January 2025

HOW-TO GUIDE

Assessing Gender Responsiveness in the Implementation of Small Arms Control Action Plans

Kheira Djouhri and Callum Watson

small arms survey



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft Confédération suisse Confederazione Svizzera Confederaziun svizra

eign Affairs FDFA

Federal Department of Foreign Affairs FDFA

HOW-TO GUIDE

Assessing Gender Responsiveness in the Implementation of Small Arms Control Action Plans

Kheira Djouhri and Callum Watson

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



CREDITS

Project coordinator: Callum Watson Production and communications coordinators: Olivia Denonville, Lionel Kosirnik, and Katie Lazaro Editor: Mira Fey Copy-editor: Alex Potter Design and layout: Rick Jones Illustrations: Daly Design Proofreader: Stephanie Huitson

Published in Switzerland by the Small Arms Survey

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

First published in January 2025

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

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

ISBN: 978-2-940747-16-0

CONTENTS

Abbreviations and acronyms	
The aim of this guide	5
How to use this guide	6
Definition of the levels of gender inclusion	9
Level 1 – Gender neutral	10
Level 2 – Gender sensitive	11
Level 3 – Gender transformative	12
Evaluation criteria to measure gender responsiveness	13
Coherence	14
Relevance	16
Effectiveness	18
Efficiency	20
Impact	22
Sustainability	24
Key resources	
References	

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

HOW-TO GUIDE: ASSESSING GENDER RESPONSIVENESS

CS0	Civil society organization
MOSAIC	Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium
NAP	National action plan
NatCom	National commission
WPS	Women, peace and security

THE AIM OF THIS GUIDE

This guide has been developed as a tool to assist small arms control stakeholders, especially national commissions (NatComs) on small arms, to assess gender responsiveness in the implementation of their countries' national action plans (NAPs) to control small arms. The guide arose from the Small Arms Survey's observation following consultations with small arms control and women, peace and security (WPS) actors that gender is not systematically mainstreamed in small arms control NAPs (Watson, 2024). Moreover, references to small arms in WPS NAPs and WPS-related topics in small arms control NAPs are not always harmonized. These consultations also highlighted the challenges that NatComs face when measuring gender responsiveness in their mid-term or final evaluations of their countries' small arms NAPs. A more detailed source of guidance in this area can be found in the Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC), which contains voluntary, practical guidance on small arms control, and provides recommendations for the evaluation of NAPs in Series o4 on 'Design and Management' (UNODA, 2020).

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is designed to support NatComs in assessing in mid-term or final evaluations the extent to which gender is mainstreamed in their countries' NAPs, whether these assessments are undertaken internally or by a third party.

The guide is based on the six evaluation criteria developed by the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development: coherence, relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability (OECD, 2021). These criteria are also listed in MOSAIC (UNODA, 2020). Based on a generic definition of each of the six criteria, the guide identifies three levels of gender responsiveness that will help small arms control actors to evaluate their progress: gender neutral (Level 1), gender sensitive (Level 2), and gender transformative (Level 3).

To determine for each criterion the level of gender responsiveness present in a NAP, a list of questions is provided, together with a list of outcomes for each level. The questions are not meant to be answered one by one, but are intended as guiding questions or catalysts to stimulate discussion during workshops or interviews with the actors involved in implementing a NAP on small arms control.















The expression 'diverse people of all genders' has been preferred in this guide to give users the opportunity to tailor an assessment to the unique characteristics of a country's national context before carrying out the assessment. This guide uses the expression 'sex-disaggregated data'. Currently, most international and regional instruments mandate the collection of sex-disaggregated data. However, the collection of gender-disaggregated data, where possible, has the potential to make policies more gender-responsive.

In addition to the guiding questions, the guide's users can refer to the OECD guidelines Applying a Human *Rights and Gender Equality Lens to the OECD Evaluation Criteria* (OECD, 2023). These guidelines can be used as a complementary tool to this guide, providing additional questions for assessing the degree to which human rights and gender equality have been integrated into programmes, policies, or any other kind of intervention.

The guide draws on a Small Arms Survey publication entitled Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide (LeBrun, 2019). It has also been designed to complement previously published assessment methodologies related to NAPs and gender, a list of which can be found at the end of this document under the heading 'Key resources'.



HOW-TO GUIDE: ASSESSING GENDER RESPONSIVENESS

DEFINITION

of the levels of gender inclusion

The three definitions are adapted from the Small Arms Survey's practical guide on gender-responsive small arms control (LeBrun, 2019).



LEVEL 1 – GENDER NEUTRAL

The NAP ignores the role of gender, but does not necessarily exacerbate existing gender inequalities.

The NAP does not make any reference to gender. It does not take gender roles, gender dynamics, or the gender-specific impacts of small arms into account. It may take an 'equal opportunities' approach to participation whereby no individuals are explicitly excluded on the basis of their gender or other identity characteristics, yet no specific efforts are made to ensure the inclusion of diverse people of all genders in decision-making processes.

LEVEL 1 GENDER NFIITRAI

LEVEL 2 – GENDER SENSITIVE

The NAP considers the impact of gender inequalities in achieving its objectives, but does not seek to change gender roles or relations.

The NAP may specifically target women and men, including youth, as potential beneficiaries of small arms control activities. It may seek to engage gender advisors, ministries of gender or women's affairs, and civil society organizations (CSOs) working on women's rights or gender equality; however, its engagement with these actors is limited and superficial. They may only be involved during the NAP development phase or as part of implementation activities, but not as integrated members of the team developing and implementing the NAP. In other words, these actors are invited to contribute to achieving the NAP's objectives without being able to influence what these objectives should be.

LEVEL 2 GENDER SENSITIVE

LEVEL 3 – GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE

LEVEL 3 GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE

The NAP addresses underlying gender inequalities in order to promote shared power, control, and decision-making as an integral part of improving small arms control and supporting women's empowerment and the achievement of more gender-equal relationships.

The NAP addresses the specific needs of diverse people of all genders, including youth and children, and allocates both human and financial resources on an equitable basis in order to address these needs. It ensures the full, equal, meaningful, and effective participation of diverse groups of people of all genders, including young people, in defining priorities and implementing activities. It considers gender norms, dynamics, and relations, and contains measures to mitigate any negative gendered impacts of small arms abuse and illicit trafficking. The NAP aligns with and contributes to efforts aimed at achieving women's empowerment and gender equity and equality, as outlined in other national laws, policies, strategies, and action plans.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

to measure gender responsiveness (based on the OECD definitions)



COHERENCE



Definition:

'The compatibility of the intervention with other interventions in a country, sector or institution' (OECD, 2021).

Applying this definition to gender:

The assessment of this criterion seeks to measure the extent to which the small arms control NAP is aligned with national, regional, and international gender policies and initiatives.

- Q1. What are the coordination mechanisms between gender and small arms control actors, and are they effective?
- Q2. How and to what extent does the NAP on small arms control take into account the priorities defined in national gender policies, for example the country's WPS NAP?
- Q3. To what extent is the small arms NAP aligned with regional or international gender-related policies or agendas?

Level 1 – Gender neutral:

- Gender and small arms control actors operate in silos. There is no interaction or information sharing between the two groups of actors. This is reflected in the NAP by the absence of any references to gender or gender-related programmes and policies.
- The actors in charge of implementing the NAP are unfamiliar with the activities of CSOs working on women's rights and gender equality, and with gender-related laws and policies.
- The absence of coordination between these two groups of actors prevents the NAP from integrating either the principles or practices of regional or international gender-related policies or agendas.

Level 2 - Gender sensitive:

- The NatCom on small arms control maps relevant state and civil society stakeholders working on gender, as well as any of the country's gender-related laws and policies. In addition, the NatCom makes some efforts to consult or engage with national gender stakeholders during the development and/or implementation of the NAP.
- Gender-related cross references in policies describe how small arms control initiatives can mitigate the differentiated impacts of small arms on diverse people of all genders, including youth and children.
- The NatCom attempts to align the NAP with regional and international gender-related policies, including by participating in regional and international forums on gender and identifying gender-related entry points in regional and international small arms control instruments.

Level 3 – Gender transformative:

- Gender focal points coordinate decision-making, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation efforts to create synergies with gender-related policies throughout the NAP's policy cycle.
- Synergies between the NAP and national gender-related policies address the interplay between gender norms, dynamics, and relations, on the one hand, and small arms trafficking and misuse, on the other hand.
- The NatCom addresses gender norms, dynamics, and relations in its regional and international engagements on small arms control in line with international gender-related laws and policies.







RELEVANCE



Definition:

'The extent to which the intervention's objectives and design respond to beneficiaries' global, country and partner/institution needs, policies and priorities, and continue to do so if circumstances change' (OECD, 2023).

Applying this definition to gender:

The assessment of this criterion seeks to verify that the small arms control NAP responds to the specific needs of diverse people of all genders, including youth and children, and also to the policies and priorities of the country's gender actors.

- Q1. To what extent do the NAP's objectives and activities consider the priorities formulated by gender actors, particularly CSOs?
- Q2. How are the specific needs of diverse people of all genders, including youth and children, taken into account when implementing the NAP?
- Q3. How and to what extent does the NatCom consider the specific needs of women and other under-represented groups in order to enhance their meaningful participation in small arms control activities?

Level 1 – Gender neutral:

- Gender actors, particularly CSOs, are not included in the NAP process, thus the NAP does not reflect their gender-related priorities and objectives.
- The NAP does not assess the specific needs of diverse people of all genders—including youth and children—in relation to small arms control. The data collected is not disaggregated by sex or age.
- The NAP does not analyse the normative and material conditions needed for women and other underrepresented groups to participate in small arms control efforts (of whatever kind).

Level 2 - Gender sensitive:

- The NAP's objectives consider national gender-related policies and programmes in which the priorities of gender actors, including civil society, are formulated, particularly the country's WPS NAP.
- Sex- and age-disaggregated data is collected, and the differential impact of small arms on diverse people of all genders, including youth and children, is acknowledged.
- All stakeholders, including women and under-represented groups, are able to articulate their genderdifferentiated needs in consultations, decision-making processes, and implementation efforts related to the effective control of small arms.

Level 3 - Gender transformative:

- The NAP's objectives specify how the NAP will contribute to national gender-related policies and programmes, including priorities formulated by gender actors, particularly CSOs.
- Sex- and age-disaggregated data is analysed to identify how both gender roles and relations and gendered power dynamics result in small arms having differential impacts on people based on their gender.
- Diverse stakeholders, including women and under-represented groups, shape agendas, build coalitions, and draw on gender perspectives forged in broader movements to influence policies and programmes designed to control the misuse and illicit trafficking of small arms, including related decision-making processes and implementation efforts.







EFFECTIVENESS

Definition:

'The extent to which the intervention achieved, or is expected to achieve, its objectives and its results, including any differential results across groups' (OECD, 2023).

Applying this definition to gender:

The assessment of this criterion seeks to measure the extent to which the NAP has achieved its genderrelated objectives, including results specifically targeting diverse people of all genders and ages, including youth, or is attempting to do so.

- Q1. How and to what extent has the implementation of the NAP enabled changes in perceptions and norms relating to the role of gender in small arms control?
- Q2. How and to what extent has the implementation of the NAP enhanced changes in perceptions and norms relating to the role of gender in small arms control?
- Q3. How and to what extent has the NAP overcome barriers that prevented the meaningful participation of women and under-represented groups in small arms control policies, programmes, and activities?

Level 1 – Gender neutral:

- Small arms actors do not collect any sex- and age-disaggregated data and thus cannot foresee or measure any changes in gender-related perceptions and norms in the NAP.
- Small arms actors do not demonstrate the capacity to apply a gender perspective across arms control programmes and activities, hence no efforts are being made to mainstream gender in the NAP.
- Barriers to the meaningful participation of women and under-represented groups in small arms control policies, programmes, and activities are not identified.

Level 2 - Gender sensitive:

- Small arms actors collect sex- and age-disaggregated data in order to identify baselines and monitor the gender-differentiated effects the NAP has on diverse people of all genders as it is implemented.
- Small arms control actors mainstream gender programmes and activities foreseen in the NAP by considering how these programmes and activities can have a positive effect on diverse people of all genders.
- The NAP includes provisions that support diverse groups of people of all genders, especially women and under-represented groups, in overcoming barriers to meaningful participation in small arms control programmes and activities.

Level 3 – Gender transformative:

- The collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data enables small arms control actors to better understand the effects of the uncontrolled misuse and illicit trafficking of small arms on gender norms, dynamics, and relations.
- Small arms control actors mainstream gender in programmes and activities foreseen in the NAP by considering how these programmes and activities can have a positive effect on gender norms, dynamics, and relations.
- The NAP implements changes in working practices to remove all gender-based barriers to meaningful participation in small arms control policies, programmes, and activities, thus maximizing their effectiveness especially for women and other under-represented groups.







EFFICIENCY

Definition:

'The extent to which the intervention delivers, or is likely to deliver, results in an economic and timely way' (OECD, 2023).

Applying this definition to gender:

The assessment of this criterion seeks to measure the extent to which the mobilization, allocation, and use of resources in the NAP's implementation equitably address the specific needs of diverse people of all genders, including youth, while mitigating underlying gender dynamics that may undermine the NAP's implementation.

- Q1. How and to what extent are resources to implement the NAP allocated equitably on the basis of the specific needs that have been identified of diverse people of all genders, including youth and children?
- Q2. How were diverse groups of people of all genders, including youth, engaged in efforts to identify both potential risks to the project and possible synergies that could maximize its impact?
- Q3. To what extent does the NAP secure the buy-in of diverse groups of people of all genders, including youth, especially in the areas of the country most affected by small arms?

Level 1 – Gender neutral:

- Resources are allocated without any consideration for the fact that people's needs may vary according to their gender and other factors, including age.
- Risk-mitigation efforts did not include diverse groups of people of all genders, including youth, and therefore failed to identify potential synergies or factors leading to a desired multiplier effect.
- No efforts have been made to secure the buy-in of diverse groups of people of all genders, including youth.

Level 2 - Gender sensitive:

- The NAP allocates resources according to the specific needs of diverse people of all genders, including youth and children.
- Diverse groups of people of different genders, including youth, are regularly involved in risk-mitigation efforts, or in identifying potentially synergies or factors that could have a multiplier effect.
- The NatCom and its partners have made efforts to secure the buy-in of diverse people of all genders, including youth.

Level 3 – Gender transformative:

- The NAP considers the positive or negative effects of specific gender norms, dynamics, and relations when allocating resources to and sequencing the NAP's implementation.
- The NAP is implemented by harmonizing efforts and pooling resources with actors from different fields and with diverse expertise, in particular those working to achieve gender equality.
- Diverse groups of people of all genders, including youth, affected by the illicit trafficking and misuse of small arms partner with the NatCom and actively contribute to the NAP's implementation.







IMPACT

Definition:

'The extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects' (OECD, 2023).

Applying this definition to gender:

The assessment of this criterion seeks to measure the extent to which the NAP's implementation has contributed to gender equality. This can be facilitated through the use of gender markers and the evaluation questions (see OECD, 2016).

- Q1. How and to what extent does the NAP's implementation directly or indirectly change genderrelated perceptions and norms through small arms control?
- Q2. How and to what extent does the NAP's implementation reduce the adverse impact of small arms on diverse people of all genders, including youth and children?
- Q3. How and to what extent has the NAP's implementation strengthened the meaningful participation of women and other under-represented groups in small arms control policies, programmes, and activities, including assessing its impact?

- The NAP does not mention gender in any of its objectives or impact statements.
- The NAP does not monitor the differential impacts of its activities due to the absence of sex- and age-disaggregated data in the baseline and subsequent monitoring and evaluation.
- Small arms control actors do not recognize the value of the meaningful participation of women and other under-represented groups in their field, including in assessing the NAP's impact, and thus make no efforts to include them.

Level 2 - Gender sensitive:

- Disaggregated data is analysed to assess the differential impacts of small arms on diverse people of all genders, including youth and children, and thus to inform small arms control policies and programmes.
- The NatCom understands these differential impacts and seeks to mitigate negative gender-related impacts by incorporating a gender perspective into the NAP.
- Diverse people of all genders, including under-represented groups, are consulted in assessing how small arms control programmes and activities impact people and communities differently on the basis of their gender.

Level 3 - Gender transformative:

- The NAP seeks to address the gendered root causes of small arms-related violence, resulting in a reduction in violence and human rights violations and improvements in gender equality.
- The NAP addresses the negative impact of small arms misuse and illicit trafficking on gender norms, dynamics, and relations.
- The NatCom partners with diverse people of all genders, including youth, to (re)design evaluation practices in order to remove barriers to meaningful participation and assess the NAP's impact on gender norms, dynamics, and relations, and its gender-differential impact on people and communities.







SUSTAINABILITY

Definition:

'The extent to which the net benefits of the intervention continue or are likely to continue' (OECD, 2023).

Applying this definition to gender:

The assessment of this criterion seeks to measure the extent to which the results of the NAP's implementation will continue to address the different needs of diverse people of all genders, including youth, after the end of the implementation period. This assessment also seeks to measure the extent to which diverse groups of people of all genders, including youth, are able to continue to participate fully, equally, meaningfully, and effectively in future small arms control efforts.

- Q1. How and to what extent does the NAP make specific efforts (including allocating human and financial resources) to sustain gender mainstreaming and inclusion in small arms control in the long term?
- Q2. How and to what extent have efforts and capacities to ensure synergies and linkages between gender and small arms policies become institutionalized?
- Q3. How and to what extent do further efforts to promote the meaningful participation of diverse people of all genders in small arms control activities rely on external factors (including political will and the allocation of adequate human and financial resources)?

Level 1 – Gender neutral:

- There is no investment in the technical, financial, and material capacities required to design and implement gender-responsive small arms control programmes.
- The lack of collaboration and harmonization between the gender and small arms control agendas hinders synergies that may have contributed to the NAP's sustainable implementation.
- The institutions responsible for implementing the NAP do not recognize the importance of supporting diverse inclusion and the need for long-term attitudinal changes.

Level 2 - Gender sensitive:

- The NatCom establishes of a pool of trained specialists in gender-responsive small arms control, thereby enabling efforts to institutionalize gender mainstreaming and diverse inclusion.
- Gender and small arms control actors develop strategies to harmonize their activities, pool their resources, and thus maximize the NAP's benefits for diverse people of all genders, including youth.
- Small arms control actors understand the importance of allocating dedicated human and financial resources to ensure the full, equal, meaningful, and effective participation of women and other under-represented groups in small arms control activities.

Level 3 - Gender transformative:

- Sustained investments in institutional learning make gender-responsive small arms control a core competency of the NatCom, resulting in changes in mindsets, new approaches, and the normalization of diverse inclusion throughout the policy cycle.
- Gender and small arms control policy processes continuously feed into each other as gender norms, dynamics, and relations shift, and attitudes to and challenges surrounding small arms control evolve.
- Leaders at all levels allocate financial and human resources to activities and programmes designed to remove barriers to the meaningful participation of people of different genders, facilitate their presence in decision-making, and ensure that they have the knowledge, confidence, and resources they need to advance their interests.







KEY RESOURCES

Monitoring and evaluating NAPs and definition and use of the six evaluation criteria:

- MOSAIC Module 04.40 on 'Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting' (UNODA, 2020)
- Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully (OECD, 2021)

Gender and small arms control:

- Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide (Small Arms Survey) (LeBrun, 2019)
- *Meaningful Partners: Opportunities for Collaboration between Women, Peace and Security, and Small Arms Control at the National Level* (Small Arms Survey) (Watson, 2024)
- Training Manual on Gender-mainstreaming Small Arms Control (UNODA, 2022)
- Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda (United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research) (Myrttinen, 2020)
- Gender Responsive Small Arms Control in the Decade of Action for the SDGs: Accelerating Action for Global Violence Reduction (Pathfinders, 2021)

Integration of gender into project design and evaluation:

- 'Integrating Gender in Project Design and Monitoring for the Security and Justice Sector' (see NAPRI Tool, p. 12) (DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, and UN Women, 2019)
- Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker (OECD, 2016)
- Applying a Human Rights and Gender Equality Lens to the OECD Evaluation Criteria (OECD, 2023)

REFERENCES

- DCAF (Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance), OSCE/ODIHR (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights), and UN Women. 2019. 'Integrating Gender in Project Design and Monitoring for the Security and Justice Sector.' Tool 15. In *Gender and Security Toolkit*. Geneva: DCAF, OSCE/ODIHR, and UN Women.
- LeBrun, Emile (ed.). 2019. *Gender-responsive Small Arms Control: A Practical Guide*. Handbook. Geneva: Small Arms Survey.
- Myrttinen, Henry. 2020. Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda. Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.
- OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2016. *Handbook on the OECD-DAC Gender Equality Policy Marker*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- -. 2021. Applying Evaluation Criteria Thoughtfully. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- -. 2023. Applying a Human Rights and Gender Equality Lens to the OECD Evaluation Criteria. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Pathfinders (Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies). 2021. *Gender Responsive Small Arms Control in the Decade of Action for the SDGs: Accelerating Action for Global Violence Reduction*. New York: Center on International Cooperation.
- UNODA (UN Office for Disarmament Affairs). 2020. 'Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.' MOSAIC Module 04.40:2020.FV1-0.
- -. 2022. Training Manual on Gender-mainstreaming Small Arms Control. New York: UNODA.
- Watson, Callum. 2024. Meaningful Partners: Opportunities for Collaboration between Women, Peace and Security, and Small Arms Control at the National Level. Briefing Paper. Geneva: Small Arms Survey. February.

Small Arms Survey

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

t +41 22 908 5777

e info@smallarmssurvey.org

About the **Small Arms Survey**

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

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

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

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

