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Examining the Global Proliferation of Craft-Produced Weapons

WHY THE FOCUS ON CRAFT-PRODUCED SALW?

Illicitly craft-produced small arms and light weapons (SALW) are increasingly used in episodes of armed violence, terrorism, and criminality across all regions of the world.

They pose significant challenges for regulation, detection and control.

WHAT ARE CRAFT-PRODUCED SALW?

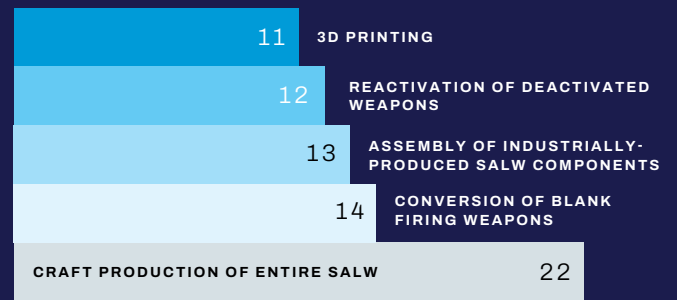
They lack a universally agreed definition, and are also referred to as artisanal, improvised, homemade weapons or privately-made firearms.

They are fabricated in a non-industrial manner and present different levels of sophistication, from rudimentary to high-tech manufacturing.

WHAT TYPES OF SALW ARE CRAFT-PRODUCED?*



HOW ARE THEY PRODUCED?*



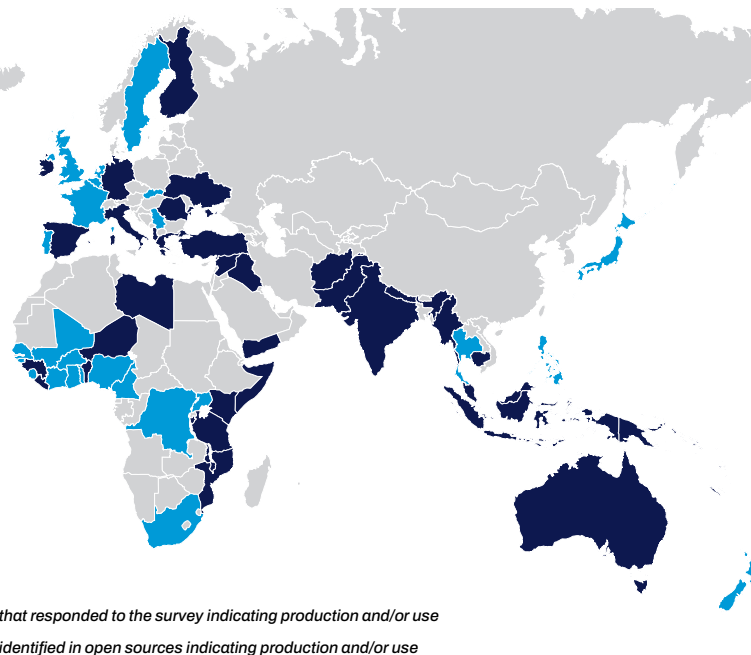
*The figures refer to the number of respondent countries per type of weapons and manufacturing techniques. More than one option could be selected by respondents.

In June 2024, UNIDIR will present a global study on crafted-produced SALW to increase knowledge and understanding on proliferation trends, and raise awareness of the challenges for preventing and addressing their illicit proliferation, trafficking, and misuse.

This factsheet presents a preliminary and non-exhaustive overview of the information collected from 43 States, as well as United Nations entities, regional organizations, and civil society actors.

This factsheet is intended to support preparations for the Fourth Review Conference on the implementation of the Programme of Action (PoA) and International Tracing Instrument (ITI).

WHERE ARE CRAFT-PRODUCED SALW MANUFACTURED AND/OR USED?*



** UNIDIR recognizes that countries that are not highlighted in the map might also be affected by the issue of craft production of SALW. This map will be updated for the global study to be published in June 2024.

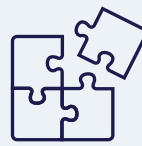
HOW TO RESPOND TO, REGULATE, AND PREVENT CRAFT PRODUCTION OF SALW?

At the **international level**, the **Firearms Protocol** is the only legally-binding global instrument that obliges states to take measures to counter the illicit manufacturing of weapons and ammunition. In Africa and the Americas, there are **regional** instruments that contain similar obligations. Under the **PoA**, States have agreed to control SALW production and criminalize the illicit manufacture of SALW.

Responses to UNIDIR's Survey on craft production indicate three types of **national** regulatory approaches for countering illicit craft production:

- 1 National laws and regulations that **prohibit and criminalize all types** of craft production;
- 2 National laws and regulations that **prohibit and criminalize certain types of craft production** (e.g. converted firearms, 3D printed firearms), but which provide for government authorization to permit other types;
- 3 National laws and regulations that provide for government **control, registration, and monitoring** of craft production.

Economic and cultural factors also play a role in national approaches to craft production of SALW and decisions to authorize such production.



KEY CHALLENGES

EXISTING REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS TO CONTROL CRAFT PRODUCTION

- often do not refer to specific production **techniques and technologies**. These can, therefore, exist in **regulatory 'grey zones'** at the national level. They can also **evolve** quicker than the development of national controls and regulations.
- should take into account drivers of **demand, respective users**, as well as **producers**.

PREVENTION AND DETECTION OF ILLICIT CRAFT-PRODUCED SALW

- are challenged by a lack of **consistent data collection and categorization** of seized craft-produced SALW, which prevents states from having a comprehensive picture of this type of illicit SALW proliferation.
- are faced with the proliferation of **commercially available items and components** which are not developed, designed or intended for lethal use and are being transformed into lethal SALW, as well as with the increasing diffusion of **guidance and 'how-to' materials** on production.

Trends in the supply, demand, and misuse of craft-produced SALW vary across regions. However, **the time is ripe for a global dialogue on measures to ensure that craft-produced weapons do not contribute to human suffering.**

ABOUT UNIDIR'S SURVEY ON ADDRESSING THE GLOBAL CRAFT PRODUCTION OF SALW

Information presented in this Factsheet draws upon UNIDIR's Global Survey on addressing the global craft production of SALW, which was distributed to all UN Member States during 2023. The Survey sought to gather information to enable a **mapping of different types of SALW craft production** around the globe, and **identify challenges and effective measures** to address the illicit proliferation of craft-produced SALW. It focuses on the period 2013-2023 and has been distributed to all national points of contact for the PoA. Other relevant stakeholders at the national and regional levels, including law enforcement, civil society organizations, as well as United Nations entities have contributed to UNIDIR's ongoing research on this issue.

UNIDIR continues to welcome contributions to this research. To receive UNIDIR's survey, or to share any relevant information, please contact the Conventional Arms and Ammunition Programme at cap-unidir@un.org.