

Resources
SALW Resources
Gender and Security Resources
Regional Arms Law Compendium
SEESAC Developed SALW Tools
➤ Standards RMDS/G
➤ Survey Protocols
➤ Awareness Support Pack
➤ National SALW Strategy Template
➤ Arms Exports Templates
➤ Software Tools
➤ Safety Guidelines for the Civil Community
➤ SEE SALW Documentaries

Awareness Support Pack (SASP)

SEESAC is mandated to provide technical advice on the crucial issue of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Awareness throughout the South Eastern Europe (SEE) region. During initial consultations with regional stakeholders during 2003 SEESAC was made aware both of the pressing need for increased SALW Awareness in SEE, and the lack of resources available to those wishing to implement such programmes.

The need for SALW Awareness in SEE continues and serious implications remain for poorly designed SALW Awareness programmes, whether owing to inappropriate messages and materials, or lack of sensitivity. At worst, a programme may increase societal tensions, worsen community perceptions of their security, or result in undesirable casualties. At the very least it may fail in its stated purpose and simply waste project funds.

Consisting of a handbook and CD-ROM, SASP 3 sets out the principles and procedures for safe and effective SALW Awareness programming, and provides a collection of supporting materials. The purposes of SASP 3 can be summarised as follows:

- To determine, continually develop and make available emerging best practices in SALW Awareness throughout SEE, thereby maximizing the chances that future programmes are safe and effective;
- To provide tools and methods for conducting programmes that will streamline projects, saving time and resources;
- To increase regional expertise with regard to SALW Awareness among all actors involved in such activities; and
- To outline mechanisms that enable SALW Awareness programmes to co-ordinate with, or be integrated into, SALW Control interventions.

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The 'SALW Awareness Support Pack' (SASP) was first published in 2003 and has since been widely used throughout the region of SEE and beyond, by actors from the governmental and non-governmental sectors, at both the national and international level. SASP became the principal handbook for practitioners in the field of SALW Awareness, systematically capturing best practices at the operational level, enabling practitioners to build on others' experiences and make use of the resources provided. SASP was updated in 2005 to reflect the many developments in the field of SALW that had taken place in the previous two years, including lessons learned from awareness activities in SEE and globally.

To ensure the relevance of SASP on the ground, a draft version of the first edition was reviewed at a joint RACVIAC/ SEESAC workshop in July 2003 by a representative group of stakeholders (staff from local and international nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), international organisations and SEE governments) before being circulated to a wider group of commentators. Before the release of the second edition, outreach workshops were conducted throughout 2004 in Croatia, FYROM (hereafter Macedonia), Albania and Moldova for the purpose of improving the SASP, and two field-tests were conducted in Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina in the form of implementing SALW Awareness campaigns according to SASP guidelines. As a result of these outreach processes and fieldtesting, the SASP was further improved, incorporating the views and experiences of the widest possible number of SALW activists and practitioners in the region and beyond.

The third edition of SASP has been produced specifically to incorporate new knowledge in the field of SALW Awareness and children, based on comprehensive research on the subject conducted by SEESAC during 2006. The results of this research strongly challenge previously existing and practiced approaches to the subject of SALW Awareness, in particular Risk Education, with children.

Visit SEESAC's SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS AARENESS SUPPORT PACK RESOURCE CENTER

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