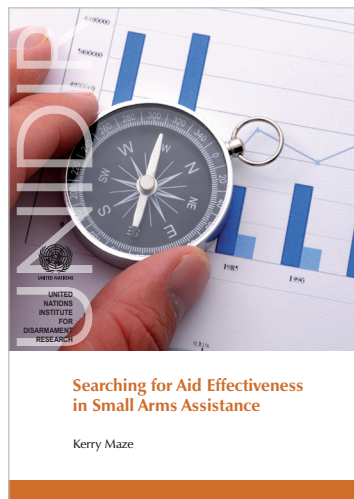


Searching for Aid Effectiveness in Small Arms Assistance

The international community has made several concerted efforts to address small arms and light weapons (SALW) at the international and regional level. These have included the development of policy instruments that establish the commitments of states to address SALW and the creation of best practice guidelines and online tools that help states address the various challenges posed by the illicit trade in SALW. States, regional and international organizations and civil society organizations have also provided financial and technical assistance to help states address SALW. However, there is no framework or system in place for measuring the impact of these efforts and for determining whether or not donors are getting the most value out of the assistance they provide and, likewise, whether or not recipient states are measurably benefiting from such assistance.

The UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (PoA) is the principle international policy document for addressing assistance and cooperation. At the Third Biennial Meeting of States on implementation of the PoA in 2008, states underlined that much work needed to be done on the subject. States have since agreed to consider including these issues in the work of an open-ended meeting of governmental experts anticipated for 2011. As they did at the 2008 Biennial Meeting, states are also lending their support to devoting a session to assistance and cooperation at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to be held in 2010. States have thus expressed a willingness to advance the issue of assistance and cooperation and it is therefore essential for states to build their knowledge and understanding of SALW assistance.



This report highlights several general and practical challenges of SALW assistance, ranging from a lack of clarity or precision on how to measure and evaluate SALW assistance to a lack of coordination in organizing and managing SALW assistance at the national, regional and international level.

In order to overcome the challenges of SALW assistance, this report explores the concept of aid effectiveness as contained in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action, being the most widely recognized set of international principles on aid effectiveness. Many of the principles and commitments of aid effectiveness contained in the Paris Declaration and its Accra Agenda for Action—notably ownership, alignment, harmonization, managing for results and mutual accountability—can apply to addressing SALW. The report demonstrates the structures, measures and tools that already exist to make SALW assistance more effective. With some modification and investment to these existing structures and tools, states could create a stronger environment for measuring the effectiveness and progress made as a result of SALW assistance. The report concludes with a series of recommendations that states and organizations could undertake at the international, regional and country level.

These include:

- Using the Biennial Meetings of States on PoA:
 - to promote consistent and strategic dialogue on SALW assistance;
 - to facilitate matching needs and resources; and
 - to strengthen the process and procedures of the PoA in the area of SALW assistance and aid effectiveness.
- Encouraging states to report on their views in the lead up to the 2012 Review Conference on the different opportunities and activities for strengthening SALW assistance and aid effectiveness on topics such as ownership, harmonization and managing results.
- Promoting and facilitating national, regional and international coordination on SALW assistance.
- Encouraging the open-ended meeting of governmental experts anticipated for 2011 to take on board important discussion points for improving SALW assistance and promoting aid effectiveness.
- Promoting a better understanding of SALW assistance in the context of development, armed violence reduction, public health, peacebuilding, women's peace and security, and conflict prevention.
- Taking national steps for improving the organization and management of assistance, such as:

- preparing and supporting the development of national strategies on SALW and strengthening country systems to coordinate on SALW issues;
- making SALW assistance more predictable;
- better coordinating and harmonizing efforts on SALW assistance; and
- promoting transparency, information sharing and systematic reporting of SALW activities implemented, underway and needed at the national, regional and international level.

The full publication can be downloaded from the UNIDIR website at www.unidir.org, or be ordered online from United Nations Publications at <http://unp.un.org>.

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Kerry Maze and Yvette Issar

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