

ANNUAL REPORT

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Abbreviations and acronyms

AFP	Agence France-Presse	NAP	National action plan
ANMaC	National Agency for Controlled Materials	NFFP	National firearm focal point
ATT	Arms Trade Treaty	OAS	Organization of American States
CARICOM	Caribbean Community	PMF	Privately made firearm
CARPHA	Caribbean Public Health Agency	PoA	UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons	PSSM	Physical security and stockpile management
CENSS	Center for Security Studies	RSF	Rapid Support Forces
C-IED	Counter-improvised explosive device	SADC	Southern African Development Community
CSP	Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty	SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States	UEMS	Unplanned explosions at munitions sites
EU	European Union	UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
GBV	Gender-based violence	UNLIREC	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
GFA	Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management	UNODA	United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs
HSBA	Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan	WAM	Weapons and ammunition management
IATG	International Ammunition Technical Guidelines	WCO	World Customs Organization
ICoCA	International Code of Conduct Association	WoMA	Women Managing Ammunition
IED	Improvised explosive device	WPS	Women, peace, and security
IMPACS	Implementation Agency for Crime and Security		
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization		
LAS	League of Arab States		
MAG	Mines Advisory Group		

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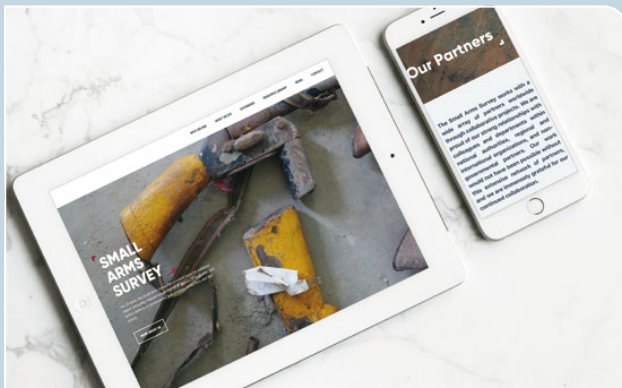
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Director's introduction



**small
arms
survey**

 Working towards a world without illicit arms

The landscape of small arms and light weapons control is undergoing a profound transformation. Patterns of production, circulation, and use are evolving in ways that increasingly challenge long-standing policy frameworks and operational responses. While international norms and instruments have expanded over the past two decades, the persistence of—and in some contexts the acceleration of—illicit proliferation underscores a widening gap between commitment and implementation.

Renewed geopolitical competition and ongoing conflicts are fuelling increased military expenditure and contributing to the expansion of the global small arms market. Rising demand is accelerating the diffusion of weapons, including into the hands of non-state actors across multiple regions. At the same time, fragmented security environments, the multiplicity of armed groups, and increasingly adaptive trafficking networks are reshaping how weapons move across borders and within societies.

Technological and industrial shifts are compounding these challenges. Advances in manufacturing, including craft production and the adaptation of commercially available technologies, are lowering barriers to acquisition and complicating efforts to trace and control weapons throughout their life cycle. Traditional arms control approaches are being outpaced. This evolving landscape underscores the need for multilateral instruments—such as the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA)—to adapt if they are to remain relevant and effective.

Against this backdrop, the Small Arms Survey has continued supporting multilateral efforts that aim to strengthen policy frameworks in response to these emerging risks. A key area of focus remains the universalization and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Universalization, however, cannot be understood simply as a matter of awareness or outreach. Our research shows that many non-signatory states have made deliberate and informed decisions based on whether the Treaty is perceived as relevant to their security priorities and as fulfilling, in practice, its core objectives of reducing illicit flows, preventing diversion, and contributing to peace and security.

“Where shared commitments are matched by data exchange and operational collaboration, tangible gains are possible.”

Concrete experiences illustrate both the potential and the limitations of existing frameworks. In the Caribbean, new evidence from the Report *Pathway to Policy: Firearms Trafficking and Public Health in the Caribbean* highlights the scale and multidimensional nature of the challenge. Firearms now account for as much as 86% of homicides in parts of the region, with illicit trafficking largely sustained through maritime flows—particularly from the United States. The Report also demonstrates the significant public health and economic burden of firearm violence, with treatment costs for gunshot injuries far exceeding average healthcare spending. These findings underscore the need for coordinated, multi-sectoral responses that bridge security, public health, and development perspectives. At the same time, cooperation among Caribbean Community (CARICOM) states has enabled more systematic analysis of trafficking patterns, supporting more informed policy and operational responses.

Similar lessons emerge elsewhere. In West Africa, alignment between the ATT and regional mechanisms has facilitated the development of national action plans (NAPs) that integrate weapons and ammunition management (WAM) into broader governance and security priorities. These experiences demonstrate that where shared commitments are matched by data exchange and operational collaboration, tangible gains are possible. Looking ahead, a key challenge will be addressing the intersection between expanding trade routes—including emerging ‘green corridors’—and the risks of illicit trafficking, to ensure that efforts to promote connectivity and economic development are not exploited by trafficking networks.

Yet these positive developments coexist with persistent and evolving risks. In regions affected by protracted instability, such as the Sahel, weak WAM systems, stockpile leakage, and battlefield capture continue to supply illicit markets.

The consequences extend far beyond immediate conflict zones, contributing to armed violence in urban settings, enabling organized crime, and undermining governance and development gains. Increasingly, the impacts of illicit arms proliferation are transnational, interconnected, and resistant to isolated policy responses.

This is also evident in contexts such as Sudan and South Sudan, which remain deeply affected by cycles of armed violence. In these settings, illicit weapons flows are embedded within broader political and economic systems, and closely tied to local power dynamics and the control of key trade corridors. Understanding these political economy dimensions is essential not only for designing effective arms control interventions, but also for informing mediation efforts and securing critical transit routes. Without such analysis, responses to trafficking risk addressing symptoms rather than the underlying drivers of instability.

The Survey’s latest research further highlights how large-scale conflicts continue to reshape proliferation risks. The Report *Weapons Compass: Proliferation and Control of Arms and Ammunition in Wartime Ukraine* examines the implications of the war in Ukraine, where vast quantities of weapons and ammunition have been deployed since 2022. As the conflict evolves, the challenge increasingly lies in managing the long-term risks associated with the widespread circulation of these weapons. Loss, abandonment, and informal stockpiling create conditions for diversion into illicit markets, with potential consequences for both national and regional security. Addressing these risks will require sustained investment not only in defence, but also in robust arms control systems, secure stockpile management, and strengthened law enforcement and judicial capacities.

At the same time, the Survey’s work highlights the continued importance of inclusive and evidence-based approaches. Despite a challenging global context marked by growing resistance to gender-focused policies, progress on gender-responsive arms control has continued in practice. Through support to practitioner networks and initiatives such as the Gender Focal Point mechanism under the ATT, stakeholders across regions are demonstrating the operational value of integrating gender perspectives. From Ukraine to West Africa, there is increasing recognition that effective arms control must account for the differentiated impacts of armed violence and ensure meaningful participation across all segments of society. The evidence is clear—gender is not peripheral to arms control policy, but central to its effectiveness.

Taken together, these trends point to a central challenge for policymakers and practitioners: the need to adapt arms control approaches to a more dynamic, interconnected, and complex risk environment. This requires strengthening accountability across the full life cycle of weapons and ammunition; improving data collection and transparency; and integrating arms control more effectively into broader security, justice, and development strategies. It also requires a renewed focus on implementation—ensuring that existing commitments translate into measurable impact on the ground.

In 2025, the Survey, together with Norwegian People’s Aid, undertook a series of assessment visits to Syria, where widespread weapons contamination and the risk of unplanned explosions at munitions sites (UEMS) pose acute threats to civilian populations. Similar dynamics are evident across the Middle East, including in Lebanon and the Palestinian Territories, where the intersection of conflict and weapons proliferation underscores the urgency of translating policy frameworks into practical, context-specific interventions, supported by sustained and coordinated international engagement.

The Small Arms Survey 2025 Annual Report presents our contribution over the past year to addressing these shifting dynamics, drawing on field-based research and global analysis to assess emerging risks and identify practical entry points for more effective responses. It reflects our

“The Survey team remains firmly committed and increasingly well positioned to respond to the evolving challenges of small arms proliferation. We greatly value the continued confidence placed in our work and look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.”

efforts to strengthen both the application of established tools and the development of innovative approaches in response to evolving challenges. In doing so, it underscores our commitment to advancing more adaptive, evidence-driven, and context-sensitive strategies to address the complex realities of illicit arms proliferation today.

Looking ahead, 2026 is already shaping up to be another demanding year. The next phase of our programme in Ukraine begins with a renewed focus on supporting local, national, and regional capacities to manage proliferation risks in a conflict environment. In Sudan, our work will consider how weapons circulation within the war economy and peripheral governance systems shape local security, civilian outcomes, and pathways to stability. The project will emphasize locally grounded approaches to arms control as entry points in contexts where these systems operate beyond formal state authority. The European Union (EU)–League of Arab States (LAS) programme will continue through a series of training sessions across LAS member states, delivered in partnership with the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) and the World Customs Organization (WCO). Our engagement in the Middle East will be complemented by plans to develop a dedicated support programme on WAM in Syria, alongside continued work in support of Lebanon. Planned activities also include an exploratory assessment in Haiti and sustained engagement in West Africa.

At the multilateral level, the Ninth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the UN PoA in June will be a key milestone, particularly the first meeting of the open-ended technical working group on new technologies. As in previous years, we aim to support the chair, member states, and the broader process. This will be followed in August by the Twelfth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (CSP12).

Alongside these priorities, a range of additional projects and partnerships are in development. The Survey team remains firmly committed and increasingly well positioned to respond to the evolving challenges of small arms proliferation. We greatly value the continued confidence placed in our work and look forward to building on this momentum in the year ahead.

— Mark Downes, Director

Our vision and mission



**For a world
without
illicit arms and
armed violence**


SMALL
ARMS
SURVIV

The Small Arms Survey is a centre for applied knowledge dedicated to preventing and reducing illicit small arms and light weapons 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.

Our vision is a world without illicit arms and armed violence. Our mission is to strengthen the capacity of governments and practitioners to tackle the challenges associated with small arms and light weapons, with our two workstreams providing stakeholders with the data required to have an informed debate and make evidence-based policy decisions as well as support during the development and implementation of international, regional, and national mechanisms and processes.

The Survey's work is organized around two thematic units. The Data and Analytics unit's primary goal is to enable the small arms community to use reliable and consistent information to make decisions. Projects and activities in this thematic area are primarily geared towards gathering and providing information and developing methodologies for research and analysis. The Policy and Capacity Support unit monitors and evaluates different approaches, programmes, and projects to identify effective practices and standards for implementing international and regional mechanisms and processes. The Survey uses this evidence base to develop and disseminate tools and resources to

strengthen capacity at the international, regional, and national levels.

With these two workstreams working in tandem, the Survey provides tailored assistance to, and engages with, institutions, stakeholders, and actors through our broad range of capabilities, including:

- qualitative and participatory research;
- quantitative research, global and project data sets and databases, and data analytics;
- population surveys in fragile settings;
- the analysis of small arms supply and demand dynamics at the national and regional levels;
- policy briefings;
- analytical, publicly available materials such as webinars, podcasts, blog posts, and reports;
- needs and capacity assessments;
- the design, monitoring, and evaluation of small arms control initiatives;
- expert technical assistance;
- the development of tools, handbooks, and reference material;
- the facilitation of experience-sharing and experts' dialogues at the national, regional, and international levels;

- support in policy formulation;
- support in the development and implementation of small arms control strategies and NAPs;
- technical expertise and training on gender-responsive small arms control; and
- the design and delivery of training programmes, including the training of trainers.

Under its [2024–28 Strategy](#), the Small Arms Survey focuses its efforts on seven thematic areas. These themes highlight areas where the Survey can add value. They are not mutually exclusive, and most of the Survey's projects combine two or more of these thematic areas in a mutually reinforcing way. For each of these thematic areas, interventions are tailored to the needs and opportunities of a given environment.

Our seven thematic areas



Our work in 2025

Development of a Guidance Manual on the Management of Weapons and Hazardous Material of War

Funder: International Code of Conduct Association

Enhancing Local Arms Control and Risk Reduction in Ukraine

Funder: Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (through Norwegian People's Aid)

Enhancing Policy Coordination and Coherence between the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management and Other Relevant Global and Regional Arms Control Instruments—2025

Funder: Switzerland

European Union–League of Arab States

Funder: EU

Gender-responsive Small Arms Control and Counter-improvised Explosive Device Measures

Funder: Germany

Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) for Sudan and South Sudan

Funders: Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States

Mapping the Transnational Circulation and Control of Small Arms in Latin America

Funder: Swiss Network for International Studies

Pathway to Policy: Integrating Security and Public Health Responses to Firearms Trafficking and Violence in the Caribbean

Funder: Germany

Supporting Ukraine in Addressing the Risks of Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation from the Russian War of Aggression

Funders: Germany (project lead), France

Understanding Challenges to Arms Trade Treaty Universalization and Compliance in the Indo-Pacific Region

Funder: Canada

Unlocking Peace and Development in East Africa through Gender-responsive Small Arms Control in Border Areas

Funder: Japan

This section provides snapshots of our work under the seven thematic areas outlined above. Rather than providing an exhaustive list of activities, it aims to demonstrate how the Survey is working towards its objectives.

1 International instruments on matters of small arms supply and proliferation

The international community has developed a substantial normative framework for conventional arms control over the years, including, but not limited to, the UN PoA, the International Tracing Instrument, the Firearms Protocol, the ATT, and the new Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management (GFA).

Arms Trade Treaty

Within the scope of our project on [ATT universalization in the Indo-Pacific region](#), we further engaged with regional stakeholders in 2025 by delivering translations of key publications on the topic in Indonesian, Japanese, Khmer, Malay, Nepali, and Thai. Outreach around the 2024 Report *Realities, Challenges, and Opportunities: The Arms Trade Treaty in the Indo-Pacific Region* continued into 2025 through activities such as:

- the delivery of [a statement at the February meeting of the ATT Working Group on Treaty Universalization](#), largely focusing on our efforts in the Indo-Pacific region and on lessons learned for greater, global universalization of the ATT;
- the organization of an Expert Group meeting in Bangkok in March for regional civil society actors and academia, led by the Survey and Nonviolence International South-east Asia, which enabled participants to identify how their work is relevant to discussions on ATT compliance and universalization, and to express interest in working more on these efforts at the national and regional level; and
- various meetings and briefings in Geneva with officials from Argentina—including the president of CSP11—the ATT Secretariat, Australia, Japan, Pakistan, and South Korea.

The Survey was invited to speak at CSP11's opening panel on ATT universalization, where we presented a new [infographic on regional profiles of illicit ammunition](#), developed in partnership with Conflict Armament Research. This infographic combines data from our [2023 Caribbean Firearms Study](#) and from the Survey's research on illicit ammunition in Europe. The presentation highlighted how regional cooperation enhances the practical value of the ATT.

Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management

In February, in the final of a series of regional outreach conferences held by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the Survey organized a session on gender and the GFA for states from the Middle East and North Africa region. At the Geneva event, we also actively contributed to discussions on other GFA-related topics.

At the Preparatory Meeting of States on the GFA, held at UN headquarters in New York in June 2025, the Survey assisted several delegations in the preparation and delivery of their statements and contributed to the inclusion of specific elements in the preliminary, indicative, and non-exhaustive list of themes proposed for the governmental technical expert meetings, particularly the following: current or emerging challenges to the safe and secure storage and management of conventional ammunition, including the impact of changing local and regional environmental conditions and the risk of UEMS; and methods of collecting, disaggregating, and analysing data to increase understanding of the differentiated impact and humanitarian consequences of UEMS, as well as the diversion of conventional ammunition, on women, men, girls, and boys and their lives, livelihoods, and human rights.

Throughout the week, the Survey also participated in and co-organized several side events:

- During the side event 'Building on Experience: Leveraging Existing Mechanisms for Effective Implementation of the Global Framework', we discussed our experiences of existing regional and national mechanisms and how these

“We are successfully developing cooperation with experts from partner countries as trainers for other partner countries, and taking advantage of the unique experience of other actors, inter alia UNIDIR, SIPRI, and the Small Arms Survey, and additional resources made available inter alia through Voluntary Trust Fund.”

— [EU statement on universalization at CSP11](#)

can be leveraged for a more effective implementation of the GFA.

- The side event ‘[Tracing the Untraceable: Ammunition Diversion Traceability](#)’ allowed us to share insights on data collection and information sharing on ammunition diversion, notably at the regional level.
- We also co-hosted the event ‘[Technically Transformative: Overcoming Barriers to Women’s Meaningful Participation in Ammunition Management](#)’, which—drawing on lessons learned and good practices from the activities of the Women Managing Ammunition (WoMA) Network—considered

how GFA member states can support the full, equal, and meaningful participation of women in their national institutions, and what can be done through bilateral and multi-lateral cooperation and assistance to achieve this goal.

Our [statement](#) during the meeting highlighted the need for greater sharing of expertise on data collection and standardization; increased emphasis on ammunition marking, record-keeping, profiling, and tracing; more coherence between the GFA and regional and national frameworks; and the promotion of the full, equal, meaningful, and effective participation of women in all GFA-related activities.

The Survey’s work is heavily referred to in the [UN Secretary-General’s report on through-life conventional ammunition management](#) and the publication [Implementing the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management: A Voluntary Guide](#) (June 2025), showing the relevance of our work for the implementation of the GFA and other internal instruments.

UN Programme of Action

With no formal meeting scheduled for 2025, the Survey focused on supporting the UNODA Regional Fellowship Training Programmes—mandated in the outcome document of the Fourth Review Conference in 2024.

For the Caribbean iteration, co-hosted by UNODA and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), the Survey provided virtual presentations on gender and small arms and on our work in the Caribbean.

For the African iteration, co-hosted by UNODA and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa in Togo and Benin, the Survey delivered presentations on gender and small arms and on privately made firearms (PMFs) (including craft and 3D-printed weapons).

The Survey as a resource point

The Survey serves as a clearing house and central hub for resources and information on international instruments. In 2025, we developed dedicated web pages for the [UN PoA](#), the [GFA](#) and the [ATT](#).

Each hub provides a summary of the instrument—including key objectives, upcoming events, and related themes—and an overview of the Survey’s relevant work, activities, and resources.



2

Small arms and ammunition supply and flows

Rigorous and timely research on small arms and ammunition supply flows at the local, regional, and global levels is critical for anticipating and addressing constantly evolving trends in the proliferation of illicit weapons, including their diversion from legal to illicit spheres and various patterns of illicit manufacture.

Caribbean

Our joint three-year project ‘[Pathway to Policy](#)’ culminated in 2025 with the publication of the second in-depth regional study. With contributions from our project partners CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), the Caribbean Public Health Agency (CARPHA), and the George Alleyne Chronic Disease Research Centre at the University of the West Indies, the Report [Pathway to Policy: Firearms Trafficking and Public Health in the Caribbean](#) focused in particular on firearms trafficking and violence as a public health issue.

The Ministries of Health and National Security of Trinidad and Tobago co-hosted the launch of the Report in December. The project has, overall, generated strong political momentum on this issue. The Survey received very positive feedback from key partners, including the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and UNLIREC, as well as the embassies of Canada, Germany, and Spain. Both international media (such as [Reuters](#) and [Xinhua](#)) and regional media (for example, in [Barbados](#), [Trinidad and Tobago](#), and [the United States](#)) covered the Report’s findings extensively.

As a reflection of the strong collaboration and relationship between project partners, the Survey signed new memorandums of understanding with both CARICOM IMPACS and CARPHA.

Earlier in the year, the Survey participated in two events for experts and diplomats, organized by the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime in Mexico City, on bridging the Caribbean and Latin American agendas to combat illicit firearms trafficking and diversion.

In June, we published a blog post entitled ‘[The Bullet Trail: A Year of Ammunition Seizures in the Caribbean and What They Mean for Public Health](#)’, demonstrating that illicit ammunition must be treated as a core element of armed violence and recognized as a growing public health concern—both in the Caribbean and worldwide.

The Survey also provided inputs into the [Mid-Term Review](#) of the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap, including with respect to calls to better integrate the roadmap within broader violence prevention frameworks. The Survey was referenced several times in the review—mentioning not only the team’s engagement in the region, but also the Survey’s [How-to Guides on NAPs](#). Almost all member states and implementing partners welcomed the recommendation to include an addendum to the Roadmap on prevention.

The [Mid-Term Review](#) was presented at the 5th Annual Meeting of States of the Caribbean Firearms Roadmap in November, which provided Survey experts with a good opportunity to engage in person with regional stakeholders and discuss how findings from the project and the upcoming report feed into the Roadmap. During this time, an article titled ‘[Firearm-related Violence in the Caribbean Is a Complex Systemic Issue: How Do We Move towards a Solution?](#)’, co-authored by Survey experts, was also published in the journal *Lancet Regional Health – Americas*.

Outputs from the Caribbean project and engagements with the expert and policymaking communities continued to gen-

erate interest and uptake throughout the year. The research was cited in several publications, including the [UN Voluntary Guide](#) on implementing the GFA; the 2025 [interim](#) and [final](#) reports of the UN Panel of Experts on Haiti; and the UN Secretary-General’s report on through-life conventional ammunition management. Additionally, the research was cited in articles by [La Jornada](#), the [Latin Times](#), the [Trinidad and Tobago Newsday](#), and the [St Lucia Times](#); scientific articles (in the [International Journal of Humanities and Social Science](#);

“New tools and technologies can reduce the amount of resources needed to perform [...] tracing operations. The work currently conducted by research NGOs like Tech4-Tracing and the Small Arms Survey provides excellent cases to demonstrate their potential.”

— [Belgium’s statement at the 12th Meeting of the Working Group on Firearms](#)



Insights and Transformations and *Policing and Society*); a publication from [Florida International University](#); an article by [Amnesty International](#); and a [Cambridge University Press](#) research paper—among others.

Latin America

In October, in the framework of the ‘[Mapping the Transnational Circulation and Control of Small Arms in Latin America](#)’ project, the Survey published *The Authorized Trade in Small Arms: Latin America from a Global Perspective*, a Situation Update examining the global authorized trade in small arms between 2019 and 2024, with a particular focus on trends in Latin America. The paper identified a significant increase in European—and particularly Eastern European—imports during this period, which seem to have fuelled the growing trade. The Update was cited in newsletters from the Forum on the Arms Trade and Expertise France.

Over the course of 2025, the project team briefed policy-makers, including a diverse range of stakeholders from Latin America as well as Europe, at 15 events. The project’s [outputs](#) generated significant media coverage in Brazil and international news outlets, including articles from Associated Press News, ‘[Lax Gun Laws in Brazil and US Help Arm Brazil’s Organized Crime, Study Finds](#)’, and Insight Crime, ‘[Ghost Guns Are Increasingly Empowering Brazil’s Powerful Gangs](#)’.

Colleagues from the Organization of American States (OAS) offered to help with the dissemination of project outputs, key findings, and policy observations to Latin American governments through a joint webinar scheduled for May 2026—a step made possible by the memorandum of understanding signed in May 2024 by the Centre on Conflict, Development & Peacebuilding and the Small Arms Survey with the OAS. In addition, the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC Rio), a partner of the Survey in Brazil, secured a national grant to convene in-person policy dialogues between the project’s researchers and regional policymakers in Rio de Janeiro in June 2026.

3

Armed violence and small arms demand

Monitoring levels of armed violence—in both conflict and non-conflict contexts—is critical for prioritizing efforts where they are most needed and for learning from policies and interventions. It is also essential to improve understanding of the multiple context-specific factors that drive armed violence and the demand for small arms, which requires rigorous and mixed-method approaches to data collection.

Ukraine

The end of our three-year [joint project with the Center for Security Studies 'CENSS'](#) was marked by the release of the Report *Weapons Compass: Proliferation and Control of Arms and Ammunition in Wartime Ukraine*. The publication was launched during a public webinar featuring a presentation by the authors and a discussion of policy implications, along with opening remarks by representatives from the German Federal Foreign Office and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, and the director of the Small Arms Survey. The event attracted significant interest and drew a diverse audience of international and Ukrainian stakeholders—including government, diplomatic, law enforcement, and defence officials; NGOs; international organizations; and researchers.

The Report was cited in prominent European media outlets, such as [Agence France-Presse \(AFP\)](#), the [Guardian](#), [Le Monde](#), [De Standaard](#), and [Watson](#), with headlines emphasizing the lack of evidence behind disinformation claims concerning the systemic diversion of Ukrainian weapons, and the need to support Ukraine in its efforts to mitigate proliferation risks. Additionally, the Report garnered attention from Ukrainian media, including the [Kyiv Post](#).

Earlier in 2025, our joint participation with CENSS at the Internal Security Fund FORTIFY kick-off meeting in Madrid—organized by the Spanish Guardia Civil and the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT) Firearms—enhanced the project's visibility. All participants received a copy of our article on weapons proliferation trends in Ukraine, published in the EMPACT Firearms Bulletin (No. 31), in their welcome package. Later in the year, the Survey was formally asked to support EMPACT Firearms' operational action on Ukraine, together with CENSS and Norwegian People's Aid. This not only reflects our collective and continuous efforts in the country, but also supports our engagement with the national firearm focal point (NFFP) and the Ukrainian government.

In May, the Survey travelled to Kosovo with members of the Ukrainian Networking Group of Experts to engage with a range of stakeholders, including high-ranking officials leading police operations, intelligence officers, border police investigators, risk analysis specialists, representatives of the NFFP, and ballistic specialists. The team also met with the Ministry of Defence and former leaders of the Kosovo Liberation Army. The mission aimed to gain a deeper understanding of Kosovo's experience with post-conflict arms reduction, civilian gun ownership, legal reforms, border security, and the reintegration of former combatants. The video ["Kosovo's Post-war Lessons: Insights for Ukraine"](#) built on this mission.

During the final [Annual Conference of the Ukrainian Networking Group](#) in August, the members shared very positive feedback about the project, highlighting its impact on their work and the meaningful connections they were able to build with one another. CENSS also expressed appreciation during conference, highlighting the trust, collegiality, and professionalism characterizing their collaboration with the Survey.

In October, the Survey delivered a briefing to the EU Council Working Party on Conventional Arms Exports (COARM) in Brussels. We received praise—including from EU representatives and member states—for our work to counter disinformation by pro-Russian media, and were encouraged to further our engagement with Ukrainian journalists.

In advance of the Report's launch, we travelled to Kyiv to provide a series of in-person briefings at the [Third National Conference on Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking of Weapons, Ammunition and Explosives](#). The briefings highlighted Ukraine's central role in discussions on small arms proliferation, and summarized the project's research ahead of the release of the final report. In November, we also published an [infographic](#) on the results of the early 2025 population survey on civilian attitudes and perceptions towards firearms in Ukraine.

Our analysis continues to be cited in Ukrainian media. The Kyiv Independent interviewed Survey experts and published an [in-depth article](#) on the risks of small arms proliferation, citing our analysis and data on public perceptions of small arms proliferation. Our work was also cited extensively in a recent [analysis by the European Council on Foreign Relations](#) on efforts to prevent future conflict in Ukraine.

In 2025, the Survey also partnered with Norwegian People's Aid and CENSS on a [project](#) focusing on the impact of small arms-related challenges on Ukraine's local authorities and their ability to provide essential services to civilians and veterans. This project aims to support these institutions' efforts to mitigate these issues by providing relevant and actionable data, needs assessments, and capacity support. During the year, the project implemented four main activities: local institutions' risk and engagement assessments; the preparation of oblast-level analytical outputs on arms

“What have been the [Ukraine] project’s greatest achievements to date?”

- The establishment of a professional network of experts capable of proposing solutions to problems related to firearms control in Ukraine.
- The development of material feeding into legislation, law enforcement practice, scientific research, and education.
- The consolidation of efforts of a wide range of specialists from various fields to achieve the project’s goals.”

— Responses from members of the Ukrainian Networking Group of Experts

seizures, trafficking, and violent incidents; the development of a tailored training programme on firearms safety and risk education for Administrative Service Centres staff; and a nationwide population survey on public perceptions of risk education and arms proliferation—the findings of which can be found in our infographic on [civilian firearm possession and safety in Ukraine since the Russian invasion](#).

Human Security Baseline Assessment for Sudan and South Sudan

In 2025, the Survey published numerous outputs in the framework of our [Human Security Baseline Assessment \(HSBA\) for Sudan and South Sudan](#), which began in 2006. Publications focusing on Sudan included the following:

- [The Republic of Kadamel: A Portrait of the Rapid Support Forces at War](#) offers an insight into Rapid Support Forces (RSF) recruitment strategies, war aims, and command and control problems. To understand Sudan’s future, it is indispensable to understand the RSF, and this paper—based on field interviews with, notably, RSF personnel—is the first to give a synthetic analysis of the RSF since the war began in 2023.
- [Urbicide in Khartoum: An Analysis of the Al-Amarat and Mayo Neighbourhoods, 2023–24](#) highlights spatial control, infrastructure destruction, looting, and the targeting of symbolic and civilian spaces as key tactics of urban violence. Co-published with the Centre on Armed Groups, it provides an urgent look at the weaponization of cities in contemporary warfare.
- [A History of Outsourced Violence: The Rise of the Rapid Support Forces, Libyan National Army, and Wagner Group](#) analyses the history of outsourced violence in Sudan, and how the resurgence of mercenary economies and transactional alliances in Sudan, Chad, Libya, and the Central African Republic challenges peacebuilding in the region.

In South Sudan, the focus was on building analytical capacity through sustained training. A team of 13 South Sudan

researchers produced more than 100 monthly analytical briefs on current and emerging political and conflict issues. The aim of this process was not only to strengthen the ability of local researchers to translate field-based insights into clear, policy-relevant analysis for international audiences, but also to enable the publications highlighted below to draw from this analysis. Once the project concluded, this group began moving towards establishing an independent, South Sudanese-led research and analysis initiative. Publications that stemmed from the research of this group included the following:

- [On the Brink: The Politics of Violence in South Sudan](#) examines what led South Sudan to delay elections scheduled for December 2024 and considers the likely ensuing civil war.
- [Wun Weng’s Victory: The Rise and Fall of Benjamin Bol Mel](#) examines Bol Mel’s rise to vice-president, what led to such a fall from grace, and what this may herald for the future of South Sudan.
- [Making the Enemy: The War in Western Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal States](#) analyses the South Sudanese government’s counter-insurgency strategy in areas where the government has no legitimacy; instead of eliminating the opposition, the government will create an enemy—an insurgency it can then suppress.
- [A Country for Old Men: The State of the Nuer White Armies of South Sudan](#) examines the state of the Nuer self-defence forces, commonly referred to as the ‘white army’, in the context of the South Sudanese government’s counter-insurgency.

The Survey hosted and chaired a webinar titled ‘[South Sudan: Succession, Conflict Dynamics, and Implications for Stability](#)’, during which leading regional experts and contributors to HSBA research and publications discussed South Sudan’s power struggles, emerging conflicts, and the growing uncertainty surrounding Kiir’s succession. The HSBA project coordinator also co-authored an article entitled ‘[The Battle for Khartoum](#)’, published by the University of Western Australia.

4 Gender-responsive small arms control

Gender-responsive small arms control involves integrating perspectives into national, regional, and international small arms-related policies and programmes that account for how armed violence affects women, men, girls, boys, and gender minorities differently on the basis of their gender, and in combination with other intersectional factors. Given that arms control is a historically male-dominated field, gender-responsive arms control also involves ensuring that women and other historically under-represented groups can participate meaningfully in all aspects of small arms control.

Arms Trade Treaty

In May 2025, Survey experts facilitated the majority of sessions at the train-the-trainer course on the implementation of the gender-related provisions of the ATT for representatives from French-speaking countries, within the framework of the EU ATT Outreach Project. Data from our [Global Violent Deaths database](#) was used to explain the links between gender-based violence (GBV) and firearms proliferation. The content also drew from the Briefing Paper *At Whose Risk? Understanding States Parties' Implementation of Arms Trade Treaty Gender-based Violence Provisions* when discussing ATT risk assessments; the new [How-to Guides on meaningful participation and gender-responsive action plans](#) when discussing mitigation measures; and the Briefing Paper *Meaningful Partners: Opportunities for Collaboration between Women, Peace and Security, and Small Arms Control at the National Level* when discussing barriers to women's meaningful participation in small arms control. At the end of the two-day training course, participants felt better equipped to integrate GBV considerations into their arms control programmes and policies. Sharing practical examples of how the ATT can be

best implemented was also useful for current and potential future national gender focal points. The training course was repeated in English in November for participants from English-speaking countries, as well as from Mexico.

In July, Expertise France requested our support for a workshop in Guyana entitled 'Preventing Gender-based Violence through Responsible Arms Transfers: Implementing ATT Article 7.4 and CSP5 Commitments'. The workshop aimed to lay the groundwork for a gender pillar of a national ATT implementation roadmap, focusing on preventing GBV and violence against women and children under Article 7.4 of the ATT, as well as on implementing the final report of CSP5 on gender and gender equality. By providing a platform to dis-

cuss Guyana's strengths and weaknesses on this matter from an international perspective, the Survey enabled national stakeholders to identify future priorities for the country's ATT roadmap.

At CSP11, the Survey participated in three side events discussing gender-responsive small arms control and meaningful participation in the context of the ATT.

- The side event '[Leveraging the Women, Peace and Security Agenda to Advance the Arms Trade Treaty](#)', which the Survey co-hosted and moderated, explored how the ATT can better engage with women, peace, and security (WPS) actors to promote universalization—noting that most



“From the outset of efforts to advance gender within the Arms Trade Treaty, the Small Arms Survey has consistently supported these efforts by providing technical expertise to ensure that the initiatives presented are aligned with the needs of the Treaty and, above all, with the broader international context [. . .]. Their approach is both creative and people-centered, [. . .] consistently promoting interregional collaboration, capacity-building, and the empowerment of delegates, while strengthening the integration of gender perspectives across ATT processes.”

— Mexican government official

current and potential future states parties are net arms importers. The event also examined how the ATT can serve as a tool to operationalize WPS commitments, particularly from the perspective of states with high levels of GBV.

- The side event ‘[Women as a Force at the Arms Trade Treaty](#)’, also co-hosted by the Survey, was primarily aimed at women delegates and sought to provide opportunities for networking and information sharing on key ATT-related activities. It also showcased the formal and informal support available to first-time delegates from civil society organizations, the ATT Secretariat, and more experienced delegates.
- The Survey presented at the side event ‘[Taking Gender into Account in the Implementation of the EU P2P ATT Outreach Project – Phase IV](#)’. The objectives of this event were threefold: to reflect on the role that the ATT can play in fighting against GBV; to raise awareness of the EU’s efforts to support ATT implementation and universalization, especially the increased emphasis on the fight against GBV as part of the ongoing fourth phase of action; and to introduce the actions carried out by Expertise France to take into account gender characteristics and gender balance in the implementation of the ATT.

The Survey also supported Mexico in developing a proposal to establish gender focal points within the ATT, including by giving them the opportunity to present and discuss this proposal with other states parties at the different side events in order to incorporate feedback. The proposal was accepted at CSP11 and three gender focal points were subsequently appointed (Mexico, Spain, and Togo).

From mid-2025 to January 2026, the Survey supported an initiative led by Control Arms and Latvia, funded by the ATT’s Voluntary Trust Fund, to increase female leadership in the framework of the ATT. Specifically, the Survey facilitated initial consultations with Geneva-based stakeholders regarding their training needs and provided several sessions at a two-day course on topics such as GBV (Article 7.4), the meaningful participation of women, and ATT universalization. The Survey later reviewed training content for an e-learning module on gender and Articles 6 and 7, which is due to be released in 2026.

The Survey also published a blog post, ‘[Up Close and Personal: Lessons Learned from a Municipal Disarmament Operation in Pehuajó, Argentina](#)’, in January 2025 drawing on first-hand experience of working on a disarmament campaign in the city of Pehuajó, in Buenos Aires province. The aim was to identify good practices in gender-responsive civilian disarmament, which, in turn, can inform efforts such as national strategies and action plans. This paper, along with other gender-related publications by the Survey, will be uploaded in 2026 to the repository on implementing gender-related aspects of the ATT managed by the ATT’s gender focal points given their relevance in identifying suitable mitigation measures under Article 7 of the Treaty.

Global Framework on Ammunition

During the GFA Preparatory Meeting in June, and in collaboration with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), we were contracted by UNODA to support the participation of five women ammunition technical experts from the WoMA Network from a range of operational backgrounds, representing Cyprus, the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation (based in Moldova), Pakistan, the Philippines, and Tanzania. Through supporting the WoMA+ Initiative in networking, sharing perspectives on barriers to participation, understanding policy processes, and raising their visibility, the Survey also contributed to the normalization of women’s meaningful participation in policymaking and GFA implementation. This was supported by a [working paper drafted by the Survey and UNIDIR on ensuring women’s full, equal, meaningful, and effective participation in ammunition through-life management](#), and co-sponsored by Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, France, Germany, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, the Small Arms Survey, and UNIDIR.

The Survey also designed and led a one-day session related to Objective 14 of the GFA at the WoMA Network course for women ammunition management experts focusing on the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), held in Wiener Neustadt, Austria, in July 2025. This provided an opportunity to discuss the WoMA+ Initiative and outline the outcomes of the GFA Preparatory Meeting with a new cohort of women ammunition technical officers.

5

National action plans and strategies

Nationally owned and inclusive NAPs and strategies are critical tools for systematically and effectively implementing, coordinating, monitoring, and evaluating small arms control measures at the regional and national levels. They are also important instruments for facilitating inclusive dialogue among states, civil society, and the private sector at the country level; enhanced government coordination; and cooperation with external partners in identifying and funding priority needs.

Reviews of national and regional initiatives

The Survey received several requests to provide input for and review NAPs and other national initiatives in 2025. Among other projects, we provided feedback on the final draft of the decree establishing Madagascar's National Commission on Small Arms and conducted technical reviews of the draft NAPs for Gambia and Burundi before their formal adoption. We also took part in the stakeholders' conference on reviewing and strengthening the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol in November 2025. The Survey presented lessons learned from reviewing and strengthening other small arms and light weapons instruments, using the UN PoA as a case study. Representatives from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) also shared their experience and mentioned the support offered by the Survey during the review of the SADC Protocol on arms control.

During 2024 and 2025, as a member of the advisory committee, the Survey took part in the French Cour des Comptes' evaluation of the French civilian arms control policy. The Cour implemented many of our recommendations, cited Survey research, and acknowledged our contribution in the final [evaluation report](#), published in March 2026.

Tools to support implementation

In 2025, with the aim of providing stakeholders with an overview of NAP processes and supporting their implementation, the Survey published the following outputs:

- The How-to Guide *Developing Strategies and National Action Plans on Small Arms Control* builds on the Survey's extensive engagement with national authorities on small arms control, particularly in West and Central Africa, and offers practical, context-specific approaches to enhance the coherence, adaptability, and inclusivity of NAPs. The Briefing Paper *National Action Plans as Tools for Effective Small Arms Control: Lessons from West Africa* complements this How-to Guide by examining the current state of practice of NAPs on small arms and light weapons in West Africa, their impact, and existing opportunities to enhance their effectiveness and potential in integrating small arms control into broader public policy frameworks that address development and security concerns.
- The How-to Guide *Developing Gender-responsive National Action Plans on Small Arms* provides guidance on how to make national small arms policies and practices, specifically small arms NAPs, more inclusive and gender responsive.
- The How-to Guide *Assessing Gender Responsiveness in the Implementation of Small Arms Control Action Plans* is designed to support national commissions in assessing, during mid-term or final evaluations, the extent to which gender is mainstreamed in their countries' NAPs.

In November 2025, the Survey participated in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Annual Coordi-

nation Meeting of National Commissions on Small Arms, where we presented our research on NAPs, along with the associated methodology, to representatives of ECOWAS member states.

Collaborative research

In 2024 and 2025, Survey experts undertook collaborative research and validation workshops in Chile and Ukraine on gender-responsive small arms control in both countries. By generating a credible baseline in a digestible draft report, the Survey helped to initiate a conversation on the importance of gender-responsive small arms control among ministerial staff, academics, and civil society in both Chile and Ukraine. In April 2025, the Survey published the findings from the workshops: *Critical Gaps: Firearms and Gender-based Violence in Chile* provides an overview of the current status of gender-responsive small arms control and violent crime in Chile, highlighting institutional shortcomings and the failure to effectively articulate the relationship between GBV and small arms control; and *Unsteady Ground: Gender-responsive Small Arms Control in Ukraine* offers an overview of the current status of gender-responsive small arms control and violent crime in Ukraine, the gendered distribution of violent crime in Ukraine during the ongoing full-scale war, and the current state of knowledge and available data on these issues. Findings from the work in Ukraine fed directly into the development of a Survey–Norwegian People's Aid project, to be implemented in 2026, and includes specific provisions on preventing arms-related GBV and facilitating the greater inclusion of women in small arms-related policy-making in Ukraine.

6 Weapons and ammunition management

Poor accounting and inadequate physical security of storage facilities can facilitate the diversion of ammunition from the national stockpile to terrorists, criminals, and other armed groups, increasing insecurity and instability. Furthermore, the deterioration of munition components can contribute to UEMS, which can have significant negative socio-economic and political consequences for the public and national governments. To mitigate these risks, ammunition management requires complex systems, which, in turn, present planning challenges and have significant budgetary implications for governments. Nationally owned and inclusive WAM refers to the good governance of arms and ammunition throughout their life cycle, including the establishment of relevant national frameworks, processes, and practices on production, stockpiling, transfers, tracing, and, ultimately, the disposal of these materials.

WAM support in Syria

As stated by the Survey's director in an [op-ed published in *Le Monde*](#), tens of thousands of weapons have already been stolen or trafficked from national stockpiles following the fall of the Bashar al-Assad regime in 2024, which represents an enormous threat to the stability of the country, and the entire region.

As part of our efforts to shed light on this major issue and mobilize international assistance, two joint Norwegian People's Aid–Small Arms Survey scoping missions to Syria and Lebanon took place in 2025. The purpose was to better understand Syria's WAM and small arms and light weapons control landscape, and to identify key needs, gaps, and opportunities in order to provide support within the country's evolving security landscape.

There was a clear understanding in Damascus that UEMS and stockpile management were critical issues for both national and regional security. The mission identified several urgent needs, including securing and managing weapons and ammunition stockpiles, together with seized and recovered items, and clearing contaminated areas in affected communities. It also highlighted gaps in community engagement, risk education, and data systems that

impede efforts to effectively monitor arms flows and inform evidence-based violence prevention and policy responses. In addition, institutional capacity and accountability also need to be strengthened, particularly for tracking weapons, preventing diversion, and aligning national frameworks with international standards through the development of a comprehensive action plan on small arms and ammunition.



At Geneva Peace Week, in October, the Survey hosted and participated in a panel about arms control in Syria—bringing together those from the field active in the security pillar; regional representatives; and Geneva-based actors working on international security sector governance, mine action, and WAM. The panel discussed challenges and opportunities for peace, as well as common priorities for action and the promotion of coordination between international and regional actors in three related sectors: mine clearance, security sector governance, and the reduction of illicit weapons proliferation and armed violence. The event was very well attended—the room reached full capacity and, as a result, some people had to join online. This, along with engagement from decision-makers with our team before and after the event, reflects the timeliness and relevance of the event, as well as interest in this topic. Coordinating the panel required communication with the Syrian Ministry of Emergencies and Disaster Management. The deputy minister shared a video message, played at the beginning of the session. The panel contributed to building a very positive relationship with the ministry, securing subsequent engagement meetings with ministry officials.

In November, the Survey—along with other Geneva-based peer organizations—met with the Syrian delegation to shed light on programmatic developments in Syria and identify areas for cooperation.

WAM support in Lebanon

In the framework of the third phase of the [EU-LAS project](#), we delivered an in-depth training session on WAM to Lebanon's armed forces in October and supported the organization of visits to army storage infrastructure (naval and air bases, army transportation regiment). The training was very successful, achieving an overall satisfaction score of 4.71 out of 5. A strong majority (67%) reported gaining substantial new knowledge, while the other 33% noted having acquired some new knowledge. Reflecting this impact, 67% stated that they will definitely apply what they learned in their work, and a further 29% indicated that they are likely to do so. The Lebanese authorities have renewed their interest in collaborating with the Survey on supporting the ongoing efforts to disarm non-state actors in the country; strengthening national WAM



training capacities; and building capacities for monitoring and analysing illicit arms flows, potentially by developing an inter-agency seizures registry.

UEMS database update

In 2025, we published a new update of our [UEMS database](#), as well as an [infographic](#) and a [Fact Sheet](#) on UEMS. These outputs were produced in time for discussions at the GFA Preparatory Meeting in June and raised awareness of the consequences of not implementing WAM good practices and the impact such events can have on the local population. The Survey's UEMS database also provided foundational information for the Survey-MAG blog post '[Explosions accidentelles dans les dépôts de munitions : impacts sexospécifiques/The Gendered Impacts of Unplanned Explosions at Munitions Sites](#)', which discusses the gendered impacts of UEMS. Numerous stakeholders continued to request access to our database in 2025. These included explosive ordnance disposal actors, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Humanitarian Peace Support School in Kenya, the Institute of Explosives Engineers, the Golden West Humanitarian Foundation, and various researchers.

Guidance for private security companies

We provided [guidance on the implementation of the International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers](#). Our work with the International Code of Conduct Association (ICoCA) culminated in the publication of the report [Guidance for Private Security Companies on the Management of Weapons and Materiel of War](#), in line with recognized frameworks such as the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium, and the IATGs. The release of the publication was combined with a webinar, '[Lead, Locks and Ledgers: Operationalising Good Practices on the Management of Weapons and Materiel of War by Private Security Companies](#)', which discussed additional measures needed to help private security companies implement the guidance and explored some of the challenges faced by both companies and regulators charged with exercising effective control over their practices.

Ahead of its official release, this guidance fed into the 6th Session of the Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group, which sought to elaborate the content of an international regulatory framework relating to the activities of private military and security companies. During intersessional discussions in December, the Survey delivered a statement on Paragraph/Article 11 on the Regulation of the Acquisition, Transfer and Use of Weapons in the [fifth draft instrument](#).

PSSM in Argentina

The Survey conducted a workshop with representatives from 10 regional delegations of the National Agency for Controlled Materials (ANMaC) to disseminate the findings of the assessment of the agency's safety and security procedures regarding physical security and stockpile management (PSSM). In a context of economic hardship in Argentina, the workshop marked the first initiative under the current administration to bring together ANMaC delegates and headquarters personnel. This opportunity was warmly welcomed by ANMaC's leadership and delegates, as well as by the Argentinian authorities, who expressed their sincere appreciation to the Survey, and affirmed their interest in advancing to a second phase.

7 Improvised weapons and ammunition, and other emerging threats

The proliferation and diversion of privately made and other non-industrial small arms and light weapons pose a growing threat to security. Non-industrial weapons no longer represent only marginal fractions of seized small arms and light weapons. Rather, the problem appears to be growing in scale and complexity. In the absence of a comprehensive and coordinated response, certain emerging types of non-industrial small arms risk being overlooked, and the underlying root factors of demand and supply ignored.

Counter-improvised explosive device efforts

In 2025, the Survey continued to support initiatives related to counter-improvised explosive device (C-IED) matters, recognizing the need for sustained and informed policy engagement in regions experiencing high-intensity conflict—notably in the Middle East and Ukraine (with the weaponization of commercial drones)—as well as areas where the manufacture and use of IEDs are evolving rapidly. With several multilateral milestones occurring in 2026, including the forthcoming UN General Assembly resolution on IEDs, the UN Secretary-General’s report on IEDs, and the Seventh Review Conference of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the Survey’s efforts in 2025 helped to frame the debate and set priorities, while drawing on past experience.

The adoption of the [Lomé Recommendations on Preventing and Countering the Acquisition and Use of Improvised Explosive Devices by Terrorist Groups in West Africa](#), presented at the 25th Coordinating Committee of the Global Counter Terrorism Forum, marked the culmination of an extensive two-year consultative process involving national authorities, security institutions, regional organizations, UN entities, and NGOs.

Throughout this process, the Survey played an active role in providing technical input and expertise. The Lomé Recommendations also integrated key insights from the Survey’s work in West Africa. These include the promotion of a ‘whole-of-society’ approach to C-IED and the development of national C-IED strategies and action plans, drawing on the Survey’s dedicated [How-to Guide](#) and lessons learned from its support to several West African states in assessing their C-IED capabilities. During the session, Germany also acknowledged the Survey’s research as a valuable contribution to understanding the broader enablers of IED threats in the region.

In October, the Survey released a podcast entitled ‘[Regulating Explosive Precursor Chemicals](#)’, which discussed how effective regulations for explosive precursor chemicals require constant vigilance; periodic review; and, when necessary, the updating of threat lists, persistent clear communication, stakeholder engagement, and international collaboration.



In November, the Survey, in collaboration with the Humanitarian Peace Support School, conducted two complementary workshops aimed at deepening understanding of IED threats in Kenya and assessing national capacities to address them. The two workshops served as an important platform for strengthening coordination, fostering synergies, and enhancing collaboration among national actors.

The Survey attended the 2025 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW and the 22nd Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in November and December, respectively, to continue building relationships with stakeholders and partners.

In December, the Survey published ‘[More than Might: How Inclusive and Accountable Strategies Can Transform C-IED Responses](#)’, a blog post that discusses moving beyond security-led initiatives towards a whole-of-society approach to mitigating the impact of IEDs.

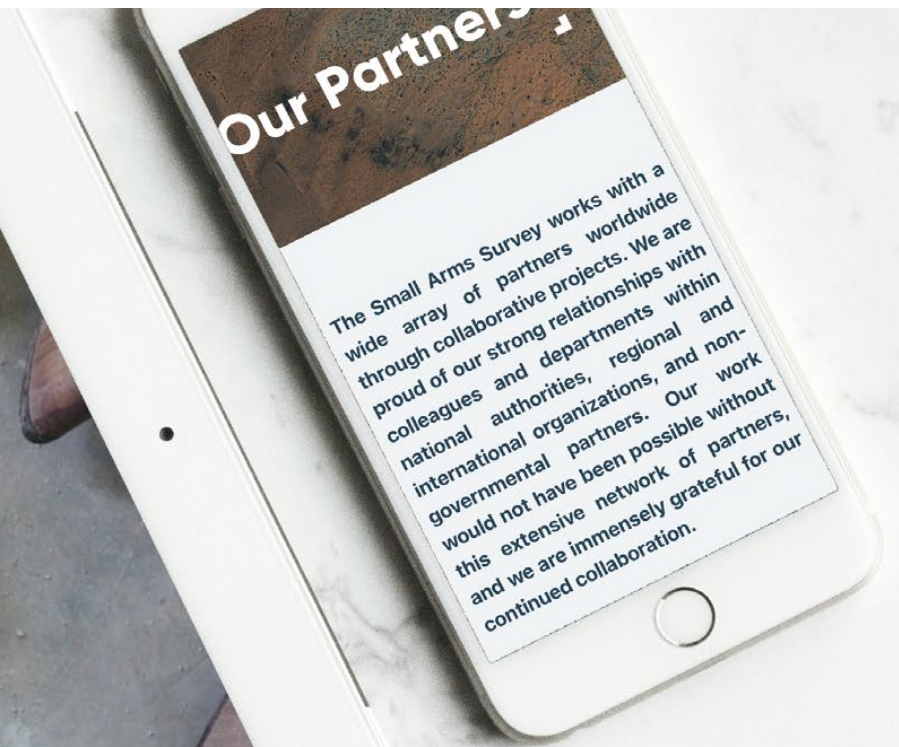
Privately made firearms

The Survey was awarded a competitive grant under the EU-funded Project VISTA to assess European member states’ seizure databases’ ability to capture emerging firearms threats, including PMFs. Research will begin in 2026 and a report will be published in 2027.

The Survey also presented its analysis on PMFs at a regional training for more than 200 customs officers from the Caribbean, organized by the WCO in the framework of Project Bolt.

The Survey’s Situation Update on PMFs in the Caribbean is cited in the [Final Report of the Panel of Experts on Haiti Submitted Pursuant to Resolution 2752 \(2024\)](#).

Outreach





Throughout 2025, the Survey continued to **counter misinformation**—responding to weapons identification requests from media outlets, and fact-checking arms trafficking claims in several politicized conflict settings. The Survey also **supported journalists** from such outlets as AFP, CNN, France24, Reuters, and the Washington Post working on a wide array of regions and topics including Afghanistan, the Caribbean, Sudan, the authorized arms trade, firearms possession, illicit trafficking, MANPADS, and more.

More than **500** media citations in **30** languages

Most notable themes covered

		Firearms holdings

Illicit arms flows/trafficking

PMFs/3D-printed weapons

Violent deaths

IEDs

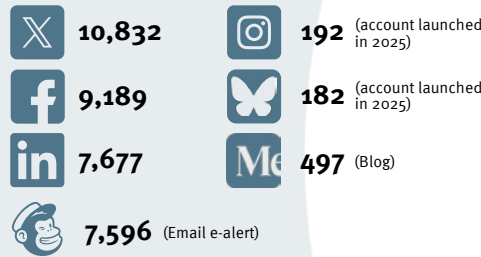
Notable news outlets citing our work

TOP 3 page views in 2025

- 1 Global Firearms Holdings database
- 2 Global Violent Deaths database
- 3 Weapons Identification Handbook



Social media followers



On **LinkedIn**, we achieved more than 115,000 post impressions and an engagement rate of 9.1%. On **Facebook**, we totalled more than 38,000 views, with an engagement rate of 3.5%. On **Medium**, our blog posts were read in full by 2,842 users and viewed by 7,645 people.

In June 2025 the Survey welcomed master's students from the University of Konstanz, Germany.



We explained methods of collecting and analysing data on arms flows, armed violence, and related security challenges. We also discussed the Survey's work on data-driven approaches to monitoring small arms proliferation, how data analysis can shape policy responses as well as conflict prevention strategies, and current global trends and challenges in arms control.

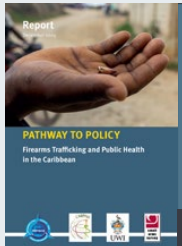


TOP 5 most viewed outputs in 2025

- 1 **Weapons Identification Handbook (in Arabic)**
The goal of this Handbook is to provide the reader with a basic understanding of how to identify and analyse small arms and light weapons, and to track their proliferation.
- 2 **Estimating Global Civilian-held Firearms Numbers**
- 3 **Primed and Purposeful: Armed Groups and Human Security Efforts in the Philippines**
- 4 **Kalashnikov AK-47 & close derivatives**
- 5 **Weapons Identification Handbook (in English)**

2025 publications and other outputs

REPORTS

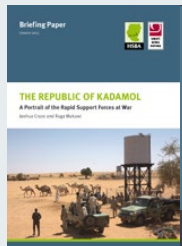


Report
Pathway to Policy: Firearms Trafficking and Public Health in the Caribbean
PATHWAY TO POLICY
Firearms Trafficking and Public Health in the Caribbean
DECEMBER 2025



Report
Weapons Compass: Proliferation and Control of Arms and Ammunition in Wartime Ukraine
WEAPONS COMPASS
Proliferation and Control of Arms and Ammunition in Wartime Ukraine
Also in Ukrainian
DECEMBER 2025

BRIEFING PAPERS



Briefing Paper
The Republic of Kadamol: A Portrait of the Rapid Support Forces at War
THE REPUBLIC OF KADAMOL
A Portrait of the Rapid Support Forces at War
JANUARY 2025



Briefing Paper
Open Markets: Documenting Arms Availability in Afghanistan under the Taliban
OPEN MARKETS
Documenting Arms Availability in Afghanistan under the Taliban
MARCH 2025




Briefing Paper
On the Brink: The Politics of Violence in South Sudan
ON THE BRINK
The Politics of Violence in South Sudan
MARCH 2025



Briefing Paper
National Action Plans as Tools for Effective Small Arms Control: Lessons from West Africa
NATIONAL ACTION PLANS AS TOOLS FOR EFFECTIVE SMALL ARMS CONTROL
Lessons from West Africa
APRIL 2025



Briefing Paper
Drivers of Extremist Sympathies: Security, Ideology, and Firearms in Lebanon and Tunisia
DRIVERS OF EXTREMIST SYMPATHIES
Security, Ideology, and Firearms in Lebanon and Tunisia
SEPTEMBER 2025



Briefing Paper
A Country for Old Men: The State of the Nuer White Armies of South Sudan
A COUNTRY FOR OLD MEN
The State of the Nuer White Armies of South Sudan
DECEMBER 2025

2025 publications and other outputs

GUIDES

HOW-TO GUIDE
Developing Gender-responsive National Action Plans on Small Arms
Kheira Djouhri and Callum Watson
Also in French
JANUARY 2025

HOW-TO GUIDE
Assessing Gender Responsiveness in the Implementation of Small Arms Control Action Plans
Kheira Djouhri and Callum Watson
Also in French
JANUARY 2025

HOW-TO GUIDE
Developing Strategies and National Action Plans on Small Arms Control
Kheira Djouhri and Julian Joly
APRIL 2025

SITUATION UPDATES

The Authorized Trade in Small Arms: Latin America from a Global Perspective
OCTOBER 2025

Wun Weng's Victory: The Rise and Fall of Benjamin Bol Mel
DECEMBER 2025

Making the Enemy: The War in Western Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal States
DECEMBER 2025

A History of Outsourced Violence: The Rise of the Rapid Support Forces, Libyan National Army, and Wagner Group
DECEMBER 2025

CO-PUBLICATIONS

Unsteady Ground: Gender-responsive Small Arms Control in Ukraine
Also in Ukrainian
APRIL 2025

Critical Gaps: Firearms and Gender-based Violence in Chile
Also in Spanish
APRIL 2025

Urbicide in Khartoum: An Analysis of the Al-Amarat and Mayo Neighbourhoods, 2023-24
JUNE 2025

Guidance for Private Security Companies on the Management of Weapons and Materiel of War
SEPTEMBER 2025


2025 publications and other outputs

FACT SHEETS



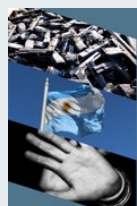
FACT SHEET
Linking the Unplanned Explosions at Munitions Sites Database to the Global Framework on Ammunition
Also in Arabic
JUNE 2025

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTIONS




Health Policy
Firearm-related Violence in the Caribbean is a Complex Systemic Issue: How Do We Move Towards a Solution?
OCTOBER 2025

BLOG POSTS



SMALL ARMS SURVEY BLOG POST
Up Close and Personal
 Lessons Learned from a Municipal Disarmament Operation in Pehuajó, Argentina
 By Juan Francisco Marín and Pamela Gutierrez with Colleen Watson
Also in Spanish
JANUARY 2025



SMALL ARMS SURVEY BLOG POST
The Bullet Trail
 A Year of Ammunition Seizures in the Caribbean and What They Mean for Public Health
 Yulio Raine
JUNE 2025



SMALL ARMS SURVEY BLOG POST
Explosions accidentelles dans les dépôts de munitions
 Impacts sexospécifiques
 Colleen Watson et Mines Advisory Group
Also in English
NOVEMBER 2025



SMALL ARMS SURVEY BLOG POST
More than Might
 How Inclusive and Accountable Strategies can Transform C-IED Responses
 Julien Joly and Paul Amoroso
DECEMBER 2025

2025 publications and other outputs

INFOGRAPHICS



Quick Facts on Unplanned Explosions at Munitions Sites (UEMS) – January 2025 update

Also in Arabic and Ukrainian

FEBRUARY 2025



The Regional Profiles of Illicit Small-calibre Ammunition (2015–2021)

Also in Ukrainian

JUNE 2025



Civilian Firearms in Ukraine since the Russian Invasion

Also in Ukrainian

NOVEMBER 2025



Civilian Firearm Possession and Safety in Ukraine since the Russian Invasion

Also in Ukrainian

DECEMBER 2025

VIDEOS



Kosovo's Post-war Lessons: Insights for Ukraine / Півосенний досвід Косова: уроки для України

In Ukrainian (English subtitles)

JULY 2025



South Sudan: Succession, Conflict Dynamics, and Implications for Stability

NOVEMBER 2025



Report Launch – 'Weapons Compass: Proliferation and Control of Arms and Ammunition in Wartime Ukraine'

DECEMBER 2025

PODCASTS



Small Arms Survey Podcast #56: Regulating Explosive Precursor Chemicals

OCTOBER 2025

Administration and finances



Institutional developments

In 2025, the Small Arms Survey continued to consolidate institutional progress while adapting to an increasingly challenging operating environment that required renewed focus on prioritization and strengthening sustainability and impact.

Building on reforms introduced in previous years, the organization further reinforced its grant and financial management processes and continued implementing a more standardized approach to project management to enhance consistency, accountability, and efficiency across programmes. Delivering high-quality results, maintaining operational effectiveness, and ensuring compliance with donor requirements remained central to our work, alongside continued investment in staff development and technical expertise.

At the strategic level, efforts focused on operationalizing the Survey's 2024–28 strategy and refining approaches to maximize impact through stronger strategic partnerships and collaboration across sectors and regions. In addition to our ongoing partnership with INTERPOL and the WCO as part of the EU–LAS project, the Survey developed a new strategic partnership with Norwegian People's Aid on the back of joint activities in Ukraine and the Middle East. These and other partnerships link the Survey's research, analysis, capacity, and policy work with organizations that provide further capacity building and implementation—enabling us to provide countries and donors alike with a more comprehensive and holistic offering.

The Survey also continued to strengthen its matrix system of working, allowing for greater flexibility, innovation, and cross-thematic cooperation in response to evolving global challenges and funding realities.

Financial developments

The year 2025 was a challenging one marked by a volatile financial environment. Several US-funded projects were paused early in the year, while wider international developments led to a number of contracts being delayed. These challenges were compounded by increasing pressure on donor funding due to multiple ongoing global crises. In addition, the strength of the Swiss franc created exchange rate pressures that require ongoing management.

The Small Arms Survey concluded 2025 with a planned deficit—in line with expectations and as approved by the Strategic Council—which was covered through the use of reserves. As in previous years, a portion of core funding was strategically invested in institutional priorities, including the maintenance of global databases and the development of concepts for emerging lines of work.

Total operating expenditures for the year stood at CHF 3,921,530, in line with the approved budget and reflecting the stable and effective delivery of programmes despite a complex operating environment.

The Survey's work continues to rely entirely on external funding. We are especially grateful for the unrestricted support provided by Australia, Ireland, Sweden, and Switzerland in 2025. As the global landscape continues to evolve, predictable and flexible core funding remains vital to the Survey's long-term effectiveness and resilience. It provides the foundation needed to sustain institutional expertise, maintain high-quality technical capacity, support innovation in response to emerging risks and opportunities, and adapt quickly to shifting challenges and priorities. This support also enables the Survey to continue delivering independent analysis and practical assistance in support of international efforts to address armed violence and strengthen security.

The Survey is also extremely grateful for the project-specific funding generously provided in 2025 by the EU, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, the United States, UNODA, ICoCA, and the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund.

The Survey extends its sincere appreciation to all partners for their continued trust, engagement, and collaboration.

Thank you!

We would like to thank the following countries, agencies, and institutions for their support of and contributions to our work in 2025.



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The Small Arms Survey is a centre for applied knowledge dedicated to preventing and reducing illicit small arms proliferation and armed violence. It 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. The Survey collaborates with a network of researchers, practitioners, partner institutions, non-governmental organizations, and governments in more than 50 countries, and its 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.

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