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Civilian Arms Registration and Marking Handbook

Nikhil Acharya with Nikkie Wiegink and Salah Idriss



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Cover photo: Community members waiting outside the police station in Sirba, West Darfur.

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1. Introduction

This *Handbook*¹ is a guide on arms registration and marking (ARM) for practitioners, government officials, and project managers working on the control of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in conflict-affected areas. It provides a practical overview of how to design and implement an ARM project, focussing in particular on arms owned by civilians.

In areas with a high rate of SALW proliferation, civilians often purchase illicit weapons for their own protection. However, in areas exposed to armed violence for extended periods of time, the further proliferation of weapons only increases the cycle of violence. SALW control, in particular the regulation of illicit arms possession, may contribute to improving security in such communities. A first step towards such a regulation of small arms and light weapons is the marking and registration of illicit, civilian-owned weapons.

If conducted systematically, an ARM process is a key element of an effective weapons regulation programme. Linking the ARM process to other related community security and development initiatives is crucial for laying the groundwork of a more comprehensive approach to arms control at the national and international level.

ARM programmes could be conducted in many conflict-affected regions in the world, but it should be recognised that every environment has its own conditions and particularities. To be effective, an ARM programme needs to be designed and implemented in a manner that is tailored to local, social and cultural realities. This *Handbook* offers several practical instructions for implementing tailored ARM programmes in difficult contexts

Background

Within the framework of a training and advisory project funded by the German Federal Foreign office (Auswärtiges Amt), BICC (Bonn International

Center for Conversion) has been supporting the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (SDDRC) in planning and co-ordinating small arms control measures at the national and community level in various parts of Sudan, as well as in strengthening initial moves to co-operate with neighbouring countries. BICC has been providing technical advice and support to a community-led ARM process in Darfur, Sudan, since 2012. To a large extent, this *Handbook* is an outcome of these experiences.

Under the framework of the Sub-Regional Arms Control Mechanism (SARCOM)—representing the governments of Chad, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Libya, Sudan and South Sudan—a technical-level meeting of SALW experts took place in Khartoum in November 2013 to facilitate a greater exchange of knowledge across borders. At this meeting, registration and marking was also underlined as a priority area in the joint communique signed by all participating member states.

Why is ARM Useful?

The ARM approach serves as one essential building block of a functional SALW regulation programme. One of the main challenges to establishing such a programme is the lack of essential information and difficulties in accessing data on illicit weapons. SALW registration and marking helps to fill that gap by creating a usable database that enables practitioners and government officials tasked with running arms control and community security initiatives to make more informed programming decisions.

ARM programmes are only useful when they are designed to support, complement and strengthen existing work on community security and arms control. ARM programmes should be linked to awareness-raising activities on the dangers of SALW among communities affected by violence.

¹We would like to thank Ahmed Khalifa, an independent researcher, for his invaluable contribution to the research and content of this publication.

This is why the *Handbook* provides a specific section on how to develop and implement context-specific sensitisation activities. Additionally, ARM programmes are most effective when tied into wider community security and development initiatives.

Furthermore, ARM may provide insight in the trade of illicit weapons, especially in border areas. Greater knowledge of these factors may help SALW control practitioners to make more informed decisions on stemming the flow of illicit weapons and reducing the risk of diversion. This in turn helps achieve the goal of improving the security of communities affected by small arms related violence.

Structure of the Handbook

The first section of this *Handbook* outlines the **process of setting up** an ARM programme, highlighting the key factors that need to be considered. The second part deals with **implementing** an ARM programme, focussing on the processes of registration, marking and record-keeping.

An additional section is about designing and implementing an effective **sensitisation and public information strategy** in support of the ARM programme as a cross-cutting, interdependent process that should accompany the ARM programme before, during and after its implementation.

ARM is too often seen as disconnected from local realities, being treated merely as a set of purely technical interventions. Therefore, the *Handbook* stresses the importance of a deep understanding of the socio-cultural context and provides assistance in how to design, implement and evaluate a **community-based ARM programme**. This *Handbook* also gives due consideration to the significant ethical issues involved with engaging in arms registration and marking in complex, insecure and highly securitised operational environments. It cannot be emphasised enough that it is crucial

to adhere to the principle of Do No Harm as well as to adopt a light footprint approach when setting up socio-cultural security interventions such as an ARM programme.

ARM programmes need to be aware of the full impact they have on the communities where they are being implemented. Programmes must endeavour to not raise false expectations or make promises that cannot be fulfilled. Programmes that are implemented without essential understandings of the cultural context of the host communities run the risk of putting the very communities they are meant to benefit at greater risk. Understanding how decisions are made at the local level or fully understanding the roles and responsibilities of relevant actors can go a long way in identifying which sections of the communities to prioritise.

2. What is Arms Registration and Marking?

The overall objective of marking and registering SALW is to establish strict state control over arms transfers. This helps to track illicit arms from their point of production and to discover at which point they may have been diverted or used in violation of national and international law (BICC, 2008, p. 5). An arms registration and marking (ARM) process aims at reducing the proliferation of illicit small arms and mitigates the risk of diversion. The ultimate goal of registering and marking SALW, when conducted effectively and in support of related processes, is to reduce firearms-related violence and enhance peace and security in violence-affected societies.

Weapons, like other commodities, are dependent on trade and the effects of demand and supply. The trafficking of weapons and the movement of illegally owned weapons often occur along the same channels as other goods and commodities that are traded. Regional or seasonal market areas therefore provide richer data on the movement, supplies, flows and patterns of illicit weapons. Greater knowledge of these factors helps actors to make more informed decisions on stemming the flow of illicit weapons and reducing the risk of diversion. This in turn helps achieve the goal of improved security of communities affected by small arms-related violence.



A unique arms identification serial number on an Austrian-manufactured Glock 17 9mm pistol in Sudan

2.1 What is Marking?

When a weapon is marked, a unique set of numbers and symbols is imprinted on an essential part of that weapon to indicate its country of origin and country of last import as well as information on the owner of the weapon. The firearm registration marking initiative at the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSEA) originates in Article 7 of the Nairobi Protocol (see box 1), which requires that the member states must register and mark firearms under national control or jurisdiction with a simple marking that identifies the country of import, the year of import and an individual serial number if the weapon does not have one (Faltas, 2014, p. 7). Part of a comprehensive ARM programme is having to develop a unified system of numbering that is in line with international small arms control standards (ISACS).

Box 1:

Article 7 of the Nairobi Protocol

States parties undertake:

- \ *To mark each small arm or light weapon at the time of manufacture, with a unique marking providing the name of the manufacturer, the country or place of manufacture and the serial number. The marking should be on the barrel frame and, where applicable, the slide.*
- \ *To mark each small arm or light weapon at the time of import, with a simple marking permitting identification of the country of import the year of import, and an individual serial number if the small arm or light weapon does not bear one at the time of import so that the source of the small arm or light weapon can be traced.*
- \ *To ensure that all small arms and light weapons in the possession of the state are marked with a unique mark.*

- \ *To ensure the maintenance, for not less than ten years, of information in relation to small arms and light weapons that is necessary to trace and identify those small arms and light weapons which are illicitly manufactured or trafficked and to prevent and detect such activities. Such information shall include:*
 - \ *The appropriate markings required by this Article*
 - \ *In cases involving international transactions in small arms and light weapons, the issuance and expiration dates of the appropriate licenses or authorisations, the country of export, the country of import, the transit countries, where appropriate, and the final recipient and the description and quantity of the articles.*

Source: Nairobi Protocol For The Prevention, Control And Reduction Of Small Arms And Light Weapons In The Great Lakes Region And The Horn Of Africa, 21 April 2004 www.recsasec.org/pdf/Nairobi%20Protocol.pdf

To mark a weapon, several different techniques, including laser etching or embedding electronic chips and chemical tracers (Berkol, 2004, p. 33) can be used. ‘Dot-peen marking’ is one cost-effective and durable way of marking weapons. Dot-peen machines, such as the Spanish-manufactured Couth MC2000 used by RECSA, punch a set of a unique numbers and symbols on a weapon. These marks should be clearly visible and placed on a structural component of the weapon essential to its operation, such as the slide, receiver or frame of the weapon so that the source from which further data can be obtained can be clearly identified. The serial number marked on a weapon must conform to established standards, such as the international small arms control standards (ISACS), to avoid duplication. Rather than provide a comprehensive source of information on the weapon and its origins, a mark is a well-structured clue that allows inspectors to follow the trail back to the source and facilitate an official tracing request to that country (BICC, 2008, p.11). The mark should not be easily removable.

2.2 What is Registration and Record-keeping?

In the registration process, basic information on the weapon, its manufacturer, owner and its history is recorded. Marking is only useful when the details of the marked weapon are then registered into a database that is maintained and accessible. Registration, consisting of record-keeping and maintenance of the data, is therefore a crucial element of the process, as it facilitates the identification of the weapon, its owner, its legal status as well as where it is stored. In contexts where no previous ARM activities have been undertaken a database needs to be built from scratch. This was the case in Sudan and other RECSA member states.

3. Designing Arms Registration and Marking Programmes

This section will focus on designing an ARM programme. The design phase refers to the period leading up to the actual start of the programme. It takes into consideration certain preconditions and proceeds to the development of an action plan.

3.1 Preconditions: Before Starting an ARM Programme

Before starting the design of an ARM programme in a particular place, the required facilitating conditions should be identified. ARM can only be effective if these are in place.

These conditions include but are not limited to:

- \ The political will of the government or local authorities to conduct such a programme;
- \ The political will of community leaders and tribal elders to support such a programme;
- \ The political will of community members, linked to an understanding of the need to tackle the proliferation of SALW;
- \ The presence of relevant development and security initiatives that can complement the ARM programme;
- \ The political capacity to guarantee that the ARM programme will not be manipulated to serve other vested interests.

If these conditions are fulfilled, the next step is to design an action plan.

3.2 The Action Plan

The basis for a measurable, effective ARM programme is a well-designed action plan that is concrete as well as pre-emptive, providing possible solutions and flexibility for problems that will inevitably arise.

An action plan should therefore outline:

- \ Required activities that should lead to the overall goal;
- \ Involved stakeholders and their responsibilities;
- \ Suitable and flexible time frames;

- \ Realistic assessments of time, money, human skills and capacity available during the programme window;
- \ Relevant elements of the operational environment (such as weather, political demonstrations, religious festivals), which may influence the accessibility of communities or field sites;
- \ A plan for monitoring and evaluation throughout the programme cycle.

It should also be noted that ARM programmes are inherently difficult to design and implement as they are often implemented in unstable, complex operational environments as well as being costly and time consuming. Vested interests and fluctuating political will often influence a programme and access to field sites is never guaranteed. Awareness of these factors can enable more informed and better quality decisions. In the following sections, each section of the action plan will be explained in more detail.

3.2.1 *Aligning Activities and Goals of an ARM Programme: A Practical Guide*

Before starting the ARM programme, it is essential to formulate a clear goal. The primary goal of an arms registration and marking programme is to improve the security of communities affected by small arms-related violence. A secondary goal is to reduce the risk of the proliferation and the diversion of small arms and light weapons from legal to illicit use.

Based on the direction provided by these clear goals, the next step is to design a set of activities that, if successfully implemented, will lead to this goal. The activities, outputs and outcomes leading to this goal should be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound. A useful question to ask here is how the ARM programme can help achieve the primary goal.

Next, it is important to identify the correct sequence of these activities and place them along a realistic time frame (by asking which of these

activities needs to be done first, or which of these activities depends on other factors being in place). Importantly, the time, money and human skills and capacity available as well as the difficulty of the operational environment will determine the scale of the activities.

The following questions should be considered:

- \ What are the inputs (financial, human and material resources as well as time) available before starting an ARM programme?
- \ What activities (sensitisation, registration and marking of SALW) are required to reach the outputs?
- \ What outputs (e.g. national database of registered weapons,) are expected to be achieved?
- \ What outcomes (reduction of illicit trade and possession of SALW, more awareness on the impact of SALW) are expected to be achieved?
- \ Do these activities, outputs and outcomes help achieve the overall goal (improved security of beneficiary communities through a reduction of small arms- related violence)?

Table 1:
Results-based Framework for the ARM Programme in West Darfur, Sudan

	Internal indicators
Goal	<i>Improving the security and stability and the reduction of armed violence in West Darfur</i>
Indirect benefit	<i>Reduction of armed violence in West Darfur Improved security perception among community members Better co-operation and confidence between communities, local leaders, law enforcement agencies on security issues Voluntary returns of IDPs and refugees through better security</i>
Outcome	<i>Accepted process of arms registration, marking and tracing More space for dialogue and exchange between security forces, local administration and community leaders Reduction of illicit ownership of weapons</i>

	Internal indicators
Output	<i>Awareness generated on the dangers of the spread of illegal weapons and its negative consequences among community members, Database designed with information on serial number, type and personal data of the owner. Legitimate identity cards distributed to community members who have registered and marked their weapons X number of civilian-owned SALW registered and marked</i>
Activities	<i>Sensitisation conducted on risks of proliferation and presence of small arms Outreach and public information activities on the registration process Pre-registration of personal information of civilians owning weapons Registration and issuing ownership cards to civilians owning weapons Data entry into the electronic database (RECSA software exists) Marking of civilian owned weapons</i>
Input	<i>Equipment Logistical support Advisory services Funds</i>

3.2.2 Identifying Involved Stakeholders and Their Responsibilities

An ARM programme involves multiple stakeholders on several levels. Important stakeholders are:

- \ International actors who support the programme financially and who determine international legislation on SALW control;
- \ Stakeholders at the national level, such as authorities responsible for permits, etc.;
- \ Local authorities and community leaders who implement the programme in their communities; implementing the programme in their communities,
- \ Community members affected by armed violence. These are the most important stakeholders as they are primary beneficiaries of ARM activities.

International actors

On the international level, the normative framework for ARM activities is established by international organisations and peacekeeping operations. These include the United Nations, the African Union, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, Regional Centre on Small Arms as well as other intra-governmental organisations and international donors. These actors are engaged in formulating and ratifying global norms, international standards, technical guidelines, standard operating procedures and training materials on SALW control.

Box 2:

Treaties, Declarations and Protocols on the Control of the Illicit Trade in SALW

The UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UN Programme of Action)

<http://www.poa-iss.org/PoA/pohtml.aspx>

The International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (International Tracing Instrument)

http://www.poa-iss.org/InternationalTracing/ITI_English.pdf

The UN Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UN Firearms Protocol)

http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/a_res_55/255e.pdf

The Arms Trade Treaty

<https://unoda-web.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/English7.pdf>

Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development

<http://www.genevadeclaration.org/fileadmin/docs/GD-Declaration-091020-EN.pdf>

The Nairobi Declaration on the Problem of the Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa

http://www.recsasec.org/publications/Nairobi_Declaration.pdf

Nairobi Protocol For The Prevention, Control And Reduction Of Small Arms And Light Weapons In The Great Lakes Region And The Horn Of Africa,

http://www.recsasec.org/publications/Nairobi_Protocol.pdf

The Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition, Parts and Components that can be used for their Manufacture, Repair or Assembly (Kinshasa Convention)

http://www.iansa.org/system/files/Pages%20from%20Convention%20de%20Kinshasa%20certifi%C3%A9_low_eng.pdf

Khartoum Declaration on the control of small arms and light weapons across the neighboring countries of Western Sudan—Now Sub-Regional Arms Control Mechanism SARCOM

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/UNDP_SD_CPR_Khartoum_Declaration_SALW.pdf

For arms control efforts to be effective, interventions must not take place in isolation but must be co-ordinated through the responsible national authorities. Arms registration and marking, along with efforts to improve the physical security and management of arms and ammunition stockpiles (PSSM) lay the groundwork for the regulation of certain kinds of weapons by reducing the risk of diversion. Several instruments and legal frameworks have been developed to co-ordinate arms regulation efforts at the regional and international level. Together, these constitute a regulatory framework within which arms registration and marking may be located.

Figure 1:
International Regulatory Framework on Small Arms Control Including Registration and Marking

ARM Programme			
UN Programme of Action	International Tracing Instrument	Firearms Protocol	Arms Trade Treaty
Regional & subregional			
standards, best practice guidelines, codes of conduct, model legislation, model regulations			

Stakeholders at the national level

In most countries, campaigns against the illicit trade in SALW are led by government authorities, including national security, military intelligence and relevant line ministries. Bringing national counterparts fully on board and securing permission from relevant authorities to conduct ARM activities is essential. (See figure 2 for an example from Sudan.)

Institutions and organisations that have to be approached on the national level

- \ Ministry of the Interior
- \ Ministry of Defence
- \ Ministry of Justice
- \ Members of Parliament
- \ SDDRC/Focal Point

Local authorities and community leaders

As the actual marking and registration of weapons owned by civilians needs to take place at the community level, local actors need to play an active role for an ARM programme to be successful. These local stakeholders should be approached in advance to ensure approval and to provide access to their communities. These stakeholders include but are not limited to the following:

- \ Local military forces
- \ Police stations
- \ Local government institutions
- \ Local party representatives
- \ Local chiefs

Community members affected by armed violence

The impact of the illicit trade in weapons is experienced most acutely by communities affected by armed violence. Having successfully made the affected communities aware of ARM activities and why they would benefit them is critical for the success of the programme.

The target members of communities at risk could be categorised by gender, age and/or their social function and could include:

- \ Women’s groups;
- \ Men;
- \ Children and youth at risk;
- \ Elderly;
- \ Community and tribal leaders;
- \ Religious leaders;
- \ Teachers.

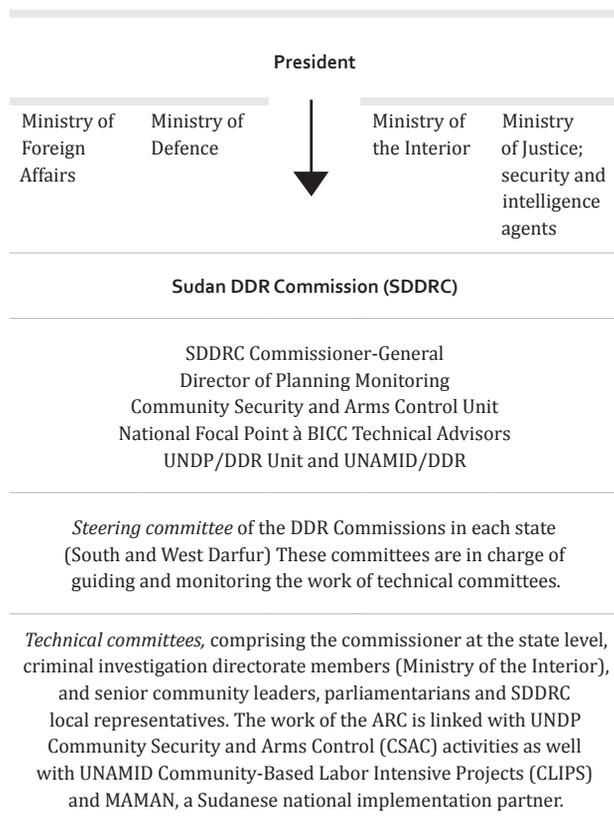
It is also important to look beyond the usual suspects to identify relevant groups or individuals that would ordinarily be overlooked. People who might have access to important information related to the movement, storage, trade and use of weapons might include merchants in the local market or hospital staff with access to valuable data on weapon-related injuries and deaths. Those who manufacture protection amulets for community members and are therefore aware of the nature of everyday security threats that ordinary community members are most fearful of.

Why community involvement?

To establish priorities of SALW control, the community needs to be involved in an exchange of information and in the decision-making process. Like this, SALW control can be inclusive, community focussed and can ensure the maximum involvement of all sections of the community. Involvement in the process includes joint planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

With the community being involved, specific interim safety strategies that encourage individual and community behavioural change are developed. These are designed to reduce the impact of SALW on individuals and communities until the threat is removed.

Figure 2:
National Stakeholders Involved in the ARM Process in Darfur



3.2.3 Identifying the Locations, Requirements and Constraints

Selection of community/location:

The community that is to host an ARM programme must be carefully selected. The following action must be taken in advance:

- \ Evaluate whether there is the political will to conduct an ARM programme. How? Discussions with local community leaders and state appointed officials.
- \ Evaluate whether there is a willingness to engage in an ARM exercise at the community level. How? Discuss this with community members.
- \ Co-ordinate ARM action with ongoing activities related to development, community security and relief work.
- \ Choose areas that serve as central hubs for nomadic populations such as market towns or border areas. They are particularly good candidates for implementing an ARM programme.
- \ Evaluate the security situation and other aspects of accessibility (see below)

Accessibility:

Factors that will impact access to communities and field sites need to be considered. Questions that need answering are:

- \ When do nomadic communities travel to find grazing land for their cattle and when do they return?
- \ When are the harvest and planting seasons?
- \ When are the rainy season and the dry season?
- \ When and where are seasonal markets held?
- \ Are there any political developments that will have an impact on the ARM target areas such as elections, visits by high-profile politicians, festivals, or religious holidays?

Due to the influence of a multitude of unpredictable factors, ARM sites may change—one characteristic of operating in securitised, unstable contexts. Alternative sites and substitute plans are therefore a necessity.



Designing ARM activities need to account for seasonal changes. Seasonal flooding following heavy rains in West Darfur renders areas inaccessible making ARM activities impossible to conduct. El Geneina, West Darfur, August 2013

Validate findings of site selection and gaining approval:

Once the search for ARM sites has been concluded and a number of possible sites have been identified, these need to be confirmed with the target communities. This confirmation or validation of the ARM sites must be obtained formally to avoid problems at a later stage. Convening a ‘validation workshop’ or similar exercise could be one way of obtaining this consensus. The meeting should be attended by members of the potential ARM target communities, including:

- \ Community leaders;
- \ Police forces;
- \ Border forces;
- \ Local authorities’ representatives such as the governor;
- \ UN agencies conducting relevant work;
- \ INGOs/local NGO/ Civil society conducting relevant work;
- \ Headquarters and local offices of the national commission on SALW control;
- \ Technical advisors associated with the programme;
- \ Arms Registration and Marking Committees (ARC).¹

¹In several ARM programmes, ARCs consisting of a cross-section of relevant stakeholders as listed above have been formed. Forming a committee with a main point of contact and a steering committee could be an important way of ensuring clear roles and responsibilities. Ensuring regular and consistent communication channels with the ARC is crucial for this arrangement to function well.

These actors will have to re-affirm their support, and their feedback will have to be incorporated to identify the final areas where the ARM programme will be implemented. This should be written up into a document that will be approved by those attending the meetings. This document should then be approved by local authorities including representatives of the relevant government bodies and security apparatus. Having this in writing will also serve to facilitate clearances or resolve impediments to the programme at the higher political levels (headquarters/ capital).

Security:

ARM programmes are often implemented in violence-affected communities. In such contexts, community members and the ARM team may be exposed to security risks. Possible security threats include hostilities between armed groups, potentially violent political demonstrations, armed crime, car-jacking, the threat of kidnapping and the presence of landmines or explosive remnants of war.

The action plan should take into account a range of security activities to protect community members and the ARM team. These activities should include:

- \ Assess and analyse the security situation around the ARM sites;
- \ Establish and maintain contact with local government security authorities;
- \ Travel by the ARM team in armoured government vehicles when necessary;
- \ Update national and local security authorities of the ARM plans constantly;
- \ Exercise caution at all times and closely monitor local and international media and available security updates and situation reports.

The ARM team is also responsible for ensuring the security of participating community members as well as local staff implementing the ARM activities to the greatest extent possible.

Obtaining travel permissions in advance:

The action plan should reserve adequate time to process travel permits and security clearances from the responsible authorities in order to visit conflict-affected localities. Not receiving such permits, as is frequently the case, could hinder and delay the ARM programme.

Example:

In Sudan, the United Nations and African Union Hybrid Mission in Darfur UNAMID and the UN Humanitarian Air Service UNHAS of the World Food Programme operate flights to Darfur. Applications to travel to conflict-affected localities need to be made more than three days in advance as the flight manifesto is subject to approval by National Security, Military Intelligence and Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC). Uniformed military personnel are not allowed to travel on flights operated by the World Food Programme.

3.2.4 Designing a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Planning, monitoring and evaluation are essential to establishing the ARM programme's progress, success, and failures, and to develop improvements for future activities. Therefore the action plan should entail a monitoring and evaluation plan that outlines the frequency of monitoring and evaluation (M&E), the roles and responsibilities of the staff responsible for conducting the exercise and the choice of indicators used.

If there is a lack of time, capacity and skills necessary for data analysis (knowledge of SPSS, for example) at the local office, external consultants with relevant technical, linguistic and research expertise should get involved in the ARM programme.

Incorporating local realities and demands is essential to tailoring an ARM programme to the local context. A well-grounded ARM programme engages with social and cultural practices around communities and societies affected by armed violence.

For a programme to be measurable, evidence-based and have a sound research design, a baseline study must be conducted. Conducting a baseline study is essential to providing 'need to know information' that must inform the ARM design, implementation and evaluation process. To ensure that a comprehensive understanding of the local context is obtained, a security needs assessment should also be conducted. To provide a comprehensive picture of the security and cultural context in which the ARM programme is meant to be conducted, it is necessary to include a component in the needs assessment that carefully analyses local cultural practices around weapons.

Baseline study:

The first step for effective monitoring and evaluation is to design and conduct a baseline study that is essential to establish the progress, success and failures of the ARM programme and to develop improvements for future activities. More importantly, the baseline is essential to provide a measurable basis for diagnosing problems and designing solutions.

The baseline study should provide answers to key questions, such as:

- \ How many weapons have already been marked and registered?
- \ What is the estimated number of civilian-owned weapons in the community?
- \ What is the general knowledge about the dangers of SALW?
- \ What is necessary to know for sensitisation activities?

These will be the guiding questions for the M&E plan and will provide insights into progress, delays and challenges in meeting pre-established landmarks.

By establishing a **useful monitoring system**, the team will be able to keep track of what has been done and its effect on the ARM programme.

Monitoring refers to:

- \ Tracking information systematically;
- \ Checking the same performances regularly;
- \ Keeping records as accurately as possible;
- \ Observing positive and negative changes that occur during the ARM programme;
- \ Building a system of measurable landmarks along a timeline. Failure to meet these landmarks would indicate, in a timely manner, a need to revise programme activities at the tactical level to be able to (stay on track to) achieve the programme goals.
- \ Focus group discussions (with women, men, girls and boys or other relevant groups such as teachers, elderly community members, youth at risk);
- \ Conducting relevant, well-designed surveys by using appropriate quantitative and qualitative research methods;
- \ Desk research (data generated in monitoring efforts, other case studies, available reports and studies, SALW surveys);
- \ Observations (field research notes, photographs and films about the programme and the environment).

To establish an **effective evaluation plan** is also a fundamental part of the ARM programme. Evaluation supplements monitoring by providing a comprehensive evaluation of what worked and what did not work, and why this did not work.

Evaluations of activities in the ARM programme include:

- \ Improving programming policy and strategy for ARM activities;
- \ Allowing programmes to remain flexible and adapt to changing realities by providing a measurable basis for correcting or revising the strategic direction of the programme midstream;
- \ Identifying unintended results and consequences of the ARM programme to limit the negative footprint of the programme in line with the principle of Do No Harm.

Data collection methods for the baseline assessment and evaluation framework of ARM:

- \ Interviews (politicians, security/military officers, UN experts, researchers, community members). This could also include interviewing participants and the Arms Registration Committee during the marking and registration process;

3.2.5 Establishing a Time Frame and Calculating a Budget

The action plan should include flexible, context-specific **timelines** for every stage of the implementation of the ARM programme. The action plan should be adaptable to the specific operational environment of the ARM programme such as:

- \ Access to field sites;
- \ Seasons of the year;
- \ Migration patterns of target communities;
- \ Amount of available funding;
- \ Existing political will and changes in the political sphere;
- \ Willingness of authorities to issue travel permits and security clearances.

Calculating a reasonable, affordable and realistic **budget** for every stage of the ARM programme is vital in the action plan. The fact that fuel and transportation prices are on the rise must be taken into consideration and be foreseen in the budget. Additionally, arms registration and marking team per diems, salaries and accommodation costs must be included in the total budget.

Box 3:**Operational Costs for an ARM Programme****ARM team costs**

- \ *How many ARM team members require per diems/ subsistence allowances?*
- \ *Any costs associated with hiring staff (accommodation, insurance, visas, local travel permits)?*
- \ *Any training workshops and conferences (national, regional and international) required of the ARM team?*
- \ *Any external advisers and consultants required? How are they paid (daily rate or fixed rate)? How many days are planned for each consultant and adviser?*
- \ *Where does the ARM team live (hotels, UN-camps, rented apartments, etc.)? And what are the costs?*

ARM equipment and material costs

- \ *How many marking machines are required/available? How much does a machine cost? What spare parts are required for the marking machine? What are the costs required for the maintenance of the marking machine?*
- \ *What are the costs for transporting the marking machine (renting vehicles, extra box for secure transport, security personnel)?*
- \ *How many registration forms should be printed? How many ID-cards are required? What equipment (laminator, cameras for photo-ID, external memory cards, photo-printers, multi-socket adaptors, extension cords, stationery, hard drive, generator) is required for registration?*
- \ *How much does it cost to establish a databank for record-keeping of the weapons and its owners?*

Sensitisation costs

- \ *What costs are required for public information meetings (refreshments, information material, etc.)?*
- \ *What does media coverage (daily radio broadcast air time, newspapers, photojournalism, film) cost?*
- \ *What costs are required for a documentary film (camera equipment, production costs, staff, permissions, accommodation, travel costs, etc.) about the ARM programme? (Optional)*

Monitoring and evaluation costs

- \ *What resources are required (per diems/subsistence allowances for M&E team, including their travel expenses, etc.) for conducting M&E activities?*
- \ *Is there a need to hire external, international/national researchers to analyse the collected data?*
- \ *What IT-equipment is required? For example, office materials, computers, printers, software for data analysis (WEFT QDA, VennMaker, SPSS).*
- \ *Any refreshments, renting of meeting rooms required for stakeholder meetings and workshops?*

Travel requirements

- \ *What types of travel expenses (international and domestic flight tickets, accommodation, per diems, rented cars, fuel, etc.) are required?*
- \ *How many times does an ARM team need to travel to the country or field? What travel requirements (visa, permissions, and security clearances) exist for interviews with stakeholders and community members?*

Communication costs

- \ *What communication facilities (SIM cards, mobile phones, satellite phones, laptops, computers, fax, Internet, mail services) are required?*

4. Implementation of Arms Registration and Marking Programmes

The arms registration and marking programme itself is commonly divided into four stages (see photo sequence below).

- \ Sensitisation
- \ Registration
- \ Marking
- \ Record-keeping

In the following sections, these different stages of the ARM programme are explained in detail, starting with registration, marking and record-keeping. A separate chapter is dedicated to sensitisation activities.

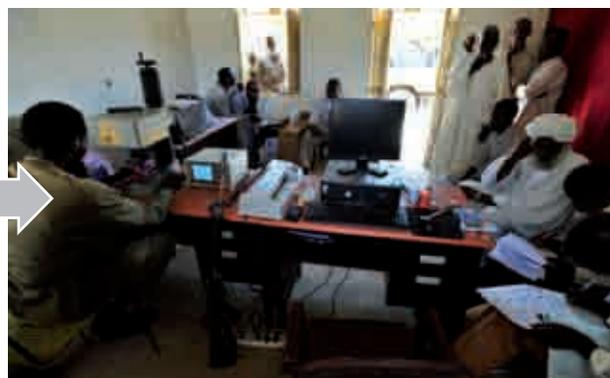
It is important to bear in mind the following essential stages of ARM while designing and implementing a tailored action plan:

4.1 Registration

The registration process requires recording basic information about the weapon, its owner and its history, beginning with its manufacturer, the address of the owner and where the weapon is currently stored. The marking is only useful when the marked weapon and information of its owner is then registered into a database that is accessible and useable for practitioners and officials. Arms registration and marking contributes to a chain of information enabling a weapon to be tracked from its point of origin to its current location. If crucial data is missing or inaccessible, or simply not recorded, the database and consequently the marking and registration cease to be useful.



Sensitisation: Public information and community meetings are held to inform the general public of the impact of the uncontrolled use and misuse of SALW.



Registration: After the sensitisation phase it is necessary to print registration forms in co-operation with the responsible authorities, such as the Ministry of the Interior.



Marking: Dot-peen machines punch a set of marks onto the receiver or frame of a weapon to create letters, numbers and images giving each weapon a unique ID.



Record-keeping: Records are kept manually and electronically in databases. The collected data is transmitted to the capital and the responsible government authorities.

Key information required for registering a weapon:

- \ Weapon type;
- \ Name of manufacturer and model;
- \ Calibre;
- \ Country of manufacture;
- \ All the markings (manufacture or post-manufacture);
- \ License number of the owner (if available);
- \ The declared location of the weapon;
- \ The full name of the owner;
- \ Private and working address of the owner;
- \ The declared address of the owner.

Box 4:

Example from Marking and Registration in West Darfur, Sudan

Before the marking process takes place, registration forms are distributed to know how many community members are willing to register and mark their illegal weapons. If more than 100 registration forms are filled in, indicating that over a 100 weapons are available to be marked, an ARM mobile team is deployed to the target community. As this means that the marking process will take place outside the (district's) capital, the ARM team will have to transport the marking machine and other relevant equipment for the marking process. Marking and registration at mobile sites are therefore considerably more expensive. If less than 100 registration forms are filled in by the community members, indicating that less than a 100 weapons are available for marking, then the marking process will take place in the capital of West Darfur, at the headquarters of the Arms Registration Committee in El Geneina, where the ARM team are stationed. In this case, transport and subsistence costs of community members travelling to the capital will also need to be accounted for in the budget.

4.1.1 Registration Forms

Registration forms are printed in co-operation with responsible authorities, such as the Ministry of the Interior. While these forms may look different in different operational contexts, their basic function remains the same: They are designed to identify each weapon and specify its legal user. Forms used for an ARM process are similar to those used to renew licenses for firearms annually.



Registration Form published by the Ministry of the Interior in Sudan in 2013

Distributing registration forms:

Ideally, the weapon should be marked and registered at the same place and at the same time. In practice, however, there might be a disconnect between the marking and registration process as civilian owners of weapons might live quite far from the location of the marking machine. In this case, there will be a pre-registration phase during which the personal details of the owners of the weapons are collected in advance. Depending on the numbers of weapons that need to be registered and marked, local authorities can then decide whether to deploy a marking team to the location or to arrange for the community members to travel to the closest regional office where the marking machine is in operation. (See box 4 for an example from West Darfur.)

4.1.2 Building a Registration Team in the Localities

The registration team must be composed of:

- \ Technical staff who understand the wider ARM programme, possibly from the regional office of the responsible government authority such as the Ministry of the Interior or the government body tasked with community security and arms control;
- \ Senior community leaders;
- \ Representatives of the local official authorities such as the local police.

The registration team must be taught how to fill in the registration forms accurately. They should be aware of what key information needs to be collected from the owners of the weapons and why this is essential for the ARM programme to be effective.

To be successful, getting the community leaders on board of this process is essential. After their approval of the registration forms, they will show them to members of their communities and explain the rationale behind the process as well as the benefits for them. The approval of senior community leaders will be crucial in mitigating the understandable reluctance of community members to share such sensitive personal data. Therefore, ideally, senior community leaders themselves or in close co-operation with government officials should directly distribute the registration forms amongst their affected communities. The leaders' involvement will also serve as a guarantee reassuring members of their community that this will not lead to any measures that would have an impact on their own security such as premature or forced collection of weapons.

REMINDER:

Mobile teams for arms registration and marking programmes have to consider that community members migrate or move, for example, during harvest time to find work and return back to their communities before the rainy season starts.

Box 5:

Checklist for the Registration and Record-keeping Process

- \ *Design and print registration forms in collaboration with relevant authorities.*
- \ *Distribute registration forms in localities.*
- \ *Conduct registration exercises in localities.*
- \ *Is there electricity available? If not, supply a functioning generator.*
- \ *Ensure a laminating machine is available and functioning; Are there enough plastic envelopes for inserting the registration cards?*
- \ *Ensure a camera is available and functioning with charged battery. Ensure trained staff is available to operate the camera or hire a photographer.*
- \ *Ensure a printer is available and functioning with functioning adequate ink and (photo) paper supplies as well scissors for cutting out photographs.*
- \ *Soft copies: Enter data in RECSA software; secure data storage; backup data; transmit data to the relevant line ministry in the capital.*
- \ *Hard copies: Write up data; store data in secure location; create backups/photocopies; transmit data to the relevant line ministry in the capital.*
- \ *Personnel paid per diems?*
- \ *Accommodation, food and refreshments organised?*

4.2 Marking

Weapons can be marked in many different ways by using different techniques, such as laser etching, embedded electronic chips, or chemical tracers (Berkol, 2004, p. 33). One cost effective and durable way to mark weapons is through 'dot-peen marking' with a system such as the Couth MC2000.

RECSA has distributed Couth MC2000 dot-peen marking machines equipped with pneumatic marking heads to member states under the framework of the Nairobi Protocol.



Beretta 9mm automatic pistol being marked Khartoum, Sudan 2013

Dot-peen machines punch a set of marks on to the receiver or frame of a weapon to create visible letters, numbers and images. Operating the Couth 2000 marking equipment has proved to be a simple, repetitive task. The Couth MC2000 can easily mark most flat surface areas, and a cylindrical attachment is available to mark curved surfaces. The machine is relatively fast and can imprint a mark in less than a minute (Faltas, 2014, p. 6). Experience has shown that using small blocks of wood helps the marking team to firmly secure various weapons of different sizes into the vice of the marking machine.

Box 6: **Marking a Weapon**

All small arms and light weapons should be uniquely marked at the time of their:

- \ *Manufacture;*
- \ *Import;*
- \ *Transfer from government stocks to permanent civilian use;*
- \ *Permanent confiscation by the State;*
- \ *Deactivation or destruction.*

The following information should be contained on a weapon at the minimum:

- \ *Country of manufacture;*
- \ *Name of the manufacture;*
- \ *A serial number unique to the manufacturer;*
- \ *Weapon type/model;*
- \ *Calibre;*
- \ *Year of manufacture;*
- \ *If possible, the country to which the weapon has been exported;*
- \ *If possible, the year of export.*

Markings should be located on a structural component of the weapon in a manner that is clearly visible and difficult to remove. Possible locations include:

- \ *Frame/receiver;*
- \ *Barrel;*
- \ *Slide, cylinder, bolt;*
- \ *Any other parts essential to the operation of the weapon.*

Markings should be applied to an exposed surface and should be:

- \ *Conspicuous without technical aids or tools;*
- \ *Easy recognisable;*
- \ *Readable;*
- \ *Recoverable (as far as technically possible)*

Source: ISACS Module 5.20 on Marking and Registration

4.2.1 Format

In 2005, RECSA members agreed upon a common weapons marking format, which consists of a star (☆) to indicate state-owned weapons with an International Organization (ISO) ISO 3166-1 country code and a unique serial number (Faltas 2014, p. 6). (For an example, see box 7 below.)

Table 2:
International Organization (ISO) Country Codes

Serial no	Country	ISO Code
1	Burundi	BI
2	Congo, The Democratic Republic of the	CD
3	Djibouti	DJ

Serial no	Country	ISO Code
4	Eritrea	ER
5	Ethiopia	ET
6	Kenya	KE
7	Rwanda	RW
8	Sudan	SD
9	Seychelles	SC
10	Tanzania, United Republic of	TZ
11	Uganda	UG

Source: Best Practice Guidelines for the Implementation of the Nairobi Declaration and the Nairobi Protocol on Small Arms and Light Weapons, p. 15, <http://www.poa-iss.org/RegionalOrganizations/RECSA/Nairobi%20Best%20Practice%20Guidelines.pdf>.

Box 7:
Example of a Marked Weapon in Sudan

The photograph below is that of a Saiga variant of a Kalashnikov 5.62mm automatic rifle manufactured in Russia being marked at the Forensics Department of the Ministry of the Interior in Khartoum, Sudan in October 2013. The weapon was marked by one of three Couth MC2000 marking machines donated by RECSA. The unique identification mark denotes the following:

- ☆ = RECSA region
- SD = Sudan
- CP = Central Police
- 01 = Khartoum
- 26226 = Unique identification number associated with this particular weapon



Saiga 5.62mm automatic with markings, Khartoum, Sudan. October, 2013

4.2.2 Building a Marking Team in the Localities

Teams that mark the weapons consist of two to up to six members. Often, three to five persons in marking teams are sufficient. To increase efficiency, labour is divided, depending on the number of markers, much like a production line (Bevan and King, 2013, p. 30).



Couth MC2000 marking machine in operation on the Sudanese-Chadian border

Ideally, the team in the marking process should consist of enough people to fulfil the following essential tasks:

- \ **Safety officer**
To ensure the safety of the marking team is paramount. The safety officer should check the weapon of the community member immediately upon arrival to ensure that instructions have been followed and the weapon is not loaded. He should remove the magazine and manually check to ensure that there is no cartridge lodged in the chamber. He should then operate the slider multiple times to ensure that the weapon is safe. Finally, pointing the barrel into a sand bag he should pull the trigger. The weapon should then be put in “safe” mode by turning the fire selector to the safety position.
- \ **Photographer**
Community owners bringing in their weapons are photographed upon entering the marking site.

\ **Record keeper I (personal details/ unique number)**

One person is responsible for generating the unique identification number on the computer which is then transferred to the control unit and to be entered into the electronic database using the available software.

\ **Marking machine operator**

He/she loads the firearm into the vice, aligning the marking head of the machine to the surface area of the weapon to be marked. He/she operates the control unit of the machine to physically mark the weapon.

\ **Record keeper II (printer/ laminator of weapons identification card)**

He/she is in charge of entering the details into the weapons identification card, printing out the photograph and sticking the photograph on to the card. He/she then laminates the weapons identification card, ensures that the number on the card aligns with the number marked on the machine and hands the weapon and the card back to the community member who owns the weapon.

In addition, the marking team will need to be accompanied by :

\ **Guards or security forces** who should create a secure perimeter around the marking site and regulate the movement of community members entering and within the actual marking site. They should instruct community members to ensure that their weapons are not loaded and are being held in safe mode

\ **Senior community leaders** should also ideally accompany community members to the perimeter of the marking site and instruct members of their communities to follow the above instructions while waiting outside. A designated community leader should also be present at the entrance to the actual marking site to ensure that community members are following procedure.

The full process of recording a weapon can take an experienced marking team three minutes or more from start to finish (Bevan and King, 2013, p. 26).

IMPORTANT NOTE:

It is essential to keep in mind that the registration and marking of small arms should be conducted simultaneously. This is more time and cost efficient, because mobile teams responsible for arms registration and marking and participants who register and mark their weapons have to spend much time traveling long distances to take part in such a programme. It is also cost efficient because often there is shortage of vehicles, fuel and lack of security personnel to deploy for the programme.

4.2.3 Training

Members of the marking team and the larger Arms Registration Committees are often drawn from local communities and security institutions and should therefore undergo specific training:

Non-technical training: Members of a marking team need to understand not just the mechanical process of operating a marking machine. The team needs to be made aware of the wider purpose of conducting an ARM programme as a key element of a larger national/regional SALW strategy

Technical training: Before starting the actual ARM programme a workshop needs to be organised to train the marking team in the following aspects

- \ Safely installing and operating the marking machine;
- \ Securely handling, transporting and storing the marking machine;
- \ Regular servicing, repairing and maintenance of the marking machine.



A civilian-owned Kalashnikov AK-47 is marked at a mobile marking site on the Chad-Sudan border. Sirba, West Darfur, June 2013.



An Austrian manufactured Glock 9mm automatic pistol is marked at the Criminal Investigation and Forensics Department of the Ministry of Interior in Khartoum, Sudan in October 2013.

Box 8:
Description and Technical Specifications of the Couth MC2000 Marking Machine

The Couth MC2000 is an electrically or pneumatically operated machine which is capable of producing an indelible mark by tracing and incising a series of micro-dots at an adjustable impact force. It allows a wide range of characters and signs previously stored in its memory to be marked with the required size and depth.

This machine can permanently mark a wide range of materials (metal, plastic, wood, glass, etc.) due to the repeated action of its properly sharpened hard-metal stylus. Even extremely hard, uneven and irregular, flat and curved surfaces can be marked without subjecting the weapon to high stress or deformation.

Dimensions and weight

- \ MC2000T controller: Weight: 5.5 kilos;
Dimensions 280x160x261 (width x height x depth, in mm)
- \ MC2000 marking machine: Weight: 40 kilos;
Dimensions 400x660x620 (width x height x depth, in mm)

Configuration

In standard configuration, the MC2000 machine consists of four interconnected elements forming a desktop machine. Those elements are:

- 1\ A MARKING UNIT, with its pneumatic-driven stylus head that makes up the mechanical component of the machine;
- 2\ A CONTROL UNIT, housing the electronic drive system, microprocessor and lit display;
- 3\ A PUSHBUTTON STATION for the ON/PAUSE/OFF commands;
- 4\ A KEYBOARD for controlling the machine and setting its working parameters. Alternatively, the machine can be operated from a computer.

4.2.4 Maintenance of the Couth MC2000

The maintenance of the marking head units and marking pin should be handled by the country owning the machine as these components are designed to be easily replaced.

Marking machines sometimes need repair due to wear and tear in difficult conditions or problems during transportation. Several of these issues can be resolved by taking precautions when transporting the machine, one of which is to carry spare parts for those components that might be easily damaged during transport but can be as easily replaced. These include a spare 8mm plastic connector hose from the electrical compressor

to the pneumatic marking head, spare spark plugs for the generator as well as extra lubricant for the machine which could be lost during transportation in rough terrain.

Electrical problems with the machine require much greater expertise, and states have been instructed by RECSA not to attempt any repairs of this kind. Electrical problems and other problems involving internal components must be directed to RECSA. In practice, however, solutions need to be found at the national level. One possibility is to contact Couth, the manufacturing company based in Spain directly as they provide reliable technical assistance.

Technical support for Couth MC2000 machine

Contact point : Technical Support Office
 Email: support1@couth.com
 Address: COUTH - Constructora de Utiles y Herramientas SL
 Zikuñaga, 48. 20120 Hernani - SPAIN
 Telephone: +34943556412 Ext 425
 Fax: +34943555262
 Skype contact: Couth marking
 Website: www.couth.com

Faults with various accessories (computer, compressor, or generator) can normally be solved by country technicians as they involve non-specialised equipment.

A spare extension cord and connectors should also be carried with the machine.

A petrol or diesel generator is also required to provide electricity to the computer, the printer and the compressor operating the pneumatic marking head. Adequate fuel for the generator should also be arranged.

4.2.5 Storage and Transportation of the Marking Machine

Marking equipment is expensive and bulky and could potentially be targeted by groups not in favour of the ARM programme. Therefore, the machine must be stored in a secure place. This should

be arranged by the national focal points in close co-ordination with international in-country actors with the capacity to provide secure storage facilities for the machine.

4x4 vehicles that can securely accommodate the machines should be used. If open pickups are used, the marking machine must be packed and covered to avoid attention and to protect it from the heat. Transportation arrangements for the marking team must also be made.

Marking equipment should be boxed, padded and secured to prevent damage in transit, ideally in a purpose built crate and/ or in specially designed containers mounted and secured to the vehicle. Where this is not possible, commercially available tethering straps can also provide a low cost solution to minimise damage in rough terrain.

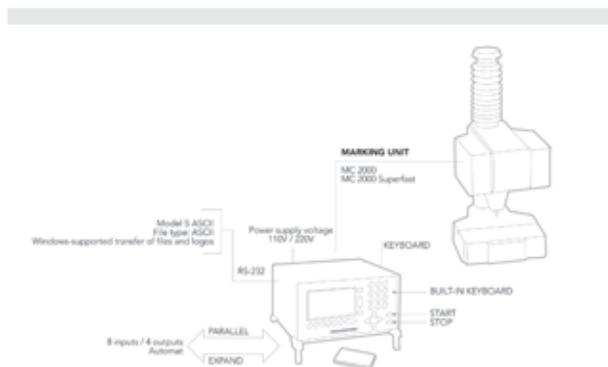
Aerial transportation:

The marking machine does not pose a security threat to commercial or military aircraft.

Commercial airlines have transported this machine in the hold of the aircraft for the payment of nominal excess luggage fees². The machine should be packaged securely, ideally in a purpose built crate. Refer to the next section for specific dimensions and weight of the Couth MC2000 machine.



Members of the Joint Sudan-Chad Border Patrol Force providing force protection to a mobile ARM site, Sirba, West Darfur, Sudan June 2013



Key components of a Couth MC2000 dot peen marking machine in standard configuration including the marking unit and MC2000 T controller. (Source: Couth MC2000 instruction manual, p. 22.)

Box 9:

Checklist for the Marking Machine

- \ Generator for electricity of the marking machine;
- \ Fuel for the generator;
- \ Lubricant for the marking machine;
- \ Motor oil;
- \ Extra air filters for the generator;
- \ Spark plug;
- \ Extra air hose (can be purchased in-country at most hardware stores. For MC2000 machines, the diameter of the plastic air hose is 8mm);
- \ Extra connector cables from the controller to the machine (USB, 25pin female connector);
- \ Storage and transportation box as well as tethering straps to attach to vehicle for secure transportation.

4.3 Record-keeping and SALW Databases

After the registration and marking stages, the collected data of the weapons and their owners should be securely stored and entered into a database. Marking is only useful when the marked weapon and information about its owner is then registered into a database that is maintained and accessible. Record-keeping and maintenance of the

data facilitates the identification of the weapon, its owner, its legal status as well as where it is stored. This is crucial for tracing weapons and identifying the point of diversion. Records can be entered and kept either manually or electronically in databases. Ideally, the data should be entered manually and electronically as well as stored securely (BICC, 2008, p. 3).

4.3.1 Hard Copies

- \ The data of the weapon and its owner should be filled in the registration forms.
- \ After filling in the registration forms the data must be stored in organised folders and secured at the local ARM site or the police station.
- \ Data should be backed up by photocopying the registration forms several times in order to avoid losses and damages.
- \ New data should be transported to the Ministry of the Interior and headquarters of the national SALW control focal point on a regular basis.



Records of registered weapons stored at the Forensics Department of the Ministry of Interior in Khartoum, Sudan.

4.3.2 Soft Copies

After filling in and securing the hard copies of registration forms, the data should be entered in record-keeping software, which should ideally be the software provided by RECSA. If unavailable, Word or Excel files may also be used. These should be designed in a way that allows them to be

²The Sudanese airline Tarco Air has transported marking machines on different occasions without any problems from Khartoum to Darfur.

integrated harmoniously with wider record-keeping processes in the country or the region. When the same software is used in national and regional programmes, this will ensure that the collected data is more useful as it is part of a more comprehensive data set.

Electronic data should be backed up by using external storage devices, such as hard disks or flash drives and stored in different secure locations (police stations, Ministry of the Interior)

The data (and back-ups) should be physically locked in a room in a relatively safe location (police station, Ministry of the Interior) where only authorised personnel have access to the collected data.

After securing the collected data, it should be transmitted to the capital and the responsible government authorities (Ministry of the Interior and headquarters of the national SALW control focal point) on a regular basis.



Paper and electronic records of registered weapons stored at the Forensics Department of the Ministry of Interior in Khartoum, Sudan.

Box 10: ***Challenges to Record-keeping***

There are several challenges to a reliable, safe and secure record keeping system:

- \ *Lack of appropriate software and IT system for storing the required information in a national database.*
- \ *Lack of necessary infrastructure for networking weapons databases in different parts of the country. Mobile marking teams often have to travel for several days to reach isolated areas, which have neither electricity nor Internet access.*
- \ *Delays in transferring the electronic records of marked weapons back to the capital.*
- \ *Constant redeployment of members of the registration and marking teams means that new personnel have to be trained to use the record-keeping software. This makes it difficult for central record-keeping authorities to keep track of the marked weapons (Bevan and King, 2013).*

5. Sensitisation and Public Information

The success of ARM activities depends on making people aware of the impacts of SALW, and on involving community members, particularly key community leaders, in the arms registration and marking activity. Public information efforts should not only be focussed externally to the wider donor community and international audience, but predominantly be directed to sensitisation campaigns in the communities where the ARM programme is implemented.

The overall objective of sensitisation activities is to create a more informed community, whose members fully understand the dangers posed by the spread of small arms and light, and who are therefore willing and motivated to mark and register their weapons.

The messages developed for sensitisation purposes should be formulated clearly and must be tailored to the local context. They should be transmitted via an appropriate medium of communication with the widest coverage possible. To identify the target audience and to formulate context-specific message, a community-based needs analysis could be included as part of the baseline study.

The sensitisation process could contain the following activities:

- \ Organising public awareness workshops at the community level;
- \ Reaching out and working with children and youth;
- \ Reaching out and working with women groups;
- \ Engaging with the media to inform activities and ensure messages are aligned;
- \ Organising galleries and public performance.

In the following sections, we will delve into these activities in greater detail.

5.1 Community-based Needs Assessment

A community-based needs assessment is necessary to identify the best ways to reach the target audience and to formulate key, context-specific messages. When conducting such an assessment,

the following actions should be taken:

- \ Identify the target audience and their roles and responsibilities in their society;
- \ Identify the location of the target audience;
- \ Identify the age group to be addressed, paying particular attention to youth at risk;
- \ Identify the most appropriate media to reach the target audience (e.g. radio, workshops, newspapers, television, theatre);
- \ Identify ideal time windows to disseminate the messages (before, during and after the ARM programme, different times of day, different seasons);
- \ Assess existing knowledge about SALW control.

This needs assessment can be conducted as part of the baseline study.

5.2 Public Awareness Workshops

Public information and community meetings should inform violence-affected communities of the impact of the uncontrolled use of SALW and increase public understanding of the ARM programme. Public awareness workshops directly generate awareness by incorporating local beneficiary communities in an inclusive and co-operative manner. Information provided could include:

- \ An overview of the ARM programme including why it is being conducted and what potential benefits exist for the target communities;
- \ An explanation of how an ARM programme will have an impact on community security at the local as well as national and regional levels;
- \ An explanation of how the negative impact of SALW is experienced differently by men, women, boys and girls;
- \ An explanation of local, national and regional SALW control programmes;
- \ An explanation of the national legal framework relating to SALW control and what legal guarantees are provided to local communities at risk.

NOTE:

The marking and registration team must always work in co-operation with the community leaders, as they are the main link to the communities affected by community members who own illegal weapons.



A meeting with community leaders to generate public awareness about ARM activities in El Geneina, West Darfur, Sudan, December 2012



Senior community leaders including the local sultan and government officials at a public awareness workshop on ARM. Legislative Assembly Hall, El Geneina, West Darfur, Sudan, December 2012.

5.3 Media, Art and Public Performance

The media can have an enormous educating impact on public opinion and people’s behaviour. Media products come in many forms, including TV scripts, radio shows, songs, documentaries, short TV and radio messages. Based on the baseline study or needs assessment, ARM sensitisation activities should choose an appropriate channel and style of presentation, to reach audiences at the right time. The messages used should be tailored to the local socio-cultural context and communicate the purpose, benefits and limits of the arms registration and marking programme.

Actors and artists could also play a significant role in raising public awareness. Street theatre performances on the dangers of arms control have proved effective in generating awareness and garnering support for community security programmes. For example organising public performances such as “Gun Control Theatre Action”, a worldwide performance intending to bring awareness to and lead to discussions around gun control measures, could be very helpful for the ARM programme as it attracts a broad range of the public. Additionally, organising exhibitions of paintings or photographs, or producing a documentary about the ARM programme helps to visualise the process and leads to better overall understanding.



Filming a documentary on ARM at a school run by the Joint Sudan-Chad Border Forces as part of their community outreach work in Sirba, West Darfur, June 2013

5.4 Children and Youth

Sensitising children and youth is crucial to building awareness of the negative impacts of SALW on future generations. ARM sensitisation activities could align with those of children and youth organisations such as UNICEF and UNDP. Examples of this are:

- \ Promotion of schools as ‘zones of peace’ in which children can learn and develop, safe from violence and free from the presence of SALW.
- \ Teaching children constructive self-expression and non-violent conflict-resolution skills through peace education programmes.
- \ Conducting projects on SALW among children towards building a culture of peace.
- \ Support of activities that reduce children’s access to weapons in their homes, such as the distribution of safety containers for storing weapons at home.



Children and youth often bear the brunt of arms-related violence. Officers from the Joint Sudan-Chad Border Forces teach at a school as part of their community outreach work in Sirba, West Darfur, June 2013



Children are disproportionately affected by the side effects of high proliferation of small arms including exposure to unexploded ordnance and unspent ammunition. West Darfur, Sudan, August 2013

5.5 Working with women’s groups

Women are particularly affected by arms proliferation and armed violence. The presence of small arms can facilitate and exacerbate violence against women and girls whether in conflict or in peace. In Darfur, women face the threat of armed, and often sexual, violence on a daily basis as basic survival chores such as gathering firewood or collecting water often carry with them the high risk of being sexually assaulted or worse.

Women are often the most vulnerable to armed violence and therefore stand to benefit greatly from a reduction of insecurity caused by greater regulation of small arms flows. On the other hand, women often have a lower social standing and are, as a result of this, limited decision-making abilities.

Harnessing the potential of women to play a significant role in designing and implementing arms control programmes is crucial. ARM programmes are no exception. Women can play a direct role in improving the effectiveness of an ARM programme. They can for example influence

the decision in favour of registering and marking firearms not only at the family level but also at a greater scale in the wider community itself.

This is why ARM sensitisation should explicitly target women through for example community outreach organisations to carry messages on the dangers of the proliferation of small arms and the importance of ARM to their husbands, fathers and other family members. One way of getting their message across could be through public performances of *hakamas* (groups of women who sing songs often with strong messages).



A community dialogue with women's groups who benefited from UNDP'S Community Security and Arms Control programme in White Nile State, Sudan, July 2013.



A water filtration plant set up under UNDP's Community Security and Arms Control programme in White Nile State, Sudan, June 2013.

Box 11:

Checklist for the Sensitisation Process

- \ *Conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to establish a baseline and to design tailored messages;*
 - \ *Use this assessment to understand what mode of communication, in which language, at what time of day, will work best;*
 - \ *Get the message out through the best-suited media, for example broadcasting daily radio messages or organising a theatre performance;*
 - \ *Organise public information workshops with community leaders.*
-

6. Challenges

Implementing an ARM programme in a violence-affected area with a high proliferation of SALW is a difficult undertaking that comes with several challenges.

Insecure operational conditions: When necessary, it is recommended to work closely with security forces such as border security forces, UN peacekeeping forces, government police or military forces stationed in the operational theatre.

Lack of stable administrative procedures, practices or precedents in violence-affected societies makes it difficult to conduct sensitive activities such as ARM.

Difficulty in accessing data for the baseline assessment and the monitoring and evaluation of the ARM programme as permission of the security authorities is required to conduct research. Informing the security apparatus (at the highest level possible) at the initial stage and throughout the implementation period will help ensure that the ARM programme does not face censorship.

Difficulty in obtaining travel permits and security clearances from the responsible authorities to travel to local areas in order to conduct the ARM programme. This is especially the case for external/international experts or staff.

Difficult communication between government, donors and field offices. Due to distances, limited access and communication, information supply from the field office to national government representatives and others may be difficult. Clear agreements should be made and followed to make regular reporting possible.

7. ARM: Doing 'No Harm'

The ARM programme needs to be aware of its footprint on the communities where this is being implemented. Realistic threat assessments and constant vigilance of government and armed group's practices and positions on weapons control is needed to ensure that the Do No Harm principle is enforced. This includes working closely with, and monitoring the activities of, the Ministry of the Interior and the state security apparatus to ensure that the data gathered during an ARM exercise is not used to further undermine the security of communities already deeply affected by armed violence.

In the case of Sudan, under the ARM programme in West and South Darfur, the Ministry of the Interior guarantees that weapons will only be registered and marked and will not be collected until the security situation in Darfur stabilises and the state is able to provide security to its own citizens. To uphold this guarantee is a key responsibility of both the international actors and local authorities involved in this process as community members are essentially jeopardising their own security on the basis of this guarantee. Failure to do so could lead to loss of life and a further erosion of the security of the very communities that are meant to benefit from such an exercise.

Glossary

Action plan

A short, medium, or long-term strategy to promote the development of a specific issue in a community, country

Armed group

A group that has the potential to employ arms in the use of force to achieve political, ideological or economic objectives. It is not part of the formal military structure of a state, state-alliance or inter-governmental organisation.

Awareness programme

A programme of activities carried out with the overall goal of minimising and, where possible, eliminating the negative consequences of inadequate SALW control. Its tools are an appropriate combination of SALW advocacy, SALW risk education and media operations/public information campaigns, which together work to change behaviour and introduce appropriate alternative ways attitudes over the long term.

Community involvement

An approach that places the needs and priorities of affected communities at the centre of the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of SALW control efforts.

(Armed) Conflict

A state of affairs in which one or more actors engage in or threaten to use armed violence.

Diversion

Arms diversion is the process by which holdings or transfers of arms that are authorised by relevant states (and are subject to their legal controls) are delivered to unauthorised end-users, or are put to unauthorised uses by authorised end-users.

Donor

All sources of funding, including the government of SALW affected states.

Illicit SALW

Small arms and light weapons that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- \ Considered illicit under the law of the State within whose territorial jurisdiction the small arm or light weapon is found.
- \ Transferred in violation of arms embargoes decided by the Security Council in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.
- \ Not marked in accordance with provisions of the International Tracing Instrument or, if applicable, the Firearms Protocol.
- \ Manufactured or assembled without license or authorisation from the competent authority of the State where the manufacture or assembly takes place.
- \ Transferred without a license or authorisation from the competent authority of the State where the manufacture or assembly takes place.
- \ Transferred without a license or authorisation by a competent national authority.

Indicator

Quantitative or qualitative factor or variable that provides a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect changes connected to an intervention, or help assess the performance of a given development or aid factor.

International Organization for Standardization (ISO)

A worldwide federation of national bodies from over 130 countries. Its work results in international agreements, which are published as ISO standards and guides. ISO is an NGO and the standards it develops are voluntary, although some (mainly those concerned with health, safety and environmental aspects) have been adopted by many countries as part of their regulatory framework. ISO deals with the full spectrum of human activities, and many of the tasks and processes that contribute to SALW control have a relevant standard. A list of ISO standards and guides is given in the ISO Catalogue at www.iso.ch/infoc/catalogue/html.

ISACS

These International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) have been developed to be compatible with ISO standards and guides. Adopting the ISO format and language provides significant advantages including consistency of layout, use of internationally recognised terminology, and a greater acceptance by international, national and regional organisations that are accustomed to the ISO series of standards and guides.

Light Weapon

Any man-portable weapon designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew (although some may be carried and used by a single person) that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive.

Examples are: heavy machine guns, automatic cannons, howitzers, mortars of less than 100mm calibre, grenade launchers, anti-tank weapons and launchers, recoilless guns, shoulder-fired rockets, anti-aircraft weapons and launchers, and air defence weapons, as well as their parts, components and ammunition.

Marking

A 'marking' is a unique set of numbers and symbols placed on a weapon to indicate its country origin and country of last import as well as the weapon's serial number. A marking therefore provides basic information that can help identify the weapons itself, as well as its owner.

Monitoring

The authorised observation by qualified personnel of sites, activities or processes without taking responsibility for that being observed. Usually carried out to check conformity with undertakings, procedures or standard practice and often includes recording and reporting elements.

Outputs

The products, capital goods and services that result from an intervention.

Parts and components

Any element or replacement element specifically designed for a small arm or light weapon and essential to its operation. This includes barrel, frame or receiver, slide or cylinder, bolt or breech block, and any device designed or adapted to diminish the sound caused by firing a small arm or light weapon

Public information

Information that is released or published for the primary purpose of keeping the public informed, thereby gaining their understanding and support. The objective of public information within SALW control is to raise general awareness about the danger of weapons. In the context of ARM programming, public information plays a necessary role in providing beneficiary communities with relevant, necessary information on the ARM process.

Record-keeping

Maintaining the data that facilitates the identification of the weapon, its owner, its legal status and where it is stored. The registration process requires recording basic information on the weapon, its owner and its history, beginning with its manufacture.

SALW

Small arms and light weapons.

SALW control

Those activities, which, together, aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of uncontrolled SALW proliferation and possession. These activities may include cross-border control issues, legislative and regulatory measures, SALW awareness and communication strategies, SALW collection and destruction operations, SALW survey and the management of information and SALW stockpile management.

Small arms

Any man-portable weapon designed for individual use that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by action of an explosive.

Examples are: revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns, as well as their parts, components and ammunition, but excluding antique small arms and their replicas.

Stakeholder

All local, national, regional and international actors that have an interest in the outcome of any particular SALW control programme.

This may include community members and leaders, parties to peace accords/political frameworks, national authorities, all UN and partner implementing agencies, bilateral and multilateral donors, regional actors and international political guarantors of the peace process.

Tracing

The systematic tracking of illicit small arms and light weapons found or seized on the territory of state from the point of manufacture or the point of importation through the lines of supply to the point at which they became illicit.

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bicc \
Internationales Konversionszentrum Bonn
Bonn International Center for Conversion GmbH
Pfarrer-Byns-Straße 1, 53121 Bonn, Germany
+49 (0)228 911 96-0, Fax -22, bicc@bicc.de

www.bicc.de
www.facebook.com/bicc.de

bicc Bonn
International Center
for Conversion \

Director for Research
Professor Dr Conrad Schetter

Director for Administration
Michael Dedek

AUTHORS

Nikhil Acharya is a BICC technical advisor on small arms and light weapons control and enhancing stockpile security, working primarily in the border areas between Sudan, Chad, the Central African Republic and DR Congo. Since late 2012, he has been based in Khartoum, advising the Sudan DDR Commission on civilian arms registration/marketing and community security initiatives in Darfur. He has taken all the photographs depicted in this Handbook.

Nikkie Wiegink currently works for BICC as a capacity building consultant on small arms control and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) in Khartoum, Sudan.

Salah Idris is Sudan's national focal point for small arms control, which is shared by the Sudan Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Commission (SDDRC) and the Ministry of the Interior.

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Heike Webb

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