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A PRACTICAL TOOL

FOR INTEGRATING THE GENDER
PERSPECTIVE IN SALW LEGISLATIVE
AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

SEESAC

The South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) has a mandate from the United Nations Development Programme and the Regional Cooperation Council to support all international and national stakeholders by strengthening national and regional capacity to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and thus contribute to enhanced stability, security and development in South Eastern and Eastern Europe.

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INTRODUCTION

The present tool is developed to accompany the study Gender and SALW in South East Europe in order to support the operationalization of the recommendations and ease the introduction of the gender perspective in SALW Control policy making and implementation. It is designed as a simple, user-friendly aid to policy-makers.

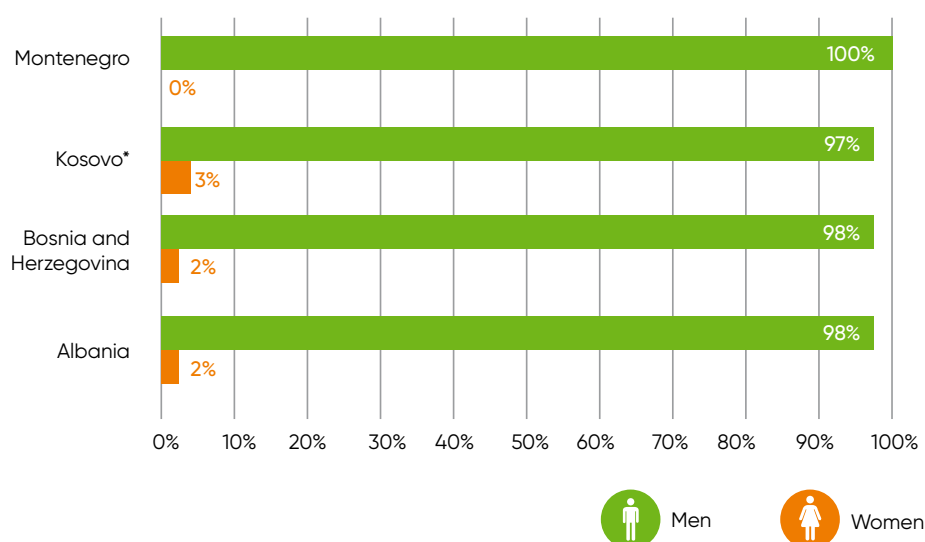
MAIN GENDER CONCERNS RELATED TO **SALW**¹ IN SEE

The analysis of the available gender disaggregated data and the review of existing literature has confirmed that dominant gender patterns play an important role in shaping and influencing prevailing SALW practices and the effects of SALW use and misuse.

For example:

- Men account for an absolute majority of both perpetrators (over 97 per cent) and victims of firearm-related incidents (over 80 per cent).
- Women are very rarely perpetrators of such incidents (1-3 per cent of cases), but are much more often represented among victims (from 9 to 22 percent).

FIGURE 1: **Perpetrators of firearm-related incidents, by sex, 2011-2015**

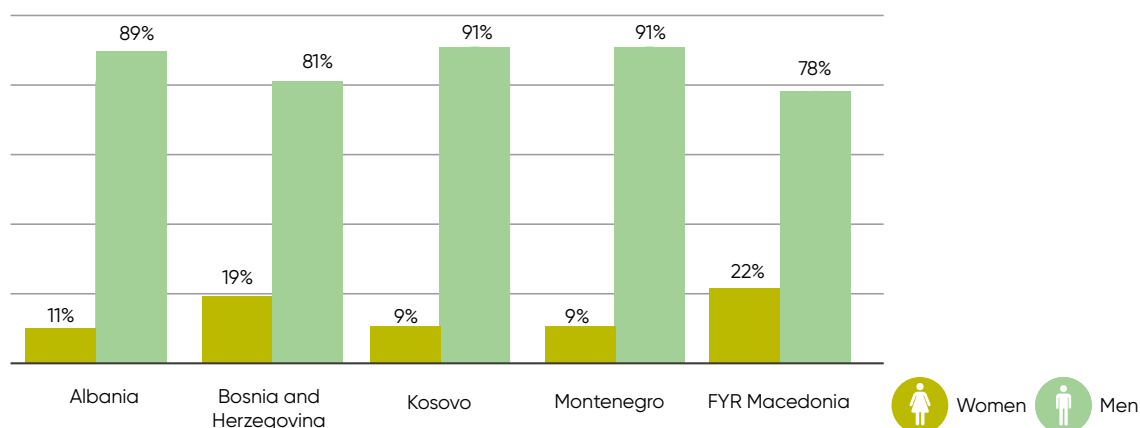


Source: SEESAC Database (Note: Data for Albania are provided only for 2015)

1 SALW stands for 'small arms and light weapons'.

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

FIGURE 2: **Intentional homicide victims in firearm-related incidents, by sex**



- The presence of firearms in domestic violence incidents affects women significantly more than men. Murder by intimate partner is the most common form of female homicide; it comprises only a minor share in the total number of male homicides.

FIGURE 3: **Proportion of intimate partner homicide in total homicide, by sex**

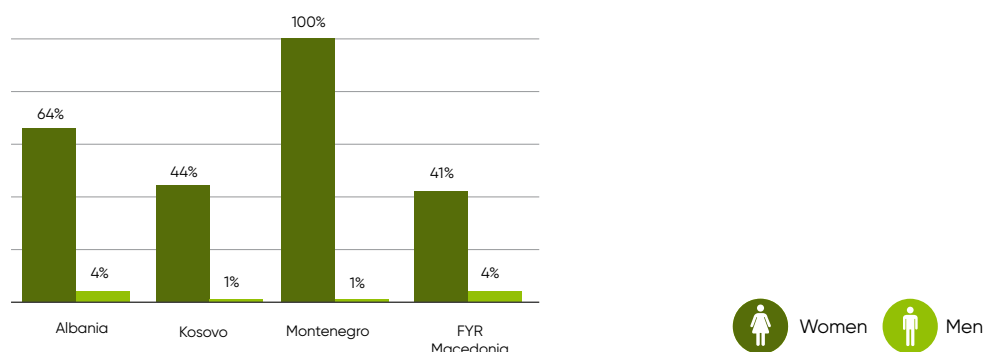
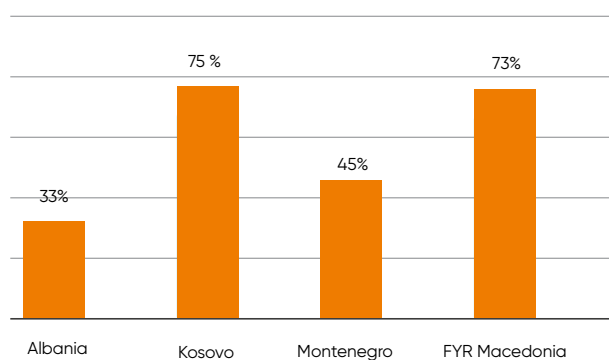


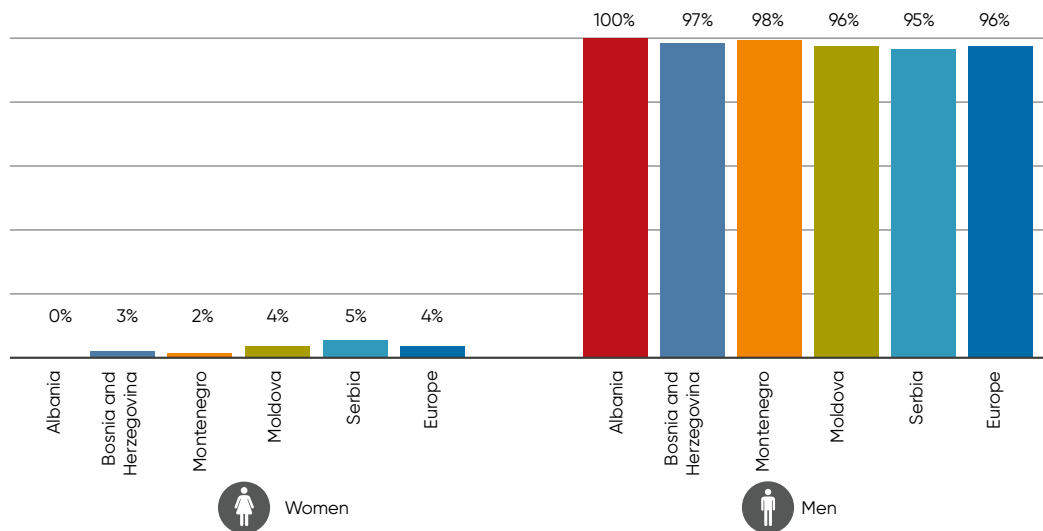
FIGURE 4: **Proportion of intimate partner femicide committed with firearms in total number of intimate partner homicide**



Source: SEESAC Database

- In terms of ownership, male dominance reaches over 95 per cent and this gendered pattern of demand for firearms is stable over time.
- In all societies in SEE, young men are disproportionately represented both among perpetrators and victims.

FIGURE 5: **Gun ownership, by sex**



Source: For Moldova, Montenegro and Serbia SAS 2014, SEESAC Database for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania. For Kosovo* gender-disaggregated data are not available.

- Women tend to have a more negative attitude toward SALW and many women's organizations have persistently advocated for stricter SALW control.
- Women are still underrepresented in the policy making process and institutions in charge of SALW control.

Legislative and policy response in SEE

- Despite the highly gendered dimensions of SALW, policies regulating SALW in SEE do not address gender issues in a way that matches the scale of the problem. When attempts are made to address existing gender concerns in legislation, they are being tackled only sporadically and in a fragmented way, primarily in the field of domestic violence through the regulation of civilian possession.
- In laws on firearms in SEE, significant progress has been made in terms of adopting a set of legal provisions regulating civilian possession and linking it to domestic violence. These provisions to restrict access to firearms or remove weapons if domestic violence occurs are in place in almost all laws on firearms in the region. A set of other laws, such as laws against domestic violence, laws on criminal code procedures and laws on policing also regulate this issue although they are not necessarily always coherent.

* References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999).

- In spite of recent legislative changes, the high share of women killed with firearms within the domestic context in SEE is persistent. These figures call for a thorough evaluation of the actual implementation of legislative frameworks regulating civilian possession and a mapping of the gaps in the legislation, to serve as a starting point for future legislative reforms.
- Recent studies on the effectiveness of the institutional response to domestic violence note the strength of gender norms and the resulting inequalities which foster stereotypes and influence the implementation of the law in practice.
- Concerning the legislative response to the misuse of firearms in illegal possession within the context of domestic violence, in addition to existing measures (such as legalization) new and innovative solutions should be devised in order to tackle this issue more effectively.
- In terms of policy frameworks (SALW control strategies and accompanying action plans) the prevailing tendency is that the main gender policy concerns are not being recognized as important policy issues needing to be adequately addressed. Gender is, therefore, being significantly under-prioritized in SALW policy agendas.
- Only exceptionally is there a formal commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming, but even then it is not being articulated with a systemic approach.
- The lack of gender disaggregated data or comprehensive research on linkages between gender and SALW persistently represents a hindering factor for the development of gender responsive SALW policies and contributes to the insufficient recognition of the problem.
- The absence of gender analysis in the policy making process further makes gender concerns related to SALW invisible and consequently not a matter of, or only sporadically a matter of, policy intervention.
- The low recognition of gender differences with respect to ownership, use and misuse of firearms, the differentiated effects of firearms on women and men, is in sharp contrast to the highly gendered effects of SALW.
- The final outcome of this approach is that SALW legislative and strategic frameworks overlook the gender differentiated security needs and concerns of women and men and therefore reduce the complexity of the policy problem. By doing so, they presuppose that security needs are common for all citizens and that they can be addressed in the same manner irrespectively of gender, age, race etc. It therefore reflects the presumption that the implementation of planned measures and interventions will lead to the increased security of all citizens.

THE TOOL

Building on the findings outlined above, SEESAC has developed a practical tool aiming to facilitate the integration of the gender perspective into SALW legislative and policy frameworks and help overcome the identified challenges.

The tool is primarily intended for the members of SALW Commissions who are mandated with the development of SALW control measures, including SALW strategies and action plans. SALW Commissions are also tasked to identify, follow and assess the impact of SALW on society, human security and safety and economic and social development, which should serve as a basis for policy development. Finally, the Commissions are responsible for monitoring and evaluation of efforts undertaken.

The goal of this tool is to assist policy makers to better identify and address gender specific SALW-related risks, and in doing so, reduce the negative effects of SALW proliferation on both women and men, girls and boys leading to the development of innovative policy solutions. This will increase the effectiveness of SALW policy and legislative frameworks resulting in tangible improvements in the security of all citizens, women, men, girls and boys.

The suggested tool benefits from a wide combination of methodologies and approaches and draws on some of the well tested practices in the integration of the gender perspective in public policies (JämStöd, 2007). It also relies on a broad box of tools such as checklists, guidance for data collection and methodologies for gender analysis such as Method 4R (Ibid., p. 47, UNDP, 2008). Equally important, it builds on the experience of working with SEE SALW Commissions and insight into the challenges they face in evidence-based policy making.

The integration of the gender perspective, if it is to be sustainable, must be approached strategically and with a long-term view. It has to be an essential part of regular policy planning and design, to guide everyday implementation, to be effectively monitored and its effects and benefits to the women, men, girls and boys evaluated. The findings of the evaluation will then steer a new policy cycle, paving the way for better and more effective policies.

Taking the following concrete steps will facilitate the translation of commitments to gender equality into practical measures:

STEP 1:

ENSURE THERE IS CONSENSUS
ON THE IMPORTANCE OF GENDER
FOR **SALW** CONTROL AMONG
POLICY MAKERS.

This is the point of departure for gender equality work. In order to provide effective and sustainable mainstreaming of gender in SALW control, certain preconditions have to be in place.

1. Shared understanding – Gender training

The shared understanding of the role gender plays in shaping SALW-related behaviour, practices and specific risks for women and men is the basic precondition for the effective and sustainable integration of the gender perspective into SALW control frameworks. It is therefore necessary to ensure that all stakeholders involved share this knowledge and have received training in gender equality, gender mainstreaming, gender analysis, institutional responses to domestic violence and linkages between gender and SALW.

2. Relevance of gender equality for SALW control work

Integrating the gender perspective into SALW control is not simply counting women and men, girls and boys but using gender disaggregated data to recognize and respond to the gender-specific risks women and men face with respect to SALW. Mainstreaming gender into all cycles of SALW control and management increases the understanding of the complexity of the problem and, therefore, enables the creation of more adequate and effective SALW control policies better suited to the challenges at hand.

3. Stakeholders and participation

Bringing gender equality institutions, women's organizations and gender experts on board will facilitate the integration of the gender perspective and ensure that the project is credible. It will bring diverse perspectives to the table and widen the range of topics addressed by policies, and ensure that policies are informed by expertise.

4. Formal commitment

Formal commitment to gender equality in SALW work needs to be in place. This can be achieved by including a statement on how the gender perspective will be addressed in the strategic document and the action plan.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE:

- Organize training on gender equality, gender aspects of SALW, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming in SALW control frameworks (see SEESAC's training), violence against women, intimate partner and domestic violence;
- Familiarise stakeholders with gender equality laws and policies, as well as international standards and commitments;
- Exchange experience with counterparts from the region who have already initiated work in this field;
- Identify needs to further advance the work: what kind of support is needed to more effectively integrate the gender perspective/have a clear picture on the relevance of gender for the respective work/seek out expertise;
- Include representatives of gender equality mechanisms, women's NGOs and gender practitioners in policy development;
- Ensure balanced representation of women and men in the policy making process. Define this in the rules of procedures.

STEP 2:

GET AN OVERVIEW OF THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND MEN WITH RESPECT TO **SALW** – COLLECT GENDER DISAGGREGATED DATA.







Gender disaggregated data is a prerequisite for understanding the linkages between gender and SALW and a basis for the design of evidence-based gender responsive policies. If gender data is not available, gender concerns will be invisible, thus hampering an adequate understanding of the problem. Without information on the specific risks women and men face in respect to SALW, the differences in their security needs, which have to be addressed, may be overlooked. Lack of data hinders the development of gender responsive policies and will negatively affect the evidence-based character of policy response. Regular data collection is essential because trends only become visible over time from a long-term perspective.

Which data to collect?

The main policy concerns outlined in the introduction could serve as a starting point when deciding which gender disaggregated data to collect. They will also help to identify the scale of the problem and which concerns are most relevant for the given context. The insight gained from this information should initiate discussion (See Step 3), which will guide further data collections.

Mapping which data is already gender disaggregated and which data that is part of regular data keeping could be disaggregated should be a point of departure for data collection. For instance, all data on victims and perpetrators of firearm-related incidents, firearm owners, persons holding a license to acquire/carry firearms and other relevant data has to be consistently disaggregated by gender.

EXAMPLE 1: **List of data to be collected could contain the following information:**



	2015		2014		2013		2012		2011	
										
Perpetrators of firearm-related incidents ¹										
Intentional homicide ² victims										
Intentional homicide victims in firearm-related Incidents										
Firearm owners										
Number of licenses to acquire firearms issued										
Number of persons killed by their intimate partner ³										
Number of persons killed by their intimate partner using firearms										
Number of persons killed by their intimate partner with legally owned firearms										
Number of persons killed by their intimate partner using illegally owned firearms										
Number of persons who handed in SALW during collection campaigns										



- 1 Firearm-related Incidents encompass: murder, aggravated murder, attempted murder, suicide, attempted suicide, causing general danger, gunfire in public, unauthorized ownership, control or possession of weapons, use of weapon or dangerous instrument, domestic violence.
- 2 Intentional homicide is defined as unlawful death purposefully inflicted on a person by another person (UNODC). For further explanation, please see: <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/IHS%20methodology.pdf>
- 3 Intimate Partner can refer to: husband/wife, former husband/former wife, partner/former partner, boyfriend/girlfriend, former boyfriend/former girlfriend.

In order to fully grasp gender aspects of SALW, it is also necessary to understand how gender intersects with other demographic characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, disability, place of living (urban/rural).

The table below shows an example of data disaggregated both by sex and age.

EXAMPLE 2: **Data on Sex and Age**

Perpetrators of firearm-related incidents by sex and age		
15-29		
30-44		
45-60		
60+		

Victims of firearm-related incidents by sex and age		
15-29		
30-44		
45-60		
60+		

In certain cases, data which does not directly refer to women and men, but are related to gender-specific problems, such as violence against women, intimate partner and domestic violence, can be used. For instance, such data could include information on the legislative response to domestic violence such as the number of applications rejected due to domestic violence-related reasons, as shown in Example 3.

EXAMPLE 3: Number of applications rejected due to domestic violence-related reasons

	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011
Number of applications to acquire firearm rejected					
Number of applications rejected due to domestic violence-related reasons					

In most of the action plans for the implementation of SALW strategies, studies on the impact of SALW on society are foreseen. This is a valuable opportunity to bridge a gap in data collection and an entry point in integrating gender. Therefore, all data must be disaggregated by gender.

During data collection, it is important to map not only the data at hand, but also the data that is missing, determine the reasons why this data is missing and how this can be addressed. This should be discussed during SALW Commissions meetings with other members of SALW Commissions and other stakeholders involved in the process.

Sometimes relevant data is not part of regular data collection practices; therefore, it is equally important to utilize data from other sources such as those produced by UNODC, UNDP, WHO; Small Arms Survey, DCAF, Institutes for Statistics, SEESAC Knowledge Database to mention just some.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE:

- Define which gender related data is to be collected;
- Determine sources of information and provide gender disaggregated data on victims and perpetrators of firearm-related incidents, owners, etc. Use other sources of gender disaggregated data as well (databases and reports produced by government institutions, international organizations, civil society organizations, etc.);
- Map the gaps in data availability, discuss challenges faced and make a plan on how to overcome this;
- Organize gender training for those in charge of data collection.

STEP 3:

IDENTIFY GENDER PATTERNS AND CONCERNS – GENDER ANALYSIS

Include collected data in the situation analysis, making sure it informs the conclusions. Explore how gender differences relate to SALW control issues and identify and define specific gender-related risks and challenges.

A broad toolbox of practical methods, such as manuals, checklists and instructions for gender analysis, has been developed and is easily available². A prerequisite for a meaningful gender equality analysis is a thorough understanding of gender regimes and gender relations between women and men. Once again, having gender experts, women's organizations and gender equality mechanisms on board will facilitate the process and help approach challenges adequately and deliver tailor-made solutions to the challenges at hand ensuring that the limited resources will be utilized in the best possible way.

This stage consists of two mutually interconnected steps. The first step, based on gender disaggregated data, tries to identify prevailing gender patterns and answer the question:

a. What kind of gender patterns do we see?

If gender disaggregated data is collected, it allows the identification of dominant gender patterns. Gender patterns should be formulated in a straightforward way.

2 UNDP. 2007. *Gender Mainstreaming in Practice: A Toolkit*. Bratislava: UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States; JämStöd. 2007. *Gender Mainstreaming Manual. A Book of Practical Methods from the Swedish Gender Mainstreaming Support Committee*. Stockholm: Swedish Government Official Reports; UNDP. 2001. *Gender in Development Programme. Learning and Information Pack: Gender Analysis*. New York: UNDP Learning Resources Centre;

For example:

- Men account for the absolute majority among perpetrators of firearm-related incidents.
- Men make up the majority of victims of firearm-related incidents.
- Firearms owners are almost exclusively men.
- Women are almost never perpetrators of firearm-related incidents.
- There are more women victims than female perpetrators of firearm-related incidents.
- Women are more at risk at home from intimate partner homicide with firearms than men.
- Young men make up the majority of perpetrators and victims of armed violence.
- Authorizations of firearm licenses are hardly ever rejected on the grounds of domestic violence.
- Women are less represented in SALW commissions.

After this step, it becomes evident that there are numerous gender-related concerns with respect to SALW control, which need to be addressed adequately.

b. Why do we have these gender patterns?

The second step is a reflection on identified patterns, discussion of those patterns and attempts to determine their causes, in essence asking why is this so? At this stage, needs for additional research could be identified.

EXAMPLE 1: **Gender pattern: *Authorization of firearm licenses are hardly ever rejected on the grounds of domestic violence.***

Why is this so?

- How does this correlate with the high prevalence of domestic violence?
- Does the law ban authorization if a person is identified as committing the criminal offence of domestic violence? Are background checks done properly? Have the competent police officers received adequate training? Has a domestic violence fatality review taken place? What was the status of firearms?

Data collected by SEESAC in cooperation with SALW Commissions in SEE indicate that domestic violence is rarely invoked as grounds for restriction on a firearms license. For instance, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in the period 2011-2015, only 3.3 per cent of the total number of reasons for license rejection were related to domestic violence. In Montenegro, in the same period, there were no cases in which the authorization of a license was banned due to domestic violence. The fact that domestic violence constitutes only a small minority of reasons for firearm licence refusal

could be indicative and definitely calls for further research and eventually revision of existing legislation and practices. At the same time, it is urgent to provide more thorough insight into the overall structure of the most frequent reasons for the ban of firearm licenses.

Including gender expertise will be of crucial importance to identify underlying issues to be addressed in policy and will ensure that the solution matches the problem, that the limited resources will be utilized in the best possible way, and that the effectiveness of SALW control work will be increased.

EXAMPLE 2: **Gender pattern: *Young men make up the majority of perpetrators and victims of armed violence.***

Why is this so?

At this stage it is crucial to ask questions. Is there any additional data available on young men who committed firearm-related violence? Through what type of violence was the incident committed (criminal, organized crime, youth gangs, violence in school, domestic violence, intimate partner violence, etc.)? Is data about their socio-economic status available? Is there any cultural conditioning (a gun culture) which influences young men to resort to firearm-related violence? Where is the evidence for such culture? Has any preventive work been undertaken?

Studies show that small arms violence is often seen by young men as a means of achieving the social and economic status they believe they deserve. Therefore, small arms can be of particular appeal to young men as they frequently associate weapons with individual pride, masculinity, and enhanced social status, which can be a 'strong symbol of power for marginalized young men' (Bevan and Florquin, 2006).

The scarce data also indicates that in certain contexts firearms may play a role in rites of passage. For example, research conducted in Belgrade showed that there is a noteworthy gender disparity in boys and girls experience with firearms – 29 per cent of boys and 48 per cent of girls claimed they had never held a firearm (SACISCG, 2005). This data indicates that young men are somewhat more exposed to SALW which should be taken into account when a policy response is being designed. In certain geographical locations, such as Northern Albania and Montenegro, firearms have also been part of rites of passage but data is scarce. A study on gun culture in SEE also brings anecdotal evidence about the role of small arms for young offenders, particularly in terms of power, who see a gun as a tool to 'keep up their status as people to be feared and not challenged' (SEESAC, 2007). The role of the media in supporting risk-

taking behaviour should also be taken into account in this regard, as well as other factors that help reproduce predominant gender regimes. In terms of policy responses to the problem, reports that enable the tracking of emerging practices relating to the results of specific programmes in reducing firearm-related violence among young men have recently been published (Abt and Winship, 2016).

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE:

- Based on collected data, identify gender patterns and formulate observations;
- Initiate a discussion about these patterns during the SALW Commission meetings;
- Ensure that gender experts are consulted. Their participation is crucial to identifying problems;
- Consult existing analysis and reports.

STEP 4:

ADDRESS IDENTIFIED GENDER PATTERNS – RESPOND TO THEM

In this step it is necessary to design a policy response to identified gender-related challenges:

- Gender-responsive goals and objectives should be set;
- Develop practical and innovative measures based on gender-disaggregated data to address the gender aspects of SALW;
- Design activities to meet the security needs of both women and men and tackle the risks they face.

Key questions: What can SALW Commissions do to address these issues within their mandate? What can be done through SALW strategies and legislation in accordance with the findings from the previous step? How does SALW Commissions' work relate to identified patterns? Use these questions to design action proposals.

EXAMPLE 1: ***Authorization of firearm licenses are hardly ever rejected on grounds of domestic violence.***

What can be done?

Policy interventions:

Objectives related to the reduction of domestic violence homicides and intimate partner femicides committed with firearms defined in the revised Strategy.

Activities:

- Conduct analysis of domestic violence and intimate partner homicide, identify trends on the use of firearms, map omissions in institutional response;
- Develop recommendations for policy and legislative changes;
- Organize training on domestic violence for police officers authorizing licences;
- Design awareness raising campaigns on the risks of misuse of firearms within the domestic context.

Legislative actions:

- Review authorization process with respect to domestic violence,
- Identify proposals for the amendment of by-laws or rules of procedures and define more strictly the licensing procedures regarding domestic violence, including spousal notifications,
- Develop and adopt procedures for stricter background checks,
- Train police officers performing security vetting on domestic violence,
- Define and adopt procedures to restrict access to firearms to persons issued restraining orders.

EXAMPLE 2 ***Young men make up the majority of perpetrators and victims of firearm-related incidents.***

What can we do?**Policy intervention**

Objectives related to the reduction of young men involved in firearm-related incidents

- Conduct a study on firearm-related incidents involving young men and identify specific risk factors;
- Compile examples of programmes aimed at reducing firearm-related violence among young men;
- Conduct an analysis of media representation of firearms and impact on young men;
- Design and launch a campaign about the risks of the misuse of firearms focusing on young men;
- Develop a policy proposal for addressing this issue;
- Pilot prevention programmes for young men.

Legislative action:

- Increase age requirement to be granted a firearm license

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE:

- Initiate a discussion about these patterns during the SALW Commission meetings;
- Ensure that gender experts are consulted as their participation is crucial to identifying problems;
- Consult existing analysis and reports;
- Define activities and integrate them into the action plan;
- Provide a budget for implementation.

STEP 5:

TRACK PROGRESS – MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The aim of SALW control policies is to increase the general security of citizens through the planning and implementation of various measures to curb the proliferation and misuse of SALW. Monitoring and evaluation must provide a proven track-record that gender-specific risks of women, men, girls and boys have been addressed and that they equally benefit from the measures in place. Monitoring the plan should fully capture the implementation of measures set to address the identified gender concerns.

There are several important points for gender responsive monitoring and evaluation:

1. Ensure that all indicators referring to individuals are gender disaggregated.

For instance, instead of:

Number of participants in the training in international small arms standards,

The indicator should be:

Number of male and female participants in the training in international small arms standards.

This allows tracking of the extent to which the commitment to ensure the balanced participation of women and men is fulfilled. If indicators show that this is not the case, additional activities such as targeting more women or investigating factors that hinder the participation of women could be undertaken.

Monitoring allows better implementation of activities.

2. Ensure that tracking the implementation of specific gender-related activities planned in the previous step is in place.

For example, if the planned activity is:

Develop and adopt procedures for stricter background checks,

The indicator could be:

Procedures for stricter background checks including DV adopted.

Or

If the activity is:

Campaign about risks of the misuse of firearms focusing on young men,

The indicator could be:

Campaign about risks of the misuse of firearms focusing on young men implemented.

As discussed previously, in most of the action plans only output indicators are given. They are important since they provide evidence that activities are being implemented. In the case of gender specific activities, they demonstrate that commitments are fulfilled.

3. Ensure there are gender responsive indicators for outcomes

From the evaluation perspective, it is essential to capture whether the goal – increasing the security for all citizens, both women and men, girls and boys – is being achieved. Measuring this is a complex task and it requires a set of indicators which have to be consequently gender disaggregated in order to confirm that both the needs of women and men have been addressed and to provide clear recommendations for further actions. Once again, having gender expertise when evaluation is planned will facilitate capturing these effects.

EXAMPLE

Gender - responsive indicators to measure whether security has been increased for both women and men should include:

Number of women and men victims of firearm-related incidents,

Number of women and men victims of intimate partner violence committed with firearms,

Number of firearm incidents committed by young men.

The findings on monitoring and evaluation have to provide clear recommendations on how to increase the gender responsiveness of SALW control activities. They have to point out what has been done properly but also what has to be improved. Finally, the conclusions of the evaluation should be discussed with other stakeholders in order to provide inputs for the new policy cycle.

WHAT SHOULD BE DONE:

- Involve stakeholders with gender expertise in the planning of monitoring and evaluation,
- Create gender disaggregated indicators and set specific indicators to track the implementation of gender specific activities,
- Ensure that indicators for evaluation capture the effects on both women and men,
- Present the evaluation and discuss the findings with other stakeholders,
- Based on all this, start a new policy cycle!

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