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## United Nations Development Programme: Small Arms Reduction Programme (SARP) for the Great Lakes Region

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**United Nations Development Programme**

**Small Arms Reduction Programme (SARP) for the Great  
Lakes Region**

**Assessment Visit Report (26 March – 1 April 2004)**



## Table of Contents

<b>1. Background</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Assessment Process</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Mandate and start-up</b> .....	<b>4</b>
3.1 Mandate .....	4
3.2 Establishment of the programme .....	5
3.3 Scope .....	5
<b>4. Overall impact</b> .....	<b>6</b>
4.1 Overall benefit to the region.....	6
4.2 Political challenges.....	6
<b>5. Progress against objectives</b> .....	<b>7</b>
5.1 First objective .....	7
5.2 Second objective .....	8
5.3 Third objective.....	9
5.4 Fourth objective.....	10
<b>6. UNDP relationships</b> .....	<b>11</b>
6.1 Headquarters support.....	11
6.2 Country Offices.....	11
<b>7. Partnerships</b> .....	<b>12</b>
7.1 Nairobi Secretariat.....	13
7.2 Governments.....	13
7.3 Non-governmental organizations .....	13
7.4 UN Family .....	14
<b>8. Management and administration</b> .....	<b>14</b>
8.1 Management .....	14
8.2 Personnel.....	15
8.3 Financial management and resource mobilization .....	16
<b>9. Recommendations</b> .....	<b>17</b>
9.1 General recommendations and conclusions .....	17
9.2 Strategy for May – December 2004 .....	18
9.3 Elements to be considered for a new regional programme .....	18
<b>Annex 1: Allocations</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Annex 2: Terms of Reference</b> .....	<b>21</b>



## **1. Background**

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa<sup>1</sup> has exacerbated conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Angola, Congo-Brazzaville and elsewhere in the region. Small arms availability has also aggravated the degree of violence by increasing the lethality and duration of hostilities, and the resulting culture of violence has obstructed peace efforts and delayed the launching of economic and social recovery in post-war societies in the region. Until very recently, governments in the region have lacked the capacity to deal with illicit supplies and trafficking, and even now, their capacity is limited. The lack of alternative livelihoods for those who are involved in armed groups, as well as general insecurity, have meant that individuals and groups are reluctant to surrender the weapons in their possession.

A conference in Nairobi in March 2000 for ten countries from the Horn and Great Lakes sub-regions resulted in the Nairobi Declaration (ND), whereby the signatories undertook to share information and co-operate in matters relating to illicit small arms and light weapons and to exercise effective control over the possession and transfer of small arms and light weapons. In order to support implementation of the Nairobi Declaration, as well as the DRC peace process, the Small Arms and Demobilization Unit (SADU) of UNDP's Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (BCPR) established the GLR Small Arms Regional Programme (SARP) in January 2002. The programme aims to build awareness of the problem of small arms proliferation in the Great Lakes within UNDP and its partners in the region, enhancing understanding of the impact on longer term development, integrating responses to the problem into UNDP's longer term programming and developing specific projects to tackle small arms proliferation.

Since its inception, changing realities in the region have influenced the direction of the project. The original project concept was heavily focused on the conflict in DRC and its impact in the surrounding region, but lack of progress in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in DRC created few opportunities for concrete activities. More recently, however, the deployment of the UN Organization Mission to Congo (MONUC), the commencement of the DDRRR programme, and the involvement of donors in the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) has created a window of opportunity in the region, while at the same time increasing the number of actors and thus international co-ordination. SARP's role within these processes with respect to SALW activities still remains unclear. Furthermore, the gradual operationalization of the Nairobi Secretariat (NS) during 2003 has created a serious regional partner through which SARP's regional participation could be enhanced.

## **2. Assessment Process**

The initial project foresaw monitoring and evaluation throughout project implementation, but there has been little systematic monitoring since mid-2002 and no assessment or evaluation during the entire project. An internal assessment is therefore long overdue, and is considered particularly desirable in view of political developments in the region, the emergence of key partners, and the need to review progress made so far. Furthermore, the current project is due to end in December 2004, and assessment will help with strategic planning on the way ahead.

This preliminary assessment has constrained itself to taking stock of progress achieved and challenges identified so far, and to the development of limited recommendations for the future of

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<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of this project, the Great Lakes Region has been defined as all the countries directly involved in the DRC conflict and the countries that suffer impact of the DRC conflict through refugees, increased cross-border trafficking and violence.



the project, both for the remainder of the year and in a possible second phase. Terms of reference can be found at [Annex 2](#).

The purpose of assessment can be summarized as follows:

- ❑ The identification of tangible achievements;
- ❑ The identification of options for SARP's future direction.

Originally a full external impact evaluation was considered, but this is no longer considered necessary at this stage for reasons outlined in Section 9. However, an independent impact evaluation involving the Regional Bureau could still be useful at the end of the current project, if combined with a needs assessment.

The BCPR/SADU Regional Liaison Specialist, Kate Joseph, conducted an assessment mission to Nairobi during the period 16-17 March and 26 March – 1 April 2004. The assessment methodology included the following elements:

- ❑ Interviews with stakeholders;
- ❑ Interviews with other partners;
- ❑ Interviews with all current SARP staff and one former staff member;
- ❑ Interviews with UNDP Kenya country office;
- ❑ Questionnaire distributed to UNDP country offices in the region (replies only received from Tanzania and Burundi);
- ❑ Review of project documentation and reports;
- ❑ Review of project finances.

This report reviews SARP's progress against its stated objectives, but also identifies key successes, obstacles, areas for improvement and options for the future. It does not provide a systematic record of all of SARP's activities, as these can be found in SARP's own reports, but rather highlights certain activities where it is felt that these have contributed to the realisation of objectives or generation of lessons learned. Recommendations can be found in Section 9.

### **3. Mandate and start-up**

#### **3.1 Mandate**

As previously explained, SARP was originally established to tackle small arms proliferation arising from the DRC conflict, and, as such, was heavily focused on the DRC and the surrounding countries affected by the conflict. Nevertheless, the overriding goal and the objectives outlined in the project document are considerably broader in scope. As defined in the project document, SARP's goal is *"to reduce the humanitarian and development impact of small arms proliferation and availability in the Great Lakes Region"*, and the four objectives were listed as follows:

1. Integrate development related aspects of small arms problems into agreed international development community policies and development programmes in the Great Lakes;
2. Raise national and international awareness of the humanitarian impact, and wider socio-economic and development costs of small arms problems in the Great Lakes;
3. Strengthen the capacity of country programmes in the Great Lakes region to understand and analyse small arms proliferation and respond;
4. Design and implement country and regional programmes in the Great Lakes to address small arms proliferation.

In spite of these rather general objectives, the programme has largely been seen through the lens of the DRC conflict. As a result, slow institutional processes in the transition phase on the



DRC side were seen as an obstacle for implementation across the board for SARP. Faced with these difficulties, SARP has shifted its emphasis from the impact of the DRC conflict to other processes in the region during the last year, but has not sought to redefine SARP's goals or developed flexible annual strategies or workplans to guide this process.

### 3.2 Establishment of the programme

SARP was designed to run for a three-year period, starting in January 2002, but due to difficulties with the recruitment process the programme was not begun until May 2002. Recruitment continued even after this date so that the programme was not fully operational until at least half a year after the intended start date. As a result, activities were also delayed. The SARP team also faced a number of challenges in establishing a functioning project office (see Section 8), which set the programme back still further. It would perhaps be fair to say SARP was not able to launch programme activities until at least eight to nine months after the anticipated start date.

In the early phase of the project, a regional assessment was conducted which was to form the basis of planning and programming for the next three years. The regional assessment was a useful document but difficulties between the assessment team, BCPR and some country offices in the region undermined the value of the initiative and reduced the quality of the final document. The failure of the assessment team leader to fulfil the terms of his contract was particularly damaging. Furthermore, it is possible that a number of personal and institutional relationships suffered as a result of this exercise and created problems for the project later on.

Following the development of the regional assessment, a BCPR/SADU mission was fielded to Nairobi to assist the team with the development of a strategy and workplan, and to provide some orientation and training for the staff. Again, this was useful and helped create a framework for future activities. However, the development of both the Project Document and the Strategy could be seen as a top-down approach in which a vision was imposed from headquarters without sufficient input from the region, in part due to the delay in the production of the final report from the regional assessment because of the difficulties outlined above. The Strategy also created a workplan for UNDP as a whole, and did not differentiate between SARP, Country Offices and BCPR. As a result, the relevance of the Strategy was called into question and was largely ignored in the day-to-day programming and planning of the regional programme. As a result, and as will shown below, SARP's approach to programming and implementation has largely been ad hoc and opportunistic in nature.

### 3.3 Scope

In terms of geographical scope, the regional programme was developed to cover the countries affected by the DRC conflict, which were taken to comprise Burundi, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda, Republic of Congo (RoC) and Tanzania. The Central African Republic is not formally part of the project but nevertheless features prominently in the Strategy. Kenya was not considered part of the project, even though the programme is based in Nairobi. This has been a source of some confusion, and has prevented SARP from capitalizing on progress made in Kenya on small arms control, both by UNDP and by other organizations. Meanwhile, interaction with other players focusing on the Great Lakes region, including donors, has sometime been difficult due to the fact that they more often operate from Kinshasa. Lastly, SARP's geographical scope does not fit with that of the Nairobi Declaration, which includes Sudan, Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea, but does not include RoC. This has also created difficulties for SARP in its support to the Nairobi Secretariat, one of its mandated activities.



However, these difficulties should not be overstated, and in general, workable solutions have been or could be found.

#### **4. Overall impact**

Before delving into progress made against objectives, it is useful to look at the overall picture in the region and the views of key partners and stakeholders.

##### 4.1 Overall benefit to the region

During discussions, key partners identified the following elements as evidence of SARP's overall benefit to the region:

- ❑ Mainstreaming small arms issue in humanitarian frameworks;
- ❑ Capacity development among NGOs and civil society organizations;
- ❑ Parliamentary process;
- ❑ Support for the Nairobi Secretariat and Friends of the Nairobi Declaration;
- ❑ Technical advice and assistance to country offices (where provided).

Most identified awareness raising to be the most visible benefit brought by the project, and spoke positively about the events organized by SARP in this regard. Capacity building with NGOs and CSOs was also considered to be of value for the region, including through the DRC workshop and the Training of Trainers workshop organized by Saferworld and BCPR, with SARP support. Many partners considered the process of engagement with parliamentarians to be particularly innovative and useful, and cited it as clear evidence of SARP's value added. SARP's support to the Nairobi Secretariat staff through a one-week orientation course, as well as its co-chairmanship of the Friends of the Nairobi Declaration (FND) was considered to have been useful, although it was felt that more could be done here.

Rather more intangibly, the regional nature of the programme was thought by many to be of benefit to the region. Regional processes such as the parliamentary dialogue or the Training of Trainers workshop have an important confidence building impact that goes far beyond the control of small arms. The mere fact that representatives (be they non-governmental, governmental or parliamentary) from previously hostile countries have been able to sit down together and discuss highly sensitive issues can be considered an achievement in itself. Some partners highlighted this affect as SARP's main benefit for the region, although it is perhaps not a central goal for the project.

##### 4.2 Political challenges

There is no doubt that SARP has been operating in a difficult and challenging environment, both in logistical and political terms. These have presented considerable problems, some of which SARP has been able to overcome, but most of which have severely hampered its capacity to deliver planned outputs effectively.

Continuing volatility and instability in the Great Lakes region make activities on small arms and light weapons difficult and sometimes even dangerous to implement. However, moves towards peace in a number of countries in the region have created a number of opportunities in the last year. Nevertheless, a lack of political will among governments of the region remains a major stumbling block, especially for initiatives at country level. Increased sensitization has gone some way towards addressing this problem, and the efforts of the Nairobi Secretariat have also proved useful in this regard.



## 5. Progress against objectives

The project document included a few indicators against which to measure progress in meeting the objectives.

### 5.1 First objective

*Integrate development related aspects of small arms problems into agreed international development community policies and development programmes in the Great Lakes.*

*Indicators of success:*

- ❑ *Adoption of National and Regional small arms policies.*
- ❑ *Policies of UN System for the Great Lakes Region formulated in the context of inter-agency mechanisms such as CASA, IASC, etc.*
- ❑ *National Strategies or small arms reduction plans developed in at least four countries in the Great Lakes Region.*

Overall, significant process has been made in the region towards the agreement of small arms policies and the integration of the issue into policy frameworks. Within the context of this assessment, it is difficult to assess how far this can be attributed to SARP and how much the efforts of other organizations have contributed to this process.

A number of countries in the region have moved closer towards the development of small arms policies and action plans, largely in order to implement commitments undertaken within the framework of the Nairobi Declaration. Most ND signatories have established national focal points and some have begun to develop national action plans. In this, they have received considerable support from Saferworld, SaferAfrica and SRIC, through a grant provided by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID); SARP has not played a substantial role in these processes. However, SARP has provided support and assistance to the Nairobi Secretariat through the provision of some training and advice. This has been a useful complement to the support provided by the two NGOs and has been viewed positively by the NS. There is a desire within the NS to continue this relationship.

Although SARP cannot be said to have fully achieved this rather ambitious objective, the programme has had some success in mainstreaming the small arms issue into planning processes of other UN agencies, notably OCHA. Here, SARP succeeded in integrating the small arms issue into the contingency planning process co-ordinated by OCHA, and was able to include small arms control as a priority issue within the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP). Although this latter achievement did not help SARP mobilize resources, it may have helped increase awareness of the small arms issue, both within the UN family and among donors.

However, much of the progress made under this objective has been opportunistic in nature, and is not the result of a coherent strategy. Some of the planned outputs did not take place, such as the organization of a regional UNDP country office workshop to review best practice and distil lessons learned. This may be because country offices in the region were not always receptive to SARP's advances, but a more concerted approach might have helped generate interest among UNDP CO staff. A focus away from lessons learned, which was perhaps premature, and towards training, awareness raising and capacity development, might have helped in this regard. The development of materials such as operational guidelines would certainly also have been helpful, but this did not take place.



## 5.2 Second objective

*Raise national and international awareness of the humanitarian impact, and wider socio-economic and development costs of small arms problems in the Great Lakes.*

*Indicators of success:*

- (1) Small Arms and Light Weapons issues related to GLR featuring in national and international media.*
- (2) National awareness strategies developed and implemented in four countries in GLR.*
- (3) Broad-based government programmes initiated, featuring multi-sectoral approaches*

There is little doubt that awareness of the humanitarian impact of small arms and light weapons has increased substantially in the Great Lakes region, but again it is difficult to differentiate between the impact of SARP and that of other organizations working on the issue. Saferworld, for example, has done much to increase awareness among government officials, and the impact of the ND and the strenuous diplomatic efforts of the NS in recent months should not be forgotten.

It is probably fair to say, however, that SARP's activities have contributed to increased awareness, especially among policy circles and among national non-governmental organizations (NGOs). One of SARP's key activities, the regional media workshop held in Nairobi from 28-30 April 2003, seems to have had a significant impact on media reporting on the small arms issue, and helped generate media attention towards the issue. However, it was not possible to conduct a systematic review of media activity during this assessment.

SARP has focused on the development of awareness among civil society and has proved adept at identifying civil society partners, in the form of NGOs, CSOs and parliamentarians. Additional activities that have helped meet this objective include the civil society training workshop for DRC, held in Kinshasa from 28-30 May 2003 and organized with the Congolese NGO Groupe d'Action pour la Démobilisation et la Réinsertion des Enfants Soldats de la RDC (GADERES). This workshop helped build a civil society network in DRC that will become useful as the country programme moves into an operational phase, but it was not possible to support activities that built on the event in its immediate aftermath.

Finally, SARP has pursued a strategy to raise awareness among parliamentarians of the problems posed by small arms proliferation. A workshop co-organized with the European Parliamentarians for Africa (AWEPA) in Mombasa in November 2003 went surprisingly well, and helped generate considerable political will among parliamentarians for tighter arms control legislation (both domestic and external). More importantly, perhaps, it provided an opportunity for policy-makers from across the region to sit down together for the first time; the value of such an event in terms of confidence building and peacemaking should not be underestimated. Opportunities have arisen that will allow SARP to build on progress made in Mombasa, such as the AWEPA-organized meeting for parliamentarians from Rwanda, Burundi and DRC, held in Bujumbura from 29-30 March 2004. National initiatives will now be crucial in order to translate commitment into action.

A number of other outputs have been developed that help contribute to the realization of this objective, including the production of brochures, t-shirts, stickers and a SARP logo. However, some other outputs which might have reached a wider audience have not materialized, such as a SARP newsletter and a SARP website, although SARP does contribute articles to the Nairobi



Secretariat newsletter. One destruction event that was organized by the Kenyan government with the support of UNDP to mark the anniversary of the first Ministerial Review Conference of the Nairobi Declaration helped generate some attention in Kenya, but no other destruction events have been organized by the programme in the region.

There have been some successes in meeting this objective, but again, SARP's activities have largely been ad hoc. Although SARP has created a strategy for communications and sensitization, activities have been relatively sporadic, usually consisting of one event in one country or at the regional level, and there has been little systematic follow-up. Furthermore, although awareness may have been raised among political elites, relatively little has been done at community level or with the general public. It is difficult not to conclude that opportunities have been missed. In general, it would perhaps be fair to say that SARP has made progress on the first indicator, but there is little evidence of any progress on the second and third indicators.

### 5.3 Third objective

*Strengthen the capacity of country programmes in the Great Lakes region to understand and analyse small arms proliferation and respond.*

*Indicators of Success:*

- (1) Development impact of small arms proliferation successfully incorporated by UNDP Country Offices in the region into various UN planning tool such as CCA, UNDAF, UNDP Country Reviews, etc at least in 4 countries.*
- (2) SALW mainstreamed in UNDP and other donor operations in the region.*
- (3) Nationally agreed small arms assessments developed.*

Much of the focus of the original project document has been on the creation of national small arms programmes through the UNDP Country Offices (COs) in the region. This assumed a certain level of interest and commitment on the part of these COs, which was in many cases difficult to sustain.

Some progress has been made against the first indicator. For example, SARP supported the inclusion of small arms control within the Kenya UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is a significant achievement that has proved to be a challenge elsewhere. In the Burundi CO, small arms have also been included in the UNDAF, probably as a result of SARP's awareness raising activities if not its advocacy. Naturally, in order to reap the full benefit of such mainstreaming, SARP and others will need to continue to highlight the issue and to capitalize on its inclusion in UNDP programming structures.

In terms of the second indicator of success, little progress has been made. However, it should be stressed that this was perhaps somewhat unrealistic given the relatively infancy of the small arms issue within UNDP and other development organizations. Furthermore, policy is often agreed at headquarters level so policy changes could only be relatively limited at the regional level. Nevertheless, it seems that more could have been done in order to help meet this objective, especially through increased liaison and interaction with COs, and through the organization of awareness raising or capacity building workshops for CO staff.

The project document envisaged that SARP would conduct a number of assessments at the regional and country level that were intended to build the basis for future programming. A regional assessment was conducted at the outset of the programme, but this was organized by BCPR before SARP was fully operational, and therefore cannot be considered an output of the



regional programme. Some project formulation missions have been conducted by the SARP team in Rwanda, Western Tanzania, DRC, and Burundi, as well as numerous project formulation missions to Republic of Congo (RoC). These have no doubt been valuable, but few concrete results have materialised. The reasons for this may be numerous and are too complex to explore within the framework of this assessment, but again, a lack of sustained interest on the part of most UNDP country offices is certainly a contributing factor.

What is unfortunate is that SARP did not undertake small arms assessments in any of the countries covered by the programme; such assessments might have helped increase understanding of the small arms issue among UNDP staff and could have provided evidence to justify small arms interventions. It should be noted, however, that the situation in some countries (e.g. DRC, Burundi) was not stable enough for assessments to take place. At this stage, Saferworld/SaferAfrica have conducted mapping exercises in a number of countries in the region that may or may not be useful substitutes for such assessments. At the very least, it would be useful to build on the work done by Saferworld in this regard, assuming Saferworld's agreement could be secured.

Finally, some assessments on aspects of policy would also have been of benefit for future programming. For example, a SARP project was designed to support field and inter-agency collaboration among customs agencies, but it never came to fruition in spite of considerable donor interest. The project was certainly unrealistic and needed considerable revision; a planned assessment would have helped in this regard. It is unfortunate that an opportunity was not found to move this project forward, and to conduct similar assessments on other aspects of small arms policy.

#### 5.4 Fourth objective

*Design and implement country and regional programmes in the Great Lakes to address small arms proliferation.*

*Indicators of Success:*

- (1) A significant number of UNDP projects addressing small arms proliferation issues successfully developed.*
- (2) Considerable number of weapons collected and destroyed with UNDP support.*
- (3) Reducing significantly the direct and indirect impacts of small arms proliferation and availability on human development in the areas of support.*

It is not entirely from the outputs listed under this objective in the project document whether the focus here was limited to DRC and the countries impacted by the DRC conflict, or it is intended to cover all countries of the region and aspects of the small arms problem. Whichever is the case, SARP is only now able to make a substantial contribution to the formulation of national UNDP country programmes on small arms, with the exception of Republic of Congo, where SARP assisted in the drafting of three project documents, of which one was eventually funded by the EU. SARP has had recent successes with the development of a pilot phase country project in Western Tanzania and the development of a workplan for the small arms component of the DRC Community Recovery project. SARP is also advising the Burundi CO on the development of a national project.

However, in general, progress has been slow and hampered by the involvement of other actors and the nature of political processes in the region. In DRC and RoC, the development of a national DDR strategy and the involvement of the World Bank through the MDRP respectively



have made it difficult to develop low-level small arms projects of a pilot nature that might have been useful to test approaches and generate lessons learned. Therefore it seems fair to say that the indicators of success have not been reached and this project objective has not been met. However, opportunities now exist to make significant progress on the first indicator, and SARP could build on progress made in DRC and Western Tanzania to develop similar pilot initiatives elsewhere.

## **6. UNDP relationships**

### **6.1 Headquarters support**

As outlined above, BCPR/SADU played the central role in drafting the project document and the original Strategy document. SADU later provided some training and orientation to the SARP staff, which was considered useful, and continued to provide backstopping and technical advice to the programme. However, there do appear to have been some difficulties in the relationship with SADU. SARP staff felt that the training provided was inadequate; it is also the view of this assessment that all programme staff would have benefited from more training and capacity building on the substantive issues, project management, communications and capacity development, as well as on UNDP procedures and practices.

There was also a perception from some staff that SADU support had been sporadic. At times, SADU played a strong role in the development of the project and perhaps tried to direct the project from Geneva, which was understandable given SARP's limited capacity at the time, but the manner in which this was done certainly caused disagreements with SARP project staff. On the other hand, there was a long period (almost one year) when SADU did not provide any support to SARP due to changes in staffing. At least one monitoring visit should have taken place in 2003. In general, this points to a need for more consistent support from SADU.

The Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) was substantially involved in the design of the Document through the provision of technical assistance and input, and through the provision of USD 100,000 from TRAC 2 funds. RBA's involvement was no doubt instrumental in the early phase and helped ensure complementarity with UNDP's programming in the Great Lakes region. However, later on during the implementation, RBA was no longer centrally involved. In view of the highly political nature of the work undertaken by SARP and the complexities of the region, it would be wise to bring RBA back into the discussion about SARP's future.

### **6.2 Country Offices**

One of SARP's primary aims was the development of national projects in the countries of the region. Progress made under this objective has been outlined above, but the relationship with the UNDP COs warrants further examination. In general, interest displayed by UNDP COs in the regional programme has been sporadic at best, perhaps because there has been little financial incentive. Only two country offices responded to the questionnaire prepared for this assessment.

*Democratic Republic of Congo:* Relations with the DRC CO were often difficult, due in part to the sheer scale of activities and support that was needed in the country. Furthermore, the involvement of major international players in DRC, such as the World Bank in DDR activities and the subsequent establishment of the MDRP complicated relations and made progress slow. However, these relations have now improved significantly with the fielding of a SARP/SADU mission to Eastern DRC in recent weeks, and SARP is committed to the provision of key inputs to the DRC Community Recovery project.



*Republic of Congo:* A strong relationship was established early on with the RoC CO, and SARP fielded a number of technical assistance missions to provide input into the development of small arms and DDR projects. The SARP programme officer was detailed to the Brazzaville office for a period of one month to provide backstopping for the development of the national DDRRR programme. SARP also made a provisional commitment to provide seed funding of USD 150,000 to the RoC CO for a cross-border project on Community Recovery, Weapons Collection and the Repatriation and Reintegration of DRC Ex-combatants. SARP also transferred an additional USD 142,000 for a DDR advisor. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to either programme the USD 150,000, and the CO was disappointed with the SARP and BCPR's inability to identify suitable candidates for the DDR post. However, agreement has recently been reached between SARP and the CO on this issue.

*Burundi:* Two missions to Burundi were conducted relatively early on in the project and some backstopping and technical advice was provided. The Burundi CO also managed to integrate small arms into the UNDAF with SARP support, although in the absence of a Resident Representative for some time little attention was paid to the issue. No concrete activities were undertaken, although it is arguable that the situation was not ripe for an intervention at this stage. Again, the situation improved with the arrival of a new RR, and a planned Gender, Small Arms and DDR workshop and assessment, which may well create the opportunity for a broader based pilot project. Care should be taken to ensure complementary with BCPR/ Transitional Recovery Unit's activities on reintegration.

*Uganda:* SARP has not initiated any activities in Uganda. There is a perceived lack of interest on the part of the government in the small arms impacts of the DRC conflict, while the UNDP CO has not so far focused on problems related to the Karamojong and the LRA in Northern Uganda. These were seen by SARP as falling outside the mandate of the original project document, although the cross-border dimensions of these issues would lend themselves well to SARP intervention. Opportunities for engagement could also arise as a result of the upcoming BCPR mission.

*Rwanda:* Technical assistance missions have been fielded to Rwanda but as yet no concrete activities have been developed. There is a perception within SARP that other international actors in the country are playing a leading role and that there is a little for SARP to contribute. Mixed messages have also been received from different government authorities on the Small Arms situation. Here, an assessment could be useful in identifying ideas for pilot projects.

*Tanzania:* In the early stages, SARP did not focus on Tanzania, in part because Saferworld and SaferAfrica were very active in the country already. However, an opportunity for UNDP involvement was identified in Kigoma, and SARP has provided technical assistance and advice for the design of a small arms project in Western Tanzania using a development focused community based weapons recovery approach.

## **7. Partnerships**

There is a variety of organizations and actors active on small arms issues in the Great Lakes region and SARP has established partnerships with a number of these. However, the multiplicity of actors and the various approaches used has sometimes created a complicated picture within which SARP has often struggled to find its niche. A division of labour among the different organizations has not been established, and SARP could have done more to highlight its value added and comparative advantage on small arms programming within a development perspective.



### 7.1 Nairobi Secretariat

During its first two years of operation, the Nairobi Secretariat (NS) was not fully operational and lacked the capacity, and indeed the political will, to take a more proactive approach to implementation of the Nairobi Declaration. In the last year, however, the arrival of a new Co-ordinator has signalled a new era in the NS's work. The Secretariat has been reasonably successful in bringing governments of the region on board, and has supported the creation of 7 out of the 10 National Focal Points. Furthermore, the Secretariat has secured new funding for the next three-year period to 2007. The Secretariat has received considerable technical assistance from Saferworld, and, to a lesser extent, from SARP. However, the Secretariat's capacity development needs are still great, particularly in terms of staff development and training. SARP has also provided support to the Friends of the Nairobi Declaration (FND) group, although the group has functioned more as an information exchange mechanism than as a resource and project mobilization forum. SARP could usefully help reinvigorate the FND by bringing projects and issues to its attention.

Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons why a stronger relationship between SARP and the NS may not be feasible at this time. First, as previously explained, the Secretariat has received considerable support from Saferworld and SaferAfrica in terms of capacity building and programming, and these two organizations are named implementers as per the terms of the Secretariat's DFID grant. Since DFID is also one of SARP's main funders, and SARP is also mandated to support the NS, it would have been useful if DFID's funding strategy had insisted on better co-ordination with SARP. Secondly, SARP's objectives and target countries differ substantially from those of the Nairobi Secretariat. However, there may be scope for co-operation on project related activities, where the political input of the Nairobi Secretariat could be useful in discussions with governments. The FND could also be used for resource mobilization and awareness raising.

### 7.2 Governments

Very limited contacts have been established with governments of the region. There may be three valid reasons for this. First, UNDP should liaise with governments primarily through the COs. Secondly, the Nairobi Secretariat maintains contacts with government on issues related to small arms control. Thirdly, international NGOs have somewhat "cornered the market" in the provision of technical advice and assistance to governments (see below). However, there is a strong case for enhanced SARP interaction with governments if the programme is to be able to launch pilot projects and achieve sustainability in programming. Regular courtesy calls to National Co-ordinators for small arms and National Focal Points would be useful when SARP staff travel on missions. Discussions with government officials during the design of pilot projects are also essential. Both should be facilitated through UNDP country offices.

### 7.3 Non-governmental organizations

The relationship with Saferworld (SW) and its sister organization SaferAfrica (SA) deserves special attention since they are major players on small arms control in the region. Both organizations have focused their activities on co-operation with governments, in particular through training, capacity development and the provision of technical assistance for legislative drafting. The approach taken by these organizations differs substantially from that of SARP, which perceives it to lean too much towards a one-size-fits-all top down approach. While the various merits or drawbacks of SW/SA's approach are not a subject of this assessment, the differing approaches have sometime brought the two sides into conflict.



Both organizations are extremely active in the region and provide substantial support to both governments and the Nairobi Secretariat. At times, SARP and UNDP in general are unsure where they contribute, and, as one interviewee noted, “UNDP is in danger of becoming an implementing agency for Saferworld”. SARP has established a productive relationship with Saferworld, partly as a result of the Training of Trainers workshop and through contact maintained at the headquarters, but also through some contacts made by SARP itself. This is a positive development, but a clear division of labour needs to be established with SW/SA. In particular, SARP should focus on those aspects in which it has a comparative advantage, especially development focused approaches to small arms control, operational small arms control projects at the country level, and community based capacity development.

There are also a number of national NGOs working on small arms control in the region. As part of its capacity development mandate, SARP has provided some training and capacity building to national NGOs, but has not been able to provide direct funding for projects. Therefore, SARP’s capacity to use the expertise and knowledge available within national NGOs has been limited. Although SARP should not become a donor for NGOs, it could consider providing limited seed funding for projects developed in conjunction with national NGOs where the projects will contribute to attainment of SARP’s regional objectives, or where approaches could be tested nationally for replication at a regional level.

#### 7.4 UN Family

The regional programme has maintained contacts with a number of UN agencies and programmes. Relations with the Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) have been particularly strong, and have focused on mainstreaming and on operational co-operation. SARP has also had some contact with both UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), although there have been no joint activities to date. Given SARP’s mainstreaming mandate it is unfortunate that stronger links have not been established with these two critical organizations, although this can often be a challenging process.

Some contact has been established with the Office to the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for the Great Lakes conflict, and SARP staff members have participated in preparatory meetings for the Great Lakes Peace Conference. This forum offers a number of opportunities for awareness raising and advocacy on small arms control and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR); SARP could seize these opportunities in the next few months by organizing a side event at the first conference meeting and by preparing briefing materials and brochures for dissemination.

### **8. Management and administration**

#### 8.1 Management

The SARP project team faced a number of challenges during the establishment of the programme, some of which they were able to overcome through key successes. Foremost among these has been the establishment of a functioning project unit in Nairobi, in spite of the fact that there were no established procedures to follow, and the fact that no provision had been made in the project document for operating costs. When the project document was developed, it was assumed that the Kenya CO would be able to cover these costs but this was never discussed in detail between the CO and BCPR. Nevertheless, the SARP staff dealt with this situation well and was able to establish a functioning office relatively quickly.



The project team also established good relations with the Kenya CO, which has been helpful with a number of aspects of the project. Political support from the Resident Representative has been particularly beneficial. There have, however, been some difficulties on the logistical side, partly because the CO had no experience with the establishment of regional programmes, and therefore had no established procedures for SARP to follow. This has been overcome through time, but administrative issues have persisted. In particular, SARP has found that procedures such as travel authorizations or residency applications have taken longer than expected due to delays at the CO.

SARP project management has suffered from the fact that little training and support was offered to the team, and, in particular to the Project Co-ordinator. The Project Co-ordinator had little project management experience and no experience with the practices and procedures of UNDP. At the same time, the project brought together a diverse group of people from different backgrounds, which made interaction and communication challenging.

As a result, there have been a number of difficulties in the management of the project. These fall into three main categories: strategic planning, information sharing and communication. First and foremost among these has been the overall lack of strategic direction and planning. Although the Project Document and Strategy became less relevant over time, little effort was made to follow annual workplans. Those workplans that were developed did not retain sufficient flexibility to allow the Project Team to respond to opportunities as they arose or modify activities to suit the changing environment. As a result, workplans themselves also lost their relevance, and SARP operated in a more ad hoc and opportunistic manner. SARP's activities became largely reactive in nature and did not fit into an overall strategy. This then had a knock-on effect on the management of staff in the team, where the absence of a clear workplan made it difficult to create a workable division of labour among the staff. Although the Project Co-ordinator endeavoured to delineate staff responsibilities, activities were not fully co-ordinated, which often led to overlaps, gaps, and worse, a competitive atmosphere in the office.

Information sharing and communication has also been a particular problem for the project team, although the Project Co-ordinator did establish procedures such as regular staff meetings. The perception was that information was not shared properly both between the Project Co-ordinator and the staff members, and among the staff members themselves. Members of staff often worked in isolation on different projects without keeping team members adequately informed, with the result that projects stalled when staff left.

Ultimately, the responsibility for intra-office communication, information sharing and strategising lies with the Project Co-ordinator, who is in charge of establishing procedures and practices that the staff must follow in the daily work. It is clear that the Project Co-ordinator would have benefited from some management and teambuilding training at an early stage. Furthermore, guidelines on all aspects of project management would have been useful for the entire team.

## 8.2 Personnel

Personnel issues have presented particular problems for SARP. As explained above, the staff recruited to the project had only very limited UN and project management experience; they also had relatively little experience in their respective specialisations. In the absence of clear direction from the Project Co-ordinator, some staff struggled to perform their tasks in a challenging environment.

High staff turnover has plagued SARP since the earliest months and has contributed to a lack of continuity in activities. Part of the reason for both this and the relative lack of experience among



staff members is the nature of staff contracts: all international staff apart from the Project Co-ordinator are UN Volunteers (UNVs), and can be easily tempted away to more senior and better paid jobs. However, discontent among staff has also been a motivating factor. Clearer responsibilities and more formalized management structures might help overcome some of these difficulties.

SARP's current staffing situation is not ideal. The Communications and Awareness Raising Officer is leaving at the end of May, but will be now replaced as new funds have been freed up. The Capacity Building Officer was not replaced when the last incumbent left in October 2003 and the responsibilities of this post were assumed by the Programme Officer.

### 8.3 Financial management and resource mobilization

#### *8.2.1 Financial management*

As previously explained, the original budget for the project was not well conceived and did not include funds for fundamental operating costs. SARP therefore had to shift funds from other budget lines and make a number of budget revisions. This was done in accordance with established procedures and budget revisions on the basis of new allocations were always shared with the Country Office and with BCPR. Although a full audit is beyond the scope of this assessment, financial management has generally been satisfactory and there are no serious issues regarding budgetary matters.

However, budget revisions appear to have been reactive in nature to cover immediate needs and did not follow a clear strategy. Budget projections have been somewhat lacking. As a result, the programme is now low on funds for projects at this stage, which is unfortunate since several possibilities for projects have materialised recently.

Another problem is related to responsibility for budget management, which has almost entirely fallen to the Project Co-ordinator. This has had two effects. First, the Project Co-ordinator has become involved in the details of financial management, which has perhaps not been the best use of his time, and should have been the responsibility of the Programme Officer. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, there is a perceived lack of transparency in the management of the programme budget; staff members do not have a clear understanding of the resources available to them for programming in their particular issue areas, and do not have responsibility for their own budgets. This has prevented programme staff from planning activities in advance, and has perhaps contributed to the reactive nature of SARP's work.

#### *8.2.2 Resource mobilization*

In terms of resource mobilization, SARP has not suffered any serious problems and has managed to mobilize adequate resources for programming. The original proposal was to secure Belgian funding to cover the entire cost of the programme; in fact, the Belgian pledge for a project focusing on DRC within a broader regional perspective was the main impetus behind the creation of the programme in the first place. However, it soon became clear that the Belgian government was in favour of an integrated small arms and recovery project, which meant that their funds could no longer be used to support the Great Lakes regional programme, by now in its initial start-up phase. Therefore, the Belgian contribution was eventually used for the DRC Community Recovery project and the funding for the small arms component of that project (USD 980,185 programmable) was channelled through SARP as seed funding for DRC. This management arrangement later proved unworkable, and the funds have now been transferred



directly to the DRC CO, but it is recommended that SARP keep a close eye on programming and financial management since responsibility for reporting is shared.

The contribution of TRAC 2 funding from the Regional Bureau was an important step in the inception of the project, but did not ultimately ensure RBA ownership and Country Office ownership. It also meant that CO decided not to contribute from its own TRAC 1 resources. The Belgian government provided a separate contribution of around USD 300,000. BCPR made a commitment to provide the remainder of the funds through the Crisis Prevention and Recovery (CPR) Thematic Trust Fund (TTF), and resources from Netherlands, Switzerland, the UK and Germany (this last being seed funding for RoC) were used. SARP currently has a shortfall of approximately USD 450,000. A summary of allocations is provided at [Annex 1](#).

## **9. Recommendations**

### **9.1 General recommendations and conclusions**

This assessment report shows that SARP has faced considerable political and logistical difficulties during its two years of operation. As a result, there is little doubt that the delivery rate has been low for a project of this size. There are a number of reasons for this which have been outlined above and relate to the original programme design, the political situation, the role of UNDP COs, the involvement of other international actors, the management of the programme and the role of BCPR.

It is the opinion of this assessment that a further impact evaluation would not be worthwhile at this stage. Although an impact evaluation is always desirable, it is only a valuable tool if there have been sufficient tangible activities on the ground to be appraised. Although SARP has undertaken a number of activities, these are generally intangible and have focused primarily on awareness raising and political dialogue. Concrete activities have been more limited. Furthermore, given that this is a regional programme, the impact will also be regional in nature, and thus highly diffused and difficult to measure. Therefore, an evaluation would almost certainly focus on process rather than impact and would therefore be limited to a progress assessment. Although it would certainly be able to go deeper than this current assessment, it would be difficult to justify the financial outlay for another assessment round. This need not preclude a more in-depth evaluation at a later stage, possibly combined with a needs assessment.

Therefore, this assessment makes the following recommendations for the future:

1. BCPR/SADU and SARP should draft a detailed workplan for the remaining eight months of the current project. This workplan should follow the new template and should programme the necessary resources for each activity. The workplan should be based on current projected activities for the remainder of the year, as well as ideas listed under Section 10.
2. On the basis of this workplan, SARP and BCPR/SADU should revisit SARP's current budget projection and resource allocation. Particular attention should be paid to human resource questions. Although this will be determined by the workplan, it is recommended that the Programme Officer receive a regular contract and at least one additional professional staff member be recruited on SSA, either as a UNV or as national staff.
3. BCPR/SADU should maintain regular phone and e-mail contact (at least every two weeks) with SARP on the implementation of activities outlined in the workplan. Written reports should be provided to BCPR/SADU every two months.
4. BCPR/SADU should initiate a consultation process with UNDP COs, RBA, donors and other stakeholders on needs and gaps in the region.



5. BCPR/SADU, in consultation with SARP and RBA, should review the need for a second phase. Ideas for a potential new phase can be found in Section 11.

## 9.2 Strategy for May – December 2004

SARP already has a number of activities planned for the rest of 2004, listed below:

1. Follow-up to parliamentary consultation process at the country level, especially in DRC.
2. Community Recovery activities in DRC:
  - a. Training for Community Recovery project staff
  - b. Small arms baseline assessment in Eastern DRC
3. Activities in Burundi:
  - a. Gender and small arms assessment and workshop
  - b. Pilot project on small arms control
4. Activities in Western Tanzania: support to the PA phase project
  - a. Assistance with development of a communications and/or awareness raising strategy
  - b. Assistance with capacity development

A number of additional activities could be considered from the following list (as well as any others developed by the project itself):

1. Support for UNDP country offices
  - a. Additional small arms assessment in one other country of the region, e.g. Uganda
  - b. Workshop for UNDP CO staff on small arms and DDR
  - c. Pilot project in one country of the region
2. Support for international co-operation on small arms
  - a. Support to the NS and Friends of Nairobi (e.g. DDR information briefing)
  - b. Advocacy with Great Lakes Peace Conference
3. Pilot projects to test regional approaches
  - a. Assessment of customs and border management capacity in two locations as preparation for a capacity development project
  - b. Follow up to the Training of Trainers workshop at the national level

## 9.3 Elements to be considered for a new regional programme

The decision to develop a new regional programme is dependent on an external evaluation, in accordance with the current Project Document, as well as a brief needs assessment and internal and external consultation processes. However, should UNDP decide to go ahead with a Phase II regional programme, this current progress assessment has the following recommendations:

1. Phase II should be more focused and targeted than the current programme. Priority should be given to current office support and to the provision of seed funding and technical advice and assistance for country projects. National assessments could form the basis of such projects. The project could include the same countries, with a focus on DRC, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania. The Phase II programme should also focus on building capacity in UNDP COs and within other UN organizations as appropriate.
2. The Phase II programme could include seed funding for pilot projects with a regional or bi-national component, such as the development of capacity for border management and customs. Such pilot projects could be used to test approaches and develop best practice. They should focus on interaction and co-ordination between two or three countries, rather than the entire region at once. If successful, they can then be expanded at a later stage.
3. The compilation of lessons learned and best practices was intended to be part of SARP's current work, but it has not been possible to fully develop this area. This could be



included as a central element of Phase II, and could include the development of resource materials and guidelines for small arms projects and activities. However, it would be better if SADU were to take the lead on this, with a Phase II regional programme merely refining materials for the Great Lakes context. The programme could also function as a clearinghouse for information, but should avoid taking on any co-ordination roles.

4. Some continued support could be given to the Nairobi Secretariat, but this should be limited to joint project-related activities for which the two organizations could mobilize additional resources if necessary. Further interaction with regional processes is not generally recommended, but this could be further explored.
5. Any second phase should include a stronger focus on capacity building in DDR. Institutional capacity on DDR both within and outside UNDP is very limited. A Phase II regional programme could play a useful role in providing training and materials on DDR for international organizations, governments and civil society.



## Annex 1: Allocations

### Crisis Prevention and Recovery Thematic Trust Fund

Donor	Date	Amount in USD
Belgium	13/03/2002	293,176.00
Germany	09/07/2003	142,900.00
Netherlands	13/03/2002	505,500.00
Switzerland	02/04/2002	173,214.00
Switzerland	04/07/2003	245,000.00
UK	05/23/2002	376,676.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,1736,466.00</b>

### Other allocations: TRAC

Source	Amount in USD
TRAC 1.1.2	100,000.00

### Other allocations: Community Recovery in Support of the DRC Peace Process

Donor	Amount in USD
Belgium / Suballotment	980,185.50



## **Annex 2: Terms of Reference**

### **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

#### **BCPR/SADU MISSION TO KENYA 26 March – 1 April 2004**

##### **Background**

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in the Great Lakes Region (GLR) of Africa<sup>2</sup> has exacerbated conflicts in Burundi, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Sudan, Angola, Congo-Brazzaville and elsewhere in the region. The proliferation of SALW has also increased the degree of violence by increasing the lethality and duration of hostilities. The resulting culture of violence has obstructed peace efforts and delayed the launching of economic and social recovery in post-war societies in the region. Governments in the region have lacked the capacity to deal with illicit supplies and trafficking. The lack of alternative livelihoods for those who are involved in armed groups and the general lack of security, mean people are reluctant to surrender the weapons they hold.

A conference in Nairobi in March 2000 for 10 countries from the Horn and Great Lakes sub-regions resulted in the 'Nairobi Declaration', whereby the signatories undertook to share information and co-operate in matters relating to illicit small arms and light weapons and to exercise effective control over the possession and transfer of small arms and light weapons. In order to support implementation of the Nairobi Declaration, as well as the DRC peace process, BCPR/SADU established the GLR Small Arms Regional Programme (SARP) in January 2002. The Programme aims to build awareness of the problem of small arms proliferation in the Great Lakes within UNDP and its partners in the region, enhancing understanding of the impact on longer term development, integrating responses to the problem into UNDP's longer term programming and developing specific projects to tackle small arms proliferation.

Since its inception, changing realities in the region have influenced the direction of the project. The signature of a global peace accord in DRC, the subsequent deployment of MONUC, the commencement of the DDRRR programme, and the involvement of donors in the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) has created a window of opportunity in the region, while at the same time increasing the number of actors and thus international co-ordination. SARP's role within these processes, and the part to be played by small arms activities, still remain unclear. Furthermore, the gradual operationalization of the Nairobi Secretariat during 2003 now means that SARP has a serious regional partner through which it can ensure more regional ownership.

##### **Assessment Strategy**

The initial project foresaw monitoring and evaluation throughout project implementation, but there has been little systematic evaluation since mid-2002. An internal assessment is therefore long overdue, and a more substantial external evaluation is also considered desirable in view of

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<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this project, the Great Lakes Region is defined as all the countries directly involved in the DRC conflict and the countries that suffer impact of the DRC conflict through refugees, increased cross-border trafficking and violence.



political developments in the region. This preliminary assessment will therefore constrain itself to taking stock of progress achieved and challenges identified so far, and to the development of terms of reference for a full external evaluation which will assess efficiency and impact and make recommendations for the future of the project.

### **Objectives**

- 1) To conduct a preliminary assessment of the first two years of SARP.
- 2) To draft terms of reference for an external evaluation of SARP.
- 3) Provide technical advice and assistance for the immediate term.

### **Output**

- 1) Preliminary assessment of SARP.
- 2) ToRs for an external evaluation of SARP.

### **Anticipated Activities**

The mission will meet officials from the UNDP Country Office, the SARP Project Team, the Nairobi Secretariat and relevant NGOs, as appropriate.

### **Mission Composition**

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