

January 2025

HOW-TO GUIDE

Developing Gender-responsive National Action Plans on Small Arms

Kheira Djouhri and Callum Watson





Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA



german
cooperation
DEUTSCHE.ZUSAMMENARBEIT

HOW-TO GUIDE

Developing Gender-responsive National Action Plans on Small Arms

Kheira Djouhri and Callum Watson

A publication of the Small Arms Survey's Gender-responsive Arms Control project,
with support from the German Federal Foreign Office and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.



CREDITS

Project coordinator: Callum Watson

Production and communications coordinators: Olivia Denonville, Lionel Kosirnik, and Katie Lazaro

Editor: Mira Fey

Reviewers: Luc Chounet-Cambas and Julien Joly

Copy-editor: Alex Potter

Design and layout: Rick Jones

Illustrations: Daly Design

Proofreader: Stephanie Huitson

Published in Switzerland by the Small Arms Survey

© Small Arms Survey, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva, 2025

First published in January 2025

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of the Small Arms Survey, or as expressly permitted by law, or under terms agreed with the appropriate reprographics rights organization.

The Small Arms Survey takes no position regarding the status or name of countries or territories mentioned in this publication.

ISBN: 978-2-940747-17-7

CONTENTS

Abbreviations and acronyms	4
The aim of this guide	5
How to use this guide	6
Part I: How to ensure diverse, meaningful participation in small arms–related events such as workshops	7
What is meaningful participation?	8
PART II: How to include gender perspectives in the NAP development process	15
National Action Plan Process	16
Key resources	29
References	31

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CSO	Civil society organization
MOSAIC	Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium
NAP	National action plan
NatCom	National commission
NGO	Non-governmental organization
RevCon	Review conference
WAM	Weapons and ammunition management
WPS	Women, peace and security

THE AIM OF THIS GUIDE

At the Fourth Review Conference (RevCon₄) of the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2024, member states expressed concern that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons impedes the achievement of gender equality. This has long been understood by women’s civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as several states that have both experienced and documented the gender-differentiated impacts of small arms and light weapons and their broader impacts on human rights.

The RevCon₄ outcome document calls on states to mainstream a gender perspective in the design and implementation of gender-responsive policies (UNGA, 2024). Since 2017 the Small Arms Survey has supported several countries and territories in the development or evaluation of national action plans (NAPs) on small arms control.¹ Based on the good practices and lessons it has identified in its work, the Survey has developed this guide as a tool that can be used to make national small arms policies and practices, specifically small arms NAPs, more inclusive and gender responsive. This means considering the specific needs of men, women, boys, girls, and under-represented groups in light of the differentiated impact of weapons on these populations. The guide also aims to strengthen diverse, meaningful participation in local and national small arms control processes; to better understand the root causes of violence; and to address small arms control from a development perspective.

The Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC) 06.10 on *Women, Men, and the Gendered Nature of Small Arms and Light Weapons* highlights the importance of ‘ensuring that gender is adequately integrated into all stages of a small arms control initiative’ to ensure ‘its overall quality’ (UNODA, 2017b, s. 7.1).

1 In Benin, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Somaliland.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is aimed at national actors involved in designing and implementing national policy processes related to small arms control, and particularly the development of NAPs. It is also designed to be used by regional and international partners supporting national actors in these processes.

The guide is based on the Small Arms Survey's approach to developing small arms control NAPs. This approach is built around five phases: (1) foundations, (2) assessment, (3) strategy, (4) operational plan, and (5) validation and dissemination. The guide's recommendations can complement existing mechanisms or serve as a basis to assist with the development of gender-responsive NAPs in the absence of such procedures.

The guide is structured in two sections. The first section aims to support arms control actors in ensuring diverse, meaningful participation in their workshops or meetings. The second section offers analysis and recommendations to encourage gender mainstreaming in the various stages of NAP development. Finally, a list of relevant resources is provided at the end of the guide to support national commissions (NatComs) and their partners. In this guide, we use the term 'national commission on small arms' to refer to all national authorities responsible for coordinating small arms control initiatives, whether they are designated focal points or specific institutions.

PART I

How to ensure diverse, meaningful participation in small arms–related events such as workshops

WHAT IS MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION?

The term ‘meaningful participation’ highlights how women and other under-represented groups need to not only be present at decision-making peace and security processes, but also have their concerns, contributions, and expertise featured in the outcomes of these processes (Salmela and Manion, 2018, p. 11). Currently, women and other under-represented groups are often included in decision-making processes, but only as observers or representatives without any real influence.

For this guide, we have adopted an inclusive approach. Therefore, the definitions and recommendations presented below can be applied to both women and other under-represented groups. Because these categories may differ from one context to another, the users of this guide should define these groups. These may include, among other categories, youth; people with disabilities; religious or ethnic minorities; and people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics.

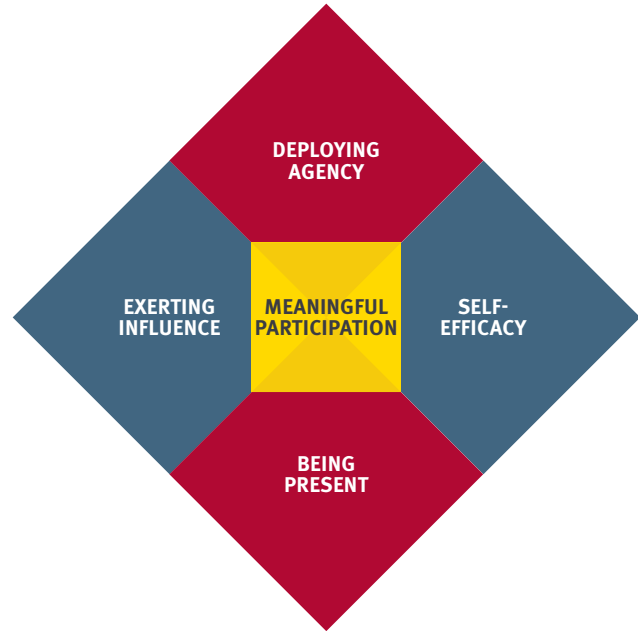
Figure 1 outlines four foundational components of meaningful participation identified at an expert group meeting convened by UN Women (Salmela and Manion, 2018; Buchanan, 2021). Although the definitions in Figure 1 are limited to the participation of women, they can be broadly extended to include groups traditionally under-represented in small arms control discussions, such as youth, people with disabilities, and sexual and gender minorities. Depending on the context, users of the guide are encouraged to define the relevant identity criteria to be considered at the national level in advance.

According to the UN Women definition, meaningful participation is realized when four elements are combined:

- **Deploying agency.** Women and under-represented groups should be able to deploy their agency by gathering evidence, setting substantive agendas, building coalitions, and collaboratively mobilizing strategies to drive change.
- **Self-efficacy.** Women and under-represented groups must possess self-efficacy, knowledge, confidence, and the resources needed to effectively represent their diverse and intersectional range of interests, values, and experiences.
- **Being present.** Women and under-represented groups must be present in settings, mechanisms, and positions of power to directly seize opportunities to inform, influence, and make decisions.
- **Exerting influence.** Women and under-represented groups must exert influence that alters decision-making outcomes to better reflect their diverse interests, values, and experiences and, therefore, those of the wider society.

These four elements should be considered in all activities related to NAP development, and are discussed in the remainder of the guide. The following section provides some specific guidance on how to support diverse meaningful participation in small arms control-related events.

Figure 1 The elements of meaningful participation



1. Before events

Integrating a gender component at the event’s preparation stage can maximize the chances of diverse, meaningful participation at the event. To address the root causes of women’s and other under-represented groups’ limited participation, it is strongly recommended to first hold a workshop to discuss the potential barriers to their participation (ideally, women and members of other under-represented groups should be included in the processes of organizing the workshop).

While some barriers are context specific, Small Arms Survey consultations² have shown that women and other under-represented groups lack confidence in their ability to master technical knowledge about small arms, and lack clarity about their role at a particular event and what is expected from their participation. Specifically, their inability to understand jargon and the abbreviations and acronyms that are frequently used at events also prevents women and other under-represented groups in many contexts from meaningfully participating by **‘deploying their agency’** and having **‘self-efficacy’**. One way to address this is by organizing a preparatory session for women and other diverse groups to:

- identify the possible barriers to their participation and solutions to overcome them (**‘being present’**);
- enhance the capacities of women and under-represented groups with regard to small arms–related issues such as definitions, technical terms, and abbreviations and acronyms that might be used at the event; international arms control instruments and guidelines; small arms identification; and weapons and ammunition management (**‘self-efficacy’**);
- identify the priorities of these groups and ensure that they are reflected in the agenda (**‘deploying agency’**); and
- provide opportunities for these groups to network and build coalitions (**‘deploying agency’**).

In this preparatory phase, the organizers (in this case the NatComs) should be attentive to the composition of the list of participants to meet the first condition of meaningful participation, that is, **‘being present’**. Meeting organizers should pay particular attention to ensuring diverse participation in terms of gender and, as far as possible, age, disability, and any other criteria considered relevant in the specific context.

2 Internal consultations with the Survey’s project officers, project assistants, researchers, and programme managers in January 2024.

The organizers could map what characteristics may result in discrimination in the country in question, for example, by establishing if the state defines any protected characteristic or attributes or identifies any national minorities in the country's legal framework. To save time and resources, organizers could refer to existing reports on discrimination produced by the government, international organizations, and civil society, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs), research organizations, and academia.³

To take this phase a step further . . .

To encourage diverse meaningful participation, organizers should:

- provide incentives, for example by extending the invitation to two members of an organization if one participant is from an under-represented group;
- work with participating organizations to identify staff from under-represented groups who could attend;
- engage with networks, such as women's staff associations, to identify potential participants from under-represented groups and invite them by name; and
- contact individuals in these organizations to seek guidance on facilitating their participation (for example, by inviting them to present a paper or lead or participate in a discussion on a specific topic).

To ensure diverse, meaningful participation, the organizers must consider certain criteria when planning the workshop. The timing (time of day and day of the week), venue, level of accessibility, availability of safe transport options, and security of the area surrounding the workshop will influence whether, for example, women or people with disabilities can attend (**'being present'**). In many contexts it is important to avoid evening meetings because some participants may have caregiving duties and safe transport options may be limited. As much as possible, the organizers should provide or fund transportation for people with disabilities when public transportation is not available or accessible.

³ These can include, for example, women, peace and security (WPS) NAPs, CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women) reports and shadow reports, Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review reports, and other reports produced by national human rights institutions.

2. During events

The presence of women and under-represented groups in the room does not in itself mean that they will be able to participate meaningfully by **'deploying their agency'**, **'exerting influence'**, and having **'self-efficacy'**. During events such as workshops, it is important to consider the different personalities of the participants, as some may dominate discussions and others may speak up less. Nevertheless, the environment in the room can be more of a determining factor of people's participation than their individual characters. The Survey's consultations highlighted the importance of skilled, active facilitation in addressing this. Facilitators should track how often each person participates and provide opportunities for others to speak if some participants dominate discussions.

The Survey's consultations also highlighted that breaks can be used for bilateral, 'informal' discussions, especially with new participants. Facilitators can reach out to participants who did not speak up in prior sessions and potentially support them in sharing relevant and contrasting information when the session resumes. Lending credence to the person's contribution may boost their confidence to participate in future sessions and **'exert their influence'**.

Group work can also be an effective way of encouraging the meaningful participation of women and under-represented groups. While plenary sessions are more formal, group work creates a safer space for the exchange of ideas and experiences. In some contexts, organizing gender-segregated working groups may also be appropriate. Depending on the culture of the country in question, at least initially women may feel more confident talking to other women. It is important, however, to ensure that the outcomes of these discussions are fed back into the main discussion.

3. After events

The post-events phase presents opportunities for organizers to draw lessons for improving inclusion in future activities. It is important to give participants, especially women and other under-represented groups, a chance to provide feedback after the event, allowing them to **‘exert influence’**. For example, a questionnaire can be shared with participants to find out whether:

- the way the event was organized—the time (time of day and day of the week) and location and location—enabled them to participate meaningfully (**‘being present’**);
- participants (individually) had sufficient knowledge and skills to participate meaningfully (**‘self-efficacy’**);
- the role of the participants (individually) was clear enough to enable them to put their experience and skills to good use (**‘deploying agency’**); and
- the workshop environment was safe and conducive to diverse, meaningful participation.

From the responses, organizers can identify measures to enhance participation, such as capacity-building for participants, either with specific groups (for example, on technical jargon) or with the whole group (for example, on gender-responsive small arms control).

Moreover, submitting the outcome document for validation by the various participants will enable gender actors, women, and other under-represented groups to ensure that the report reflects their specific needs and priorities in terms of small arms control. It also lets them take ownership of the event outcomes by valuing their contributions.

Finally, the post-event period provides opportunities to maintain links and exchanges between participants and to build platforms for future collaboration on topics such as gender and small arms control. For example, a WhatsApp group for meeting participants and sub-groups for female participants, if needed, can allow them to continue sharing advice and information or to meet up again in the future.

PART II

**How to include gender perspectives in the
NAP development process**

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN PROCESS

This section identifies possible entry points for gender mainstreaming in the various phases of the NAP development process (see Figure 2). Recommendations and examples of good practice are proposed to enable users to integrate gender perspectives into each stage of the process.

Phase 1: Laying the foundations

1. Definition of the phase

This is a preliminary phase during which the NatCom seeks to verify that the necessary conditions for developing a NAP are present. The aim of this phase is twofold: to ensure that the prerequisites for embarking on arms control processes are met, and to generate political buy-in for the development of a NAP.

2. Why it is important to integrate gender in this phase

Gender mainstreaming in this phase will help prepare actors for integrating gender perspectives into arms control by getting them to think about gender from the outset of the NAP development process. The aim is to identify the level of political will to take gender into account among policymakers working on small arms control and to identify gender actors who are already undertaking work that contributes to small arms control, such as peacebuilding, conflict prevention, protection, or combatting gender-based violence.



Figure 2 National action plan development process

Small Arms Survey approach



3. Recommendations: how to integrate gender in this phase

3.1. Analyse the composition of the NatCom, particularly in terms of gender

Some commissions are composed of gender representatives, such as the ministry of gender, women's promotion or equality, or CSOs with expertise in these matters. A NatCom may also have hired a gender expert as a focal point on these issues. In the absence of a gender representative in the NatCom, it is important to verify whether this is due to a lack of information, interest in gender, or pre-existing knowledge of and relations with these actors. It is essential to understand the NatCom's gender approach from the outset to highlight good practices and identify needs.

3.2. Analyse the relationship between the NatCom, security actors, and gender actors

It is common for gender actors and NatComs not to interact. This may be due to a lack of awareness of the differentiated impact of weapons on people of diverse genders or the widespread idea that arms control is a technical domain reserved for security actors, such as the army and police. Before initiating NAP development work and attempting to integrate gender perspectives, it is important to understand the relationships between these various actors and identify the institutional mechanisms that might facilitate their interaction.

3.3. Map existing gender initiatives and gender actors that contribute to arms control

It may be useful to map current or past initiatives in the country, or more broadly in the region, that link arms control and gender. These might include initiatives to address gender-based violence; community trust building; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; or positive discrimination policies in the armed forces. On the one hand, this mapping will enable the NatCom to contact gender actors, while on the other hand, it will determine the overall level of gender mainstreaming in the country. In some contexts, involving certain groups or addressing specific topics may present challenges, and their inclusion might put them at greater risk than it would benefit them. Adopting a 'do no harm' approach will help mitigate this potential negative impact. For example, it may be helpful to identify both the topics and groups that may face resistance from the group and to develop strategies to ensure that the NAP addresses their concerns.

4. Practical example of good practices and challenges

During its evaluation in Senegal in 2023, the Survey encouraged the NatCom to contact the institutional actors in charge of gender equality. A meeting was organized with the Ministry of Women, Family and Children to understand their involvement in the NatCom's work, specifically with the Gender Equity and Equality Directorate. While in practice the ministry did not participate in NatCom meetings, there were many synergies between the two institutions. Indeed, the Gender Equity and Equality Directorate was involved in activities, including research, on issues relating to the impact of trafficking on women and children at the country's borders. Illicit activities such as child labour and human, drug, or arms trafficking were raised. Although the two institutions would benefit from working together, the lack of communication hindered these interactions. To break down silos of this kind in other countries, NatComs could, for example, establish focal points to liaise with the ministry of gender and other relevant gender actors, commission joint research on topics related to gender and small arms control, and formalize the participation of gender actors in the NatComs' meetings.

Phase 2: Assessment

1. Definition of the phase

The assessment phase involves evaluating the needs, practices, and challenges faced by small arms control stakeholders in weapons and ammunition management (WAM). This includes assessing the extent and nature of arms proliferation in the country, and reviewing relevant policies, operational capacities, and practices.

This phase should ideally build on studies such as national small arms and light weapons surveys that outline the gender-differentiated threats and impacts these weapons have, as well as the root causes of armed violence in the country. These studies should also provide an overview of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, identifying both the supply routes and demand factors, including how gender and other roles, norms, and expectations influence these dynamics.

2. Why it is important to integrate gender in this phase

Applying a gender analysis to the assessment phase is necessary to understand the national context and identify potential entry points for integrating gender perspectives into future NAP activities. Taking gender into account right from this phase also enables the actors involved in the NAP development process to familiarize themselves with gender actors and their activities.

3. Recommendations: how to integrate gender in this phase

3.1. Ensure the participation of diverse actors and gender experts in the assessment phase

It is important to advocate for diverse participation from the outset of the process, because the NatCom should aim to maintain consistency in participation throughout the entire process. The participation of gender experts and representatives from under-represented groups will significantly impact the final outcomes, ensuring that they reflect the interests of the communities they represent. To involve gender actors



from the start of the process, including from civil society (for example, women’s rights organizations), a mapping of relevant national actors and organizations should be carried out before the assessment (for more details, see the recommendations listed under Phase 1, above).

3.2. Define key gender-related questions

One way to identify diverse, gender-differentiated needs in each functional area is to formulate gender and diversity questions tailored to the national context before the assessment process takes place. The assessment workshop facilitator can also pre-identify key points in each functional area, which should be given particular attention during the discussions.

In addition, it is recommended that resource persons for each functional area be pre-identified so that they can contribute and answer questions on gender (for example, the gender focal point of the NatCom, women from the defence and security forces, etc.). Integrating a gender perspective in the WAM assessment will make it possible to understand gender implications in each component and address the challenges in future NAP activities.

3.3. Define gender and diversity from the outset of the NAP development process

Because each participant’s level of knowledge on gender and diversity considerations will likely vary, organizing an introductory gender-specific session on the first day can lay the foundations for the rest of the assessment workshop. This session is also an opportunity for the organizers to identify champions and possible sceptics with regard to gender and diversity considerations.

During this session it is important not only to define concepts such as gender, diversity, and meaningful participation, but also to introduce the concept of *intersectionality*, which is central to considering the integration of gender perspectives into arms control activities. This concept will also enable national actors to understand the gender-specific impact of small arms and to identify factors (such as age, gender, and religion) that need to be taken into account to mitigate the adverse effects of firearms. Facilitators can ask the group to define what diversity factors should be considered in the specific context to ensure ownership of the NAP development process. This stage will define the contours of the approach to gender that national stakeholders wish to adopt throughout the process.

4. Practical example of good practices and challenges

To ensure the integration of gender and diversity considerations into Sierra Leone's assessment workshop, a session on gender and diversity was organized on the first day of the workshop. One of the objectives was to present and discuss the concept of intersectionality and to identify important factors to be considered in the national context (age, gender, sexual orientation, etc.). Gender and age were identified as major factors influencing exposure to armed violence; additionally, disability was also mentioned as being important. More specifically, a study by the Sierra Leone Action Network on Small Arms (a CSO) and the Sierra Leone Commission on Arms and Ammunition in 2022, a few months before the assessment workshop, highlighted that most artisanal arms producers were people with disabilities. This work has underlined the importance of including the perspectives of people with disabilities in the development, implementation, and evaluation of arms control policies and programmes. Based on the findings of this study, the NatCom invited an expert NGO specializing in disabilities to participate in the process, ensuring that particular attention was given to the needs of people with disabilities during the assessment phase.

Phases 3 and 4: Strategy and operational plan (Design)

1. Definition of the phase

In the Survey's approach to NAP development, the **Design** phase encompasses two separate phases:

- **Phase 3: Defining the strategy.** This phase involves identifying priorities and setting clear goals based on the assessment, and involving key stakeholders and partnerships.
- **Phase 4: Developing the operational plan.** This phase translates the strategy into actionable tasks, responsibilities, timelines, and resources, ensuring a multisectoral approach.

For this How-to Guide, the two phases have been merged into a single phase (**Design**), because the gender recommendations apply to both stages.

The results-based management approach is particularly recommended to ensure that the objectives defined in the NAP are achievable, effective, sustainable, and measurable. This framework is widely used in development, humanitarian, and peacebuilding contexts to ensure that projects and programmes are outcome-oriented, efficient, and effective (UNSDG, 2011).

Since resource allocation is central to this phase, it is crucial to ensure that gender-related activities are adequately budgeted for if they are to contribute to advancing gender equality.

For more information, see the sub-section on 'Gender and small arms control' on p. 29: UNODA, Training Manual on Gender-mainstreaming Small Arms Control (2022):

- pages 120–22 on gender-responsive budgets; and
- pages 155–70 on measuring impact and progress.

2. Why it is important to integrate gender in this phase

Integrating a gender perspective into the action plan essentially depends on this stage, where strategic axes and objectives are defined that will further influence the future activities of the NAP.



3. Recommendations: how to integrate gender in this phase

3.1. Analyse the WPS action plan and identify synergies and opportunities for collaboration

By 2023, 107 countries and nine regional organizations had adopted a WPS action plan to facilitate the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSC, 2000). Action plans are national strategic documents that describe the government's approach and strategy to facilitate the implementation of the four pillars of the resolution: prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery. NatComs should identify potential synergies with WPS action plans to ensure that national small arms action plans are gender responsive and that both plans are implemented coherently and are mutually beneficial.



3.2. Identify possible complementary national programmes and policies on human security and gender equality

The objective is to examine what policies the small arms NAP needs to align with and what opportunities for interagency cooperation are available. The NatCom should contact the gender or WPS actors (such as women's CSOs and the ministry of gender) and the ministry of development and planning to collect information about existing national gender documents or policies related to security issues. When seeking to include gender considerations in the NAP, the NatCom should ensure that the NAP aligns with these documents and connects with national development plans coherently in order to promote women's and under-represented groups' meaningful participation in security issues, including arms control.

3.3. Stakeholder analysis: identify relevant diverse actors, including gender actors, to be involved in planning, implementation, oversight, and monitoring and evaluation of NAP activities

NAPs are often developed by technical security actors behind closed doors, which prevents civil society, other government departments, and local actors from contributing meaningfully to the development process. A stakeholder analysis can identify these excluded groups and facilitate tailoring the outreach strategy to diverse audiences (refer to the sub-section 'Stakeholder analysis' in the Key resources on p. 30 for further information on conducting a stakeholder analysis). Particular attention must be paid to CSOs

whose role is not systematically formalized in the NAP and to gender actors at both the institutional and operational levels (women's CSOs, for example).

To take this phase a step further . . .

The stakeholder analysis should determine:

- who is responsible for implementing the gender provisions;
- to whom the implementers of the gender provisions will be accountable;
- who will be consulted and how; and
- who will be informed and how.

4. Practical example of good practices and challenges

In Burkina Faso, prior to the strategic plan development workshop, the Small Arms Survey organized information sessions to enhance the knowledge of gender actors, particularly women, on small arms control. As mentioned, small arms control can appear exceedingly complex to non-technical actors. A pre-workshop session was therefore organized to ensure the meaningful participation of women and CSOs working on gender equality in the NAP design. Including these diverse actors opened new perspectives on the NAP's content. Whereas small arms NAPs primarily focus on restricting the supply of small arms and preventing diversion, other civil society actors, including those working on gender equality, can play a critical role in shaping the debate on the demand for the illicit acquisition and misuse of small arms. For example, as a result of this pre-workshop session, a research agenda has been developed in collaboration with the Survey to analyse the root causes of armed violence and the gender roles, norms, and expectations that prompt women and men to acquire illicit arms.

Phase 5: Validation and dissemination

1. Definition of the phase

This phase of the NAP development process consists of submitting the action plan for validation by all the relevant stakeholders and ensuring its dissemination to facilitate ownership by and the contribution of diverse stakeholders in its implementation. Validation and dissemination can take different forms, depending on national procedures and guidelines for planning, monitoring, and validating strategic plans. Depending on the context, validation may involve technical validation by experts in arms and ammunition control, gender, and development, and other relevant actors, and political validation by the cabinet or council of ministers, for example.

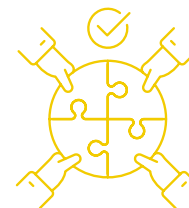
In cases where national procedures do not require political validation, it is nevertheless a good practice to seek validation from policymakers. Several examples from such processes supported by the Survey demonstrate that technical validation alone cannot ensure national-level support for the NAP project.

After the NAP has been validated, the state, through the NatCom, is responsible for ensuring that it is shared and promoted at the national level and throughout the wider society. Dissemination is key to fostering ownership and awareness at the different levels of society, including among non-traditional actors based outside the capital city such as local women's and youth CSOs or community leaders.

2. Why it is important to integrate gender in this phase

This stage will enable diverse actors, including gender actors, to play a significant role in the oversight, monitoring, and evaluation of the NAP, in order to:

- check the conformity of the process to ensure that the NAP focuses on their priorities;
- generate ownership by ensuring that actors can identify a role for themselves in the NAP (gender actors, including CSOs working on gender equality, should be invited to participate in this phase to determine where they can directly contribute to the NAP's implementation and monitoring); and
- strengthen awareness of the NAP among the country's general public.



3. Recommendations: how to integrate gender in this phase

3.1. Ensure that gender objectives and activities are coherent and reflect the needs expressed by gender stakeholders

The purpose here is to ensure that the objectives and effects of the NAP are (i) consistent with gender stakeholders' programmes and policies and other complementary frameworks, and (ii) representative of the needs these stakeholders expressed in the assessment and development phases. This is critical for the implementation of the NAP. Indeed, if the NAP on arms control shares common interests and objectives with the programmes or policies of gender actors, there is a chance these actors could directly lead or fund certain activities. This is particularly important when the NatCom has no gender expertise internally.

3.2. Ensure that the plan has identified the capacities needed to address gender-related provisions

NatComs sometimes integrate gender perspectives into the NAP in the design phase without having the internal capacity to ensure these perspectives' implementation and monitoring. The validation phase—specifically, the technical validation—should be an opportunity for gender actors to ensure that the NatCom has provided the necessary resources to implement the NAP. In the absence of this control, there is a risk that the NAP will be validated without having the technical, human, and financial capacity to deliver the gender-related activities, making them more likely to be pushed into the background.

3.3. Identify and engage with the gender actors responsible for validating and disseminating the NAP

The diversity of stakeholders is particularly important during the validation phase to ensure that the NAP is not perceived merely as an internal NatCom strategic document, but as a national document that has obtained broad-based support. When promoting the NAP, efforts should be made to engage diverse groups, especially those who may not have previously had the opportunity to participate in the NAP development process. This inclusive approach will ensure that all stakeholders have a comprehensive understanding of the NAP and its gender-related aspects, and will also enhance internal oversight and

accountability. CSOs working on gender equality—and, more specifically, women’s organizations—can contribute to the NAP’s dissemination through community awareness-raising activities, as can the media, which can play a significant role in presenting the NAP in accessible ways to reach diverse audiences. To facilitate this dissemination process, the NatCom should consider producing a summary document that highlights the NAP’s key elements. Political dissemination (among both ministries such as gender, health or development and parliamentarians) is also critical, because it allows the NatCom to draw attention to its needs for the NAP’s successful implementation, particularly in terms of resources.

4. Practical examples of good practices and challenges

Recently, Togo undertook work to develop a NAP on arms control. During the validation process the Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation rejected the NAP because it did not follow internal NAP development procedures (Meynier, 2024). The NAP is currently being revised to comply with these national guidelines. Following national procedures was, therefore, a condition for validating the NAP. This example underlines the importance of this phase of implementing the NAP and highlights the need to integrate diverse actors into the process, particularly the Ministry of Development Planning and Cooperation.

In Burkina Faso, the Small Arms Survey and NatCom contacted and kept in touch with the Ministry of Planning from the assessment phase onward. From the outset of the NAP development process, the NatCom used the national planning guide (*Guide d’élaboration de suivi et d’évaluation de plans stratégiques*) and other complementary frameworks to design the NAP.

These examples demonstrate how meaningfully involving diverse actors in the NAP development process contributes to effective policymaking.

KEY RESOURCES

Developing small arms control strategies or policies:

- MOSAIC Module 04.10 on *Designing and Implementing a National Action Plan* (UNODA, 2016)
- MOSAIC Module 04.30 on *Awareness-raising* (UNODA, 2017a)
- MOSAIC Module 06.10 on *Women, Men and the Gendered Nature of Small Arms and Light Weapons* (UNODA, 2017b)
- *Module 6: National Strategies and Action Plans for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons* (Saferworld, n.d.)

Gender and small arms control:

- *Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide* (Small Arms Survey) (LeBrun, 2019)
- *Meaningful Partners: Opportunities for Collaboration between Women, Peace and Security, and Small Arms Control at the National Level* (Small Arms Survey) (Watson, 2024)
- *Training Manual on Gender-mainstreaming Small Arms Control* (UNODA, 2022)
- *Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda* (UN Institute for Disarmament Research) (Myrntinen, 2020)
- *Gender Responsive Small Arms Control in the Decade of Action for the SDGs: Accelerating Action for Global Violence Reduction* (Pathfinders, 2021)
- *How-to Guide: Gender-Responsive Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration* (Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration) (Dietrich and Winderl, 2012).
- *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Internal Oversight within Armed Forces* (Bastick, 2014)

Gender and social inclusion analysis:

- *The Gender and Social Inclusion Toolkit* (CIVICUS, n.d.)
- *A Toolkit for Integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation* (World Vision, 2023)
- ISE4GEMs Tool 4, ‘Vulnerability Assessment’, in *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices: ISE4GEMs: A New Approach for the SDG Era* (Stephens, Lewis, and Reddy, 2018, p. 122)
- ‘National Action Plans: At a Glance’ (WILPF, n.d.)
- CEDAW Reports (United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies, Database)
- Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review Reports (United Nations Human Rights Council)

Stakeholder analysis:

- ISE4GEMs Tool 2, ‘Stakeholder Analysis’, in *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices: ISE4GEMs: A New Approach for the SDG Era* (Stephens, Lewis, and Reddy, 2018, p. 119)
- ‘Tool 1: Stakeholder Analysis’ (FDFA and SDC, 2011)
- *Multi-stakeholder Management: Tools for Stakeholder Analysis: 10 Building Blocks for Designing Participatory Systems of Cooperation*, Promoting Participatory Development in German Development Cooperation Series (Zimmermann and Maennling, 2007)

REFERENCES

- Bastick, Megan. 2014. *Integrating a Gender Perspective into Internal Oversight within Armed Forces*. Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces and Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.
- Buchanan, Cate. 2021. *Gender-inclusive Peacemaking: Strategies for Mediation Practitioners*. Mediation Practice Series. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue.
- CIVICUS. n.d. *The Gender and Social Inclusion Toolkit*.
- Dietrich, Louise and Thomas Winderl. 2012. *How-to Guide: Gender-responsive Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration*. Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.
- FDFA (Federal Department of Foreign Affairs) and SDC (Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation). 2011. 'Tool 1: Stakeholder Analysis.'
- LeBrun, Emile, ed. 2019. *Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide*. Handbook. Geneva: Small Arms Survey.
- Meynier, Clément. 2024. 'Working to Prevent and Reduce the Impact of Armed Violence in Coastal West Africa.' *Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*, Vol. 28, No. 1. Winter/Spring, pp. 47–60.
- Myrntinen, Henry. 2020. *Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*. Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.
- Pathfinders (Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies). 2021. *Gender Responsive Small Arms Control in the Decade of Action for the SDGs: Accelerating Action for Global Violence Reduction*. New York: Center on International Cooperation.
- Saferworld. n.d. *Module 6: National Strategies and Action Plans for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons*.
- Salmela, Katarina and Megan Manion. 2018. *Women's Meaningful Participation in Negotiating Peace and the Implementation of Peace Agreements*. Report of the Expert Group Meeting. New York: UN Women.

- Stephens, Anne, Ellen D. Lewis, and Shravanti Reddy. 2018. *Inclusive Systemic Evaluation for Gender Equality, Environments and Marginalized Voices: ISE4GEMS: A New Approach for the SDG Era*. New York: UN Women.
- UNGA (United Nations General Assembly). 2024. *Report of the Fourth 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*. A/CONF.192/2024/RC/3 of 5 July.
- UNODA (United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs). 2016. *Designing and Implementing a National Action Plan*. MOSAIC Module 04.10: 2016(E)V1.0.
- . 2017a. *Awareness-raising*. MOSAIC Module 04.30: 2017(E)V1.0.
 - . 2017b. *Women, Men and the Gendered Nature of Small Arms and Light Weapons*. MOSAIC Module 06-10:2017(E)V1.0.
 - . 2022. *Training Manual on Gender-mainstreaming Small Arms Control*. New York: UNODA.
- UNSC (United Nations Security Council). 2000. Resolution 1325 (2000). S/RES/1325 (2000) of 31 October.
- UNSDG (United Nations Sustainable Development Group). 2011. *Results-based Management Handbook: Harmonizing RBM Concepts and Approaches for Improved Development Results at Country Level*.
- Watson, Callum. 2024. *Meaningful Partners: Opportunities for Collaboration between Women, Peace and Security, and Small Arms Control at the National Level*. Briefing Paper. Geneva: Small Arms Survey. February.
- WILPF (Women's International League for Peace and Freedom). n.d. 'National Action Plans: At a Glance.'
- World Vision. 2023. *A Toolkit for Integrating Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Design, Monitoring and Evaluation*.
- Zimmermann, Arthur and Claudia Maennling. 2007. *Multi-stakeholder Management: Tools for Stakeholder Analysis: 10 Building Blocks for Designing Participatory Systems of Cooperation*. Promoting Participatory Development in German Development Cooperation Series. Eschborn: Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit.

Small Arms Survey

Maison de la Paix
Chemin Eugène-Rigot 2E
1202 Geneva
Switzerland

t +41 22 908 5777

e info@smallarmssurvey.org

About the Small Arms Survey

The Small Arms Survey is a centre for applied knowledge dedicated to preventing and reducing illicit small arms proliferation and armed violence. The Survey informs policy and practice through a combination of data, evidence-based knowledge, authoritative resources and tools, and tailored expert advice and training, and by bringing together practitioners and policymakers.

The Survey is an associated programme of the Geneva Graduate Institute, located in Switzerland, and has an international staff with expertise in security studies, political science, law, economics, development studies, sociology, criminology, and database and programme management. It collaborates with a network of researchers, practitioners, partner institutions, non-governmental organizations, and governments in more than 50 countries.

The Survey's activities and outputs are made possible through core support as well as project funding. A full list of current donors and projects can be accessed via the Small Arms Survey website.

For more information, please visit: www.smallarmssurvey.org.

