

## Exercise: Using the ISACS–AT in the context of conducting SALW surveys

ISACS Operational Module 05.10: Conducting small arms and light weapons surveys

### SCENARIO—Context

Country Y has recently emerged out of several years of conflict and armed violence with widespread arms proliferation among non-state actors, who obtained these weapons through direct contributions from foreign governments, leakage from government stockpiles, recovery from the battlefield, and cross-border transfers facilitated by the porous nature of its borders.

The United Nations Security Council, politically divided over the conflict in Country Y, has not imposed an arms embargo on the state, but several states in the region have imposed targeted sanctions after the outbreak of the conflict. In order for these sanctions to be lifted, the sanction-imposing states have made it clear that the Government of Country Y needs to establish and demonstrate its effective measures on weapons management.

Prior to the armed conflict, the state was both a manufacturer and an importer/exporter of small arms and light weapons. Security was provided predominantly by state agencies, such as the Police Force, while there were numerous private security firms active in the country, mainly in the capital and other urban areas. While the number of private security companies (PSCs) in Country Y had decreased during the years of conflict, the recent end to the crisis has seen a rise in the use of PSCs.

With the conflict ending approximately eight months ago, there are initial estimates of around 2 million small arms and light weapons circulating in Country Y, with more than one third estimated to be circulating outside of state-controlled stockpiles. This estimate has been made by an external research organization relying on open-source information. These estimates are not considered a reliable source of data by the Government of Country Y. The users of these weapons are not very well documented, while there are several armed groups in the country that are known to possess small arms and light weapons.

Following the conflict, to secure its territory and strengthen its security apparatus to protect its population, the newly established Government of Country Y has expressed interest in manufacturing and importing arms once again. Furthermore, the Government is currently interested in revising its law on civilian possession of small arms and light weapons and has expressed interest in conducting a collection programme.

As described above, the Government of Country Y has made small arms and light weapons control a priority of its national security agenda. As an initial step, it has ordered its National Small Arms and Light Weapons Commission to plan a small arms national survey in order to get a clearer picture on the distribution of weapons and to provide a baseline for informed policy decisions to be implemented with international and national partners. The last baseline national survey conducted on small arms control was six years ago, prior to the conflict.

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## TASKS

You are part of an independent, external consultant team that has been contracted by the National Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Commission to carry out a baseline survey on small arms and light weapons. As a first step, the Commission has requested that you review the methodology from the previous distribution survey conducted prior to the conflict, with the view to provide expert assessment on data collected, and to prepare a report to the Commission on the findings.

Specifically, the Commission has requested that the team use the ISACS Module 05.10, Clause 9.6.2 as the basis to conduct the assessment in order to gather the following information:

- 1) What data the previous surveyors collected in line with recommendations of the ISACS; and
- 2) What data they did not/were not able to collect.

For data not covered by the previous surveyors, you must:

- a) Explain the importance of collecting such data for small arms distribution survey; and
- b) Propose how the Commission could collect such information through use of surveys.

As requested by the Commission, you must consult the ISACS to complete this task. The main responsibility of your team is to convince the Commission to conduct a comprehensive distribution survey. It is expected that the Commission will request a detailed briefing on how the previous survey has implemented the ISACS recommendations and what specific data that are missing should be collected for the upcoming survey. You will present the findings to the head of the Commission. Your presentation may be conducted verbally or through use of visuals. You may use the ISACS in hardcopy or the ISACS–AT to complete this task.

## ASSUMPTION

Work with the information provided. All available information on SALW data collected in the previous distribution survey is presented below. If certain information is missing, consider that the relevant information has not been observed, presented, or made available to you.

## HELP TIP

Recall the steps in conducting an assessment:

1. Identify the information need that needs to be measured in the Module;
2. Design a questionnaire to formulate a baseline assessment;
3. Collect relevant data;
4. Analyze the results to inform the findings and report.

## KEY NOTE

1. Implemented: Measure that you are certain has been implemented (100%).
2. In Progress: Measures that you observe have been undertaken, but not completely implemented (1%–99%). In Progress may also be used in cases when a certain aspect of the measure (as described by the indicator) is implemented.
3. Not Implemented: Measures that you are certain have not been implemented based on the information provided and/or observed.
4. Not answered: Measures that you are not able to evaluate due to lack of information provided.
5. Not applicable: Measures that are not applicable to the context you are dealing with.

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**COPY: Distribution assessment methodology on small arms and light weapons data collected by Agency (A) prior to the conflict****Overview**

Data was collected from State agencies, as well as from military, police, customs, and border guards. The names of these agencies (five in total) were recorded, but it was not possible to obtain data on the quantity and types of small arms in the possession of each State agency. Also, the survey collected the overall number of personnel from each agency, but was unable to determine the number of personnel who had access to small arms within those agencies.

The survey collected data related to civilian ownership of small arms. Data was collected on the legislative and regulatory framework governing the access of civilians to small arms and light weapons, with types and categories of licences recorded for private individuals and private shooting clubs and ranges. The data collected on the number of licences in force was disaggregated by licence type. Limited data was collected on the number of applications for new licences each year, and this information was not disaggregated by licence type. Information related to the expiration of licenses was not collected. The survey collected data on quantity and types of small arms and light weapons legally held by civilians. Accurate data could not be obtained on small arms illicitly held by civilians.

Access to information on private security companies was restricted and no meaningful data were obtained from them.

**Manufacture**

General data collection was conducted for manufacture of small arms, light weapons, their parts, components, and ammunition. Baseline data was collected on the legislative and regulatory framework governing domestic manufacture, including the types and categories of licences and authorizations required for manufacture. There were a total of seven authorized manufacturers and their production capacities were recorded. Information was also obtained on the quantities and types of small arms and ammunition manufactured legally.

The survey did not include data on the number of unauthorized manufacturers and their respective production capacity, including the quantities and types of weapons and ammunition manufactured illicitly. A clear explanation for exclusion of this data is not provided in this note.

**Transfers**

General data collection was conducted for domestic trade of small arms, light weapons, their parts, components, and ammunition. While baseline data was collected on the legislative and regulatory framework governing domestic trade, the types and categories of licences and authorizations required to engage in domestic trade were not collected. The survey data included the number of authorized traders for domestic trade, while it did not clarify whether the traders were responsible for wholesale or retail. Data on the types of weapons traded and the volume of domestic trade was not obtained.

Data collection was also conducted for international transfer of small arms and light weapons, their parts, components, and ammunition, although the availability of information was limited. General data was collected on the legislative and regulatory framework governing international transfers of small arms and light weapons, however data did not provide insight into the categories of licenses and authorizations for transfers. It is not clear from the data available whether the legislative and regulatory frameworks apply to all types of transfers, such as import, export, transit, transshipment, and/or brokering of arms. No information was made available by the Government on the number of registered brokers. Access to data on quantities and types of small arms and light weapons transferred were restricted, including on the number of imports and export authorization granted. Due to this limitation, no meaningful data were collected on the quantities and types of weapons transferred.

It should be noted that the Government was not fully transparent and cooperative in sharing full information regarding the transfers of small arms and light weapons.

**Information on diversion**

Information could not be collected on the quantities and types of small arms, light weapons, and ammunition lost by or stolen from relevant stakeholders, including from State agencies, private security companies, and private individuals. The surveyors noted here again that the Government was not entirely transparent with data related to diversion.

**Collection and disposal**

No information was collected on small arms, light weapons, and ammunition that were relinquished by civilians or seized/confiscated by the State. No collection programme has been implemented so far in Country Y. The Government, however, did disclose that weapons destined for disposal were destroyed in order to make them permanently inoperable.

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