

UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR DISARMAMENT RESEARCH
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**Exchanging Weapons for
Development in Cambodia**
**An Assessment of
Different Weapon Collection Strategies
by Local People**

Geofrey Mugumya



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United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research
Geneva, Switzerland



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PREFACE

The proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons can have grave consequences in post-conflict societies by increasing the level of armed violence and hindering economic development. The international community has responded to the need of promoting sustainable peace and security throughout conflict regions, and continuous efforts are being made to remove illicit small arms and light weapons from circulation. In particular, promotion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former soldiers is critical in bringing a conflict to an end and creating a stable society. In order to encourage cooperation in weapons collection efforts, reasonable economic incentives must be provided, and, moreover, it is essential that proper employment opportunities be provided to induce ex-combatants to give up their weapons and start new lives.

As part of these endeavours, weapons collection and Weapons for Development (WfD) programmes have been introduced as micro-disarmament efforts to reduce the presence of weapons in post-conflict societies, and thereby to promote a safer and more prosperous future for affected communities. Japan has long been engaged in these projects, and providing development assistance as compensation for the surrender of small arms. The leading idea of WfD programmes derives from the notion that dealing merely with the current status of affairs is not sufficient to enhance human security in the long term. What is fundamentally important is to acknowledge that reconciliation at all politico-social levels, including addressing the root causes of conflict within communities, is the key to reconstructing durable peace.

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has, since 2002, been implementing a project to assess the impact and success of weapons collection programmes in exchange for community-based development projects. This report presents results from the UNIDIR case study undertaken in Cambodia in March – April 2004, looking at project design and implementation in accordance with the needs of communities in three regions of Cambodia, in exchange for the voluntarily surrender of small arms.

The findings of this volume confirm the results earlier drawn from the UNIDIR studies of Mali and Albania, underlining the paramount importance of including affected communities in both planning and undertaking weapons collection programmes. Through the views of local people, all stakeholders can learn to better understand and address the root causes of armed violence and unrest in post-conflict societies. An important part of including local communities in weapons collection decision-making is to take into account the needs and wishes of different parts of the society, namely those of men, women, youth and traditional institutions.

The UNIDIR project has, for its part, clearly demonstrated Japan's commitment in weapons collection and Weapons for Development projects. Japan's assistance to post-conflict regions aims at helping the reconciliation process: the coexistence of civilians with former adversaries within and across communities to develop the degree of working co-operation necessary to move towards a shared future. After people voluntarily surrender their weapons, their lives can be improved by sustainable development, the creation of good governance and confidence-building between security sectors and civilians, hence reducing the reoccurrence of conflict. Japan's approach is widely shared as effective and applicable to various regions of the world. Under this approach, development assistance is provided to the regions where small arms collection is carried out in order to give more momentum for their collection.

In our view, the current analysis of views expressed by affected communities themselves offers new views and innovative lessons for designing and implementing more efficient post-conflict disarmament programmes. We strongly believe that involving local people and listening to their views in the execution of weapons collection and Weapons for Development approaches can provide momentum for building sustainable peace and security in post-conflict societies worldwide.

Yoshiki MINE
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Japan
to the Conference on Disarmament

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ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
BANSA	Before And Now Situations Analysis
BICS	Basic Inter-personal Communication Skills
CCA	Community Calendar Approach
CMAC	Cambodian Mine Action Centre
CoC	Code of Conduct
DDMP	Determining Decision-Making Process
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DSG	Direction Support Group
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
EU-ASAC	European Union Assistance on Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in Cambodia
FFW	Food for Work programme
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
IGO	Inter-governmental organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
JSAC	Japan Assistance Team for Small Arms Management in Cambodia
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NWCD	National Women and Children Rights Development
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation methodology
RCAF	Royal Cambodian Armed Forces
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
SAS	Small Arms Survey
SSR	Security Sector Reform methodology
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats methodology
TOR	Terms of Reference
TSG	Three Star Game
UN DDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
UNPoA	United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIDIR	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VCA	Vulnerability and Capability Analysis
WfD	Weapons for Development approach

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Armed conflicts tend to increase the proliferation of weapons in societies, and small arms can continue circulating among the civil population after a conflict has ended, resulting in increased levels of crime and social unrest. Because of this, weapon collection programmes have during past years been integrated into fundamental elements of post-war reconstruction efforts. However, in order to guarantee sustainable results, the mere collection of weapons is rarely enough to restore normality and foster development. Despite various attempts for more inclusive and comprehensive weapon collection programmes, many gaps and grey areas remain. It is for this reason that the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) decided to undertake an evaluative study of weapon collection schemes in selected post-conflict countries. One of the main driving forces behind commencing the study was UNIDIR's desire to assess how the affected communities could better be integrated into post-conflict weapon collection programmes.

This study presents UNIDIR's research findings from Cambodia, confirming the results of prior case studies undertaken in Mali and Albania, which suggest that the use of inclusive participatory approaches can increase communities' confidence and allow local people to participate in determining the future of their communities, particularly with respect to local disarmament, something which they rarely have the opportunity to do.

The project should be viewed in the wider context of the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects (UNPoA). The UNPoA has prompted the implementation of a range of measures aimed at controlling the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW), including practical disarmament measures. Like the other UNIDIR case studies, this paper stems from the recommended follow-up actions of the UNPoA. It

recognizes the need to develop and support action-oriented research aimed at facilitating greater awareness and better understanding of the nature and scope of problems associated with the illicit small arms trade.¹ The study concludes that weapons reduction measures with different types of incentive schemes given to communities in exchange for weapons cannot be successfully implemented without first introducing mechanisms for local community engagement.

BACKGROUND

The half century following Cambodia's independence in 1953 were marked with political unrest, traumatic experiences and ongoing power struggles. In 1991, Cambodia with the United Nations and other interested parties came to an agreement to end the era of conflict. However, the 1993 UN-administered elections establishing new constitution were boycotted by Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrillas, who rejected peace talks. In 1997, the failure of the uneasy coalition government established after the elections, led to the formation of another coalition, which finally succeeded in integrating the Khmer Rouge and other fighting forces with the new Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF). Following the relative stabilization of the situation, the Royal Cambodian Government, supported by the international community, embarked on its first serious attempt to tackle the problems caused by illicit small arms and light weapons in the country, estimated to be in hundreds of thousands.

Large-scale weapons collection began in 1999, following the enactment of Government Sub-Decree No. 38, which declared that the private possession of weapons was illegal. According to international agencies that supported the government's early efforts in collecting weapons, the first strategies applied were a mixture of persuasion and coercion, and managed to achieve some good results especially in Phnom Penh and other urban areas. However, success in remote villages and other rural areas was not apparent, since for various reasons, villagers were reluctant to hand in their weapons. It has been said that some villagers even hid their weaponry deep in the forests to be out of reach by police searches. Hence, new strategies were devised to convince rural population to voluntarily surrender their weaponry and to find out where arms caches were hidden. Among the new strategies was the introduction of Weapons for Development programmes (WfD). According to aid agencies supporting

the government in implementing weapon collection programmes, execution of these new strategies led to the collection of over 100,000 weapons between 1998 and 1999 alone.²

Although the WfD approach had been previously applied in weapon collection programmes in Mali, Nicaragua and other countries, the term “Weapons for Development” was formally used for the first time in the disarmament literature in the wake of the Albanian conflict of early 1997. Following what agencies considered to be a success in Albania, the same approach was applied in Cambodia to collect weapons that had fallen in the hands of the public during three decades of civil wars.

This report unravels the strategies that have been applied to retrieve weapons in Cambodia, showing their merits and demerits based on the participatory assessment of different stakeholders, especially the people who handed in their weaponry.

NEW EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

The aim of the present UNIDIR project is to evaluate weapon collection and Weapons for Development programmes by applying Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) methodology, developed by UNIDIR to improve the previous evaluative efforts for small arms collection by involving stakeholders at all levels. The aim of the project, as well as the PM&E methodology, is explained in detail below. In brief, different techniques, including round table and focus group discussions, which incorporate the use of visual symbols, were applied with a view to review the principal aspects of weapon collection cycle, as well as implemented incentive schemes. Results from Mali and Albania had revealed that when used, the PM&E approach can unravel salient issues surrounding the proliferation and misuse of SALW and help in creating durable solutions to weapon collection programmes. Hence, Cambodian weapon collection and Weapons for Development programmes were evaluated by using the same techniques that had been used in Mali and Albania studies, with slight modifications:

- for goals and purposes, the main technique applied was Before and Now Situations Analysis (BANSA);

- for identification and design, the main technique applied was Determining Decision-Making Process;
- for appraisal and implementation, the main technique applied was Conversational Interviews;
- for monitoring, the main technique applied was Community Calendar Approach (CCA);
- for performance, the main technique applied was the Three Star Game (TSG).

UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

Preparation phase

UNIDIR started its Weapons for Development Programme in September 2002. UNIDIR's extensive research experience has helped in realizing that local ownership of the research process is as important as the outcome of the research itself. Furthermore, for action-oriented research such as the WfD aiming at generating policy recommendations, it is of primary importance to build a strong sense of project ownership among the stakeholders in the fullest sense right from the outset of weapon collection programmes. To ensure this, specific measures were pursued: First, a database of possible stakeholders at national and international levels was established, including governments, donors, the UN and other inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), research institutions and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Consultations were also undertaken, during which UNIDIR explained and discussed ideas with individual stakeholders, who got to present their views on the project. UNIDIR also visited several organizations in Geneva and in the United Kingdom.

To ensure sufficient policy direction to the project, a Direction Support Group (DSG) was formed, comprising of members from the Government of Japan, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs (UN DDA), the African Union (AU), the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the Quaker United Nations Office in Geneva, the Institute for Development Studies (IDS), the University of Sussex, and the Small Arms Survey (SAS). From Geneva the team was constantly in contact with its focal points in Phnom Penh which included a local NGO "Working Group for Weapons Reduction" (WGWR), and two

international agencies “EU Assistance on Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in Cambodia” (EU-ASAC), and “Japanese Assistance Team to SALW in Cambodia” (JSAC). The government department responsible for SALW-related affairs, as well as the UNDP Country Office were also contacted and information was exchanged. The team contacted and exchanged information also with those international organizations which were implementing SALW programmes in Cambodia.

An International Stakeholders’ Workshop was held in Geneva on 9 December 2002. It was attended by 53 delegations from countries such as Albania, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka. In the meeting, the proposed research methodology was introduced, and participants got to present opinions and feedback on various aspects of the project. Workshop recommendations included limiting the project to three case study countries: Albania, Cambodia and Mali.³ The draft conference report was sent to participants for their comments before it was published.

The original case study to test the developed PM&E techniques was planned to be Mali. Practitioners in Mali and other case study countries were consulted and information was shared between them. These practitioners provided valuable input to the development of project methodology. The DSG was kept informed and updated throughout the process. The Cambodian study confirmed the results from previous case studies, proving that the developed techniques can be applied at the community, provincial and national levels.

Preparatory week in Phnom Penh

Based on the lessons learned from Mali and Albania, the WfD management team undertook a one-week preparatory mission in Cambodia. Again, as in Mali and Albania, the preparatory mission was very important because it added precious value to the research, when compared to Mali case study where no preliminary mission was undertaken. In particular, the preparatory mission achieved the following:

- in consultation with other national stakeholders, field research sites were selected, and a draft research programme was drawn up;

- consultant contracts, conditions of service as well as Terms of Reference (TORs) were formalized;
- procedures for selecting translators and trainee facilitators were set, and their TORs were drafted;
- the team met and briefed different national stakeholders, and solicited their views on the intended research. Those met included officials from JSAC, EU-ASAC, WGWR, and the UNDP. The team met also with government officials responsible for SALW in the Cambodian Ministry of Interior.

When the team returned to Geneva, the final research plan was formulated, and all financial and other required logistics were finalized, including training materials as well as TORs for consultants, translators and trainee facilitators.

Selecting the areas of field research

During the preparatory week, three areas of field research were agreed upon: Snuol district bordering Vietnam, Pailin district bordering Thailand in the North-West, and Angkor Thom district, also in the North of the country. The criterion for selection was based on how disarmament programmes had evolved in Cambodia from the original Weapons for Development approach to the current programmes such as “Weapons for Security” or “weapons reduction for peace and development”. Also, in order to have a comparison with the Mali and Albania case studies, the research continued to look separately at urban, rural and border areas, as well as gender, age and other societal differences. Snuol district was selected because it is where weapon collection projects started in Cambodia. Within Snuol, Pir Thnou commune, located near the Vietnamese border, was selected to represent border sections of the population. Pailin district, Ochra Sangkat, located about one kilometre outside the main city, was chosen to represent a typical urban area in the Cambodian context, while Angkor Thom district and specifically Leang Dai commune was to represent a rural area. These characteristics for the selection of research areas were selected to ensure their comparability and to provide a comprehensive review of evolution of different strategies applied in weapons collection, shedding light on existing data gaps and grey areas.

From Phnom Penh to the field

The field core team included:

Mr Geoffrey Mugumya, team leader and lead researcher, Geneva;
Miss Shukuko Koyama, project assistant, Geneva;
Mr Lay Samkol, facilitator/translator;
Mr Kim Pagna, facilitator/translator;
Mr In Vuthy, facilitator/translator;
Mr Savoy, driver.

When the team arrived in Phnom Penh on the 18 April 2004, it found that everything was in place, including a detailed itinerary. The first two days in the field were used to orient the selected translators on the PM&E methodology. Local authorities and organizations in the field had already been contacted and the logistics such as transport had been arranged. Like in the Mali and Albania case studies, the team introduced itself to the local authorities before commencing the actual research to avoid possible feelings of mistrust or security concerns.

As in the previous case studies, in order to raise the feeling of project ownership at the local level, local authorities were asked to select residents to act as trainee facilitators. They were trained in the PM&E methodology and offered short-term contracts by UNIDIR. The WGWR, with the help of local authorities, arranged general community meetings at suitable venues. The purpose of these meetings was to brief participants on the scope and purpose of the study, as well as to form focus groups for further research.

Feedback strategy

Bottom-up feedback process to keep all relevant stakeholders informed about the study proceedings had been found to work well in Mali and Albania case studies, so similar procedures were undertaken also in Cambodia. The strategy enabled virtually all stakeholders to provide feedback both on the process and the final outcome of the research.

At the end of each community-level exercise, minutes taken during the meeting were read out to the participants for their confirmation. Heads of government departments and district level stakeholders were briefed on the research objectives and debriefed on the preliminary research findings,

with the opportunity to clarify some aspects if seen necessary. The same briefing and debriefing took place also with national level stakeholders, the UN system, bilateral agencies, NGOs and involved researchers.

CHALLENGES AND OBSTACLES TO BE AVOIDED

Conducting field research in Cambodia was notably facilitated by the previous field research experiences from Mali and Albania, especially since the challenges faced in the three case studies were largely similar. Cambodia and Albania proved similar in the sense that weapon collection projects and programme evaluations had been undertaken in both countries, but by applying a different methodology. As in Albania, several evaluations have been undertaken in Cambodia by different agencies. As a result, people's expectations about the outcomes of these evaluations have increased. During the field study, local leaders were constantly presenting their views on different programmes and soliciting more projects from UNIDIR. The specific challenges can be summarized to the following issues:

Problems related to the type of research:

- Research purposes need to be carefully considered: as was found out in Albania, people tend to prefer programmes that offer immediate benefits instead of academic results with longer-term goals;
- In some instances, respondents were reluctant to give information especially about critical issues. This is understandable, because it is easier for external actors to criticise the situation, but should nevertheless be taken into account when designing interviews and interpreting their results;
- From the outset, it is important to keep expectations realistic: Even though the situation might be tempting for large-scale assessments, researchers need to be clear about what will follow after the research is completed. This is crucial in Cambodia where several NGOs are implementing weapon collection programmes.

Challenges related to the necessary all-inclusive approach:

- In order to ensure accurate and effective research outcomes, it is important to understand the underlying issues that led to the outbreak of conflict or armed violence;

-
- All projects should take into account cultural aspects such as people's norms, values and traditions distinctive to the society in question;
 - In addition to cultural aspects, it is important to understand the power relations within a community to get an accurate picture about inter alia the role of women in the society and the division of responsibilities within the government.

Desk-bound research and preparations prior to the field mission:

- It is important to take into account field realities in each respective country of study: realities in the field often prove to be distinctively different than the perceptions gotten during preliminary desk-bound research. Therefore the researchers need to re-adjust their plans and objectives once in the field;
- It is to be ensured that all necessary logistics are in place and working perfectly before commencing field research.

In the field:

- Differences of experience among team members need to be assessed before proceeding to the field and taken into account during the research. However, while cultural and personal differences are to be taken into account, they should never be a substitute for professionalism.
- All relevant personnel need to be familiarized with the UN Field Safety Rules or other similar guidelines, since failure to follow them may expose the whole research team to danger; Driving at night requires prior planning, even in cases where time might be running short. For example, after travelling for hours, during the night, the vehicle transporting the team in Cambodia had a battery failure, which caused the team to risk travelling under dime light until reaching a secure place to spend the night. This could have been avoided if the journey was started in the morning to have had enough time during the day to repair the car;
- Efforts must not be spared in securing the selection of qualified people to be trained as facilitators. For example in Cambodia, considerable time had to be spent in looking for women who could read and write the local language;
- Overall, it is important (though by no means uniquely so) to keep an eye on the people working with the research team, and ensure that all involved hold to their defined roles and responsibilities.

GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED

Findings from the Cambodia study confirmed most of the lessons earlier learned from Mali and Albania case studies, including:

- Participatory approaches can help define accurate strategies to enhance the understanding of SALW proliferation dynamics;
- Different strategies applied in weapon collection programmes have different impacts on both the eradication of weapons from the communities and on the socio-economic impact of affected communities;
- Prior to commencing weapon collection and WfD projects, questions related to the demand-side need to be addressed: what leads people to acquire and keep their weapons? What incentives could be used to persuade weapon holders to surrender their weapons?;
- Community-based indicators are important criteria (impact and performance indicators) for determining success or failure of weapon collection and WfD programmes;
- Programmes that contribute to re-building people's livelihoods and consider the interests and obligations of different socio-economic groups, tend to be more attractive than programmes that are limited to supporting government institutions;
- The local people too, should be consulted on the question of what should happen to the retrieved weapons; whether they should be destroyed or re-used by the state.

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The next chapter presents the detailed development and application of the methodology that was used followed by an overview of weapon collection projects as perceived by government officials, bilateral and non-governmental organizations. Chapters four, five and six present field research findings from the men, women and youth focus groups. Chapter seven analyses the general lessons learned from the field, and the final chapter provides policy recommendations for further weapon collection and WfD applications.

The findings contain several helpful ideas and propose modifications for further weapon collection and WfD programmes. The study makes five global recommendations, mainly aimed at policymakers in countries that fund weapon collection and WfD programmes.

Strong support for an integrated weapons for development approach

The study reveals that local communities strongly support an integrated WfD programme approach, as compared to other weapon collection incentives such as individual weapon buy backs. It is therefore recommended that donors continue to fund such programmes, because in addition to transferring skills and offering employment, the approach at the same time addresses factors driving the demand for armed violence.

Decentralised but coordinated local structures for programme implementation arrangements

A combination of traditional and decentralised local administration structures such as they are in Cambodia, were found to be conducive for the successful implementation of programmes. It is therefore recommended that prior to funding any programmes, decentralized but well coordinated structures are assessed and established in order to ensure the best possible involvement of all levels of the society.

Capacity building for women and traditional institutions

Even if traditional institutions are recognised as important vehicles to implement programmes, the research revealed that they often suffer from the disadvantage of bias against women and traditional institutions. It is therefore recommended that resources be invested in raising the capacity of women to participate, and also in supporting men to understand the importance of including women in disarmament processes.

Alternative security arrangements

Programmes to address security issues should be driven as strongly as possible by the kind of actions that address the real security threats, which often emerge after people have handed over their weapons. As such, programmes like security sector reforms (SSR) may need to be undertaken

in the aftermath of a successful implementation of a weapon collection programme. They should concentrate on supporting alternative security arrangements such as community policing.

Funding longer term projects

The current budgeting cycles of major donor institutions, such as the European Union, were found not to be conducive for the implementation of programmes such as WfD, which have developmental components that usually require long implementation time spans. It is therefore recommended that donor institutions consider earmarking funds for a period spanning for two-three years instead of following mere calendar year funding.

CHAPTER 2

DEVELOPMENT AND APPLICATION OF THE METHODOLOGY

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation techniques were originally developed and applied to review weapon collection programmes in Mali, and later used also in Albania and Cambodia. The process involves several stages, beginning with the formulation of project objectives and research questions, and proceeding by the establishment of contacts with country and local level organizations. In the first phases, also field facilitators are selected and trained. This preparatory phase is followed by field research with community meetings and the formation of focus groups. The Cambodia study applied the Basic Inter-personal Communication Skills (BICS) technique, as well as the same five techniques originally developed for Mali and used in Albania.

KEY EVALUATION OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In order to get an accurate overview about the goals and implementation of different weapon collection programmes, assessment research questions need to address all the phases of the programmes. Questions that need to be asked, and are applicable in all three case studies, include:

- What were the goal(s) and purpose(s) of the weapon collection projects?
- How were the various activities and projects identified and designed, and whose initiatives were they?
- How were the projects appraised and implemented?
- How the monitoring was carried out, and what was monitored? What indicators were used?

- How was the performance evaluated (with respect to such aspects as effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability and relevancy) for the various activities and the institutions involved?
- What about crosscutting issues such as weapons storage, or perceptions about the “sufficient” number of weapons in the society?

SELECTION AND TRAINING OF TRAINEE FACILITATORS

A Cambodian NGO, Working Group on Weapons Reduction, was selected during the preparatory week in Phnom Penh to coordinate the field research: selecting translators, as well as liaising with local authorities and NGOs in districts where the research was to be conducted. In consultation with local stakeholders, the WGWR was also asked to identify six people from each area to be trained in the PM&E methodology and arrange community meetings. Like it was done in Mali and Albania, the selected individuals were offered short-term contracts as community facilitators for the duration of the research. In total, 18 people were trained. Local authorities cooperated by arranging community meetings.

The team was linked with the Commune Council of Pytnou with the help of the Deputy Governor of Snuol district, Mr Som Chhun. The team met and briefed the Council on the research plan, and the council agreed to give the project their fullest cooperation. The council also helped to identify candidates to be trained as facilitators. To ensure gender balance, in accordance with UNIDIR’s principle of giving equal opportunities, the team insisted on half of the selected trainees to be men and half women. However, the commune leaders found it difficult to get equal number of women, as they could not find enough women within the surrounding villages who could read and write Khmer. In Snuol, the selected trainees were: Mr Moeng Than, Mr Hem Vay, Mr Moeng Poln, Ms Set Thy, Ms Nhek Mon and Ms Poeung Ken. In Pailin, the team selected: Mr Poug Rety, Mr Chea Mean, Mr Phom So Ken, Ms Nhem Sreiyouta, Ms Means Sovan, and Ms Outa Kim Sean; and in Angkor Thom: Mr Vath Vonn, Mr Kech Kun, Mr Khung Chhorn, Ms Doung Chorm, Ms Choeun Si, and Ms Say Nga.

The head of Pytnou Primary School allowed training sessions to be held in one of the classrooms, since the gatherings were conducted on a weekend. In Pailin, training sessions were organized at a local Buddhist

monastery, while in Angkor Thom district, the district Governor offered the district Council Hall for the team's use. As in Mali and Albania, in the beginning of the training sessions, the team explained the research mission, the PM&E approach, and project's objectives, and gave a general briefing about small arms and light weapons. The topics stimulated discussion among the trainees, who immediately started narrating their different experiences regarding weapons.

THE NEW EVALUATION METHODOLOGY: PM&E AND THE FIVE EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

The PM&E approach was also applied in Cambodia, considering its well-established status as a research method for project evaluation and collaborative problem-solving through generation and use of knowledge. PM&E is a process that frequently leads to remedial action by involving all levels of stakeholders in a shared decision-making process and engaging people at grass-root level to participate in all stages of weapon collection. Local communities were engaged in the review of all principal aspects of weapons collection and Weapons for Development processes, namely in the overall goal setting, identification and design, as well as appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Different visual participatory tools such as symbols and diagrams had already been successfully used in Mali and Albania case studies. Boxes representing "before" and "now" situations in the community were applied to encourage participation of all community members.

By applying this methodology, UNIDIR was able to learn from the experiences of stakeholders, in particular grass-root level participants, and to assess the suitability of this inclusive methodology in understanding the causes of SALW proliferation, weapon collection strategies, and many other issues surrounding a post-conflict setting.

Research findings from Cambodia confirm findings from Mali and Albania, and prove that the application of PM&E techniques can unravel a multitude of salient issues that would not be comprehended through traditional "clipboard" methods. Results from Cambodia confirm that PM&E is a promising tool that can contribute to better understanding of the

causes of armed violence, as well as to see how communities can become more directly involved in stamping out the root causes of armed violence.

Basic interpersonal communication skills

In the beginning of the training, trainee facilitators were introduced to Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) methodology, a prerequisite technique for participatory research, used in teaching facilitators how to communicate at local level. The facilitators did not have previous experience about community participation research. Therefore, to familiarise them with the methods, the team used pictures to demonstrate the establishment of basic inter-personal communication skills. The exercise involves showing pictures of a village woman and a female community worker, depicted in different positions: in one picture there is communication between the two women; another picture illustrates a breakdown in the communication, and the last one shows how communication has been restored. Whenever applied, this technique stimulates discussion, reviews and reflections among the trainees about their day-to-day inter-personal communication. Because pictures can be understood and interpreted differently, questions are allowed and clarifications made to ensure that everybody understands the aim of the exercise. The facilitator should always ascertain whether the meaning and implications of the exercise have been understood. Trainees' responses should also always be recorded. The latter steps are important to the eventual formulation of the Field Code of Conduct (CoC).

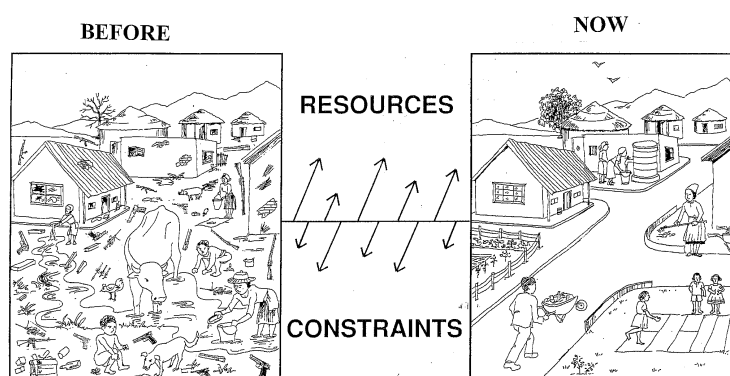
As in Mali and Albania, the trainee facilitators in Cambodia welcomed the use of pictures in demonstrating different communication situations. The exercise stimulated lively discussion among the trainees who were also ready to pose questions on points they thought they had not totally understood.

Before and Now Situations Analysis: evaluating project goals and purposes

The BANSA technique is a participatory tool to be applied in evaluating how the overall goals and purposes of weapon collection and WfD projects are set and achieved. In the context of evaluating the projects, the BANSA technique involves comparison of the "before" situation (prior to the

implementation of various interventions) to the “now” situation (improved circumstances after interventions have been implemented).

Before and Now Situations Analysis (BANSA)



As in the Mali and Albania studies, the trainees were introduced to the BANSA technique by using pictures symbolising “before” and “now” situations. Symbols in the “before” situation box depicted a community filled with armed violence: guns everywhere, killings and deaths, water and sanitary problems, and unplanned infrastructures. Trainees were asked to look at the boxes and interpret the symbols with respect to situations in their own communities prior to the implementation of weapon collection and WfD projects. They looked first at the “before” situation box. The “now” situation box then depicted an improved community, with people going freely about their business in a well-planned village with good water and sanitary conditions, and without guns. The trainees agreed that the “now” situation box corresponded to the current situations in their respective areas. Additional symbols were added, indicating further perceived improvements such as a school and a new borehole. Facilitators were told that their task would be to engage the community participants in analysing the boxes: to facilitate the drawing of alternative boxes that reflect actual situations in those communities, and to discuss what steps had been taken to change the situation from the “before” to “now” condition. Facilitators heard that they would also be responsible for identifying resources and

constraints, as well as other issues that of importance to community members. When the BANSA technique was applied among the communities in the field, more symbols depicting actual circumstances were added to both the “before” and “now” boxes.

Specifically, the guidance given to trainees instructed them to encourage participation by open-ended questions encouraging conversation. This is in contrast with a direct “question and answer” -type approach, which can generate questions that elicit simple “yes” or “no” responses. The following questions were set and used in order to understand the overall goals and purposes of weapon collection and WfD projects.

For local leaders and other stakeholders:

- (i) How did the SALW come to the hands of people? Why do people want arms?
- (ii) What prompted weapons collection?
- (iii) What processes were involved in weapons collection (from when the weapon is collected up to when it is destroyed)?
- (iv) What processes are involved in implementing the incentive schemes?
- (v) What challenges were met in collecting weapons?
- (vi) How were the challenges overcome?
- (vii) What strategies were pursued to curb the proliferation of SALW?
- (viii) How can community level disarmament be achieved?
- (ix) How can success or failure of weapon collection programmes be measured?
- (x) What are the common characteristics for incentives schemes preferred, and why?
- (xi) What implementation arrangements were followed, and why?

For men’s focus groups:

- (i) What was the situation before, and why?
- (ii) What is the situation now, and why?
- (iii) What is ‘insecurity’?
- (iv) What was the aim for weapons collection and WfD projects?
- (v) What strategies were pursued to achieve the goal, and why?
- (vi) How does the focus group assess the impact of weapons collection, and why?
- (vii) What constraints were met in weapons collection?
- (viii) How were those constraints overcome?

For women's focus groups:

- (i) What was the situation before, and why?
- (ii) What is the situation now, and why?
- (iii) What is 'insecurity'?
- (iv) What was the aim of weapons collection?
- (v) What strategies were pursued to achieve the goal, and why?
- (vi) What were the indicators for success/failure?
- (vii) Under what conditions can weapons collection take place, and why?
- (viii) What difficulties were faced, and why?

For youth focus groups:

- (i) What was the situation before the weapons collection?
- (ii) What is the current situation?
- (iii) What was the overall goal of the weapons collection?
- (iv) How does the focus group assess the impact of weapons collection in immediate, medium and long term?

Trainee facilitators were instructed to use the above questions to guide them in managing the focus group discussions. In fact, the community participants themselves posed similar questions to their fellow participants, when talking about some of the issues. Trainee facilitators learned to apply the six "helpers": who, what, when, where, why and how. The BANSAs technique, including the process and questions enumerated above, were applied to all the field exercises. The trainee facilitators' performance in the field exercises confirmed that they had understood the BANSAs technique as presented.

Trainees were trained also in the other PM&E techniques. As in the previous studies, training sessions for these other techniques took place during the mornings, while afternoons were reserved for the application of the techniques in the field. The additional techniques included "Determining Decision-Making Process", "Conversational Interviews", "Community Calendar Approach", and the "Three Star Game". The techniques, including the full process and the questions enumerated above, were applied to all field exercises, and are discussed below.

Determining decision-making process: evaluating project identification and design

The technique of determining decision-making processes is a tool to evaluate the identification and design of weapon collection and WfD programmes. It enables participants to understand and evaluate those decision-making processes within a community that characterise community involvement in weapon collection and WfD programmes. The technique utilizes pictorial diagrams that show institutions and individuals responsible for decision-making in a community. These may include pictures of a village official, village chief, village committee (elders, religious and other leaders), external agent, local ordinary woman, local ordinary man, village artist, and/or local ordinary youth. When undertaking the research, participants are asked to compare the pictures to their own situations. They are given small cards on which they may vote for those pictures representing the institutions or individuals that they feel made the decisions for the various activities that had been identified. During the exercise, project identification and design questions are posed to the participants.

Guide questions for men's focus groups were:

- (i) What is "participation"?
- (ii) Who makes decisions in the communities, and why?
- (iii) What were the activities involved in weapons collection?
- (iv) How were the decisions made regarding the above activities?
- (v) Who got involved and who did not, and why?
- (vi) What is the general view regarding how activities were implemented?

Guide questions for women's focus groups were:

- (i) What is "participation"?
- (ii) Who makes decisions in the communities, and why?
- (iii) What were the activities involved in weapons collection?
- (iv) Who made the decisions regarding the various schemes, and why?
- (v) Who should be involved in decision-making, and why?

Guide questions for youth focus groups were:

- (i) What is "participation"?
- (ii) Who makes decisions in the communities, and why?
- (iii) What were the activities involved in weapons collection?
- (iv) Who determined which of the above activities, and why?

As with the BANSAs technique, these questions were given merely to guide the trainee facilitators; they were not meant to be asked in a strict question and answer format.

Conversational interviews: evaluating project appraisal and implementation

The purpose of the conversational interviews technique is to learn how weapon collection and WfD programmes were implemented in the community. The discussed issues cover questions of project appraisal and implementation.

Guide questions for men's focus groups were:

- (i) Had there been any previous mechanisms for weapons collection?
- (ii) What were their mechanisms, and why?
- (iii) How do the previously used mechanisms compare with WfD approach?
- (iv) What encouraged those having weapons to surrender them, and why?
- (v) What types of weapons were the handed in first, and why?
- (vi) What types of weapons were surrendered in large numbers, and why?
- (vii) What processes are involved in weapons collection (from when it surrendered to when it is destroyed)?
- (viii) What should be done to the weapons handed in?
- (ix) Where were the weapons kept, and why?
- (x) What places do the core group participants consider safe for weapons storage, and why?

Guide questions for women's focus groups were:

- (i) Were there any other mechanisms for weapons collection?
- (ii) What were these mechanisms?
- (iii) How were they compared to WfD approach, and why?
- (iv) What are the strengths or weaknesses of WfD approach, and why?
- (v) What was done to convince weapon holders to hand over their weapons?
- (vi) What types of weapons were handed in first, and why?
- (vii) What types of weapons were handed over in large numbers, and why?
- (viii) When should weapons collection in a community stop, and why?
- (ix) Who was involved in previous weapon collection programmes and who was not? Why?

Guide questions for youth focus groups were:

- (i) Were there any previous weapon collection?
- (ii) What kinds of incentives were applied?
- (iii) Did the WfD approach put them in consideration?
- (iv) What convinced weapon holders to hand over their weapons?
- (v) What was the whole process in weapons collection?
- (v) How were the benefits distributed to the whole community?

As with the previous techniques, these questions were given merely to guide the trainee facilitators, and to stimulate and facilitate discussion among community participants.

Community calendar approach: evaluating project monitoring

The Community Calendar Approach is a tool to evaluate how project monitoring was carried out. This technique enables better understanding of community's perspectives on how the monitoring of weapon collection or Weapons for Development projects was conducted. In the approach, participants are asked to list all activities and projects undertaken in their community. When answering, participants use calendar-oriented monitoring forms, indicating the time of year when they feel individual collection activities and projects attracted more weapons, as well as the reasons why this was the case. Trainee facilitators were given questions specifically developed for this particular exercise.

Guide questions for men's focus groups were:

- (i) What activities have been taken in weapons collection activities and WfD projects?
- (ii) What is the best timing for weapon collection programmes, and why?
- (iii) What type of incentives attracted the largest number of weapons, and why?
- (iv) What type of incentives would the focus group participants prefer, and why?
- (v) What aspects of the weapons collection had required critical monitoring, and why?
- (vi) How did the focus group participants ascertain whether weapons collection was reducing the number of weapons in the community?
- (vii) Who did participate and who did not, and why?
- (viii) How were the benefits monitored?

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- (ix) Did the focus group participants consider that the interventions addressed the root causes?
 - (x) What lessons did the men learn by participating in weapons collection?

Guide questions for women's focus groups were:

- (i) What activities have been taken in weapons collection activities and WfD projects?
- (ii) What is the best timing for weapon collection programmes, and why?
- (iii) What were the implementation arrangements, and why they were selected?
- (iv) Did the focus group participants consider that the interventions addressed the root causes?
- (v) What type of incentives attracted the largest number of weapons, and why?
- (vi) What constraints were met and how could these be overcome?
- (vii) What were the indicators for success or failure, and why?

Guide questions for youth focus groups were:

- (i) What is the best timing for weapon collection programmes?
- (ii) How were the various activities monitored?
- (iii) What aspects did require critical monitoring?
- (iv) Were there any benchmarks for monitoring?
- (v) What indicators show positive or negative changes, and why?
- (vi) Who was involved in the monitoring, and why?
- (vii) Where were the collected weapons kept, and why?
- (viii) How was the information shared?

As with the previous techniques, these questions were given merely to guide the trainee facilitators, not to be used in a direct manner.

Three Star Game: evaluating project performance

The Three Star Game (TSG) technique is a tool to evaluate the performance of individuals, institutions and activities or specific components of the weapon collection and WfD projects. The technique uses three stars—the biggest representing A “very excellent” performance, the middle-sized representing A “fairly excellent” performance and the smallest representing A “good” performance. The terms “good”, “fair” and

“bad” are not used because people might feel uncomfortable using them and view them as overly critical or offensive.

★	Very excellent
★	Fairly excellent
★	Good

In the Three Star Game, participants are asked to list all weapon collection or WfD activities and projects that were undertaken in their communities, as well as all individuals and institutions that were involved in these activities and projects. Based on their own experience, they are then asked to associate one of the three sized stars with an activity/project or individual/institution. The exercise enables understanding of the kinds of activities and projects that are preferred by the community, based on the projects' relevance, sustainability and effectiveness in terms of attracting greater numbers of weapons and reduction of armed violence. The technique also helps to deduce which institutions or individuals should be involved in future project implementation.

Trainee facilitators were presented the questions that had been developed for this particular technique.

Guide questions for men's focus groups were:

- (i) How did the focus group participants rate the performance of the various actors as well the activities and why?
- (ii) What was the major contribution by the community, and why?
- (iii) What are the main characteristics of incentives that they consider more important, and why?
- (iv) What were the indicators for success or failure, and why?
- (v) What did the focus group participants consider to have been the main failure, and why?
- (vi) Did they consider the WfD approach sustainable?
- (vii) How many guns are enough for the community, and why?
- (viii) How do the focus group participants evaluate the long-term benefits of weapons collection, and why?

Guide questions for women's focus groups were:

- (i) How did the focus group participants rate the overall performance of institutions/activities, and why?
- (ii) How do they evaluate the impact, and why?
- (iii) Which incentives schemes are most preferred, and why?
- (iv) What did the focus group participants learn by participating in weapons collection?

Guide questions for youth focus groups were:

- (i) How do the focus group participants rate the overall performance of institutions/activities and individuals?
- (ii) What are their criteria for rating, and why?

As with the previous techniques, these questions were given merely to guide the trainee facilitators. The trainee facilitators understood all the presented techniques. The community representatives appreciated the power that these techniques wield in engaging different people in discussion and in enabling them to reach consensus.

ARRANGEMENTS BEFORE PROCEEDING TO THE FOCUS GROUPS

Field operation arrangement

The same arrangement that had earlier been used in Mali and Albania was applied also in Cambodia. The communities selected for research were divided into three groups according to gender and age. Two trainee facilitators were assigned to each group: one trainee was made responsible for note taking, while the other was assigned to facilitate the discussion. However, in general, both facilitators worked together to ensure teamwork.

Code of Conduct (CoC)

Reflecting on what they had learned in the Basic Inter-personal Communication Skills exercise, the facilitators were quick to contribute to the formulation of an operational Code of Conduct. It was prepared to include the following guidelines: (a) strict time management; (b) effective participation by everyone; (c) equal treatment of all participants in the groups; (d) value of every question or answer from the community; (e) significance of being good listeners; and (f) the importance of not being defensive.

Field terms of reference for the groups

As in Mali and Albania, the Field Terms of Reference established three focus groups: men, women and youth. The questions and answers from the community were to be recorded to the greatest possible extent. After each exercise, whenever possible, the conclusions reached by the groups were to be read out loud to ensure that they were an accurate reflection of the issues the communities had raised. The PM&E team met every afternoon to receive the groups' findings and to prepare training for the next exercises. During the exercises, the main facilitators were to provide support and assistance whenever needed. Each focus group could individually decide at what time to hold their meetings, keeping in mind the daily morning training times.

GENERAL COMMUNITY MEETING AND FORMING THE FOCUS GROUPS

The first general community meeting was held in Village Hall of Cheungkhle, and attended by over hundred men, women and children.

In the beginning of the meeting, the PM&E Team Leader explained the purpose of UNIDIR's WfD project and explored the need to listen to the views of the ordinary community members. The commune leaders had briefed the villages upon inviting them, and therefore the community members did not have many questions to the team.

The facilitators proceeded to explain the formation of focus groups and as planned, three focus groups, consisting of men, women and youth, were formed. Together with trainee facilitators, each group decided the place and time that would be most convenient for conducting the field exercises. The ages for youth ranged from 15 to 25 years, men ranged from 30 years upwards, while women ranged from around 20 to 50 years. No other criteria were set for group partitions, however, community members readily divided themselves accordingly. When proceeding to do field exercises, all groups began with the BANSAs, which was followed by DDMP and other techniques. Although it took facilitators a lot of effort to explain that the pictures were not to be understood as representing factual situation but rather just abstractions to help in visualizing the situation, in the end all the participants understood their meaning. The team is convinced that these

types of exercises can be adapted as a prototype procedure for conducting participatory research on a range of sensitive subjects, including weapon collection, armed violence, illicit trade in SALW or other substances in post-conflict situations.

The following chapters describe how the PM&E techniques were applied in the field to evaluate WfD projects. Alongside with PM&E, other conventional evaluative research methods were also applied, such as Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats" (SWOT) and Vulnerability and Capability Analysis (VCA). Findings from the field exercises revealed that armed violence influences all parts of the society in different ways and magnitudes.

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF WEAPON COLLECTION: EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF SECONDARY STAKEHOLDERS

Throughout the research project, researchers held consultations with various secondary stakeholders⁴ to seek their experiences and perspectives on weapon collection programmes. The discussions touched upon various aspects of weapon collection and WfD projects, as well as the general causes of armed violence in Cambodia.

In the Ministry of Interior, the team met with the Director of the Department of Weapons and Explosive Management and Fire Control, Brigadier General Ouk Kim Lek and his team. During field exercises, in-depth discussions on various aspects related to SALW proliferation were held with various government officials in different districts. In Snuol district these included: Mr Som Chhun, Deputy Governor of Snuol district, Mr Lom Chhayvoent, deputy Police Chief of Snuol, and members of Pytnou Commune Council: Commune Chief Mr Keng What, and members Korm Sean, Moeng Vin, Phou Kou, and Noy You. A meeting of civil organizations was organized by NGO Women and Child Rights Development. In Pailin district, the team met with: Governor Sons Siyat, Police Chief Mr Oun Saven, and Sankat Chief Mr Sam Phoung, as well as two civic organizations: Cambodia Human Rights and Development Association, led by Mr Som Chan Kea, and Cambodia De-mining Agency. In Angkor Thom district, the team met with Governor Mr Butha Rary, Police Chief Mr Tepcanna, and the Commune Chief of Leang Day, Mr Hin Sean. In Angkor Thom district, the team consulted also with two civic organizations: JSAC, led by Mr Inn Vuthy, and Friends Association Pioneer, led by Mr Peng Sakun.

Efforts were made to involve also the UNDP and other UN agencies. A roundtable debriefing was organized at the end of the field research mission, and a couple of UN agencies, including the World Food Programme and UNICEF, attended. The above interlocutors represented secondary stakeholders' views with regards to Weapons for Development

programmes, weapons collection as well as the proliferation of SALW in Cambodia in general.

AN OVERVIEW OF WEAPON COLLECTION PROGRAMMES

At the national level, different secondary stakeholders gave differing opinions about the weapon collection programmes undertaken in Cambodia. Even though the differences probably stemmed partially from the geographical region represented by the particular interviewee, it also seemed that each stakeholder wanted to justify either the approach they were applying, or the objectives they had set for weapon collection programmes. The views expressed in general can be summarized as follows.

The Government

According to government officials, the Cambodian Government is committed to stop the proliferation of SALW and hence has put in place policies and a conducive environment to facilitate the achievement of the above goal. Existing gun laws are being revised, and new ones are being formulated. Structures for implementing weapons collection have been established at national and provincial levels, and they have made possible the voluntary collection and confiscation of over 100,000 weapons within less than two years. It was stated that it was due to this favorable environment coupled with clear, unwavering government policies and commitment that the international community responded to assist the government efforts. According to the interviewed government representatives, a combination of strategies was implemented to retrieve the illicit SALW in circulation. These included:

- 1) Weapons for Development approach, by which communities were offered schools, wells and roads in exchange for weapons surrendered. This approach was the most preferred by the government, because “if it is well implemented, it can benefit the people greatly”;⁵
- 2) Weapons Management and Control approach, whose major elements include constructing proper storages for weapons and registering stockpiles by establishing a computerized weapon management system for the whole country. According to government representatives, this approach has been crucial. They argue that a centrally managed monitoring system prevents the leaking of weapons

from the government to the public. The approach is also supported by some international organizations, such as EU-ASAC;

- 3) Weapons Destruction, meaning the public destruction of surplus and retrieved weapons. According to the government, over 100,000 weapons have been destroyed since the programme began in 1999. The interviewed government representatives argue that the advantages of public destruction are three-fold: public destruction of weapons prevents recycling, sends a peaceful message to the general public, and is a sigh of relief because it turns people's attitudes increasingly against weapons;
- 4) Public awareness-raising efforts, including television shows, posters and training in civil-military relations. According to government representatives, public awareness programmes have been crucial for the attitudes of the majority of people in Cambodia, whose deficient capabilities to read and write have made retrieving information from other sources difficult. It was estimated that a substantial number of surrendered weaponry resulted exactly from public awareness-raising programmes.

However, according to the government, these interventions, especially the WfD, need to be substantially improved if they are to meet the challenges ahead. Suggestions on how to improve them include:

- (i) building strong partnerships between the government and other actors, especially the EU-ASAC and local NGOs;
- (ii) getting further substantial resources from donors to support the programmes;
- (iii) having the government as the implementer of programmes; and
- (iv) considering how to assist the neighboring communities affected by weapons proliferation.

International agencies

The two main international agencies supporting the Cambodian Government in weapon collection programmes are EU-ASAC and JSAC. While the representatives of both these organizations agreed that a multi-strategy approach such as the one described by the government is very crucial, they also voiced their reservations on certain aspects of this approach.

EU-ASAC

According to the EU-ASAC, Weapons for Development programmes in Cambodia have since 2001 developed from large scale projects such as building schools, health centers, roads, and bridges, to small projects such as building wells and storage facilities, and further to capacity building, awareness-raising, and training the police. The main explanation given to these transformations was a management problem, arising mainly from the nature of EU budgeting cycle, which does not fit projects that have development objectives, such as WfD programmes. According to EU-ASAC, the restructuring of programmes was necessary to ensure that the resources as well as the implementation were aligned to the 12-month budget cycle. This decision led to the removal of certain project components. For example, large-scale projects, originally meant to jump-start the programmes, were scaled-down because funding sources were reduced due to significant capital expenses. Also small projects such as building wells were removed from being implemented by the local NGOs in preference to existing regional structures. Thus it seems that while the government advocates large-scale projects, implementing agencies tend to have reservations concerning their applicability and current form. In general, however, the EU-ASAC interviewees justified the shift from large-scale initiatives to smaller projects and public awareness-raising and argued that people's needs have changed and therefore the concepts and standards of weapon collection have to change.

JSAC

The JSAC started its programmes in Cambodia in April 2003, and developed a new concept and approach for weapons collection, called "Weapons Reduction for Peace and Development". According to JSAC, a long term perspective to build confidence and sustainable peace-building was needed, since Cambodia is not in an immediate post-conflict situation, and development needs are therefore higher than security needs. However, JSAC also noted that past programmes such as "Weapons for Rice" distorted long-term perspectives, because by providing short-term benefits, they had encouraged people to bargain to receive immediate gains instead of focusing on longer-term goals. The main pillars of "Weapons Reduction for Peace and Development" are workshops at the district and community levels for political leaders, chiefs and police. The workshops explain the dangers that SALW pose to the community, and sensitize the police not to arrest people who turn up in police stations to surrender their weapons. According to designers of these programmes, continuous sensitizations

keep the collection of weapons from the communities buoyant, and in the areas where the programmes have been implemented, many weapons have been surrendered as a result of sensitization and awareness-raising.⁶

CAUSES OF SALW PROLIFERATION IN CAMBODIA

Secondary stakeholders gave varying explanations for the root causes of illicit SALW proliferation to and within Cambodia. Their experiences varied mainly according to geographical areas. However, despite moderate regional differences, the circumstances that led people to acquire weapons were described as being quite constant throughout regions—generally, the problem touches the whole country. All secondary stakeholders seemed to agree on the following explanations regarding the causes of SALW proliferation in Cambodia:

Main Causes of SALW proliferation in Cambodia:

- The legacy of war
- Country's geographical location
- Fear of revenge and the need for protection
- Failed disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes
- Criminal activities
- Political persecutions
- Impunity of the law

Legacy of war

All secondary stakeholders concurred that most weapons proliferated to Cambodia as a result of several wars: for the last three decades wars have been fought on Cambodia soil by different countries, such as the United States, Vietnam, Thailand and China, who have supplied different factions and successive governments with arms. In addition, several countries, such as Burma, Russia and Pakistan, have supplied weapons to the country on an informal basis. Throughout the period of armed conflicts, millions of surplus arms proliferated into Cambodia, where they were shipped to different actors, including government and rebel forces, ex-servicemen of the

military and the police, as well as demobilized ex-combatants and deserters from various factions of the society. The interviewees described situations, where an area had in different times been occupied by different fighting factions, each of which had supplied weapons to the community.

Country's geographical location

The geographical location of Cambodia, as well as the physical features of some of its regions, is ideal for hiding weapon caches. For example, all the districts where the research was conducted are forested and relatively mountainous. Snuol is located near the Vietnam border while Pailin borders with Thailand. The geography of these areas is ideal for guerrilla operations, and hence loads of weapons were transited through them from the neighboring countries. The areas were also used to hide the smuggled weaponry, as well as to harbor different fighting groups. For example, Snuol district was a stronghold for war between North Vietnam and America, South Vietnamese forces supported the region first, after which it was occupied by American troops.

Fear of revenge and the need for protection

Interviews revealed that another cause of SALW proliferation in Cambodia and a reason why people may still be keeping weapons is the fear for revenge by different ex-fighters, and the need to protect families, property and community by weapons. The explanation given to this was that when the war ended there were no mechanisms to promote reconciliation among the communities, and suspicions and fear continued to linger. In addition, a culture of weapons had emerged over the three decades of turmoil, leaving the resorting to gun use still a factor in some communities.

Failed disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes

Field research results revealed that some sections of the society, especially in opposition dominated areas, were not satisfied with the conducted DDR exercises. According to them, only forces from the Khmer Rouge and other rebel forces were disarmed, leaving the government-supported forces fully armed. Again, the peace agreement that brought together different factions of the society did not spell out how many armed forces were to be retained from each faction. For example, some local sources joked that there are more "generals than men", meaning that the ratio of generals to men was too great, since most of the high-ranking officers were not demobilized as part of the DDR process. It was further

noted that even after other forces were reintegrated with the government forces, the issue of disarmament remained unsolved and hence fighters continued holding on to their weapons. However, according to the Pailin Governor, seven out of ten fighters are estimated to have handed over their weapons.

Another reason related to the failed DDR was that most ex-fighters have been left to find future income by themselves. According to Ochra Commune Chief Mr Sam Phoung: “during the fighting there were less problems for the fighters, because either they didn’t need to have money and it was easy to use any means to get it... but now they have to cater for their families”. Finding new means of income has often proved difficult, and therefore some of the ex-fighters are said to be likely to resort to armed violence.

Criminal activities

One of the major causes for SALW proliferation in Cambodia was named to be criminality. Secondary stakeholders referred especially to the so-called “anarchy groups”, banditry gangs that emerged during the war and have continued to terrorize people inter alia through kidnappings for ransom. In addition, when asked about the people involved in illicit activities, the interviewees mentioned illegal timber loggers and traders, drug traffickers, and people involved in human trafficking both within Cambodia and across borders. According to police sources, most of these criminal gangs are politically connected and therefore difficult to control.

Political persecution

Based on the interviews, it seems that opposition groups in the country feel utterly marginalized, and that only government supporters benefit from government opportunities. In the rural areas this marginalization has been transformed into fear and as such, some interviewees were of the view that fearfulness may lead people to hold on to their guns. Also in general, it was noted that level of suspicion between government and former rebellion groups remains high. As reflected in a statement by the Governor of Pailin, a former Khmer Rouge commander: “it takes many years to trust the government... for example it took seven years (1991-1997) for the Paris Peace agreement⁷ to be implemented”.

Impunity of the law

Many people voiced their outrage on how the law is applied separately to favour those connected to the government. This practice, they pointed out, flares up hatred and may in its part lead people to hold on to guns.

REASONS FOR STARTING WEAPON COLLECTION PROGRAMMES

All the national level, secondary stakeholders concurred that so far, the implemented weapon collection programmes have been initiated by the government. Following the cessation of hostilities and the eventual absorption of the last remnants of the Khmer Rouge army into the new Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF), it was realized that small arms in the country, at the time estimated to be in hundreds of thousands, were a threat to the fragile peace and security that had returned to the country. At district, commune and village levels, however, the primary stakeholders gave different opinions, depending on local circumstances that had led to the commencement of weapons collection.

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING WEAPON COLLECTION PROGRAMMES

At the national level, the interviewed government officials as well as other secondary stakeholders mentioned several challenges faced in implementing weapon collection programmes, including the fact that the existence of mines in certain areas remains a hindrance to accessing areas where weapon caches are hidden, and despite several attempts, the strategy to retrieve these particular caches is still lacking. Other constraints cited in secondary stakeholder interviews included the lack of resources and expertise to study and analyse the current Cambodian legislation on arms, especially with a view to align it with the recommendations of the UNPoA on SALW. Similarly, the need for capacity building for the newly established National Commission for SALW was also pointed out as a major factor impeding the smooth implementation of weapon collection programmes. It was however pointed out that these constraints might be overcome by forging strong partnerships between the Cambodian Government and bilateral funding organizations.

When citing the problems encountered in implementing weapon collection programmes, district, commune and local government authorities and the police reiterated some of the impediments echoed earlier by national level authorities: existence of mines in some areas, limited resources to support those digging up weapon caches, and the limited capacity of the police to reach out to the communities for sensitization. It was further noted that as a result of inadequate means to reach out to the communities, the Government Sub-Decree No. 38 would not be easy to disseminate to the population. It was also pointed out that because of political connections between some criminals and politicians, it was difficult to retrieve weapons: “they will always be re-supplied,” pointed out one district police chief.

International agencies and NGOs implementing weapon collection programmes mentioned some additional problems and challenges: EU-ASAC explained how their programmes had had to be restructured and how they had to abandon large scale projects as result of management problems, mainly arising from difficulties adapting budgeting cycles to project timelines. In the same vein, some project components such as building wells had to be removed from being implemented by local NGOs in preference to existing regional government structures. In some instances, EU-ASAC pointed also to the inadequate political commitment from the side of the government, mainly due to the failure of forming new government after the elections in October 2004. According to JSAC, main challenges in implementing weapon collection programmes are related to the precedent set by past programmes, which rewarded those who handed over weapons. Therefore, people tend not to take seriously any programmes that do not grant direct rewards to the population.

MEASURES TO CURB SMALL ARMS PROLIFERATION AND ARMED VIOLENCE

Government officials and other secondary stakeholders concurred that there was no single method to curb the illicit proliferation of SALW or armed violence, but that measures would ideally have to take into account different aspects of the problem and strive for solving it in integrated and comprehensive fashion. According to the interviewed secondary stakeholders, these would include incentive schemes to communities

voluntary surrendering weapons, combined with an enforced SALW legislation, which should be explained both to the law enforcement officers and local people. In addition, strong outreach programmes that would sensitize people and raise their awareness on the dangers posed by weapons would be needed.

Secondary stakeholders were of the view that the total removal of illicit weapons from communities could best be accomplished only by stamping out all criminal acts. As pointed out by one interviewee: “the removal of weapons does not necessarily remove crime because if necessary, people can use other means for criminal purposes”. For example, it was pointed out that the removal of AK-47s has made criminals start using other kinds of improvised weapons.

Political leaders and other secondary stakeholders pointed out the connection between provincial and cross-border dynamics associated with Cambodian problems of SALW proliferation. It was in particular mentioned that weapons from one district or province might be used to commit crimes in another district, and similarly, some guns were said to be smuggled in the country across borders especially from Thailand⁸ and Vietnam. Secondary stakeholders identified the need for international cooperation as prerequisite for dealing with SALW problem: because national, provincial and cross-border weapon control efforts are interconnected, disarmament at the community level must be linked with efforts at all other levels. They also concurred that as long as illegal big businesses that depend on criminality exist, all sorts of weapons will continue to be demanded.

MEASURING “SUCCESS” OR “FAILURE” OF WEAPON COLLECTION PROGRAMMES

As was earlier found out in Albania, all secondary stakeholders seemed to agree that the basic measure to determine the success or failure of weapon collection efforts would be an improvement in the security situation, indicated by the reduction of armed violence. Also the number of collected weapons was pointed out as an indicator for measurement. However, as in Mali and Albania, it was noted that the number of collected or destroyed weapons itself is not sufficient enough an indicator to measure the success of weapon collection programmes. As secondary stakeholders

in Albania had identified, also Cambodian interviewees referred to the improved understanding between the police and ordinary people as another important measure of success for weapon collection programmes. As one NGO-representative pointed out: “whereas people previously feared the police, they now work with the police by providing information on guns and criminals”. Also other indicators were mentioned, including the reduction of crime, construction of schools, health centers, wells, and the provision of logistical support to the police. In regions like Seam Reap, interviewed NGOs mentioned how armed violence and related crimes have reduced significantly in the five districts where weapon collection programmes have been implemented, in comparison with the rest of the country.

At the national level, different options were mentioned regarding the optimal characteristics of incentive schemes which were provided to the community in exchange for weapons surrender. Government officials advocated projects that would rebuild people’s livelihoods, whereas at the district levels, most leaders supported programmes that would help the capacity building of different government institutions such as the police. Most community level chiefs agreed with the views of national level officials, while agencies implementing weapon collection programmes seemed to concur with district and provincial level officials. The explanation for these divergent views may be the fact that at the national level, officials would like to use weapon collection programmes such as Weapons for Development approach, as a launching pad for post-war reconstruction. At the district and provincial level, on the other hand, most governors are ex-fighters with little experience about negotiating with external agencies. This explains why most of them tend to support the agenda of external agencies that are implementing programmes. It seemed that because of imbalance in negotiation power, district and provincial officials will embrace the programmes that external agencies propose, irrespective of whether the programme is relevant or not. As a result, agencies have now shifted from programmes that address the real security threats of the people to soft programmes such as sensitization and awareness-raising which, though as expensive as previous programmes, are easier to manage.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite the differences, there were also a number of common elements in the answers. All interviewed secondary stakeholders were of the view that projects should as much as possible benefit the local people. Where WfD projects are implemented, they should be accessible to everyone in the community, and exclude no one. As it was discovered in Mali and Albania, incentive projects should foster reconciliation and unity among all social groups.

A consensus seemed to emerge from all interviewed secondary stakeholders that the most desirable implementation arrangement would be the one in which local people or primary stakeholders could play a leading role. Having reviewed (by applying PM&E) how the current programmes were implemented, all secondary stakeholders recognized the need for further improvement in this area.

CHAPTER 4

MEN'S FOCUS GROUPS: EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF RURAL-BASED, URBAN-BASED AND BORDER-BASED MEN

As we have seen field exercises in each community began with a general community meeting, where the purpose of field research and the expected outcome were explained and the focus groups of men, women and youth were formed. Each group then decided on the venue of their exercises. The focus groups, together with their facilitators, proceeded on the modalities of the exercises during the next two to three days. Men's focus groups did fifteen PM&E field exercises, in which they used the five techniques presented in Chapter 2 of this report. Five exercises were conducted with border-based men in Snuol (at a compound of a local resident in Pytnou commune), five with rural-based men in Angkor Thom district (in the local pagoda⁹ of Lean Dai commune), and five with urban-based men in Seam Reap district (in the local pagoda of Ochra Sangkat¹⁰).

BEFORE AND NOW SITUATIONS ANALYSIS (BANSA): EVALUATING PROJECTS GOALS AND PURPOSES

All group meetings began with the facilitators introducing the BANSA exercise with the objective of engaging the men in reviewing the goals and purposes of weapon collection programmes. Discussions arising during the analysis of the BANSA diagram and the subsequent session for questions and answers evoked lively discussion and debate in all men's focus groups.

"Before" Situation

Participants described the "before" situation in their communities with the remarks listed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: “Before” Situations

Urban-based men	Rural-based men	Border-based men
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of health and sanitation facilities • Many arms, ammunitions and grenades were scattered in the village causing explosions • People were afraid to travel because it was not safe • Children would not go to school • There was a shortage of rice and other food stuff • People could not find safe drinking water • “Infrastructure, such as roads, pagodas and schools, was dilapidated” • “Sometimes corpses with gunshots were found in the village” • “There was no education for children” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were mines and ammunitions • “It was like a civil war” • “We used to live in fear” • “There were bombardments” • “We used to find weapons in trenches that were built near homes” • Many deaths and injuries were caused by weapons • Some roads and village paths were not used due to mines • “We had forced conscriptions into the Khmer Rouge army, especially as carriers of weapons and other supplies” • There was a shortage of food • “No access to farmlands was possible, and hence there was no cultivation” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There was insecurity everywhere” • Weapons were scattered everywhere • Robberies were common • “People used to fear to travel in the neighbourhood” • “Many deaths and injuries resulted from arms and mines” • “Many people were disabled” • Kidnappings for ransom were common” • “People could not do any business” • Some people got weapons in order to do illegal businesses • “Some people could not access or cultivate farmlands” • “Livestock was shoot whenever it strayed into people’s farm fields” • There were forced conscriptions to fight • “Many people got disabled” • “Small disputes resulted in shootings” • Children were becoming aggressive. Sometimes they got weapons from their parents when they quarrelled among themselves • “Accidental killings used to be common”

“Now” Situation

The participants described the “now” situation in their communities with the remarks listed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 “Now” Situations

Urban-based men	Rural-based men	Border-based men
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “There is development in the community: roads, housing, school and water boreholes” • There is security: the number of robberies and killings has reduced • Few caches of weapons are suspected to remain in the jungles • “Now we have freedom of movement” • AIDS/HIV infections seem to be on the rise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is infrastructure: a school, a health centre, water points, pagoda and a new road • Irrigation channels have been constructed • People have bought motorbikes, cars and are doing business • Presence of NGOs¹¹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is infrastructure: school, roads and water wells. However, these are still inadequate, and there is no health centre yet • Sanitation • Reduced fear • No recent cases of robbery have been reported • People can go to the jungle to do their business • The community is progressing: people have more personal housing etc. • The environment is more favourable for business • Developmental programmes have been established

As the tables reveal, there are both similarities and differences on how the men experienced the “before” situation and how they portray the “now” situation. As far as the similarities are concerned, all groups agreed that prior to 1997, guns had become part of people’s culture: As one participant working for a local NGO in Angkor Thom district pointed out, “prior to 1997 weapons had become our friends and almost everybody was armed”. It was also noted that the previous situation undermined development most specifically because of inaccessibility to farmlands due to insecurity resulting from widespread SALW and mines. This curtailed local people’s movement and led to economic hardships such as serious food shortages. Additionally, all of the men’s focus groups concurred that as

a result of war and chaos, all social and economic infrastructures had disappeared or were badly damaged leading to social evils such as lack of basic needs: health, water, sanitation, education, and housing. In particular, border-based men pointed out specific issues, such as how simple disputes, which traditionally used to be solved amicably, now resulted in shootings and deaths. The easy availability of SALW in a community clearly can undermine local mechanisms for dispute resolution and also transform small disputes into bigger conflicts. Similarly, NGOs dealing with children and women issues pointed out how children had become aggressive and sometimes would draw their parent's guns when quarrelling among themselves.

There were similarities and differences also in how the men experienced the "now" situation. All focus groups generally agreed that the "now" situation represented significant normality and peace, illustrated by specific positive developments. They mentioned that after the weapon collection programme, people have been able to refocus their minds on work. As one participant put it: "there is an environment for doing business and thus development can be evidenced by people who have bought cars and motorbikes, and built houses".

There was a general consensus among all men's groups that widespread SALW were not conducive for post-war peace-building efforts or the reconstruction of people's livelihoods. "People always fear to invest in an environment in which they are not sure of security," said one local participant from Angkor Thom district.

Definition of insecurity

Echoing the Albanian case study, all men's focus groups mentioned "insecurity" as the main reason for acquiring weapons. In order to find out what was meant with this, the facilitators asked men to describe what they considered to be "insecurity". Different explanations were given. For example, border-based men described insecurity as "a situation whereby one is always in fear and scare", as "fear of robbery of livestock", as "any armed violence and communities fighting among themselves", and by describing a situation "when we are intimidated especially by government officials". Urban-based men described insecurity as: "a situation with sporadic shootings", "killing of people's livestock", "drug users committing

crime”, as well as “inability to satisfy basic needs such as food, remaining poverty and shortage of farming tools as well as mines”. According to rural based men, the major meaning of insecurity is “intimidation by government officials”, “fear of being blasted by mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO)”, and situations where “people are robbed of the livestock, and community violence prevails”.

Looking at the above information, the PM&E team concluded that men conceive insecurity to range from lack of access to basic human needs to curtailed freedom, lack of protection of their individual human rights and property, as well as environmental contamination in areas where they earn their livelihoods. From this analysis, it can be concluded that despite the districts visited being categorized as rural, urban and border areas by virtue of their geographical location, the socio-economic environment of all of them can best be described as rural. This can partly explain the reason for mentioning communal security and the need to clear farmlands of mines and UXO as very crucial.

Overall goals and purposes, and strategies to achieve them

When asked about the overall goals of weapon collection and WfD projects, men’s focus groups gave varying responses. While urban-based men described the goal of weapon collection being “the need to restore peace, and to get rid of fear from people” and while they wanted to reduce violence in the communities and start respecting the law, rural-based men viewed the programmes as having been initiated because “we needed secure environment for peace and happiness”, “we wanted to eliminate armed robberies and violence that had characterised the everyday life of our community”, and “we wanted to get rid of SALW as the first step towards rebuilding our livelihoods after a long civil war”. In the same vein, border-based men asserted that they wanted to reduce injuries resulting from SALW, mines and UXOs, to seek durable peace, security and free movement, previously curtailed by insecurity, and to eliminate illegal activities that were being carried out with arms.

While differences between men’s portrayal of the situation could be due to many reasons, for example geographical location of their communities and the extent to which the civil war and proliferation of SALW had affected their particular communities, there nonetheless exist

common denominators in their responses, such as the need to work for durable peace and security by reducing robberies, violence, murders and injuries resulting from the misuse of arms. Above all, all men's focus groups stressed the need to create an environment favourable to rebuilding their livelihoods.

In describing their experience on the pursued weapon collection strategies, all men's focus groups recognised the effectiveness of exchanging weapons for development, even though in some regions this approach was never applied.¹² In addition, sensitisation and awareness-raising activities in informing the population about the dangers of SALW were appreciated as important strategies. In general, Table 4.3 summarises the different elements of strategies, mentioned by men's focus groups.

Table 4.3: Strategies Mentioned by Men's Focus Groups

Urban-based men	Rural-based men	Border-based men
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General disarmament programme following a negotiated agreement • Awareness-raising campaigns • Information outreach programmes • WfD and other projects • Inter-community meetings • Community cooperation • House-to-house sensitisation about the law • Confidence-building measures • Public destruction of collected weapons • Establishment of police posts at commune level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitisation workshops • Civil society involvement • Use of posters • Increase in the prize of ammunition • Development assistance encouraging the participation of local people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Sub-Decree No. 38 (1999) • Community meetings • Participation of local people • Community working as a group • Public availing information to the police • Awareness and information sharing among family, neighbours and relatives • Police reaching out to communities

Almost all strategies applied to encourage people to surrender weapons were similar. However, some of them need to be mentioned here because of their significant importance. For example, the establishment of police posts at the commune level was considered as an important factor,

because it was seen as a guarantee to the community that alternative security measures were being put in place. This is particularly relevant in circumstances, where local communities have well-founded fears over possessing weapons. The lesson learned is that for a weapon collection programme to be effective there should be alternative security mechanisms in which the affected people trust. Similarly, measures that give confidence and courage to people to either provide information or surrender their weapons, were found crucial. In this respect, men pointed out measures such as an amnesty law and unwavering government commitment to implement it, public destruction of collected weapons, mechanisms for encouraging full participation of socio-economic-political groups and above all, a well-conceived incentive scheme with projects that address human insecurities of the local people.

Assessing the impact and constraints of WfD programmes

The overwhelming view was that when assessing the impact of these projects, one needs to look at the extent to which local people have participated. As one participant pointed out “success depends on people’s willingness to cooperate”: in particular, border-based men noted that the impact of weapon collection schemes should be tested against four elements: 1) whether a desire to get rid of weapons from communities by the local people has been created; 2) the level of participation of the local people; 3) relationship between security forces, especially the police and local communities; and 4) how local people perceive the benefits accruing from WfD projects. Male participants also mentioned an increase in the hatred of guns: “we now understand very well the dangers associated with keeping a gun—we hate guns”, said a participant from Snuol. Another important factor cited by all men’s focus groups was that weapon collection programmes had set conditions that permitted the resumption of normal life and economic development in their areas. A further positive impact was the fact that in all the research areas, most of the weapons hitherto possessed by individuals had been retrieved.

In relation to the impact of weapon collection programmes on improved human security, general experiences of focus group participants showed that WfD programmes have a more profound impact on communities if they target the vulnerabilities within those communities. This was in particular cited to have been the impact on border-based

communities where a comprehensive and integrated WfD approach had been in effect.¹³ However, in general, all men's focus group participants agreed that the fact that so many weapons were removed from the communities and destroyed is a very powerful indicator of success. Other indicators listed by the men further embodied the general security situation following the collection activities and WfD projects. Among these indicators, the reduction of violence was noted: "there is now less armed violence and most people who fled their homes have returned".

Men's focus groups gave several answers when asked about constraints faced in implementing weapon collection and WfD programmes. In what seemed to be a total reversal of all the positive impacts, it was pointed out that as a result of weapons collection and disarmament in general, some ex-combatants within the focus groups pointed out how it had now become difficult for them to earn a living. Other major derailing factors mentioned by the men included:

- (a) little time for educating and sensitising local people, especially those who are resistant to turn in the weapons;
- (b) inability of local authorities to clearly explain project aims to the local people;
- (c) the difficulty of reaching more local people, especially those located in forest;
- (d) the inability to reach caches that are still hidden in the jungle due to the fear of mines;
- (e) improvised guns used by criminals are difficult to detect;
- (f) "connected" people who do not respect the law keep weapons to do illegal business and other criminal activities; and
- (g) the issue of bringing on board those who wanted to keep their weapons for hunting purposes.

An additional derailing factor was that weapon collection programmes in general were implemented sporadically; they were neither continuous nor progressive, leaving those involved in the process sometimes discouraged. In other instances men mentioned that local people thought that they were to be given rice if they handed over weapons, and were discouraged when discovering that rice was not given. One derailing factor was also that mechanisms for turning in weapons secretly were never put in place and as a result, some weapons holders were afraid to come forward.

Men's suggestions of how the constraints could be overcome differed from area to area. According to the border-based Snuol men, WfD programmes combined with a proper reach-out strategy of awareness-raising at all levels is vital. The Snuol focus group also mentioned that the fact that the government realised that it could not solve the problem of SALW proliferation without involving the local people also contributed to overcoming some of the derailing factors. They were of the view that in general, good examples set by government officials, such as handing over their weapons first, are crucial in overcoming the constraints to voluntary weapons collection. Urban-based men mentioned that despite civil wars having affected people's norms, local Cambodian people have respect for the law.

Finally, men's focus groups stated that cooperation among local people as well as with local and national authorities is a very important factor in overcoming constraints. They also concurred that WfD projects, even though they cannot address all needs of the communities, give impetus for the surrender of weapons, and also set example for community-based development, which other agencies could follow. Even in areas, where EU-ASAC had not implemented WfD projects, projects implemented by other agencies were considered as reward for the communities for having surrendered their weapons.

DETERMINING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS: EVALUATING PROJECTS IDENTIFICATION AND DESIGN

In order for the facilitators to better understand the interviewees' conception of "participation", they were asked to define the term. After a lengthy exchange of views, the general consensus among the border-based group was that participation means "community members working together", "resolving problems through discussion", "accepting everyone's opinion", "helping one another" and "reaching consensus". Urban-based men defined participation as "giving advice to external actors by the local people", "people meeting to discuss and sharing their concerns", and "committing resources and time to a project", while rural-based men considered participation as "putting aside time for our personal business to contribute to the community". Also the direct contribution to build community social and economic infrastructure, such as three to five per

cent of projects' total cost was considered as participation.¹⁴ Adding to what they understand by participation, rural-based men also mentioned direct contribution in the form of providing their labour as well as ideas. It seems clear that the interviewed men understood participation to mean the involvement of local communities at all levels of weapon collection programmes. The research team discovered that the concept of participation is somehow embedded in the culture of Cambodian people. As one participant said: "for centuries people have maintained Buddhist monks by providing them food and other necessities of which everyone is proud". Based on the strong sense of community participation evident from the testimony of the local people, it became evident that in some areas previous weapon collection implementers had not given local people enough opportunities to participate in designing the projects.

After agreeing on the central concepts, men's focus groups proceeded to name the various categories of participants in weapon collection programmes. The rural-based men mentioned the community (meaning all the people in community), commune council members, and women. In particular, they noted that women are getting increasingly involved because they have more time in the community than men, who are more occupied with their profession. Urban-based men mentioned the commune council and community as a whole (ordinary men and women), while the border-based men's focus group mentioned the community, district and local authorities, and village leaders. The structure of local government administration in Cambodia has sub-structures, which bring people together for meetings at a local level. In addition, there are commune and elder councils at lower levels. However, some participants argued that these lower level decision-making structures have politically become so partisan that their decisions hardly represent local people's wishes.

Male participants were also asked to list the various activities undertaken in their communities to support weapon collection and WfD programmes, and to ascertain which actors and institutions had made which decisions. Several general activities and projects, and five main actors were identified by the men, and are presented in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Main Actors Identified by Men

Weapon collection activities	Weapons for Development projects	Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dissemination, sensitisations and awareness-raising (placing posters) Inter-community meetings Formation of weapons collection groups Turning in weapons and also digging up the ones hidden in forests Monitoring groups Transporting retrieved weapons Registering retrieved weapons Destruction of weapons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing 'seed money' as an incentive Providing rice¹⁵ Implementation of various incentive projects (schools, wells, latrines, roads, seed distribution, pagoda construction, Food for Work programme) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Commune and sangkat chiefs District and provincial authorities NGOs

In general, all men's focus groups identified a similar group of decision makers. Differences, however, occurred in the extent to which men felt various decision makers were involved in the projects. In all focus groups, the following actors were identified: the community as a whole (men, women, and youth), commune and sangkat chiefs and councils, district and provincial authorities, and NGOs. However, when asked to vote about who made the above decisions, the results were as summarised in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: Reviewing Decision-Making and Influence Using Pictorial Diagrams: Men's Focus Groups, Cambodia

Decision maker	General community (men, women, youth)	Commune council/chief	District authorities	NGOs/ external agents
No. of decisions	2-3	3	2-3	2

To all men's focus groups, the roles played by students as well as the police were crucial. There were some regional differences in how the men perceived the role of different decision makers. For example, with border-based men, data indicated that equal numbers of decisions were made between the community and commune authorities, but for the urban and rural areas, it was noted that initially most decisions were made by local authorities, and local communities had to follow what was decided by the government. Rural-based men argued that orders to collect weapons were made by district authorities to commune chiefs who then would in turn issue instructions to the communities. All focus groups recognised the very important role played by commune authorities in weapons collection as well as in implementing community development programmes.¹⁶ There seemed to be general consensus among men's focus groups that all institutions and individuals listed above are very important in any weapon collection programmes, hence suggesting that planners of weapon collection programmes should always first make a situation analysis with a view to understanding the local and traditional institution as well finding out how communal actors relate to each other. Only after this evaluation can a weapon collection programme successfully proceed.

CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEWS: EVALUATING PROJECT APPRAISAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

Comparison of the WfD approach and previous incentives

When asked whether there had been any previous mechanisms for the collection of weapons and whether the new approach had taken them into account, different responses arose from different focus groups: According to the border-based men, there had been no previous mechanisms for weapons collection in the communities they knew. The older ones among the group remembered that during the 1970s weapons had flooded into their communities. On the other hand, the urban-based men in an area former controlled by Khmer Rouge could recall fighters handing in old weapons and being given new ones, so that the old ones could be destroyed and never be re-used. The rural-based men could not recall any previous mechanisms and hence asserted that there was nothing to compare with.

Convincing weapon-holders to turn in their arms

Rural-based men mentioned that the main rationale in convincing weapon-holders to turn in their arms had been the desire for peace and security; the need to stop “useless” killing and injuries and to avoid their children following their experiences of suffering such as being conscripted to fight.¹⁷ Rural-based men mentioned also how they wanted to re-start their livelihoods by reviving agriculture and other developmental activities, which had been severely affected by armed violence. On the other hand, border-based men pointed out that it was the general desire by the local people, having realised that no development will come to their area in the environment of insecurity. Urban-based men mentioned that the war of attrition had affected almost everybody in their communities causing deaths, injuries and destruction of property, and that therefore there was the need for peace. “Put down your guns, take up the Dharma”, had been the driving slogan in the area to restore peace.

When discussing what types of weapons were turned in first, men’s focus groups’ answers reflected the geopolitical alignment to particular fighting groups. For example in Snuol district, which borders southern Vietnam, the majority of the weapons collected were AKs of Chinese origin, the kind of weapons used by the Vietnamese army. In other regions too, AKs made up the majority of retrieved weapons.

The facilitators also wanted to know men’s opinions regarding what should be done with the collected weaponry. The general response from all men’s focus groups was that collected weapons should be publicly destroyed. The men gave the following reasons: a) they are illegal weapons which have nothing to do with national security; b) by destruction, leakage into the hands of criminals can be avoided; and c) victims of armed violence, especially the disabled and those that have lost the relatives, get satisfied when they see that weapons are being destroyed.

When discussing the best practices that the men would recommend regarding the handling of weapons during the collection exercise, all men’s focus groups suggested that the process should proceed in the following manner:

- first, information about the goal of weapons collection should be disseminated;

- special groups should be selected to handle weapons or to dig them from the jungle;
- retrieved weapons should be counted and brought to the commune chief, where they also should be stored. Also, wherever government institutions such as military garrisons, police outposts or local administration offices do exist, weapons should be kept there;
- the weapons should be registered by showing which village has handed them over, and then transported to the district;
- commune council officials should accompany the weapons transportation up to the district to ensure that they are not tampered with;
- later, the weapons should be destroyed publicly in the presence of community representatives.

All men argued that this process is vital for the success of weapons collection, in particular concerning the issue of institutions to which weapons should be handed to, or where they should be stored in cases when government facilities such as police stations are unavailable. In this respect, commune chiefs were found to be central, because they are trusted by many people.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR APPROACH: EVALUATING PROJECT MONITORING

In the beginning of Community Calendar exercises, which were conducted in the same venues as the previous exercises, the facilitators explained the purpose of the technique, and the participants were asked to recall major weapon collection activities and WfD projects in their areas, as identified in the previous exercises. Here, men's focus groups identified essentially the same weapon collection activities and WfD projects as those identified in the Determining Decision-Making exercises, with a few additions.

Weapon collection activities and their timing

When discussing the best timing for weapon collection activities, all men's focus groups concurred that the best timing would be between

December and May, with the exception of sensitisation and awareness activities, which could go on throughout the year. The reasons given for this timing was that when implemented this time, the programmes would have greater impact because: a) this period is generally a dry season, and family work is less demanding (no preparation for rice cultivation or harvesting); b) many local people will be willing to participate in weapons collection activities, such as attending meetings and going to the jungle; c) the area is not flooded and weapon diggers will find it easier both to dig up weapons and to access the jungle; d) during this period, many locals go to the jungle to collect various products and sometimes find guns; e) this is an immediate post-harvest period, and thus people can contribute food and other resources to the teams collecting weapons; and f) it is easier to transport weapons during the dry season as the roads are passable. In discussing such issues, participants noted that the weapons collection officials had hardly ever considered such matters. However, “although they may look trivial, they are important for implementers to know”, noted one participant, appreciating the power of applying the PM&E approach.

Weapons for development projects and their timing

While discussing what they consider to be the best incentive or activity in encouraging people to surrender their weapons, men’s focus groups gave different preferences. For example, the rural-based men mentioned that the first incentive should be that the government would maintain safety and security of its people. With regard to specific incentives, they mentioned micro credit schemes such as food, farm animals, dykes for irrigation, schools and boreholes. This was surprising to the international agency operating in the area, since the agency had all-along been spending its resources only on sensitisation and awareness programmes. The urban-based men mentioned that whereas roads, wells, sanitation, construction of pagodas and provision of seeds were some of the important incentives that were provided by different organizations, their most preferred incentives would have been micro credits. For the border-based men, priority incentives mentioned were schools, wells, roads and dykes. The men reasoned that they preferred such physical infrastructures because “these have improved most people’s standard of living”.

The analysis indicates that designing Weapons for Development projects requires a thorough study of different social and economic groups that takes into account the different needs of rural, urban and border-based

societies. For example, project successes in rural areas will not likely be replicable in an urban setting and vice-versa. In addition, local conditions such as the extent to which the conflict affected the local people may crucially influence people's priorities and choices. In general, from the conclusion of findings, men expressed the view that the most successful projects in collecting weapons had been those that had addressed the immediate post war human needs and physical security in the communities, and had revitalised the social and economic infrastructure for rebuilding their livelihoods. As pointed by one participant in Angkor Thom district "natural resources do exist and people understand their problems and how to solve them, but they lack financial means, skills and infrastructure" Hence it was a general recommendation that interventions in WfD would always attempt to effectively address the root causes of small arms proliferation.

Agencies implementing WfD programmes in Cambodia have not consciously considered such issues in designing their weapon collection programmes and hence all men's focus groups seemed to conclude that as a result, most interventions have proved unsuccessful. In fact some interventions by certain agencies seem to have eroded local people's voluntary spirit.

General findings concerning activity and project monitoring

While discussing the aspects that the men found to be the most crucial in monitoring the success or failure of weapon collection programmes, focus groups identified the following indicators, beyond those named in the previous sections:

- (a) ensuring that all weapons retrieved reach the first place of storage and thereafter the district headquarters (preventing leakage);
- (b) registering weapons with serial numbers (if any), type and origin;
- (c) ensuring that weapons collected from one community are not claimed by another community;
- (d) making sure that information about the whole programme is well kept;
- (e) monitoring incidents where arms are used to reflect whether the number of weapons used by criminals is increasing or decreasing;
- (f) making a periodic assessment with a view to identify those who would want to hand over their weapons but might not have heard the message;

- (g) reviewing whether local disputes such as land disputes continue to be resolved by armed violence; and
- (h) re-counting the weapons prior to destroying them, witnessed by representatives from different organizations.

The researchers wanted to know which modalities were used to enable everybody to participate in the implementation processes, and also to ensure that the benefits accruing from weapon collection programmes would go to the whole community. Discussion on this aspect invoked differing opinions. According to the border-based men, the main way for ordinary citizens to participate was to provide labour force. The region, where the border-based men's focus group lived, has seen the implementation of comprehensive WfD programmes, with agencies like EU-ASAC providing financial and technical expertise in building a school and bore holes. To ensure that benefits reached all the villages, modalities, such as community meetings, were organized to seek people's views and preferences. One of the main principles was that the incentives should be such as to benefit the whole society, avoiding conflicts since no individual could claim to own them. However, the border-based men also noted that because there had not been enough consultation prior to undertaking the project, the primary school that was built as part of one programme is not located in the centre of the villages that collected weapons, and as such, children from distant villages have to travel a long way to school.¹⁸ The experience of both urban and rural-based men was that project implementation had been decided between funding agencies and local leaders, who would only brief the involved communities afterwards. Commune councils, chiefs and sub-chiefs were responsible for everything, including the way in which projects were distributed. For example, the urban-based men mentioned that only five out of eleven villages in Ochra Commune were given boreholes and yet they all participated in the weapon collection programme. The men argued that such an approach is far from ideal. As an old man noted: "we do not even know which organizations helped our commune with these infrastructures".

Men were also asked, whether they thought that weapons collection and WfD programmes addressed the root causes of getting armed in local communities. According to the rural-based men's focus group, "the local communities know their problems and how to solve them, as long as they take ownership of the whole process". The urban-based men argued that it is difficult for external actors to address the root causes, when the people

involved do not even know who has initiated the programmes and when the provided incentives are not sufficient. On other hand, however, responses of the focus group in border area, where local participation seemed to have been high, were reflecting general contentment with programmes.

When discussing the lessons learnt from participating in weapons collection and WfD programmes, the responses of the focus groups reflected the extent to which the particular regions had been involved in the implementation processes. For example, men in the border-based focus group noted how they had learnt new skills such as building, constructing latrines, and repairing boreholes. Also, seeing their parents participating in building the school has encouraged the children to study. People have also learned to willingly sacrifice the little they have for the benefit of the whole community. The border-based men concluded: “no participation—no consensus—no success”. As a lesson learned from weapon collection programmes in their area, both the urban and rural focus groups mentioned similar experiences, including sensitisation on SALW laws and how to respect the law in general. These two focus groups did not mention whether they had learnt new skills.

The responses from focus groups reflect how different approaches to weapons collection can either empower or isolate local communities. Again, full local participation in weapons collection came out in the exercises as an important community empowering tool.

THREE STAR GAME: EVALUATING PROJECT PERFORMANCE

In all the regions, the number of participants continued to increase throughout the exercises, and this fact demonstrates local people’s interest in PM&E exercises. Facilitators commenced the Three Start Game exercises by asking the men to recall the major weapon collection activities and WfD projects, as identified in the previous exercises. Participants were also asked to list the institutions and individuals associated with the implementation of the identified activities and projects.

The contribution of weapon collection activities, WfD projects, and participating institutions and individuals was assessed with a view to study which of these had performed better than the others and why. In general,

men's focus groups assessed the performance of the implemented weapon collection activities and WfD projects, as well as the individual actors and institutions that were associated with implementation, as follows:

The overarching finding from all men's focus groups was that the main contribution to the projects had been the willingness of local communities to contribute to the success of weapon collection projects. According to the men, this cooperative attitude was manifested through: (a) the acceptance by the community of its role as a participant in weapon collection; (b) the decisions to dedicate some resources to assist those collecting weapons; (c) direct participation in meetings and contributions to build community infrastructures; (d) sharing information with those collecting programmes such as the police; and (e) sharing ideas.

When considering which kinds of project had led to the surrender of most weapons, the men's experience seemed to suggest that the projects which had provided incentives to local people, such as those that helped fight illiteracy and addressed other basic human needs, had been the most fruitful.

Men's focus groups assessed and ranked the weapon collection activities and WfD programmes as shown in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Assessing the Performance of Weapon Collection Activities—
The Three Star Game, Men's Focus Groups**

Weapons collection activity	Rating			Rating criteria
	Urban	Border	Rural	
Awareness and sensitisations programme	★	★★	★★★	Rated as "very excellent" by border-based men, who were citing the increased awareness among the local people. The urban-based rated it "fairly excellent" citing that although it is important, it was implemented intermittently and only few people participated. The rural-based rate it "very excellent", citing that people became aware of the dangers related to weapons and responded positively.

Weapons collection activity	Rating			Rating criteria
	Urban	Border	Rural	
Community meetings		★		Rated as “fairly excellent” by the border-based men, who were citing that community meetings are difficult to call together and are mostly attended by men. The rest of the men’s focus groups did not rate this activity.
Posters		★		Rated as “fairly excellent” by border-based men, who were citing that many people cannot relate the message to actual problem. The rest of the men’s focus groups did not rate this activity.
Digging up weapons from jungles/ general weapons collection	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by all men’s focus groups, which were citing that weapon collection had changed the mentality of many people and thus reduced the number of arms in circulation.
Registration/ Transportation/Storage	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by all men’s focus groups, which were citing reasons such as: local people would escort the tractors carrying the weapons, and there were no reports of weapons getting away from storage.
Destruction	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by rural and border-based men, because some of the local people had witnessed the destruction of weapons, and people had also got satisfied when weapons were destroyed. Rated as “fairly excellent” by urban-based men, who were citing that some of the weapons were never destroyed.
Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)	★			Rated as very excellent by the urban-based (the majority of whom ex-Khmer Rouge fighters) citing that it was a major weapon collection programme in their region. The rest of the men’s focus groups did not rate this activity.

**Table 4.7: Assessing the Performance of WfD Projects—
The Three Star Game, Men’s Focus Groups**

Weapons for Development project	Rating			Rating criteria
	Urban	Border	Rural	
Water Wells	★	★★	★★★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by border and rural-based focus groups, which were citing that people have access to clean water.</p> <p>Rated only as “good” by urban-based men, who were citing that though important the well constructed are accessed by few villages (5 out of 11).</p>
Roads	★	★★	★★★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by both the rural and border-based men, because people can travel after mines have been cleared and hence can do business.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the urban-based men, who were citing that despite people having contributed their money for repairing roads, the condition of the roads has not yet improved.</p>
Schools	★★	★★	★★★	<p>All rated schools as “very excellent” citing that they do not want their children to be illiterate and vulnerable like they themselves (parents). Urban-based men cited that there were already enough schools in the area.¹⁹</p>
Health Centre	★		★★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by rural-based men, who were highlighting its importance in the community.²⁰</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the urban-based men, who were citing that the health centre is not accessible to many local people and also that there is “discrimination” in giving services in favour of few people who are known to those working there.</p> <p>The border-based men did not rate this project activity.</p>

Weapons for Development project	Rating			Rating criteria
	Urban	Border	Rural	
Fishing Ponds			★	Rated only as “good” by the rural-based men citing that the whole project failed as there is no water in the ponds. ²¹ The rest of the focus groups did not mention this project.
Sanitation (Latrines)	★		★	Rated only as “good” by the rural-based men citing that they are too few to cover the whole population and only built at schools and pagodas. Rated “very excellent” by the urban-based men citing that they introduced hygiene into the community for the first time. The border-based men did not rate this activity.
Irrigation Canals (dykes)			★	Rated as “fairly excellent” by the rural-based men citing that water is only needed in the dry season.

Men assessed the performance of the institutions and individuals involved in weapon collection activities and Weapons for Development projects as shown in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8: Assessing the Performance of Institutions and Individuals—The Three Star Game, Men’s Focus Groups

Institution/ Individual	Rating			Rating criteria
	Urban	Border	Rural	
Ordinary village man	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by all men, citing that they participated directly in handing over their weapons and also dug caches from the jungles.
Ordinary village woman	★	★	★	Rated as “fairly excellent” by all three focus groups citing various reasons, including a notion that women could not involve directly because of the domestic core as well as the task of looking after the children.

Institution/ Individual	Rating			Rating criteria
	Urban	Border	Rural	
Youth			★	Rated as “good” by rural-based men, because “they perpetuated the use of weapons”. Only few were willing to contribute. The rest of the focus groups did not rate these actors.
Village Council/ Chiefs		★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by both border and rural-based men, citing that they are trusted, and that the success of programmes depends on them. The urban-based men did not rate these actors.
External Agencies	★			Rated as “very excellent” by the urban-base men, who were citing that they provided funds as well as promoted awareness-raising programmes. The rest of the groups did not rate these actors.
Monks	★		★	Monks were rated as “fairly excellent” by urban-based men, citing that although monks educate and have influence, they don’t directly participate in weapon collection. Rated as “very excellent” by the rural-based men, who were citing that monks disseminate messages.
Civilian Intelligence Groups			★	Rated as “very excellent” by the rural-based men citing that they provided information the police on those who had illegal guns. The rest of the groups did not rate these actors.

CONCLUSIONS

Responses from men's focus groups largely reflected the results obtained in the Albanian case study in emphasizing a marked improvement of conditions after a weapon collection or WfD programme. All men had realized that the proliferation of SALW was not conducive for post-conflict peace-building efforts or the reconstruction of people's livelihoods. According to the men, the main reason for acquiring weapons is insecurity. There were, however, differences in what the interviewed men perceived as insecurity, as well as in what they thought would be the most effective ways to decrease it. All focus groups underlined the importance of including local communities in both planning and undertaking weapon collection and WfD programmes. Since different communities have differing security concerns and also the overall situation in societies vary, the strategies applied as well as incentives offered in exchange for weapons, should vary according to communities' needs and wishes while consistently addressing especially decreasing illiteracy and providing the satisfaction of basic human needs. Men's focus groups gave various suggestions about how to best undertake safe and effective weapon collection project. The importance of community authorities was underlined, however in connection with wide participation of ordinary people.

All men's focus groups concurred that the best timing for weapon collection activities would be between the months of December and May, especially because of the favourable climatic conditions of that period.

Overall, men's focus groups noted that different approaches to weapon collection can either empower or isolate local communities, and that full local participation is a major community empowering tool.

CHAPTER 5

WOMEN'S FOCUS GROUPS: EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF RURAL-BASED, URBAN-BASED AND BORDER-BASED WOMEN

Women's focus groups did fifteen PM&E field exercises, using the five techniques presented in Chapter 2 of this report. Five exercises were conducted with border-based women in Snuol district's Pytnou commune (conducted at the village community centre), five with urban-based women in Pailin district's Ochra Commune (conducted inside the village pagoda), and five with rural-based women in Angkor Thom district, Lean Dai commune (also conducted inside the village pagoda).

BEFORE AND NOW SITUATIONS ANALYSIS (BANSA): EVALUATING PROJECT GOALS AND PURPOSES

After having introduced themselves, facilitators began the BANSA exercise. Discussions arising from the questions and answers, as well as from the analysis of the BANSA diagram produced the following input from women's focus groups.

Before" and "Now" Situations

Women were quick to grasp the intentions of the exercise. For example, the urban-based women immediately recalled how mines and grenades had been discovered behind the town school, as well as within the pagoda compound and near people's homes. All three women's focus groups—rural, urban and border-based—concurred that "before" situation had been marked by difficulties in their daily lives, as well as by general fear and violence. Some of the responses are described in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: “Before” Situations

Urban-based women	Rural-based women	Border-based women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grenades and mines were found near people’s homes, the school and pagoda compounds • “We could not move freely” • Farmlands could not be accessed due to mines • Roads and village paths were mined • There were no social amenities, such as health centres • Some villagers fled from the area • Children were not attending school • There were no tourists coming to the area • People had stopped raising animals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The situation was bad, there was poverty, diseased etc. • People were always on the move • “We were under constant fear of being kidnapped by the Khmer Rouge” • Fear of being caught between different battle forces • “We could not rear livestock because of mines” • “It was an anarchy-shootings and open display of weapons” • “We could not go to jungles to collect forest products for business” • We were living in shelters rather houses” • “There was no tourism” • “There were no schools, pagodas or a health centre” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weapons were scattered everywhere • There were robberies and shootings • Killings were common • Travelling to villages was impossible • There was no cultivation, nor hunting or gathering in forests²² • People could not guard their farms • “There were mine explosions resulting in death and injuries” • “We could not access to farmlands due to the presence of mines as well as the fear to be attacked by gunmen” • “There was a shortage of all human needs such as a health centre” • No development agencies or NGOs could operate in the area due to prevailing insecurity

Women’s responses on their experiences of the “before” situation reflected almost similar trends among all focus groups, with the exception of the rural-based women, who pointed out the fear of abduction by the Khmer Rouge. During the discussions, all of the women emphasized the problem of the lack of health centres, proper shelter as well as the inaccessibility of farmlands; issues which directly affected their day-to-day lives.

When speaking about the situation after the implementation of weapon collection programmes, women generally expressed the view that the security situation had fundamentally improved, manifested by the resumption of normal life and economic activities, as shown in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2

Urban-based women	Rural-based women	Border-based women
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We have roads, a school, a health centre, a pagoda and a market” • There are new services like electricity • “We can now farm our lands” • “Our children can attend school” • “People can freely go anywhere and there are no anarchical shootings” • Tourists are coming to the area again • “Some people have bought cars and motorbikes” • There are now outreach programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We have a health centre and boreholes for water” • Security has improved • “Children can play around without us being worried about mines” • Guns are no longer carried openly in public • “Tourists come to our village” • “There are several NGOs active in the village”²³ • “People have acquired properties, such as bicycles, motorbikes and animals” • “We are aware of our rights and obligations” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now we have village paths” • “We have a school, boreholes, but no health centre” • “Formerly displaced people have now resettled in their homes” • Mines have been cleared from farmlands • “We can get materials from the jungles” • “Our children can attend school” • “We can move freely without the fear of being harmed” • People have been able to restart their economic activities • There has been a resumption of tourism

All women’s focus groups asserted that the “before” situation had been caused by the impact of war and armed violence. All groups also agreed that the present situation had fostered some development in their areas, mainly because development agencies and NGOs had come to their assistance. The women also mentioned that important income-generating activities, such as tourism, raising animals, and harvesting forest products could now be undertaken in a manner not possible before. They pointed out, how the “now” situation has facilitated child development programmes such as

public immunisations and education, all of which concerned the women in their capacity as mothers. The accessibility of farmlands and other places from which they diversify their incomes, significantly increased their means of survival.

Definition of insecurity

As with the men's focus groups, the word "insecurity" dominated the discussion describing the "before" situation. To fully understand the attributes given to this term, facilitators asked the women to discuss the meaning of "insecurity" in the context of SALW proliferation in their communities. Again, as it was in Mali and Albania, women illustrated insecurity in the form of different descriptive statements. border-based women defined it as a situation "when there is no public order", "when policemen mount illegal checkpoints for the purpose of extortion", when the law is applied unequally for the favour of the wealthy, or when there is gambling in the community and those that lose their money resort to violence. The border-based women concluded that insecurity is "any obstacle that hinders the community from doing business or developing". Urban-based women defined insecurity with reference to the specific threats posed by SALW proliferation, such as robberies and sporadic shootings, or living in constant fear. In the same vein, rural-based women considered insecurity in relation to state obligations, such as the failure of the government to protect its citizens from armed robberies, or the open display of illegal weapons. In general women's responses demonstrate how far-reaching and multi-faceted the impacts of SALW proliferations are: they can affect people's lives both socially, economically, politically, physically and culturally. Again, this suggests that the best means to assess the impact of the proliferation and misuse of SALW is to look at them in the wider context of human security.²⁴

Overall goals and purposes, and strategies to achieve them

Women's focus groups also discussed why there had been a need to start weapon collection programmes, and what these programmes were all about. The discussions generally reflected that all women had an idea about the nature of these programmes, even though they gave different explanations to the main rationale of commencing weapon collection programmes. From the analysis of the data gathered, the views expressed by border-based women can be summarized as the desire for peace,

security, restoring public order and the need to re-launch meaningful and sustainable development. As one participant noted: “we do not want any more fighting, whether by Khmer Rouge, anarchy groups or any other actors; we do not want to hear any more shootings in community”. Almost similar arguments were advanced by both the urban and rural-based women. Urban-based women also mentioned the need to resume “normal” development and to prevent the re-occurrence of conflict by introducing tranquillity in the society. Rural-based women added issues such as getting rid of SALW as a precursor for development.

Women expressed different opinions about the preferable strategies of weapon collection programmes. According to border-based women, the most important initiatives would be the involvement of local people in searching weapons in the jungles, the willingness of local communities to contribute money, assistance given to the police by providing them with all relevant information, and the logistical support for NGOs. The women also mentioned the need to educate children on how to respond in case of finding weapons. According to the women, these strategies could work in tandem with other initiatives, such as WfD projects, Food for Work schemes, and well-planned outreach sensitisation strategies. Above all, the women stated that it was their desire to work for peace.

In general, women concluded that a comprehensive and integrated approach is necessary for the successful implementation of weapon collection programmes. This approach should combine WfD projects, Food for Work schemes, sensitisation programmes such as the “neighbour-to-neighbour approach”, and support of the police. Unfortunately however, projects in Cambodia have so far not adopted integrated approaches, but have rather been concentrating only on certain aspects of SALW proliferation.

When discussing other conditions that would facilitate community disarmament programmes, all the women agreed that full community involvement was of paramount importance for a successful weapon collection and disarmament project. However, according to their experiences, they pointed out that the level of community participation is currently not sufficient, but should be augmented by other conditions, including:

- (a) an amnesty period, so that those turning in weapons would not be punished by the government;
- (b) means to transport the weapons as soon as they are retrieved (in case of digging them from the forests);
- (c) ending the war through a negotiated peace agreement granting equal opportunities for all parties;
- (d) promoting transparency and the use of local institutions;
- (e) meeting peoples' basic human needs; and
- (f) ensuring that all stockpiles are properly managed.

Assessing the impact and constraints of WfD programmes

Women's focus groups also discussed the impacts and failures of various weapon collection programmes. Depending on the area, participants gave a long list of both quantitative and qualitative indicators for assessing the success of weapon collection and WfD programmes, including: reduction in fear, large number of collected weapons, improved rapport between the ordinary people and the police, significant reduction in accidental killings, reduced sporadic shootings, resumption of free of movement, and the return of the people displaced during the conflict. All women's groups seem to have reached consensus that successful weapons collection is dependent upon the desire by the local communities to work for peace, security and development. As noted by one participant: "if the communities are not interested in development, there will never be security".

Regarding the constraints of weapon collection programmes, women's focus group discussions unravelled several salient issues. These differed from area to area. For example, border-based women mentioned how the weapon diggers sometimes had difficulties in retrieving caches from the ground.²⁵ They also noted that sometimes the diggers were not provided with enough food for the days they spent in the forest, or enough to feed their families. Another constraint was that families of those who participated in the collection used to fear that their husbands and sons would get harmed. This was largely because most of the collected weapons were old and fractioned. Nonetheless, border-based women argued that due to the desire for peace, people continued to participate in the programmes. The urban-based women in Pailin district, which is a former Khmer Rouge controlled area, mentioned how difficult it was to convince some ex-fighter

to give up their weapons because they had not gained full trust in the government. Other constraints they mentioned included people burying the weapons in the ground or selling them to criminals. It was also noted that sometimes when weapons were surrendered, there was no transport available to ship them for storage. Most importantly, urban-based women also mentioned that because of high illiteracy, it had been difficult to bring everybody on board on weapon collection. In addition, when discussing the constraints, rural-based women in particular raised the problem that suspected weapon holders were annoyed with local people who reported them to the police. Rural-based women mentioned also that armed robberies in some areas had increased after weapon collection campaigns, suspecting that criminals knew that their victims no longer had guns to defend themselves.

Women's experiences in weapon collection elicited a number of lessons learned. First, they highlighted the possibility that past experiences might have led to persistent fear of revenge, making people reluctant to come forward to report people possessing illegal weapons. Some people were also suspected of wanting to hold on to their weapons because they lacked alternative security arrangements. Finally, discussions with women's focus groups confirmed that if a conflict does not end in a complete victory of any one group but rather in a consensus, the consensus can enhance the success of future weapon collection programmes.

DETERMINING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS: EVALUATING PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND DESIGN

The facilitators began the Determining Decision-Making Process (DDMP) exercises by asking women's groups to list the various activities that had been implemented in their communities. After identifying the general activities and specific projects, the women were asked which actors had determined which activities, and why.

Like their male counterparts, women were asked to define the term "participation". All the groups agreed that participation means contribution in terms of physical and intellectual resources. For instance, border-based women gave the example of a family member joining a group to dig up weapon caches, and urban-based women voiced issues like "community

sharing ideas”, or “contributing resources to projects, involvement in solving community disputes and direct involvement in collecting weapons”. In the same vein, rural-based women defined participation as direct participation in weapons collection, or giving the local authorities information on weapons. Again, women groups were reluctant to state whether such kind of participation had been exhibited in the design and implementation of previous WfD programmes in their areas.

Women also discussed how decisions were taken as well as who the main actors were who usually take such decisions in their respective communities. Border-based women identified the major decision makers AS the village chief, the military and the community meetings (attended by both men and women). Urban-based women mentioned village chiefs, village group leaders, monks, commune council, and community meeting (attended by men, women and youth), and rural-based women mentioned the village committee for development,²⁶ village chiefs, village group leaders, village solidarity committees, elders and the community as a whole.

The women mentioned the following activities and projects where decisions were made: village meetings, sensitisation and awareness-raising campaigns, collection and handling of weapons, mobilising local people to participate, transporting weapons, monitoring weapons collection and destruction, constructing infrastructures, and providing food for the ones that were digging up weapons in the jungle.

Women’s focus groups identified the most influential actors in weapons collection programmes as shown in Table 5.3.

The women stressed that most decisions are made by men. This was said to be so because women have a lot of domestic work, which curtails their participation. Women also mentioned that youth were hardly given any role in decision-making.

**Table 5.3: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E):
Reviewing Decision-Making and Influence using Pictorial Diagrams:
Women's Focus Groups**

Decision maker	No. of decisions
General community (men, women, youth)	B4
	U1
	R1
Elders	B0
	U0
	R1
NGOs	B1
	U0
	R1
Head of the commune	B2
	U3
	R3
Military/Police	B1
	U1
	R1
Commune councils	B2
	U3
	R2
Monks	B0
	U1
	R1
Village Development and Solidarity committee	B0
	U1
	R1

Key: U (Urban-based), B (Border-based), R (Rural-based)

The results confirm the previous lessons learned. First, where comprehensive and integrated WfD strategies had been applied, the whole community had been included in the decision-making. This contrasts with areas where the majority of decisions were taken by local administration officials. Secondly, the data also confirms how local administration structures (commune councils and chiefs) have a great influence on all communities.

As for the general experience on how weapons collection should be implemented, women's focus groups were the first and foremost of the view that everybody's contribution, whether small or big, should be appreciated, "because all community members wanted peace and security, and weapon collection programmes were one component towards achieving this goal". Border-based women mentioned how consensus through general community is of paramount importance when deciding the objectives and locating specific projects. Urban-based women, on the other hand, were of the view that continuous education of the masses, cooperation with local authorities is important. Rural-based women argued for the need to increase women participation in weapons collection citing "we know more about the community needs, we can lead change in our communities, such as mediating when there is a conflict in our neighbours' homes".

CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEWS: EVALUATING PROJECT APPRAISAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

Since the research project was probing the management cycle of weapons collection and WfD programmes, facilitators asked the women about their experiences on how these programmes were implemented. It was found that the most suitable method to engage the women in a deep and reflective discussion was to conduct Conversational Interviews exercises.

Comparison of the WfD approach and previous incentives

Women were asked recall whether weapon collection programmes had been organized in their communities in the past, or whether there existed any traditional mechanism through which people would have been

able to surrender illegal weapons. The focus groups could not remember any such programmes or mechanisms. In discussing the ongoing weapon collection and WfD programmes, all women's groups mentioned that the WfD approach is the most effective way to attract weapons surrender, especially when implemented in tandem with other programmes, such as sensitisation and awareness-raising. Women pointed out the benefits that have accrued from weapon collection programmes, most which are stated in the "before" situation box. Border-based women specifically argued that the WfD approach would have had a more far-reaching impact if it had engaged women in a discussion such as this one (meaning the PM&E exercise). As much as they appreciated the previous projects, they were of the view that in their capacity as women they would have preferred the following incentives:

- (a) irrigation channels;
- (b) paths to farmlands;
- (c) constructing a health centre and providing medicines;
- (d) agricultural extension services;
- (e) more police posts, especially in villages bordering forests; and
- (f) adult literacy programmes. Border-based women also noted that community education is still needed to stamp out uncouth practises. The women pointed out for example how alternative, improvised weapons are being acquired and how local disputes are still being solved through archaic ways.

Rural-based women, who had not directly benefited from WfD projects, hailed weapon collection programmes especially in terms of sensitisation. They noted the difficulties in building good relations between local people and authorities, and cautioned that implementers of weapon collection programmes should never falsely raise people's expectations. For example, some people had participated in previous programmes with the hope that they would be given rice or money, which, however, were not offered as an incentive.

The foregoing analysis reveals how local people's needs and priorities differ, as revealed by women's focus groups that stressed priorities like health centres, paths to farmland and literacy programmes—incentives which men's groups seemed not have thought of. Whilst aid agencies may not afford to cater for the whole "shopping list" of local communities, it

would be cardinal if they consulted all social groups so as to enable priorities of each group.

Convincing weapon-holders to turn in their arms

Implementing WfD programmes is a challenging undertaking. This is because even though WfD programme incentives are designed to reward the whole community rather than individuals, decisions to hand in weapons are often made by individual weapon holders. Therefore, programme designers need to understand both what is done to convince individual weapon holders to turn in their arms, and how the incentives could best benefit whole communities. In seeking women's experience on this matter, facilitators asked them to reflect on previous weapon collection programmes in their areas and think about which had been the most important motivating factors convincing people to turn in their weapons. Analysis of the responses and explanations revealed a common desire for peace and security, as well as the need to rebuild livelihoods. In addition, women's focus groups voiced explanations specific to local circumstances. For instance, the border-based focus group mentioned that because ordinary people had understood that they had no right to possess weapons and realised that the easy availability of automatic weapons was resulting in increased armed violence, they had to surrender their weapons. While discussing factors specific to their respective regions, both rural and urban-based women's focus groups mentioned how keeping weapons at home had become a hazard to family members, especially to children. They also mentioned some instances where women had been threatened with guns by their drunken husbands.²⁷

All women's focus groups gave a long list of the types of weapons surrendered in the early phases of weapon collection programmes. They concurred that initially old and dilapidated weapons, such as those retrieved from forests, were handed in first. All noted that AK-type weapons were the majority, and included weapons made in several countries, inter alia China, Russian Federation, Czechoslovakia and Pakistan. Border-based women's focus group explained that generally, weapons retrieved from their area were left behind by Vietnamese, Lon Knol and Khmer Rouge forces, which again explains why most of them were old. Urban-based women mentioned AK-types as being the majority and also cited that they had been the ones mostly used in fighting. Rural-based women mentioned

that AK-type rifles had been widely distributed to support groups during the conflicts.

When asked how complete disarmament could be achieved in Cambodia, all women's focus groups alluded to strong laws and the need to satisfy people's basic needs.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR APPROACH: EVALUATING PROJECT MONITORING

Community Calendar Approach exercises were held at the same venues as the previous exercises. Facilitators began the exercises by explaining their purpose. As was done with the previous exercises, participants were then asked to recall the major weapon collection activities and WfD projects undertaken in their communities.

The same activities and projects as identified in Chapter 5.2 were re-stated. The women then plotted each one of them against a specific period in the year when the activity should be implemented, considering when the implementation would have the highest impact in attracting weapons surrender and retrieving the hidden caches from the jungles.

When asked to state their experiences on the best timing for implementing weapon collection programmes, responses and explanations from all focus groups were similar and almost tallied with those earlier given by men's focus groups. Cambodia climatic seasons do not vary according to seasons or geographic regions. Hence the women's focus groups alluded to the fact that even though weapon collection efforts should go on throughout the year, whenever there are specific and deliberate interventions to entice people to hand over weapons, the best time is in the dry season between December and May. When implemented this time, projects will have greater impact because:

- (a) this period is generally dry, and family work is less demanding (no preparation for rice cultivation or harvesting);
- (b) many local people will be willing to participate in weapon collection activities especially in meetings and by going to the jungle;

- (c) there are no floods, and therefore weapon diggers will find it easier both to dig up weapons as well as to access the jungle;
- (d) this an immediate post-harvest period and thus people can contribute food and other resources to the teams collecting weapons;
- (e) it is easier to transport weapons as the roads are passable; and
- (f) many people will have free time to attend weapon destruction ceremonies.

When discussing whether the interventions had attempted to address the root causes of SALW problem in the communities, different responses were generated. According to rural-based women, whilst some WfD project incentives such as schools and boreholes had addressed problems that could lead to conflict if unsolved, this outcome had been more the result of a lucky occurrence than deliberately planned intervention. They quickly added that schemes such as building a health centre, provision of irrigation canals, ploughs, animals and corrugated iron sheets for roofing would have addressed some core problems faced by local people. On the other hand, urban-based women mentioned how weapon collection programmes addressed such causal issues as creating a conducive environment that enabled the resumption of businesses and farming as well as reduction in casualties. They stated that if project incentives like wells, schools, or health centres had been provided, and also if people had received farming implements such as tractors and irrigation pumps, most of THEIR frustrations could have been overcome. Rural-based women pointed out how de-mining programmes addressed some of the core issues such as the enabling the resumption of for crop production as well as animal husbandry. However, they argued that as women they would prefer projects like construction of irrigation channels, more wells and sanitation facilities.

From these responses it is clear that the issue of armed violence could be eased by addressing general scarcities within the community. Women's responses indicated that to a certain extent they attribute poverty and illiteracy as feeding in to armed violence. All women's focus groups contended that as weapon collection programmes seek to include women and as women get more involved as it is beginning to happen, most of the problems that lead people to armed violence shall be tackled. All groups also agreed that originally weapon collection programmes did not listen to women or include women's perspectives in project initiation. Yet, they

claimed, women are the most affected by and familiar with the underlying causes of the problem.²⁸

In reviewing the criteria for assessing the success of weapon collection programmes, women's focus groups offered differing indicators of potential increases or decreases in numbers of illegal weapons in circulation. They restated opinions such as "no more sporadic and accidental shootings"; "many weapons have been publicly destroyed", "new infrastructures have been built", and "there has been significant reduction in kidnappings, and murders". However, they also pointed out that due to so many years of war, "the culture of guns" is not fully elicited from people's minds.

According to female participants, it is crucial to ascertain how local people feel about these programmes. For example, whereas activities such as public weapon destruction can seem to be too costly in terms of preparations as well as resources required, one should also assess their impact by asking local people how they feel when weapons are destroyed. In Cambodia, women's responses suggested that weapons destruction really changed people's opinions about weapons: "when guns are destroyed, they will never again be used to kill", one participant noted.

THREE STAR GAME: EVALUATING PROJECT PERFORMANCE

To conclude the management cycle of weapon collection and WfD programmes, women's focus groups did the Three Star Game (TSG) exercises to review project performance. As with the previous exercises, the spirit in the groups remained high, and more and more women turned up to participate in the exercises. Facilitators began the Three Star Game by explaining its purpose. After that, the contribution of WfD projects to the communities was assessed, with a view to study which of the programmes had performed better than others, and why. As had been seen with men, performance ratings typically differed between focus groups, even though in some cases both performance descriptions and given explanations were similar in all groups.

Table 5.4: Assessing the Performance of Institutions/Individual, Activities and WfD Projects—The Three Star Game by the Women’s Focus Groups

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Commune heads	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by all groups, citing that commune heads coordinated external agencies with the local people, and are elected by people.
Commune councils	★	★	★	Rated by all groups as “very excellent”, citing reasons such as mobilising the people, and ensuring that weapons collected did not get lost. It was also noted that commune councils are trusted by local people.
General community (men, women, youth)	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by border-based women, citing reasons such as cooperation with police and full participation in the whole process: “success depends on the willingness of the community”. Rated as “fairly excellent” by both urban and rural-based women citing that they were not fully involved.
Police/Military	★	★	★	All rated the police as “very excellent” because of the way they handled those surrendering weapons.
Monks	★	★		Rated as “fairly excellent” by both the urban and rural-based women, citing that although they were influential, they did not participate directly. The border-based women did not rate this actor.

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
External agents (NGOs)	★		★★	<p>NGOs were rated as “very excellent” by the border-based women, citing the involvement of organizations like EU-ASAC and WFP for having funded the projects.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the urban-based women.</p> <p>The rural-based women did not rate this actor.</p>
Village development and solidarity committees		★★		<p>Rated as “very excellent” by the rural-based women, citing that these committees are increasingly becoming important vehicles for promoting development.</p> <p>The rest of the groups did not rate this actor.</p>
Sensitisation and awareness-raising	★	★	★★	<p>Rated only as “good” by the urban-based women, who said that very few people attend (approximately 30%) the workshops.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the rural-based women, citing that though it is major activity in making people to be aware of the law, in their area very few people attend workshops.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” by the border-based citing that it is an important component of a comprehensive weapon collection programme.</p>

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Infrastructure development	★		★	<p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the border-based women citing that although they got some infrastructure, they were made to contribute a lot. Also, the project did not cover the areas that women wanted the most.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” by the urban-based women, citing that the constructed wells have helped local people.</p> <p>The rural-based women did not rate this item citing that they were never given any projects in exchange for weapons retrieved.</p>
Weapon collection and handling	★	★	★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by the border-based women, citing that almost all suspected illegal weapons were retrieved and none was recycled back to the community.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by both the urban and rural-based women, citing that although many weapons were collected and destroyed, they suspect that many weapon caches still remain hidden in the jungles. They also added that some primitive methods such as spying on those who had weapons were not good, and hence they don’t consider the exercise to have been purely voluntary.</p>

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Storage and destruction	★	★	★	<p>Rated as very excellent by the border-based women, citing that many weapons were destroyed.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the urban-based women, who said that destruction ceremonies are important, but that only few government officials and members of the community attended them.</p> <p>Rated as “good” by the rural-based women, citing that despite the excellent storage, the destruction was never carried out in areas where the weapons were collected. They proposed that destruction should take place in the area where the weapons are collected.</p>

CONCLUSIONS

Although women’s focus group discussions resulted in different explanations, the main rationale to begin weapon collection activities seemed to be stamping out insecurity accruing from armed violence. Hence, all three women’s focus groups concurred that the situation in their communities had significantly improved following the various efforts to remove the illegally held weapons. There have been different degrees of success, they said, greatly depending on the type of intervention. Women concurred that in implicit terms, the impact of weapons collection is manifested on both the success of restoration of peace and security, and through progress made in rebuilding livelihoods. Women confided that whereas sensitisation and awareness-raising among the communities about the dangers of SALW is important, it is insufficient when applied alone. Hence they were of the view that a comprehensive and integrated approach comprising different types of projects would be the most fruitful ones, because they tend to maximise the participation of local people. Like

the men, women participants stressed the importance of strong weapon laws.

Women noted the significant role played by traditional and other local institutions in enhancing successful weapons collection, but also pointed out that these institutions are sometimes traditionally biased against women and therefore do not reflect their specific needs and wishes. As in Mali and Albania, the overall results from women's focus groups highlighted the need for weapon collection and WfD projects to be more gender sensitive, and to take into account the needs and capabilities of different societal groups. When discussing what they had learned from participating in weapons collection, different opinions were expressed depending on the respective region. However, all focus groups seemed to confide that they had learned how to get involved in community issues, what are their rights and obligations, how to avoid armed conflicts, what the consequences of possessing weapons are, and how they can take care of the community infrastructure.

Women concluded that in order to maintain the current peace, community security should persevere and the inflow of weapons into communities should be halted. Women also stated that their involvement in weapons collection can open up space for dealing with many other problems that women are confronted with.

CHAPTER 6

FOCUS GROUPS OF YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN: EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES OF BORDER-BASED, URBAN-BASED AND RURAL-BASED YOUTH

Following the practises of men's and women's focus groups, youth focusgroups did fifteen PM&E field exercises, using the five techniques presented in Chapter 2. Five exercises were conducted with border-based youth in Snuol district, Pytnou commune (conducted at a roadside kiosk), five with urban-based youth in Pailin district, Ochra Commune (conducted in the village pagoda), and five with rural-based youth in Angkor Thom district, Leang Dai commune (also conducted in the village pagoda).

Once again field exercises in each community began with a general community meeting in which the purpose of the field research as well as the expected outcome was explained and thereafter focus groups of men, women and youth were formed. Each group then decided on the venue where to conduct its exercises. The focus groups proceeded to conduct the exercises during the next two to three days.

BEFORE AND NOW SITUATIONS ANALYSIS (BANSA): EVALUATING PROJECT GOALS AND PURPOSES

The discussions arising from the questions and answers of the Before and Now Situation Analysis, as well as from the analysis of the BANSA diagram, produced the following input from youth focus groups.

“Before” and “Now” Situations

Table 6.1: “Before” Situations

Urban-based youth	Rural-based youth	Border-based youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scattering of weapons, ammunitions, mines and UXO, which injured many people in the village • Shootings and armed robberies • Dilapidated infrastructure • “Before, there was no school, pagoda or health centre” • “There was no support from NGOs because they feared to come to the village” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Mines, UXO, arms and ammunitions were spread everywhere” • No health services or drinking water • There was food shortage, leading to famine and poverty • Dilapidated infrastructure: old pagodas, schools and health centre • “No bridges to connect with the neighbouring villages” • “There were no irrigation channels” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Armed robberies • Unchecked shootings • “There was a shortage of food” • “There were no infrastructures like schools, roads or toilets” • “We couldn’t go to the jungle to do business” • “Because of weapons, ammunitions and mines, local people became victims”

All youth focus groups confided that the situation was mostly due to the war that had ravaged their communities and resulted in the continuous proliferation of weapons in the absence of NGOs and other external agencies to help in weapons collection and de-mining.

Youth groups described the “now” situation as having significantly improved. They attributed this to a combination of several interventions by the international community: WfD programmes and other related weapon collection activities, as well as awareness-raising and sensitisation programmes conducted by NGOs and other actors. However, it was also observed that as a result of weapons collection and other disarmament programmes, some negative effects had also come up. For instance, urban-based youth mentioned how as result of weapon collection and other disarmament programmes, there has been an increase in armed robberies. They in particular attributed this to criminal elements of the society, who have kept their guns knowing that people in general, and especially the wealthiest part of the society no longer have private guns to protect

themselves. This reinforces the earlier conclusion reached by the PM&E research that where local communities are holding on to their weapons for protection, alternative security arrangements should be put in place prior to implementing major weapon collection programmes.

Table 6.2: “Now” Situation

Urban-based youth	Rural-based youth	Border-based youth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is new and rehabilitated infrastructure: roads, school, pagoda, public health centre and boreholes • Casualties of landmines and UXO have decreased • Reduced weapon circulation in the public • Acquisition of private property: motorbikes, houses • “We can now move freely” • Bridges have been constructed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is infrastructure: road, school, pagodas, health centre • Armed robberies and the number of weapons have reduced²⁹ • Food shortages have reduced • Irrigation channels have been repaired • New bridges have been constructed³⁰ • Only few cases of armed robbery of cows and buffalos have been registered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “We have schools and wells” • “There is peace and security” • No more sporadic shootings • There are less armed robberies • Reduced number of weapons in the community • People can move freely

Overall goals and purposes

The PM&E team sought youth’s views on the overall goals and purposes of weapon collection. The discussions revealed that communities wanted to create a favourable environment for peace, security and development. Border-based youth mentioned that the rationales for weapon collection programmes were the desire for community security, the need to reduce injuries from weapons, and the promotion of peace. Urban-based youth mentioned that weapon collection programmes were undertaken because of the desire to “restore peace and forget the war; reduce injuries caused by arms, live a happy life by reducing fear after many years of war”, while according to the rural-based youth, the main rationale

for weapon collection was to end armed violence, eliminate sporadic shootings and develop the communities.

Assessing the impact and constraints of WfD programmes

When discussing their experiences with weapon collection and WfD projects, the youth identified different effects observed by their communities as measures of projects' impact. In particular, they concurred that immediate impacts such as building roads and village paths, accessing farm lands, improvements in sanitation and awareness-raising programmes contributed to people's basic needs and hence reduced the desire to hold weapons. For example, border-based youth pointed out that in short-term, the impact can be measured by improved security, reflected in the free movement of people, reduced feelings of fear and the large number of collected weapons. According to them, medium-term impact could be determined by improved infrastructure, while the longer term could be determined by the local people utilising this infrastructure to restore durable peace and security, as well as "re-launching development". Urban-based youth observed that whereas the immediate impact can be measured by the fact that fewer people are possessing illegal weapons and injuries have decreased, medium-term impacts can be seen in terms of improved infrastructures. In the longer term, they hoped that "local people would improve their lives more because of improved security; and that investments such as factories would be located in the area, tourists would visit the city and buy products". Above all, urban-based youth hoped that robberies would decrease as a result of the government offering more protection. Rural-based youth mentioned that the immediate impact of weapon collection programmes could be assessed by the reduction in shootings and armed robberies, in the medium-term by the increased number of tourists and by various new infrastructures and de-mining programmes. In the longer-term, they hoped that there would be more improved roads and industries in the area. They would also like more secondary schools and a bridge to be built.

When discussing the factors that facilitated a successful weapon collection programme, the youth confided that full involvement and willingness of local communities as well as cooperation with local government authorities is of paramount importance.

DETERMINING DECISION-MAKING PROCESS: EVALUATING PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND DESIGN

To begin the exercise, youth participants were asked to discuss the term “participation”. Different understandings of the term were expressed. Border-based youth described participation as the contribution of the local people to work together as a community. Urban-based youth described participation in the following manner: “when local people render a hand to do an activity by contributing their labour, time as well as ideas”. In the same vein, rural-based youth described participation as local people contributing money, materials and labour, or expressing their ideas by discussing issues that are of concern their community. From the analysis of the above statements, it is evident that all youth groups understood participation to mean the local people contributing both ideas and, where possible, resources towards activities aimed at assisting the whole community. Also weapon collection programmes were considered to fall under activities requiring community participation.

The youth were then asked to list the various activities and projects that had been undertaken in their communities as part of weapon collection and WfD projects, and to ascertain which actors and institutions had made which decisions. Table 6.3 lists the projects and actors which were identified.

Table 6.3

Weapon collection activities	WfD projects	Actors, individuals or institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitisation and awareness-raising • Meetings between authorities and NGOs • Information about weapons • Preparation for weapon collection • Handing in weapons • Digging up weapons • Transporting weapons • Storage • Destruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determining WfD projects • Construction of infrastructure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General community (men, women, youth) • Commune Head • Commune Council • Police • NGOs

In terms of primary decision makers in the community, all youth focus groups seemed to have different views, as shown in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4: Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E):
Reviewing Decision-Making and Influence using Pictorial Diagrams:
Youth Focus Groups**

Decision maker	No. of decisions
General Community (men, women, youth)	U2
	R1
	B4
Commune Head	U3
	R3
	B2
Commune Council	U2
	R3
	B2
Police	U2
	R2
	B1
NGOs	U2
	R2
	B1

Key: U (Urban-based), B (Border-based), R (Rural-based)

As was the case with other focus groups, youth groups were also of the view that most decisions are taken by men, who are also the most active participants in weapon collection programmes. They said this was because women have a lot of domestic work to do. The youth also concurred that they themselves were seldom if ever given a role in decision-making.

Responses of the youth show that where a comprehensive and integrated WfD strategy was applied, the general community participated

and felt that they could influence the decisions that were taken. There were also indications that where WfD approach was applied, there was some form of local involvement in project implementation. On the other hand, in areas where a comprehensive and integrated approach was not applied, it seems that the majority of decisions had been taken by local administration officials. This indicates that a community will rely on external actors if there is no comprehensive programme to involve them.

CONVERSATIONAL INTERVIEWS: EVALUATING PROJECT APPRAISAL AND IMPLEMENTATION

This exercise sought the experiences of the youth about how weapon collection and WfD programmes were appraised and implemented. The youth were asked whether they knew any previous mechanisms for the collection of weapons, and whether the new approach had in their view taken into account these mechanisms. None of the youth focus groups recalled any other mechanisms that would have been used for weapon collection: “there was neither reporting about weapons to the authorities, nor public discussion about weapons-related issues”, a border-based youth said.

When commenting on the WfD approach, only border-based youth had an idea about what the approach was about. They noted that this approach, in addition to involving local people in weapons collection, had brought some development in their area. When discussing the main driving force for the surrender of weapons, youth groups gave differing explanations: border-based youth mentioned reasons such as the local people having realised that it was not in the interest of their security to keep illegal weapons, and that instead, there was the need to reduce injuries caused by weapons. They also pointed out that since many weapons were hidden in the jungle,³¹ everybody had a stake to collect them. On the other hand the urban-based youth noted that while they were aware of the need to create an environment for peace and security to enable development, they were also fearful of being punished when caught with illegal weapons or losing community trust when found to be in possession of an illegal weapon. For Rural-based youth the main driving force was the desire to end the insecurity that had come as result of war; to end armed robberies, and

to end armed violence in solving local disputes as well as the weapon accidents at home.

All youth focus groups concurred that local communities considered peace and security as a pre-requisite for rebuilding the livelihoods which had been shattered during many years of civil war. They all argued that the rebuilding of these livelihoods could not be achieved in the insecurity caused by the proliferation of the SALW which had scared away NGOs and tourists.

The youth stated that the weapons collection process should begin with the governmental authorities or NGOs sensitising the communities on both the reason why they should not keep illegal weapons, as well as awareness-raising on the laws regarding weapons collection. This should be followed by community meetings in which objectives could be explained and discussed with the local people. Roles and responsibilities of different actors should be agreed upon in the beginning of the exercise, followed by the preparations for handing over weapons. Implementers of weapon collection programmes should, according to the youth, consider especially what happens to those surrendering weapons; who goes to the jungle to dig up the weapons; what benefits local communities will get and when; as well as who receives the weapons surrendered and where the weapons are kept. In the view of the youth the weapons should be checked and registered either by the local authorities or NGOs, and transported to the commune headquarters, police post or district for destruction. These activities should go hand-in-hand with the implementation of incentive schemes. Youth groups concurred that whereas the local people should always be kept informed about what takes place in their community, this has unfortunately not always been the case: “we did not know for instance which organization constructed the boreholes”, pointed out one participant in Pailin.

When describing how the WfD project benefits were distributed within the communities, youth focus groups agreed that considering the large number of weapons retrieved and destroyed, and also considering the significant reduction in insecurity incidents, the distribution of benefits should be assessed from those peace dividends from which everyone has benefited. However, the youth from areas that have not benefited from WfD were of the view that if implemented, the WfD would have maximised

the benefits, motivating people to hand over their weapons, which are still suspected to remain in large numbers.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR APPROACH: EVALUATING PROJECT MONITORING

The PM&E team wanted to know the best timing for implementing weapon collection programmes. Given that local people were involved, it was important to find out in what months of the year they would be able to participate in weapon collection without compromising their other activities. In the Community Calendar Approach local people are asked to state important periods in the year and important events that go with them. To commence this exercise, facilitators asked the youth once more to recall the major weapon collection activities and Weapons for Development projects that had been implemented in their communities. The youth had no problems in listing the recent collection efforts.

Once again, as in other focus groups, the youths agreed that the best time to collect weapons would be between December and May. They went on to say that weapons should always be turned in at any time when the government calls the people to do so. They also noted that the burning of weapons (flames of peace) should also be conducted during this period to enable many local people to participate.

When youth focus groups were asked about the aspects of weapon collections requiring critical monitoring, they named the phase when weapons are transported from villages to the district stockpiles, because they can be stolen on the way. The youth also pointed out the need to ensure that the number of weapons stored tallies with the number of weapons to be destroyed. It should also be ensured that officials representing the communes that have collected weapons escort the weapons and witness the destruction ceremony.

When the discussion moved to indicators for monitoring weapon collection activities, the youth cited a few reference points, based upon their own general experience, according to which the success or failure of a weapon collection programme could be assessed. Again the same indicators that they gave in the “now” situation analysis were re-echoed,

but with more emphasis. For example, the youth mentioned how as result of improved security tourists have started visiting the Angkor Temples giving employment to local people, and how NGOs have come to assist local people in projects such as rice banks, cow banks and micro-credit infrastructures. Other indicators to evaluate the success included: many weapons and stockpiles of ammunitions have been retrieved and publicly destroyed; the safety on roads has improved, there are less accidental weapons injuries, and gunmen no longer intimidate local people by using guns for exhortation as it used to be in the past.

When discussing information sharing on the implementation of weapons collection and WfD projects, the youth's experience was that in general information was shared among family members, relatives, village group leaders, chiefs and local councils, police, military and NGOs. In some areas the youth noted also the mass media. The monks, too, had sometimes got involved in telling local people to hand over arms. From this multiplicity of players, it was found out that a clear outreach strategy for information dissemination is very important to ensure that the correct information reaches everybody at the same time.

THREE STAR GAME: EVALUATING PROJECT PERFORMANCE

After spending two days in each community conducting various exercises, the research team introduced the last exercise, the Three Star Game, which aimed at evaluating the performance of actors, activities and types of implemented projects vis-à-vis contribution in attracting handover of weapons. The numbers of youth attending in meetings continued to increase. The assessment by all three focus groups is summarized in Table 6.5.

**Table 6.5: Assessing the Performance of Various WfD Projects—
The Three Star Game by Youth Focus Groups**

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Commune heads	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by all youth focus groups, who noted that commune heads had organized the meetings and conducted door-to-door sensitisation campaigns.
Commune councils/village group leaders	★	★	★	Rated as “fairly excellent” by the border-based youth when compared with the role played by the local people themselves citing reasons such as mobilising the people, and ensuring that weapons collected did not get lost. It was also noted that commune councils are trusted by local people and that they mobilised local people in weapon collection. Both the urban and rural-based youth rated them as “very excellent”, citing that almost everything regarding weapons collection depended on them.
General community (men, women, youth)	★	★	★	Rated as “very excellent” by border-based youth, who cited full community involvement in weapon collection processes. Rated as “fairly excellent” by both urban and rural-based youth, who claimed that the majority of local communities had not been fully involved in weapon collection programmes. They all noted that men played a more direct role than women.

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Police/Military	★	★	★	<p>Rated as “fairly excellent” the by the border-based youth, citing that the role of the police/military was only limited to the verification of collected weapons.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” by both the urban and rural-based youth, citing that the police/military were involved in the collection, registration and transportation of weapons.</p>
Pagodas		★		<p>The role of pagodas was rated as “very excellent” by the rural-based youth, who noted that usually they are centrally located and local people interact there.</p> <p>The rest of the focus groups did not rate this factor.</p>
External agent (NGOs)	★	★	★	<p>NGOs were rated as “very excellent” by all youth focus groups, because they had both mobilised people and funded projects. The rural-based youth, however, pointed out that they expect more projects after currently undertaken awareness-raising programmes.</p>
Sensitisation and awareness-raising of communities	★	★	★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by the border-based youth, who said that these activities were well organized and many people attended in them.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” also by the urban-based youth, citing that NGOs have covered this widely and increased awareness in local communities.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the rural-based youth, citing that not many local people attend these activities, and even those who do seem not to understand what is taught.</p>

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Infrastructure development (schools, health centres roads, toilets, wells, pagodas, irrigation canals)	★	★	★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by the border-based youth, citing that infrastructures such as a school, wells and toilets have solved people’s problems.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” also by the urban-based youth, citing that schools have helped to fight illiteracy and also that children can play games at school compounds. Urban-based youth noted, however, that the wells constructed are too few, and also that even poor people were subjected to contribute some money for building them. Although local people contributed money also for constructing a road, it was not repaired yet.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by the rural-based youth, who said that classrooms are very few and some pupils study under the shade in the open, wells are too few and located too far away for some households, health centre has no equipment, roads are still bumpy, and many irrigation canals have collapsed.</p>
Weapon collection and handling	★	★	★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by the border-based youth, who claimed that almost all illegal weapons were retrieved and none were recycled back to the community.</p> <p>Rated as “fairly excellent” by both the urban and rural-based youth groups, who said that although many weapons were collected and destroyed, it was suspected that many weapon caches still remain hidden in the jungles.</p>

Actor/Institution	Rating			Assessment criteria
	Urban	Rural	Border	
Transportation, storage and destruction	★	★	★	<p>Rated as “very excellent” by the border-based youth, citing that many weapons were destroyed.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” by the urban-based youth, citing that destruction ceremonies were transparent: they were attended by all social groups, and also the transportation of weapons was well organized.</p> <p>Rated as “very excellent” by the rural-based youth, citing that people were satisfied to see weapons being destroyed.</p>

CONCLUSIONS

Results from youth focus group exercises confirmed the views presented by men and women about programme implementation and the problems that had been encountered therein. Participation of all community members was noted as being crucial for successful weapon collection. Institutions that are associated with local people seemed to be the most preferred actors to implement weapon collection programmes. The data analysis revealed that even though community sensitization is important, it is most applicable in areas where local people do not understand their problems or ways to solve them. However, in communities where local people are familiar with their problems and have opinions about how to solve them, most effective means of implementation is physical assistance by external actors, especially in terms of enabling the development of community infrastructures. The youth also revealed that they had ideas and needs concerning weapon collection programmes, but that their needs were not necessarily looked at during programme planning.

CHAPTER 7

SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF THE GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED

This section presents a synthesis and analysis of the lessons learned from the Cambodia case study. To follow the format adopted in previous case studies, as well as to facilitate the transfer of the analysis to the users of this report, the lessons learned have been arranged as follows:

- (i) Methodology
- (ii) Project conception, design and implementation
- (iii) Using local institutions in project implementation
- (iv) Peace and security as the main goals
- (v) Assessment and performance criteria
- (vi) Characteristics of incentive schemes
- (vii) Best practices in weapon collection
- (viii) Budgeting issues

METHODOLOGY

As in the Mali and Albania case studies, the frankness and openness of the discussions revealed that all focus groups appreciated the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation methodology as applied in the study. The techniques enabled active participation of all interested participants, creating an inspiring and open atmosphere, where opinions could be exchanged and decisions made without a situation of winners and losers. Facilitators and community participants gave positive feedback about the relative easiness at which the techniques could be grasped and applied. Overall, the five techniques applied in this study can be adapted to review the implementation of different policy programmes.

PROJECT CONCEPTION, DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

The field study showed how different approaches in the design and implementation of programmes can have differing impacts on local people. In Cambodia, the manner in which agencies design and implement weapon collection programmes has had a profound impact on the intended beneficiaries as indicated in the following:

Pursuing an integrated and multi-pronged strategy

The original approach in weapon collection programmes in Cambodia offered a combination of different incentives in exchange for the voluntary surrender of weapons. These included:

- (a) investment in big projects, aimed at developing social and economic infrastructures, such as constructing schools, health centres and roads;
- (b) putting in place smaller infrastructures, such as dykes and irrigation canals, boreholes and repairing village paths;
- (c) working together with other agencies by introducing schemes, such as Food for Work;
- (d) providing capacity support for the police and other local institutions, such as constructing storage facilities and increasing the awareness about the law; and
- (e) organizing general sensitisation and awareness programmes.

The findings of the study reveal that where this strategy was applied, it had profound impacts: over 90% of the suspected illegally held weapons were retrieved, both from individuals and caches hidden in forests. There was almost full participation of local people in the programmes, since the activities were wide, making it easier for every member of the community to participate in the activity to which they felt they could best contribute. By interacting with external actors during the implementation of WfD projects, local people were able to acquire new skills, crucial in assisting in the rebuilding of their shattered livelihoods. In addition, original multi-pronged strategies opened new areas of concern among local population, such as fighting illiteracy and the need for sanitation. They demonstrated a direct link between the causes and effects of SALW proliferation, and opened avenues for inter-agency collaboration and pooling of synergies.

Two-pronged strategy

Two-pronged strategy in weapons collection, which was precipitated by difficulties in both mobilising funding and budgeting incompatibilities, concentrated on a combination of awareness-raising and sensitisation activities, such as constructing wells and sometimes storage facilities for weapons in exchange for the voluntary surrender of weaponry. In areas where it was applied, such as Ochra village in Pailin, the lessons learned from the local people revealed the following:

- (a) large percentage of weapons still remain unretrieved, especially the caches suspected to be hidden jungles;
- (b) previous projects were networking more with police and local authorities than with the whole community, which led to over-reliance on covert information instead of fully benefiting from the possibilities of talking to ordinary people;
- (c) the focus of the projects was less on direct participation BY the local people and more on external actors in implementing projects, resulting in the lack of local ownership;
- (d) only a few local people (management committees) learned new skills when participating in general post-conflict reconstruction programmes, since they were rarely involved in project implementation;
- (e) because these kind of projects are small undertakings, their costs are lower and projects can easily be spread throughout the beneficiary areas, leading to a more even distribution of benefits; and
- (f) the approach might provoke resistance among community members who feel that they would have wanted to take part in the decision-making, especially in locating the infrastructures. For example, members of the men's focus group in Pailin were not satisfied with the criteria applied when allocating the locations of boreholes in the village.

One-pronged strategy

Also one-pronged strategies were applied in Cambodia. In these programmes, the priority was mainly placed on awareness-raising and sensitisation of local communities as stand-alone programmes to encourage voluntary surrender of weaponry. The lessons analysed from the research findings reveal the following:

- (a) there is a tendency by the agencies applying such an approach to assume that local people neither understand the problems of SALW nor the general problems they are confronted with in their communities. This seemed contrary to what the research revealed, as local people showed that they understand their problems and how to solve them; they only lack the capacity and resources act;
- (b) while weapons held by individuals can be retrieved, hidden caches will almost always remain, as emptying them would require local people to be given equipment with which to dig them up;
- (c) one-pronged strategies tend to rely on few government officials (their intelligence or covert information, or the literate members of the community who attend workshops) rather than promoting a community-wide-approach;
- (d) they also tend to assume that those who attend sensitisation and awareness-raising workshops disseminate the message to their neighbours by the so-called “neighbour-to-neighbour approach”. Unfortunately, implementing this approach in reality seems to be rather problematic;
- (e) one-pronged strategies do not promote the development of new local skills;
- (f) the approach does not seem to be acceptable by local people if applied as a stand-alone programme, as it does not seek to address the factors that drive the demand for weapons possession;
- (g) it seems that local people in areas where these programmes have been implemented, agree to get involved with a hope that more tangible projects will follow; and
- (h) aid agencies seem to prefer this kind of approach because its implementation is easier than hard programming such as constructing wells or bridges, even if the amount of resources spent on a workshop can be as much as constructing a borehole in a village.

The issue of peace and security seemed to be the driving force for the local people to get involved in weapon collection programmes. This seemed to be connected with the need to rebuild livelihoods as well as re-launch development in the aftermath of conflict. It was learnt that local people understand very well that security is a pre-requisite for attracting investment both from internal and external sources. As long as there was a heavy presence of illegal weapons in the society, attracting foreign investment proved difficult, because almost everybody suffered from the insecurity that was perpetuated by the spread of SALW. According to those

interviewed, the absence of peace and security arises from the constant fear of being harmed, the inability to meet basic human needs, the lack of both physical and human rights protection, and the fact that local people have no say in the running of their communities.

Studying past and present situations

A critical analysis of both past and current situations with a view to understanding the dynamics of SALW proliferation is important. For example, the analysis of the “before” and “now” situations enabled the researchers to have a deeper understanding of conflict dynamics, the actors involved, conflict outcomes, and how these are contributing to the proliferation of SALW in Cambodia. In the Cambodian case, this also induced a deeper understanding of the legacy of war: how weapons had leaked from government forces, what the role was of deserters from the armed forces or the rebels, and how foreign forces supplied weapons for occupied areas. Studying past and present situations led the researchers to take better into account the effects that Cambodia’s geographical location as well as its physical features have had on transiting and hiding weapons, as well as on facilitating illegal activities. In Cambodia border areas, jungles and mountains have nurtured illegal activities such as logging and trafficking in human beings and drugs. Situation analysis has also helped in understanding how as a result of failed DDR programmes, ex-combatants may want to hold on to their weapons even after a conflict has ended, how people may want weapons simply to protect themselves, their properties or family members, and how there still exists a fear for revenge especially against former ex-combatants as well as other parties opposing government policies. Understanding such issues prior to designing any weapon collection programmes was found crucial. However, through the research it was learned that agencies implementing weapon collection programmes seldom have enough time and resources to undertake comprehensive background studies.

Use of local institutions in project implementation

All interviewed communities implied that in order to create a sense of local ownership to a project, local institutions needed to be included in programme implementation. All the communities recognised that WfD projects should supplement local people’s efforts to get rid of weapons, rather than introduce new models that are alien to the communities and sometimes too expensive to sustain. In the Cambodian context, the existing decentralised structures were found conducive to implementation of

Weapons for Development programmes. However, for such structures to fully respond to the needs of local people, there must be full participation, as defined by different focus groups as information sharing, joint planning, or contributions in the form of financial aid, labour, materials, time and ideas. All participants seemed to prefer external agencies supporting their own initiated projects rather than being called upon to participate in the initiatives started by external actors. Therefore, for the effective participation of local institutions, project's aims, objectives and intended outcomes should be carefully defined and discussed among all social, economic, political and cultural forces in the community. Other issues to be discussed include definitions of who will benefit from the weapon collection, and the reasons for profiting. In general, full involvement of traditional and other locally developed institutions, such as elders, religious leaders, commune chiefs and councils, group leaders, village solidarity committees, and women groups, is crucial. However, the research revealed that although traditional institutions and structures are very important in implementing community based programmes, they sometimes tend to marginalize the participation of women and as such hardly put the needs of women on the top of the agenda. Hence it would be important to build the capacity of women organizations to enable them better negotiate their share in project implementation.

Characteristics of the incentives

Communities seemed to suggest that the programmes they most preferred are those that provide immediate physical security in combination with projects aimed at reviving people's livelihoods, stimulating economic and promoting the needs of women. In general, the following were the main characteristics of the most preferred incentives: programmes that restore local people's immediate security, facilitate free movement; programmes that enable the revival of agriculture production; programmes that promote people to work together (reconciliation element); programmes that provide basic human needs, programmes that lead to the acquisition of skills, employment and greater self-reliance; and finally, programmes that are easy to implement and do not go beyond the technical or managerial capacities of local communities.

Assessment and performance indicators

The study revealed that it is difficult to assess the impact of weapons collection and WfD projects using mere quantitative indicators such as the number of guns collected vis-à-vis the amount of resources invested to

retrieve them. As such, the most feasible way to assess the success of a programme seems to be to ask the local people on how they assess the situation after a weapon collection programme has been carried out. Hence the use of community-based qualitative indicators, such as how the community considers whether the situation has improved or deteriorated, is crucial in assessing the success or failure of interventions. Other indicators include: the reduction in armed robberies, shooting and killings; reduction in domestic violence; return and resettlement of formerly displaced people; revival of economic activities; restoration of traditional mechanisms of solving local disputes; good rapport with the local authorities and security forces; revival of the schooling system; and reduced famine.

Best practises in weapon collection

All focus groups seemed to suggest that certain standard practises are common to the successful implementation of weapon collection programmes. In addition to constant cooperation between communities and local authorities, these include:

- (a) weapons collection should be undertaken during a period when people's security threats that may require their self-protection are lower. The implementation of certain activities or projects should also coincide with a period when people are free from day-to-day activities;
- (b) the process of implementing weapon collection programmes should be as transparent as possible, especially records of the collected weapons should be made and maintained;
- (c) all collected weapons, whether new or old, should be completely removed from circulation and destroyed while taking into account the preferences of the affected community. As much as possible, the destruction should take place close to the communities that collected them;
- (d) prior to the destruction, the number of weapons received must be counted to match with the number to be destroyed;
- (e) it is to be ensured that where communities have handed over weapons, the government starts implementing alternative security measures, agreed upon by the local people.

From the research findings it is clear that success of weapon collection depends much on the willingness of the local population to stamp weapons from their communities. Full commitment of the government by both

enacting the relevant laws as well as providing security to the affected local population is crucial.

Budgeting issues

It was learned that due to difficulties in fundraising for WfD projects as well as incompatibilities in budgeting cycles, agencies might feel inclined to shift over to other approaches such as concentrating on only sensitisation and awareness-raising, which seem to be easier to implement and can better fit within donors' budgeting cycles. However, feedback from the affected communities indicates that budgeting issues should not come at the expense of the real needs of communities. Hence, the message that continues to be echoed by is to encourage donors to adapt long-term strategies and commit themselves to funding weapons collection and WfD programmes.

CHAPTER 8

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the current study support many of the results retrieved from the previous case studies of Mali and Albania. Field experience from Cambodia exhibits also several additional ideas and propose modifications for further weapon collection and WfD programmes. This chapter introduces the general recommendations, primarily aimed at policymakers in countries that fund weapon collection and Weapons for Development programmes.

STRONG SUPPORT FOR AN INTEGRATED WEAPONS FOR DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The study reveals that local communities strongly support an integrated approach to WfD programmes, as compared to other incentives. It is therefore recommended that donors continue to fund such programmes, especially because in addition to transferring skills and offering employment, the approach at the same time addresses factors that drive demand for armed violence.

NEED FOR DECENTRALISED BUT COORDINATED PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

A combination of traditional and decentralised local administration structures such as exist in Cambodia, were found to be conducive for the successful implementation of programmes. It is therefore recommended that prior to funding any programmes; decentralized but well coordinated structures are assessed and/or established, in order to ensure the highest possible involvement of all levels of the society.

CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR WOMEN AND TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The research revealed that although traditional institutions are recognised as important vehicles to implement programmes, they suffer from the disadvantage of often being biased against women. It is therefore recommended that resources be invested in raising the capacity of women to participate, and also in supporting men to understand the importance of including women in decision-making processes.

ALTERNATIVE SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

Field research in Cambodia confirmed the results from prior case studies of Mali and Albania in suggesting that programmes to address security issues should be driven by community needs rather than by political motives. It is recommended that thorough technical assessments be undertaken to ascertain what kind of programmes address the real security threats emerging in communities after people have handed over their weapons. As such, programmes like security sector reforms (SSR) may need to be undertaken in the aftermath of a successful implementation of a weapon collection programme,³² and should concentrate on supporting alternative security arrangements, for example community policing.

FUNDING LONGER TERM PROJECTS

Current budgeting cycles of major donor institutions, such as the European Union, were found not to be conducive for the implementation of programmes such as the WfD, which have developmental components that require long time spans in their implementation. It is recommended that due to the role of planning and implementation of WfD projects, donors would investigate possibilities of earmarking funds for longer periods instead of following their year-to-year budgeting cycle.

Notes

- 1 Section III, para. 18
- 2 Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit 2003: *An Integrated Approach to Small Arms Management: The EU-ASAC Programme on Curbing Small Arms and Light Weapons in Cambodia*, GTZ publication, Eschborn.
- 3 Originally, the project had considered the inclusion of ten countries: Albania, Angola, Brazil, Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone and Sri Lanka.
- 4 Government, the United Nations and other inter-governmental organizations, as well as representatives of civil society and NGOs.
- 5 Interview with the Brigadier General Ouk Kim Lek, February 2004.
- 6 However, results from field exercises revealed mixed feelings about the success of these programmes among beneficiaries.
- 7 An agreement signed between the government and other fighting forces in Paris, 23 October 1991.
- 8 There was debate as to whether the recent weapons flow was from Thailand to Cambodia, or the reverse.
- 9 A monk monastery
- 10 The lowest local administration unit in a township is called a "sangkat" while for a rural area it is called a "commune".
- 11 Rural men attributed progress made in their village to have accrued from the presence of several local and international NGOs: Plan International, Padex, Cambodia Red Cross and Beauty Israel.
- 12 The WfD approach was applied in Snuol and partly in Pailin.
- 13 What is referred to as an integrated and comprehensive WfD approach in this report is a combination of various interventions including big projects such as constructing schools, roads etc, small projects such as construction of boreholes, latrines etc, and supplementary projects from other agencies such as Food for Work (FFW) by World Food Programme as well as other awareness and sensitisation programmes, or support to the police and local institutions.
- 14 Communities are required to cover 3-5 per cent of the project costs in their areas as form of cost-sharing between local communities and government.
- 15 The urban-based men mentioned that sometimes, the police would give a kilo of rice as an incentive to those providing information about weapons.

- 16 Community development programmes in this case means WfD projects and other disarmament programmes not directly related to weapons collection
- 17 The older rural-based men recalled government authorities conscripting them to fight the Khmer Rouge and the Khmer Rouge to fight the government forces.
- 18 The PM&E team discovered that this is one of the disadvantages of bigger projects requiring heavy investments. Incentives of big projects might become indivisible, suggesting that in some cases, greater community satisfaction could be achieved through small projects.
- 19 Some of the infrastructures were provided by different NGOs not necessarily involved in weapon collection programmes.
- 20 The men also mentioned that because of “cost-sharing”, many people cannot afford this service.
- 21 Although this project was not directly connected with weapons collection, local people continued to mention it, saying that if it had succeeded, it would have been regarded as an important income-generating project.
- 22 In this village along the border with Vietnam, hunting and gathering is still a major source of revenue.
- 23 Agencies mentioned included: Bantea, Srei, Plan International, OACAA (doing Reproductive Health), Concern International, ICSJ
- 24 Human Security Approach in this context is a summation of how the proliferation of SALW has negatively affected the rights of affected communities.
- 25 It was confirmed by men who participated in digging that catches had been buried at a dept of half one to one-and-a-half metres.
- 26 These are new committees, which include village solidarity committees, a kind of parallel structures that are being formed under the auspices of UN agencies in order to foster development.
- 27 Similar incidents earlier been mentioned by two NGOs.
- 28 The PM&E team learnt that whereas women participated like any other community members in community meetings, men usually dominated the discussions and made decisions.
- 29 The youth cited that they no longer hear shootings in the beginning of the rainy season and at the New Year, as evidence to show that the number of weapons had reduced.
- 30 A bridge connecting Leang Dai village with Piak commune was built by the International Labour Organization (ILO).

- ³¹ In Pytnou commune, only few weapons were surrendered, mostly by ex-service men who had not declared them to the government.
- ³² They may also be implemented in parallel. In these cases, however, it must first be ascertained whether there is a linkage between weapon collection and the subsequent SSR, rather than simply following a continuum from weapon collection to SSR. This is because the research findings from Albania revealed that agencies have often based the shifting from WfD approach to SSR on the easy mobilisation of resources, since according to them, SSR programmes attract more funding than WfD projects.

