World Health Organization

WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing trafficked women, World Health Organization

Ethical and safety recommendations for intervention research on violence against women, World Health Organization

Researching Violence Against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists, World Health Organization and Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH)

United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials

ISACS 03.30, *National regulation of civilian access to small arms and light weapons*

ISACS 03.40, *National coordinating mechanisms on small arms and light weapons control*

ISACS 04.10, *Designing and implementing a National Action Plan*

ISACS 04.30, *Awareness-raising*

ISACS 04.40, *Monitoring, evaluation and reporting*

ISACS 05.10, *Conducting small arms and light weapons surveys*

IDDRS 05.10, *Women, Gender and DDR*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISACS 01.20, *Glossary of terms, definitions and abbreviated terms*, and the following apply.

In all ISACS modules, the words 'shall', 'should', 'may' and 'can' are used to express provisions in accordance with their usage in International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards.

- a) **“shall” indicates a requirement:** It is used to indicate requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform to the document and from which no deviation is permitted.
- b) **“should” indicates a recommendation:** It is used to indicate that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required, or that (in the negative form, 'should not') a certain possibility or course of action is deprecated but not prohibited.
- c) **“may” indicates permission:** It is used to indicate a course of action permissible within the limits of the document.
- d) **“can” indicates possibility and capability:** It is used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or casual.

4 United Nations framework

4.1 General

This document provides practical guidance on the implementation of commitments related to women and gender that are contained in United Nations multilateral instruments related to small arms and light weapons control.

4.2 UN Programme of Action

In the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN Programme of Action), all UN Member States declare themselves

- a) “Gravely concerned about [...] the negative impact on women [of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects]” (section I, paragraph 6).

In the outcome document of the 2012 Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action, all UN Member States undertake to

- b) “facilitate the participation and representation of women in small arms policymaking, taking into account relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly, and to explore means to eliminate the negative impact of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on women” (section II, paragraph A.2.i)

4.3 Arms Trade Treaty

States party to the Arms Trade Treaty

- a) “[bear] in mind that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict and armed violence” (preambular paragraph 10); and
- b) commit themselves, when exporting conventional arms, to “take into account the risk of the conventional arms [...] being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children” (Article 7.4);

5 The gendered nature of small arms and light weapons

5.1 General

The possession, use, misuse and effects of small arms and light weapons, as well as general attitudes towards them, manifest clear gender dimensions. Likewise, violence perpetrated with small arms is a highly gendered phenomenon and has vastly different impacts of women and men.

5.2 Femininities and masculinities

The ideologies of masculinity and femininity are socially constructed and largely reflect power dynamics in which men as a group have power over women as a group and some men (especially those expressing a traditional or ‘hegemonic’ form of masculinity) have power over other men (including those expressing other forms or alternatives to traditional masculinity — such as homosexuality or bi-sexuality, people who are transgender or intersex, or those who identify or are recognised as a third or other gender).

Notions of masculinity and femininity develop in interaction with other power factors — such as age, class, and race — producing a multitude of masculinities and femininities in different contexts. It is essential to focus on these interactions, e.g. by paying attention to how the use and misuse of small arms impacts on different women and men and on sexual and gender minorities.

Armed conflict and violence take a terrible human toll and seriously perturb social and economic order. Such disruption can roll back decades of progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women and can place an enormous burden on women who are forced to provide for their families alone, while perhaps also caring for a family member disabled by armed conflict or violence.

Despite these overwhelmingly negative consequences for both women and men, armed conflict and violence can also present opportunities to challenge gender norms that prevent women — and, by extension, their communities — from reaching their full potential. Examples of this include women being glorified for their contributions to struggles for freedom and independence, or stepping into leadership roles in their communities, civil society and the private sector while men are away fighting. Such challenges to traditional conceptions of femininity, if built upon, can be valuable stepping stones towards further empowerment of women and gender equality.

5.3 Attitudes

Not only are women and men affected differently by small arms, they also perceive them differently. In household surveys, female respondents are more likely to characterise small arms as a threat to safety and are less likely to acknowledge the presence of a small arm in the home.

5.4 Ownership, use and misuse

5.4.1 Men and misuse

Most of the world's estimated 875 million small arms are in male hands. Most people who work in professions in which small arms are routinely used (e.g. law enforcement, military and private security) are male. Most people who use small arms for recreational purposes (e.g. hunting and sport shooting) are male. Most perpetrators of small arms violence are male.

A small proportion of the young male population — often marginalized either socially, economically or both — perpetrates most armed violence, suggesting that violent behaviour is rooted more in social than in biological factors. The very act of perpetrating violence, especially with a small arm, can lead to more extreme marginalization.

Marginalized young men frequently perceive violence — especially small arms violence — as a way to attain positions of social and economic status to which they feel entitled but which are otherwise closed off to them. By offering empowerment in the face of exclusion from socially-defined masculine roles, small arms can represent potent symbols of power for marginalized young men.

Small arms can enable marginalized young men, who would otherwise have little influence in their communities, to exert considerable control, even over traditional figures of authority. Small arms make it easier for young men to seize authority through violence, while in the process reversing or destroying the existing social order and its traditional structures and customs of authority.

5.4.2 Women and misuse

Although only a small share of small arms-related misuse is committed by women, who also represent a minority of SALW owners, women do also engage in violent behaviours, including with small arms, but tend to do so less frequently and for different reasons.

Female combatants and women or girls associated with non-State armed groups are common in armed conflicts throughout the world. In addition to engaging directly in armed conflict, women and girls also fulfil essential support functions in such groups (e.g. as spies, smugglers, paramedics, teachers, couriers, mechanics, drivers, etc.).

Like men and boys, women and girls sometimes join armed groups voluntarily and sometimes are forcibly recruited. Forcibly recruited female combatants are especially vulnerable to gender-based violence, including rape, forced marriage and sexual slavery. Women and girls engaged in armed conflict can thus find themselves in a position of being simultaneously a perpetrator and a victim of human rights violations.

While armed gang violence mainly involves men, women who are involved in gangs can occupy a number of roles, including as perpetrators (who participate in gang violence alongside male gang members), victims (i.e. partners, sisters and mothers of gang members who are targeted by other gangs) and associates (i.e. women and girls who occupy support roles).

Women and girls (like men and boys) join gangs for a variety of reasons, including for protection following a history of physical and sexual abuse, the desire for a family-structured environment, to obtain money and respect, or because they have been forced to join. Factors that seem more to affect girls' delinquent behaviours include early puberty (which can lead to increased conflict with parents and associations with older boys or men), sexual abuse or maltreatment, depression and anxiety.

6 Effects of misuse

6.1 General

Of the more than half-a-million people who die violently every year around the world — in conflict zones and elsewhere — more than four fifths (84 percent) are male and less than one fifth (16 percent) are female. A small arm is used in almost half of all violent deaths globally and in approximately one-third of all killings of women and girls (i.e. femicide).

While men constitute the majority of victims in countries with high levels of lethal violence, a woman's risk of being killed is also highest in these settings. Wherever small arms violence presents a serious problem, the risk of victimization increases for the entire male and female population.

Whether as perpetrators, victims or witnesses of armed violence, men, women, boys and girls can suffer long-lasting, extreme, psychological trauma as a result.

6.2 Effects on men and boys

6.2.1 General

Most direct victims of small arms violence are male. Young men (aged 15-29) are especially vulnerable — they are the primary victims of violence in general, and account for an even greater proportion of victims of small arms violence. Young men are also more likely to use a small arm when carrying out a crime than any other demographic group.

6.2.2 Violent masculinity

Young men are not merely passive receptors of social norms. They participate actively in internalizing, reframing and reproducing norms that they receive from their social settings, their families and their peers. A young man's gender is not the sole determinant of his association with or willingness to perpetrate armed violence. His understanding of social and cultural ideologies of masculinity will influence whether a young man turns to armed violence or not.

The association of masculinity with small arms possession and violent behaviour is socially constructed. Young boys are sometimes given toy guns to play with, or they make their own in order to emulate characters they have seen in violent films, music-videos or video-games, or in real-life gangs or militias. Small arms are sometimes implicated in rites of passage from boyhood to manhood. Calls to take up arms often make deliberate appeal to popular notions of manliness.

Women's attitudes can also contribute to the powerful cultural conditioning that equates masculinity with violent behaviour and with owning and using a small arm. Women sometimes overtly encourage men to fight (or shame them for not fighting) and, more subtly, support attitudes and stereotypes that promote the association of masculinity with the possession and use of small arms.

While access to small arms is an obvious risk factor for armed violence, controlling availability and regulating possession of these weapons will not, by themselves, affect demand factors and underlying causes of violence. In order to address deeper causes driving the demand for and misuse of small arms by men, it is essential to understand and address the widespread association of masculinity with small arms possession and violent behaviour.

Countering the socially-constructed yet enduring associations between small arms, violence, power and masculinity is a key component of any effective, long-term violence reduction strategy. Tackling the problem of violent masculinity requires a strong commitment to gender equality and a redefinition of what it means to be a man — i.e. giving meaning to manhood that does not involve aggression or violence.

6.2.3 Gender-based and sexual violence

While women and girls are the primary victims of gender-based and sexual violence, such violence is also directed against men and boys, especially during armed conflict, and can be magnified by the use of small arms. Non-combatant men suffer more from gender-based violence than do combatant men, e.g in the form of sex-selective massacres, forced conscription and sexual violence. During the first decade of the 21 Century, incidents of sexual violence against men and boys were reported in over 25 armed conflicts.

6.2.4 Suicide

The availability of small arms is a serious risk factor for male suicide. It is mainly men who use small arms to commit suicide. Suicides carried out with a small arm most frequently take place in the home, the men involved often have alcohol in their blood and most of them have never been in contact with psychiatric services nor have had a history of previous self-harm.

6.3 Effects on women and girls

6.3.1 General

Women and girls are affected disproportionately by small arms in a number of ways. For example, their rate of death by gunshot is disproportionate to (i.e. lower than) their share of the population (since more men than women are killed with small arms) and is also disproportionate to (i.e. higher than) the extent to which they are owners or users of small arms — i.e. women are many times more likely to be a victim of armed violence, usually at the hands of men, than a perpetrator of it. The very fact that almost all small arms are owned, used and misused by men, puts women in a vulnerable position.

6.3.2 Violence against women

Small arms play an important role in lethal violence generally, and in violence against women specifically.

The brandishing of a small arm in order to intimidate, threaten or coerce is a predictor of its actual use. Women who fall victim to femicide often have previously reported being threatened with a small arm as part of a broader pattern of coercive, controlling violence perpetrated against them by their male partners.

6.3.2.1 Femicide

Regions of the world with the highest levels of femicide largely correspond to the regions with the highest overall rates of lethal violence. However, in non-conflict settings — where 90 percent of violent deaths occur — there is an inverted relationship between the rate of violent death and the proportion of female victims — i.e. in countries with high rates of violent death, the proportion of female victims tends to be below the global average of 16 percent, with the reverse being true in countries with low rates of violent death.

NOTE To clarify what can seem to be a counterfactual finding: Countries with the highest overall rates of violent death also have the highest rates of femicide; but since many more men than women are being killed in these countries, the ratio of female to male victims is below the global average. Conversely, countries with the lowest rates of violent death also have the lowest rates of femicide, but since fewer men are being killed in these countries, the ratio of female to male victims is above the global average (indeed, in some high-income countries with low rates of violent death, as many or more women than men die violently every year).

In countries with the highest rates of femicide, more than half of killings of women and girls are perpetrated with small arms.

Most perpetrators of femicide are male and are frequently current or former intimate partners, family members or friends of the victim. Most victims of femicide perpetrated by an intimate partner or a family member were the target of prior violence and abuse by the same perpetrator. Violence against

women perpetrated by intimate partners or family members often leads the victim to self-directed violence, including suicide, both while the violence is going on and after it has stopped.

6.3.2.2 Intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence

Intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence is common, universal and highly gendered. Overwhelmingly, its burden is borne by women at the hands of men. Its most chronic, frequent and severe manifestation is coercive, controlling violence, which can include the use of small arms.

The proportion of lethal intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence, in relation to all femicides, tends to be low (as little as 3 percent) in countries with high femicide rates and high (as much as 80 percent) in countries with low femicide rates. In other words, although a woman is more likely to be killed in a country with a high femicide rate, it is less likely that the perpetrator will be an intimate partner or family member (with the converse being true for countries with low femicide rates).

Intimate partner and domestic / family-related killings is the only category of homicide in which women outnumber men as victims. Globally, between 40 and 70 percent of female murder victims are killed by an intimate partner or family member. In countries where small arms are easily available, they are often used to commit such femicides. In contrast, most men who fall victim to small arms violence are killed outside the home by people who are not their intimate partners or family members.

Small arms are also frequently used as a weapon of choice to inflict other widespread forms of intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence such as physical, psychological and sexual violence, including rape and stalking.

Rates of intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence are high during armed conflict and increase in its aftermath, with women suffering the brunt of this type of violence. The increased availability of small arms during armed conflict can translate into more dangerous forms of violence in the home.

Cases of intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence, including involving small arms, often go unreported. Institutional and policy responses often fail to address appropriately the complexity of this problem and to provide adequate services and protection to female victims of such violence.

Women who resort to violence within an intimate partner relationship, including with a small arm, can be considered as being either a victim or an aggressor. As a victim, women who resort to violence are typically resisting, reacting to or defending against abuse from a partner in the relationship, but a woman may also be the perpetrator of abuse. Women tend to initiate or to use physical assault because they are motivated by a need for self-protection or justice in relation to previous or continued assaults by their partner.

6.3.2.3 Small arms in the home

The presence of a small arm in the home represents an increased risk to all members of the household. Due to the high prevalence of domestic violence, which disproportionately affects women, women are especially at risk since a small arm in the home can be used to threaten or inflict harm. A small arm is a hazardous object that can injure or kill if improperly handled, representing a particular risk to children. It is also an effective suicide tool that is far more likely to inflict death or serious injury than other suicide methods.

As mentioned in Clause 5.4.1, women are severely under-represented in professions that use small arms (e.g. law enforcement, military and private security). When small arms that are used by men at work are brought into the home, they heighten the risk of injury and death to family members, especially women and children.

Male soldiers and police officers suffering from post-traumatic stress are much more likely to use psychological and physical aggression against their intimate partners than those not suffering from the disorder and are also at higher risk of turning small arms against themselves. Female soldiers and police officers suffering from post-traumatic stress are more likely to turn lethal violence against themselves.

Work-related small arms inside and outside the home can also contribute to a wider normalization of small arms in public and private spaces and to the militarization of society, which can have serious negative implications for women.

6.3.2.4 Gender-based and sexual violence

There is a link between small arms and gender-based and sexual violence, where women and girls are the primary victims. Refugees from armed conflict often cite rape as a primary reason for fleeing their homes and report that rape is primarily perpetrated by armed men. Some forms of sexual violence in conflict, such as rape, can be classified as war crimes and can constitute an element of genocide.

The prevalence of rape and other forms of sexual violence in a society can be a good proxy for measuring rising tensions and incipient conflict and may be used as a warning sign in conflict prevention and early warning strategies. However, rape and other forms of sexual violence often go unreported. By the time they start showing up in data, tensions and conflict may already be quite far advanced.

Common indicators of small arms-related sexual violence include

- a) arms bearers undertake house raids and searches, particularly where women are alone in the home;
- b) ex-militias (particularly from groups with a history of sexual violence) recently-integrated into armed forces abscond/desert with their small arms;
- c) infiltration of refugee, internally displaced or transit camps by arms bearers and proliferation of small arms in such camps;
- d) mass displacement due to insecurity or emergency, particularly where displaced women are compelled to pass ad hoc checkpoints controlled by arms bearers;
- e) heightened fear expressed by women / girls, including reports of threats of a sexual nature by arms bearers; and
- f) reports of disappearance of girls while traveling to or from school, in areas where arms bearers are present (often linked with abductions).

6.3.2.5 Indirect effects of armed conflict and violence

Non-combatants of both sexes and of all ages suffer immensely from the indirect consequences of armed conflict, such as reduced access to food, clean water and shelter, as well as to essential social services such as healthcare and education.

Non-combatant women and girls are especially affected. The indirect impacts of armed conflict include death and disability linked to pregnancy and childbirth (due to disrupted delivery of reproductive health services), as well as the spread of sexually transmitted disease through rape.

Both during and after armed conflict, women and girls are exposed to many forms of gender-based violence as direct and indirect consequences of the availability and misuse of small arms and light weapons — including rape, forced pregnancy, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, enforced prostitution, sexual servitude / slavery and forced sterilization, as well as secondary violence against survivors of sexual violence, such as so-called ‘honour killing’ and disfigurement.

Women are also disproportionately affected by the social and economic impacts of armed conflict. During wartime, the responsibilities of women increase when their male relatives are on the battlefield. The economic burden of supporting their families or becoming full-time caregivers falls on women when male relatives are killed, injured or disabled. Widows and single women who have lost their husband, father or brother can become more vulnerable to gender-based violence.

Most of the world's displaced people are women, children and the elderly. In refugee camps, displaced women must contend with armed violence as they care for their families. Forced displacement, militarization of refugee camps and the withdrawal of humanitarian assistance from areas affected by armed violence has a severe impact on access to basic services for those most in need.

Following conflict, the negative impacts of small arms and light weapons on society persist. Refugees and internally displaced people — mainly women, children and the elderly — are often reluctant to return to their homes due to ongoing violence and the large number of weapons still in the hands of the population. Post-conflict communities may also feel the need to arm themselves due to ongoing feelings of insecurity.

7 Guiding principles for mainstreaming gender in small arms control

7.1 General

Gender-sensitive small arms control initiatives — whether they be at the level of legislation, policy, programme or project — are simply more effective in addressing the adverse impacts of the illicit trade and misuse of small arms and light weapons than those that do not take a gender perspective into account. As such, ensuring that gender is adequately integrated into all stages of a small arms control initiative is essential to assuring its overall quality.

7.2 Engage early with expertise on gender

From the earliest stages of assessment, strategy-setting and programme design, organisations specialising in gender equality, women's organisations and gender specialists should be included in the planning and design of small arms control initiatives, and later in their implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

7.3 Build consensus among stakeholders

A shared understanding of the important role that gender plays in relation to small arms and light weapons, and their very different impacts on women and men, is a basic precondition for the sustainable integration of gender perspectives into small arms control initiatives. All stakeholders should share this understanding and should be committed to pursuing gender-sensitive approaches.

Trainings on gender sensitivity, gender mainstreaming and gender analysis (using sex-disaggregated data), as well as long-term mentoring, should be conducted as needed to build a strong consensus on this issue among all stakeholders.

In order to demonstrate that such a commitment exists, a formal statement in support of gender equality should be included in the project / programme document, together with details of how a gender-sensitive approach will be pursued with the aim of achieving results for women and men.

Reticence and tensions can exist at various levels of society regarding women's rights and gender-sensitive work. Organizations proposing gender-sensitive approaches that promote women's leadership should

- a) do no harm (i.e. not expose women to intolerable levels of risk);
- b) be committed to maintaining their presence for long enough to develop a sustainable national / local capacity to engage in gender-responsive small arms control initiatives; and
- c) be ready to address any negative consequences that may arise, e.g. in the form of attempts to undermine such approaches by sectors of society who feel that their traditional power or status is threatened by them.

In settings in which there is resistance to accepting and acting upon gender perspectives, it can be useful to frame gender-sensitive approaches to small arms control within a broader human security and human rights framework.

7.4 Collect and use sex- and age-disaggregated data

7.4.1 General

Data disaggregated by sex and age is a prerequisite for understanding the gender-specific impacts of small arms misuse and for designing evidence-based, gender-responsive initiatives to address them. Without the benefit of accurate information on the different risks that small arms present to women and men and their specific security needs, small arms control interventions risk being gender-blind, which may hamper their ability to achieve results that are beneficial to women and girls.

NOTE For further guidance on data collection in relation to small arms control, see ISACS 05.10, *Conducting small arms and light weapons surveys*.

7.4.2 Gender-sensitive surveys

Small arms and light weapons surveys shall collect sex- and age-disaggregated data and include gender-focused questions.

Gender expertise, which may be provided by the government ministry responsible for women's affairs, national women's rights organizations and/or equivalent experts, should play a role in the design of surveys, the training of survey staff and the gender-sensitive analysis of survey results.

Survey teams should include gender specialists. All survey staff, including surveyors, quality assurance officers, analysts and managers, should receive basic gender training. Surveyors, in particular, should receive in-depth training on conducting interviews on sensitive, gender-related issues including, but not limited to, armed sexual violence.

Female surveyors or female survey teams may be used to interview women, girls and young boys. Survey protocols should include separate focus groups for women, men, girls and boys.

Local women and gender-focused civil society groups may help to raise awareness of and understanding about the survey process and may also facilitate the organization of interviews.

NOTE For further guidance, see ISACS 05.10, *Conducting small arms and light weapons surveys*.

7.4.3 Ethical considerations

The highly sensitive nature of gender-based violence, and especially violence against women, poses a unique set of challenges for any data-gathering activity that touches on these issues.

The full range of ethical and safety issues shall be considered and addressed prior to the commencement of any data-gathering activity. Failure to do so can result in harm to the physical, psychological and social wellbeing of those who participate and can even put lives at risk.

In applicable circumstances, the following guidelines shall be applied:

Researching Violence Against Women: A Practical Guide for Researchers and Activists, World Health Organization and Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH)

Putting women first: Ethical and safety recommendations for research on domestic violence against women, World Health Organization.

WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies, World Health Organization.

WHO ethical and safety recommendations for interviewing trafficked women, World Health Organization.

IDDRS 05.10, *Women, Gender and DDR*

7.5 Conduct a gender analysis

Gender analysis is the indispensable starting-point for mainstreaming gender into small arms and light weapons control initiatives. The first step in a mainstreaming strategy is the assessment of how and why gender differences and inequalities are relevant to efforts to control small arms and light weapons. Without gender analysis, gender mainstreaming is not possible.

The purpose of gender analysis is to reveal the connections between gender relations and the misuse of small arms. As such, it can be a powerful tool in helping to build consensus among stakeholders (see Clause 7.3) and in helping to design gender-responsive small arms control initiatives.

Small arms control initiatives that are gender-blind or profess to be gender-neutral are likely to reinforce existing inequalities between men and women. Gender analysis brings such inequalities to the surface so that small arms control initiatives can be responsive to the different needs of women and men and deliver equivalent results for both sexes.

NOTE 1 In some areas of small arms control — e.g. conducting surveys (ISACS 05.10), collecting weapons (ISACS 05.40) or strengthening community safety (ISACS 04.20) — gender considerations are highly significant and play a determining role in outcomes. In other areas — e.g. marking and recordkeeping (ISACS 05.30) or stockpile management (ISACS 05.20) — they may be less significant and constitute rather a set of factors to be weighed with others.

NOTE 2 For further guidance, see “How to Conduct a Gender Analysis” (UNDP, 2016).

7.6 Address identified gender patterns

Gender analysis conducted on the basis of sex- and age-disaggregated data should reveal specific gender patterns in relation to the use, misuse and effects of small arms, as well as in relation to obstacles that may exist to the participation of women in initiatives to control small arms. Some of these patterns may reflect, more or less, those set out in Clause 5, and some may be specific to the context in question. Either way, initiatives to control small arms shall address identified gender patterns and shall take concrete steps to respond to them.

7.7 Support the meaningful participation of women

Small arms and light weapons control is not the exclusive domain of men. Women should participate meaningfully in all aspects of control initiatives, from assessments and design, through planning and implementation, to monitoring and evaluation; and women’s participation should permeate all levels, including policymaking, programming and budgeting.

At the level of policymaking, the composition of the national coordinating mechanism on small arms and light weapons control should be gender-balanced, in accordance with Clause 7.4.1 of ISACS 03.40, *National coordinating mechanisms on small arms and light weapons*.

Working at the international, regional, national and local level, women can play leading roles in all aspects of preventing the illicit trade, uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons and in assisting the victims of small arms violence. The representative participation of women in initiatives to prevent conflict and control small arms and light weapons shall be made a priority.

7.8 Track progress using gender-sensitive indicators

The aim of a small arms control initiative is to increase the general security of people — women, men, girls and boys — by reducing the illicit trade, uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms. The monitoring and evaluation of such initiatives shall verify that

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- a) gender-specific risks to females and males have been adequately and equitably addressed;
- b) women and men participate in all aspects of the initiative — design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation — in a balanced and equitable manner; and
- c) the benefits of the initiative are shared equally among women and men.

To help achieve this, indicators referring to individuals, used for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation, shall be disaggregated according to sex.

EXAMPLE Instead of “number of key-informants consulted during the small arms survey,” the indicator should be “number of female and male key-informants consulted during the small arms survey.”

NOTE For further guidance, see Annex B, *Gender-responsive small arms and light weapons programme indicators*.

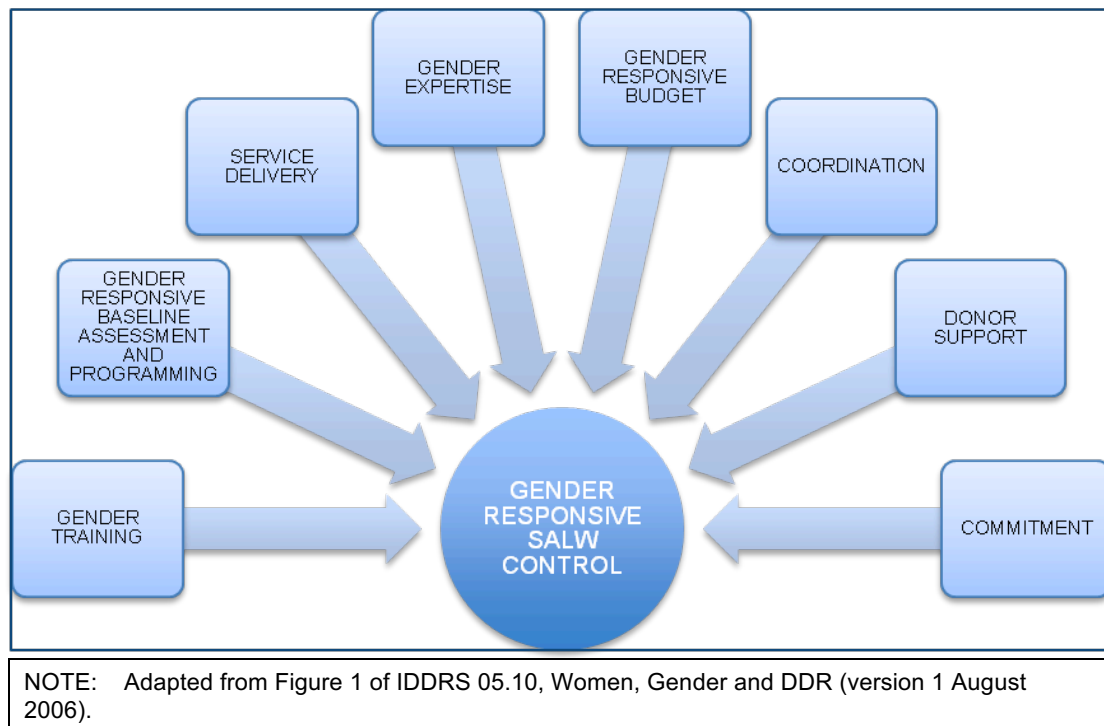
If the monitoring of sex-disaggregated indicators shows an imbalance in the participation of or benefits accruing to women and men, corrective action shall be taken to redress the imbalance, which may involve including more women by removing obstacles to their active engagement.

8 Gender considerations in programming

8.1 Gender-responsive small arms and light weapons control

Gender-responsive small arms and light weapons control should include the following key elements:

- a) programme and government commitment to relevant global and regional small arms and light weapons control agreements, including those elements specifically designed to address gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- b) local ownership at all levels;
- c) donor support;
- d) coordination mechanisms that ensure the full participation of women and women’s organizations, in accordance with ISACS 03.40, *National coordinating mechanisms on small arms and light weapons control*, as well as UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1899 (2009);
- e) gender-sensitive baseline assessments and programme design;
- f) gender training for government officials, service providers, media and civil society;
- g) gender-responsive budgets;
- h) gender expertise (e.g. provided by gender specialists, female leaders, representatives of women’s groups, men working to combat gender-based violence, etc.); and
- i) appropriate service delivery to women as well as men.

Figure 1 – Key elements of gender-responsive small arms and light weapons control

8.2 Regional and national policy development

National action plans on small arms and light weapons control (see ISACS 04.10) should be integrated into broader national development and poverty reduction strategies, peacebuilding efforts and human security frameworks, throughout which gender and age sensitivity should be mainstreamed.

Regional and national policy development processes on small arms and light weapons control should be informed by gender expertise (see Clause 7.2), which may be accessed through consultation with female and male gender specialists and with women's and men's groups working to eradicate gender-based violence.

Regional and national policy development processes shall ensure a balanced representation of women and men in the teams responsible for the assessment, drafting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of small arms and light weapons control efforts.

8.3 National coordinating mechanisms

Comprehensive guidance on national coordinating mechanisms on small arms and light weapons control is provided in ISACS 03.40.

National coordinating mechanisms should be gender balanced, should promote women's participation and leadership and should include

- a) the government ministry responsible for women's affairs;
- b) civil society organisations, especially women's groups and men's groups working to eradicate gender-based violence (either as invited experts or through public consultation);
- c) the domestic / family violence unit of the police force (if one exists); and
- d) female parliamentarians.

8.4 Making the link with human trafficking

Trafficking in small arms and light weapons is often linked to other types of trafficking, including in human beings, drugs, precious minerals, etc. Women, girls and young boys constitute the majority of victims of human trafficking and traffickers sometimes use women as smuggling agents.

While addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons,

- a) the close links between different kinds of trafficking should be taken into consideration, and cooperation between relevant sectors, as well as between relevant States, established;
- b) collaboration, consultation and engagement with the social and economic development sectors, as well as with civil society organizations, should be developed in order to address the needs of those drawn into trafficking networks as a survival strategy;
- c) well targeted income generating programmes should be considered as they may be effective in preventing arms smuggling;
- d) testimonies of trafficked women, men, girls and boys, anecdotal evidence and qualitative data should be used in the formulation of anti-trafficking policies and action plans;
- e) collaboration with women's organizations should be encouraged, in particular with those with expertise in designing and implementing community-level trafficking prevention and victim assistance programmes (this can also help to improve services to trafficked women and girls identified at borders);
- f) male and female border control personnel, especially border police and customs officers, should be trained to identify and interview victims of human trafficking (civil society organizations that specialize in gender issues may assist with such training);

NOTE For further guidance, see ISACS 05.60, *Border controls and law enforcement cooperation*.

8.5 Weapons collection and destruction

During weapons collection programmes, women can play an important role in persuading their partners, children and family members to relinquish small arms, or may hand them in on behalf of partners or relatives who fear legal reprisals (e.g. in the absence of a legal amnesty). Weapons collection programmes should plan for and encourage the handing in of weapons by women.

Local women should be consulted when planning for the collection of small arms and light weapons, since they can provide useful information on the prevalence of weapons and on security considerations to be addressed before the collection process begins.

The opinions, roles and needs of local women should be considered when incentives are being developed to boost participation in the collection process.

Information and awareness-raising campaigns on weapons collection should include strategies targeting participation by women.

Collection campaigns should also address factors linked to dominant norms of masculinity that can fuel demand for small arms among men, especially young men.

Women, especially those who have survived small arms-related violence, who have lost partners or family members to such violence, or who care for survivors of such violence, may be given priority in employment opportunities and other incentives related to a weapons collection process. Since the households of such women may still contain small arms or light weapons previously used by their deceased or injured male partners or family members, care shall be taken to include them in the awareness-raising and weapons collection process.

Civil society organizations promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women should be encouraged to

- a) run awareness campaigns in support of voluntary weapons collection programmes, with a focus on women, youth and the mobilization of other civil society groups;
- b) participate in weapons collection as intermediaries between communities and State security officials;
- c) provide public information on weapons amnesties and on incentives to hand in weapons, and raise awareness in order to boost the collection campaign;
- d) strengthen confidence in weapons destruction processes by raising awareness of their benefits and by participating in and officially monitoring public destruction events;

NOTE For comprehensive guidance on small arms and light weapons collection and destruction, see

- ISACS 05.40, *Collection of illicit and unwanted small arms and light weapons*; and
- ISACS 05.50, *Destruction: Weapons*.

8.6 International small arms transfers

ISACS 03.20 and 03.21 provide gender-sensitive guidance on national controls over the international transfer of small arms and/or light weapons, and over the end-use of such weapons, respectively.

When evaluating a request for authorisation to export small arms or light weapons, the risk of their being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children shall be taken into account. Where such a risk is found to be significant, the export shall not be authorised.

If, after an authorization has been granted, an exporting State becomes aware of new relevant information related to the violations set out in the previous paragraph, it should reassess the export authorization after consultations, if appropriate, with the importing State.

8.7 Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants should be conducted in a gender-sensitive manner, in accordance with the Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS), especially IDDRS 05.10 on *Women, Gender and DDR*.

NOTE UN Security Council Resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 all make reference to the need to include women and to take into account their specific needs during DDR processes.

8.8 Legislative reform

Efforts to reform national legislation related to small arms and light weapons should include gender expertise and shall include women and men in the teams responsible for the assessment, drafting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such legislation.

If not involved in the drafting process, all relevant government ministries, departments and agencies – e.g. those responsible for youth, women’s affairs, health, education, judiciary, social affairs, agriculture, wildlife, sport, the interior, urban planning, etc. – should be consulted on the drafts and should provide technical expertise, including on aspects related to gender.

Officials involved in legislative reform should be made aware of the gender aspects of small arms issues through training.

Legislative reform processes should include a focus on the gender aspects of legislation related to small arms and light weapons and should ensure, for example, that no law allows for discrimination and violence against women.

Legislation related to small arms and light weapons should be harmonized with other relevant legislation. For example, it should be harmonized with legislation designed to prevent intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence.

Gender-focused civil society groups, such as women's associations, youth groups and men's groups working to combat gender-based violence, should be granted full participation in the assessment, design and review of legislation on small arms and light weapons.

Citizens, and especially marginalized groups that may include female and male victims of gender-based violence, shall be made aware of their rights and how these are affected by changes in legislation. Civil society, service providers and the media have an important role to play in this regard. Information and training should also be provided to government agencies about the gender aspects of new legislation and policies related to small arms and light weapons.

In order to ensure that the gender aspects of national legislation are properly implemented, law enforcement officials, judiciary and other relevant service providers should receive targeted and tailored gender training. The need for female and male personnel at certain key posts should be assessed and acted upon.

Monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of small arms and light weapons legislation should involve all relevant government ministries, departments and agencies, as well as civil society organizations. Government agencies or civil society may provide the gender expertise required to design gender-sensitive monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Women- and gender-focused civil society organizations should take an active role in collecting evidence to measure the implementation and impact, and to identify unforeseen positive and negative effects, of legislative mechanisms related to controlling small arms and light weapons.

8.9 Peace education, community participation and awareness-raising

8.9.1 General

The design of small arms and light weapons control initiatives related to peace education, community participation, risk education and awareness raising shall, in each individual context,

- a) be informed by an understanding of the gendered impacts of small arms ownership, proliferation and misuse;
- b) integrate sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender analysis in the assessment; and
- c) take into consideration the different needs and roles of women, men, girls and boys.

Such initiatives should, in each individual context,

- d) be based on a well researched understanding of the different roles played by men and women in all aspects of small arms and light weapons control;
- e) take into account gendered security perceptions, attitudes and behaviors towards small arms and light weapons;
- f) target different groups based their knowledge, attitudes and behaviours in relation to small arms and light weapons and based on their influence on other groups; and
- g) recognize the importance of and support local initiatives, including the peacebuilding and violence prevention activities of grass-roots citizen's organizations, many of which are led by women and youth.

8.9.2 The role of women's groups

Women's civil society organisations should be key participants in initiatives to control small arms and light weapons. They can provide important gender relevant inputs for small arms control policies and projects and facilitate the integration of a gender perspective. They can work to address social problems caused by small arms, for example by acting as counsellors to assist victims of small arms violence, or by creating grass-roots community initiatives to protect children in gang-infested areas.

Women's groups should participate both in long-term efforts to build peace education, non-violent conflict resolution capacities and tolerance, as well as in shorter-term efforts designed to raise awareness of the dangers associated with the possession and use of small arms. They should also participate in the oversight, monitoring and evaluation of small arms and light weapons control efforts.

8.9.3 The role of men's groups

When designing peace education programmes and building capacity for armed violence prevention, it is essential to take into account that small arms are often closely linked to identity, culture, and traditional perceptions of masculinity (see Clause 6.2.2).

From the male perspective, this includes trying to understand men's motivation to own, use and misuse small arms, and trying to overcome the socially constructed gender stereotypes that link firearms ownership, use and misuse with masculinity.

Men have an essential role to play in engaging other men (especially marginalised young men and those at risk of marginalisation) in constructive dialogue related to how they have been socialised to understand masculinity in certain ways and how this can be detrimental to themselves, to women in their lives (be they partners, mothers, sisters, daughters or co-workers) and to the overall development potential of their communities, societies and countries.

Male-led initiatives that oppose violence against women and that promote gender equality, the empowerment of women, and positive, non-violent expressions of masculinity can provide alternative role models for men and challenge traditional conceptions of masculinity and strict gender roles that discriminate against women. Such initiatives should be supported and integrated into existing efforts to control small arms and light weapons.

8.9.4 The role of the media

Small arms pervade many types of media that are expressly targeted at young men, including on television and in films, video games and music videos. A growing body of evidence suggests a link between violence depicted in media and real world violence.

Young men are the main consumers of violent movies, in which small arms are often the chosen instruments of violence. Young men are also the main consumers of music that glorifies violence and of video games that immerse the player in violent, armed scenarios.

The media have a strong influence on attitudes towards small arms and gender stereotypes. Media support for small arms and light weapons control efforts may be enhanced by sensitising journalists to the gender-specific impacts of small arms and light weapons possession and misuse. Relevant topics for such awareness-raising should include:

- a) human rights and, specifically, women's rights;
- b) global norms and international instruments on gender, armed violence and small arms and light weapons control;
- c) the different impacts of armed violence on men and women; and
- d) local, national and regional initiatives and achievements in the area of small arms and light weapons control, including the role that women have played in them.

The broadcasting of violence — including armed violence, violence against women and sexual violence — on television and its depiction in film and in video games should be regulated. Programmes that promote tolerance, non-violent expressions of masculinity, gender equality and non-violent conflict resolution should be promoted.

8.10 Survivor assistance

8.10.1 General

A survivor is a person who has been physically injured, intimidated, or brutalized through violence perpetrated with a small arm or light weapon.

Survivors include women and men who have suffered harm, including physical or mental injury (violently acquired impairments), emotional suffering, economic loss, or substantial diminution of their fundamental rights due to the misuse of small arms and light weapons.

A victim is a person who has died as a result of injuries inflicted with a small arm or light weapon.

Survivor assistance includes emergency and continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological and social support, access to justice and economic reintegration.

8.10.2 Caring for survivors

The responsibility of caring for a person who has been injured with a small arm typically falls to women and girls — mothers, wives, sisters, daughters, partners. This can limit their opportunities to engage in educational and economic activities and can contribute to the deterioration of their own health.

Enormous strains can be placed upon family members and communities, particularly women and girls, who become frontline providers of largely unpaid and unrecognized care in settings where services are weak or cost-prohibitive. In contexts where women provide the bulk of care, households in poverty or financial stress may become more pressured, exacerbated by the unequal earning power of men and women.

8.10.3 Female-headed households

Gun violence results in more female-headed households due to the disproportionate number of men being killed, or impaired in ways that preclude paid employment. Livelihood stress can also negatively affect the education of children and young people, with many dropping out of school or engaging in risk-taking behaviour (e.g. drug couriership or sex work) to contribute to household income. Male unemployment can also be an exacerbating factor in violence against women.

8.10.4 Psycho-social support

Injuries and disability sustained through small arms violence are associated with psychological problems. However, in many settings, psycho-social intervention or the provision of mental health programming is inhibited by social custom, perceptions about the roles of men and women and their (gendered) capacity to withstand trauma, and inhibition on the part of those experiencing guilt for surviving armed violence.

8.10.5 Economic reintegration

Priority may be given to female and male survivors of small arms violence in livelihood schemes (e.g. vocational training, employment, etc.), in particular when these relate to survivor assistance and small arms and light weapons control.

Survivor assistance should encompass public awareness and education in order to prevent and fight discrimination against survivors of small arms violence, especially when they attempt to re-integrate into the workforce.

8.10.6 Survivors as agents of change

Male and female survivors can be powerful agents of change in addressing the misuse of small arms and light weapons. Those that wish to should be supported in taking on advocacy roles in support of effective small arms and light weapons control. Associations of survivors should receive support to strengthen their service delivery, advocacy and management capacities.

NOTE For further guidance on survivor assistance, see ISACS 02.10, *Small arms and light weapons control in the context of preventing armed violence*.

9 Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Government

The primary responsibility for the control of small arms and light weapons lies with the government of the State in question.

It is also the primary responsibility of the government to ensure that gender equality and the empowerment of women are mainstreamed across all government departments and that women and men — especially those in decision-making positions — are included in gender-related awareness-raising, education, advocacy, and capacity building initiatives.

The responsibility for small arms control should be vested in a national coordination body, in accordance with ISACS 03.40, *National coordinating mechanisms on small arms and light weapons*. In order to ensure that gender perspectives are fully integrated, the national coordinating mechanism should

- a) include the government department(s) responsible for women's affairs, as well as for health, education and social policy;
- b) include civil society organizations that work on gender and women's issues;
- c) ensure that small arms and light weapons control issues, in particular those affecting demand, are analyzed and addressed from a gender perspective;
- d) ensure that national strategies and action plans on small arms and light weapons control incorporate the gender-specific guidance provided by ISACS 04.10, *Designing and implementing national action plans*;
- e) ensure women's equal and full participation in decision-making on small arms and light weapons control, including by co-opting competent female experts from civil society groups;
- f) initiate capacity building activities aimed at strengthening women's knowledge of small arms and light weapons control;
- g) ensure that both men and women are able to express their views and perspectives on small arms and light weapons control freely, including through public dialogue, consultations, polls and surveys;
- h) provide, where possible, financial and technical assistance to civil society groups, in particular those working on gender and women's issues, in order to build their capacity to undertake advocacy, violence prevention, peace-building, education, tolerance and victim assistance programmes in support of small arms and light weapons control;
- i) where relevant, address young men as a group that is particularly vulnerable to engaging in and being victimised by armed violence, including by supporting educational, employment, sporting and artistic opportunities for low-income young men, and by promoting non-violent models of masculinity;

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- j) ensure that law enforcement officials are accountable for the safety, security and appropriate use of their state-owned weapons, especially when off duty, and that they comply with the United Nations Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials.
- k) train police on their roles and responsibilities under relevant national law regarding the presence and use of small arms in the context of intimate partner and domestic / family-related violence, including, where relevant, informing victims of their rights, e.g. regarding protection orders, firearms seizure, etc.;
- l) integrate a gender perspective into the process of issuing and renewing small arms licences to civilians, in accordance with ISACS 03.30, *National regulation of civilian access to small arms and light weapons*, in particular its Clause 9.2;
- m) contribute to raising public awareness of the risks associated with the possession, proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, especially in the context of campaigns to prevent intimate partner- and domestic / family-related violence and to promote a culture of peace, in accordance with ISACS 04.30, *Awareness-raising*;
- n) include gender aspects of small arms and light weapons control when reporting on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, in accordance with ISACS 04.40, *Monitoring, evaluation and reporting*; and
- o) provide sufficient budget allocations for the implementation of the above-mentioned initiatives. In order to achieve this, gender responsive budgeting should be fully integrated in all policy stages.

9.2 Civil society

Civil society involvement in small arms and light weapons control is key to local ownership, provides invaluable insights into the problem and increases support for control efforts. Civil society organisations specialising in gender can enhance gender-responsive small arms and light weapons control efforts in myriad ways, including by

- a) lobbying for and providing gender-responsive advice in policy development;
- b) monitoring the implementation of international, regional, national and local policies on gender mainstreaming and gender equality as they relate to small arms and light weapons control;
- c) promoting women's political participation, decision-making and leadership within the small arms and light weapons policy arena;
- d) providing capacity building on gender and security issues, facilitating dialogue and negotiation between local communities and government institutions, and raising public awareness of small arms and light weapons control process and activities;
- e) working with survivors, perpetrators and affected communities to address the demand for small arms and light weapons, as well as the detrimental impact of their misuse;
- f) having a role in conducting gender-sensitive surveys and assessments on issues related to small arms and light weapons;
- g) ensuring that the specific concerns of men and women are voiced at local, national and international levels; and
- h) being instrumental, as surveyors and respondents, in the conduct of small arms and light weapons surveys (see ISACS 05.10) and in weapons collections and destruction processes, where their involvement can foster a sense of trust and confidence among men and women.

Women's organisations, in particular, can contribute by

- i) raising awareness of the risks associated with the possession proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, contributing to public debate and lobbying for change in a country's policies related to small arms and light weapons;
- j) influencing in the home and in the community by encouraging their children, partners and other family members to turn in illicit and unwanted small arms and light weapons;
- k) initiating and participating in community forums on small arms control to ensure that local leaders, representatives of international organizations and others hear the views and perspectives of women;
- l) lobbying national governments to sign international treaties related to small arms and light weapons and to implement their commitments under those treaties;
- m) designing innovative programmes and projects that provide community incentives for former combatants, including female fighters, to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate into their communities;
- n) encouraging ex-combatants to lay down arms and participate in weapons-collection programs, and ensure that they benefit from any incentives provided for such activities;
- o) ensuring that women's participation and expertise is actively drawn on in decisions related to small arms control processes, transitional justice strategies, and the formation of legislative / decision-making forums; and
- p) ensuring that women are involved in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of initiative to control small arms and light weapons.

9.3 Regional organizations

Since small arms and light weapons can cross borders easily, regional approaches, including coordination and harmonization of laws and practices, are vital for effective small arms and light weapons control. Regional organizations play an important role in building consensus and momentum and in advancing regional and global norms on small arms and light weapons control.

The illicit trade and misuse of small arms and light weapons present different problems in different regions, and States have varying levels of financial and material resources at their disposal to respond to these problems. Regional initiatives and region-wide approaches can help States both to gather the necessary financial support and to share technical resources.

In developing and implementing regional approaches to small arms and light weapons control, regional organizations should

- a) base their policy development on a gender-sensitive assessment of the impact of small arms and light weapons on men, women, boys and girls;
- b) initiate and promote a systematic approach to gathering sex- and age-disaggregated data on the direct and indirect impacts of the misuse of small arms and light weapons;
- c) ensure women's participation in policy development, decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes; and
- d) connect the knowledge and experience of relevant civil society groups from the region, in particular those working on gender and women's issues, through conferences, exchanges, training programmes, etc. and encourage and support regional networks of civil society organizations, including women's groups.

Regional organizations may also

- e) encourage the establishment of regional observatories on small arms and light weapons proliferation and misuse and promote their linkage with other regional observatories and with observatories at national and/or local levels, including those focusing on gender and women's issues; and

NOTE Existing regional or sub-regional observatories may benefit from integrating small arms and light weapons control, including its gendered aspects, into their work. An early warning system, for example, could benefit from being able to tap into the knowledge of women's groups about possible flash points and weapons flows. An observatory on urban youth violence may benefit from the knowledge of urban girls' associations on factors that trigger violence and the acquisition of small arms, as well as the patterns of small arms circulation in their communities;

- f) provide technical assistance and financial resources to build the capacities of States in the region to address gender aspects of small arms and light weapons control.

9.4 The United Nations

All of the organizations that make up the United Nations system, including Funds, Programmes and Specialized Agencies, are mandated to support the achievement of gender equality.

Organizations of the UN system involved in small arms and light weapons control shall integrate gender considerations into all stages of information gathering, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of small arms and light weapons projects and programmes and should

- a) highlight the impact of the uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons on other programmatic areas covered by the United Nations;
- b) encourage and support the integration into gender-specific UN programming of small arms and light weapons control;
- c) promote the systematic collection and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data related to small arms and light weapons misuse and use it to carry out gender analyses of the problem;
- d) mainstream gender at the operational level into small arms and light weapons project design and assist national coordinating mechanisms to mainstream gender into their National Action Plans on small arms and light weapons control;
- e) encourage and support the participation in small arms and light weapons control efforts at the global, regional, national and local levels of civil society organizations; especially those dealing with gender, youth and women's issues;
- f) ensure that their budgets include sufficient resources for training on gender issues in order to build the capacity of their staff on gender aspects of small arms and light weapons control;
- g) ensure a coherent and coordinated approach to their work on small arms and light weapons control through the UN Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) mechanism;
- h) share and disseminate sex- and age-disaggregated data related to small arms and light weapons across the UN system and with partners at the global, regional, national and local levels;
- i) include qualitative and quantitative information on gender aspects of small arms and light weapons control in relevant reports and recommendations on policy and operational issues; and
- j) provide technical assistance to States in order to enhance their capacity to integrate a gender perspective into their legislative and policy frameworks on small arms and light weapons control.

9.5 Donors

Donors have an important role to play in supporting national small arms and light weapons control efforts, particularly in low-income settings and in countries recovering from armed conflict. Donors, together with international organizations and civil society should

- a) encourage governments to accede to international agreements related to women's human rights and/or assist them in meeting their obligations under such agreements, which include the
 - 1) UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
 - 2) UN Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 on *Women and peace and security*;
 - 3) UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;
 - 4) Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which outlines steps governments should take to protect women from gender-based violence;
 - 5) Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women; and
 - 6) Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa
- b) ensure that the small arms and light weapons control initiatives that they support fully integrate gender issues and that women fully participate in them;
- c) ensure that relevant staff in the international development and foreign affairs ministries possess the requisite gender expertise;
- d) support further research on gender and small arms and light weapons control.

Donors may also provide capacity-building support, either as part of comprehensive security sector reform or on an ad hoc basis, to address issues identified by a small arms and light weapons control gender assessment, for example by

- e) training law enforcement officials, including on gender issues related to small arms misuse, or
- f) developing judicial systems, including by increasing their capacity to address gender-based violence.

Annex A
(informative)

UNDP Eight-Point Agenda for Gender Equality in Crisis Prevention

Practical, positive outcomes for girls and women in crisis

A.1 Strengthen women's security in crisis: Stop violence against women

- a) Violence against women is an affront to the foundations of human rights, human decency and human dignity.
- b) Rape and sexual violence are not collateral damage: they are methods of war. Perpetrators of these war crimes must be held accountable – by their communities, governments and by the international community.
- c) Violence against women also impedes progress in poverty eradication, combating HIV/AIDS, and peace and security.
- d) Men and boys have a critical role to play in reversing the pandemic of violence against women.

A.2 Advance gender justice: Provide justice and security for women

- a) Laws to protect women's rights must be included and enforced within legal frameworks.
- b) Women must know their rights and be able to access legal systems, e.g. through free legal services.
- c) Custom, tradition or religious beliefs should never serve to excuse or justify violence against women.

A.3 Expand women's citizenship, participation and leadership: Advance women as decision-makers

- a) Women need the skills and confidence to influence the decisions that directly affect their lives, including through direct participation in government and the security sector.
- b) Women are often denied access to business transactions and excluded from negotiations surrounding land titles. Legislation needs to change to allow women to access business and land ownership.
- c) Women need to be represented in social, political and economic spheres, giving them a voice in the peace and recovery processes.

A.4 Build peace with and for women: Involve women in all peace processes

- a) Women must be involved in all stages of the peace and recovery processes, including as high-level negotiators in peace talks.
- b) Peace agreements offer opportunities for inclusiveness, democratic reform and gender equality. These opportunities must be seized.
- c) Gender provisions must be included in peace agreements and given priority as agreements are implemented.

A.5 Promote gender equality in disaster risk reduction: Support women and men to build back better

- a) Women's unique needs must be incorporated in analyses of disaster risk and post disaster risk assessments.
- b) As community structures crumble and violence escalates, steps must be taken to prevent the increased vulnerability of women and girls.
- c) Women's economic potential goes unrealized, as their interests are not factored into the recovery effort. For example, cash-for-work schemes often do not specifically target women-headed households.
- d) Temporary housing often denies women privacy, increases their vulnerability to exploitation and discrimination and marginalizes widows. This has an effect on the well being of women and children.
- e) Women's experience and knowledge must be valued and incorporated in any plans or policies.

A.6 Ensure gender-responsive recovery: Promote women as leaders of recovery

- a) Women must be given equal opportunities to livelihoods, including access to land and credit. Rebuilding in key sectors such as transportation, shelter and health care must specifically benefit women.

A.7 Transform government to deliver for women: Include women's issues on the national agenda

- b) Women need to be engaged in decision-making on government budgets and resource mobilization.
- c) Incentives need be offered to public institutions that address women's needs.

A.8 Develop capacities for social change: Work together to transform society

- a) Women organizations and networks need to be strengthened to ensure responsiveness and accountability on gender issues.

- b) Men need to be educated to promote gender equality and support women's empowerment.

Achievement of this Eight- Point Agenda will require

- a) supporting full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325;
- b) incorporating gender equality priorities into advocacy and strategic planning in the development, humanitarian, peace, and security spheres;
- c) strengthening human resources, policies and programmes to ensure responsiveness and accountability on gender issues;
- d) building partnerships to maximize impact on gender priorities;
- e) developing gender-responsive funding mechanisms and resource mobilization strategies;
- f) supporting data collection that counts women, counts what women value, and values what women count; and
- g) advancing intellectual leadership, knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation on gender and crisis prevention and recovery (CPR) issues.

Annex B (informative)

Gender-responsive small arms and light weapons programme indicators

B.1 General

Comprehensive, gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation of small arms and light weapons control and armed violence reduction programmes is necessary to determine the impact of policies and interventions on men, women, boys and girls, including unforeseen positive and negative effects, and to identify lessons learned.

B.2 Gender-responsive interventions

Key questions to ensure that small arms and light weapons control interventions are gender-responsive may include:

- a) How are the particular needs of women and girls and of marginalized men and boys addressed?
- b) Are there activities to increase the participation of women in planned interventions?
- c) Are there specific indicators to monitor gender-related objectives and the impact of gender activities?
- d) Are funds earmarked for gender objectives, activities and outputs?
- e) Has gender expertise been made available in the design of the intervention?
- f) Are women's organizations and those working on gender issues included as partners?
- g) Are the needs for interventions to reduce small arms violence in the home, and to prevent armed gender-based violence identified and addressed?

B.3 Gender-responsive monitoring and evaluation process

B.3.1 Gender mainstreaming

Key questions to ensure that the monitoring and evaluation process of small arms and light weapons control interventions are gender-responsive may include:

- a) Do monitoring and evaluation staff have the capacity to integrate gender issues?
- b) Is monitoring and evaluation of sex and age data disaggregated? Does monitoring and evaluation address specific gender aspects, like gender roles and gender-based violence and trafficking?

- c) Have gender-related objectives, indicators and benchmarks been met? If not, what is being done about it?
- d) Are field research teams adequately staffed and trained to collect information from men and women?
- e) What is/was the overall impact of the intervention on men, women, boys and girls? For example, is there a mechanism in place to monitor if survey respondents have been exposed to reprisals for participating in the process?
- f) What good and bad practice related to gender issues can be identified? How can this feed into future programming?
- g) How are the results of the evaluation communicated to men and women involved in the process and to affected communities? Is there a mechanism to collect their feedback to the results?

B.3.2 Promoting the equal participation of women and men

- a) Do men and women participate equally in monitoring and evaluation?
- b) Are specific measures taken as part of the monitoring and evaluation process to reach the marginalized groups? For example, how do survey protocols address the fear many women feel if they are approached about family violence when their partner is present?
- c) Did the intervention adequately involve men and women? Were their views incorporated into the programme?
- d) How has the programme affected participation of men and women in small arms and light weapons control process?

B.4 Gender aspects of results and process

B.4.1 General

Key indicators to measure gender aspects of intervention results and process may include:

B.4.2 Public health impacts

- a) Death and injury rates and trends related to firearms (homicide, suicide, and unintended shootings) disaggregated by sex and age.
- b) Psychological and psychosocial trauma related to armed violence disaggregated by sex and age.

B.4.3 Particular security needs, perceptions and priorities of men, women, girls and boys

- a) Relative perceptions of security and danger.
- b) Levels of fear associated with particular armed actors /groups.
- c) Level of confidence in ability of the security sector.
- d) Perceived need for small arm ownership for self-protection.
- e) Perceptions of arms availability in the community.

- f) Actual numbers of small arms in the community/country and typology of small arms owners.
- g) Number of women and girls involved in small arms and light weapons smuggling.
- h) Attitude towards small arms and light weapons possession, exhibition and use.
- i) Social customs valuing small arms use, violence and violent masculinity.
- j) Typology of gang members, including women, boys and girls.
- k) Media representation of men, women, boys and girls in relation to small arms and light weapons issues

B.4.4 Violence against boys and girls

- a) Rates of direct violence-related death and injury of boys and girls.
- b) Rates of unintentional firearm death and injury of boys and girls.
- c) Incidence of psychosocial and psychological trauma associated with small arms violence disaggregated by gender.
- d) Presence of boys and girls in fighting forces, armed groups and gangs, and their respective functions.
- e) Incidence of armed forced recruitment of boys and girls.
- f) Number men, women, boys and girls victims of trafficking networks also involved in small arms and light weapons smuggling.

B.4.5 Violence against and among men and women

- a) Firearm prevalence or use in violence against and among men and women.
- b) Rates of young men and women injured or killed through small arms violence.
- c) Incidents and typology of violence in the home in general and, specifically, involving firearms.
- d) Small arms-related intentional and unintentional death and injury rates disaggregated by gender.
- e) Psychosocial and psychological trauma associated with armed violence, including threats and small arms 'brandishing', by gender and age.
- f) Rate of successfully prosecuted gender-based violence cases.
- g) Existence of gender-based violence prevention measures.
- h) Number of men, women, boys and girls victims of trafficking networks also involved in small arms and light weapons smuggling.

B.4.6 Impacts on humanitarian and development assistance

- a) Percentage of population out of reach to humanitarian aid agencies, disaggregated by gender.
- b) Small arms-related mortality and injuries among aid workers.
- c) Armed robberies, rapes or other crimes.

- d) Psychological trauma linked to small arms violence.
- e) Perceptions of security.
- f) Perceptions of arms availability in the community.
- g) Actual number of small arms in the community.

B.4.7 Refugees and internally displaced people

- a) Incidence of firearm-related death, injury and disability among displaced people, disaggregated by sex.
- b) Armed intimidation (may require case definition) and assault among displaced people.
- c) Armed sexual violence against women and men reported or observed.
- d) Dependence of displaced populations on food aid, etc. due to insecure situation.
- e) Existence of female-specific health services and facilities in camps and their capacity to respond to armed violence injuries and trauma.

B.4.8 Governance

- a) Women's role and participation in community and local organizations and structures.
- b) Women's participation in national decision-making structures, by level.
- c) Implementation of international agreements on women's rights.
- d) Attention given to mainstreaming gender in new legislation.
- e) Women's and gender-based civil society participation in advocacy and public awareness.
- f) Capacity gaps of civil society and especially women's organizations to fully and effectively participate in small arms and light weapons control.
- g) Ratio of female staff in security institutions and the military.

B.4.9 Social

- a) Boys' and girls' enrolment rates in primary and secondary education.
- b) Increased/decreased quality and access to social services and their specific gendered implications.
- c) Women's and men's belief in fair treatment from institutions.
- d) The gender-responsiveness of existing security and justice laws, policies and institutions and improvements in gender-responsiveness (taking into account progress made).
- e) Changes in gender division of labour within the household.
- f) Changes in social attitudes to women in positions of leadership.
- g) Influence of women/men in community decision-making.
- h) Number and typology of women employed in small arms and light weapons manufacturing.

Annex C (informative)

UNDP Gender-Mainstreaming Checklist for Policy and Project Documents

Background and Justification: Is the gender dimension highlighted in background information to the intervention? Does the justification include convincing arguments for gender mainstreaming and gender equality?

Goals: Does the goal of the proposed intervention reflect the needs of both men and women? Does the goal seek to correct gender imbalances through addressing practical needs of men and women? Does the goal seek to transform the institutions (social and other) that perpetuate gender inequality?

Target Beneficiaries: Except where interventions specifically target men or women as a corrective measure to enhance gender equality, is there gender balance within the target beneficiary group?

Objectives: Do the intervention objectives address needs of both women and men?

Activities: Do planned activities involve both men and women? Are any additional activities needed to ensure that a gender perspective is explicit (e.g. training in gender issues, additional research, etc.)?

Indicators: Have indicators been developed to measure progress towards the fulfillment of each objective? Do these indicators measure the gender aspects of each objective? Are indicators gender disaggregated? Are targets set to guarantee a sufficient level of gender balance in activities (e.g. quotas for male and female participation)?

Implementation: Who will implement the planned intervention? Have these partners received gender-mainstreaming training, so that a gender perspective can be sustained throughout implementation? Will both women and men participate in implementation?

Monitoring and Evaluation: Does the monitoring and evaluation strategy include a gender perspective? Will it examine both substantive (content) and administrative (process) aspects of the intervention?

Risks: Has the greater context of gender roles and relations within society been considered as a potential risk (i.e. stereotypes or structural barriers that may prevent full participation of one or the other gender)? Has the potential negative impact of the intervention been considered (e.g. potential increased burden on women or social isolation of men)?

Budget: Have financial inputs been “gender-proofed” to ensure that both men and women will benefit from the planned intervention? Has the need to provide gender sensitivity training or to engage short-term gender experts been factored in to the budget?

Annexes: Are any relevant research papers (or excerpts) included as annexes (particularly those that provide sound justification of your attention to gender)?

Communication Strategy: Has a communication strategy been developed for informing various publics about the existence, progress and results of the project from a gender perspective?

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