

Distr.: Limited  
29 June 2006

Original: English

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**United Nations Conference to Review Progress made  
in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to  
Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in  
Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects**

New York, 26 June-7 July 2006

**Guidelines for gender mainstreaming for the effective  
implementation of the UN programme of action to prevent,  
combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light  
weapons in all its aspects**

**United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms  
(CASA)**

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## **Preface**

The issue of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) was first raised by the United Nations in a 1995 General Assembly resolution ([A/RES/50/70B](#)). In 2001, the United Nations adopted the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (PoA) – a first step towards developing a global approach to eliminate the illicit trade in SALW.

Women and men have a right to equal participation in all activities relating to the elimination of illicit trade in SALW. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) recognizes the need to take into account the impact of conflict on women and men, including issues related to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. These guidelines underscore the human rights-based rationale for the inclusion of gender perspectives in the implementation of the PoA and the added efficacy of the PoA in doing so. Accordingly, this means understanding and analysing the different roles played by men, women, boys and girls both as part of the SALW proliferation problem and potential solutions through the implementation of the PoA.

The UN Department for Disarmament Affairs (UNDDA) has undertaken considerable efforts to promote understanding of the importance of gender perspectives in all aspects of its substantive work. For the effective implementation of the PoA, such critical gender considerations need to be addressed in all stages of the process: the information gathering, planning, implementation and monitoring processes.

These guidelines have been developed as a resource to improve the effective implementation of the PoA. Their purpose is to highlight the importance of the perspectives of those impacted by the proliferation of SALW, particularly the considerations of women and men, in the global effort to control illicit SALW. Indeed, without such considerations, the effectiveness of the PoA will be seriously undermined.

## **Acknowledgements**

This document is based on research and consultation initially conducted by International Alert in collaboration with UNDDA. This initial research and consultation was supported by the Human Security Program of Foreign Affairs, Canada, and resulted in a publication produced by International Alert<sup>1</sup>, under their own responsibility. The consultation brought together civil society regional representatives from South Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America and the Arab Region, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and UNDDA, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as supporting government representatives from Canada, Germany and the UK.

The second strand of this work was undertaken by UNDDA Regional Disarmament Branch, assisted by International Alert, and led to the development of a working paper for presentation at regional preparatory meetings for the Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) in 2005. At DDA's invitation, International Alert participated and presented it at the first of these regional meetings for Arab states in Algeria in April 2005 and at the meeting of the Group of Interested States at the BMS in July 2005.

This resource document is based on feedback on the draft working paper. It is intended to promote understanding of the importance of gender perspectives, as well as provide practical gender guidelines and concrete examples designed to assist United Nations policy makers and field personnel in incorporating gender perspectives in all relevant initiatives and operations in the process of implementation of the PoA.

In this connection, in order for the UN stakeholders to contribute their experiences and views, DDA invited the members of CASA to participate in the last stage of elaboration of this document. The United Nations

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<sup>1</sup> International Alert, Putting a Human Face to the Problem of Small Arms Proliferation – Gender Implications for the Effective Implementation of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (February 2005)

Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) assisted in finalizing the document for dissemination at the 2006 Review Conference in New York. This final draft was completed with input from the UNIFEM Andean Regional Office, the UNIFEM CEE/CIS section in New York, the Women's Institute for Alternative Development (WINAD) in Trinidad and Tobago, as well as substantive input from the United Nations Department of Political Affairs.

## INTRODUCTION

### ***Gender Perspectives in the Control of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons***

The United Nations has endorsed the strategies of gender mainstreaming and gender balance in its pursuit of gender equality through the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000), the Beijing Platform for Action, ECOSOC-agreed conclusions for gender-mainstreaming (1997/2) and various other policy and practice initiatives.

A Gender Mainstreaming Action Plan launched by UNDDA in April 2003, also underscores the commitment, and importance it affords to the different impact of all categories of weapons, including small arms and light weapons on men and women in all disarmament-related work.

***Gender-mainstreaming*** refers to the “*process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislations, policies or programmes in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.*” (ECOSOC 1997)

A gender-sensitive approach is not exclusively about women, but about gender more broadly. This approach factors the special needs of men and women, boys and girls in the formulation of appropriate responses to issues of gender and SALW. For example, young men suffer disproportionately from the direct impacts of SALW use (90 percent of gun homicide victims are men), while women tend to be victims of the indirect, longer-term consequences.

However, it is inaccurate to identify women solely as victims and men as perpetrators of violence. Such a view not only neglects the active role that women play globally in civil society-driven disarmament initiatives, but also the role that women and girls increasingly play as users of guns, as combatants or traffickers.

Even in times of ‘peace’, gender must remain a cross-cutting consideration for strategies on combating illicit SALW at national, regional and global levels.

### ***Mandates for Mainstreaming Gender into the UN Programme of Action***

Multiple international mechanisms exist within the UN system specifically designed to address gender issues in general, and women’s concerns and roles in particular – mechanisms which may be used as a basis for gender considerations in the implementation of the PoA. These include, but are not limited to, UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security; ECOSOC Gender-Mainstreaming resolutions; the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); and the Beijing Platform for Action.

UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) transcends the common perception of women as victims in times of war. Conversely, it recognizes the active role that women can play in peace processes, advocates and binds Member States to ensure their full participation accordingly. Resolution 1325 specifically

...Encourages all those involved in the planning of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependents.  
(UN SC resolution 1325, Article 13, 2000)

The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1325 (October 2002)

...Call[s] on Member States, entities of the United Nations system and NGOs to develop guidelines, based on a review of good practice, on increasing attention to the needs and contributions of women and girls in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes and to monitor and report regularly on their implementation. (UN Secretary General's report, Section G, paragraph 72, S/2004/814)

Such mandates have helped to mobilising significant levels of support within United Nations among Member States' governments, as well as within civil society organizations, facilitating concerted international efforts designed to integrate gender considerations into all areas of the disarmament machinery in the process. However, much remains to be done.

These guidelines: (i) illustrate the relevance of gender considerations for the PoA; and (ii) provide guidance to policymakers and practitioners on how to integrate such considerations into implementation of the PoA.

### **GENDER ENTRY POINTS FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PoA**

➤ *Integrating gender perspectives is critical to the successful implementation of the PoA in the following four key areas:*

- 1) Illicit trade in SALW, and the linkage between different forms of trafficking;
- 2) DDR Programs;
- 3) National and Regional focal points: defining specific regional and national approaches; and
- 4) Civil society integration and public awareness initiatives

➤ *In each key area, the following must be addressed:*

- **Relevance** of gender mainstreaming (gender mainstreaming legitimacy and utility): how are gender-oriented actions related to the PoA? Why is gender mainstreaming necessary?
- **Objectives** of gender mainstreaming: what can Member States obtain by integrating gender mainstreaming in the PoA? What are the goals of gender mainstreaming?
- **Recommendations** on how to integrate gender perspectives (presented in a table, it will summarize the gender relevance of the PoA, before outlining concrete actions to be undertaken by Member States).

## 1. GENDER MAINSTREAMING RELEVANCE IN COMBATING THE ILLICIT TRADE AND TRAFFICKING OF SALW

### ***Gender objectives for combating the illicit trade and trafficking of SALW***

Addressing the gender poverty and development dynamic behind illicit trade and trafficking in national, regional and international collaboration with development partners will enhance the effectiveness of PoA implementation by:

- strengthening control of the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects;
- eliminating opportunities for traffickers to exploit the vulnerability of the poor and other marginalized populations;
- addressing the human rights and security needs of women and girls drawn into trafficking networks;
- increasing the engagement of social and economic development actors in SALW control.
- improving knowledge of criminal network mechanisms in order to better address the problem of trafficking;
- encouraging and supporting the participatory enabling mechanisms and concomitant capacity to identify and respond to potential conflict situations;
- combating the drivers of illicit trade of SALW.

### ***Gender relevance for combating the illicit trade and trafficking of SALW***

#### Gender considerations on Illicit trade of SALW

The PoA aims to:

Identify, where applicable, groups and individuals engaged in the illegal manufacture, trade, stockpiling, transfer, possession, as well as financing for acquisition, of illicit small arms and light weapons, and take action under appropriate national laws against such groups and individuals.  
(PoA II:6)

Developing effective interventions against those involved in the illicit trade of SALW is impossible in the absence of controls regulating illicit brokering – controls which facilitate the monitoring of every stage of the SALW transfer/transaction chain. Men constitute the strong majority of those involved in illicit brokering and trafficking, exploiting the vulnerability of others for profit.

It is reported in several contexts in South Asia that young women and girls become arms smugglers to earn an income. Sometimes this is by force, other times as an economic survival strategy.<sup>2</sup> Women and girls are often used to smuggle SALW across borders, because they are generally not regarded as a threat by border guards and certain traditional female clothing such as the 'burqa'<sup>3</sup> in the North West Frontier province of Pakistan and in Afghanistan offers perfect cover for smuggling small arms and ammunition. In other contexts, it has been reported that male border guards will knowingly allow women and girls to carry weapons across a border in return for sexual favors.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> International Alert consultation with women from South Asia region on Women, Peace and Security Toolkit development, Sri Lanka, September 2004.

<sup>3</sup> A garment that covers a woman completely from head to toe, leaving only a small grid for the woman to look out from.

<sup>4</sup> International Alert consultation with women from South Asia region on Women, Peace and Security Toolkit development, Sri Lanka, September 2004.

Widows and dependents form a high proportion of conflict environment populations. This demographic shift places a heavier economic burden on women than they might have experienced prior to the conflict. Threats to security posed by the easy accessibility and proliferation of SALW further undermine the potential for traditional economic activity, and restrict the mobility of civilians. In this context, many women have little choice but to become active players in the illicit SALW trade, which may represent the only means of income-generation.

#### Linkages between different forms of trafficking

Anti-trafficking collaboration initiatives are critical to the control of illicit SALW; however, for such initiatives to be effective, human trafficking and related intelligence monitoring must incorporate gender-specific information.

The PoA recognizes the:

...close link between terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and precious minerals and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and stressing the urgency of international efforts and cooperation aimed at combating this trade simultaneously from both a supply and demand perspective.  
(PoA, I:7)

A growing body of anecdotal evidence suggests that those criminal networks illicitly trafficking SALW are simultaneously involved in the trafficking of women and girls, as well as narcotics and precious minerals.<sup>5</sup>

Criminal networks have discovered that women and girls are generally not regarded as threats by border guards, and consequently are often used as couriers to smuggle SALW across borders. Such a phenomenon cannot be ameliorated without a gender-oriented policy.

In Bangladesh, it was reported that trafficking of women had increased with the increase in arms smuggling.<sup>6</sup> In the Balkans, with the cessation of the violent conflict, some groups, which had been involved in arms trafficking, began to focus on trafficking in women. Women freed from trafficking rackets in Liberia were also able to verify that those involved in human trafficking were also dealing in SALW.<sup>7</sup>

Finally, the PoA stresses that:

States should, as appropriate enhance cooperation, the exchange of experience and training among competent officials including customs, police, intelligence and arms control officials at the national, regional and global levels in order to combat the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects.  
(PoA III:7)

Without integrating the knowledge and experiences of diverse actors such as customs, police, intelligence organizations, civil society groups and women's rights organizations, however, such cooperation is not possible. Moreover, understanding the context of the illicit trade in SALW and trafficking would enhance international efforts to act on targeted interventions and minimize its humanitarian concomitants.

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<sup>5</sup> Refugees International Bulletin. 'Liberia: UNMIL's Crackdown on Trafficking Puts Women at Risk', May 10, 2004 and examples from Bangladesh at IA South Asia Consultation on Women, Peace and Security Toolkit, September 2004.

<sup>6</sup> International Alert consultation on Inclusive Security Toolkit in South Asia, September 2004

<sup>7</sup> Refugees International Bulletin. 'Liberia: UNMIL's Crackdown on Trafficking Puts Women at Risk', May 10, 2004

Distr.: Limited  
29 June 2006

Original: English

### **Recommendations for Gender Mainstreaming in combating the illicit trade and trafficking of SALW**

Provision in PoA	Recommendations to Integrate Gender
<p><b>Preamble Para 6</b> – Gravely concerned about...devastating consequences on children...as well as the negative impact on women and the elderly...</p>	<p>Use knowledge of the context-specific impacts of SALW proliferation on communities according to age, gender, disabilities, economic status and ethnic identity to form the basis for intervention.</p> <p>Integrate gender analysis and the provision of gender-specific data as a component of all SALW programme, planning and execution.</p>
<p><b>Preamble Para 7</b> – Concerned also about the close link between terrorism, organized crime, trafficking in drugs and precious minerals and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and stressing the urgency of international efforts and cooperation aimed at combating this trade simultaneously from both a supply and demand perspective.</p>	<p>Consider and articulate the linkage/s between all types of trafficking.</p> <p>Incorporate anecdotal evidence and qualitative data in the formulation of future anti-trafficking policies.</p> <p>Broaden collaboration, consultation and engagement with the social and economic development sector<sup>8</sup>, as a means to address the human security and rights needs of those drawn into trafficking networks as a survival strategy.</p>
<p><b>III Implementation, International Cooperation &amp; Assistance 7</b> – States should, as appropriate, enhance cooperation, the exchange of experience and training among competent officials including customs, police, intelligence and arms control officials at the national, regional</p>	<p>Initiate a more systematic approach to the gathering of gender-disaggregated data, thus facilitating more effective actions for combating the illicit SALW.</p> <p>Incorporate the knowledge and experience of different civil society groups, including women’s organizations in exchanges and training processes, ensuring that the diverse knowledge bases, technical capacities and experiences of men and women, boys and girls, old and young as well as persons with</p>

<sup>8</sup> This would further support the implementation of the General Assembly Resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000, where the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, referred to in Annex 2 of the PoA, 2001.

and global levels in order to combat the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects

disabilities are included.

Incorporate civil society groups, including women's organizations into training programs and as a resource tool for training and awareness purposes to ensure that women's perspectives as users and victims of illicit SALW are reflected in all training programmes.

Create adequate economic opportunities and survival strategies for men, women, boys and girls, thus undermining the illicit SALW trade.

Distr.: Limited  
29 June 2006

Original: English

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## **2. GENDER-INCLUSIVE PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION (DDR)**

### ***Gender objectives for DDR***

Through *gender-inclusive planning and implementation of DDR* at the national and regional levels, PoA effectiveness will be enhanced in terms of:

- Improved sustainability through the systematic engagement of a broader set of actors, including those from civil society, and particularly women's groups engaged in disarmament and peace-building, in the DDR planning process, ensuring support for ex-combatants and those with peace-building capacities.
- Enhanced public awareness.
- Addressing the needs and supporting the capacities of survivors.
- Contributing to conflict prevention by addressing the needs of combatants and broader conflict-affected communities.
- Contributing to building and sustaining peaceful communities through rehabilitation interventions designed and implemented by affected communities

### ***Gender relevance for DDR***

#### Disarmament in conflict-affected regions

The PoA places particular emphasis on:

The regions of the world where conflicts come to an end and where serious problems with the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons have to be dealt with urgently.  
(PoA I:22c)

The promotion of effective and comprehensive DDR programmes at the national, regional and international levels is mentioned repeatedly in the PoA, particularly in relation to the specific needs of children in armed conflict (for example, II paragraph 22) and ex-combatants (for example, II paragraph 34).

Evidence shows that DDR processes rarely recover more than a marginal percentage of all SALW in the possession of armed groups and the civilian population. Disarmament processes often deal primarily with the most powerful male combatants, and thus exclude peripheral combatants, civilians affected by conflict and those working towards peace and security.

Since DDR terms are invariably agreed upon in formal peace negotiation processes, a successful implementation of the PoA would be achieved by integrating women in such negotiations – as mandated in

UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. At the political and planning level, it is also important that women politicians, disarmament experts, military or combatant representatives be included either as direct participants or advisors in peace negotiations, as well as in the planning and monitoring of DDR implementation.

Increasing evidence suggests that the DDR process would be more effective if it incorporated a broader set of actors that were either involved in the conflict or had necessary peace-building capacities.

The Liberian Women's Initiative (LWI) was created in 1994 in response to the lack of progress and the silence of women's voices in the peace talks. The group, open to all women, regardless of ethnic, social, religious or political background, chose '*disarmament before elections*' as their primary goal. They targeted all parties involved in the peace talks and started a programme to assist in the collection of small arms. Although they never took part in the peace talks as official participants, they proved to be influential consultants during the process and also acted as effective monitors of the process.

The PoA encourages the UN Security Council to consider:

The inclusion, where applicable, of relevant provisions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the mandates and budgets of peacekeeping operations  
(PoA, II:35)

Despite young men accounting for the overwhelming majority of those wounded or killed by SALW, the indirect, longer-term impact on surviving women and girls is significant. This must be emphasized, particularly in reintegration and rehabilitation initiatives linked to DDR resources and mandates. The DDR mandate, therefore, should integrate gender expertise in the planning, implementation and monitoring stages. Gender is relevant to DDR and peacekeeping operations as a valuable instrument in the design and planning of sustainable and successful disarmament efforts, which should be appropriated to local needs.

The PoA recognizes the need:

To encourage, particularly in post-conflict situations, the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants and their subsequent reintegration into civilian life  
(PoA, II:34)

Gender relevance in DDR goes beyond the fact that ex-combatants include women and children. Indeed, a sustainable reintegration of divided and traumatized populations requires a wide sociological and psychological approach that only an inclusive and gender-oriented intervention can provide.

To be complete and efficient, this focus on ex-combatants must both consider the roles of women and girls as voluntary participants in conflict and those coerced as combatants, carriers, messengers, sex-slaves and/or cooks in combatant groups. Such an approach links disarmament to the essence of DDR: reduce violence and allow peaceful and sustainable development. Related themes – such as easy access to SALW in countries with high unemployment, and gun violence, either for criminal purposes or related to domestic violence<sup>9</sup> – can only then be integrated into the problem. Gender-inclusive DDR programs can then engage the problem at its source.

Thus, a gender-oriented analysis takes into consideration both direct and indirect consequences of war, facilitating a more thorough planning process which reflects near- and long-term DDR initiatives. Through a better understanding of the root causes of conflict and the different ways in which the conflict has affected all levels communities, DDR programmes will more effectively and sustainably address long term peace needs.

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<sup>9</sup> International Alert and Swiss Peace Foundation, Gender and Conflict Early Warning: A Framework for Action, June 2002.

The 'Weapons in Exchange for Development' programme in Gramsch, Albania marked the first successful weapons collection programme in Albania and women played a key role for its success. The motto of the initiative was "One Less Weapon, One More Life". Some 6,000 weapons and 137 tons of ammunition were handed over in exchange for community based development and public works projects.

Distr.: Limited  
29 June 2006

Original: English

### Recommendations for DDR

<b>Provision in PoA</b>	<b>Recommendations to Integrate Gender</b>
<p><b><i>II Preventing, Combating &amp; Eradicating the Illicit Trade in All its Aspects para 34</i></b> – To encourage, particularly in post-conflict situations, the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants and their subsequent reintegration into civilian life.</p>	<p>Use gender analysis and gender-inclusive implementation strategies for DDR, so as to produce a more effective and sustainable disarmament process.</p> <p>Broaden definitions of combatants in DDR programmes, encompassing women combatants and women associated with fighting forces.</p> <p>Initiate broad, gender-inclusive community consultations to ensure the effectiveness of DDR initiatives and the development of context-specific responses.</p> <p>Encourage and recognize the role of local women in disarmament and peace-building processes, in order to sustain DDR initiatives.</p> <p>Include young unemployed men and women in training and income-generating initiatives.</p> <p>Include, at the political and planning level, women politicians and disarmament experts, military and/or combatant representatives, either as participants or advisors, and assist in the planning and monitoring of DDR implementation.</p> <p>Ensure that staff appointed to plan and develop DDR programmes be given gender awareness training and be made familiar with Security Council resolution 1325, thereby promoting gender-inclusive processes with appropriate monitoring and evaluation.</p>
<p><b><i>II Preventing, Combating &amp; Eradicating the Illicit Trade in All its Aspects para 35</i></b> – the inclusion, where applicable, of relevant provisions for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the mandates and budgets of peacekeeping operations.</p>	<p>In DDR provisions in peacekeeping mandates, emphasize the need for a broad definition of combatants, including women combatants and combatant associates.</p> <p>In DDR provisions in peacekeeping mandates, emphasize the need for broader partnerships with development and peace-building initiatives.</p> <p>In peacekeeping mandates, make explicit the need for gender expertise in planning, implementation and monitoring.</p>

	<p>In DDR provisions in peacekeeping mandates, put emphasis on reintegration, thus addressing the long-term impact of conflict on surviving men and women, girls and boys as caregivers and as heads of households.</p> <p>In DDR provisions in peacekeeping mandates, include gender-disaggregated information in budgeting to ensure adequate resourcing for programmes addressing the specific needs of men and women.</p>
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### 3. NATIONAL AND REGIONAL FOCAL POINTS: DEFINING SPECIFIC REGIONAL AND NATIONAL APPROACHES

#### - Gender Objectives for National and Regional focal points

Through the development of *inclusive national and regional focal points*, implementation of the PoA will be enhanced in terms of:

- Encompassing the broader impacts and actors affected and engaged in practices related to illicit SALW control.
- Ensuring a more sustainable human security approach to issues of the illicit SALW trade and control.
- Increasing a broad dissemination of information across institutions and civil society in relation to the new national/regional arms laws.
- Including a broader set of actors in awareness-raising about destruction and disposal activities, particularly as a means of confidence-building, especially in traumatized conflict and post-conflict societies.

#### - Gender relevance for National and Regional focal points

##### National and regional points of contact

The PoA makes specific calls for action at the national, regional and global levels that would be more effective when combined with awareness for gender issues. For example:

Establish or designate, as appropriate, a national point of contact to act as a liaison between States on matters relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action  
(PoA, II:5)

As SALW issues touch a broader sphere of military and civilian interests than other disarmament and arms control matters, national commissions require effective inter-agency and civil society communication on the implementation of the PoA. These national focal points provide great potential for incorporating gender perspectives in all aspects of SALW control.

In some states in Central America, the participation of government entities in national commissions has gone beyond involving the ministries of foreign affairs, defence and police agencies, to include government agencies dealing with intelligence, the judiciary, public health, human rights, youth, children and women. In Paraguay, for example, the working group, which serves as the focal point for the implementation of the PoA and national legislation, includes Amnesty International and local women's empowerment organisations focusing on domestic violence.

##### Country and region-specific approaches

Implementation of the PoA is not a 'one size fits all' endeavour. The PoA recognizes:

Efforts are being undertaken at the global, regional, sub-regional, national and local levels to address the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects, and aiming to build upon them, taking into account the characteristics, scope and magnitude of the problem in each State or region.  
(PoA, I:18)

In some developing, weapon-producing states, weapon production constitutes a core source of income-generation for large segments of the population. For many women, lacking alternative

sources of employment, work on the SALW production line often represents the only option for viable employment.<sup>10</sup> In such contexts, it is important to consider the need for incentives to encourage compliance with the PoA that focus on such structural factors. This may include the development of alternative industries into which weapon manufacturing employees can be redeployed. The composition of national and regional coordination bodies referred to in the PoA should also reflect the information and coordination needs for effective small arms control.

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<sup>10</sup> See for example pp 6-7 of NATO (1996) Colloquium, Panel III – Comparative Overview of Human and Social Problems in Military Downsizing and Defense Industrial Restructuring in Cooperation Partner Countries, by Michael Brzoska

**Recommendations for National and Regional focal points**

<b>Provision in PoA</b>	<b>Recommendations to integrate Gender</b>
<p><b>III Implementation, International Cooperation &amp; Assistance para 3</b>                      – States and appropriate international and regional organizations in a position to do so should, upon request of the relevant authorities, seriously consider rendering assistance, including technical and financial assistance where needed, such as small arms funds, to support the implementation of the measures to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW and all its aspects as contained in the PoA.</p>	<p>Allocate financial and technical assistance to civil society groups, in particular women’s networks, for peace and disarmament and community reintegration and sensitization.</p>
<p><b>III Implementation, International Cooperation &amp; Assistance para5</b>                      – States and international and regional organizations should, where appropriate, cooperate, develop and strengthen partnerships to share resources and information on illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects.</p>	<p>Incorporate gender-inclusive consultations in information sharing mechanisms, to source information from active civil society groups working toward eliminating the illicit trade in SALW.</p>
<p><b>II Preventing, Combating &amp; Eradicating the Illicit Trade in All its Aspects para 5</b> – To establish or designate, as appropriate, a national point of contact to act as a liaison between States on matters relating to the implementation of the Programme of Action.</p>	<p>National commissions should require effective inter-agency and gender-inclusive civil society engagement on the implementation of the PoA.</p>
<p><b>II Preventing, Combating &amp; Eradicating the Illicit Trade in All its Aspects para 6</b> – To identify, where applicable, groups and individuals engaged in the illegal manufacture, trade, stockpiling, transfer, possession, as well as financing for acquisition, of illicit small arms and light weapons, and take action under appropriate national laws against such groups and individuals.</p>	<p>Focus cooperation discussions on addressing the gender-specific security needs of those drawn into trafficking networks through economic or survival necessity (often women, young boys and girls).</p> <p>Collaborate with the social and economic development sector as part of gender-sensitive trafficking prevention strategies.</p> <p>Assist the development of alternative industries for which weapon manufacturing employees can be retrained (gender-aware conversion).</p>

## 4. CIVIL SOCIETY INTEGRATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS INITIATIVES

### Gender objectives for civil society integration and public awareness initiatives

Through *gender-inclusive public and private engagement* at national, regional and international levels referred to in the PoA, effectiveness of implementation will be improved in terms of:

- Increasing public awareness of SALW control initiatives.
- Addressing the security needs of different sectors of the community.
- Integrating broad and specific civil society knowledge of SALW.
- Building on local initiatives in combating the illicit trade in SALW.
- In the context of national and regional implementation of the PoA, engaging gender-inclusive civil society groups, which, in turn, will help improve the effectiveness of planning initiatives and implementation.

Furthermore, governments and authorities (i.e. national commissions) that willingly embrace multi-sector approaches in combating the illicit SALW, and make efforts to include marginalized groups accordingly, are more likely to receive financial and technical support from the international community.

### Gender relevance for civil society integration and public awareness initiatives

#### Civil society contribution

The PoA refers in several places to:

The important contribution of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and industry in, inter-alia, assisting Governments to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects  
(PoA, I:16)

Civil society groups are also actively involved in disarmament and awareness initiatives. Women's groups have been particularly active in influencing attitudes towards small arms abuse and disarmament initiatives. Because of their influence at the household and community levels, women represent a valuable public awareness resource.

Engaging in successful public awareness and education on the issues of SALW should include the understanding of the various roles played by women and men with regards to SALW. Women are not only victims of SALW and conflict, they also, in some cases, play active role as users of guns, combatants and traffickers. When they do not play an active role, they may play an important role as a "silent partner" of the men and boys using SALW in times of conflict. Their education and training in issues of SALW is key in helping combat the illicit trade in and use of SALW.

The PoA encourages:

...International and regional organizations and States to facilitate the appropriate cooperation of civil society, including non-governmental organization, in activities related to the prevention, combat and the eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in view of the important role that civil society plays in this area. (PoA II:40)

A gender-oriented analysis is highly relevant to integrating civil society into disarmament efforts, not merely due to the presence of many women's group acting in different areas of disarmament and disarmament education, but also because women have a particularly influential role in shaping attitudes toward SALW at the household and community levels. Indeed, women – especially in traditional or rural areas – are the principal agents for transmitting values, and determining a community's way of life.

In March 2000, 1,000 women marched to parliament in South Africa to say “no to gun violence” and to call for the implementation of the Firearms Control Act.

The UN Secretary-General has also emphasized the importance of civil society engagement in his recent report “In Larger Freedom” (2005):

States, however, cannot do the job alone. We need an active civil society and a dynamic private sector. Both occupy an increasingly large and important share of the space formerly reserved for States alone, and it is plain that the goals outlined here will not be achieved without their full engagement. (“In Larger Freedom” paragraph 20)

#### Public-awareness initiatives

The PoA mentions the need:

To develop and implement, including in conflict and post-conflict situations, public-awareness and confidence-building programmes on the problem and consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, including where appropriate the public destruction of surplus weapons and the voluntary surrender of SALW, if possible, in cooperation with civil society and NGOs, with a view to eradicating the illicit trade in SALW  
(PoA, II:20)

Traditionally, SALW destruction and disposal has been exclusively a government activity involving technical experts from the police and military. However, this process can be made more effective through the incorporation of provincial and municipal authorities, NGOs, women and youth groups. In fact, through the awareness-raising, education and communication *vis-à-vis* SALW destruction and disposal, the work of such entities can help reinforce and strengthen the work of the technical experts

Gender-inclusive outreach and civil society engagement is critical to the effectiveness of SALW public awareness relating to destruction and disposal. Furthermore, confidence-building is likely to be reinforced, particularly in traumatised conflict and post-conflict societies, if a broader set of actors are incorporated into the SALW destruction process.

The women's Pastoralist, Peace and Development Initiative has successfully fought to raise public and political awareness of the proliferation and misuse of small arms in the Garissa District of Kenya.

Member States can only develop and execute appropriate responses, and thus ensure the sustainability of disarmament and conflict transformation processes, when gender roles are considered and incorporated, both in terms of impact and agency.

**Recommendations for civil society integration and public awareness initiatives**

<b>Provision in PoA</b>	<b>Recommendations to integrate Gender</b>
<p><b>Preamble para 16</b> - The important contribution of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and industry in, inter-alia, assisting Governments to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.</p>	<p>Integrate gender-inclusive civil society participation into planning and monitoring processes and activities.</p> <p>Identify and support civil society groups involved in community disarmament and awareness initiatives, particularly women's groups and individual women, . Their valuable role in shaping public awareness and attitudes toward illicit SALW, should be capitalized upon in all programmes.</p>
<p><b>II Preventing, Combating &amp; Eradicating the Illicit Trade in All its Aspects para 40</b> – [Encourages]...international, regional organizations and States to facilitate the appropriate cooperation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in activities related to the prevention, combat and the eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in view of the important role that civil society plays in this area.</p>	<p>Include gender-inclusive civil society groups in planning initiatives, to enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of implementation.</p> <p>Identify and consult with women's groups already involved in local disarmament initiatives.</p> <p>Include consideration of cultural-sensitive provisions when consulting women's groups independently.</p>
<p><b>III Implementation, International Cooperation &amp; Assistance para 2</b> - States undertake to cooperate and to ensure coordination, complementarity and synergy in efforts to deal with the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects at the global, regional, sub regional and national levels and to encourage the establishment and strengthening of cooperation and partnerships at all levels among international and inter-governmental organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and international financial institutions.</p>	<p>Ensure gender inclusivity in collaborative way between government and civil society, so as to capitalize on local knowledge from gender-based human security perspectives.</p> <p>Align MDG reporting with other women's rights instruments, such as CEDAW and the Beijing Platform of Action, to ensure that gender equality is seen as a human right.<sup>11</sup></p>
<p><b>III Implementation, International Cooperation &amp; Assistance para 18</b> – States, regional and sub-regional and international organizations, research centres, health and medical institutions, the United Nations system, international financial institutions and civil society are urged, as appropriate to develop and support action-orientated research aimed at <u>facilitating greater awareness and better understanding of the nature and scope of the problems associated with the illicit trade in SALW and all its aspects.</u></p>	<p>Integrate human perspectives and gender analysis into action-orientated research.</p> <p>Collect gender-specific data at national, regional and international levels in relation to users of illicit SALW and violence.</p> <p>Encourage countries to report progress against the additional gender indicators suggested by the Millennium Task Force on Gender Equality.<sup>12</sup></p>

<sup>11</sup> *En Route to Equality*. A gender review of national MDG reports 2005. UNDP

<sup>12</sup> *idem*

## CONCLUSION

These guidelines advocate for a systemic gender-inclusive approach in the implementation of the PoA. Women and men have a right to participate and be taken into account in these processes. An inclusive approach will help in full ownership of all efforts to eradicate illicit small arms and light weapons trade. It is a fact that gender-oriented policy, continuously and rigorously implemented, will maximize all efforts to “Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons In All its Aspects”.

Enhanced understanding of gender-specific perceptions of human security is a key factor to effective implementation of the PoA. Gender implications exist both in relation to the causes and consequences of the misuse and proliferation of SALW. Recognizing the different and diverse experiences of men, women, boys and girls, as *agents and victims* of SALW misuse and proliferation, and incorporating this into response strategies accordingly, facilitates the development of meaningful, effective and sustainable SALW control.

To ensure sustainability of the control of illicit proliferation of SALW, gender roles must be considered, both in terms of the diverse impacts of SALW on men, women, boys and girls, and the different points of engagement for positive action.

International implementation of the PoA has come a long way in terms of building norms and standards to combat and prevent the proliferation of SALW. To ensure sustainability of progress to date, it is critical that the gender implications for SALW use form an integral component of national and regional strategy development.

## Annex I: Glossary

**Gender Analysis** is the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated information. Men and women both perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these differences so that policies, programmes and projects can identify and meet the different needs of men and women. Gender analysis also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by women and men.

**Gender balance** is the term given to issues relating to staffing. Gender balance is seen as a human resources issue and is dealt with under those structures.

*OCHA*

**Gender Equality** Gender equality entails the concept that all human beings, both men and women, are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes, rigid gender roles, or prejudices. Gender equality means that the different behaviors, aspirations and needs of women and men are considered, valued and favored equally. It does not mean that women and men have to become the same, but that their rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female.

*ILO 2000*

**Gender Equity** is the process of being fair to men and women. To ensure fairness, measures must often be put in place to compensate for the historical and social disadvantages that prevent women and men from operating on a level playing field. Equity is a means. Equality is the result.

*UNESCO*

**Gender Mainstreaming** is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, such that inequality between men and women is not perpetuated.

*ECOSOC 1997*

**Gender-responsive objectives** are programme and project objectives that are non-discriminatory, equally benefit women and men and aim at correcting gender imbalances.

*UNESCO's gender mainstreaming framework*

**Gender sensitivity** Ability to perceive existing gender differences, issues and inequalities and incorporate these into strategies and actions.

*WHO*

**Disaggregated Data (Sex):** Sex-disaggregated data is quantitative statistical information on differences and inequalities between women and men.

*DFID, April 2002*

There is a widespread confusion over, and misuse of, the terms “gender disaggregated data” and “sex-disaggregated data”. Data should necessarily be **sex-disaggregated** but not **gender-disaggregated** since males and females are counted according to their biological difference and not according to their social behaviors. The term **gender-disaggregated data** is often frequently used, but it is nevertheless it should be understood as **sex-disaggregated data**.

## Annex II: List of UN agencies and specialized funds working in the field of gender awareness

- **Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA)**  
*<http://disarmament.un.org/gender.htm>*
- **Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)**  
*<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/>*
- **Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO)**  
*<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/lessons/>  
[www.monuc.org](http://www.monuc.org)*
- **Department of Public Information (DPI)** <http://www.un.org/works/women/women1.html>
- **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)**  
*<http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/MEETING/003/X9611E.HTM>*
- **International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**  
*<http://www.iaea.org/Resources/Women/>*
- **International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**  
*<http://www.ifad.org/gender/policy/action.htm>*
- **International Labour Organization (ILO)**  
*<http://www.ilo.org/dyn/gender/gender.home>*
- **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)**  
*<http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/gender/index.html>*
- **Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)**  
*[http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha\\_ol/pub/iasc/IASC%20gender%20policy.htm](http://www.reliefweb.int/ocha_ol/pub/iasc/IASC%20gender%20policy.htm)*
- **Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI)**  
*<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/>*
- **Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNHCHR)**  
*<http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu2/7/b/women/>*
- **United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)**  
*<http://www.unifem.org> or  
<http://www.womenwarpeace.org/issues/smallarms/smallarms.htm>*
- **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**  
*[http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=3160&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3160&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)*
- **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**  
*[http://www.unodc.org/unodc/alternative\\_development\\_projects\\_gender.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/alternative_development_projects_gender.html)*

- **WomenWatch**  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>
- **World Bank Group**  
<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTGENDER/0,,menuPK:336874~pagePK:149018~piPK:149093~theSitePK:336868,00.html>
- **World Health Organization (WHO)**  
<http://www.who.int/gender/en/>
- **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**  
<http://www.wipo.int/women-and-ip/en/>
- **World Meteorological Organization (WMO)**  
<http://www.wmo.ch/web/wmoh/>