



Mine Action Support for Armed Violence Reduction:

NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

Although there is no international consensus on the definition of armed violence, this policy brief uses the definition put forward by the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which defines armed violence as the “intentional use of illegitimate force (actual or threatened) with arms or explosives against a person, group, community, or state, which undermines people-centred security and/or sustainable development.”¹

Under this definition, armed violence reduction (AVR) refers to any action or activity that contributes to a decrease in armed violence. These may include, among others: certain peace building activities; disarmament,

demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) programmes; community safety programmes; small-arms/light weapons (SALW) and ammunition disposal; physical security and stockpile management (PSSM); and security sector/system reform (SSR). While some of these activities are strictly dedicated to reducing armed violence, others, such as SALW control, ammunition disposal and PSSM, also contribute to increased public safety and accident prevention (eg, depot explosions).

For the purpose of this policy brief, the terms ‘AVR’ and ‘AVR-related’ will refer to both strict armed violence reduction as well as wider public safety interventions.

Mission Creep or Responding to Wider Security Needs?

GICHD POLICY BRIEF | DECEMBER 2012

SUMMARY²

This policy brief is based on the findings of a study undertaken by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in 2011-12 on the role of mine action organisations in supporting armed violence reduction at an operational level. This policy brief examines the increasing involvement of mine action organisations in efforts to reduce armed violence and promote public safety. It looks briefly at how the focus on AVR has developed and the types of programmes that mine action organisations are implementing, as well as the rationale for this shift from ‘traditional’ mine action to AVR. It concludes with a summary of key findings and lessons learnt.

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INTRODUCTION

In 2006, a study undertaken by the GICHD found that there were few examples of existing synergies between SALW programmes and mine action. However, the study noted that there was scope for using mine action technical expertise "...to manage the explosive threat through mines/ERW (Explosive Remnants of War) clearance, SALW collection, and ammunition stockpile reduction, including by destruction and demilitarisation."³

The purpose of this policy brief is to illustrate how an increasing number of mine action organisations are using their mine action technical expertise and their capacities to operate in difficult environments to reduce armed violence and promote public safety. Several organisations now have AVR-related policies, programmes and staff in place. For example:

- > Danish Demining Group (DDG) has developed an AVR framework⁴ and is implementing community safety programmes in Somaliland, South Sudan, Uganda and Yemen
- > Mines Advisory Group (MAG) uses the term AVR⁵ to describe its work on identifying stockpiles and ammunition, stockpile assistance and safe storage, destruction of surplus and obsolete weapons and ammunition, and marking and tracing weapons
- > Several organisations are implementing Physical Security and Stockpile Management programmes (eg, DDG, Swiss Demining Foundation (FSD), HALO Trust, MAG, Organisation of American States (OAS), United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)) to improve the security of armouries and storage depots, strengthen ammunition management capacity, reduce the risks of unplanned explosions and prevent theft from stockpiles
- > Action On Armed Violence⁶ (AOAV) is implementing a reintegration training programme in Liberia for ex-combatants, and HALO Trust employs and trains ex-combatants as deminers in Afghanistan, both of which support broader DDR efforts
- > In addition to mine risk education, Handicap International (HI), DanChurchAid and DDG also deliver SALW risk education to prevent SALW-related accidents, raise awareness and reduce the impact of SALW misuse

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Despite the expanding number and scope of these interventions, limited information is available on programme objectives, methodologies and results achieved. While research has been done on the role of mine/ERW operators beyond mine action, this research has largely focused on peace-building. Furthermore, virtually no guidance has been developed for mine action organisations on how to implement and support programmes that try to reduce armed violence and improve public safety.

To address this gap, the GICHD study⁷ consisted of a series of case studies (see Box 1) that profiled different organisations, highlighting programme scope, methodology and results, and the rationale behind the expansion beyond mine action into AVR. The overall goal of the case studies and this policy brief is to share key lessons learnt, provide practical guidance for the mine action community, and strengthen collaboration between mine action organisations and those focussing specifically on AVR-related programmes.

Box 1 | List of case studies

The GICHD Mine Action and AVR study included the following twelve country case studies:

- > Albania Mine and Munitions Coordination Office's and DanChurchAid's UXO hotspot clearance project in Albania
- > AOAV's post-conflict rehabilitation and reintegration programme in Liberia
- > DanChurchAid's SALW awareness raising project in Burundi
- > DDG's Community Safety Programmes in Somaliland and Uganda
- > HALO Trust's reintegration of former combatants into demining in Afghanistan
- > HI's SALW risk awareness project in Libya
- > MAG's PSSM programmes in Burundi and Somaliland
- > OAS's SALW and munitions destruction programme in Guatemala
- > UNMAS's PSSM project in Côte d'Ivoire
- > UNMAS's rapid response project in Congo-Brazzaville

Before examining the different types of AVR-related programmes that mine action organisations are implementing and the factors which have motivated this shift to AVR, the following section provides some background on how discussions on armed violence reduction have evolved.

FROM SALW CONTROL TO AVR: THE EVOLUTION

Increased international attention and policy dialogue on the need to reduce armed violence stem from international efforts to address the illicit trade and proliferation of SALW. Initially, SALW control programmes focused on reducing the availability or supply of SALW. However, second generation SALW programming has moved beyond a focus on supply to also address the factors stimulating the demand for arms, including poverty and lack of development. In 2006, for example, the Small Arms Survey published a paper entitled "Demanding Attention: Addressing the Dynamics of Small Arms Demand," which argued that interventions to restrict the supply of weapons would only succeed if factors driving demand are carefully diagnosed and acted upon."⁸

The AVR approach brings further evolution by including analysis of how arms are integrated in a community's socio-economic, cultural and political dynamics and looking at links from local through to regional and international levels.⁹ Many governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have since launched initiatives to ensure AVR efforts are linked to national and regional development programmes and strategies. Currently, 100 countries have endorsed the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which is a high-level diplomatic initiative designed to encourage states and civil society actors to achieve measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence in conflict and non-conflict settings by 2015 (and beyond). See Box 2 for a summary of milestones in the evolution towards the current international AVR agenda.

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Box 2 | Key AVR milestones

2001 | The UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW is established, requiring participating steps to enact measures to fight illicit SALW manufacturing and trade in a broad range of areas.

2005 | During the World Summit (High Level Plenary Meeting of the 60th Session of the General Assembly), global leaders recognise the strong link between development, peace, security and human rights.¹⁰

2006 | The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development is adopted by 42 states. Now endorsed by over 100 states, it recognises clear links between armed violence and development.

2009 | The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) publishes a report titled **Armed Violence Reduction: Enabling Development**, which introduces the 'AVR lens'.

2010 | The Norwegian Government and the UNDP organise the Oslo Conference on Armed Violence -Achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to "generate international momentum to ensure that commitments to armed violence reduction and prevention are included in the High Level Plenary Meeting on the MDGs, and reflected in subsequent MDG and developmental strategies through to 2015."¹¹ More than 60 countries agree to measures to address armed violence.¹²

2012 | Global civil society alliance for AVR is established to promote innovative and evidence-based strategies to create effective national action plans and programmes that reduce armed violence.

The OECD, at the forefront of promoting a greater understanding of the links between armed violence and development, has developed a variety of tools and methods to aid practitioners in developing effective AVR programmes. One of these tools is the AVR lens, an analytical framework that captures the key elements and levels of armed violence, namely the:

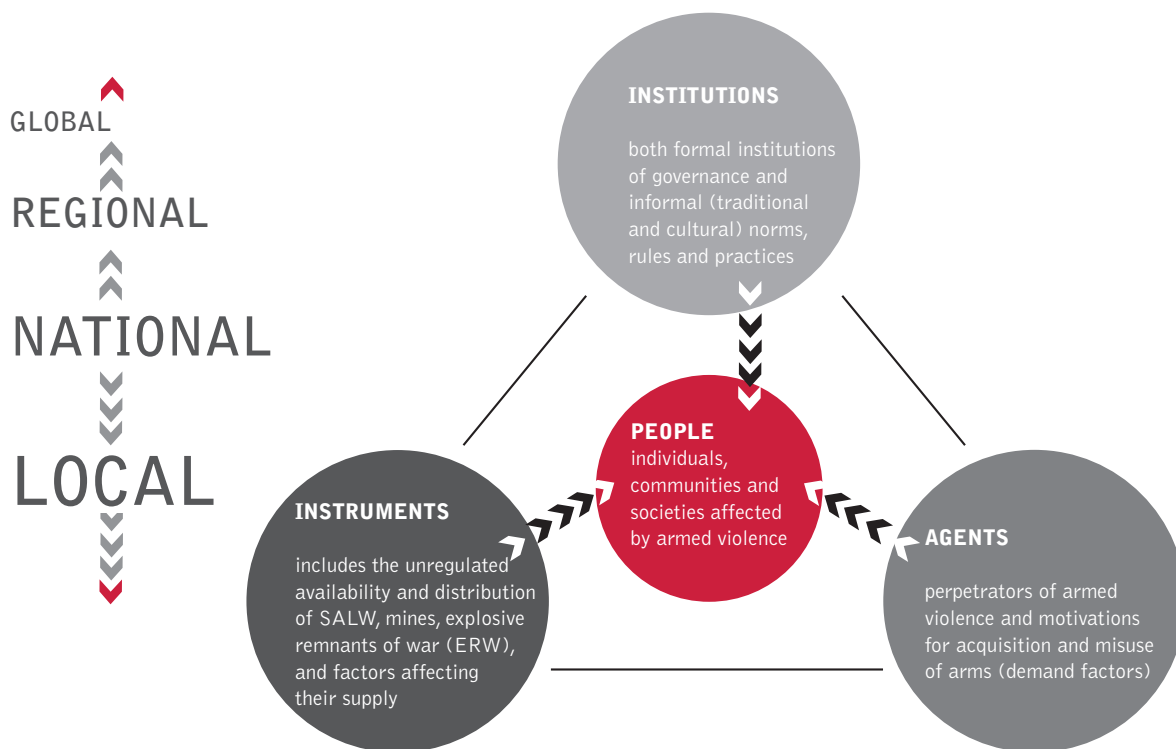
- > people affected by armed violence (victims and wider communities)¹³
- > perpetrators of armed violence, and their motives¹⁴
- > instruments of armed violence¹⁵, in particular their availability and supply
- > wider institutional and cultural environment that may enable or protect against armed violence¹⁶

A diverse range of organisations are implementing AVR-related initiatives in different programming contexts (eg high rates of urban criminal violence to protracted post-conflict insecurity) that focus on different aspects of the 'AVR lens'. These include UN agencies such as the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery and the World Health Organisation's Violence and Injury Prevention programme, as well as numerous governmental and non-governmental organisations working at regional, national and sub-national levels. In some countries however, these initiatives may not be referred to using the AVR label.¹⁷



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Figure 1 | The OECD's AVR Lens



Source: OECD | Armed Violence Reduction: Enabling Development | 2009

A distinguishing element of the AVR lens is its emphasis on risk factors which exist and interact at different levels, from local to global, and that it “...encourages practitioners to think outside of particular programming mandates and consider the entirety of the problem at hand.”¹⁸ This policy brief will use the AVR lens as a basis for analysing the AVR-related programmes being implemented by mine action organisations.

THE ROLE OF MINE ACTION

Instruments of armed violence

The majority of mine/ERW operators involved in AVR have focused primarily on a single element of the AVR lens—the instruments of violence. This is not particularly surprising given that they have long worked on the removal and destruction of other instruments of violence, ie mines and other ERW. Mine action organisations are also used to working with security actors such as the military and police and, due to their ability to operate in challenging environments, they are often among the only organisations capable of safely collecting and disposing of these items.

Several mine action organisations have established dedicated, stand-alone SALW and munitions destruction programmes, including in those countries where they have not previously been involved in mine action. MAG, for example, launched a PSSM programme in Burundi in 2009, working first with the police and then with the military to survey weapons and munitions stockpiles, collect and destroy volatile or surplus SALW and ammunition, refurbish armouries and train armourers.¹⁹ Similarly, UNMAS was requested by the UN mission in Côte d’Ivoire to provide assistance to the military, gendarmerie²⁰ and the police with securing the numerous storage depots and armouries that had been looted and destroyed during the conflict in 2010-11, and with strengthening ammunition management capacity. UNMAS contracted HALO Trust to implement the project.²¹ Neither had previously worked in Côte d’Ivoire, which does not have a mine/ERW contamination problem and, as a result, there had been no previous mine action involvement.

SALW and munitions collection and destruction, as well as PSSM programmes, have developed into distinct categories of operations for several organisations, signalling a clear broadening of their mandates and

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objectives. These programmes seek to reduce the risk of unplanned explosions at munitions sites, prevent loss and theft from SALW and munitions stockpiles, and reduce the number of SALW in circulation. UNMAS, for example, played a lead role in coordinating the emergency response to the ammunition depot explosions that took place in Congo-Brazzaville in March 2012. This was the first time that UNMAS had led an emergency response to an ammunition depot explosion. Although UNMAS had no prior mine action involvement in the Republic of Congo, it was able, at short notice, to deploy personnel to Brazzaville. Several mine/ERW operators have been involved in the clearance operations, eg, Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Demeter and MAG.

Some programmes also try to strengthen the capacity of national authorities, such as the national military and police, to safely handle, manage and store their stockpiles. The OAS, for example, had worked in Guatemala on mine action. Although Guatemala closed its mine action programme in 2005 after completing its clearance obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the military contacted the OAS several years later to assist with the disposal of unstable white phosphorous munitions. Based on its contacts within the military and its reputation in mine action, the OAS has been able to use this initial request for assistance as the basis for building a wider SALW and munitions destruction programme with the military in Guatemala.²²

However, dealing with the instruments of violence, although necessary, is only one of the elements identified in the AVR lens as essential for effectively addressing the problem of armed violence. In recognition of this, some mine/ERW operators have begun to move beyond a sole focus on the instruments of violence, to also address the other elements of the AVR lens, ie perpetrators of armed violence, those affected by it, and formal institutions.

Beyond the instruments

Several mine action organisations have moved beyond a focus on the instruments of armed violence to implement innovative programmes, some of which have little to do with mine action, munitions or even SALW control. AOA, for example, began its activities in Liberia in 2006 with a Weapons and Ammunition Disposal (WAD) programme. However, in January 2008, the organisation significantly broadened its mandate in the country by launching a training and reintegration programme.²³ The programme is for (i) male and female ex-combatants excluded from Liberia's Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) process and (ii) male and female war-affected youth engaged in illegal and criminal activities, or at high risk of re-engaging in conflict. The programme therefore targets the perpetrators of armed violence, ie ex-combatants and at risk youth, by providing them with the means to pursue alternative, non-violent livelihoods through targeted vocational training, psychosocial counselling and sustained reintegration support. And although the training and reintegration programme was initially implemented alongside its WAD programme, it has become AOA's only programme in Liberia.

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HALO Trust in Afghanistan has adopted a slightly different approach. HALO Trust is employing former combatants and training them as community-based deminers in coordination with the Afghanistan Peace and Reintegration Programme.²⁴ While the overall objective of HALO Trust's clearance programme is to remove the threat of mines/ERW, the strategy of employing ex-combatants as deminers also contributes to wider efforts to promote peace and stability by providing them with alternate livelihood opportunities. Reintegreees receive a salary from day one of demining training, which immediately relieves the financial pressure to return to conflict. According to HALO Trust, the retention rate of reintegreees within the demining sector is 70 per cent, indicating that the programme is helping to change the behaviour of perpetrators of armed violence.

Other organisations have also tried to address multiple elements of the AVR lens in an integrated way. Since 2008 for example, DDG has been implementing Community Safety Programmes (CSP) in Somaliland²⁵, South Sudan and Uganda²⁶. Although DDG initially intervened in each of these countries to conduct mine/ERW clearance, the organisation has expanded its mandate to tackle the threat posed by armed violence. In Somaliland, DDG completely phased out its demining operations and is focusing solely on community safety by facilitating the development of community safety plans²⁷, delivering firearms safety education along with conflict management training²⁸, and installing safe-storage devices²⁹ for firearms to reduce the risks associated with unsafe storage of SALW and misuse. In Uganda, DDG facilitates peace meetings between different clans, as well as regular meetings between communities and their security providers, and is also delivering conflict management education to the police and the military. DDG's approach goes beyond trying to secure access to or prevent the proliferation of arms and ammunition, to also try to change attitudes and behaviour, and strengthen local institutions and community capacity and resilience. Also of note is the fact that DDG is trying to strengthen programming synergies with its parent organisation, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), in an effort to enhance the impact of combined community safety and development programming. DRC focuses on a range of sectors, including housing and small-scale infrastructure, income generation, social rehabilitation and food security and agricultural rehabilitation and development.

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While each of DDG's three Community Safety Programmes has been developed according to local context and needs, they share some similarities. For example, the programmes:

- > are informed by DDG's AVR framework
- > are community-driven with a strong emphasis on community capacity-building
- > include a range of activities that target: the instruments of violence, eg safe storage devices for SALW and ERW collection and destruction; perpetrators of violence, eg providing conflict management training and facilitating peace meetings; and institutions, eg establishment of community and district-level committees dealing with community safety issues

HI is also moving in a similar direction. It began its work in Libya in April 2011 with an emergency response project focused on clearing mine/ERW contamination resulting from the country's civil conflict.⁵⁰ However, the rapidly increasing number of deaths and injuries resulting from the uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of SALW in Benghazi led

a more integrated intervention that addresses multiple elements of the AVR lens.

Both DDG and HI's community safety programmes draw upon community safety interventions implemented by organisations such as the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), Saferworld, UNDP and national NGOs in the Balkans. For example, Handicap International noted that its SALW RE training materials were developed based on materials produced by SEESAC and the Bonn International Center for Conversion's (BICC) Training and Education on Small Arms (TRESA) modules.

Despite differences in their programmes, objectives and methods, this subset of broader AVR programmes share one central characteristic: a people centred-approach. The concerns and perceptions of the victims and local communities affected by armed violence—the ultimate beneficiaries—figure as a key element in the design and implementation of these programmes. Communities are not only surveyed and consulted, but are often integrally involved



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HI to expand its project. HI's intervention, initially restricted to eastern Libya, focuses on changing civilian behaviour by increasing public awareness of the risks posed by SALW. HI's risk awareness project consists of delivering SALW Risk Education (RE) sessions, similar in approach to Mine Risk Education, and using the media to publicise SALW risk messages. By seeking to change how people view SALW, HI is tackling both the perpetrators of armed violence as well as those affected. With the expansion of its project to Tripoli in 2012, HI is also moving towards a community safety approach by engaging directly with the authorities and civil society to ensure an institutional shift aimed at deterring civilian SALW ownership. In these ways, HI has opted for

in the programmes themselves. Invariably, the level of community involvement in a programme depends on the operator's methodology, but the close involvement of communities represents an important step towards ensuring these programmes are needs-based, effective and sustainable.

These examples illustrate the expanded scope and involvement of mine action organisations in AVR. They should however be viewed as one element of the AVR lens which complement the interventions of a wide range of other actors involved in reducing armed violence. The reasons behind this shift are varied, and are examined in greater detail in the following section.

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MINE ACTION TO AVR: REASONS FOR THE EXPANSION

GICHD's study of mine action organisations that have ventured into the realm of AVR revealed several motivating factors. The shift partly reflects the fact that while 1,155 people were killed by mines and other ERW in 2010⁵¹, approximately 740,000 people die annually as a result of armed violence, including in non-conflict affected countries.⁵² DDG Somaliland, for example, shifted from demining to community safety partly in response to a survey of several communities identified as high and medium mine/ERW impacted, which found that mines were not having as serious an impact on communities as previously believed, whereas SALW and private ownership of ERW were resulting in far more deaths and injuries.⁵³

Mine action organisations are able to work in unstable, conflict-affected contexts such as Afghanistan, Somalia and South Sudan, due to their experience in responding to emergency mine/ERW contamination threats during and immediately after conflicts. They are also used to adhering to International Mine Action Standards and to undertaking quality control and quality assurance for their mine action operations. This type of experience and logistical expertise makes them well-placed to also respond to threats related to SALW and munitions.

Another factor motivating this shift is the possibility that the generous funding previously made available for mine action will decrease beyond 2015.⁵⁴ Mine action organisations are therefore expanding the range of services that they provide to address a wider range of threats and make use of new funding opportunities.

Progress on the legal, normative and diplomatic fronts (see Annex 1) has also helped present operators with a framework within which to provide affected states with AVR assistance. Regarding SALW control, examples include the UN Programme of Action on SALW, the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, the International Small Arms Control Standards, and regional initiatives such as the Nairobi Protocol and the Economic Community Of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention. On the AVR front, the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence and civil society efforts to establish a global alliance on AVR have also focused international attention on the problem of armed violence.

A final factor motivating this shift is that operators have received requests for AVR-related assistance from contacts in the security forces in countries where they previously worked. These relationships have, in some cases, helped facilitate engagement in new areas, eg PSSM and SALW and munitions destruction. For example, MAG's PSSM programme in Somaliland evolved based on a request from the national authorities.⁵⁵ In 2008, MAG had provided support and other expertise for the collection and destruction of SALW. However, in 2010, the Police Commissioner in Somaliland's capital, Hargeisa, asked MAG to visit one of its main police armouries due to concerns about the poor storage conditions of arms, ammunition and explosives, and the potential risks posed to police officers and civilians. Based on this request, MAG conducted a survey of over 40 police armouries across Somaliland, and used the findings to develop a multi-phased PSSM project that began in mid-2011.

**GICHD STUDY ON MINE ACTION AND AVR:
SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS AND LESSONS
LEARNT**

The GICHD's research focused on documenting examples where traditional mine/ERW operators had expanded into AVR or public safety-related programming. Based on an analysis of twelve programmes, the following are the main findings and lessons learnt to date:

1. **Most of the mine/ERW operators are concentrating on the instruments of violence:** Most of the operators involved in AVR-related programmes have opted to focus on one aspect of the AVR lens, ie the instruments of violence. Their programmes include collecting and destroying excess and unsafe SALW and ammunition, promoting the physical security of arms and ammunition stores and raising awareness about the risks of SALW. This reflects in part that mine action organisations are used to dealing with mines/ERW and have been able to also develop programmes to tackle SALW and munitions as a natural extension.
2. **Some operators are charting new territory:** A few operators have, however, focused their interventions on different elements of the AVR lens, such as the perpetrators of violence and institutions, with a strong community focus. In doing so, these operators are demonstrating that they have the capacity to innovate and chart new territory. DDG's Community Safety Programme approach and AOAV's Post-Conflict Rehabilitation and Reintegration Training project in Liberia are clear examples of programmes which are well beyond the scope of mine action. These programmes recognise that reducing armed violence requires changing behaviour and attitudes, and they try to address some of the factors driving armed violence, eg weak governance, limited capacity and lack of livelihood opportunities. Community involvement was cited by several organisations as vital to relevance and to sustainable behaviour change.
3. **National mine action authorities remain focused on 'traditional' mine action:** While the involvement of mine/ERW operators and UNMAS in new programming areas is moving forward, national mine action authorities have remained focused for the most part on 'traditional' mine action. In fact, in many mine/ERW affected countries,

parallel coordination structures exist for small arms control, eg national SALW focal points or commissions; they typically have limited contact with their mine action counterparts. There are few examples of national mine action authorities engaging in SALW and munitions-specific programmes. The Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) is among the exceptions. Following the completion of the mine action programme in Albania in 2009, AMAE used its mine action experience and capacity to address the clearance of unexploded ordnance (UXO) hotspot areas across the country that resulted from past explosions at ammunition depots or abandoned army camps.³⁶ Renamed the Albania Mine and Munitions Coordination Office (AMMCO), it is responsible for coordination, quality management, accreditation, community liaison and survivor assistance, among other things. However, AMAE made the shift only once the mine/ERW threat had been fully resolved. If capacity and resources are available, national mine action programmes should not wait until after the completion of their Article 5 clearance obligations to facilitate the use of mine action organisations to reduce armed violence.

4. **Limited involvement in AVR-related policy discussions at national level:** Although mine/ERW operators are making progress in implementing field level programmes, contact with national SALW, SSR and DDR actors on strategy and policy issues tends to be limited. In some countries, operators are regarded by these actors largely as operational service providers. Although they have excelled at establishing effective working relationships with security providers, ie national militaries and the police, they generally do not engage in broader policy discussion and processes. Those involved in PSSM programmes in particular tend to have limited contact with national SALW focal points and civil society organisations involved in SALW control and broader AVR issues. For example, in Côte d'Ivoire, UNMAS and HALO Trust support the DDR process organised by the DDR division of the UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the National SALW Commission by deploying technically qualified staff to check weapons, inspect and identify ammunition prior to their registration by the UNOCI-DDR team, and advise on the temporary storage of arms and ammunition. They do not

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however engage in strategic discussions regarding the DDR process in Côte d'Ivoire. However, there are exceptions; for example, in Libya, HI is working with the Souk Al-Jouma Union of NGOs and the Free Media Center, while in Somaliland, DDG works in partnership with local peace building NGOs Haqsoor and Horn Peace.

men and boys who tend to be the main owners of SALW. Women are encouraged to convince their husbands to store their arms and ammunition safely. It has however been more difficult to mainstream gender considerations into programmes that focus primarily on the instruments of violence, eg SALW and munitions destruction and PSSM.



5. **Efforts to mainstream gender are mixed:** Some operators have taken steps to mainstream gender considerations into their new programmes. For example, although DanChurchAid did not have a formal gender mainstreaming policy in place, its SALW Awareness Raising and Risk Education project in Burundi ensured that women were encouraged to participate as trainers and SALW risk education focal points, and were represented in media-related materials.⁵⁷ HI drew upon its organisational policy on gender, as well as various in-house gender mainstreaming tools, for its SALW risk education project in Libya. For example, HI works with local women's groups, and has adapted its RE methods to reach out specifically to women, who are more difficult to access in Libya. DDG does not have a formal policy on gender but its Community Safety Programme in Somaliland used several approaches to take gender and diversity into account. For example, DDG's baseline surveys collect sex and age disaggregated data, and both male and female heads of household are interviewed. When DDG teams distribute safe storage devices to households to promote the safe storage of SALW and prevent misuse, they typically target
6. As UNMAS and several mine action organisations have ventured into the area of PSSM, the following are some PSSM-specific reflections:
 - a. **PSSM has become a new domain for mine action organisations:** Several of the main NGO operators⁵⁸ are implementing PSSM programmes and, within the United Nations, UNMAS has taken the lead on PSSM. PSSM has very clearly become a new domain for mine action organisations, and is highly competitive. Although operators have not yet formed a global community of practice to share information about programming approaches and lessons learnt, at field level some have recognised that coordination is important, particularly when supporting the same national authorities and trying to ensure a consistent approach.
 - b. **A holistic and sustainable approach to PSSM is needed:** PSSM programmes in conflict-affected or fragile contexts require a holistic and sustainable approach, which should involve a combination of activities focused on strengthening the physical security of stores and depots, improving ammunition and weapons management, and developing capacity of national security actors.

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- c. **Gaining access to information and physical access to stores and depots can be difficult:** Operators implementing PSSM programmes typically encounter challenges in getting accurate information about national stockpiles and gaining access to depots and armouries, given that this is closely linked to national security. Access to information and physical access to stores and depots is particularly challenging in countries that are just emerging from conflict, and where there is a real fear of a return to conflict and, therefore, a desire to maintain national stockpiles despite indications that munitions and arms may be obsolete, degraded, dangerous and/or surplus to requirements. Monitoring and assessing stockpiles requires considerable trust on the part of the national authorities, as knowledge of which weapons and munitions are stored where, and their individual state, could be misused by foreign states or internal forces. Systems for storing such information must therefore be secure, clearly understood by national authorities, and be based on clear agreements between operators and national authorities on how that information can be used.
- d. **Donors and operators tend to emphasise achievement of outputs instead of outcomes:** Some donors seem to be more interested in funding short term “quick win” and high visibility initiatives (eg destruction of MANPADS, SALW and munitions) rather than longer term support to develop capacity, standards, monitoring, etc. Few donors request that reporting for these AVR programmes be done in terms of outcomes, eg improving public safety, reduced risk of harm to civilians, reduced risk of SALW/munitions theft and trafficking, etc. Results, particularly for the PSSM and munitions/SALW destruction programmes, are largely measured in terms of outputs. Organisations do not necessarily have the capacity to report on how their PSSM programmes contribute to AVR/public safety-related outcomes.
- e. **Donor interest in ammunition management capacity development is mixed:** Donor interest in strengthening the ammunition and weapons management capacity of militaries in conflict-affected contexts is mixed. Some donors are unaware of the potential risks posed by unsafe ammunition management practice. Yet this preventive work costs far less than responding to an unplanned explosion at a munitions site.³⁹ In many cases, it may be that donors are aware of the potential risk but the problem remains unaddressed as their official aid agencies are not responsible for such programmes and their Ministries of Defence are not involved in these countries.



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- f. **Working with militaries can be challenging:** Working with militaries comes with its own set of challenges and opportunities. One challenge several operators have encountered is that the decision-making process is slow due to the command structure of militaries and the need to get high-level approval for PSSM-related activities. This can result in delays and slow the pace of the programme.
- g. **The International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG)⁴⁰ provide a sound basis for PSSM programmes:** The IATG provide relevant information for PSSM programmes in a relatively accessible format. Although knowledge of the IATG is not essential for a typical mine action programme, it is necessary for PSSM work. The IATG cover, in a comprehensive manner, key topics such as ammunition and explosive storage principles, transportation regulation, explosive safety regulation, quantity distance calculations, etc, and lay out the standards and materials required for the construction of ammunition stores and barracades. However, operators also recognise that PSSM advice and support needs to be adapted to the local context and that a rigid application of European standards is not always feasible.
- h. **Opportunities exist to draw upon the Quality Management expertise in mine action:** In countries where operators are implementing PSSM programmes, national standards and related accreditation and Quality Management (QM) processes are not yet in place. As there is no clear legal framework, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) used by the operators to guide their PSSM operations are often the only reference documents. As external QM is not yet well developed, and the level of internal QM varies, these initiatives could potentially benefit from the QM experience and skills developed within the mine action sector.
- i. **Mine action organisations are engaging ammunition management experts for PSSM programmes:** Mine action organisations that have traditionally employed explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) qualified personnel are also starting to engage individuals with ammunition management expertise, similar to the UK Ammunition Technical Officer (ATO) qualification. Some have also employed advisors with construction or civil engineering backgrounds to oversee the construction/rehabilitation of storage facilities.

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CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the GICHD study, it is clear that the role of mine action organisations in supporting AVR is invaluable. While partly driven by changes in funding and international political environments, their relevant expertise, the innovative approaches that they are adopting (eg towards community safety), as well as the relationships they have already built with national security sector actors give them unique insight, leverage and opportunity to contribute to AVR.

Mine action organisations should continue to employ their expertise and experience to address wider security challenges. More, however, should be done by national mine action programmes to explore opportunities to facilitate the entry of mine action organisations to support AVR, where capacity and resources are available and the context appropriate. It is clear that efforts to reduce armed violence require multi-faceted solutions and mine action organisations should continue to move towards programming that goes beyond the instruments of armed violence. Some may argue that this shift towards AVR is a diversion from the core mandate of mine action organisations. While this may be true and different organisations may, quite reasonably, choose differently whether to expand the scope of their operations, in many contexts the threats to safety and security posed by arms are far higher than threats from mines and ERW. Given that mine action organisations have expertise and experience which can be applied to prevent armed violence and promote public safety, it is a natural and welcome shift for them to expand their scope of activities into AVR programming.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Geneva Declaration Secretariat. Global Burden of Armed Violence. Geneva, 2008.
- ² This policy brief was written by Sharmala Naidoo and Albert S. Mülli (GICHD), with assistance from Raksha Vasudevan (GICHD).
- ³ GICHD. Identifying Synergies between Mine Action and SALW, Geneva, 2006, p.62. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/publications/MA_and_SALW_Oct2006.pdf
- ⁴ DDG, AVR Framework, June 2012. See: http://www.danishdemininggroup.dk/fileadmin/uploads/pdf/DDG_PDF/AVR_PDF/DDG%20Armed%20Violence%20Reduction%20Framework%20-%20June%202012%20FINAL.pdf

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- ⁵ MAG Website, MAG's global operations directly reduce the devastating effects of armed violence, accessed 8 October 2012, <http://www.maginternational.org/about/armed-violence-reduction/>
- ⁶ Formerly known as Landmine Action. The organisation changed its name in 2010 to reflect its broadening activities.
- ⁷ Case study research for the study involved a mixture of field research missions and desk-based research between November 2011 and August 2012.
- ⁸ David Atwood, Anne-Kathrin Glatz and Robert Muggah. Demanding Attention: Addressing the Dynamics of Small Arms Demand, Small Arms Survey and the Quaker United Nations Office, Geneva, 2006. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/B-Occasional-papers/SAS-OP18-Demand.pdf>
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ World Summit, Outcome document.
- ¹¹ Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UNDP. Oslo Conference on Armed Violence Achieving the Millennium Development Goals, 12 May 2010, Geneva, <http://www.osloconferencearmedviolence.no/objectivesformat.cfm>
- ¹² <http://www.osloconferencearmedviolence.no/pop.cfm?FuseAction=Doc&pAction=View&pDocumentId=24790>
- ¹³ The lens looks at how armed violence impacts specific populations groups (women, men, boys and girls) differently
- ¹⁴ The lens recognises that while most violence is committed by males, women are also occasionally perpetrators and should not be overlooked.
- ¹⁵ The instruments of violence refer to the supply and availability of weapons and ammunition, together with ERW, and are considered as risk factors, not causes of armed violence.
- ¹⁶ OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2009), Armed Violence Reduction: Enabling Development, OECD, Paris, p.50
- ¹⁷ For example, in some countries, AVR-related initiatives may be referred to as public and citizen security, crime prevention, conflict prevention, peace building, pacification and community policing. OECD (2011). Investing in Security: A Global Assessment of Armed Violence Reduction and Prevention Initiatives, OECD, Paris.
- ¹⁸ OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2009), Armed Violence Reduction: Enabling Development, OECD, Paris.
- ¹⁹ See Sharmala Naidoo and Albert S. Mülli (GICHD). Mines Advisory Group's Physical Security and Stockpile Management Programme, Burundi, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Burundi-MAG-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²⁰ The gendarmerie in Côte d'Ivoire is a military force charged with police duties that falls under the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defense. They are typically responsible for security in rural and peri-urban areas, while the police are responsible for policing urban areas.
- ²¹ See Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD), UNMAS Physical Security and Stockpile Management Pilot Programme, Côte d'Ivoire, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Cote-d-Ivoire-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²² See Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD). OAS SALW and Munitions Destruction Programme, Guatemala, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Guatemala-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²³ See Albert S. Mülli (GICHD), Action on Armed Violence Post-Conflict Rehabilitation and Reintegration, Liberia, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Liberia-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²⁴ See Samuel Hall Consulting (GICHD). HALO Trust's Reintegration of Former Combatants into Demining, Afghanistan, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Afghanistan-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²⁵ See Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD). Danish Demining Group Community Safety Programme, Somaliland, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Somaliland-DDG-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²⁶ See Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD). Danish Demining Group Community Safety Programme, Uganda, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Uganda-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ²⁷ A community safety plan is developed through a participatory process and contains a community's community safety priorities and action plan for meeting these priorities. The plan is developed by a Community Safety Committee which is typically comprised of teachers, elders, women and youth.
- ²⁸ DDG's conflict management training seeks to strengthen the capacity of communities to manage local conflicts through non-violent conflict management and consensus building.
- ²⁹ A Safe Storage Device consists of a metal clamp that is secured to a small arm, often an AK-47, and locked with a padlock and secured to the floor or wall of a home.
- ³⁰ See Albert S. Mülli (GICHD), Handicap International's SALW Risk Awareness Project in Libya, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012, GICHD. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Libya-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ³¹ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. Landmine Monitor, 2011. This is a partial accounting as mine/ERW casualties are not systematically recorded in many countries.
- ³² Geneva Declaration Secretariat. Global Burden of Armed Violence. Geneva, 2008.
- ³³ GICHD. External Assessment of DDG's Humanitarian Mine Action Programme in Somaliland, Geneva, May 2008.
- ³⁴ Jean Devlin (GICHD). Mine Action Funding: Trends, Modalities and Future Prospects. Results of a survey of donor countries carried out in May-June 2010. November 2010. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/LMAD-Funding-Report-Nov2010.pdf
- ³⁵ See Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD), Mines Advisory Group's Physical Security and Stockpile Management Project, Somaliland, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Somaliland-MAG-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ³⁶ See Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD), Using Mine Action Capacity for UXO Hotspot Clearance, Albania Mines and Munitions Coordination Office and DanChurchAid, Albania, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Albania-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ³⁷ See Albert S. Mülli (GICHD), DanChurchAid's SALW Awareness Raising and Risk Education, Burundi, Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study, September 2012. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/AVR/AVR-Burundi-DCA-case-study-Sep2012.pdf
- ³⁸ Please note that the GICHD study only looked at the programmes of NGO mine/ERW operators, and not commercial or military organisations.
- ³⁹ For example, according to Small Arms Survey, the clean-up costs for the unplanned explosion that took place in Gerdec, Albania in 2008 was an estimated USD 10 million while an additional USD 18 million was spent on compensation, rebuilding and repairs; Source: Pilar Reina and Nicolas Florquin (Small Arms Survey), presentation delivered to 2012 UNMAS/GICHD Mine Action Technology Workshop in Geneva.
- ⁴⁰ United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs. International Ammunition Technical Guidelines, 2011, <http://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/Ammunition/IATG/>

ANNEX 1 | SALW and AVR-related Agreements and Standards

| Name | Description |
|--|--|
| UN Firearms Protocol (2001/in force 2005) | States required to secure and track firearms, their various components and ammunition at the time of manufacture, import, export and transit. |
| UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) (2001) | State parties required to take steps to fight illicit SALW manufacturing and trade in a broad range of areas, with follow-up meetings held bi-annually. |
| Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) | Aimed at eliminating illicit trade and end use of conventional weapons, but no agreement on treaty text has yet been reached. |
| International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) (2012) | Provides guidance (mainly for UN agencies supporting states in controlling SALW) on stockpile management, marking, record-keeping, tracing, and destroying illicit or unwanted arms. |
| International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (2011) | Provides guidance to states on establishing standards and procedures for effective stockpile management. |
| OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons (2003) | Provides guidance for states to implement the OSCE Document on SALW, intended to minimise illegal SALW circulation. |
| OSCE Handbook of Best Practices on Conventional Ammunition (2008) | Aims to guide policy-making of participating States on the destruction of conventional ammunition, explosive material and detonation devices, and stockpile management and control. |
| GICHD Guide to Ammunition Storage (2008) | Highlights good practices in the safe storage of ammunition. |
| Manual of NATO Safety Principles for the Storage of Military Ammunition and Explosives (2010) | Establishes safety principles to be used between host countries and NATO forces in storing conventional ammunition and explosives. |
| Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Material (CIFTA) (1997/in force 1998) | Aimed at eradicating illicit manufacture and trade in SALW. Provisions include marking, record keeping, confiscation or forfeiture of firearms, strengthening of controls at export points, and cooperation between member states. |
| Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention (2006/in force 2009) | Signing parties must ensure safe management of national stockpiles, and dispose of excess or obsolete stocks. |
| Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control, and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa ("Nairobi Protocol") (2004/in force 2006) | Measures aimed at harmonising legislation between member states, strengthening law enforcement capacity, cross-border and regional cooperation, stockpile management, and sensitisation of populations on the dangers of SALW. |
| Andean Community Decision 552: Andean Plan to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (2003) | Seeks to strengthen national capacity and regional cooperation in controlling the manufacture, trade, possession and use of SALW. |
| Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons (2011) | Member states commit to ensuring implementation of the Programme of Action, strengthen security sectors, harmonise and strengthen legislation, cooperate in stockpile management and destruction, and push for conclusion of a global Arms Trade Treaty. |
| Southern African Development Community (SADC) Firearms Protocol (2001/in force 2004) | Measures aimed at eradicating illicit manufacture of SALW, regulating trade of (legal) SALW, and harmonising legislation across member states. |
| EU Code of Conduct on Arms Exports (1998) | Builds on the eight criteria adopted in 1991 for states to use in allowing arms exports. Also includes reporting and consultation mechanisms to ensure consistent interpretation of criteria. |
| EU Council Common Position (2008) | Replaces and expands upon 1998 Code of Conduct. |