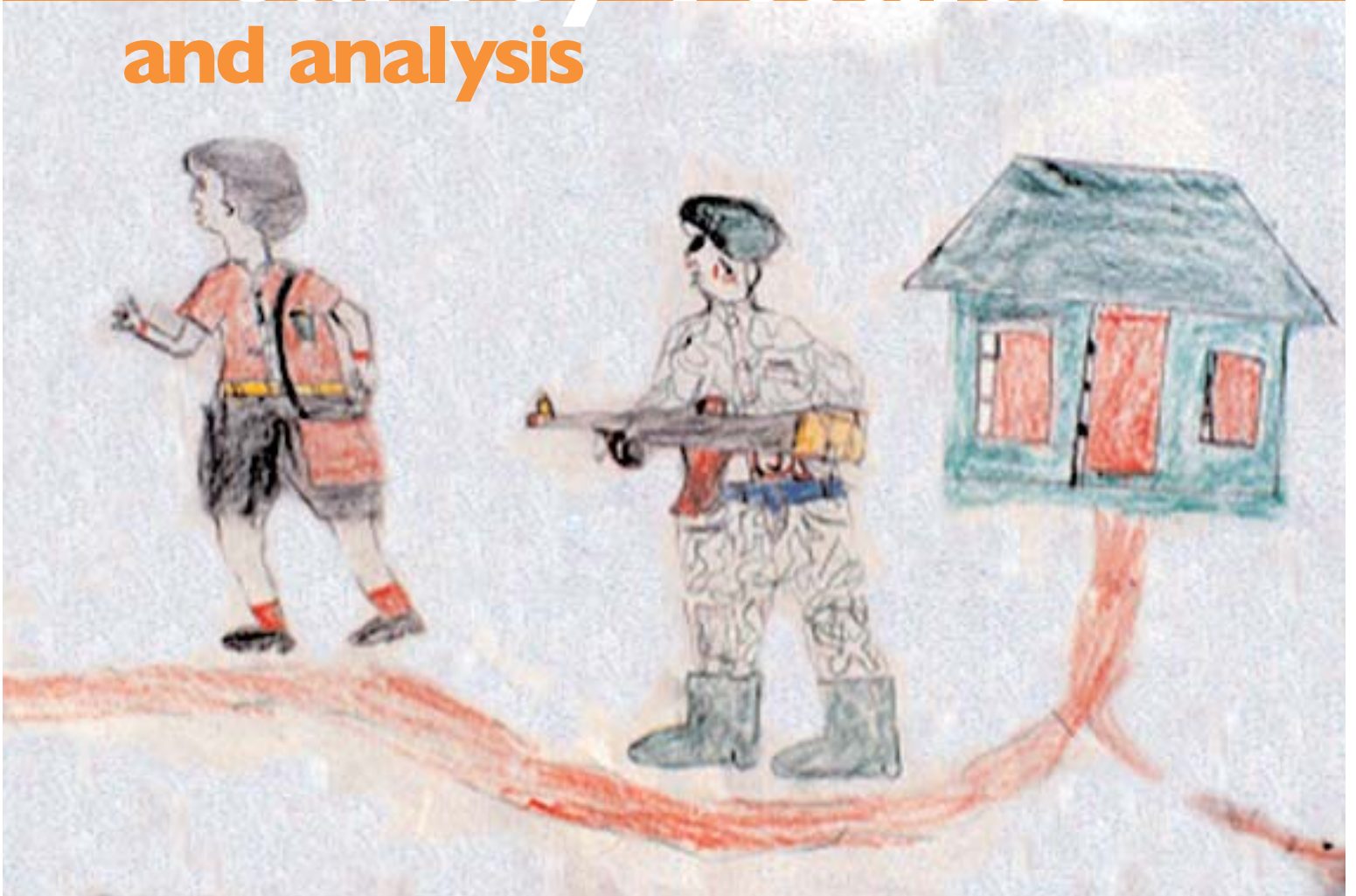


**small arms
and children:**
preliminary needs assessment
survey results
and analysis



This survey analysis is a companion piece to the policy document prepared for the Review Conference, “Small Arms and Children: Progress since 2001 and recommendations for further action”, and builds on the policy options and research papers entitled, respectively, “Small Arms, children and armed conflict: Policy Options for Effective Action”, and “Small arms, children and armed conflict: Background Research Paper”, produced by World Vision Canada in 2004.

Copies of all World Vision Canada documents on small arms and children can be found at:
worldvision.ca/policy

World Vision Canada gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution of the Department of Foreign Affairs Canada in support of this project.

Research Team: Chris Derksen Hiebert, World Vision Canada; Rachel Stohl, Senior Analyst, Center for Defense Information, Washington, DC; Kathy Vandergrift, Consultant, Ottawa.

For more information, contact:

Chris Derksen Hiebert
World Vision Canada
1 World Drive
Mississauga, Ontario, Canada L5T 2Y4
905-565-6200
chris_derksen-hiebert@worldvision.ca

Cover illustration from: *Where is My Home? Children in War*. First Edition 1998 Kampala, Uganda. Produced by: AVSI, GUSCO, Red Barnet, INICEF, World Vision.

World Vision Canada is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organization dedicated to working with children and communities to overcome poverty and injustice.

Copyright © 2006 World Vision Canada

“There are different contexts in which the problem is manifested: children being accidentally targeted during clashes between adults, children easily accessing their parents’ and relatives’ small arms in a home environment, increasing violence among youth, especially in schools, small arms [becoming] part of the ‘image of being cool.’”

—UNICEF Macedonia

“Youth are the primary perpetrators and victims of gun violence in South Africa. We work with youth to challenge the gun culture and urge them not to take up guns. We believe this work against the cycle of proliferation [will] bring down the rate of gun violence.”

—Gun Free South Africa

Introduction

In May 2006 a needs assessment survey on children and small arms was developed by World Vision Canada and sent to organizations working on issues related to children and/or small arms (see Appendix I.) The survey was distributed through the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) website and listservs, the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) and Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict email lists. Thirty-three responses were received by June 14, 2006. The geographic breakdown of survey responses was: 11 Africa, 10 Asia, 2 Middle East, 4 Europe, 4 Central and Eastern Europe, and 2 South America. The majority of responses were completed in response to emails distributed by IANSA.

This survey is part of World Vision Canada’s larger project on small arms and children and armed conflict that looks at the nexus of these two issues. (See our companion paper, “Small Arms and Children: Progress since 2001 and Recommendations for Further Action”.) Our intention in this project is to encourage diplomats and policy makers to link the policy advances that have been made separately in these two areas (i.e. the UN Small Arms Programme of Action and UN Security Council Resolutions on children and armed conflict, such as 1612) and to urge their implementation in ways that enhance the protection of children from small arms. At the same time, we are seeking to develop greater collaboration among and between NGOs and NGO networks that focus on small arms and children in armed conflict, but often do not bring these two thematic areas together in their field work or in their policy efforts.

Not surprisingly, the survey results demonstrated that the level of work on the issues of children and small arms differed tremendously. While some organizations were just beginning to develop programs, projects, and resources linking children and small arms, others had established more sophisticated and comprehensive programs. Regardless of the level of previous work, all groups that answered the survey in full were interested in doing further work on the links between the two issues.

Children and Small Arms: Facts and Figures

- The majority (53%) of gun murder victims are under 30¹
- There are more than 600 million small arms and light weapons in circulation, the majority in the possession of civilians
- Lightweight, easy-to-use, low cost small arms enable the use of an estimated 300,000 child soldiers in over 20 conflicts around the world
- In countries at peace, there are many thousands of children in organized armed violence. For example, in Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria and the Philippines, armed children patrol territories
- Children suffer death and injury from the barrels of guns around the world and also experience psychosocial trauma when they become victims of, or witness the misuse of small arms
- Most child deaths in conflict zones are from preventable diseases, due to lack of access to assistance; high levels of small arms availability and misuse are an important factor in preventing the delivery of assistance to children in need
- Small arms and light weapons are regularly used to commit abuses of the rights of children
- Small arms-fuelled conflicts often cause massive population displacement, uprooting millions of children from their homes
- Small arms diminish the support structures and opportunities that children need to survive
- The threat of small arms limits children's access to health care, education, food, water, and humanitarian assistance
- Small arms can devastate families by causing the death or injury of a parent or the forced separation of children
- Economic instability and lack of economic opportunities during armed conflict deny children and, most crucially, adolescents access to education, livelihoods, support services and skills training

Key Survey Results

- Thirty-three organizations responded to the survey with broad geographic representation: 11 Africa, 10 Asia, 2 Middle East, 4 Europe, 4 Central and Eastern Europe, and 2 South America
- Overwhelming interest by survey respondents in continuing work on linkages between small arms and children
- Significant work that links the issues of small arms and children is already being undertaken in every region of the world
- Strong interest from survey respondents to strengthen links between organizations working on small arms and children, either by creating a new network or expanding existing networks on small arms and children
- Additional research on the links between the small arms and children is strongly desired and needed
- A wide variety of resources already exist on small arms and children, but these resources are not readily available or known to interested parties
- Organizations working in the field and community level are particularly eager to receive programming suggestions, best practice guides and training manuals that link the issues of small arms and children

¹ *Small Arms Survey 2004: Rights at Risk*, Figure 6.5, p.180

Analysis of Survey Results

1. Linking Issues of Small Arms and Children and Youth

When asked to describe how their organization linked small arms and children and youth, the responses differed in style and substance. Some described their participation in existing networks as an aspect of campaigns; others explained how the specific issues that they work on combine aspects of children's issues and small arms.

The existing networks that provide linkages between the issues, as mentioned by respondents to the survey, were the Children's Disarmament Network, the Control Arms Campaign, and Children in Organized Violence (COAV). Some groups also indicated partnerships with other organizations, for example, how the issues are highlighted in programs run by the Bonn International Center for Conversion.

Many respondents described thematic issue areas that combine work on both small arms and children's issues. Education curricula were mentioned as were existing campaigns and efforts surrounding issues of child labour, child health, child rights, child abuse/violence against children, child protection, child soldiers and protecting youth from armed conflict and crime.

In addition, respondents discussed how they linked the two issues in existing programs on youth responses, alternatives to violence, parenting, youth peace initiatives, and youth empowerment programs. Still others discussed how small arms were continually addressed in demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration programs, as well as conflict prevention and awareness raising efforts.

“We are interested in including the issue of small arms proliferation and small arms control in our [child] protection activities because armed violence continues to have a serious negative impact on the communities we work with.”
—World Vision Sudan

2. Interest in Networking/Further Work on Issue

Every respondent that answered question 4 (are you interested in working on issues related to small arms and children and youth?) responded positively to continuing to work on these issues. However, the ways in which groups were interested in pursuing these linkages varied, in terms of their interest in working collectively and collaboratively, as well as the priorities that were articulated. In addition, some groups wanted to use existing networks; others wanted help in finding other groups with similar interests with whom they could connect.

Groups were also interested in furthering their work at both the thematic and strategic levels. The main thematic issues groups were interested in working on included: children and armed conflict, including child soldiers; small arms control and proliferation; child protection; child health; education; community disarmament programs and community healing; disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation, and reintegration; conflict prevention; and linkages between arms proliferation and human rights violations.

Strategically, groups wanted to work together on awareness raising, research, advocacy initiatives, data collection and analysis, sharing best practices and solutions, and cooperating on the search for and distribution of materials and resources.

3. Further Information and Resources

The need and desire for materials on small arms and children was overwhelming in all the survey responses. A common theme throughout the responses was the emphasis on the participation of children, both in the design and creation of materials and as the audience and recipient of materials. The surveys described a wide variety of the kinds of resources that would be most useful.

Some groups wanted resources that could be used in conducting programmatic activities, such as: posters, PowerPoint presentations, cartoons, magazines, colouring books, books and pens advertising small arms dangers, puzzles, crossword puzzles, rap songs, drama, poetry, and CDs and/or DVDs (one suggestion was for a compilation of songs which oppose guns or gun violence by rock stars). Groups especially wanted resources that could be used in schools and for trainings of young people and community leaders. Groups also were eager to receive toolkit materials and training manuals to use during such trainings and staff briefings, as well as general campaigning and programming ideas and guidelines to create workshops geared toward youth and those that work with youth.

Others were eager to receive resources and information in the form of data and statistics. Suggestions included a list of web links; specific fact sheets; detailed statistics, including data from affected areas; reports on the structure of armed groups; the use of weapons by children; dynamics related to command and control of child soldiers; oversight of weapons distribution mechanisms; and statistics on child injury and accidents due to firearms. Others wanted region-specific data, such as expenditures on armaments and their negative impacts on development in sub-Saharan Africa. Case studies were also requested, including stories of youth in different countries that children could take home and read, especially stories that demonstrated how youth have solved the problems of violence around them, or how they got their friends or family members to stop carrying guns. There was also a request for program evaluation of small arms education efforts.

“...in the present situation, in which armed conflict is stopped, mines and unexploded ordnance that are present as remnant[s] of war have become even greater risks for the children, and children are living under the threat of the gun.”
—IHRICON (Nepal)

In general, there was a strong demand for resource guides, training manuals, and overall strategic guidance, with specific advocacy strategies for children or mainstreaming small arms into existing campaigns and conflict resolution programs. There was a strong desire for experience sharing, as well as best practices (including working on small arms issues in violent [post] conflict settings) and “how to” guides on advocacy and diplomacy for dealing with decision makers. Some requested help with networking at the national, regional, and international levels.

Still others wanted help acquiring funding and technical support. In the same vein, there was also a request for communication training and help developing communication messages geared at children with a focus on violence prevention, reporting illegal weapons, proper handling of weapons in homes, and improving family attitudes towards gender differences.

4. Recommendations and Conclusions

The survey results emphasize the broad interest in the issues related to small arms and children and youth. While groups focus on many different aspects of these issues, it is clear that the linkages between the issues are important to many organizations around the world. Moreover, the survey revealed that much more can be done to bring these groups together and to develop new information and resources for use in a variety of contexts.

Three broad conclusions can be drawn from the survey:

1. There is significant interest in creating new, or expanding existing networks on small arms and children. This may mean investing in expanding entities like the IANSA youth network (hiring a coordinator, developing a strategic plan, etc.), or may mean creating and developing an entirely new entity for organizations wanting to share information and experiences on youth and small arms.
2. Additional research on the links between the two issues is necessary and desired. Specific case studies as well as quantifiable data will be helpful to organizations in a variety of regions and in order to draw larger conclusions globally.
3. There are a wide variety of resources, including program suggestions, best practice guides and training manuals, that will benefit the work of organizations in the field and working at the community level. While some manuals may be contextually specific, there is enough overlap between the needs of survey respondents to create general resources that can be adapted at the local level if necessary.

“In Brazil, guns are part of day to day life for many children and the motivation to carry a gun begins to influence children starting from the time they are young. We know that in Brazil the age group most affected by armed violence is 15-25-year-olds (both as victims and users of guns).” —*Sou da Paz*

Summary of Survey Results

Organization Name	Country	Resources
African-Diaspora & Other Races' Development Movement (ADORDEM)	Ghana	Currently writing a paper on small arms and children
Africa-Europe Faith and Justice Network (AEFJN)	Belgium	Child Soldiers in Africa, 2000
Angola Center for Teaching Peace	Angola	Trade in Small Arms between Europe and Africa, 2000
Asian Youth Centre, Mumbai Chapter	India	PowerPoint presentation of programs
Balay Integrated Rehabilitation Center for Total Human Development (BIRTH-DEV)	Philippines	From Philippine Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers: "Armed or Not, They are Children: A Primer on the Use of Children as Soldiers in the Philippines";
Bonn International Center for Conversion	Germany	"Enhancing Partnerships Towards Effective Strategies on DDDR, Second National Consultation Workshop on the Use of Child Soldiers in the Philippines"; "Tugkol sa Optional Protocol ng UN Convention on the Rights of the Child". All material is available on www.bicc.de or www.tresa-online.org : Youth and SALW (YSA) (TRESA module) Other TRESA modules "My first shot" (film) BICC Annual Report 2006 "Demobilizing and Reintegrating Afghanistan's Young Soldiers" (BICC Paper 42, Vera Chrobok)
Centre for Affairs Resource Management (CHARM)	Sudan	Surveys (www.iansa.org) IEC materials
Centre for Peace and Economic Development (CEPEDE)	Tanzania	Booklet entitled, "Silaha Baraka au Balaa?" ("Firearms: a Fortune or a Disgrace?"), which explains horrors of firearms-related crimes
Child Adolescent and Family Survival Organization (CAFSO)	Nigeria	Leaflets and position papers on <i>child abuse</i> , <i>child labour</i> , and <i>Stop the flow and drain the pool of arms for peace</i> , all available upon request.

Organization Name	Country	Resources
Citizens Collective – North East India	India	
COAV/Viva Rio	Brazil	<p>COAV Cities Project, available at www.coav.org.br</p> <p>“Neither War nor Peace” (book), available at www.coav.org.br/</p> <p>“Children of the drug trade” (book) – available at www.coav.org.br/</p>
Gun Free South Africa	South Africa	<p>Results from a research project on youth-at-risk and guns, available on the gca.org.za website.</p> <p>Comprehensive set of materials for declaring schools firearms free zones</p> <p>Storybook on toy guns</p> <p>Small colouring book for children</p>
Human Development Promotion Group (HDPG)	Pakistan	<p>Book entitled “Renaissance” (September/October 2006) about lives of landmine child victims</p> <p>Reports with small arms data</p> <p>Network on small arms awareness</p> <p>Volunteer youth group</p>
Human Rights Information and Training Center (HRITC)	Yemen	<p>Magazine</p> <p>Posters</p> <p>Study on Yemen</p> <p>Study on Lebanon</p> <p>Study on Sudan</p> <p>Study on Palestine</p> <p>All studies available at HRITC offices in Yemen and Oman and on network website.</p>
Human Security Initiative Organizations	Sudan	<p>Reports</p> <p>Papers</p>
Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IHRICON)	Nepal	

Organization Name	Country	Resources
Indian Institute for Peace, Disarmament and Environmental Protection	India	Article on effects of small arms and light weapons on children/youth, available on request.
Institute for Security Studies	South Africa	Invisible Stakeholders: Children and War in Africa, Angela McIntyre, editor, 2005. Reexamining Voluntarism: Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone, Krijn Peters, 2004.
Institute Sou da Paz	Brazil	
IPPNW – Uganda	Uganda	Manual on dangers of landmines Paper on effects of small arms in Mbale Hospital
Journalists for Children and Women’s Rights and Protection of the Environment in Macedonia	Macedonia	Calendar with children’s photos and poems – the Life Without Arms Teacher guide
Medicovet Rural Welfare Society	India	Conduct meditation camps for children to help with anger control
Pakistan Pediatric Association	Pakistan	Leaflets on the issue of small arms and youth
Pax Christi Pilipinas	Philippines	The Philippine Action Network on Small Arms (PHILANSA) has produced a roving photo exhibit for schools and communities.
Quaker Service-American Friends Service Committee, Middle East Quaker International Affairs Program	Jordan	“February 2006, Public Perceptions about SALW and Community Security in the Middle East”, available at www.mena-small-arms.org/MENAResources.html (see same page for more publications) www.mena-small-arms.org/News.html www.child-soldiers-mena.org/GlobalReport2004.html www.child-soldiers-mena.org/GlobalReport2004entries.html

Organization Name	Country	Resources
Small Arms Survey	Switzerland	<p>Children Associated with Fighting Forces (CAFF) and Small Arms in the Mano River Union (MRU), Christina Wille, 2005, available at hei.unige.ch/sas/Books/A&A%20pdfs/</p> <p>“Fuelling Fear: The Lord’s Resistance Army and Small Arms,” Small Arms Survey. 2006. <i>Unfinished Business</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 272-293.</p> <p>“The Myth of Madness: The Organization of the Ugandan Lord’s Resistance Army.” Bevan, James. (forthcoming.) <i>Civil Wars</i>. Special Issue.</p>
South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)	Serbia and Montenegro	<p>www.seesac.org</p> <p>www.seesac.org/reports/SALW%20in%20Schools[Final].pdf</p> <p>www.seesac.org/reports/MRE%20Study.pdf</p> <p>www.seesac.org/reports/BYU%20report.pdf</p>
Support Center for Associations and Foundation (SCAF)	Belarus	<p>In cooperation with the NGO Association for Educational Innovations and National Institute of Education, SCAF has developed a manual and textbook, “Arms Control and Violence Prevention in Belarus Schools and Communities”, Iouri Zagoumenov, Ludmila Shalkovich, Ihar Zahumionau, Minsk, 2004, that is now used in Belarus schools and communities (in Russian). Also produced a survey on attitudes of students in Belarus on gun violence and control.</p>
Sustainable Peace and Development Organization (SPADO)	Pakistan	Brochure entitled “Youth for Peace”
UNICEF – Skopje	Macedonia	
UNICEF – Sudan southern Sector	Sudan	
War Child Holland	The Netherlands	
World Vision – Sudan	Sudan	

APPENDIX I

Needs Assessment Survey: Children and Small Arms

Overview: Small arms are a major factor in the abuse of children in armed conflicts and violence. Policy options to address this issue more effectively at the international level need to be linked with effective programming approaches in the field. In order to develop resources on this issue, World Vision Canada, in conjunction with consultants Rachel Stohl and Kathy Vandergrift, is conducting a survey to determine interest, needs, and existing initiatives that link small arms and children. This survey is part of a larger project on children and small arms, supported by Foreign Affairs Canada. The project aims to increase the dialogue, policy options, and resources dedicated to small arms and children. Resources and workshops will be available during the UN Small Arms Review Conference this June/July. It would be appreciated if you could take a few moments to answer the following questions to help us determine the most appropriate courses of action and also forward the survey to any individuals and organizations you think should participate in the survey as well.

Purpose of Survey: To determine the needs and knowledge of NGOs on the nexus of issues relating to children and small arms.

Why: In order to develop a toolkit of resources for NGOs on small arms and children, a baseline of existing knowledge, resources, needs, and wants must be ascertained from groups working on the issue of children and armed conflict and/or small arms.

Timeline: Survey will be sent out first week of May 2006. Completed surveys to be returned to Rachel Stohl (rstohl@cdi.org) by May 26, 2006. Results and summary of findings ready in time for the UN Review Conference, June 27, 2006.

Questions:

Please answer questions as thoroughly as possible. Provide details of specific programs and resources, when available.

1. Are you familiar with programs or projects in regions where your organization works that address issues of children and small arms? If so, please provide a brief overview.
2. What work is your organization already doing on the issue of small arms and children and youth? How do you link the issues of small arms and children and youth in your work?
3. What resources do you have available on small arms and children and youth? (Please provide links and/or a bibliography of any materials on this subject.)
4. Are you interested in working on issues related to small arms and children and youth? In what way? Why is this linkage important to your work?
5. What information or resources on small arms and children and youth would be most helpful to you in your work? (Please be specific – fact sheets, resource guides, programming ideas, etc.)