



**small
arms
survey**

STRATEGY 2014 -2018

3 April 2014



INTRODUCTION

The Small Arms Survey has made crucial contributions to international efforts to combat small arms and light weapons proliferation, and to prevent and reduce armed violence. It has been at the forefront of international policy development in its core areas, and represents an innovative and important partnership between non-governmental and governmental stakeholders. The present strategy provides an opportunity to consolidate existing successes and to strengthen the position of the Small Arms Survey as an indispensable interlocutor for governments, non-governmental actors, and international organizations. If fully realized and adequately resourced, it can take the work of the Small Arms Survey to a higher level, and enhance its catalytic role in efforts to tackle the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and the associated armed violence and insecurity.

HISTORY IN BRIEF

ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH

The illicit proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons presents a grave threat to human security. The unchecked spread of these weapons exacerbates inter- and intra-state conflicts, contributes to human rights violations, undermines political and economic development, destabilizes communities, and has a negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of millions of people.

Effective action by governments, civil society and the international community to counter the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons depends on the development of accurate evidence concerning the flows and stocks of these weapons and on reliable analyses of the causes and consequences of their proliferation. Yet policy-makers, analysts, and civil society actors around the world often lack basic information concerning the production, transfer, stockpiling, and use of small arms and light weapons. The strengths and weaknesses of various policy instruments (such as gun buy-back schemes, strengthening of export controls, codes of conduct, firearms or ammunition marking, recording-keeping and tracing) also need to be assessed on an ongoing basis so that best practices and lessons learned can be established, widely shared, and incorporated into practical policies.

Recognizing the need to address these complex issues the Swiss government established the Small Arms Survey project in 1999, in conjunction with other interested governments, among them Canada, Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and the United Kingdom. Institutionally, the Small Arms Survey is a high-profile contribution of Switzerland to international peace and security debates, and is a strategic partner of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. Since its establishment it has attracted consistent international support and resources, and positive assessments, for its policy-relevant programmes and projects, and for the strength of its expertise and analysis.

Administered and produced in Geneva by a small, dedicated team of around 25 people, the work of the Small Arms Survey is targeted at a wide audience of governments, international organizations, analysts, policy-makers, and civil society actors. It benefits from its Geneva location and its international network of partners to foster broad-ranging understanding and in-depth research on small arms and armed violence.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

Over the past 15 years the way in which the international community addresses the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons has evolved considerably. In the first years after the adoption of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms, stakeholders concentrated on problem identification and norm-setting through diplomatic and non-governmental initiatives at the global and regional levels.

- The Small Arms Survey played a crucial role through its work on marking and tracing, the demand for arms, weapons diversion, stockpile management, arms brokering, and the global distribution of small arms and light weapons.
- The Small Arms Survey promoted a multi-dimensional approach that brought together expertise from a range of communities— development, law and criminal justice, human rights, public health, and violence prevention—to avoid a narrow focus on arms control and to break through policy silos to seek innovative approaches to security and safety.

The focus of states, NGOs, international and regional organizations has more recently shifted to implementation through policy development, practical programmes, and capacity-building and assistance for local and national authorities and civil society actors.

- The Small Arms Survey has played an active role in training and capacity-building, assessing implementation, supporting legislative development, and pioneering national baseline assessments, in more than a dozen countries, that have served as a foundation for practical policies and programmes.

In parallel, major donors (including multilateral organizations such as the OECD and the World Bank) have moved from treating small arms proliferation and misuse as an isolated issue to promoting stabilization, security, safety, and violence reduction through a variety of policy and programmatic frameworks.

- The Small Arms Survey contributed to this shift through its work on armed violence to support the measurement pillar of the Geneva Declaration, and its *Global Burden of Armed Violence* reports. Weapons-related challenges are now seen as part of a broader socio-economic, developmental, or political context; as an important piece of a larger security-building challenge. One result has been a proliferation of approaches to security and safety promotion, including: disarmament; demobilization and reintegration; security sector reform; criminal justice reform and Rule of Law promotion; armed violence prevention and reduction; public safety and citizen security; violent extremism; and state fragility and stabilization

The *reach* and *focus* of the Small Arms Survey's work has evolved in parallel to the changes in its operating environment. In terms of reach the bulk of its work is now focused on national-level and local projects, as well as on capacity building and outreach, while maintaining a high-profile role at the global level through engagement with international and regional initiatives.

- Small Arms Survey staff have worked in more than 50 countries in all regions of the world over the past decade, often in an ongoing or sustained fashion. In several cases work has been conducted jointly with national agencies (e.g. the Kenyan government's National Focal Point on Small Arms for the Survey's armed violence assessment in Kenya) to ensure better uptake into the policy process.
- The Small Arms Survey has deepened its engagement with local actors, and operates a network of staff and collaborators focused on regional coordinators, currently based in Bogota, Cape Town, Nairobi, Tunis, and Washington, DC (and previously in Kathmandu and New Delhi).
- The Small Arms Survey is dedicated to building southern capacity through close partnerships in its knowledge-building efforts.

In terms of *focus*, projects began with a focus on issues relating to weapons and markets (production, transfers, diversion, stockpiles, possession), and have progressively leveraged this expertise to link it to broader security-building initiatives.

- The Small Arms Survey has led large-scale and long-term "security assessment" projects (Human Security Baseline Assessment (HSBA) in Sudan and South Sudan, Security Assessment in North Africa (SANA)); national armed violence assessments (Burundi, Guatemala, India, Kenya, Liberia, Nepal, Timor Leste, Yemen); ongoing monitoring and assessment of international initiatives; and issue-based work on gangs (e.g.: Central America, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago), urban armed violence, femicide, physical security and stockpile management, unplanned explosions, and weapons diversion.

Gender issues are an important aspect of policies and programmes dealing with the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and related human security issues, especially as these affect women and children.

- The Small Arms Survey has undertaken path-breaking data-collection and analysis on global femicide, on arms-related violence against women, and on the different roles and perspectives of women on security and safety issues (including as participants in gangs, armed groups, and security forces)
- the theme of the 2014 *Small Arms Survey* focuses on *Women and Guns*.

PROFILE

The Small Arms Survey is an internationally-recognized centre of excellence focusing on all aspects of arms and armed violence. It serves as the principal international source of public information on all aspects of small arms and armed violence and as a resource for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and activists.

Institutionally it is an independent research project of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva. The Small Arms Survey is a relatively small organization with a core team of about 25 staff with expertise in security studies, political science, international public policy, law, economics, development studies, conflict resolution, criminology, and sociology. The staff collaborate actively with around 25 peer institutions or experts and draw upon a worldwide network of researchers and partners.

The International Programme Council is the Small Arms Survey's oversight body. It includes some 20 representatives from governments, research institutes, and non-governmental organizations. It meets twice a year and is responsible for approving the broad strategic direction, administration, and budget of the project, as well as for offering counsel to the Programme Director and Managing Director.

The largest donor remains the Swiss government, accounting for around 50% of total contributions to the Small Arms Survey in recent years. In 2013, total expenditure was 5.84 million CHF, a figure that has been relatively stable since 2010. The other main contributors are European countries, Australia, and the United States, as well as several United Nations agencies, programmes, and institutes. The trend in recent years has been towards a steady increase in mandated funding for specific projects related to the geographic or topical interests of donors, governments, and international organizations on issues related to small arms, armed violence, and insecurity.

CHALLENGES

CONTEXT

The past decade has witnessed considerable evolution in the work of the Small Arms Survey, and in the policy and programmatic environment in which it operates. The current situation, including the move in late 2014 into the Maison de la Paix, and revitalization of the role of international – and intellectual – Geneva, present an opportunity to grow the Small Arms Survey into a knowledge hub at the centre of global efforts to promote human security.

The two main opportunities lie in the continuing—and increasing—call, by a variety of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders, for reliable information and analysis to support evidence-based programming and policy-making; and in the promotion of a holistic and cross-cutting approach to violence, insecurity and public safety. Both of these opportunities offer powerful comparative advantages, reflected in the growing appreciation among diverse stakeholders of the value added of working with the Small Arms Survey.

The challenges are:

- tailoring support to multiple stakeholder communities, using appropriate language and policy frameworks;

- cross-fertilizing best practices and knowledge across different policy communities (conflict, development, criminal justice, public health);
- translating information into actionable knowledge that can be used to develop and implement relevant policies and programming.

The Small Arms Survey's cross-cutting analysis and expert knowledge can help stakeholders break out of policy silos, learn from experiences in related issue areas, and deepen their understanding of their own domain. Similarly, the Survey is ideally positioned to work in partnership with international organizations active in its topic areas. The multi-disciplinary expertise of its staff and network, spanning conflict, criminal justice, development, economics, gender, legal and public health backgrounds is a comparative advantage for the Small Arms Survey, allowing it to work with diverse international and regional organizations.

INSTITUTIONAL

Over the next five years, the Small Arms Survey intends to maintain and sustain its high profile and comparative and competitive advantage by:

- promoting skill development among its senior and research staff;
- maintaining its holistic approach and competences on gender issues;
- implementing an in-house mentoring process;
- institutionalizing its knowledge;
- formalizing its partnerships and network of consultants, partners, researchers and peer organizations; and
- developing innovative means of collaborating at a distance.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

VISION

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons represents a grave threat to human security. The vision of the Small Arms Survey is a world where safety and security for all is protected and promoted.

MISSION AND MANDATE

The mission of the Small Arms Survey is to catalyse practical solutions to promote security and safety, through knowledge creation and expert analysis. Its mandate is to serve as the principal international source of impartial and policy-relevant expertise and analysis on all aspects of small arms and armed violence and to act as a resource for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and activists. It is an independent monitoring mechanism of national and international governmental and civil society initiatives on small arms and armed violence and an outlet for policy-relevant research on small arms and armed violence issues.

The Small Arms Survey also serves as a forum and clearinghouse for the sharing of information and the dissemination of best practices and initiatives dealing with small arms and armed violence. Its operational credo is to be globally present and locally-focused.

THEORIES OF CHANGE

Generating information to inform evidence-based policies and programmes

The unconstrained proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons is a major threat to human security and safety. Effective use of reliable information and expert analysis on the global flows and stocks of these weapons, and on the causes and consequences of their proliferation can play a key role in the formulation of evidence-based policies and programmes to improve security and safety, at local, national, and regional levels. The Small Arms Survey's independent information and analyses on all aspects of small arms and armed violence provides an entry point to influence practical policies and programmes to stem the illicit proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

The success of efforts to deal with small arms and light weapons depends on the availability of accurate and independent information concerning the global flow of these weapons and on reliable analyses of the causes and consequences of their proliferation. Through providing independent information and analysis, the Small Arms Survey contributes to the international efforts of policymakers and other stakeholders to constrain the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and to contribute to safer and more secure communities around the world.

Translating knowledge into practice

Few fragile or insecure settings have the capacity to translate knowledge into practical and policy-relevant actions. In such environments research must inform, educate and influence key change-makers, whether international donors, UN actors, civil society or government officials and decision-makers. Through promoting the uptake of its information and analysis into policies and programmes, the Small Arms Survey contributes to the international efforts of policymakers and other stakeholders to constrain the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and to contribute to safer and more secure communities around the world. The work of the Small Arms Survey demonstrates how knowledge can be made relevant to policy and programming, and how efforts to shape and inform policies and programmes can—under the right conditions—catalyse improvements in security and safety.

Information on the scope, scale, distribution, and causes of violence and insecurity is highly political (and politicized). The Small Arms Survey works alongside and with government authorities (local, national, regional, and international) that are crucial to ensuring the successful uptake of its research and analyses.

STRATEGIC DOMAINS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to contribute to the vision of a safer world and in the light of the logic of the theories of change presented above, during 2014–2018 the Small Arms Survey will focus its work on the following strategic goals, and their accompanying concrete objectives:

Strategic Goal 1		
To maintain the Small Arms Survey's role as a global centre of excellence		
Strategic objectives	Type of Indicator	Indicators
Generate and provide more information and analysis on all aspects of small arms and light weapons	Output	Ongoing production of high-quality information on all aspects of small arms and light weapons production, transfers, stocks, distribution, storage and destruction
Generate and provide more information and analysis on specific aspects of armed violence	Output	Progressive deepening of publicly available data (longitudinal, sub-national, demographic) on patterns of victimization and the impacts of armed violence
Be at the cutting edge of tools and methods for analysis into core topics	Output	Advancing leading-edge methods and tools for research on small arms proliferation and control as well as armed violence, with particular attention to ethics
Strategic Goal 2		
The Small Arms Survey will work to catalyse change through knowledge-building and expertise		
Strategic objectives	Type of Indicator	Indicators
Project outputs are communicated effectively to target audiences	Output	Developing a tailored communications strategy and tools for each project. Tracking use and uptake of project outputs
Project outputs are integrated into appropriate policies and programmes	Outcome	Relevant stakeholders in specific projects at national, regional or international levels have integrated project outputs into policies and practices
Contribute to the building of capacities	Outcome	Establishing a profile as a key node in international

to design and implement policies to combat proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons		networks and partnerships of armed violence observatories. Creating sustained demand for training and capacity-building Active involvement in relevant networks.
Strategic Goal 3		
The Small Arms Survey will contribute to the development of international norms and best practices through its engagement with international and regional initiatives		
Strategic objective	Type of Indicator	Indicators
Contribute to the ongoing development of global and regional norms	Outcome	Continued demand for direct expert participation in international and regional diplomatic processes
Strategic Goal 4		
The Small Arms Survey will enhance the measuring, evaluating and monitoring of the effectiveness of security promotion initiatives, and promote cross-fertilization of best practices within and between regions.		
Strategic objective	Type of Indicator	Indicators
Monitor and assess implementation of international and regional instruments and highlight areas for future action	Output	Advance mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of international and regional commitments and for assessing the implementation of relevant policies
Strategic Goal 5		
The Small Arms Survey will consolidate its management and develop a careful growth strategy with adequate organizational, human and financial resources		
Strategic objectives	Type of Indicator	Indicators
The organizational structure is adapted to size and scope of the organization	Output	Management structure with clear responsibilities and reporting lines
Human resources are in balance with the tasks	Outcome	Job satisfaction Predictable staffing evolution
Funding for growth is assured	Outcome	Finances are maintained and diversified
Synergies with other organisations in the Maison de la Paix are explored.	Outcome	Number of common meetings and shared engagements.

APPROACH AND WORKING METHOD

The Small Arms Survey will continue to operate as a centre of excellence and expertise on small arms and armed violence issues, by further strengthening the proven research methods that inform all of its information and analysis. Its working methods include: fieldwork; research partnerships; data generation and analysis; training and capacity-building; policy-development work; and engagement with a wide range of stakeholders.

The Small Arms Survey will respond to the specific needs of key stakeholders with the following approaches and methods:

- 1 further strengthening its use of **robust and innovative research methods** to support evidence-based programming and policy making.
- 2 developing **high-quality training packages** and opportunities for programmers and policy-makers (ranging from ad-hoc and Geneva-based outreach, to sustained and field-based training modules), to build capacity to develop effective policies and programmes to tackle small arms proliferation and misuse, and armed violence.
- 3 developing **appropriate monitoring, evaluation and assessment tools** to measure the effectiveness and impact of policies and programmes, as well as to provide independent assessments of national, regional and international initiatives on small arms and armed violence.
- 4 sustaining **regional presence** through “hubs” and strategic partnerships to bring together diverse stakeholders, as a forum for the sharing of best practices for dealing with arms and armed violence issues.

- 5 engaging in ongoing generation of new data—in areas such as weapons stockpiles (civilian, state, and non-state actors), weapons destruction programmes, unplanned explosions, national and sub-national armed violence, and violence against women—as a resource for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and civil society.

These efforts will be integrated into the core business of the Small Arms Survey, not subject to the vagaries of specific projects and funding cycles. Some initial investment has been made in these areas (ongoing data collection, initial monitoring and evaluation, and training courses), but consistent staffing is required to maintain and, more importantly, to upgrade and roll out these tools to support specific security and safety-promotion programmes.

PARTNERS AND NETWORKS

The Small Arms Survey commissions research and conducts collaborative projects with independent researchers, international organizations, UN agencies, research organizations, NGOs, and partner institutions throughout the world. Findings from this research are presented in the project's various publications.

RESOURCES

The Small Arms Survey has been in a “no growth” pattern for the past four years, consistent with the fiscal climate and overall operating environment. The strategic vision sketched above is designed to allow it to fulfil its core mandate, and meet needs and demands in a coherent and effective manner.

The ability to achieve the objectives detailed above, especially in specific issue-based or field-based projects, depends on donor support for the core operations, as well as on specific project elements (such as outreach and communications). They cannot entirely be realized within existing (and overstretched) resources, and will require a medium-term commitment from key stakeholders and partners to supporting and maintaining the Small Arms Survey as an international centre of excellence for policy-relevant research and analysis on all aspects of small arms and armed violence, and a support mechanism for international, regional and national programmes.

The Small Arms Survey, now in its 15th year, receives about 90 per cent of its financial support from governments. Switzerland has been the most important strategic partner for the Small Arms Survey since its establishment, increasing its annual core funding support to 2.5 million CHF (with some additional support for specific projects from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Human Security Division). At the same time, the total budget has increased from 1.2 million to approximately six million CHF per year, and its work has been supported by 15 different governments, UN agencies and bodies as well foundations.

The staff and management will need to maintain the integrity and reputation of the Small Arms Survey, to ensure that the Survey's network of working partnerships provides effective regional coverage, and to integrate their work into broader conflict resolution, humanitarian, peacebuilding, post-conflict reconstruction, development, public health, crime prevention, and armed violence reduction programmes.

IMPLEMENTATION AND STRATEGIC MONITORING

This strategy will be implemented through two two-year work plans for 2014-2015 (Annexe 1) and 2016-2017.

The strategy will be regularly monitored on the base of the strategic goals and objectives with the corresponding indicators and sources of verification (Annexe 2) and progress will be documented in annual reports. In 2016 an internal mid-term review of this Strategy will be undertaken to assess its realization and adapt its parameters as and if appropriate.