

# CHAPTER ONE

## METHODOLOGY

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### Objectives of the Research

1. To find and document local-level programmes and groups which include a small arms demand-reduction component.
2. To analyse the success or failure of these measures within the organization's stated goals.
3. To assess the relevance of such programmes and measures to policy making.

### Key Terms

There are two kinds of key terms used in this research: the terms used to conceptualise the fieldwork and the terms used during the fieldwork when talking with participants. The terms 'demand' and 'demand-reduction measures' sometimes proved too difficult to translate into participants' native languages. We often substituted the term 'root causes' of conflict to refer to demand. We also, at times, avoided using the word 'gun' or 'guns' (*bunduki* in Kiswahili) since for many people that implied that we might be working for the government. The terms 'peace', 'peace building', and 'conflict' were safer options that often got the result of gun-related responses. The following are the terms used to conceptualise the problem.

**Demand.** Refers broadly to the 'buyer' side of the gun market (as opposed to manufacturers and suppliers). Buyers include individuals, militias, gangs, armies, and crime syndicates. Demand factors influencing buyers include state failure to provide security, civil conflict, systemic violence, and availability of guns. The assumption is that as long as demand goes unchecked, no amount of control over supply can adequately address proliferation.

**Demand-reduction measures.** Any project, policy, or activity with a focus on buyers or potential buyers, with the specific aim to prevent gun acquisition or

use. This includes, for example, the promotion of peaceful conflict resolution, youth education and alternatives to violence, and positive environmental and resource management.

**Supply-side measures.** Current policy focus on regulating guns by targeting manufacturers and dealers and regulating the transfer of SALW shipments.

## Research Framework and Methods

The reduction of demand for weapons has been a difficult area to prioritize at the national, regional, and international level precisely because it is so seemingly far-reaching. While recommendations have been made to incorporate a demand-side view into anti-proliferation policy work, the assumptions on which these statements rest have been largely theoretical. The goal of this research was to look at case studies where local groups are successfully integrating demand-side approaches to peace building and small arms reduction, and to determine the policy implications of their work. Concrete examples provide a way of validating the hypothesis that small arms policy should incorporate a balance of supply and demand measures.

The research was carried out in Kenya for several reasons. First, Kenya is one of ten signatories to the Nairobi Declaration (March 2000), a regional initiative aimed at curbing small arms proliferation in the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa. This ambitious collective framework provides for the involvement of civil society in enhancing security. Second, Kenya has a well-developed civil society and network of peace building groups, many with a specific small-arms component. Sharing porous borders with Sudan, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Somalia, much of remote Northern Kenya has what one interviewee called “a government of churches”: the prevalence of religious and other civil society organizations in the absence of government institutions. Finally, with the end of former President Daniel arap Moi’s 27-year rule, a new government in Nairobi has prioritized the country’s traditionally marginalized areas in its public agenda. If all politics is local, then all peace is political; a government committed to addressing the specific problems of the borderlands is a prerequisite for change.

The fieldwork took place during nine weeks from July to September 2003. The result is an organization-level survey of small-arms reduction practices. This report does not try to represent the views of individuals or try to capture entire communities’ perceptions of small arms proliferation. Rather, it profiles

the practices of a select number of community-based organizations (CBOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and peace committees, some of which are affiliated with or integrated into local government structures.

To determine which organizations would be included in the survey, we identified key partners working in the peace and conflict sector in Kenya. The National Council of Churches Kenya (NCCCK), the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC), and Oxfam GB-Kenya were instrumental in distributing an initial questionnaire to their grassroots partners in the field. The responses to these questionnaires painted a preliminary picture of the types of organizations operating in different regions of Kenya. We selected a representative sample of groups from the returned questionnaires. The aim was diversity across approaches and target groups, the urban-rural divide, and a focus on or deep awareness of the problem of small arms proliferation in the organization's mission statement or objectives.

As with any research, there were pitfalls and unforeseen circumstances. Many of the areas in which the survey was conducted are in the midst of unpredictable conflicts. Travel plans for the fieldwork portion of the study hinged on factors as diverse as the mood of security personnel at key roadblocks and the conditions of *luggas*, seasonal riverbeds across which vehicles had to pass. Because of the vastness of the northern regions of the country and the unreliability of modern means of communication, there were instances where on arrival at a group's offices it was learned that they had left the day before to conduct a rural training session a hundred kilometres away - on foot. The array of organizations included in this research is not scientifically representative of Kenya as a whole or its marginalized communities. However, the profiles presented do provide new insight into the way local groups approach peace building, conflict resolution, and the reduction of demand for small arms.

All of the organizations profiled in this report were visited by one of two researchers in Kenya between July and September 2003. Interviews were conducted with key staff and, when possible, with members and individuals from the organization's 'target group'. In some cases, focus groups with members and individuals from the target group were held to better facilitate discussion and the sharing of ideas. Materials published by the organizations, including brochures, annual reports, and situation reports were collected and used in characterizing its work and tactics. Interviews, both formal and informal, were also conducted with donor agencies responsible for funding peace and conflict resolution work at both the national and grassroots levels.

Interviews with organizations and committees were structured as open dialogues. The following questions served as guidelines for the information that was to be gathered over the course of the discussion.

### ***Set 1: Understanding the organization's approach***

*Questions for organizational leaders and/or members:*

- When was the organization started?
- Why was it started?
- Who started it?
- What are the objectives of the organization? (For a committee: What is the purpose of the committee?)
- What are the main projects or activities?
- Describe the target community where the organization operates.
- What role(s) does the organization play in the community? (i.e., facilitator in times of conflict, education, awareness building, etc.)
- What is the organization's target group within the community and why?
- How does the organization reach the target community?
- How often does the organization do activities directly with the target group?
- What are the main challenges facing the organization?

### ***Set 2: Assessing the gun problem from the organization point of view***

*Questions for organizational leaders and members:*

- Is there a problem with guns in your community?
- How would you describe the gun problem?

- How many people in the community own at least one gun?
- Who owns the guns? (i.e. youth, elders, clan)
- What is the main reason that people own guns?
- What is the main reason that people use guns?
- Who has traditionally been responsible for security/safety in your community?
- Who is responsible now?
- Who should be responsible for security/safety in your community?
- Are you aware of national (government) or international policies on security and guns that affect your community?
- Do you think such policies are effective, ineffective, or make the problem worse?
- Since the organization began its activities, do you think the gun problem has improved, stayed the same, or become worse? Why?
- Do you believe that your projects or activities reduce the need for guns within the community? Why or why not?

In general, interviews were conducted confidentially, although some organizations were agreeable to being named in the report. Therefore, while quotations from interviews are used extensively in this monograph, the person being interviewed is rarely identified. Transcripts of all the interviews remain at the offices of the Institute for Security Studies.

In conclusion, it needs to be stressed again that this research does not purport to represent the views of communities or even of entire organizations. The goal was to profile successes and challenges in local demand reduction and peace building in Kenya, and to move the research and policy debate on the existence and efficacy of demand-based anti-proliferation measures to the next level. Many questions are left unanswered, but the emerging dialogue between local actors and policy makers has the potential to change the face of human security in addressing them.