

MODULE 3

Impact of small arms and light weapons on conflict, security and human development

Objective

To outline the impact that the illicit and uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW) have on conflict, security and human development, including the different impacts experienced by men, women, and different age groups.

Summary

This module looks at some factors behind the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW, and illustrates the different ways in which widespread availability of small arms affect peace, conflict, security and development. Although the presence of SALW does not necessarily cause conflict, it does contribute to the level of violence and the intractability of some conflicts. Similarly, easy access to illicit weapons also fuels insecurity, particularly within and among communities, as grievances can easily escalate into violent confrontation and people resort to violence to resolve disputes even after conflict has ended. Violence and insecurity in turn threaten development by contributing to displacement, hindering access to education and health care, undermining or overturning livelihoods and commercial activity, and destroying or damaging infrastructure. This module also considers the impact of SALW through a gendered and age-related lens. Men, women and people of different ages have fundamentally different experiences of life and livelihoods, and different groups experience the impact of SALW differently.

Session	Learning objective	Lesson plan	Exercise/Tool	Handout	Time
Module 0: Introduction					
Introductions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Become comfortable with group 		Introductions – find out and present name and 3 things about partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ List of participants ■ Name badges 	9.00–9.20am (20 mins)
Course overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Understand what is included in the curriculum ■ Agree on the agenda 	Exercise to identify participants' expectations from the training.	On flash cards participants write their expectations from the training (1–2), read out to others and paste on the wall. These can be revisited at the end of the workshop to check whether the workshop met their expectations.	Workshop agenda	9.20–9.45am (25 mins)
Establishing ground rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Establish ground rules for training 		Ground rules – group brainstorm		9.45–10.00am (15 mins)
Morning tea break					10.00–10.30am (30 mins)
Module 3: Impact of small arms and light weapons on conflict, security, and human development					
2 Impacts of SALW on conflict and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To understand the different ways in which widespread availability of small arms affect peace, conflict, and security. ■ To be aware that the range and frequency at which SALW have been used in recent conflict suggests that modern SALW are both increasing in numbers and becoming more prevalent in armed conflict. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Give out handout 2. Present case study on the LRA to highlight the impact of armed rebel groups on local and regional security. 3. Present case study on security in Lakes State since 2005. 	Case study examples	Handout: Conflict, security, and development	10.30am–12.00pm (90 mins)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To recognize that the widespread availability of SALW is a threat to human security because their presence encourages violent rather than peaceful ways of resolving problems. 				
3 Impacts of SALW on development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To grasp that the socio-economic under-development is both a breeding ground for and a consequence of the proliferation and misuse of SALW. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present case study on Jonglei and Eastern Equatoria states. 2. Workshop exercise 1 Allow 20 minutes per group exercise for discussion and then request each group to give a 5–10 minute feedback presentation. 	Workshop exercise 1 Divide participants into groups of three to six persons. Ask each group to discuss how SALW has impacted on conflict, security, and development in South Sudan, drawing on their own knowledge and experience.	Handout: Conflict, security, and development	12.00–1.30pm (90 mins)
Lunch					1.30–2.30pm (60 mins)
4 Impacts of SALW by gender and age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ To recognize the different ways in which SALW impacts harmfully on the young and old, women, men, and children. 	Workshop exercise 2 <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss the impact of illicit proliferation and misuse of SALW on gender. 2. Discuss the impact of illicit proliferation and misuse of SALW on children/youth. 	Workshop exercise 2 Divide participants into groups of three to six persons. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ask each group to imagine themselves being one of the following: a group of young women; old women; young men; old men. (Depending on the context of those being trained, you could add/substitute with other types of groups as well, for instance particular tribes.) Ask each group to discuss: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do they think is the impact of SALW proliferation and misuse from their points of view? b. How has it affected their lives and their futures? 2. Ask each group to discuss: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What they thought of the idea that women and children could use SALW and be active combatants in armed conflict? b. What they thought of the idea that men could be victims of armed conflict and SALW use? 	Handout: Conflict, security, and development	2.30–4.30pm (120 mins)
End of day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Wrap-up ■ Evaluation 					4.30–5.00pm (30 mins)

1 SALW, security and development

SALW have many uses beyond their primary function as weapons of war. As a consequence, the effects of their proliferation are widespread. The first cluster of effects is connected with **conflict** and **insecurity**, and includes both the direct costs (deaths and injuries in conflicts) and the indirect costs (post-conflict insecurity, inter-communal tensions, etc.) of SALW proliferation and use. Although the presence or proliferation of small arms and light weapons does not *cause* the conflicts that are evident around the world, they do contribute to their level of violence, and generally therefore make the resolution of these conflicts more difficult.

The second cluster relates to **development** and governance issues. Investments of time and money – by governments, the international development community, major international aid agencies and NGOs – often have little impact in conflict-affected environments because gains are undermined by violence and insecurity. Up to 1.5 billion people live in countries that are affected by conflict and fragility, and 70% of fragile states have experienced conflict since 1989.¹ SALW misuse is one of the factors that cause insecure situations and therefore undermines development. At the same time, a lack of development and a state that does not provide security to its people are some of the factors causing people to have weapons. For this reason, international focus on SALW issues has often been cast more broadly to address the roots of conflict and strengthen security provision through processes like security sector reform.²

2 Impacts of SALW on conflict and insecurity

Since the invention of SALW, they have been used in many wars and conflicts, including between states, but also at sub-national level. Because of SALW being so easily available, relatively cheap (in comparison to conventional weapons) and easy to carry or move around, it has become possible for ordinary people to possess and use SALW relatively easily. But the illicit, uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of SALW have severe effects on conflicts, security and human development, as outlined below.

Impact on conflict

Earlier wars in the 19th and 20th centuries already involved the use of rifles, carbines, machine guns and similar weapons, but the range and frequency at which such weapons have been used in more recent conflict suggests that modern SALW are both increasing in numbers and becoming more prevalent in armed conflicts. For example, armed conflicts Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda all witnessed child combatants using small arms with ease. And since these weapons are easy to move around – and given the history of so many armed conflicts in Africa already – SALW are already present to a large degree in many societies.

SALW are used both by government forces (military and police) and by non-state actors (guerrillas, ethnic militias, self-defence units, violent criminals etc) engaged in conflicts

¹ IDPS 2012, p 1.

² DFAIT 2008.

against each other or against the state, or in violent criminal activities. Of the 49 armed conflicts since 1990, all but three relied on SALW as the only instrument of war, and only one, the 1991 Persian Gulf War, was dominated by heavy weapons.³ Modern small arms – especially assault rifles like the Soviet/Russian AK-47 and the US-made M-16 – have played an especially conspicuous role in recent conflicts, accounting for anywhere between 35 and 60 percent of all of the deaths and injuries in warfare since 1990.⁴

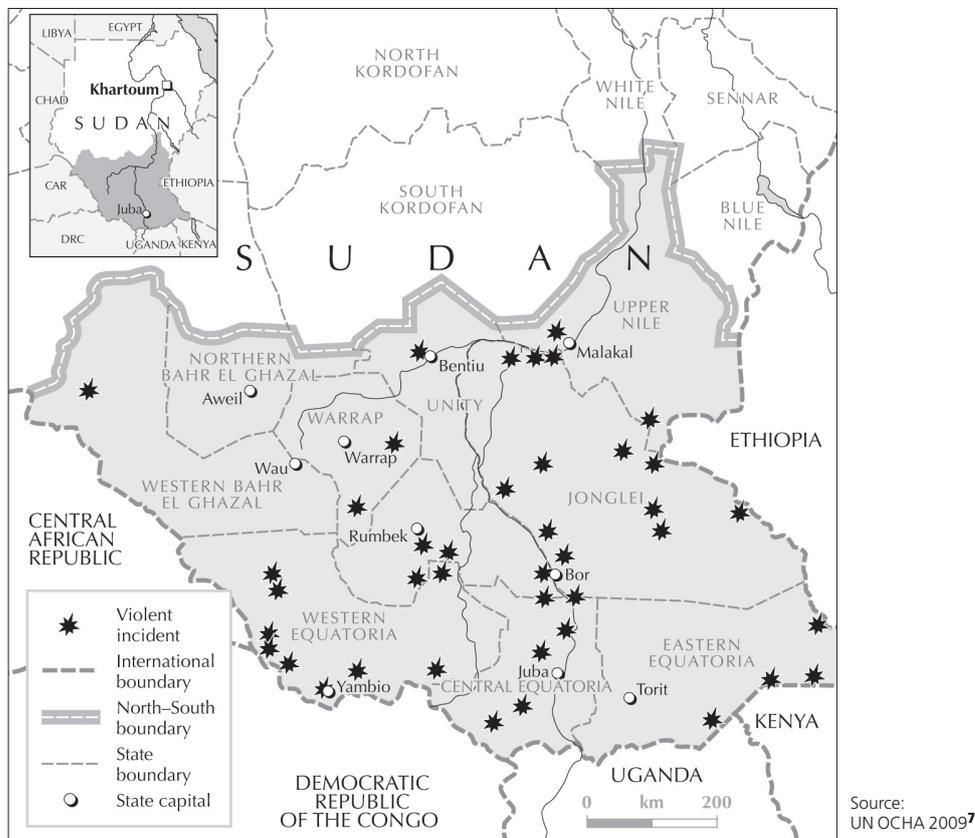
EXAMPLE

South Sudan

Until the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005, South Sudan experienced decades of armed conflict, and was in 2011 still suffering from the consequences, including underdevelopment, large-scale displacement and continuing armed conflict at the community level. There are many different causes and levels of conflict in South Sudan, ranging from conflicts between individuals and groups over such things as marriage, cattle, water and pasture to conflicts at the political level. The presence of small arms contributes to these conflicts and makes them more deadly. For example, violence between pastoralists and crop farmers or among pastoralists over cattle rustling or grazing rights has historically occurred in South Sudan. Traditionally, these conflicts were fought with spears and sticks. However, this has changed due to the circulation of small arms during the civil war. Cattle raids with the use of guns can now lead to dozens or even hundreds of deaths. Traditional conflict resolution mechanisms, such as negotiations between community elders, are also less effective, as power is now often wielded by well-armed young men.⁵

In 2009, South Sudan experienced a major spike in armed violence, causing some 2,500 deaths and displacing 350,000 (see Map 1 below). The violence took place as implementation of the CPA reached crisis point, with the (then) Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) almost exclusively preoccupied with countering perceived Northern aggression, at the expense of security and governance issues closer to home.⁶

Map 1 Significant violent incidents causing displacement, South Sudan, 2009



³ Klare, undated webpage.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ BICC 2007, p 9.

⁶ McEvoy and LeBrun 2010, p 19.

⁷ *Ibid.*

EXAMPLE**Impact of armed rebel groups on local and regional security**

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, remains a serious threat to security and stability, both in South Sudan and regionally. While the LRA was originally a northern Ugandan rebel group of ethnic Acholi with grievances against the Kampala government, more recently it has recruited an unknown number of South Sudanese Acholi and Congolese and has maintained an itinerant existence in areas bordering South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and the Central African Republic (CAR). It has long engaged in opportunistic violence in South Sudan, terrorising communities and maintaining its numbers through kidnapping and the theft of ammunition and food. Khartoum supported the LRA against the SPLA during the civil war – countering support of the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) for the SPLA – and though its forces in South Sudan reportedly numbered fewer than 50 out of an army estimated at present to be 300 strong, the group is still widely feared.⁸

Impact on security

The widespread availability of SALW is a threat to human security because their presence encourages violent rather than peaceful ways of resolving problems, and negate confidence- and security-building measures.⁹ The unregulated circulation of SALW to a wide range of unaccountable and untrained actors also contributes to violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Even after a conflict has officially ended, SALW often remain in the conflict zone in the hands of ex-combatants, civilians and criminals, making it easy for fighting to restart. Even when further combat is avoided, small arms become tools of other forms of violence, such as criminal activity, ethnic and political rivalries, and interference with efforts to deliver food, medicine, and supplies to people in dire need of relief. Refugees are often afraid to return to their homes because of the large number of weapons that remain in the hands of ex-combatants who have not been demobilised or have become affiliated with local gangs, warlords, or militias.¹⁰ While some people may feel that they and/or their families are made more secure by owning a weapon, particularly in situations where governments cannot protect their citizens, this arming of civilians can create a feeling of insecurity among other members of the community. More deaths, injuries and accidental wounding are likely during quarrels and disagreements if a weapon is available in households. Psychological consequences such as trauma may also result. Meanwhile, the proliferation of criminal, domestic and anti-state violence can lead governments to commit resources to security rather than development.¹¹

After a conflict, SALW may become instruments for other forms of violence, such as crime and banditry and disruption of economic activities. In countries that receive development assistance or where emergency relief is required for people affected by violence or other disasters, SALW use can make it too unsafe for such help to be provided.¹²

EXAMPLE**Security in Lakes State, South Sudan since 2005**

A study undertaken by the Small Arms Survey in Lakes State in 2006 found that every third respondent admitted to owning a firearm (most commonly an AK-47 assault rifle) either individually or as part of a family. The survey found that most residents of Lakes State were in favour of stronger measures to control private gun ownership. It also found that while some respondents said that security had improved after the signing of the CPA, others reported feeling less secure than during the conflict. Most households had experienced armed robberies and fights involving firearms since January 2005.¹³

⁸ HSBA 2011, p 4; McEvoy and LeBrun April 2010, p 27.

⁹ UNDDR 2006, Introduction, p 3. UNDP defines human security as a broad range of seven threats (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political) to individuals. See UNDP 1994.

¹⁰ Klare, undated webpage.

¹¹ UNDDR 2006, Introduction, p 3.

¹² Klare, undated webpage.

¹³ BICC 2007, p 11.

3

Impacts of SALW on development

Socio-economic underdevelopment presents both a breeding ground for and a consequence of the proliferation and misuse of SALW.¹⁴ The long-term impacts and costs of SALW in terms of human and economic development affect societies as a whole, and the adverse effects of armed violence on poverty, social spending and economic development perpetuate human suffering. SALW can have a negative and destructive impact on human development, including health and mortality, knowledge and education, income and standard of living, and community participation.¹⁵ SALW also play a key role in criminal activities and damage to property and can become an integral part of day-to-day business and commerce, which have a negative impact on employment, investment and growth of post-conflict countries. Widespread use of small arms in business and commerce frequently has a detrimental effect on business activity and employment which in turn fuels poverty. As a result, there may be less opportunity to work and earn an income as investment declines – not only large-scale Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), but also by local or regional entrepreneurs who may not want to take the risk.

There is an increasing recognition that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) will not be achieved unless more is done to increase and promote security, as a secure environment is a precondition for development. For example, in its assessment of current threats to international peace and security, the UN High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change recognised that extreme poverty creates environments which make the emergence of threats such as terrorism and civil conflict more likely. The proliferation of SALW interferes with the provision of basic needs, and creates difficulty in carrying out development programmes because of the threat of violence.

In recognition that most conflict-affected states will not reach the MDG targets, the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS)¹⁶ was initiated in 2008 to develop strategies for promoting development in countries affected by conflict and fragility. The members of the IDPS include conflict-affected countries, donor countries and international institutions and they agreed in 2011 on a new way of supporting conflict-affected states, with five priority areas:

- Legitimate politics: Foster inclusive political settlements and conflict resolution
- Security: Establish and strengthen people's security
- Justice: Address injustices and increase people's access to justice
- Economic foundations: Generate employment and improve livelihoods
- Revenues and services: Manage revenue and build capacity for accountable and fair service delivery.¹⁷

These priorities reflect an international commitment to improve the security of people living in insecure states – including through tackling SALW issues – as part of a broader development agenda. South Sudan is a member of the IDPS process and is one of the first countries in which the above priorities will be implemented.

The presence of SALW also has direct costs to governments. In some countries, as much as 25 percent of annual gross domestic product is spent on treating victims of armed violence and on increased policing, with firearms being involved in over 80 percent of all violent deaths.¹⁸ Greater personal insecurity means that increasingly, disposable income

¹⁴ Heinrich 2006, p 5.

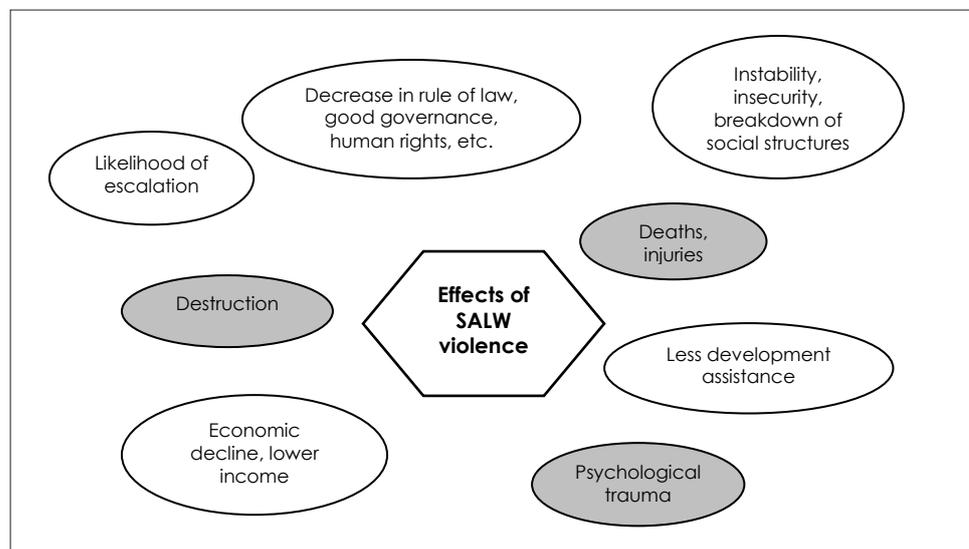
¹⁵ BICC 2006, p 6.

¹⁶ The website is: www.oecd.org/site/0,3407,en_21571361_43407692_1_1_1_1_1,00.html.

¹⁷ IDPS 2012, p 2.

¹⁸ UNDDR 2006, Introduction, pp 2–3.

is directed to the purchase of arms and ammunition. Economic factors such as high rates of unemployment and low wages may also cause people to use weapons as a means of survival.¹⁹ There is two-way relationship between economic and social stability in that victims of negative economic conditions may join forces to resist the prevailing social order, precipitating social instability. In addition, armed violence has a particularly negative impact on vulnerable groups such as women (see Section 4 below).



Source: People Safe from Guns in South Sudan. A Training Manual for Local Stakeholders. BICC 2006, p 7.

EXAMPLE

Jonglei and Eastern Equatoria States, South Sudan

Home to 1.3 million inhabitants, Jonglei State in South Sudan is also among the most underdeveloped regions in the world. Multiple ethnic communities migrate seasonally to sustain cattle and preserve their pastoralist way of life. Access to water and grazing areas, as well as cattle rustling, are thus primary triggers of conflict. Tensions between communities are aggravated by pervasive tribalism and perceptions of state bias, the virtual absence of roads and infrastructure, widespread food insecurity, land disputes and limited access to justice. The prevalence of violence in Jonglei is also partly due to the fact that many former fighters who have not been absorbed into the SPLA or other security institutions and have nothing much to do retain their guns, military orientation and old allegiances.²⁰

In Eastern Equatoria State (EES), severe drought and food insecurity affecting large parts of the state since April 2009 have been widely reported as another key reason for increasing levels of armed violence and insecurity. Violence peaked at the end of 2009, coinciding with the height of the migratory period for cattle keepers, who in the face of drought have to venture farther into unfamiliar or hostile territory in search of pasture and water points. For example, in Isoke *payam*, Ikotos county, 40 out of 60 reported violent incidents from September to December 2009 involved gunshot injuries. Where the previous norm was one to two gunshot wounds per month, by the end of 2009 the rate had increased to one to two per week.²¹

¹⁹ *Ibid*, p 3.

²⁰ International Crisis Group 2009, p i.

²¹ HSBA 2010, p 4.

4

Impacts of SALW by gender and age

It is important to bring a gender and age analysis to our understanding of the impact of the illicit proliferation and misuse on all levels of society. The key insight brought by a gender and age analysis is not merely the articulation of gendered differences but, more significantly, how to address the inequalities between women and men and girls and boys which are manifested in the fact that globally, women have less access to power, resources and decision-making processes than men. Furthermore, it provides us with analytical tools that address and find solutions to structural inequalities between women and men and girls and boys.²² SALW impact harmfully on young and old, women and men and children – but often in somewhat different ways.

Men: The highest percentage of both perpetrators and victims of SALW violence are men. Men often see weapons as symbols of ‘courage’, ‘masculinity’ or ‘honour’, and therefore as positive and necessary for their survival.²³ For example, in the Horn of Africa generally, social ideas and beliefs about masculinity and manhood are closely connected to weapons and arms. A man without a gun in zones of conflict is often not considered “a real man”. At the same time, masculinity and femininity are often defined in such a ways as to support military approaches to conflict and to retain the dominance of men in decision-making.²⁴

“I don’t think I would like to have a daughter who is an amputee, or see my wife with one arm. That decreases the value of woman for us. I would rather come home with one leg. So, we felt [in the SPLA] that it is our duty as men to do the fighting, the dirty job. We do it, and the women take care of the children. Therefore most of the women are discouraged from the army. When we told them that fighting is not your work, they didn’t quarrel. They just went away in peace and got married and they have children now.”²⁵

This quote illustrates the beliefs of many people in the Horn of Africa that men need to ‘be masculine’ by using SALW in defence of their nation and women. While men perform this role, the appropriate role for women is to become the bearers of culture and to socialise the next generation of male fighters.²⁶ Yet in many countries across the globe this idea that women are always pacifist and stay at home when there is war has been disproved: women too have taken up arms.

EXAMPLE

Women and conflict

There are myriad examples of women who go beyond supporting the conflict in some way to engaging actively in acts of violence as combatants. Women have participated as active combatants in conflicts around the world, including in Algeria, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, South Africa, Sri Lanka, and Zimbabwe. Their numbers are not insignificant: for example, 25 percent of the combatants in El Salvador’s Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) were women. In the case of Nicaragua, approximately 30 per cent of soldiers and leaders of the Sandanista National Liberation Front were female. In the latter case, many of the high-ranking women were also later involved in the peace negotiations – although, as one noted, not “as a woman, but as a representative of a powerful armed group”. In cases such as El Salvador and Sudan, women have filled leadership positions, both within the military and paramilitary structures as well as within the government. It should be noted, however, that such gender changes at the micro level are often not accompanied by corresponding changes in political or organisational influence, and they do not necessarily fundamentally alter patriarchal ideologies.²⁷

²² El Jack 2002, p 52. See also Eckman et al 2007 and Krienert 2003 for more critical discussions on questions of masculine expression.

²³ BICC 2007, p 5.

²⁴ El Jack 2002, p 53.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ Kaufman and Williams 2010, p 133.

Women: The uncontrolled proliferation of SALW increases the threat of intimidation and abuse of women and heightens the lethality of violence against women,²⁸ both inside and outside the home. Sexual and gender-based violence is also often committed against men and boys, but this issue has been severely under-reported and under-researched to date.²⁹ During armed conflict, women may also choose or be forced to perform certain roles for combatants – act as ‘wives’ (often forced), porters, cooks, spies, or messengers. In this context women often endure sexual violence as well. Nevertheless, women also can play roles that are conducive to SALW proliferation. Sometimes they encourage their men to arm, or play a key role in encouraging small arms violence, including by supporting and promoting cycles of revenge.³⁰ Sometimes they play a role in weapons smuggling; sometimes they arm themselves; and sometimes they also serve as combatants in civil conflict.

EXAMPLE

Women’s agency in conflict periods

The organisation Sudanese Women’s Voices for Peace (SWVP) has been networking through community-based mechanisms for peace mobilisation since 1994 in the difficult environment in South Sudan and other parts of the country. SWVP’s membership is based on activism, with a special focus on the human rights of all Sudanese people. The main goal of SWVP is to strengthen network members, enhance small arms control to achieve ‘families free of gun violence’, and to establish dialogue and ensure disarmament in Sudan. Since 2000, SWVP has been working near the Kenya-South Sudan border developing posters addressing the issue of small arms, focusing on getting guns out of public places such as schools, hospitals, churches and markets.³¹

Children/youth: In situation of violence and conflict, children and youth are pushed, pulled and forced into various actions by people, events and decisions over which they have little or no control. It is estimated that since 1990, more than 2 million children have been killed in wars, 6 million have been seriously injured and more than 22 million have been driven from their homes.³² The vast majority of the casualties are directly attributable to SALW. In societies destabilised by the use of SALW, children are denied many of their human rights, including their rights to freedom from violence and exploitation, survival and development, health care, education and care within a family environment. As a result, progress that had previously been made, for instance on extending education to children or on providing them with health care, can be undermined or even reversed. In many countries around the world there is a relationship between youth unemployment and violence that requires further consideration in relation to the impact of SALW.

In conflict situations, SALW heighten levels of violence and prevent humanitarian assistance from reaching those who need it. They also create opportunities for violence to continue in other forms long after peace agreements are signed. In communities enjoying relative peace, children witness and are traumatised by the use of SALW in domestic violence and in disputes. Children also become accidental victims because adults fail to keep the weapons out of their reach.³³

Another consequence of the availability of SALW and their use in conflicts is the use of child soldiers. Experience in countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda has shown that children can easily be frightened and exploited, and then trained to handle SALW. An estimated 300,000 children worldwide are currently fighting in adult wars.³⁴

²⁸ Gender-based violence (GBV) is a form of violence that targets individuals because of their gender and can be perpetrated against women or men. GBV includes violent acts such as rape, torture, mutilation, sexual slavery, forced impregnation and murder. Especially in war and conflict situations, the risk and incidence of GBV increases. In BICC 2006, pp 10–11.

²⁹ RLP 2009.

³⁰ BICC 2007, p 6.

³¹ IANSA 2005, p 46.

³² UNICEF 2001.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

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Workshop exercises

Exercise 1

Impact of SALW in South Sudan

Divide participants into groups of three to six persons. Ask each group to discuss how SALW has impacted on conflict, security and development in South Sudan, drawing on their own knowledge and experiences. Allow 20 minutes per group exercise for discussion and then request each group to give a 5–10-minute feedback presentation.

Exercise 2

SALW, gender and age in South Sudan

Divide participants into groups of three to six persons.

1. Ask each group to imagine themselves being one of the following: a group of young women; a group of old women; a group of young men; a group of old men. (Depending on the context of those being trained, you could add/substitute with other types of groups as well, for instance particular tribes.) Ask each group to discuss:
 - a. What do they think is the impact of SALW proliferation and misuse from their points of view?
 - b. How has it affected their lives and their futures?
2. Ask each group to discuss:
 - a. What they thought of the idea that women and children could use SALW and be active combatants in armed conflict?
 - b. What they thought of the idea that men could be victims of armed conflict and SALW use?

Allow 20 minutes per group exercise for discussion and then request each group to give a 5–10-minute feedback presentation. Exercise 2 can be expanded by changing the assignments so that by the end of the training every group has presented on each of the different genders and age groups.

MODULE 3: HANDOUT

Conflict, security and development

Impacts of SALW on conflict and insecurity (M3 S2)

Effects include both direct costs (deaths and injuries in conflicts) and indirect costs (post-conflict insecurity, intercommunal tensions, etc.).

The widespread availability of SALW is a threat to human security because their presence encourages violent rather than peaceful ways of resolving problems, and negates confidence- and security-building measures.¹

CASE STUDY

Impact of armed rebel groups on local and regional security

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), led by Joseph Kony, remains a serious threat to security and stability, both in South Sudan and regionally. While the LRA was originally a northern Ugandan rebel group of ethnic Acholi with grievances against the Kampala government, more recently it has recruited an unknown number of Sudanese Acholi and Congolese and has maintained an itinerant existence in areas bordering South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and the Central African Republic (CAR). It has long engaged in opportunistic violence in South Sudan, terrorising communities and maintaining its numbers through kidnapping and the theft of ammunition and food. Khartoum supported the LRA against the SPLA during the civil war – countering support of the Uganda People's Defence Force (UPDF) for the SPLA – and though its forces in South Sudan reportedly numbered fewer than 50 out of an army estimated at present to be 300 strong, the group is still widely feared.²

CASE STUDY

Security in Lakes State, South Sudan since 2005

A study undertaken by the Small Arms Survey in Lakes State in 2006 found that every third respondent admitted to owning a firearm (most commonly an AK-47 assault rifle) either individually or as part of a family. The survey found that most residents of Lakes State were in favour of stronger measures to control private gun ownership. It also found that while some respondents said that security had improved after the signing of the CPA, others reported feeling less secure than during the conflict. Most households had experienced armed robberies and fights involving firearms since January 2005.³

Impacts of SALW on development (M3 S3)

Socio-economic underdevelopment presents both a breeding ground for and a consequence of the proliferation and misuse of SALW.⁴

After a conflict, SALW may become instruments for other forms of violence, such as crime and banditry and disruption of economic activities. In countries that receive development assistance or where emergency relief is required for people affected by violence or other disasters, SALW use can make it too unsafe for such help to be provided.

¹ UNDDR 2006, Introduction, p 3. UNDP defines human security as a broad range of seven threats (economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political) to *individuals*. See UNDP 1994.

² HSBA 2011, p 4; McEvoy and LeBrun April 2010, p 27.

³ BICC 2007, p 11.

⁴ Heinrich 2006, p 5.

EXAMPLE

Jonglei and Eastern Equatoria States, South Sudan

Home to 1.3 million inhabitants, Jonglei State in South Sudan is also among the most underdeveloped regions in the world. Multiple ethnic communities migrate seasonally to sustain cattle and preserve their pastoralist way of life. Access to water and grazing areas, as well as cattle rustling, are thus primary triggers of conflict. Tensions between communities are aggravated by pervasive tribalism and perceptions of state bias, the virtual absence of roads and infrastructure, widespread food insecurity, land disputes and limited access to justice. The prevalence of violence in Jonglei is also partly due to the fact that many former fighters who have not been absorbed into the SPLA or other security institutions and have nothing much to do retain their guns, military orientation and old allegiances.⁵

In Eastern Equatoria State (EES), severe drought and food insecurity affecting large parts of the state since April 2009 have been widely reported as another key reason for increasing levels of armed violence and insecurity. Violence peaked at the end of 2009, coinciding with the height of the migratory period for cattle keepers, who in the face of drought have to venture farther into unfamiliar or hostile territory in search of pasture and water points. For example, in Isoke *payam*, Ikotos county, 40 out of 60 reported violent incidents from September to December 2009 involved gunshot injuries. Where the previous norm was one to two gunshot wounds per month, by the end of 2009 the rate had increased to one to two per week.⁶

Impacts of SALW by gender and age (M3 S4)

The key insight brought by a gender and age analysis is not merely the articulation of gendered differences but, more significantly, how to address the inequalities between women and men and girls and boys which are manifested in the fact that globally, women have less access to power, resources and decision-making processes than men.

Men	The highest percentage of both perpetrators and victims of SALW violence are men. Men often see weapons as symbols of ‘courage’, ‘masculinity’ or ‘honour’, and therefore as positive and necessary for their survival. ⁷
Women	The uncontrolled proliferation of SALW increases the threat of intimidation and abuse of women and heightens the lethality of violence against women, ⁸ both inside and outside the home. Sexual and gender-based violence is also often committed against men and boys, but this issue has been severely under-reported and under-researched to date. ⁹ Women also can play roles that are conducive to SALW proliferation. Sometimes they encourage their men to arm, or play a key role in encouraging small arms violence, including by supporting and promoting cycles of revenge. ¹⁰ Sometimes they play a role in weapons smuggling; sometimes they arm themselves; and sometimes they also serve as combatants in civil conflict.
Children/ youth	In situations of violence and conflict, children and youth are pushed, pulled and forced into various actions by people, events and decisions over which they have little or no control. In many countries around the world there is a relationship between youth unemployment and violence that requires further consideration in relation to the impact of SALW.

This handout is taken from *Small arms and light weapons: A training manual*, published by Saferworld, February 2012

⁵ International Crisis Group 2009, p i.

⁶ HSBA 2010, p 4.

⁷ BICC 2007, p 5.

⁸ Gender-based violence (GBV) is a form of violence that targets individuals because of their gender and can be perpetrated against women or men. GBV includes violent acts such as rape, torture, mutilation, sexual slavery, forced impregnation and murder. Especially in war and conflict situations, the risk and incidence of GBV increases. In BICC 2006, pp 10–11.

⁹ RLP 2009.

¹⁰ BICC 2007, p 6.