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

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

Ethnicity and SALW

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

Three things must be kept in mind about ethnic groups:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

   In order to address this problem, CSOs can:

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

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

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

Entry points for SALW control and conflict management

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

Table 5: A tool for interpreting ethnicity

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

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

Local production and craft guns

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

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

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

Background to craft gun production

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

Reasons for production

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

Dealing with craft gun production

Craft gun production in Ghana

Some figures about craft production in Ghana:

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

Table 5: Production and sale costs of craft guns

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

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

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

Understanding craft production in your area

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

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

Developing a strategy about craft gun production

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

Social/traditional importance ◄► economic importance

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

Internal use ◄► external use

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

Socially approved use ◄► socially condemned use

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

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

Your program might include:

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

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

Trying to convince craft manufacturers to convert to other production will only succeed if:
- Alternative products yield as much profit, and
- Alternative products result in as much social capital (respect, contribution to the community, feeling of accomplishment) as manufacturing guns.

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

Useful resources

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

- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2007. "Cocaine Trafficking in West Africa. The threat to stability and development." *Report*. Available at <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/west_africa_cocaine_report_2007-12_en.pdf>.
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. 2007. "Cannabis in Africa. An overview." *Paper*. Available at <http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Can_Afr_EN_09_11_07.pdf>.

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

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

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

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

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

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Section 6: Civil society and SALW

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

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

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

Examples of civil society actors include:

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

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

[8] See Section 7 for an explanation of the 'security sector' and a discussion of security sector reform (SSR).

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

Criticism and cooperation with government

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

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

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

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

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

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

When did the events happen?

Where did they happen?

Who was involved?

Why should it be opposed / dealt with?

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

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

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

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

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

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

Relations with security services

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

National security

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

Case Study: Ammunition explosion in Lagos, Nigeria

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Coordination and cooperation with security services

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

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

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

CSO-Military interface

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

How do we cultivate trust between the military and CSOs?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Civil society organization and management

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

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

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

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

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

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

Cooperation between CSOs

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

Trainer Note

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

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

Full citations are provided at the end of this section.

Raising awareness on SALW control

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

Activities for raising awareness can be in the form of:

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

Case Study: Raising awareness in Senegal

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

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

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

Contributed by Khoudia Diop Koumé, MALAO

Every good awareness-raising program should consider the following steps[10]:

Step 1: Do a needs assessment!

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

Step 2: Define your target group and objective!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Step 4: Do a field test!

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

Step 5: Implement your campaign!

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

Step 6: Evaluate!

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

[10] This section is modified from SEESAC, 2007.

Writing a proposal

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

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

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

Media and SALW control

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

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

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

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

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

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

Table 6: Different media and entry points

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

Dealing with the media

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

What you should provide to the media:

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

What you should expect of the media:

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

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

Participation in weapons collection activities

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

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

See Section 7 for information on arms collection programs.

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

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

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

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

Contributed by Robert Dorliae, UNDP Liberia

Useful resources

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PROCESS	POST- CONFLICT	NOT POST- CONFLICT
Disarmament	• Focuses mainly on armed, warring parties. • Part of a comprehensive arms reduction or DD&R process. • In DD&R, disarmament is run by the military. • Entire DD&R process relates closely to development. • Part of post-conflict reconstruction. • Cooperation with development agencies is essential.	• Focuses on individuals and communities. • Part of a violence reduction or arms control process, or may be a 'stand alone' issue. • Focus is often on criminality. • Run most effectively by police forces together with CSOs.
SSR	• Focuses on reestablishing the impartiality and effectiveness of security services. • Reconciliation of warring parties is essential. • Focus is often primarily on the military.	• Focus on providing effective, legal, responsive security services to the population. • Legislation-led process. • Intended primarily to enhance democratic control of the security services.
CIMIC	• Most often focuses on the provision of essential services to the population. • Often requires dealing with multi national/cultural peacekeeping forces. • Is a stop-gap until local agencies can take care of domestic affairs.	• Is an attempt to ensure that security services and CSOs can cooperate to produce effective domestic results. • Requires the development of trust and mutual support systems. • Requires education of both security services and CSOs about one another's needs and sensitivities.

Disarmament

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

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

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

peace agreement[13], to ensure that what is written into the agreement is *doable* and *acceptable* to the public.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Disarmament stages

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

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

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

Security Sector Reform (SSR)

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

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

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

Table 9: SSR actors

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

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

Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC)

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

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

Post-conflict CIMIC

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

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

CIMIC within the security sector (not post-conflict)

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

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

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

Useful resources

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

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

For more information on SSR, see:

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

Selected bibliography

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

Section 8: Research on SALW

Trainer Note

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

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

Good research provides you with a means to support:

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

Civil society organizations need to be able to:

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

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

Organizations that can help you engage in such research include:

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

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

Using research

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

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

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

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

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

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

A practical approach to reading research reports

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

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

Doing research

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

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

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

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

Some general issues before starting research

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

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

Preparing your research

The problem

The first step is to identify the problem:

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

Research instruments

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

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

Citation and referencing

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

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

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

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

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

It would appear as a reference in a report as:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

General principles for all research

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

Subjects for study

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

1. Production research

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

2. Stockpile research

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

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

3. Transfer research

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

4. Use and effects research

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

5. Attitudes

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

Limits and pitfalls of research

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

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

Funding research

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

Table 10: Research activities

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

Table 11: Research costs

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

What to do with your research results

Publishing research results

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

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

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

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

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

Disseminating research results

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

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

In addition, there are four other potential audiences:

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

Safety in SALW research

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

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

Safety

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

Always remember some basic safety rules[15]:

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

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

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

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

Security

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

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

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

Useful resources

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

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

Conclusion

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Annexes

Annex I: UN Definition of SALW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

** These weapons are sometimes mounted."

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

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

Ammunition and other related materials (Article 1)

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

Prohibition of SALW transfers (Articles 3-6)

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

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

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

Register of arms for peace operations (Article 11)

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

Dialogue with manufacturers and suppliers (Article 12)

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

Control of civilian possession (Article 14)

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

Visitor's certificates (Article 15)

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

Management and security of stockpiles (Article 16)

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

Marking (Article 18)

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

Tracing (Article 19)

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

Brokering (Article 20)

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

Strengthening border controls (Article 22)

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

Public education and awareness programs (Article 23)

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

Complaint Procedure (Articles 27, 31)

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

Monitoring and implementation (Article 28)

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

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