



FINAL EVALUATION REPORT

Disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition ((CFSP) 2019/2111)

South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control
of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC)



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PROJECT INFORMATION		
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¹ For the United Nations Development Programme, references to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). For the European Union, this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

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Abbreviations

AVMP	Armed Violence Monitoring Platform
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CFSP	Common Foreign & Security Policy
DNH	Do No Harm
DoA	Description of the Action
ECIS	Europe & the Commonwealth of Independent States
EMPACT	European Multi-Disciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats
EU	European Union
EUROPOL	European Police Office
FRONTEX	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
FE	Final Evaluation
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GENSEC	Gender Network on SALW Control
GEWE	Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment
HR	Human Rights
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
INTERPOL	International Criminal Police Organization
IRH	Istanbul Regional Hub
KII	Key Informant Interview
LNOB	Leave No One Behind
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
OECD/DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PoA	Programme of Action
PSSM	Physical Security and Stockpile Management
SALW	Small arms and light weapons
SGD	Sustainable Development Goal
SEE	South-East Europe
SEEFEN	South-East Europe Firearms Experts Network
SEESAC	South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSR	Security Sector Reform
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
ToT	Training of Trainers
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNLIREC	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNRCPD	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific

Executive Summary

This Evaluation Report relates to a Final Evaluation (FE) of the Disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition (Council Decision) (CFSP) 2019/211) project, (hereinafter the project). The project is implemented by the Southeastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) with financial support from the European Union (EU) and has a budget of EUR 11,819,605.20. The project commenced on 1st February 2020, and concluded on 31 December 2024. It is being implemented across eight jurisdictions - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo,² Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine. The evaluation covers the entire implementation period of the project as well as all project implementing jurisdictions.

In line with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Evaluation Criteria,³ the FE provides UNDP SEESAC, the project's donor, government counterparts, and other stakeholders with an impartial assessment of the results generated to date. The evaluation assesses the Project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability as well as cross-cutting issues; identifies and documents evidence-based findings; and provides stakeholders with recommendations to inform the design and implementation of future interventions.

The evaluation is based on data available at the time of the evaluation, including project documents, regular progress report and other relevant reports, as well as comprehensive in-person and online stakeholder consultations conducted during May and June 2025. The intended users of the evaluation include primary evaluation users, namely UNDP Istanbul Regional Hub and SEESAC, who will use the evaluation to further strategize for strengthening disarmament and arms control activities. The secondary users, namely the project's partners will use the information to learn about what works when advancing and enhancing disarmament and arms control activities. The EU may use the evaluation for accountability and as input for decision-making purposes. Overall, all users can use the evaluation for accountability and transparency purposes, to hold UNDP accountable for its development contributions, as well as for learning.

The results based and criteria based methodology used a mixed-methods approach with an emphasis on collecting qualitative data from the project's partners. It comprised an analysis of all relevant project documentation shared by the project – over 30 documents in total, and data collected virtually through a total of 43 key informant interviews. A total of 45 project partners and stakeholders were met including 20 women (44%) and 25 men (56%). This included representatives from the Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW) Commissions, representatives from the South-East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN), representatives from the customs, border and criminal police authorities, Ministries of Interior, UN entities, CSOs and research organisations, as well as UNDP/SEESAC project and programme representatives and senior management.

² All references throughout the report to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

³ OECD Evaluation Criteria. Available at <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

This evaluation report provides a set of 12 findings, five conclusions, five recommendations and nine lessons learned. A summary of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations are provided below. Chapter 1 provides the introduction; Chapter 2 the description of the project; Chapter 3 the methodology for conducting the evaluation; Chapter 4 the analytical framework; Chapter 5 contains the main analysis and findings of the evaluation; Chapter 6 provides the conclusions; Chapter 7 recommendations and Chapter 8 the lessons learned.

Summary of Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

Relevance - Finding 1: The project is relevant to multiple objectives, both specific to SALW control and to much broader political priorities, including regional cooperation and EU enlargement. This ensures that the project is highly relevant to the specific needs and priorities of the authorities in Southeast and East Europe. This relevance has been maintained throughout the project through close alignment between the Small Arms Light Weapons Control Commissions (or equivalent), and their National Strategies and Action Plans with the EU Accession process, as well as through their high level of engagement in the project. Further, the project elevates its relevance through its alignment and contribution towards not just to jurisdictional, regional and EU priorities but also priorities at the global level related to SALW control. This includes through its contribution towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Programme of Action, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the UN Disarmament Agenda, amongst others.

Relevance - Finding 2: The relevance of the project to the authorities in the eight jurisdictions has been driven through their close engagement and steering of both the project design and its implementation. All activities have been needs based and demand driven, based on the articulated and identified requests of the authorities for support. Risks were well documented and have been regularly monitored throughout the project implementation, allowing the project to have a flexible approach and adapt to changes in the operational context as required. This includes changes brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic, throughout which the project continued to deliver, reaching its highest ever delivery targets, as well as the war in Ukraine. A more rigid project structure would not have allowed for this level of adaptability.

Coherence - Finding 3: The project itself provides robust coherence through holistic interventions targeting strategic, legislative and operational capacities. Benefitting from SEESAC's portfolio approach, the project has been highly successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with other interventions within SEESAC's portfolio, as well as with interventions supported by other actors, such as OSCE and UNODC. Through this approach, the project has not only avoided duplication but has also actively sought out complementarities and synergies where possible. Lessons learned from previously projects, such as the need for strong local ownership and a long-term approach, have been successfully implemented into the project to maximise coherence.

Effectiveness - Finding 4: Under component 1, the project has contributed towards further strengthening capacities for the design and implementation of evidence-based SALW control policies and standardisation of approaches through regional cooperation at the strategic and operational levels. The project adopted a dual-orientated approach through provision of support to the SALW Commissions in Southeast and East Europe at the strategic level and supporting the South-East Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN) at the operational level. This support is highly valued across all eight jurisdictions, achieving significant results in contributing to the reduction

of the threat of the illicit proliferation of SALW. The Armed Violence Monitoring Platform established by SEESAC and supported through the project, which monitors firearms related incidents, is significantly recognised by project stakeholders and has statistical, analytical, intelligence and operational use.

Effectiveness - Finding 5: The project has established an effective model, which has been replicated to further support the capacity building of both law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking. The model consists of a comprehensive needs assessment, followed by the development of dedicated Standard Operating Procedures, the provision of equipment and tailored capacity development assistance in the form of training, focused on the implementation of the SOPs, complemented by regional knowledge exchange and learning. This sequential approach has proven to be highly successful in strengthening the capacities of law enforcement and border authorities in detecting and countering illicit trafficking of weapons. They are now seeking additional support in emerging areas such as regarding convertible and 3D printed SALW.

Effectiveness Finding 6: The project has successfully strengthened regional security by enhancing capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM), using a three-fold model. This achievement included substantial infrastructure security upgrades, effective surplus reduction, and comprehensive training programmes. As a result, there has been a marked improvement in the security of weapons and ammunition stockpiles, a significant reduction in excess and confiscated SALW and ammunition, and the adoption of better physical security and stockpile management practices throughout the region. Additionally, the project has bolstered the inspection systems of law enforcement authorities, collectively contributing to a substantial reduction in proliferation risks and enhancing regional stability.

Efficiency - Finding 7: The project has demonstrated effective and cost-efficient utilisation of funds to address the priorities identified by partners. Strategic resource allocation is evident, with over half of the budget dedicated to equipment and infrastructure enhancements, resulting in a high value for money. The substantial level of expertise and professionalism of the project staff is consistently recognised and deeply appreciated by all project partners and stakeholders, fostering a strong sense of trust and confidence. The behind the scenes work required to implement such a project should not be underestimated. The successful execution of the project, maintained even amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, highlights its overall efficiency and resilience in delivery. Delays caused have been beyond the control of the project. The project has had a robust approach to risk management, which has aided its efficiency, as well as a monitoring and evaluation system in place to guide decision-making and improve performance. In particular, the project has a very strong focus on learning both within the project and cross-learning with other SEESAC and external projects and partners, contributing further to its efficient implementation.

Impact - Finding 8: The project has generated a transformative impact on regional security, significantly enhancing the capacity to combat illicit SALW and ammunition, thereby strengthening peace and stability in South East Europe and beyond. By harmonising strategic approaches, normative frameworks, and legislation across jurisdictions with EU acquis standards, this initiative has fostered unprecedented cooperation and coordination among security institutions in the region. These efforts have led to tangible improvements in border control, law enforcement, and customs operations, evidenced by increased detection, seizure, and destruction of illicit weapons. The increased operational capacity and upgraded security infrastructure have placed the

region in a stronger position to detect, prevent, and respond to illicit trafficking, including any influx of military equipment linked to the war in Ukraine.

Impact - Finding 9: The project has achieved remarkable and far-reaching impact that extends well beyond South East and East Europe, thanks to its innovative partnership approach and a strong culture of sharing lessons learned and best practices. This proactive dissemination of solutions has fostered regional and global advancements, showcasing the project's leadership in promoting effective strategies. Notably, the successful replication of the Armed Violence Monitoring Platform in the EU exemplifies its impact, while the Western Balkans Roadmap has been replicated in the Caribbean and Central America, demonstrating its versatility and applicability across different contexts. Furthermore, the project has generously shared its expertise to support SALW control initiatives in Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia and the ASEAN region, enhancing global efforts in weapons management and security. Its support for capacity development initiatives with UNODA and its regional centres on gender mainstreaming further highlights its commitment to fostering sustainable, global peace. Overall, these accomplishments underscore the project's role as a catalyst for positive change, inspiring and empowering diverse regions through innovative solutions and collaborative knowledge sharing.

Sustainability - Finding 10: The project was designed with a sustainability perspective and is part of a wider portfolio of support that contributes towards its sustainability prospects. Its positioning within SEESAC ensures that support does not end at the conclusion of this project but that results achieved will be continually reinforced and embedded in the jurisdictions. This long term approach of the donor, of SEESAC and of the partners fosters strong sustainability prospects. The high level of ownership of the project's results at the level of the jurisdictions, combined with the project's approach of seeing the jurisdictions as partners and not beneficiaries has also contributed to both ownership and sustainability. However, while sustainability at the level of the jurisdictions is reasonably secure, it is less secure at the regional level, where a neutral, independent partner such as SEESAC, is still required to bring the jurisdictions together. Sustainability prospects could be further boosted through additional cost-sharing from the authorities.

Cross-cutting issues - Finding 11: SEESAC is widely recognised as a global frontrunner in terms of research and analysis on the gendered perspectives of SALW control and armed violence reduction. Through targeted interventions, policy-relevant research and analysis and the development of knowledge products and resources, the project has further contributed towards changing perspectives on gender and integrating it into SALW control activities throughout the region and beyond. While disability inclusion and leave no one behind have not been the focus of the project, there are contributions in this regard. The project's commitment to the realisation of human rights through addressing disarmament and arms control activities, which serve as vital tools to uphold and protect human rights by reducing violence, preventing abuse and promoting peace, is conceptually clear, although it is not fully captured or communicated through the project.

Communications and visibility - Finding 12: The project has adopted a number of different approaches, based on SEESAC's previous experiences and lessons learned, to communicate the project and its results with a high level of visibility to its donor, the EU. This includes through using varied communication channels generating significant outreach, as well as the project's participation in regional and global events. However, while the authorities have a strong sense of ownership of the project results, there is a sense amongst the donor that the authorities view the project as a UNDP/SEESAC project, without being fully aware of the contribution of the EU.

Internal communication with partners and stakeholders has been exemplary, with regular and relevant exchange.

Conclusion 1: The project has significantly contributed toward boosting the regional approach to SALW control, including regional standardisation, cooperation, transparency and coordination. This approach remains central to advancing measurable results in SALW control.

Conclusion 2: The project has cultivated robust partners which underpin its approach, both at the level of the jurisdictions and within the European Union. During this phase, the project has consolidated partnerships with external stakeholders, including other UN entities, civil society and research organisations.

Conclusion 3: Through this project and the SEESAC portfolio, UNDP and SEESAC are positioned as a leading and critical actor in disarmament and arms control activities in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented. The project evidences what can be achieved with the long-term commitment of the jurisdictions, the European Union as the project's donor and UNDP/SEESAC. Further, it has positioned the Western Balkans as an exporter of knowledge.

Conclusion 4: The project has generated significant interest beyond the Western Balkans, including in Moldova and Ukraine, key project partners, as well as other regions and countries throughout the world. This interest has also contributed to raising the profile of the Western Balkans jurisdictions, allowing knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning beyond the region.

Conclusion 5: Recognised globally as a leader in gender-focused research and analysis, the project has facilitated the successful integration of gender considerations into policies, laws, and institutional practices, fostering a paradigm shift from peripheral acknowledgment to structural inclusion. The project, while closely linked to the realisation of human rights, is not articulating or capturing these linkages, beyond its contribution to the SDGs.

Relevance and coherence: Recommendation 1: Upscale support to Moldova and Ukraine and ensure continued close alignment with developing EU strategy and the Acquis.

Effectiveness and efficiency: Recommendation 2: Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of disarmament and firearms control efforts by strengthening the role of prosecutors, at the regional level, expanding cross-border cooperation, and continuing to proactively address emerging threats through targeted capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

Impact and sustainability: Recommendation 3: Strengthen the sustainability of disarmament and border control efforts by encouraging increased government cost-sharing and transitioning to a more self-reliant funding model, while maintaining dedicated resources to support regional cooperation and jurisdictional engagement.

Cross-cutting issues: Recommendation 4: Enhance the articulation of the broader contribution of the project to consideration of human rights issues in disarmament and SALW control activities. Facilitate inclusion of the project's gender trainers into other gender training programmes conducted by regional and global organisations, such as the Swedish Criminal Police.

Communications and visibility: Recommendation 5: Enhance knowledge sharing within UNDP through virtual platforms and encourage project partners to communicate the role of the EU in the

project further.

FINAL EVALUATION

Disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition ((CFSP) 2019/2111)

1. Introduction

This Evaluation Report relates to a Final Evaluation (FE) of the Disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition (Council Decision) (CFSP) 2019/211) project, (hereinafter the project). The project is implemented by the Southeastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) with financial support from the European Union and has a budget of EUR 11,819,605.20. The project commenced on 1st February 2020, and concluded on 31 December 2024. It is being implemented across eight jurisdictions - Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo,⁴ Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine. The evaluation covers the entire implementation period of the project as well as all project implementing jurisdictions.

The Evaluation Report is structured as per the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines⁵ as follows. Chapter 1 provides the introduction. Chapter 2 presents the description of the intervention, including the context and background as well as the project itself. Chapter 3 provides the evaluations' objective, scope and purpose as well as the evaluation approach, methods and data analysis approaches utilised as part of the evaluation process. Chapter 4 presents the analytical framework, Chapter 5 the findings, Chapter 6 the conclusions, Chapter 7 the recommendations and Chapter 8 the lessons learnt.

There are a number of annexes to the Evaluation Report, including the key evaluation questions, evaluation matrix, informed consent protocol and data collection tools and instruments, the stakeholder list, project progress towards indicators, the bibliography, the Terms of Reference (ToR) and the signed Pledge of Ethical Conduct.

2. Context and Background

2.1 Context

SEESAC is a joint initiative of the UNDP and the Regional Cooperation Council. As such, it is an integral part of UNDP's work in the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region and has, since 2002, worked primarily to strengthen the capacities of national and regional stakeholders to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and thus contribute to enhanced stability, security and development in Southeastern and Eastern

⁴ All references throughout the report to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

⁵ http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf

Europe. SEESAC also has a distinguished record of working closely with authorities to advance gender equality in the security sector.

Significant progress has been made in recent years in South-East Europe (SEE) regarding enhancing arms control and countering illicit arms trafficking. The SEE region, however, remains an area of concern and has been identified as a priority area in the 2018 EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms, and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition entitled ‘Securing arms, protecting citizens’ (the ‘EU SALW Strategy’). Illicit firearms have a clear impact on internal and external security, by fuelling organized crime and terrorist acts in the SEE region and the EU. Therefore, establishing strong and efficient control mechanisms relating to arms transfers, use, possession, and stockpiling of arms constitutes a significant contribution to regional, European, and global peace and security.

To address the remaining challenges relating to SALW control, and to further support the authorities in addressing these challenges and reinforce the commitment to combatting illicit trafficking and misuse of SALW and firearms, a *Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024* (the ‘Roadmap’) was adopted at the Western Balkans Summit in London on 10 July 2018. The Roadmap has seven goals covering all functional areas of arms control and envisions the Western Balkans as a safer region, where comprehensive and sustainable mechanisms, fully harmonized with EU standards and other international standards, are in place to identify, prevent, prosecute, and control the illegal possession, misuse, and trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives. The Union adopted in 2018 a Council Decision in support of the coordination and monitoring of the Roadmap implementation ([Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2018/1788](#) followed by EU CD 2022/2321).

Following one of the key recommendations of the *Mid Term Review of the Roadmap*, the revision of the text of the Roadmap for implementation in the [period 2025-2030](#) was finalized following two rounds of consultations during the Roadmap local coordination meetings as well as based on the written feedback by the donors and implementing partners. **The Roadmap 2025-2030** was then endorsed by the Western Balkans Ministers of Interior during the [EU - Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs](#) in Montenegro in October 2024.

SEESAC, as the executive arm of the *Regional Implementation Plan on Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons* (the ‘Regional Implementation Plan’), supports the implementation of the Roadmap. Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 mandated SEESAC with the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Roadmap. Coordination among institutions, international organisations, and donors under the Roadmap framework is mainly ensured through formal regional Roadmap coordination meetings focusing on taking stock of progress and information exchange, and through the provision of expert and technical support to local Roadmap coordination meetings. Monitoring of the implementation of the Roadmap is ensured through the development of biannual monitoring and evaluation reports documenting progress, challenges, and needs based on the commonly agreed Key Performance Indicators. In addition, SEESAC holds the secretariat role of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) set up to support the implementation of the Roadmap. SEESAC is working closely with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission (DG HOME, DG NEAR), Europol, the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), the EU Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), Interpol, NATO, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), United Nations Office on Drugs

and Crime (UNODC) Global Firearms Programme and other relevant donors and international organisations that support disarmament and arms control activities in SEE.

2.2 Background to the Project

SEESAC is currently implementing the [EU Council Decision 2019/2111](#)⁶ (the project) that envisages the provision of support to capacity building of the regional authorities to perform both preventive and repressive activities necessary to successfully identify, thwart, and counter the trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives from and through their jurisdiction. Project results directly contribute to the implementation of the *South East Europe Regional Implementation Plan Combatting the Proliferations and Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons* and the *Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024*, as well as to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peaceful and just societies, in particular targets 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and death rate everywhere) and 16.4 (significantly reduce illicit arms flows).

The overall objective is to further contribute to improved security in the SEE region and the EU by combatting the threat posed by illicit SALW and their ammunition in and from SEE, Belarus, and Ukraine. Its implementation will deepen and complement the Union assistance on SALW control provided through recent Council Decisions 2010/179/CFSP⁷, 2013/730/CFSP⁸, and (CFSP) 2016/2356⁹ as well the Regional IPA funded project ***Support for Enhancing the Fight Against the Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the Western Balkans***.¹⁰ It will also contribute to the achievement of the Regional Implementation Plan and Roadmap goals supported by Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 and EU CD 2022/2321.

The action is contributing to strengthened regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and information-sharing on SALW control; further support to the development of a legislative and regulatory framework on SALW, firearms, and explosives, and its harmonization with the Union framework and standardization in SEE; continuous support to evidence-based policy-making on SALW control addressing the needs of both men and women; capacity building of border police and criminal police services of the Western Balkans to counter illicit trafficking and possession of firearms; improving physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction, and training; and building on the current work on the establishment of the Firearms Focal Points in SEE.

⁶ This action builds upon the basis of the achievements under Council Decisions 2004/791/CFSP6, 2010/179/CFSP, 2013/730/CFSP, (CFSP) 2016/2356 and in complementarity with the Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788. It focuses on three main areas, maintaining the holistic approach to tackling the threat posed by SALW in the SEE region.

⁷ Council Decision 2010/179/CFSP of 11 March 2010 in support of SEESAC arms control activities in the Western Balkans, in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (OJ L 80, 26.3.2010, p. 48).

⁸ Council Decision 2013/730/CFSP of 9 December 2013 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to Combat the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition (OJ L 332, 11.12.2013, p. 19).

⁹ Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2356 of 19 December 2016 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (OJ L 348, 21.12.2016, p. 60).

¹⁰ https://www.seesac.org/News_1/SEESAC-Announces-a-New-Project-and-Continues-its-Decades-long-Work-trees

The project was established to act as a **regional cooperation facilitation mechanism** to enhance arms control and counter illicit arms trafficking through the development and implementation of evidence-based SALW control policies and standardization of approaches through regional cooperation. The project foresees **three main components**:

Component 1: Facilitation of regional cooperation and support for evidence-based policy-making on SALW control, thus further contributing to the reduction of the threat of illicit proliferation of SALW. This component aims at further contributing to strengthening capacities to design and implement evidence-based SALW control policies and standardization of approaches through regional cooperation at the strategic and operational levels. This is done through the facilitation of SALW Commissions meetings in SEE and the meetings of the South-East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN) that enable the information exchange and sharing of good practices contributing to the standardization of approaches in the region. Additionally, technical advice is provided to enhance policy development and implementation. In this context, support is provided for data collection and analysis, harmonization of SALW and explosive control legislative frameworks, and the consistent integration of gender perspective into SALW control policies.

Component 2: Further support to capacity building of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking. The component aims to strengthen the capacities of the authorities to perform both preventive and repressive activities necessary to identify and counter illicit possession and trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives from and through their jurisdictions. This is achieved through improved procedures, equipment, and training of the targeted law enforcement institutions.

Component 3: Improvement of capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction, and training. The component contributes to reducing the risk of proliferation through the enhancement of weapons and ammunition stockpile security, reducing surplus and confiscated stocks of SALW and ammunition, improving the physical security and stockpile management practices as well strengthening the inspection systems of law enforcement authorities in the region.

The project is implemented by UNDP IRH, through UNDP SEESAC. It is managed by the SEESAC Project Manager, who acts as the regional project manager. UNDP Offices in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine are regularly informed about the implementation of the project. UNDP SEESAC supports the overall coordination of the regional project based on continuous consultations with the project beneficiaries. The project has a budget of EUR 11,819,605.20 (US\$ 13,224,956.26) and is funded by the European Union (European External Action Service (EEAS)). It started on 1 February 2020 for an initial period of 48 months to 31 January 2024. Due to delays encountered in the project implementation, on 6 December 2023 UNDP submitted a request for a no-cost extension of the project implementation period by 11 months, until 31 December 2024. The *Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/381 was adopted on 22 January 2024 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.*¹¹

¹¹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=OJ:L_202400381

2.3 Stakeholder Mapping

The project engages with a number of key partners to deliver results to its beneficiaries. The key partners and beneficiaries and their role in the project is described below.

Partners

SEESAC directly implemented the project in close cooperation with SALW Commissions¹² as well as with the authorities of the interior and police services of Albania, BiH, Kosovo, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia, and relevant institutions in Belarus and Ukraine. Other institutions were closely involved in line with the established multi-stakeholder holistic approach to SALW control.

Other partners include the South East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN), which operates as the key operational platform for combatting illicit arms trafficking in Southeast and East Europe. It is composed of representatives from criminal police, ballistic units, customs administrations, border police and prosecution offices to share good practices and concrete cases of cross-border cooperation in countering the trafficking of firearms; and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX).

The direct beneficiaries of the project are the institutions responsible for SALW control in South East and East Europe. The authorities of the interior, police services, border guards, criminal investigators, prosecutors and customs authorities and defence and arms export control of the Republic of Albania, BiH, Kosovo, the Republic of Moldova, Montenegro, Republic of Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia as well as Ukraine, who benefit from information exchange and knowledge-sharing, leading to standardisation through regional cooperation, capacity development, improved procedures and provision of targeted specialised equipment necessary for policy, operational and technical advancements in SALW control. Finally, SALW Commissions and other institutions responsible for the control of SALW in South East and East Europe will benefit from training and information-sharing as well as regional cooperation. In addition, key institutions tasked with SALW control Ukraine will benefit from a better understanding of the illicit firearms trafficking threat and targeted knowledge transfer.

Other relevant stakeholders

Other relevant stakeholders include UNDP IRH; UNDP SEESAC; UNDP Offices in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine; the European Union (European External Action Service (EEAS) and the EC's department in charge of migration and home affairs (DG HOME), OSCE, UNODC, NATO as well as the US Department of State and numerous other international and regional actors.

2.4 Theory of Change

The vision for the project is presented in the [EU Council Decision 2019/2111](#), which sets out the overall objective of the project and the project's approach. In addition, there is a Description of the Action (DoA), which contains the project's logical framework. The DoA provides the overall objectives, specific objectives, activities and indicators. There is no illustration of the project's logical framework or description of its theory of change. However, the project is part of a wider portfolio of project's implemented by SEESAC and feeds into the over-arching Theory of change for the portfolio. *The Regional Implementation Plan on Combatting Arms Trafficking in Southeast*

¹² SALW Commissions are inter-ministerial bodies established in each jurisdiction to plan, coordinate and monitor all arms control activities in each jurisdiction.

and East Europe and the [Roadmap for a Sustainable Solution to the Illicit Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition in the Western Balkans](#), are region's key strategic documents on SALW control and, as such, it provide the basis of the project's Theory of Change.

The project's vision is that the Western Balkans is a safer region, and an exporter of security, where comprehensive and sustainable mechanisms, fully harmonized with the European Union and other international standards, are in place to identify, prevent, prosecute, and control the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of firearms, ammunition and explosives. This vision will be achieved through 7 Roadmap goals, while the progress of action will be measured through the 14 Key Performance Indicators.

The project's strategy is **that if** legislative and regulatory framework on SALW/firearms control in the Western Balkans is fully harmonized with the European Union framework and other international agreements, which will consequently enable the compatibility of arms control laws and procedures amongst the Western Balkans, **then this** will lead to standardization of SALW/firearms control procedures and practices allowing for a better and more efficient response to the firearms related threats at both national, regional and EU level.

The project's strategy is also **that if** policies are based on data and analytical assessments, **this will** lead to better prevention and managing of risks in countering the illicit trafficking and misuse of firearms and enable better response to old and new arms control challenges, such as new technologies, ever changing modus operandi as well as the dynamic social, political and security environments.

Also, **if** SALW control strategies and policies are gender responsive - addressing the differentiated impact that the illegal possession and use of firearms have on women and men, **then this will** lead to better prevention and response to incidents committed with firearms, and reduced firearm-related violence towards women and men. If security sector intuitions are more representative of the society they serve, they will be better able to recognise and respond to the needs of all.

Furthermore, considering that majority of weapons are legally produced but many of them are diverted later into illicit use, the project strategy is **that if** detection and risk profiling capacities are strengthened, as well as rate of adjudication of misuse and trafficking of firearms cases increased, capacities for prevention of diversion of legal trade strengthened as well as regional cooperation facilitated, **then this** will lead to significant reduction of illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

Furthermore, **if** awareness of general population about the dangers of misuse of firearms is increased, **then this** will lead to reduced supply, demand and misuse of firearms.

Also, **if** there is increased seizure, conditions in place for legalization and voluntary surrender, and systematic use of deactivation, and destruction, **then this** will lead to substantial decrease of firearms in illicit possession in the region and decreased surplus.

Furthermore, **if** capacities for inspection systems and implementation of life cycle management of SALW and ammunition are in place, **then this** will lead to significant decrease of the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms.

The project's specific logical framework, that contributes towards the over-arching ToC is provided below.

Overall Objective/outcome: To further contribute to improved security in the SEE region and in the EU by combatting the threat posed by illicit SALW and their ammunition in and from SEE, and Ukraine. *Its implementation will deepen and complement the Union assistance on SALW control provided through recent Council Decisions 2010/179/CFSP (2), 2013/730/CFSP (3), and (CFSP) 2016/2356 (4) (which expires on 29 December 2019). It will also contribute to the achievement of the Regional Implementation Plan and Roadmap goals supported by Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788.*

Specific Objectives/Outputs:

Output 1: To strengthen regional cooperation, knowledge exchange and information-sharing on SALW control;

Output 2: To support capacity development of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking

Output 3: To improve capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction and training

There are a number of project results/performance indicators included under each of the output areas. These are generally related to the completion of activities and do not include baselines and often times are generic, such as *enabling information exchange, knowledge transfer and standardisation of approaches*; or *enhancing capacities of SALW Commissions and SEEFEN members through targeted training sessions*. They are not SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timebound). Further, there are no performance indicators to measure higher level results. In total, there are 22 indicators, which the project is using to measure its performance. This is broken down into 11 indicators under output 1; eight indicators under output 2; and five indicators under output 3.

2.5 Evaluation purpose, objective and scope

The ToR provided the overall framework for the evaluation, including the purpose, objective and scope of the evaluation, which the evaluator has analysed to develop the specific methodology for conducting the evaluation.

2.5.1 Purpose

As per the ToR, the purpose of the evaluation was to provide an impartial review of the UNDP regional project in terms of its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, cross-cutting issues of gender equality, disability inclusion, the realisation of human rights and leave no one behind, and finally, communications and visibility. The key findings, lessons learnt, and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by UNDP to assess the performance and value of the regional project, and as guidance for the future course of action in the field.

2.5.2 Objective

The evaluation objective was to examine the overall performance of the project and to provide a thorough understanding of the progress made by the authorities in South-East Europe, in achieving project goals in combatting the threat posed by illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. It assesses how the outputs delivered added value for the relevant authorities in Albania, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Kosovo to make

progress from the strategic and policy level as well as the operational aspects of SALW control in three project areas: i) strengthening regional cooperation, knowledge exchange and information-sharing; ii) capacity building of border police and criminal police services of the Western Balkans in countering illicit trafficking and possession of firearms; and iii) improvement of capacities for PSSM through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction and training.

Based on a substantive analysis of the effectiveness of the project approach through desk-top review, feedback from selected project partners, and other means of obtaining data, the evaluation assesses cause and effect relations and identifies the extent to which the observed changes can be defined as transformational and can be attributed to the UNDP project. The findings and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by UNDP, SEESAC and the South-East Europe authorities to have a better understanding of the progress and gaps.

2.5.3 Scope

The evaluation covers the entire implementation period of the project from **1 February 2020 - 31 December 2024**. The evaluation covers the jurisdictions participating in the implementation of the regional project: Albania, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Kosovo. The evaluation takes into consideration the political, economic, and social changes, notably changes that occurred during the five years of implementation of the regional project, and in particular, the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and political situation of the region, and the larger geographical context, including security-related developments during the time of the evaluation period in South East Europe.

3. Methodology

The main reference for the evaluation methodology was the OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria¹³ as well as the UN Evaluation Group (UNEG) Norms and Standards.¹⁴ The evaluation also adheres to the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation¹⁵ and UNDP's updated Evaluation Guidelines (2021)¹⁶ and Evaluation Policy (2019).¹⁷ Furthermore, the evaluation was designed to be gender-responsive, follow a human-rights based approach, and reflects a utilisation-focused approach. These approaches are elaborated further below. The evaluation is both summative in terms of analysing the results of the project implementation as well as formative in terms of providing forward-looking and actionable recommendations to inform future projects in the sector. The evaluator was aware that there is already an on-going successor project to the project, where recommendations may prove useful.

As per the OECD/DAC Evaluation Criteria,¹⁸ the FE provides UNDP's IRH, SEESAC, SALW Commissions in the implementing countries and other stakeholders with an impartial assessment of the results generated to date. The evaluation assesses the Project's relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability, cross-cutting issues and the additional criteria of communications and visibility. Gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, leave no one behind (LNOB) and the realisation of human rights were cross-cutting

¹³ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), Network on Development Evaluation, Better Criteria for Better Evaluation Revised Evaluation Criteria Definitions and Principles for Use, 2019, available at: <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/revised-evaluation-criteria-dec-2019.pdf>

¹⁴ <http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/2787>

¹⁵ <http://www.uneval.org/document/download/1294>

¹⁶ http://web.undp.org/evaluation/guideline/documents/PDF/UNDP_Evaluation_Guidelines.pdf

¹⁷ <http://web.undp.org/evaluation/policy.shtml>

¹⁸ <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/daccriteriaforevaluatingdevelopmentassistance.htm>

across all stages of the evaluation, to the extent possible.

3.1 Evaluability Analysis

The evaluator undertook a light evaluability assessment, looking at the project's Description of the Action (DoA), its logical framework and the project documentation that is available. While the DoA and the logical framework are clear, with clearly and appropriately worded outcome and output statements, there are gaps in the project's 22 performance indicators, which measure only the completion of activities. There is no articulated theory of change, that would chart the causal pathway foreseen to achieving results, although the project is contributing to an over-arching ToC for the SEESAC portfolio of projects, as described in section 2.4 above. There are no assumptions underpinning the project's logical framework. Of the 22 performance indicators, none are collecting disaggregated data since they are not collecting data related to the number of participants etc., although the indicators are regularly monitored and updates are provided in the project's quarterly and annual progress reports.

Despite the gaps in measuring the outcomes of the project, the contribution of the project towards the highest level of results is well presented. The project directly contributes to the implementation of the EU Security Strategy, the EU SALW Strategy, the EU Policy Cycle for organised and serious international crime (EMPACT Firearms), the Arms Trade Treaty, the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects, the International Tracing Instrument, the UN Firearms Protocol, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women and peace and security, and the UN Disarmament Agenda, and will specifically enhance regional cooperation in combating the threat posed by the spread of SALW and their ammunition. The project results also directly contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda on peaceful and just societies, in particular targets 16.1 (significantly reduce all forms of violence and death rate everywhere) and 16.4 (significantly reduce illicit arms flows), and Goal 5 on gender equality. In addition, the project supports the implementation of the Commission's Action Plan to target the illicit trafficking of firearms and explosives in the EU. Further, each of the project's component areas or outputs, clearly stipulates its contribution towards different elements of the Roadmap and the Regional Implementation Plan, illustrating its close alignment and contribution towards this strategic document. In addition, the project is aligned with UNDP's Strategic Plan 2022 – 2025¹⁹ and UNDP's Gender Equality Strategy 2022 – 2025.²⁰

Document availability was assessed as good. All relevant project documentation was shared with the evaluator. Regular quarterly and annual progress reports are comprehensive and available for all years and contain relevant and updated data. In addition, the evaluator was provided with the relevant project financial information and project monitoring data. Overall, this meant that from documentary sources alone, triangulation was potentially possible, within the confines of the project's logical framework.

In order to address these limitations, the evaluator adopted a **results-based and criteria evaluation approach**, that went beyond assessing the project's achievements as per its performance indicators but moreover assesses the project's higher level results at the outcome and impact level and its contribution to broader regional and global level results, including the Regional Roadmap. To this end, the evaluator developed some success indicators, which are contained in the Evaluation Matrix at Annex II, with which to measure the project's results.

¹⁹ <https://strategicplan.undp.org>

²⁰ <https://genderequalitystrategy.undp.org>

Furthermore, the evaluator adopted a *contribution analysis approach*, which does not firmly establish causality but rather seeks to achieve a plausible association by analysing the project's ToC and results framework, documenting the project's successes and value added, applying the "before and after" criterion, i.e. what exists now that did not exist before and what has changed since the start of the project, and through considering the counterfactual – what would have happened without the project. Additional analytical approaches that were used by the evaluator are described in Chapter 4. Using this approach, the conclusion from the evaluability analysis was that the evaluability of the project is possible.

3.2 Evaluation criteria and elaboration of key questions

As per the ToR, the evaluator was asked to consider a number of key questions shaped around the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria and the additional criteria of communications and visibility. In total, there were 29 questions divided over each of the evaluation criteria, with an additional 6 broader questions, which were used to guide the overall evaluation and assess the overall regional impact of the project (Please see Annex I). The evaluation questions were assessed by the evaluator, who, given the high number of questions, elaborated one key evaluation question per each of the evaluation criteria. In order to answer the key evaluation questions and questions contained in the ToR, the evaluator developed a number of sub-questions and all questions have been synthesized into an evaluation matrix (see Annex II), which guided the evaluator and provided an analytical framework for conducting the FE. The evaluation matrix sets out the relevant evaluation criteria, key questions and sub-questions, data sources, data collection methods/tools, indicators/success standards and methods for data analysis. The evaluation matrix has been divided into each of the six evaluation criteria – relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability and cross-cutting issues, with the addition of the communications and visibility criteria. Within the effectiveness criteria, each of the project's three component areas have been individually scrutinised. Additional questions were also included in the data collection tools and instruments at Annex III.

3.3 Cross-cutting Themes – Gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion and leave no one behind, and the realisation of human rights

In addition to the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, the evaluator analysed three cross-cutting themes – gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE), disability inclusion and leave no one behind (LNOB) and the realisation of human rights.

To respond to this and to assess whether the project has had a gender-transformative approach, and as per the UNEG Guidance on Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluation, gender equality and the human rights based approach aspects were integrated into both the evaluation scope and methodology and incorporated into the evaluation matrix and evaluation questions. This allowed the evaluator to assess how the project contributes towards gender equality and diversity and inclusion, for example through affecting gender and power relations and structural causes of inequalities. In addition to being participatory and inclusive, the evaluator's approach was based on the principles of gender equality. The evaluator was cognisant that the project's logical framework is not collecting any gender disaggregated data or any other deeper disaggregated data and that disaggregated data is largely unavailable. Given these limitations, the evaluator was unable to assess gender equality and the human rights based approach using an intersectionality lens, which would have looked at gender, age, disability status and other intersectional elements that may be relevant. However, efforts were made for positive sampling in terms of ensuring a minimum of 40% women representation during the key informant interviews,

again, cognisant that the sector is traditionally dominated by men. This was achieved with the evaluator reaching 44% women.

The evaluator adopted a two-pronged approach towards gender equality and the HRBA as a means of analysing the cross-cutting themes.

The first ensured that the evaluation was gender responsive and efforts will be made to promote:

- **Gender-Responsive Scope and Criteria:** Gender Equality and Human Rights (GE/HR) were mainstreamed throughout the evaluation scope of analysis and the evaluation criteria. This ensured that questions were designed to be gender responsive and that GE/HR – i.e. gender related data was collected at all stages of the evaluation where it exists; Evaluation questions explicitly address GEWE and HRBA to capture gender-differentiated impacts.
- **A gender and disability responsive methodology** to ensure appropriate methods and tools that reflect gender, disability and inclusion sensitivity. This promoted the employment of a mixed methods approach and the collection of disaggregated data, where such data exists. It also guaranteed that a wide range of data sources and processes were employed, as well as a wide range of stakeholders interviewed within the scope of the project, in order to promote diversity, inclusion and representation of all relevant groups in the evaluation.
- **Evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations reflect a gender and HR analysis:** The evaluation analysed the effects of the project on human rights and gender equality and ensured that findings explicitly reflect gender and human rights analysis, integrating triangulated and disaggregated data where possible.

The second was to ascertain the extent to which the project and its results are gender responsive. This entailed a detailed examination of the following:

- The overall design of the project and the extent to which it ensured that needs of women, in all their diversity, were considered.
- The implementation of the project and the extent that it ensured gender sensitivity, disability inclusion and HRBA in its activities and the promotion of gender equality and HR both from a project management perspective as well as performance. By embedding these gender-responsive, disability and intersectional principles throughout the evaluation, the process aimed to generate evidence on how the project contributes to transformative change in gender equality and the realisation of human rights.

3.4. Evaluation Design

3.4.1. Overall Approach

The evaluation was multi-faceted and followed a results-based and criteria-based approach. The methodological approach used mixed (qualitative and quantitative) methods, as the best vehicle for meeting the evaluation's needs. The evaluator ensured that the evaluation was conducted through a participatory and inclusive process, which included as many of the relevant stakeholders and beneficiaries as possible, within the scope of the evaluation. The methodological approach promoted inclusion and participation by employing gender equality and human rights responsive approaches, as detailed above under section 3.3, with a focus on a utilisation-focused approach. This approach and how it was incorporated into both the design of the evaluation and its conduct are detailed below:

(i) Utilisation Focused Approach²¹

The evaluator adopted a utilisation focused approach that promotes the usage of the evaluation report and seeks to enhance learning among all stakeholders. There was a strong focus on the participation of the users of the evaluation report throughout the evaluation process. The intended users of the evaluation include primary evaluation users, namely UNDP IRH and SEESAC, who will use the evaluation to further strategize for disarmament and arms control in SEE. The secondary users, namely the project's stakeholders – i.e. SALW Commissions throughout the region, will use the information to learn about what works when advancing and enhancing disarmament and arms control activities in SEE. The EU ECAS may use the evaluation for accountability and as input for decision-making purposes. Overall, all users can use the evaluation for accountability and transparency purposes, to hold UNDP accountable for their development contributions. The evaluator sought to ensure the full and active participation of all users as relevant throughout the evaluation process.

3.4.2 Specific Approach

The evaluation's principal guide was the project's Description of the Action containing its logical framework, which provided an indication and outline as to the set of questions that the evaluator asked each stakeholder group. Key Informant Interview Guides are provided at Annex III. Additional questions are provided in the Evaluation Matrix at Annex II. The evaluator analysed the potential for further outcomes to which the project may contribute in the longer term. A linear approach to the evaluation based on the benchmark of results against indicators was insufficient to grasp the nature of the results produced and to identify the key facilitating and constraining factors. The methodological approach selected by the evaluator thus allowed for a non-linear approach, which enabled an evidence-based analysis of the relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project's interventions as well as the additional criteria and cross-cutting themes.

3.5 Data collection methods and instruments

A number of different data collection methods and instruments were utilised by the evaluator in order to collect as much primary and secondary, quantitative and qualitative data as possible to ensure the integrity of the evaluation. This allowed for the maximum reliability of data and validity of the evaluation findings through triangulation, as well as generating feedback loops and insights to inform future planning and programming.

- (a) **Desk research and document review of over 30 of the project's document:** the evaluator conducted a detailed desk research and document review as part of the inception phase. This process remained on-going throughout the evaluation to obtain additional information, to validate and verify preliminary findings, and to fact-check and cross-reference data and information. Documentary review findings were recorded using a standardised analytical tool derived from the evaluation matrix, questions, and criteria; and triangulated against other data sources to generate robust findings. Data collected from all sources was captured and systematised in a framework according to the key evaluation questions. The desk review and document research was triangulated with other data collection methods used in this evaluation to answer the evaluation questions as specified in the ToR and evaluation matrix. For a list of documents reviewed, please see Annex VI.

²¹ <https://www.betterevaluation.org/methods-approaches/approaches/utilisation-focused-evaluation>

- (b) **Financial Analysis:** A financial analysis was undertaken of the project's financial reports and related documentation to determine the level of efficiency of the project implementation.
- (c) **Project monitoring data:** The evaluator analysed the project's monitoring data contained in its progress reports as well as any other tools and instruments used by the project. This data was triangulated and verified to the extent possible through the key informant interviews.
- (d) **43 Key informant interviews with 45 project stakeholders 20 women (44%) and 25 men (56%):** The qualitative interviews were conducted using interview protocols developed based on the evaluation questions (main questions and sub-questions). The interviews were semi-structured, with questions included from the interview guide, but also with enough flexibility to expand the topics of conversation based on the respondent's knowledge of the project's activities and the project overall. In all cases, the evaluator treated all information that respondents provided as confidential, in as much as their comments have been reported in such a way that they cannot be traced back to a particular individual. This was intended to foster a frank discussion and to encourage interviewees to provide an accurate assessment of the project. The KIIs generated in-depth, qualitative data from stakeholders who have first-hand experience of the project and its activities. They key informants that were selected are experts in their field, policy makers and individuals with extensive experience of disarmament and arms control activities in the region and with the project itself. The aim of the KIIs was to gather detailed information from these experts relating to the project and disarmament in the region. For a list of participants who participated in KIIs, please see Annex IV.

3.6 Management Arrangements

The evaluator worked under the overall supervision of the UNDP Evaluation Manager, who ensured quality assurance in collaboration with SEESAC throughout the evaluation process. The Evaluation Manager supported the overall evaluation process, and assured high quality and independent implementation of the evaluation with the appropriate guidance from UNDP's Senior Management and in coordination with the Regional Project team.

The UNDP SEESAC Team provided the required information and documents to the Evaluation Expert. They were also responsible for providing support in establishing initial contacts with the interviewees before the organization of meetings and identifying interpreters, and covering the costs the interpretation.

The Project Board were available for interviews with the Evaluation Expert and will endorse the Final Evaluation Report following presentations of the evaluation findings, as necessary.

3.7 Data management plan, informed consent and ethical considerations, including Do No Harm

The evaluation adhered to international best practices and standards in evaluation, including the OECD DAC ethical considerations for development evaluations²² and [UNEG Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct](#).²³ In addition, the evaluator signed the UNEG Pledge of Ethical Conduct at the start of the evaluation process – please see Annex VIII. All stakeholder information was

²² <https://www.oecd.org/development/evaluation/qualitystandards.pdf>

²³ United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG), UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation- UNEGFN/CoC , 2008.

handled with confidentiality and in accordance with the UN's Rules on Personal Data Protection. All interview notes were de-identified by the evaluator and all names were changed into a code. Proper storage of data is essential for ensuring confidentiality and the data protection procedures will be adhered to during all stages of the evaluation. At the end of the evaluation, all notes and data will be destroyed.

The evaluation was conducted in an ethical and legal manner, taking into account the well-being of those involved in and affected by the evaluation. The evaluation was conducted in accordance with professional ethics and standards to minimise risks to evaluation participants, including the principle of 'do no harm', and a protocol was in place to ensure that the clearly defined informed consent of all evaluation participants is obtained – please see Annex III for the informed consent protocol. All stakeholders were informed that the evaluation was being conducted independently and that their participation in the evaluation is entirely voluntary as well as being confidential and anonymous.

The evaluator briefly explained the reasons and objectives of the evaluation and the scope of the questions. Stakeholders had the right to refuse or to withdraw at any time. The evaluator also ensured respondent privacy and confidentiality, as the disclosure of confidential information may seriously jeopardise the efficiency and credibility of the evaluation process. The evaluator has respected informants' right to provide information in confidence and also ensure that sensitive information cannot be traced to its source so that the key informants are protected from reprisals. Nothing in the evaluation report has been attributed to any individual, organisation or institution.

4. Analytical Framework, Sampling Methods, Limitations and Mitigation Responses

4.1 Analytical Framework

In order to analyse the collected data, the following analytical methods were applied by the evaluator:

Contribution Analysis

In the complex political, social and development context in SEE, it was difficult for the Final Evaluation to attribute the observed results *solely* to the project. This is partly because of the number of stakeholders involved, partly because of other exogenous factors, and partly because of the complex nature of the project itself. For this reason, the evaluator adopted a *contribution analysis approach*, which does not firmly establish causality but rather seeks to achieve a plausible association by analysing the project's ToC and results framework, documenting the project's successes and value added, applying the "before and after" criterion, i.e. what exists now that did not exist before and what has changed since the start of the project, and through considering the counterfactual – what would have happened without the project.

Political Economy Analysis

A political economy approach recognises the local and regional contexts and the incentives faced by the actors engaged in it, i.e. the internal and external factors that determine success. A political economy approach allowed the evaluator to consider the geo-political sensitivities at play in the region and how these might have affected (positively or negatively) the project. This included being cognisant of the political, social and economic changes that have taken place during the project implementation.

Quantitative and Qualitative Data Analysis

Most of the primary data collection methods (key informant interviews) collected qualitative data. These were analysed using a code structure, aligned to the key evaluation questions, sub-questions and indicators. The qualitative data from the primary data collection methods was cross-referenced with other sources such as documents. The quantitative data produced during the KIIs produced descriptive analysis (rather than more complex regressions).

Triangulation

Triangulation is the process of using multiple data sources, data collection methods, and/or theories to validate research findings. The evaluator used more than one approach (data collection method) to address the evaluation questions in order to reduce the risk of bias and increase the chances of detecting errors or anomalies. Wherever possible all data gathered, both qualitatively and quantitatively was triangulated, through cross verification from two or more sources. For interviews, this was done through posing a similar set of questions to multiple interviewees. For the document review it was accomplished through crosschecking data and information from multiple sources to increase the credibility and validity of the material. The evaluator applied three approaches to triangulation: methods triangulation (checking the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods); interrogating data where diverging results arise; and analyst triangulation (discussion and validation of findings, allowing for a consistent approach to interpretive analysis).

Data Synthesis

Data synthesis is the process of bringing all the evidence together to synthesize the data and formulate findings and conclusions. Multiple lines of evidence fed into the contribution analysis. An evidence map was utilized to map information obtained from different sources on the same results area and evaluation questions, and information collected through interviews and case studies. The evaluator synthesised data in two ways. The first was the process of articulating the key findings and cross-checking the strength of the evidence for each. Based on this, the conclusions were developed and cross-checked for their relevance to the findings.

Verification and Validation

The above steps incorporated verification and validation of evidence during the data collection and data analysis processes. In addition, the draft report was shared with the ERG, the project team and other key stakeholders, allowing for review and comments. The final report will also be presented in at least two meetings with all relevant stakeholders. These processes provide an opportunity to share key findings, offer mutual challenges, and discuss the feasibility of and receptiveness to draft recommendations. They also provide an important opportunity to foster buy-in to the evaluation process particularly for the stakeholders who will have responsibility for implementing recommendations.

4.2 Sampling Methods for Qualitative and Quantitative Data Collection

The geographical scope of the evaluation included Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine. The evaluator ensured that stakeholders from all locations were included in the data gathering process.

Given the nature of the project and the scope of the evaluation, the evaluator used purposive sampling techniques. For example, purposive sampling techniques were used for the selection of subjects from the locations where the project activities have been undertaken, to ensure their

inclusion and participation in the evaluation and data collection processes. Purposive sampling techniques were also used to try to ensure as many women participants were included as possible, and for participation in the key informant interviews to ensure that the participants were able to actively engage and provide the needed information during the KIIs. Given the nature of the project, there was no opportunity to apply random sampling methods.

4.3 Challenges and Limitations of the Evaluation and Mitigation Responses

The evaluator was faced with a number of challenges and limitations during the evaluation process. The first was the limitation given the limitations with regards to its performance indicators. The evaluator mitigated this through adopting a results-based approach that went beyond assessing the project against its logical framework and that looked at results beyond and above its performance indicators.

The second was with regards to the integration and assessment of gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, leave no one behind and the realisation of human rights, given the nature of the project and the limited disaggregated data available, beyond participation in events and meetings. The evaluator mitigated this to the extent possible by aiming to collect disaggregated data where it exists and through efforts to obtain *qualitative data* relating to these aspects.

The third limitation was with regards to conducting the data collection exclusively online. While this brings significant benefits in terms of the efficiency of the evaluation and its timespan, it could have created barriers where stakeholders were not fully comfortable or confident meeting using an online modality. The evaluator mitigated this by reassuring the stakeholders of her independence from the project and from UNDP and encouraged a frank and fruitful discussion through trust-building at the start of each meeting.

Fourthly, the evaluator may have faced some key biases, including recall bias, response bias and selection bias. The evaluator mitigated these biases primarily through a semi-structured interview protocol that called questioning about specific activities from the project implementation. She stressed for each informant that she would maintain confidentiality and anonymity and then explained the evaluator's independence from both UNDP and the project. Overall, multiple sources of data and questions eliciting specific examples helped to mitigate the risk of these biases.

Fifthly, given the integrated nature of SEESAC's programming and its portfolio approach and given that the project under evaluation is the fifth phase of the provision of on-going support to the authorities in the region, it is challenging for both the evaluator and the project's partners to distinguish specific achievements, solely as a result of this project. The evaluator mitigated this through approaches mentioned above, such as through the use of a semi-structured interview protocol and through close reliance on the project's DoA and logical framework, as well as through a contribution analysis approach, which sought to identify the contribution of the project towards higher level results as well as results achieved specific to the project itself.

Finally, the evaluator faced some limitations regarding the scope of stakeholder engagement. While the evaluation aimed to be inclusive and participatory, practical constraints, in particular the time allocated for data collection as well as accessibility may have limited the extent and depth of stakeholder and beneficiary engagement. There might be relevant voices and perspectives that have not been fully captured due to these constraints. The evaluator made efforts to prioritise key stakeholders and utilised varied communication channels to try to reach as many of the project's

stakeholder as possible. However, some stakeholders may not have been included and their voice and perspectives will not have been captured.

5. Findings

This chapter presents the findings of the evaluation based on the analysis of the data collected. The findings are presented as per the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria and respond to the key evaluation questions and additional questions contained in the ToR and presented at Annex I. The ToR is presented at Annex VII.

5.1 Relevance

Finding 1: The project is relevant to multiple objectives, both specific to SALW control and to much broader political priorities, including regional cooperation and EU enlargement. This ensures that the project is highly relevant to the specific needs and priorities of the authorities in Southeast and East Europe. This relevance has been maintained throughout the project through close alignment between the Small Arms Light Weapons Control Commissions (or equivalent), and their National Strategies and Action Plans with the EU Accession process, as well as through their high level of engagement in the project. Further, the project elevates its relevance through its alignment and contribution towards not just to jurisdictional, regional and EU priorities but also priorities at the global level related to SALW control. This includes through its contribution towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN Programme of Action, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the UN Disarmament Agenda, amongst others.

The project is extremely relevant to the specific needs and priorities of the relevant authorities in the eight jurisdictions throughout Southeast and East Europe. This relevance has been ensured through close alignment between the project and the priorities and needs of the jurisdictions articulated in their National Strategies and Action Plans, as well as the high degree of engagement and participation from the SALW Commissions, or their equivalent. These, in turn, are closely aligned with the priorities of the jurisdictions in their EU aspirations and with the EU Aquis and accession process. This relevance also extends to Moldova and Ukraine, where the project has been providing support and expertise.

In terms of the relevance of the project with the jurisdictions' EU Accession process, the project directly contributes towards the implementation of the EU Security Strategy, the EU SALW Strategy, the EU Policy Cycle for organized and serious international crime (EMPACT Firearms). This is crucially relevant both for the jurisdictions participating in the project as well as for the EU member states, as the project promotes overall regional stability and security, aligning with broader EU strategic objectives. In addition, the project supports the implementation of the Commission's Action Plan to target the illicit trafficking of firearms and explosives in the EU.

The relevance of the project to the EU is evidenced by the unanimous adoption of the Council Decision 2019/2111, which sets out the project. This decision, which falls under the EU's Common Foreign Policy and Security Budget, is both the largest ever adopted specifically on arms control by the EU in terms of the size of resources that were allocated, as well as the longest in terms of its four year duration (this was subsequently extended to five years due to delays caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic and the outbreak of war in Ukraine). It is notable, that SEESAC is the only UNDP entity, project or programme to receive financial support from the EU's Common Foreign Policy and Security Budget, making it highly relevant for UNDP.

The project is also highly relevant for the jurisdictions' global commitments and priorities, to which it is well aligned and contributing towards. This includes the UN Arms Trade Treaty,²⁴ which regulates the transfer and trade of conventional weapons; the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects,²⁵ which is a global framework for activities aimed at countering the illicit trade in SALW and controlling their negative consequences; the International Tracing Instrument,²⁶ which enables states to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons; and the UN Firearms Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition,²⁷ which is the only legally binding instrument to counter the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition at the global level.

The project is also contributing towards the UN's Disarmament Agenda,²⁸ in particular Pillar 2 on disarmament that saves lives by mitigating the humanitarian impact of conventional arms and addressing the excessive accumulation and illicit trade, and Pillar 4 on strengthening partnerships for disarmament by reinvigorating disarmament institutions and processes, engaging regional organisations, ensuring the full and equal participation of women, empowering youth as a force for change, and enhancing participation by civil society and engagement by the private sector, specifically through enhancing regional cooperation in combating the threat posed by the spread of SALW and their ammunition.

Through its strong commitment to gender mainstreaming in all disarmament and arms control activities, the project is aligned with and contributing towards UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security,²⁹ which stresses the importance of the equal participation of women and their full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Finally, the project is contributing towards the jurisdictions' ambitions and commitments contained in the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, the project is contributing towards progress on SDG 16 – on peace, justice and strong institutions, and its targets 16.1 – to significantly reduce all forms of violence and death rate everywhere and target 16.4 – to significantly reduce illicit arms flows. It is also contributing towards SDG 5 on ending discrimination and violence against women and girls and its target 5.1 to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence.

Finding 2: The relevance of the project to the authorities in the eight jurisdictions has been driven through their close engagement and steering of both the project design and its implementation. All activities have been needs based and demand driven, based on the articulated and identified requests of the authorities for support. Risks were well documented and have been regularly monitored throughout the project implementation, allowing the project to have a flexible approach and adapt to changes in the operational context as required. This includes changes brought about by the global COVID-19 pandemic, throughout which the project continued to deliver, reaching

²⁴ <https://legal.un.org/avl/ha/att/att.html>

²⁵ <https://disarmament.unoda.org/convarms/salw/programme-of-action/>

²⁶ <https://www.unodc.org/documents/organized-crime/Firearms/ITI.pdf>

²⁷ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/the-firearms-protocol.html>

²⁸ <https://www.un.org/disarmament/sg-agenda/en/>

²⁹ <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/>

its highest ever delivery targets, as well as the war in Ukraine. A more rigid project structure would not have allowed for this level of adaptability.

Beyond its strategic importance to the authorities in the eight jurisdictions identified in Finding 1, the project has been actively guided and shaped through their ongoing engagement and leadership in both its design and execution, further strengthening its relevance. This was confirmed by all stakeholders who participated in the evaluation, who spoke of the high degree of relevance of the project in their day to day work – strategically, normatively and operationally. All activities were based on the identified needs of the authorities and responded to their requests for assistance. For example, under component 1, the project specifically supported the requests of the SALW Commissions or their equivalent across the eight jurisdictions at the strategic level as well as with regards to the harmonisation of the normative framework with the requirements of the EU accession process. It also supported the strengthening of the SEEFEN to coordinate with and contribute to the efforts of Europol, EMPACT, EFE, DG Migration and Home Affairs, Interpol, Eurojust and Frontex. The support provided to border police and criminal police under component 2 was based on individual needs assessments undertaken at the level of the jurisdictions, allowing for the bespoke tailoring of assistance to the identified needs. The assessment methodology was developed in-house allowing for further tailoring. Under component 3, the project strengthened the authorities capacities in terms of physical security and stockpile management, again based on individual needs assessments, with tailor-made solutions being provided. The close involvement of the relevant authorities in both the design and implementation of the project ensured that the project maintained its relevance throughout.

The project was able to be implemented in a flexible manner, responding to the needs and requests of the authorities, underpinned by a risk management approach, which documented identified risks at the project's outset and monitored these regularly throughout its implementation. Despite this, the project faced a number of risks and challenges during its implementation, to which it was able to respond to, adapting as and when necessary. The project commenced in early 2020, immediately prior to the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This impacted the project's ability to organise in-person events, a key factor when strengthening regional cooperation, as well as delays in the planned activities. The project was able to swiftly pivot to an online modality, supporting the authorities with technical equipment where necessary to facilitate their online participation. When activities resumed in person, stringent safety measures were implemented to ensure the safety of the participants. However, while the project was able to continue to deliver throughout the pandemic, it did hinder the execution of project activities as per the original plan for 2020 and 2021. This disruption consequently led to delays in activities planned for subsequent years. This resulted in a request for a 12-month no cost extension, which was approved in February 2024, extended the project implementation period to December 2024.

The project also faced challenges and risks caused by the war in Ukraine since February 2022. While Ukraine was envisaged to participate in the project from the outset, in terms of exchanging knowledge and experience and providing capacity assistance, the outbreak of war was not envisaged, which required the project to adapt and provide additional support than was originally envisaged. For example, in order to respond to EU concerns about the increased risk of weapons trafficking during and especially after the end of the war, the project provided additional support to the Ukrainian authorities, as well as to the other seven jurisdictions to detect and investigate weapons.

The war in Ukraine also had a knock on effect in disputing markets, including the availability of certain types of goods and increasing costs due to the rise of inflation. This was especially visible in the procurement process for equipment needed for the establishment of weapons registry but also in the procurement of equipment requested by the Border and Criminal Police services in the region. The project mitigated these risks by re-advertising procurement requests, splitting requests and more proactive outreach to vendors. However, the increased costs of goods, building material for infrastructure works, workforce wages, event organisation etc. resulted in the need to update costs estimates in several jurisdictions and repeating tenders. Given that 50% of the project's budget was allocated to procurement and that initiating procurement processes required comprehensive needs assessments, prioritising recommendations from these assessments mandated the formulation of relevant Standard Operating Procedures in collaboration with authorities, conducting essential training sessions, and ultimately facilitating procurement procedures, the execution of these activities faced significant delays during the challenging period, further postponing procurement processes.

The project also faced challenges with regards to the political instability throughout the region during its implementation. For example, Serbia has had four governments since the start of 2020, Montenegro had had four in the past three years. Since the start of 2020, Bosnia and Herzegovina has experienced several government changes, particularly at the entity levels (the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Republika Srpska) and the state level. The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina has had multiple coalition changes and cabinet reshuffles, while Republika Srpska has also seen administrative shifts. Overall, there have been at least five different government formations at different levels within Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2020, including changes at the state, entity, and cantonal levels and long periods without any functional government in place. Throughout these periods of political uncertainty or change, the project has maintained a steadfast commitment to the authorities, ensuring that project activities continued.

Finally, the project faced challenges due to the launch of the UNDP global cloud-based administrative system, Quantum, at the start of 2023. This affected all aspects of operations and seriously prolonged various operations processes. For example, the initial delays in registering suppliers and procurement processes led to further delays or postponements of the subsequent activities. The most significant negative impact was the requirement for bidders to register in the system for bidding, contracting, or invoicing. This posed considerable difficulties and risks, as technical issues during registration deterred potential bidders, resulted in fewer bids. Despite gradual progress and improvements during 2023 and 2024, reporting, HR and procurement continued to face challenges.

Despite all of these risks and challenges, the project was able to adapt, show flexibility and maintain its relevance through constant engagement with the authorities and through their active engagement and steering of the project. This was in part facilitated through a flexible project structure that allowed for adaptation to needs.

5.2 Coherence

Finding 3: The project itself provides robust coherence through holistic interventions targeting strategic, legislative and operational capacities. Benefitting from SEESAC's portfolio approach, the project has been highly successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonisation and coordination with other interventions within the SEESAC portfolio, as well as with interventions supported by other actors, such as OSCE and UNODC. Through this approach, the project has not

only avoided duplication but has also actively sought out complementarities and synergies where possible. Lessons learned from previously projects, such as the need for strong local ownership and a long-term approach, have been successfully implemented into this project to maximise its coherence.

The project's approach is highly cohesive, effectively targeting capacity gaps across multiple levels. It addresses strategic needs by strengthening overarching policies and frameworks, while also focusing on legislative reforms to create a more enabling legal environment for disarmament and arms control activities. Additionally, the project emphasizes operational capacity building to ensure that practical implementation at the ground level throughout the jurisdictions is effective and sustainable. This comprehensive approach helps to foster lasting improvements in the overall system, as well as strengthen coherence.

The project was designed to support implementation of the Regional Roadmap on combatting illegal arms trafficking in the Western Balkans and as such, sits within a portfolio of projects implemented by SEESAC. This includes the Roadmap itself - a *Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024* (the 'Roadmap'), which was adopted at the Western Balkans Summit in London on 10 July 2018. The Roadmap has seven goals covering all functional areas of arms control and envisions the Western Balkans as a safer region, where comprehensive and sustainable mechanisms, fully harmonized with EU standards and other international standards, are in place to identify, prevent, prosecute, and control the illegal possession, misuse, and trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives. The Union adopted in 2018 a Council Decision in support of the coordination and monitoring of the Roadmap implementation ([Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2018/1788](#) followed by EU CD 2022/2321), which this project also complements.

Following one of the key recommendations of the *Mid Term Review of the Roadmap*, the revision of the text of the Roadmap for implementation in the [period 2025-2030](#) was finalized following two rounds of consultations during the Roadmap local coordination meetings as well as based on the written feedback by the donors and implementing partners. **The Roadmap 2025-2030** was then endorsed by the Western Balkans Ministers of Interior during the [EU - Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs](#) in Montenegro in October 2024. SEESAC, as the executive arm of the *Regional Implementation Plan on Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons* (the 'Regional Implementation Plan'), supports the implementation of the Roadmap. Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 mandated SEESAC with the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Roadmap.

Project results directly contributed to the implementation of the *South East Europe Regional Implementation Plan Combatting the Proliferations and Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons* and the *Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024*. Its implementation will deepen and complement the Union assistance on SALW control provided to SEESAC through recent Council Decisions 2010/179/CFSP³⁰, 2013/730/CFSP³¹, and (CFSP)

³⁰ Council Decision 2010/179/CFSP of 11 March 2010 in support of SEESAC arms control activities in the Western Balkans, in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (OJ L 80, 26.3.2010, p. 48).

³¹ Council Decision 2013/730/CFSP of 9 December 2013 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to Combat the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition (OJ L 332, 11.12.2013, p. 19).

2016/2356³² as well the Regional IPA funded project *Support for Enhancing the Fight Against the Illegal Possession, Misuse and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the Western Balkans*.³³ It also contributed to the achievement of the Regional Implementation Plan and Roadmap goals supported by Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 and EU CD 2022/2321.

SEESAC's portfolio approach has contributed to the coherence of the project, through its holistic implementation. This approach ensured that all projects are working synergistically and learning from each other to contribute towards common goals. The projects are closely interlinked and are not being implemented in a vacuum. This coherence enhanced the overall effectiveness of the project (see further under 5.3), reduced duplication, and ensured that the combined outcomes of all projects generate greater value than if they were approached independently. Further, the development of the project was based on lessons learned from previous interventions. This included the need for a high level of local ownership, which fostered greater commitment and strengthened sustainability prospects; a platform approach, which brought together all relevant stakeholders in relevant regional meetings and workshops, including governments and EU institutions; and a long-term approach to further reinforce sustainability benefits.

The project's coherence also benefits by working within the framework of the Regional Cooperation Council (RCC). SEESAC itself is a joint initiative of the RCC and UNDP and this positioning provides coherence within both the RCC's and UNDP's programming in the region. SEESAC has actively sought to mitigate the risks of duplication with other initiatives. While it is widely acknowledged, including by the EU, that SEESAC is the focal point for SALW control in the region, SEESAC has coordinated closely with others, notably UNODC and OSCE to ensure coherence. With UNODC, this is primarily achieved through the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, which was established in 2019 at the request of donors to coordinate donor support to the implementation of the Roadmap. Specifically, it facilitates funding of concrete SALW control projects for implementation by UNDP and UNODC. SEESAC holds the secretariat of the Trust Fund and as such, provide programmatic coordination, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation, technical and management support. This level of coordination avoids overlaps and duplication in the design and implementation of all SALW control projects in the region.

Further, OSCE, UNODC and all other regional and international actors are regularly invited to all meetings organised through this project at both the regional and local level. These include at least two regional level meetings annually as well as two local level meetings annually, relating to the Roadmap implementation and the Annual Regional Steering Group meetings on SALW. In addition, tri-lateral meetings between SEESAC, OSCE and UNODC are organized as and when needed. The partners also coordinate in other forums, such as the NATO Coordination meetings, which are organized on a quarterly basis and the Multinational Small Arms and Ammunition (MSAG) meetings, as well as with other UN Agencies through the UN CASA mechanism. While all of these efforts help to avoid overlap and duplication, SEESAC is also proactive in identifying possibilities for synergistic implementation. For example, in 2022, SEESAC and OSCE organized a joint meeting on capturing lessons learned from SALW control in conflict cycles, to transfer lessons learned from the Western Balkans to Ukraine. The partners coordinated very closely in their joint technical assistance to support the law enforcement agencies in Moldova. Additionally,

³² Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2356 of 19 December 2016 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (OJ L 348, 21.12.2016, p. 60).

³³ https://www.seesac.org/News_1/SEESAC-Announces-a-New-Project-and-Continues-its-Decades-long-Work-trees

the partners participate together in the Regional Awareness Raising Task Force that SEESAC facilitates, where they have aligned awareness raising and capacity development support.

Overall, the project demonstrates strong coherence by effectively addressing strategic, legislative, and operational capacities. SEESAC's portfolio approach has ensured effective coordination, complementarity, and harmonisation with other initiatives, both within SEESAC and with external partners like OSCE and UNODC. By prioritising collaboration and building on lessons learned—particularly the importance of local ownership—the project has minimised duplication and fostered valuable synergies.

5.3 Effectiveness

Finding 4: Under component 1, the project has contributed towards further strengthening capacities for the design and implementation of evidence-based SALW control policies and standardisation of approaches through regional cooperation at the strategic and operational levels. The project adopted a dual-orientated approach through provision of support to the SALW Commissions in Southeast and East Europe at the strategic level and supporting the South-East Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN) at the operational level. This support is highly valued across all eight jurisdictions, achieving significant results in contributing to the reduction of the threat of the illicit proliferation of SALW. The Armed Violence Monitoring Platform established by SEESAC and supported through the project, which monitors firearms related incidents, is significantly recognised by project stakeholders and has statistical, analytical, intelligence and operational use.

Component 1 was focused on the facilitation of regional cooperation and support for evidence-based policy-making on SALW control to further contribute to the reduction of the threat of illicit proliferation of SALW. Through a twin-track approach, the project supported regional cooperation at both strategic at operational levels. At the strategic level, this focused around the organisation of regular meetings (twice per year) of the SALW Commissions or their equivalent in the region and at the operational level, through regularly convening and providing support to SEEFEN.

The project has achieved significant results under this component through provision of support to the SALW Commissions. Eight regional level meetings have been conducted, bringing together the SALW Commissions throughout the region to share knowledge and exchange experience. The SALW Commissions informed the evaluation of the huge value that these opportunities bring for peer-to-peer exchange and learning. In particular, the technical expertise provided through the project has contributed towards the standardisation of approaches throughout the region as well as the harmonisation of legislation with the EU Acquis. The project has supported the development of National Strategies and Action Plans on SALW control, which also contributes towards the standardisation of approaches, with all strategies and action plans being interlinked closely with both the Regional Roadmap and in turn, the priorities of the jurisdictions with their EU Accession processes. The project has provided a strong gender perspective into the technical expertise provided at the strategic and normative level, ensuring that it is integrated into all strategic and normative frameworks. It is notable, that SEESAC provides the only forum where regional actors are able to come together and discuss common objectives in the field of security. It is even more notable, that this is on such a sensitive issue and the ability of the project and SEESAC to accomplish this evidences its role as a highly trusted partner.

Other types of complementary support have also been provided through the project. For example, the project has been supporting senior members of SALW Commissions to participate in English

language courses. In total, 41 participants attended English language courses, of which 34 completed 61 courses across various levels, ranging from the beginner to the proficient, through group or individual courses. Recipients of these trainings who participated in the evaluation spoke of how the courses improved their language skills, which in turn enabled them to cooperate and exchange information and knowledge among representatives across jurisdictions both at policy-making and operational level. Beyond this, their improved communication skills allowed recipients to communicate with colleagues and interlocutors throughout the EU as well as to participate in EU and international fora related to SALW, such as in RevCon 4 of the UN PoA. This contributed towards raising the profile of the region on the international stage and for global partners and stakeholders to learn about the experiences of addressing SALW in the region.

The project also supported authorities in strengthening their capacities for data collection and analysis. For example, in Bosnia and Herzegovina, relevant IT equipment was provided to the Ministry of Security in response to their request for creating capacity for more efficient data collection and analysis. Additionally, the Ministry of Internal and Foreign Trade of Serbia received support in upgrading its software for record-keeping and reporting on arms transfers.

All stakeholders who participated in the evaluation spoke of the increased capacities of the SALW Commissions as a result of the continuous support that has been provided to them, both through this project and through predecessor projects. Evidence of their increased capacities include their role in the development of the Regional Roadmap and its subsequent implementation, which is embedded in strong coordination by the SALW Commissions at the local level. This also speaks to the level of regional trust and confidence that has been inspired as a result of this and other SEESAC projects. It is reported that there is no other region in the world where institutional structures comprising the SALW Commissions and SALW Strategies are so consistently in place, with regular knowledge sharing and joint planning of activities, enabled through regular meetings.

The project has supported the organisation of nine regional meetings of the SEEFEN. SEEFEN was created to facilitate the exchange of information and the transfer of knowledge within the region and between the region and the EU while promoting practical cooperation in fighting the illegal possession and illicit trafficking of firearms. The Network brings together investigators and border police representatives, customs administrations, public prosecutor's offices and ballistic experts from across the region. Since its original formation in 2016, the Network has expanded to include border police representatives. SEEFEN is the only regional platform in South East Europe that enables dialogue amongst all experts involved in the gun-enabled crime chain from the bullet found at a crime scene to the criminal behind bars, from the region to the rest of Europe. The project facilitates knowledge exchange and learning, not just between the jurisdictions, but also with key EU interlocutors such as EUROPOL, EMPACT, FRONTEX and EU member states etc. Similarly, the technical and advisory support provided by the project to SEEFEN is highly welcomed and regarded by stakeholders. In particular, forging connections not just within the region but also with relevant EU actors is seen as a particular added value. Stakeholders spoke of the crucial relevance of including prosecutors in the Network, recommending even closer engagement with judicial actors in the future. SEEFEN broke down barriers between different stakeholders and led to an increase in information exchange within the region and the EU.

This project has supported the publication of monthly monitors on armed violence trends across the region through collecting data to inform the Armed Violence Monitoring Platform,³⁴ established by SEESAC in 2014. Stakeholders informed as to the utility of the AVMP, which they

³⁴ <https://www.seesac.org/AVMP/>

use for statistical, analytical, intelligence and operational purposes. The project is supporting the publication of monthly and quarterly monitors on armed violence trends in the region, as well as regular In-Focus Armed Violence Monitors. In total, under this project, 16 monthly monitors, 17 quarterly monitors and 20 In Focus monitors were shared and published. These provide data and analysis on specific issues such as domestic violence, victims of firearms incidents, weapons seizures etc. based on the data gathered through the AVMP. Beyond these publications, AVMP data is used to support the development, drafting, and evaluation of SALW Control Strategies and action plans, as seen in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republic of Moldova. The data also complement the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap implementation progress reports and contribute to risk assessments, the formulation of evidence-based policies, and the design of targeted awareness-raising campaigns. In addition, AVMP findings inform donors and project design, while international organisations and research institutions rely on the platform to analyse armed violence trends and support policy development. The AVMP has proven to be a highly successful model, which has now been replicated within the EU (see further under 5.5 Impact below.). AVMP data has also been used by SEESAC to compile a brief on the young perpetrators and victims of firearm incidents. This brief was prepared as a contribution to the report of the Secretary-General on “Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation,”³⁵ evidencing the breadth of the utility of the gathered data.

The project has also supported the continuation of the publication of four annual Regional Arms Exports Reports. It is notable that the only other region that prepares such reports is the EU, evidencing the strong level of political commitment of stakeholders in the jurisdictions to the goals of the project and SEESAC overall, as well as a high level of transparency. SEESAC has provided support in ensuring data collection, analysis and dissemination to provide an evidence base for decision-makers as well as to increase transparency.

Additional targeted and on-demand policy-relevant research conducted under this project includes seven Fast Facts on SALW Survey in 2020 and a Study on Hand Grenades produced in or originating from the Western Balkans, alongside a best practice manual for the forensic examination of seized hand grenades. Stakeholders, including EUROPOL, spoke of the relevance and utility of the study. The project’s ability to develop such kinds of knowledge products and policy-relevant research is both well acknowledged and highly valued by its partners and stakeholders, who view SEESAC as a front runner in this regard.

Beyond the six Western Balkans region, the project has provided considerable support to the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Multifaceted support has been provided to assist these countries in relation to disarmament and arms control activities. This has included through their participation in the regional SALW Commission meetings to share knowledge and contribute and benefit from peer learning and exchange, as well as through their regular participation in the SEEFEN meetings. In addition, on demand support has been provided to the General Police Inspectorate of the Republic of Moldova in establishing an electronic Weapons Registry System with nationwide access. This included through the provision of hardware equipment as well as technical advisory expertise on the establishment of such a Registry, based on lessons learned and best practices throughout the region. In addition, the project undertook a needs assessment to determine the needs for further enhancing the weapons registry system as well as preparatory work for a Feasibility Study for supporting the second phase of the Weapons Registry in the Republic of Moldova. The project also provided support for the enhancement of data collection and analysis capabilities of

³⁵ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/4018305?ln=en&v=pdf>

the Moldovan Criminal Police through the provision of 42 laptops and laser printers.³⁶ Additional hardware equipment required for the establishment of the weapons registry throughout the country, was procured and delivered to the General Police Inspectorate in Republic of Moldova, namely 65 computer working stations, 65 multifunctional devices, 65 monitors, 65 UPSs, 5 laptops, 70 smart phones, re-transfer printer and 2 high volume document scanners. Additionally, within support to the Criminal police in Moldova that was also provided through EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2321, the listed IT equipment was procured from EUSAC V alongside the feasibility study. Finally, senior members of the SALW Commission in Moldova, as well as from other jurisdictions, benefitted from their participation in English language courses, with the aim of strengthening their English language knowledge. Participants in the evaluation spoke of the utility of the language course, which has already enabled them to participate in EU and international conferences. Authorities in Moldova have particularly welcomed their participation in the project, which given its close links to the EU Accession process, is seen as a huge added value.

The project also facilitated knowledge exchange and information sharing with the authorities of Ukraine through their participation in SALW Commission and SEEFEN meetings, and technical advice and assistance provided to contribute to the standardisation of legal provisions and harmonisation with the EU. This has led to strengthening Ukrainian inclusion in EU mechanisms, such as EMPACT, EUROPOL, FRONTEX etc. The project also translated SALW control knowledge products into Ukrainian and provided hardware and software as well as technical expertise. The inclusion of Ukraine and Moldova in the project is seen by all stakeholders as being extremely valuable both to the EU accession aspirations of the Moldova and Ukraine, as well as to the EU and the Western Balkans region as a whole. For example, with a huge influx of weapons into Ukraine in support of its war efforts, it is increasingly important that the authorities in the region have strengthened abilities to detect the threat of illicit SALW and their ammunition.

The project has nine indicators to measure its progress under Component 1. While not all indicators are quantified, it can be said that the project has met or exceeded all of its indicators. Please see further Annex V.

Finding 5 : The project has established an effective model, which has been replicated to further support the capacity building of both law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking. The model consists of a comprehensive needs assessment, followed by the development of dedicated Standard Operating Procedures, the provision of equipment and tailored capacity development assistance in the form of training, focused on the implementation of the SOPs, complemented by regional knowledge exchange and learning. This sequential approach has proven to be highly successful in strengthening the capacities of law enforcement and border authorities in detecting and countering illicit trafficking of weapons. They are now seeking additional support in emerging areas such as regarding convertible and 3D printed SALW.

The project has successfully established a comprehensive, replicable model for combating illicit arms and explosives trafficking, which has significantly strengthened the capacities of law enforcement and border authorities in four Western Balkans jurisdictions – Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia. This model is rooted in a sequential process beginning with thorough needs assessments of both training and equipment requirements, leading to the development of tailored Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), provision of advanced equipment, and targeted capacity-building activities such as specialised training sessions, together with regional knowledge

³⁶ As reported in the Project Brief prepared by SEESAC as part of the evaluation, May 2025

exchange. This same model was applied for the provision of support to both criminal police and border police. It is particularly noteworthy, that the project marks the first time that SOPs were developed for either of these law enforcement authorities.

With regards to the border authorities, once comprehensive needs assessments had been undertaken, the project provided technical assistance and support in the development of 12 SOPs in areas such as firearms detection, risk analysis, and emergency response, with each adapted into local languages and endorsed locally. Border authority stakeholders who participated in the evaluation confirmed the relevance and utility of these SOPs, noting that it was the first time they had SOPs governing their day to day work. The development of the SOPs was followed by dedicated workshops to train border control authorities on the use and application of the SOPs. In partnership with FRONTEX, the project supported the development of a detailed Handbook for border police, which was subsequently distributed at border crossings. Stakeholders informed that the Handbook is available at all border crossings throughout the four jurisdictions and served as a complex and comprehensive resource for frontline officers. Complementary to this, the project together with FRONTEX created a five-day Firearms Detection training of trainers Course, based on the SoPs and the Handbook, which was delivered to around 100 representatives of Border Police and Customs Services from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, North Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, and Montenegro. The training curriculum, focused on enhancing the skills of front-line officers in firearms, ammunition, and explosives detection, as well as in the identification of weapons, their components, and ammunition, thus integrating various aspects of the work developed under the project, making the effort more comprehensive and sustainable. All stakeholders spoke of the need to have additional ToT sessions to ensure that the ripple down effect takes place and that additional representatives can be trained throughout the jurisdictions. Further, FRONTEX expressed a wish for project and SEESAC trainers to join the pool of trainers that they are currently compiling to include trainers with Western Balkans experience.

A large focus of the project has been on the provision of specialised equipment for the border authorities. For example, in total, 940 pieces of equipment worth US\$3,516,000 were delivered to the Border Police of Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia. This included tools such as watercraft engines, videoscopes, thermal cameras, drones, detectors for explosives and narcotics, X-ray scanners, border surveillance packs, matter density detectors, metal safes, , binoculars (thermal, day, and night), flashlights, mechanical inspection tools, reflectors, laser rangefinders, telescopic mirrors, trail cameras, rugged mobile phones, endoscopes and computers/laptops. Training on the use of this equipment has been integral to the project's success. The representatives from border authorities who participated in the project spoke of the great utility of the equipment and how it has positively impacted their ability to carry out their day to day work in detecting and countering illicit trafficking of weapons. Not only this, but the equipment can be used for detecting and countering other types of crimes, such as human trafficking, drugs smuggling etc. having a knock-on effect beyond the scope of the project. In particular, practical exercises during training on equipment use, such as with sniffer dogs on how to detect firearms and ammunition were highly appreciated.

The project has also provided regional level support to the border police and customs representatives, through annual regional meetings, which the project has organised jointly with FRONTEX. These meetings brought together representatives from the six Western Balkans jurisdictions and Moldova. Stakeholders informed that these meetings are contributing to enhanced cooperation of Border and Customs Services within the system of Integrated Border Management. They also serve as a platform for exchange of information on new modalities of trafficking of

firearms, new challenges in efficient border control but also information on best practices in various border operations.

The project used the same model for supporting the criminal police services across the six Western Balkans jurisdictions. While the needs assessments were conducted under a separate Council Decision 2018/1788, this project provided support for the development of SOPs, provision of equipment and training and facilitation of regional knowledge sharing. For example, this included the development of 20 mutually developed and endorsed Standard Operating Procedures on detection, risk analysis, firearms/ammunition/explosives related investigations, and emergency situations for the Criminal Police authorities. As with the border authorities, this was followed by the purchasing of 991 pieces of equipment worth US\$ 2,068,275 USD. This included a variety of tools and devices to support investigative and operational activities. These comprise specialized imaging and detection equipment such as Ground Penetrating Radar and thermal imaging cameras, as well as metal detectors, videoscopes, and handheld Raman analysers. To support communication and data management, the procurement included mobile phones, laptops, PCs, servers, and digital storage devices. For crime scene investigation, various equipment such as forensic lights, search sets, tamper-evident tapes, metal safes, and reflectors were provided. Additionally, the authorities received drones, portable X-ray scanners, stereomicroscopes, and laser printers, along with a range of security and utility items including metal shelves, hydraulic presses, and chemical vapor fuming chambers. Also included were night vision binoculars, GPS trackers, and different types of flashlights to enhance operational capabilities across the different criminal police services. The stakeholders informed the evaluation as to the utility of this equipment, which has strengthened their detection and investigation capacities for firearms trafficking as well as for other types of crimes.

The provision of equipment was complemented by six trainings for approximately 150 representatives of criminal police services across the six jurisdictions, focusing on detection of firearms, investigations, emergency situations, and practical implementation of the risk analysis methodology. Stakeholders also spoke of the utility of this practical training, confirming that they have been able to apply it in their day-to-day work. Previously, they commented, they were unsure what to do if they detected a weapons. Now the SOPs set out in detail the different steps that need to be taken. In addition, four regional meetings for criminal police representatives have been conducted to discuss the current context and challenges in firearms-related criminal investigations in their respective jurisdictions. Stakeholders informed that these meetings provide a valuable opportunity for peer-to-peer learning, knowledge and experience exchange.

Overall, this structured and multi-layered approach, combining needs analysis, SOP development, equipment provision, tailored training and regional cooperation has proven highly effective in enhancing the ability of law enforcement and border authorities across the jurisdictions to detect, investigate, and prevent illicit arms trafficking, leading to measurable reductions in firearms proliferation and trafficking threats in the region. This will be discussed further under 5.5 Impact below.

Such has been the success of this approach that the authorities are seeking additional support in emerging areas, such as convertible and 3D printed SALW. Through this and other projects, SEESAC has been responding to this demand. For example, SEESAC has published a knowledge product on 3D printed firearms- State of play, challenges and Law Enforcement approach, as a preventive measure. While there still have been no seizures of these types of weapons in the region, given the increasing threat of 3D printed firearms in the EU it is important to raise awareness and

knowledge of the WB law enforcement authorities. SEESAC is also in the process of finalising a knowledge product on drones, which will provide comprehensive information on the application, regulation, and security implications around the use and threats of drones within the Western Balkan region. Furthermore, it will provide a comprehensive overview on how drones are being implemented in police practices and which challenges this brings. It will contain recommendations for Police and the Judiciary at both the operational and strategic level. Having in mind that the threat of blank firing weapons, which can be converted into firearms, still presents the biggest threat in the region when it comes to the trafficking of firearms, SEESAC has provided considerable support and facilitated several regional gatherings on this topic. For example, the last Regional Meeting of Criminal Police Representatives focused only on blank firing weapons and gathered participants from the Western Balkans, Moldova, Ukraine, as well as Turkey and Bulgaria as countries of origin of convertible weapons and Sweden and the Netherlands as the countries of their final destination. SEESAC also facilitated a Regional meeting of ballistic experts from the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine with the focus on the examination of convertible/converted weapons in order to provide a platform for participants to share information and new trends and technologies in this area.

The project has eight indicators to measure its progress under Component 2. While not all indicators are quantified, it can be said that the project has met or exceeded all of its indicators. Please see further Annex V.

Finding 6: The project has successfully strengthened regional security by enhancing capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM), using a three-fold model. This achievement included substantial infrastructure security upgrades, effective surplus reduction, and comprehensive training programmes. As a result, there has been a marked improvement in the security of weapons and ammunition stockpiles, a significant reduction in excess and confiscated SALW and ammunition, and the adoption of better physical security and stockpile management practices throughout the region. Additionally, the project has bolstered the inspection systems of law enforcement authorities, collectively contributing to a substantial reduction in proliferation risks and enhancing regional stability.

Component 3 aimed to reduce the risk of proliferation through the enhancement of weapons and ammunition stockpile security and reducing surplus stocks of SALW. Based on lessons learned from previous projects, this project adopted a three-fold model of (1) improving the security of storage locations; (2) building the capacity of the personnel tasked with managing stockpiles, significantly increasing security provisions and reducing the risk of the unwanted proliferation of stockpiles of SALW and their ammunition; and (3) reducing surpluses, therefore further reducing the risks of proliferation. For example, the project provided infrastructure support to upgrade the security for 18 evidence rooms across the six Western Balkans jurisdictions and Moldova. Police premises in the region did not previously have secure evidence rooms, often resulting in firearms related evidence being stored insecurely. The evaluator was informed that this often led to looting. Upgrades provided are in line with international standards and include for example, 24/7 CCTV, fire doors and bars on windows. Since the security upgrades have been finalised, no looting has taken place, evidencing the effectiveness of this support.

Complementary to this, the project provided support to SALW disposal activities to reduce confiscated and surplus stocks of SALW and ammunition. In total, the project supported the destruction of 10,644 pieces of SALW, 4,998 parts and components of SALW and 50,000 cartridges, across four jurisdictions, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro and Kosovo.

This evidences the projects contribution to diminishing risks of proliferation through the reduction of confiscated and surplus stocks of SALW and ammunition. Stakeholders confirmed that this has contributed towards mitigating diversion risks.

Additionally, the project organised three regional thematic workshops for the personnel responsible for PSSM of conventional weapons and ammunition throughout the six Western Balkans jurisdictions and Moldova. The purpose of the workshops was to further strengthen the weapons and ammunition management capacities of authorities in the Western Balkans and Moldova. In total, 66 participants attended the three regional workshops. Stakeholders who participated in these workshops informed of the value in further strengthening the weapons and ammunition management capacities of authorities.

The project also provided bespoke assistance to the Ministry of Interior in Serbia, in response to requests for support to decrease the illicit possession and misuse of firearms in the country, following the two mass shooting incidents in 2023. This support was tailored to support the capacities of police officers in charge of record-keeping of weapons and proper and safe storage of ammunition and weapons in police stations/administrations. In total, five national PSSM trainings were provided for the Serbian Ministry of Interior, reaching a total of 224 personnel, evidencing the project's ability to adapt and respond to specific requests for assistance.

The project has four indicators to measure its progress under Component 3. While not all indicators are quantified, it can be said that the project has met or exceeded all of its indicators. Please see further Annex V.

5.4 Efficiency

Finding 7: The project has demonstrated effective and cost-efficient utilisation of funds to address the priorities identified by partners. Strategic resource allocation is evident, with over half of the budget dedicated to equipment and infrastructure enhancements, resulting in a high value for money. The substantial level of expertise and professionalism of the project staff is consistently recognised and deeply appreciated by all project partners and stakeholders, fostering a strong sense of trust and confidence. The behind the scenes work required to implement such a project should not be underestimated. The successful execution of the project, maintained even amid the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine, highlights its overall efficiency and resilience in delivery. Delays caused have been beyond the control of the project. The project has had a robust approach to risk management, which has aided its efficiency, as well as a monitoring and evaluation system in place to guide decision-making and improve performance. In particular, the project has a very strong focus on learning both within the project and cross-learning with other SEESAC and external projects and partners, contributing further to its efficient implementation.

The project has been implemented in a cost-efficient manner. Financial data shows that deviations from the planned budget occurred in the first year of project implementation, due to the challenges of implementing during the pandemic. These resources were allocated to subsequent years. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic combined with the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, resulted in a one year no cost extension of the project, in order for it to fully implement all envisaged activities, although the delays caused were beyond the control of the project. This is discussed more in Finding 2 above. The project's successful delivery throughout its implementation, including during the challenging circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, is a testament to its adaptability and

resilience. Despite the pandemic’s disruptions, the project maintained steady progress, adapting to unforeseen circumstances with flexibility. This ability to sustain momentum underscores the well-structured planning and the capacity of the team to respond swiftly to changing conditions. Despite this, the financial data shows that implementation increased dramatically during the last two years of implementation during 2023 and 2024, one conditions had improved.

The project’s budget, as revised through the No-cost Extension under the Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/381, together with its delivery rates, is provided below. Due to exchange rate losses, the received funds amounted to US\$12,898,487.52 instead of the originally contracted US\$13,224,956.26.

Table 1: Original budget for the EUSAC V project showing year 1 budget revision

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total (USD)
Total activities	207,298.69	580,376.11	1,055,630.57	4,733,091.90	5,783,374.93	12,359,772.20
GMS	14,510.91	40,626.33	73,894.14	331,316.43	404,836.25	865,184.05
Overall project total	221,809.60	621,002.44	1,129,524.71	5,064,408.33	6,188,211.18	13,224,956.26

Table 2: Annual expenses and overall balance for the EUSAC V project

	Year 1 Costs Incurred	Year 2 Costs Incurred	Year 3 Costs Incurred	Year 4 Costs Incurred	Year 5 Costs Incurred	Balance
Total activities	207,298.69	580,376.11	1,430,962.99	4,744,538.31	5,090,208.09	1,277.04
GMS 7%	14,510.91	40,626.33	100,167.41	332,117.68	356,314.57	89.39
Overall project total	221,809.60	621,002.44	1,531,130.40	5,076,655.99	5,446,522.66	1,366.43

Strategic resource allocation is evident, with over half of the budget dedicated to equipment and infrastructure enhancements, complemented by the development of SOPs and the delivery of targeted trainings. This targeted investment has enabled the achievement of tangible improvements, ensuring that resources are used where they have the greatest impact. Behind the scenes, the logistics and preparatory work involved in executing procurement and practical trainings and deploying equipment are substantial. The project’s ability to efficiently deliver a project of the size and scale should be recognised.

The project team’s extensive capacities, particularly that of the CTA and the gender advisor, were instrumental in ensuring the quality of the results achieved. Their high level of expertise, professionalism, and excellent communication fostered a smooth operational flow, earning consistent recognition and appreciation from all project partners and stakeholders. This professional approach has been fundamental to the project’s overall success and its efficient implementation. SEESAC’s unmatched expertise and strong relationships with project partners and stakeholders, based on trust and confidence have been central to facilitating efficient

implementation. Their precise and comprehensive support ensures that relevant experts are always provided in response to identified needs. Regular contact and ongoing communication have helped streamline processes, making collaboration straightforward and highly efficient and effective. These factors collectively have contributed to the project's efficiency, resilience, and high-impact outcomes, even amid complex logistical challenges.

The project has demonstrated a comprehensive and robust approach to risk management as detailed in Finding 2, which has significantly contributed to its overall efficiency and success. By proactively identifying potential risks and implementing effective mitigation strategies, the project has been able to adapt swiftly to unforeseen challenges, ensuring continued progress even in difficult circumstances, such as the pandemic and the impact of the war in Ukraine. This systematic risk management approach has minimised disruptions, optimised resource utilisation, and enhanced the overall stability and efficiency of project activities.

Additionally, the project has established a monitoring and evaluation system that serves as a critical tool for guiding decision-making and continuously improving performance. This system provides regular and detailed insights into project results, allowing for timely adjustments and course corrections. A notable strength of the project is its emphasis on learning, both within the project team and through cross-learning initiatives with other SEESAC and external projects. This culture of knowledge sharing has fostered innovative solutions, best practices, and lessons learned, further enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of project implementation. Overall, these strategies have created a dynamic environment conducive to sustained success and adaptive management.

5.5 Impact

Finding 8: The project has generated a transformative impact on regional security, significantly enhancing the capacity to combat illicit SALW and ammunition, thereby strengthening peace and stability in South East Europe and beyond. By harmonising strategic approaches, normative frameworks, and legislation across jurisdictions with EU *acquis* standards, this initiative has fostered unprecedented cooperation and coordination among security institutions in the region. These efforts have led to tangible improvements in border control, law enforcement, and customs operations, evidenced by increased detection, seizure, and destruction of illicit weapons. The increased operational capacity and upgraded security infrastructure have placed the region in a stronger position to detect, prevent, and respond to illicit trafficking, including any influx of military equipment linked to the war in Ukraine.

The project is achieving broad-ranging impact that extend beyond just the achievement of results. Perhaps the greatest of these is its ability to forge partnerships among the jurisdictions of the Western Balkans, who, not so long ago, were fighting each other in bloody conflicts and are now brought together through this project, and other SEESAC initiatives, to discuss issues of common interest. Through adopting a conflict sensitive approach, such as only including names of participants and cities and not using flags and maps, the project has been able to bring participants together and to unite the security institutions in the Western Balkans around areas of mutual concern. This has a knock-on effect in terms of the project's contribution towards peacebuilding, conflict prevention and reconciliation. It is noteworthy, that SEESAC, including this project, is the only institution that is able to successfully do this in the region, in the area of security.

Beyond this, the project has played a pivotal role in establishing a coherent and harmonised legal and strategic framework across Southeast and East Europe. By supporting the alignment of national legislation with EU and UN standards, it has created a unified legal environment that facilitates effective enforcement, traceability, and accountability. This legislative harmonisation, coupled with mutual cooperation mechanisms, has significantly strengthened regional commitment to disarmament, reducing divergence that historically hindered coordinated action. Furthermore, the development and strengthening of strategic structures such as SALW Commissions has enhanced policy coherence. These Commissions serve as central entities that coordinate efforts, develop relevant strategies, and ensure the consistent implementation of disarmament policies, promoting a collective response to illicit SALW proliferation. While this is of benefit to the institutions themselves, contributing towards the achievement of their EU aspirations, it is also of benefit to the EU member states and wider region, as the Western Balkans are a source of origin for many illicit SALW. Furthermore, the project's inclusion of Moldova and Ukraine, and the large investments made through this project in the Western Balkans, particularly in further strengthening the detection and investigation capacities of border and criminal police services, have not only been timely but also necessary. The same applies to the continuous and targeted support for strengthening SALW control measures in the Republic of Moldova, as well as knowledge sharing across the region, including with representatives of Ukrainian institutions.

A hallmark of the project's impact lies in the substantial enhancement of operational capacities and infrastructure. The introduction of technical equipment, along with the establishment of Standard Operating Procedures for Criminal and Border Police Services, has transformed enforcement capabilities. For the first time, the region possess SOPs together with advanced equipment that allows border police and criminal investigations units to detect and investigate illicit weapons more effectively. This upgrading of infrastructure has led to a doubling of weapons seizures since 2019 – 52%. While a total of 17,792 firearm incidents were reported in the Western Balkans over the last six years, weapons seizures represented 46% of all of these incidents.³⁷ This demonstrates the impact the project is having in furthering a proactive law enforcement response to the illicit possession, proliferation, and misuse of firearms, and increasing capacities of law enforcement institutions.

This enhanced operational capacity is exemplified by the forging of bilateral and multilateral contacts throughout the region and with EU bodies such as Europol, FRONTEX, and Eurojust. Notably, joint investigations have resulted in hundreds of firearms seized and organized criminal groups dismantled. The evaluator was informed of a cross-border intervention at the border between Kosovo and Montenegro in May 2024, where 170 pieces of SALW were seized. A similar initiative between Kosovo and North Macedonia resulted in the arrest of 18 people and the dismantling of a weapons conversion workshop. Both of these results were credited to the support provided through the project, both in terms of increased capacities of the border control authorities as well as better equipment to enable them to effectively perform their jobs. Another example, from April 2025, involved Kosovo and Albania, cooperating with Europol and Eurojust building on connections forged through their participating in regional meetings organised through this project, which led to hundreds of firearms being seized (exact figures are still pending) and the dismantling of an organised crime group. These collaborations exemplify the multiplying effect of bringing the jurisdictions together, leading to more effective suppression of trafficking chains, increased interdiction at borders, and disruption of smuggling routes, all of which evidence the impact of the project in the region and beyond.

³⁷ Project brief prepared as part of the Final Evaluation, SEESAC, May 2025

In addition, the project reinforced storage and evidence management and strengthened the implementation of Physical Security and Stockpile Management procedures. The 10,644 pieces of SALW, 4,998 parts and components of SALW and 50,000 cartridges that have been destroyed by the project have contributed to increased citizen security and social cohesion.

The project's emphasis on knowledge sharing and training has yielded lasting regional and global benefits. The wealth of knowledge products, targeted and policy-relevant research that has been produced by the project demonstrates its impact not just in the project's implementation region, but also beyond. The use of these products by policy and decision-makers regionally and globally is well evidenced through the replication of SEESAC's models and approaches to SALW control and armed violence reduction. The number of downloads of SEESAC's publications also evidences this. For example, in the 2024 calendar 9,736 knowledge products were downloaded, including those developed through this project. In the 5 years from 1st January 2020 – 31st December 2024, 35,646 knowledge products were downloaded. Further, English language courses for 41 senior members of SALW Commissions and SEEFEN members has expanded their participation in EU and international and discussions on global disarmament initiatives. The Armed Violence Monitoring Platform (AVMP) has evolved into a global resource for security institutions and researchers, providing critical data to inform risk assessment and early warning mechanisms.

SEESAC's positioning as a key partner to the EU, FRONTEX, DG Home, Europol, and Interpol underscores its recognition as an essential player in regional and global disarmament and security initiatives. This recognition resides in high-level documents and international acknowledgment, reinforcing its leadership role.

Furthermore, the project's broader impact extends to related issues such as organized crime, human trafficking, and preventing violent extremism. The evaluator was informed that as the authorities amongst the six jurisdictions in the Western Balkans have started to cooperate on preventing violent extremism, as a direct result of their participation in a regional meeting organised under this project, where the issue was first raised. This led to an agreement to start cooperating together on this issue as well. The project is having considerable multiplying impact through the increased capacities and equipment upgrades provided, which are also being used to detect cases of human trafficking, drugs smuggling and other types of organised crime. For example, the evaluation was informed that in February 2024 in Montenegro, 31 packages of marijuana were detected as a result of the equipment provided through this project. This resulted in the breaking up on a smuggling gang operating between Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Other multiplying effects include the increase in knowledge, the increase in information exchange, including with EU institutions, the forging of bilateral contacts throughout the region and in the EU, the strengthening of cooperation between the jurisdictions with EU bodies such as Europol and FRONTEX, the increased number of cases being reported on EMPACT, and the ToT who are continuing the transfer of knowledge to relevant representatives throughout the jurisdictions. With substantively enlarging the assistance to border and criminal police services through this project (compared to the previous projects), the region is better equipped not only to detect trafficking and misuse of weapons in the region, but also to detect and combat any potential trafficking after the war in Ukraine which has received large amounts of military equipment and weapons during the war.

Finding 9: The project has achieved remarkable and far-reaching impact that extends well beyond South East and East Europe, thanks to its innovative partnership approach and a strong culture of

sharing lessons learned and best practices. This proactive dissemination of solutions has fostered regional and global advancements, showcasing the project's leadership in promoting effective strategies. Notably, the successful replication of the Armed Violence Monitoring Platform in the EU exemplifies its impact, while the Western Balkans Roadmap has been replicated in the Caribbean and Central America, demonstrating its versatility and applicability across different contexts. Furthermore, the project has generously shared its expertise to support SALW control initiatives in Kyrgyzstan, Cambodia and the ASEAN region, enhancing global efforts in weapons management and security. Its support for capacity development initiatives with UNODA and its regional centres on gender mainstreaming further highlights its commitment to fostering sustainable, global peace. Overall, these accomplishments underscore the project's role as a catalyst for positive change, inspiring and empowering diverse regions through innovative solutions and collaborative knowledge sharing.

In addition to the considerable impact achieved in the SEE region, the project has achieved impact well beyond these borders. In 2020, the EU Action Plan on Firearms Trafficking was launched. This was inspired by the Western Balkans Roadmap, as it introduced for the first time a set of indicators, that mirror those already developed as part of the Roadmap. Previous EU Action Plans did not include a monitoring framework. Similarly, inspired by the Armed Violence Monitoring Platform developed by SEESAC, the EU developed a similar monitoring platform covering the 27 member states. As co-partner in the initiative, SEESAC, through this project, provided considerable technical advice and assistance to the development of the <https://gunviolence.eu> database. The database was developed in cooperation with SEESAC by the Flemish Peace Institute (FPI). Building on this, the FPI has recently launched a new, EU funded project, Vista, which will compare the EU wide data gathered through the GunViolence database with SEESAC's own data gathered through the AVMP. SEESAC's technical assistance in terms of what data to gather, how to use the data, how to analyse it, the types of research products that can be developed with the data and overall how to use the data to inform policy in the EU was highly welcomed by all relevant stakeholders who participated in the evaluation. Through the AVMP, SEESAC showed the EU what it can learn from the Western Balkans.

Other examples of where the project, through its positioning within SEESAC has achieved outsized influence is with regards to the replication of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap, which this project was designed to help implement. Through SEESAC's technical advice and assistance, the Roadmap has been replicated in the Caribbean as well as in Central Asia. Discussions are on-going regarding its further replication, for example, in the Andean countries as well as in the ASEAN³⁸ region of South East Asia. This is being led by Cambodia, which has a leading role in ASEAN, and who participated in a 10-day, high-level delegation to the Western Balkans region to learn about the work of SEESAC. The delegation participated in two regional workshops organised under the auspices of this project and met with many of the project's key stakeholders, in particular from the SALW Commissions. This led to the development of the Cambodian National Strategy and Action Plan on SALW and the draft pathway to develop a similar National Commission, based on the Western Balkans model. The government of Cambodia has already started gender training as well as specific training for women police officers. The value to the government of Cambodia of observing the Western Balkan model and mechanisms has been huge.

SEESAC has developed a strong partnership with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), which this project has helped to bolster. This included through the provision

³⁸ <https://asean.org>

of significant technical advice and assistance to the development and implementation of a joint UNDP-UNODA Saving Lives Entity – SALIENT – project in Kyrgyzstan. The project provided technical inputs into the development of the project concept and document, participated in a pre-project scoping mission, facilitated a high level delegation from Kyrgyzstan to participated in a Study Tour throughout the region and provided significant technical advice and assistance throughout the project’s implementation. Based on the SEESAC model, the project supported the establishment of a SALW Commission in Kyrgyzstan and the development of a National SALW Control Strategy and Action Plan. The Kyrgyz project was recognised as a best practice example at the 4th Conference on Arms Control under the Programme of Action – RevCon 4.

SEESAC, through this project, also provided considerable support to two of UNODA’s regional centres, the [United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa](#) – UNREC and the [United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament for Asia and the Pacific](#) – UNRCPD. This was provided at the request of the EU to strengthen UNODA’s regional capacities on gender mainstreaming. While the support to UNREC was provided online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, support to UNRCPD was provided through a hybrid approach, with the project’s gender advisor providing in-person and online training over a two week period. The evaluator was informed that throughout the two-year project for the regional centres, SEESAC provided regular support through the provision of technical advice and assistance, including the drafting of a training manual for UNODA project officers, using SEESAC’s resources and expertise.

UNODA’s regional centre in Latin America and the Caribbean - the [United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) – UNLIREC – has also benefitted from SEESAC expertise provided through this project in the development of the Caribbean and Central America Roadmaps, mentioned above. This has included through UNLIREC leaning on SEESAC for lessons learned and best practices and an annual lessons learned event held between SEESAC and UNODA to exchange knowledge and learning. This has included cross-learning for example on investigation processes and engaging with judges and prosecutors, where UNODA has shared its own learning and tools.

Further, ahead of the 4th Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action (PoA) and the 10th Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and UNDP SEESAC co-hosted an online event to discuss the latest trends in gender-responsive arms control. The event brought together representatives of UNDP SEESAC, UNIDIR, national institutions and civil society organisations across the region. These examples evidence the ever increasing impact that SEESAC is having beyond the Western Balkans and South and South East Europe in addressing disarmament and arms control and reducing the threat of illicit SALW and their ammunition in different regions and globally.

5.6 Sustainability

Finding 10: The project was designed with a sustainability perspective and is part of a wider portfolio of support that contributes towards its sustainability prospects. Its positioning within SEESAC ensures that support does not end at the conclusion of this project but that results achieved will be continually reinforced and embedded in the jurisdictions. This long term approach of the donor, of SEESAC and of the partners fosters strong sustainability prospects. The high level of ownership of the project’s results at the level of the jurisdictions, combined with the project’s approach of seeing the jurisdictions as partners and not beneficiaries has also contributed to both

ownership and sustainability. However, while sustainability at the level of the jurisdictions is reasonably secure, it is less secure at the regional level, where a neutral, independent partner such as SEESAC, is still required to bring the jurisdictions together. Sustainability prospects could be further boosted through additional cost-sharing from the authorities.

The project has been strategically designed with a strong emphasis on sustainability, recognising that lasting impact requires continuous support, ownership, and institutional embeddedness. Positioned within SEESAC's broader framework of regional security initiatives, the project ensures that its achievements are not transient but are firmly integrated into jurisdiction and regional systems. This approach fosters a long-term perspective, where ongoing support, reinforced policies, and adaptive capacities sustain the progress made beyond the project's lifespan. The strong commitment from governments and partners to uphold and build upon these results underscores the project's promising sustainability prospects.

Central to the project's success are the SALW Commissions, which have evolved to become pivotal agents of change at both regional and jurisdictional levels. This transformation illustrates a shift from a top-down, externally driven approach to one where local institutions develop ownership and drive strategic priorities. The success of these commissions demonstrates the model's replicability and its value as a sustainable platform for ongoing disarmament, threat reduction, and policy coordination in the region and beyond.

The project has facilitated substantial knowledge generation and capacity development across multiple domains—people, processes, and technology. Extensive training programmes, operational standard procedures, and the deployment of advanced equipment have strengthened institutional capacities in areas such as border control, criminal investigation and weapons management. When combined, these elements have created a resilient and adaptive framework that will persist well into the future. Notably, the SoPs introduced will remain with institutions, ensuring continuity of best practices and procedural consistency in the future.

The commitment to sustainability is further evidenced through in-kind contributions, such as government funding allocated to storage facilities and awareness campaigns, illustrating high-level ownership and shared responsibility. Governments have also demonstrated their commitment through ongoing collaboration, sharing of presentations, and archiving of institutional knowledge—thereby fostering a culture of continuous learning and knowledge transfer. This could be further boosted going forward.

Equipment provided during the project was selected with sustainability in mind, incorporating maintenance training and commitments from authorities to ensure its continued functionality. This strategic focus on maintenance underscores the recognition that technological sustainability is as critical as initial deployment. As a result, jurisdictions view themselves as true partners rather than passive beneficiaries—an approach that encourages ownership, accountability, and an institutionalised legacy of the project's achievements. This has been a key element in terms of bolstering the sustainability of the project's results.

Further, through this face of the project, results have become more institutionally driven and owned and less personality driven as capacities have spread more at the institutional level and are less confined to the individual level. This includes through the development of the SOPs, the TOT and the wide range of training and capacity building support that has been provided. The provision of equipment has also reinforced this.

While sustainability risks at the level of the jurisdiction are negligible, sustainability at the regional level is less secure. Were SEESAC and the project to withdraw now, it is doubtful that the same degree of regional coordination would continue. This is in part due to financial constraints and who would fund this at the regional level as well as in part related to who would lead and coordinate this. Given the history in the region, until all jurisdictions are members of the EU, it seems likely that a neutral, independent institution, such as SEESAC, will be required to continue to bring the jurisdictions together at the regional level to continue progress in this area. It is worth noting that there is nascent progress among the Ministries of Defence supported by SEESAC through other projects, who have started to come together in regional coordination outside of SEESAC using the SEESAC driven Ministerial Declaration from 2021 as a basis for this.

5.7 Gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, leave no one behind and the realisation of human rights

Finding 11: SEESAC is widely recognised as a global frontrunner in terms of research and analysis on the gendered perspectives of SALW control and armed violence reduction. Through targeted interventions, policy-relevant research and analysis and the development of knowledge products and resources, the project has further contributed towards changing perspectives on gender and integrating it into SALW control activities throughout the region and beyond. While disability inclusion and leave no one behind have not been the focus of the project, there are contributions in this regard. The project's commitment to the realisation of human rights through addressing disarmament and arms control activities, which serve as vital tools to uphold and protect human rights by reducing violence, preventing abuse and promoting peace, is conceptually clear, although it is not fully captured or communicated through the project.

The comprehensive efforts by both the project and SEESAC exemplify a significant advancement towards mainstreaming gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as disability inclusion within the realm of SALW control and armed violence reduction. Recognised globally as a leader in research and analysis from a gender perspective, SEESAC has effectively integrated gender mainstreaming into policies, laws, and institutional practices across the region. While this project mainstreamed gender throughout all activities, it did not include a specific component on gender, since there is a gender specific component in another SEESAC-implemented project and in order to avoid overlap. The focus therefore in this project was on knowledge sharing regarding experiences on gender mainstreaming and integrating the gender perspective into laws and policies.

The project has created a number of significant knowledge products and resources such as the Gender and SALW Control Resource Pack, which have fostered a paradigm shift—moving from peripheral acknowledgment to structural integration of gender considerations in SALW activities., including at the strategic, policy and legislative levels. The Resource Pack provides a concise overview of the wide range of knowledge products developed by SEESAC and serves as a simple reference guide and aid to policy-makers, practitioners, and researchers. To further facilitate knowledge exchange, SEESAC developed the policy brief [*Small Arms Control – The Case for Gender Mainstreaming*](#), which summarizes the overall approach to gender mainstreaming in SALW control in South East Europe and outlines practical strategies in enhancing the gender responsiveness of arms control. Both of these resources are being used globally, for example, by the Flemish Peace Institute, by the New York Centre for International Cooperation, by other UN institutions, and by policy and decision-makers regionally and globally. SEESAC's

comprehensive approach to gender is well captured in its Gender Brochure from February 2025 and its Gender Strategy 2024 – 2030.

Targeted gender sessions have been provided to the members of the SALW Commissions, which has ensured the integration of the gender perspective in strategic and legislative frameworks, as well as on-demand support to different authorities. For example, the project provided substantial support to the SALW Coordination Board in Bosnia and Herzegovina for a campaign against femicide in 2024, as well as through a review of the Gender Action Plan for Bosnia and Herzegovina related to measures to mainstream gender in SALW control. Further, all data collected through the AVMP is gender disaggregated, allowing for specific research and analysis on the gendered perspectives of SALW. These efforts have contributed towards changing the perspectives of the authorities in the jurisdictions with regards to gender. This can be seen for example through more gender sensitive interviewing and search techniques as well as the integration of gender considerations into gun licencing laws throughout the region. As one stakeholder informed the evaluation, without SEESAC gender would not even be present.

SEESAC and the project have significantly contributed towards mainstreaming gender into SALW control efforts at the global level. For example, SEESAC's global contributions include the delivery of tailored coaching programmes on gender mainstreaming in small arms control to UNRCPD, UNREC, and UNLIREC staff discussed above, delivery of training sessions to institutions in Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, and Bangladesh and Timor Leste. These jurisdictions have now started to collect gender disaggregated data and including a gender dimension into their Programme of Action reporting, in particular related to the relationship between femicide and use of SALW and GBV. Further, Papua New Guinea is now developing a SALW National Strategy and Action Plan with a strong gender perspective, based on its learnings from SEESAC and the project. SEESAC takes an active part in the UNODA-led global Gender Mainstreaming Group, sharing knowledge and best practices with other stakeholders. SEESAC provided gender expertise to UNIDIR through reviewing research papers for example of Women around Weapons, sharing data and names of contacts, as well as through participation in one and others events. UNIDIR regularly uses SEESAC's resources for their own research.

The project has also cultivated partnerships and cooperation with a number of other stakeholders and institutions focused on knowledge exchange and learning around gender mainstreaming and SALW control. This includes the Flemish Peace Institute on the gendered aspects of gun violence and collecting data around this issue, which led to the develop of the EU-wide Gun Violence database referenced previously; the New York University Centre for International Cooperation, who have established a Gender Network on SALW Control – GENSEC, with whom SEESAC is a key member with its resources being widely used by the GENSEC members; and cooperation with the Swedish Police on the intersection of SALW and gender-based violence (GBV). This cooperation was focused around the provision of this project providing expert gender related training to one cohort of trainees, comprising representatives from authorities, the judiciary, CSOs, practitioners etc. from Albania, Kosovo and Montenegro. Aside from the expert training, the AVMP and project and SEESAC research and knowledge products were used as part of the wider training programme. This has had spill-over effects in the region. For example, one participant from Albania, used the new knowledge gained from the expert training provided project to develop municipal level training and an awareness raising campaign on the correlation between GBV and SALW, with a particular focus on challenging stereotypes and mindsets. Such was the success of the project's contribution to the Swedish police training programme, that they would like SEESAC gender trainers to become a regular feature of any future training efforts. All of this evidences the

reach that the project has had beyond its geographical focus and the impact it is having in mainstreaming gender perspectives in SALW control activities.

While disability inclusion and “leave no one behind” initiatives have not been the primary focus, the project’s efforts contribute to these broader human rights goals by fostering inclusive approaches, supporting victim support mapping, and aligning policies with human rights principles. SEESAC’s active participation in global gender mainstreaming forums and partnerships with entities like UNODA and national authorities further amplify its impact, promoting equitable and human rights-centred disarmament practices.

Ultimately, the project underscores that disarmament and arms control are not only security measures but essential tools for upholding the fundamental human rights of all individuals—by reducing violence, preventing abuse, and promoting peace and equality. The continued development of gender-sensitive strategies and inclusive data practices affirms the commitment to leaving no one behind and ensuring that human rights are protected and realised through effective SALW control and armed violence reduction initiatives. However, the linkages of the project’s contribution to these cross-cutting issues, beyond gender equality, is not being fully captured or articulated by the project.

5.8 Communications and Visibility

Finding 12: The project has adopted a number of different approaches, based on SEESAC’s previous experiences and lessons learned, to communicate the project and its results with a high level of visibility to its donor, the EU. This includes through using varied communication channels generating significant outreach, as well as the project’s participation in regional and global events. However, while the authorities have a strong sense of ownership of the project results, there is a sense amongst the donor that the authorities view the project as a UNDP/SEESAC project, without being fully aware of the contribution of the EU. Internal communication with partners and stakeholders has been exemplary, with regular and relevant exchange.

The project developed a comprehensive Communications and Visibility Plan, which had the overall objective of highlighting amongst key local and international stakeholders and the general public the EU's further contribution to improved security in the SEE region and the EU by combatting the threat posed by illicit SALW and their ammunition in and from South East and East Europe. Additionally, the plan aimed to ensure that communications activities and products concerning the projects, objectives, results, and achievements are executed and produced with the highest quality and distributed on time to target groups.

The specific communications objectives were:

- To raise awareness among key stakeholders and the general public about EU's support allocated through EU Council Decision 2019/2111, its progress and milestones, and the EU's contribution to these achievements;
- To enhance the visibility of the EU-UNDP partnership in the context of increasing safety and security in SEE by reducing the threat posed by illicit SALW and their ammunition.

The project has deployed a number of different communication tools to publicise the project and its results. The EU logo was consistently displayed on all project materials, online and at venues to ensure that people attending events or exposed to project-related activities are aware of the EU's financial support. Communication tools used by the project included websites, social media,

informational and promotional materials including event agendas, briefs, reports, and others, as appropriate. Publications, events, and campaigns produced under this project are branded accordingly. For example, SEESAC's Online Knowledge Exchange Platform ensures appropriate dissemination and visibility of the progress and results of the EU CD 2019/2111. The platform provides comprehensive information on key events, detailing relevant project activities, milestones and success stories. By consistently highlighting the EU's contribution, the platform ensures EU-funded actions are easily recognised and promoted.

The project has developed a number of different knowledge products, many of which have been referenced elsewhere in this evaluation report. Knowledge products cover research findings, analyses, project outcomes, lessons learned, and collaborative efforts. These resources serve as valuable tools for stakeholders, policymakers, and the public to understand the complexities of illicit arms trafficking and the positive impact of the EU's involvement and support. For example, all reports produced under the AVMP have highlighted on the back cover the EU's support. SEESAC's social media content effectively showcases achievements made possible through EU funding. This includes photos, graphics and videos that capture the progress and impact of initiatives. Posts on X (Formerly Twitter), Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram are crafted with appropriate messaging and tags to relevant profiles to highlight the EU's contribution and efforts.

To raise awareness to a broader audience and contribute to a better understanding of armed violence in the region as well as to highlight the positive impact and the EU's support to mitigating the impact of firearms on the region's safety, SEESAC developed video content featured on SEESAC social media accounts – X (Formerly) Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube.

Significant communications and visibility highlights during the lifespan of the project include the following:

- Over 400 news items posted on SEESAC's knowledge exchange platform
- Over 100,000 visitors to the knowledge exchange platform
- Approximately 35,000 downloads of knowledge products
- Nearly 9,000 followers across social media platforms
- 120+ posts with EU logo and support included³⁹

Further, to increase the visibility of the results achieved and contribute to global arms control discussion, SEESAC team members shared the results achieved within this Council Decision, progress achieved on disarmament in South East Europe, and contributed to global events with technical knowledge and expertise. During these events, the EU's support was highlighted in speakers' presentations. To raise awareness, of the EU support on arms control, cooperation, and knowledge exchange, among project partners, representatives of national, regional, and international institutions and organizations SEESAC strategically brands materials for events with the EU logo - including appropriate disclaimers. To ensure proper visibility at SEESAC events EU logo is positioned on all printed materials (roll ups, backwalls, agendas, logistical notes, list of participants handouts, infographics, registration forms, etc.) as well as digital material (presentations, invitations, social media posts, etc.).

While the jurisdictions in the region are also promoting the project on their own websites and

³⁹ See further Appendix II – Communications and Visibility Report, February 1 2020 – December 31 2024, SEESAC Final Report EUSAC V

through social media, demonstrating their ownership of the project and its results, there is a sense amongst the donor that the jurisdictions view the project as a SEESAC/UNDP initiative, without acknowledging the full contribution of the EU. While this is not the fault of the project or SEESAC, both should reinforce the message to the jurisdictions that the project would not be possible without the support of the EU.

Internal communication between the project and its partners and stakeholders has been exemplary through the project's implementation period, including with the EU. For example, regular quarterly and annual progress reports are comprehensive and data driven and shared in a timely fashion. The project communicates nearly on a daily basis with the jurisdictions, providing advice and support that extends beyond the project's framework. The level of communication and professionalism amongst the project team is highly regarded and appreciated by all partners and stakeholders, with the team always going the extra mile to ensure regular and relevant communication using varied modalities. Communication within UNDP with Country Offices, the IRH and other regional centres is also assessed as comprehensive, although some UNDP colleagues would prefer a dedicated space on Teams for all SEESAC related information, which would be easily accessible, rather than via email communication, which can sometimes get overlooked.

6. Conclusions

Conclusions are drawn based on the 12 findings above and seek to answer the guiding questions for the evaluation.

Conclusion 1: The project has significantly contributed toward boosting the regional approach to SALW control, including regional standardisation, cooperation, transparency and coordination. This approach remains central to advancing measurable results in SALW control.

Based on findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11

The project has made substantial strides in strengthening the regional approach to SALW control across Southeast and East Europe, emphasising standardisation, cooperation, transparency, and coordination. Rooted in SEESAC's distinctive methodology—centred on fostering confidence and collaboration—these efforts have created a solid foundation for sustainable, transformational change in the region. By facilitating multi-level cooperation among policymakers and operational level practitioners, SEESAC has not only enhanced regional capacities but also built vital trust and direct partnerships among institutions and experts. This collaborative environment has been instrumental in developing tools such as the Roadmap and has contributed to the SEE region's reputation as one of the most transparent globally concerning arms transfer reporting. Recognised consistently at high-level political forums within Europe—such as the EU-Western Balkans Summit, the Berlin Process and the EU-Western Balkans Justice and Home Affairs Ministerial, the regional cooperation approach remains central to advancing measurable results in SALW control. Moving forward, the project's continued emphasis on fostering regional collaboration will be essential in sustaining progress and achieving impactful, long-term outcomes in arms control and disarmament.

Conclusion 2: The project has cultivated robust partners which underpin its approach, both at the level of the jurisdictions and within the European Union. During this phase, the project has consolidated partnerships with external stakeholders, including other UN entities, civil society and research organisations.

Based on findings 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9 and 11

The project has successfully cultivated a resilient and influential network of partners that underpin its strategic approach, both within the jurisdictions of the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine and across the European Union. During this phase, SEESAC has consolidated partnerships with a diverse array of stakeholders, including UN entities such as UNODA and its regional centres, UNIDIR and other UNDP Country Offices, civil society organisations such as the Flemish Peace Institute, research institutions such as the NYU Centre for International Cooperation, and first and foremost the authorities across all eight jurisdictions. The ability to convene these stakeholders on equal terms, effectively breaking down siloes, exemplifies the project's strength in fostering inclusive dialogue and collaboration.

Given the sensitivities surrounding disarmament in the region, SEESAC's role as a neutral and trusted intermediary is indispensable—especially when the jurisdictions not yet part of the EU. Its capacity to facilitate trust-building, jurisdictional and regional coordination, and institutional capacity development has been vital in transforming strategic vision into tangible action that addresses both national needs and regional priorities.

SEESAC's reputation as a pioneer in the disarmament field within the UN system is demonstrated by its recognition as a reliable partner within initiatives like the UNODA-UNDP SALIENT initiative, and by its standing with entities like UNODA and UNIDIR. Its influence is rooted in its ability to serve as a neutral, trusted platform that brings disparate actors together to work toward shared objectives, even amid ongoing political tensions. The success of mechanisms observed in the Western Balkans serves as a model for other regions, illustrating the power of dialogue and cooperation in post-conflict settings transitioning toward peace and stability.

From supporting regional cooperation to informing global initiatives such as SALIENT in Kyrgyzstan and Honduras, SEESAC's strategic engagement underscores its vital role in advancing disarmament efforts. Its capacity to build trust and foster collaboration remains central to sustaining progress, reinforcing the importance of strong, committed partnerships in achieving long-term disarmament goals.

Conclusion 3: Through this project and the SEESAC portfolio, UNDP and SEESAC are positioned as a leading and critical actor in disarmament and arms control activities in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented. The project evidences what can be achieved with the long-term commitment of the jurisdictions, the European Union as the project's donor and UNDP/SEESAC. Further, it has positioned the Western Balkans as an exporter of knowledge.

Based on findings 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10 and 11

Through this project and its broader portfolio, UNDP and SEESAC have established themselves as leading and vital actors in disarmament and arms control efforts within the jurisdictions where implementation has taken place. The evidence demonstrates that sustained long-term commitment from the jurisdictions, the European Union as the project's primary donor, and UNDP/SEESAC itself can produce meaningful and measurable progress. Notably, this engagement has elevated the Western Balkans from being perceived primarily as a conflict-affected region to an exporter of knowledge and good practices in disarmament. This has elevated the position of the Western Balkans both within the EU, where it is able to share knowledge, learning and best practices, as well as within other regions and countries.

This transformation is a testament to the depth and longevity of engagement in this sensitive and complex area, providing a meaningful example of what can be achieved through long-term

collaboration and strategic partnership. The region is now viewed as part of the solution, with strengthened relationships, increased confidence, and a more equal partnership dynamic—particularly between the Western Balkans and the European Union. Such developments have elevated the profile of the Western Balkans on the global stage and fostered regional confidence in the effectiveness of multilateral disarmament efforts.

Furthermore, this project has contributed to positioning UNDP and SEESAC as pivotal leaders in security sector reform and disarmament initiatives, establishing a strategic foothold for continued influence and impact. SEESAC’s neutrality and independent status remain critical assets—providing a vital regional space for collaboration until all jurisdictions fully integrate into the EU. This role will be essential to maintaining momentum, fostering trust, and ensuring sustained progress in disarmament and security reform efforts across these jurisdictions.

Conclusion 4: The project has generated significant interest beyond the Western Balkans, including in Moldova and Ukraine, key project partners, as well as other regions and countries throughout the world. This interest has also contributed to raising the profile of the Western Balkans jurisdictions, allowing knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning beyond the region.

Based on findings 4, 9 and 11

The project has achieved impactful recognition beyond the Western Balkans, capturing the interest of a diverse array of countries and regions, including from the expanded project partners, Moldova and Ukraine. This engagement is particularly significant given the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the associated challenges related to the large influx of SALW, underscoring the relevance and adaptability of the project’s approaches to diverse contexts. The increased international interest has also elevated the profile of Western Balkans jurisdictions as leaders and credible sources of knowledge and best practices in disarmament, facilitating valuable peer-to-peer learning opportunities beyond the region.

Furthermore, the project’s success has inspired the development of SALW control Roadmaps and strategies in other regions, such as the Caribbean and Central America, illustrating its potential as a replicable model. High-level delegate study tours from Kyrgyzstan and Cambodia, enabled through this project, have contributed to establishing SALW commissions and fostering the development of national strategies and action plans based on the SEESAC model in these countries. This broad interest highlights the significance of the project’s methodologies and emphasises the role of the Western Balkans jurisdictions as a catalyst for regional and global disarmament efforts, fostering cross-regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and capacity-building on a global scale.

Conclusion 5: Recognised globally as a leader in gender-focused research and analysis, the project has facilitated the successful integration of gender considerations into policies, laws, and institutional practices, fostering a paradigm shift from peripheral acknowledgment to structural inclusion. The project, while closely linked to the realisation of human rights, is not articulating or capturing these linkages, beyond its contribution to the SDGs.

Based on findings 1, 4, 5, 8, 9 and 11

The project has made substantial advances in mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment within SALW control and armed violence reduction efforts across the region. The development of key resources, such as the Gender and SALW Control Resource Pack and targeted policy briefs, has facilitated knowledge sharing and practical application at both regional and

global levels. Furthermore, tangible changes in authorities' behaviours—such as more gender-sensitive interviewing techniques and gender-responsive legislation—highlight the project's impact on transforming attitudes and institutional approaches.

While disability inclusion and “leave no one behind” initiatives have not been central components, the project's efforts contribute to broader human rights objectives by fostering inclusive approaches, supporting victim support, and aligning policies with human rights principles. Through active participation in global forums and strategic partnerships—ranging from UN entities to academic institutions—SEESAC has expanded its influence, promoting equitable, gender-sensitive disarmament practices worldwide. Ultimately, the project reaffirms that disarmament and arms control are crucial tools for safeguarding fundamental human rights—reducing violence, preventing abuse, and fostering peace and equality. However, greater articulation of the project's broader contribution to cross-cutting issues beyond gender remains necessary to fully capture its impact on human rights. This should extend beyond capturing the project's contribution towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

7. Recommendations

The evaluator is aware that the project has already continued into a sixth phase, which largely mirrors continuation of this fifth phase of the project, which is subject to evaluation. Thus, the recommendations are more over-arching and relate to areas where the jurisdictions or other partners have expressed interest in support or assistance. A series of next steps is provided for the how the project can consider activating the recommendation.

Relevance and coherence: Recommendation 1: Upscale support to Moldova and Ukraine and ensure continued close alignment with developing EU strategy and the Acquis.

Based on findings 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9 and conclusions 1, 2 and 3

The project should upscale support to Moldova and Ukraine by strengthening technical assistance, policy development, and capacity-building efforts tailored to their specific contexts. It is vital to ensure that these initiatives, and any future projects, remain closely aligned with the evolving EU strategy and the acquis, fostering harmonisation and regional integration. Continued support should also underpin upcoming EU initiatives, such as the forthcoming EU Action Plan on Firearms Trafficking (2026-2030), to reinforce cross-border cooperation and effective implementation of controls. Prioritising sustained engagement with Moldova and Ukraine is especially crucial, given their strategic importance in controlling firearms flows. In Ukraine, in particular, support should aim to prevent firearms from being trafficked into Western Europe via the Western Balkans, thereby addressing broader regional security concerns and curbing illicit arms movements. Upscaling this comprehensive, coherent approach already initiated through this and predecessor projects will further strengthen regional stability and enhance the overall effectiveness of disarmament efforts.

Next steps:

- Based on the articulated needs and demands of the authorities in Moldova and Ukraine, identify efforts to upscale activities and support
- Ensure continued alignment with EU strategies and policies as they develop

Effectiveness and efficiency: Recommendation 2: Enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of

disarmament and firearms control efforts by strengthening the role of prosecutors at the regional level, expanding cross-border cooperation, and continuing to proactively address emerging threats through targeted capacity-building and knowledge-sharing initiatives.

Based on findings 2, 4, 5 and 9 and conclusions 1, 2 and 3

To ensure robust and accountable enforcement of firearms regulations, it is crucial to deepen the integration of prosecutors into SEEFEN, facilitating better data exchange and coordination between police and prosecution authorities at the regional level. While this is being tackled by SEESAC to some extent through the Roadmap and UNODC is taking the lead in supporting the judiciary and prosecutors at the level of the jurisdictions through dedicated projects funded through the Western Balkans MPTF, strengthening this chain of command and further strengthening regional cooperation will improve case handling, legal proceedings, and ultimately, the prosecution of illicit firearm-related activities. Additionally, based on the emerging results in this phase, supporting authorities to conduct more cross-border investigations and collaborative efforts can significantly disrupt transnational firearms trafficking networks, enhancing regional security.

The evolving landscape of firearms technology, including drones, convertible weapons, and 3D-printed (ghost) weapons, presents new challenges that demand specialised training and knowledge-sharing. The project should continue to the requests of the jurisdictions to provide targeted support based on learning from successful practices in other regions and through developing its own research and learning to support the authorities to stay ahead of these emerging threats and develop effective responses.

Next Steps:

- Develop and implement specialised training programmes for prosecutors on firearms-related crimes and data management.
- Strengthen channels for regular data exchange and information sharing between police and prosecution agencies within and across jurisdictions.
- Support the continuous capacity building of customs, border and criminal police and authorities to facilitate internal and cross-border detection of SALW trafficking
- Continue to support the capacity building of the authorities throughout the jurisdictions to counter new weapons technologies

Impact and sustainability: Recommendation 3: Strengthen the sustainability of disarmament and border control efforts by encouraging increased government cost-sharing and transitioning to a more self-reliant funding model, while maintaining dedicated resources to support regional cooperation and jurisdictional engagement.

Based on findings 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 and conclusions 1 and 2

To ensure long-term sustainability, it is essential to gradually shift more financial responsibility to the jurisdictions. While ownership and commitment is already high, and jurisdictions are in the nascent stages of committing their own funds to certain activities, this should be increased further, through a phased approach, going forward. However, until all jurisdictions are EU members, it will be important to have dedicated funding for regional cooperation through SEESAC, as a neutral partner.

To further reinforce sustainability, trainer of trainer programmes should be expanded through the customs, border and criminal police. The project should support the jurisdictions in contributing to wider capacity building efforts, such as by facilitating its trainers to apply to join the pool of

trainers being created by FRONTEX. Leveraging FRONTEX's expertise, including integrating trainers from Western Balkans into their pool, will not only elevate regional capacities but also ensure that border management practices adhere to European standards and best practices.

Increasing local ownership through government cost-sharing, alongside a strategic focus on regional training collaborations, will create a more sustainable and resilient framework for border management and disarmament efforts, ultimately contributing to enhanced security and stability across the region.

Next Steps:

- Develop a phased plan for increased government cost-sharing, including clear milestones and resource commitments.
- Initiate discussions with the jurisdictions to establish dedicated co-financing mechanisms for border security and disarmament initiatives.
- Coordinate with FRONTEX to expand ToT and training programmes for border control authorities in all jurisdictions, with SEESAC taking the lead in implementation.
- Facilitate the inclusion of Western Balkans trainers in FRONTEX's pool of certified trainers to build regional expertise.

Cross-cutting issues: Recommendation 4: Enhance the articulation of the broader contribution of the project to consideration of human rights issues in disarmament and SALW control activities. Facilitate inclusion of the project's gender trainers into other gender training programmes conducted by regional and global organisations, such as the Swedish Criminal Police.

Based on findings 1 and 11 and conclusion 5

To maximise the impact of the project and ensure its broader contribution to human rights considerations in disarmament and SALW control activities is fully recognised and articulated, it is essential to strengthen the communication and integration of these cross-cutting issues. This includes documenting and showcasing how the project advances human rights principles within its activities, thus reinforcing the linkage between disarmament efforts and the protection of fundamental rights. Additionally, facilitating the inclusion of the project's gender trainers in other regional and global gender training programmes—such as those organised by the Swedish Criminal Police—can help disseminate best practices, deepen advocacy for gender-sensitive approaches, and promote a more holistic, human rights-based framework in disarmament activities worldwide.

Incorporating these trainers into wider training networks will also foster greater peer learning, cross-regional collaboration, and consistency in integrating gender and human rights issues across jurisdictions. This approach will contribute to elevating the project's influence on regional and global policies, ensuring that human rights and gender equality remain central to disarmament and SALW control efforts at all levels.

Next Steps

- Promote awareness among project partners on the interlinkages of human rights considerations in disarmament activities.
- Include human rights considerations and interlinkages in project communication products
- Facilitate the inclusion of SEESAC's gender trainers in existing regional and global gender training initiatives, including those led by the Swedish Criminal Police and other organisations.

Communications and visibility: Recommendation 5: Enhance knowledge sharing within UNDP through virtual platforms and encourage project partners to communicate the role of the EU in the project further.

Based on findings 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 10 and conclusions 1 and 2

The project can consider streamlining communication and knowledge sharing within UNDP through the creation of a virtual platform, such as on Teams, that all included all project related information, include invitations, emails, updates etc. This would be accessible to all UNDP offices serving as a centralised, easily-accessible repository for resources and updates related to the project.

While the project consistently highlights the vital role of the EU in supporting disarmament and SALW control initiatives through this project, this acknowledgment is not always evident in partner communications across the region. To strengthen the visibility of EU's contribution, the project should actively encourage authorities and partners to explicitly reference the EU as a key supporter in their public communications, reports, and outreach efforts. Making the EU's support more visible will not only enhance the standing of the project but also reinforce the importance of regional and international cooperation in achieving sustainable disarmament and security objectives.

Next Steps:

- Establish a dedicated UNDP virtual platform (e.g., Microsoft Teams, SharePoint) serving as a comprehensive digital library and communication hub for all project-related materials and updates.
- Regularly update and maintain the virtual space with relevant resources, event information, and project reports.
- Encourage the jurisdictions to emphasize the importance of reflecting the EU's role in their communication and outreach efforts.

8. Lessons Learned

Lesson learned 1: Jurisdictions and Institutions as Partners, Not Beneficiaries

A key lesson learned is that framing jurisdictions and institutions as active partners rather than mere beneficiaries enhances engagement, ownership, and sustainability of project outcomes. This has driven meaningful participation in the project together with a strong commitment to on-going efforts, leading to a stronger sense of shared responsibility and long-term impact. This approach has fostered mutual trust and ensured that the project was needs based and demand driven, thereby contributing towards its effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

Lesson learned 2: Regional Level: Common Problems and Common Solutions

A crucial insight from the regional approach of the project is through its recognition that many challenges faced across jurisdictions are shared, allowing for the development of common solutions. Addressing these issues collectively fostered regional cohesion, reduced duplication of efforts, and promoted best practice sharing and peer-to-peer learning. This collaborative approach not only streamlined resources but also strengthened regional cooperation, providing a more unified front in tackling transnational problems such as illicit SALW trafficking.

Lesson learned 3: Long-term Approach

The project exemplifies what can be achieved through adopting a long-term approach, across all relevant stakeholders – the partners, the EU as the donor and UNDP/SEESAC. Implementing a long-term strategic approach has proven vital for sustainable results. Continuous engagement, capacity building, and institutional development over extended periods has built institutional resilience and embed practices into jurisdictional and regional frameworks. Long-term planning enabled the project to adapt to evolving challenges and demonstrate more tangible, lasting changes rather than short-lived interventions.

Lesson learned 4: Interlinking of Projects – Holistic and Portfolio Approach

SEESAC’s method of adopting a holistic, portfolio approach by interlinking various projects has demonstrated that integrated efforts create synergistic effects. This coordination ensures comprehensive coverage of disarmament issues, leverages resources efficiently, and guides phased progress across different sectors. Such interconnected initiatives foster a more cohesive strategy, enhancing overall impact and sustainability.

Lesson learned 5: Localisation to the Local Context

Tailoring interventions to the local context remains a critical lesson, emphasizing that understanding local dynamics, culture, and specific needs leads to more effective and accepted solutions. Contextualised approaches foster greater ownership among local stakeholders and ensure that initiatives are relevant, culturally sensitive, and sustainable over time.

Lesson learned 6: Managing Sensitivities with Neutrality and Ownership

By focusing on shared interests and fostering high levels of ownership, the project has been able to navigate this highly sensitive sector in a sensitive region. Through the use of individual names and capital city locations, the project ensured the participation of all jurisdictions in the region. The participation guidelines developed are now being adopted for other regional initiatives, reflecting the importance of managing sensitivities through respectful engagement and inclusive practices.

Lesson learned 7: Coordination and Structured Approach Based on Priorities

A well-structured coordination mechanism grounded in clearly defined priorities has been key to garnering buy-in from stakeholders and delivering results. This approach ensures that efforts remain focused, resources are allocated efficiently, and progress can be measured against strategic objectives, ultimately leading to more effective implementation and tangible outcomes.

Lesson learned 8: Evidence-Based Knowledge and Policy Making

Using an evidence-based, intelligence-led approach to SALW control has heightened the quality of knowledge and decision-making within the project. This method enhances the credibility of policies, makes implementation more tangible, and encourages decision-makers to act with greater confidence. It also fosters a culture of continuous improvement driven by reliable data and rigorous analysis.

Lesson learned 9: Training of Trainers (ToT) as a Sustainability Catalyst

The implementation of ToT programmes has demonstrated its potential to ensure sustainability by building a core cadre of trainers who can cascade knowledge within their jurisdictions. This approach expands training reach, fosters capacity building, and supports ongoing learning, thereby increasing the likelihood of sustained progress and the expansion of good practices beyond the project’s formal timeline.

Lesson learned 10: A Flexible Project Structure Enables Adaptation and Resilience

One of the key lessons learned is that maintaining a flexible project structure is essential for navigating unforeseen challenges and emerging needs. This flexibility has allowed the project to adapt effectively to significant disruptions such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing War in Ukraine. By being agile and responsive, the project was able to pivot strategies, reallocating resources and adjusting timelines to address new priorities, ensure continuity, and maximise impact despite unpredictable circumstances. This lesson underscores the importance of building adaptability into project design to enhance resilience and sustain progress in dynamic operational environments.

ANNEX I – Key Evaluation Criteria and Questions as per the Terms of Reference

The evaluation was guided by the following questions to determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, including lessons learned and forward-looking recommendations. The guiding questions for the final project evaluation, as per the ToR, are summarised below. The overarching question for the overall project action is: *What is the impact of this project? How does it contribute to the implementation of the relevant regional frameworks (such as the SALW Control Roadmap).*

Relevance

- To what extent the project efforts towards meeting the project objectives have been relevant to the specific needs/priorities of the authorities in the SEE (such as the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap)?
- Have the authorities in eight jurisdictions steered the project design and implementation? If yes, how? If no, why not?
- Have all relevant risks been considered when designing the project, and have the risks been regularly monitored and updated to respond to any changes in the environment in which the regional project have been implemented? Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how? To what extent were human rights, gender equality and social inclusion mainstreamed within the Project?

Coherence

- To what extent has the regional project been successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other relevant interventions of relevant institutions in eight jurisdictions in SEE, as well as interventions supported by other donors, avoiding duplication of efforts and adding value?
- Have the lessons learnt from previous projects been successfully implemented in the current regional project to maximize the coherence of action?

Effectiveness

- Has the project results framework been well-defined, gender responsive and effective in measuring the achievement of the project objectives and results?
- To what extent have the project intended objectives and results been achieved? What are the main project accomplishments?
- To what extent were the regional project management arrangements effective and appropriate for meeting the project objectives?
- Have there been any delays in the project implementation, what have been the causes, and have they been resolved? Were adequate steps taken by the project to adjust its implementation strategy to the new circumstances and needs? What lessons have been learnt from changes to the originally planned activities?
- Is the quality of achieved outputs satisfactory? To what extent are key stakeholders/ project partners satisfied with the project implementation and the outputs delivered? What are some of the specific challenges that were addressed and the challenges that remained relevant?
- To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented? Is the Project meaningfully focusing on gender equality and ensuring no one is left behind?

Efficiency

- Have the requested and provided funds been adequate to meet the needs identified by the project partners?
- Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results?
- Is the relationship between project inputs and results achieved appropriate and justifiable?
- Have there been any weaknesses in project design, management, human resource skills, and resources?
- To what extent has the project effectively managed risks and implemented robust monitoring and evaluation systems to inform decision-making and improve performance?

Impact

- Has the project, through the achievements/outcomes been impactful in supporting the jurisdictions in the implementation of the national, international and regional instruments for reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition?
- What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the jurisdiction and regional levels?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions?
- Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?

Sustainability

- To what extent are the achieved outputs and outcomes sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project?
- To what extent have the project partners and key stakeholders taken an active role and ownership in implementing the project?
- To what extent have the capacities of institutions in jurisdictions been strengthened to sustain the results of the project?
- Have the UNDP established new partnerships, or consolidated critical ones as a result of the regional project?
- What are the elements that do and do not deliver sustainable results of the project activities?
- What are the innovations/ best practices that deserve to be further built upon?
- Have lessons learned been documented by the project regularly? Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide another similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the SEE? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners?

Cross-cutting Issues

- To what extent have gender equality, the empowerment of women and disability inclusion been addressed in the design and implementation of activities?
- Were results in the areas of gender equality, women's rights and disability inclusion achieved? Has the project monitoring data been disaggregated by sex, age and disability?
- How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination?
- How has the project contributed to a broader culture of learning and expertise exchange within the region?

- How successful has the project been in incorporating/testing innovative approaches that address cross-country barriers?
- How effective has the project been in facilitating intercountry collaboration to manage these cross-border challenges?

Communications and Visibility

- Did the project have a proper external communications strategy and action plan? Was the individual contributors' visibility adequately ensured?
- Has the internal communication with partners and key stakeholders been regular and effective?
- Have the project partners and key stakeholders been made aware of the project results? If not, what could have been improved?
- Did the project partners demonstrate ownership of the project's results through the communication of project activities through their own channels?

The following additional questions should guide *the overall regional impact* of the project:

- How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination?
- Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how?
- Have the UNDP established new partnerships, or consolidated critical ones as a result of the regional project?
- To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented?
- Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide another similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the SEE? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners?
- Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
<p>Relevance: What is the extent to which the project strategy, proposed activities and expected outputs and outcomes are justified and remain relevant to beneficiaries' assessed needs, the country's/ regional policies, and</p>	<p>* To what extent the project efforts towards meeting the project objectives have been relevant to the specific needs/priorities of the authorities in the SEE (such as the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap)? *Have the authorities in eight jurisdictions steered the project design and implementation? If yes, how? If no, why not? *Have all relevant risks been considered when designing the project, and have the risks been</p>	<p>* Were any stakeholder inputs/concerns addressed at the project formulation stage? *How does the project address disarmament and arms control needs of intended beneficiaries? *What analysis, in particular the GESI/HRBA context and its political economy was done in designing the project⁴⁰? *Was the project able to adapt to evolving needs/changing context? *To what extent did it use adaptive</p>	<p>Relevant EU Council Decisions and Final reports on the implementation of EU Council Decisions EU Strategy Against Illicit Firearms, Small Arms & Light Weapons & Their Ammunition - Council Conclusions (19 November 2018) EU Action Plan on firearms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	<p>Needs assessments conducted by UNDP at project design stage. Context and stakeholder analysis conducted at project design stage and updated throughout the project cycle. Participation of population-level stakeholders, including the most vulnerable, in needs assessments. National and regional development priorities incorporated into project strategic planning.</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Political economy analysis *Contribution analysis *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the evaluator and the project team</p>

⁴⁰ “Gender analysis should be applied at all levels, including planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation”; 1997 ECOSOC Resolution on gender mainstreaming.

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
donor's priorities.	regularly monitored and updated to respond to any changes in the environment in which the regional project have been implemented? Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how? To what extent were human rights, gender equality and social inclusion mainstreamed within the Project?	management to maintain its relevance? *What project revisions were made – if any - and why? *Was a stakeholder analysis conducted as part of the project development phase? *What is the level of acceptance for and support to the Project by relevant stakeholders?	trafficking 2020-2025 UN Programme of Action UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security The Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Roadmap Action Plans and SALW Strategies Roadmap Regional Progress Reports (KPIs and Narrative Reports) Midterm review of Roadmap implementation		Partner priorities incorporated into project strategic plans.	*Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC; *Comment and feedback to evaluator

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/ Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
			SALW Surveys Project Document Project Progress Reports Project Monitoring Framework			
Coherence: To what extent is the project intervention in coherence with National or Regional & EU policies and UNDP priorities, and to what extent the intervention was	*To what extent has the regional project been successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other relevant interventions of eight jurisdictions in SEE, as well as interventions supported by other donors, avoiding duplication of efforts and adding value? *Have the lessons learnt from previous projects	*To what extent were opportunities for synergies and complementarities explored and leveraged? *To what extent are there synergies and interlinkages between the intervention and other interventions carried out by UNDP? *Was there any overlap and duplication with other initiatives? *To what extent was there coordination and	As above	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Focus group discussions • Email, phone and 	Evidence of strategic planning processes actively seeking coherence and synergies Evidence that duplication of programming has been reduced through coordination SEESAC/partner satisfaction levels with partnerships (in UN programming and external partners/processes) Results through partnerships that the project could not have	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Political economy analysis *Contribution analysis *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/ Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
consistent with other actors' interventions in the same context	been successfully implemented in the current regional project to maximize the coherence of action?	communication with other actors in the field? *What is the extent of UN and other actors coordination with regards to the WPS Agenda and UNSCR 1325 and the YPS Agenda?		online follow-up where necessary	achieved/expect to achieve on its own Evidence of timely and appropriate addition of new partners as needed	evaluator and the project team *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC comment and feedback to evaluator
Effectiveness: To what extent were the project's expected outputs and outcomes achieved or are expected to be achieved. (Factors contributing	*Has the project results framework been well-defined, gender responsive and effective in measuring the achievement of the project objectives and results? *To what extent have the project intended objectives and results been achieved? What are	*What are the key internal and external factors (success & failure factors) that have contributed, affected, or impeded the achievements, and how did UNDP and the partners manage these factors? *How effective were the strategies used in the implementation of the	* Project Document (DoA) * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project Monitoring Framework *Other relevant reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Email, phone and 	Evidence the project has strengthened capacities to design and implement evidence-based SALW control policies and standardisation of approaches Evidence of information exchange and sharing of good practice Evidence of increased capacity for data collection	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Political economy analysis *Contribution analysis

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
to or detracting from the achievement of the project's desired results and objectives will also be included in the assessment.)	<p>the main project accomplishments?</p> <p>*To what extent were the regional project management arrangements effective and appropriate for meeting the project objectives?</p> <p>*Have there been any delays in the project implementation, what have been the causes, and have they been resolved? Were adequate steps taken by the project to adjust its implementation strategy to the new circumstances and needs? What lessons have been learnt from changes to the originally planned activities?</p>	<p>project, in particular with regards to the HRBA, GEWE?</p> <p>*To what extent have stakeholders been involved in project implementation?</p> <p>*In what ways did the Project come up with innovative measures for problem solving?</p> <p>*What good practices or successful experiences or transferable examples have been identified?</p> <p>*To what extent did the project substantively mainstream gender and support gender- and youth responsive disarmament and arms control, ensure disability inclusion and LNOB?</p>	<p>*Relevant partner reports</p>	<p>online follow-up where necessary</p>	<p>and analysis</p> <p>Evidence of harmonisation and standardisation of SALW legislative and regulatory frameworks</p> <p>Evidence of the consistent integration of gender perspectives into SALW control policies.</p> <p>Evidence of capacity building of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking</p> <p>Evidence of improved capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security</p>	<p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluator and the project team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC comment and feedback to evaluator</p>

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
	<p>*Is the quality of achieved outputs satisfactory? To what extent are key stakeholders/ project partners satisfied with the project implementation and the outputs delivered? What are some of the specific challenges that were addressed and the challenges that remained relevant?</p> <p>*To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented? Is the Project meaningfully</p>				upgrades, surplus reduction and training	

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
	focusing on gender equality and ensuring no one is left behind?					
Efficiency To what extent were the project resources (funds, expertise/human resources, time, etc.) optimally used and converted into intended outputs.	* Have the requested and provided funds been adequate to meet the needs identified by the project partners? *Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results? *Is the relationship between project inputs and results achieved appropriate and justifiable? *Have there been any weaknesses in project design, management,	*Have the implementation modalities been appropriate and cost-effective? *Was the project implemented within deadline and cost estimates? *Did UNDP solve any implementation issues promptly? *How often has the Project Board met? *Is the project fully staffed and are the staffing/management arrangements efficient? *Are procurements processed in a timely	* Project Document (DoA) * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project Monitoring Framework *Other relevant reports *Relevant partner reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review and desk research Independent external research and reports Key informant interviews Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	% of project total/annual funding requirements met % of financial resources via different sources % of project funds delivered on time Satisfaction levels among project implementers with flexibility and utility of different sources of funding	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Financial data analysis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Contribution analysis *Triangulation *Discussion of data amongst the evaluator and the project team *Verification of data with Stakeholders

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
	human resource skills, and resources? *To what extent has the project effectively managed risks and implemented robust monitoring and evaluation systems to inform decision-making and improve performance?	manner? Are the resources allocated sufficient/too much? *What were the reasons for over or under expenditure within the Project? *Was there good coordination and communication between partners in the project?				*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC, comment and feedback to evaluator
Sustainability – To what extent are the benefits of the project likely to continue after donor funding has been completed.	*To what extent are the achieved outputs and outcomes sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project? *To what extent have the project partners and key stakeholders taken an active role and ownership in implementing the project?	*To what extent are the project activities likely to be institutionalized and implemented by the relevant institutions after the completion of this project? *What are the key factors that will require attention to improve the prospects of sustainability of Project results?	* Project Document (DoA) * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project Monitoring Framework *Other relevant reports *Relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Document review and desk research Independent external research and reports Key informant interviews Email, phone and 	Alignment of project and implementation strategies with national/regional development plans and strategies Absorption into the national budgets of key project activities Level of ownership of project results	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Financial data analysis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Contribution analysis *Triangulation

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
	<p>*To what extent have the capacities of institutions in jurisdictions been strengthened to sustain the results of the project?</p> <p>*What are the elements that do and do not deliver sustainable results of the project activities?</p> <p>*What are the innovations/ best practices that deserve to be further built upon?</p> <p>*Have lessons learned been documented by the project regularly?</p>	<p>*To what extent do stakeholders support the project's long-term objectives?</p> <p>*Is there an exit strategy for the Project? Does it take into account political, financial, technical and environmental factors?</p> <p>*What is the level of national and local ownership of the project activities?</p> <p>* To what extent has the project created a shift in attitudinal and cultural behaviour towards disarmament and arms control?</p> <p>*Does the project provide for the handover of any activities?</p>	<p>partner reports</p>	<p>online follow-up where necessary</p>	<p>Evidence UNDP supports policies of governmental institutions and strategies for long-term development approaches</p>	<p>*Discussion of data amongst the evaluator and the project team</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC, comment and feedback to evaluator</p>

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
		*What are the perceived capacities of the relevant institutions for taking the initiatives forward?				
Impact What is the extent to which the intervention has generated or is expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended, higher-level effects	*Has the project, through the achievements/outcomes been effective in supporting the jurisdictions in the implementation of the national, international and regional instruments for reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition? *What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the jurisdiction and regional levels? *What are the positive or negative, intended or	*How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination? *Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how? *Have UNDP established new partnerships, or consolidated critical	* Project Document (DoA) * Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual *Project Monitoring Framework *Other relevant reports *Relevant partner reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	Evidence that the project has supported jurisdiction to implement relevant instruments to reduce the threat of illicit SALW Evidence the project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SAWL control Evidence the project has contributed towards achievement of the SDGs Evidence of new or consolidated partnerships Evidence that UNDP is a critical actor in SSR in SEE	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Contribution analysis *Triangulation *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
	<p>unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions? *Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?</p>	<p>ones as a result of the regional project? *To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented? *Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide another similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the SEE? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners? *Are there any spill-over effects that could be</p>			<p>Evidence the project has generated interest beyond SSE</p>	

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
		attributed to this project?				
Communications & Visibility	<p>*Did the project have a proper external communications strategy and action plan? Was the individual contributors' visibility adequately ensured?</p> <p>*Has the internal communication with partners and key stakeholders been regular and effective? Have project partners/donors been regularly updated about the project activities?</p> <p>*Have the project partners and key stakeholders been aware of the project results? If not, what could have been improved?</p>	<p>*To what extent did communications target women, PWDs and other vulnerable groups?</p> <p>*Were any innovative communication mechanisms used – how effective were these?</p> <p>*How is the project tracking and monitoring its audience for its communication products? Are different strategies adopted for different groups?</p>	<p>* Project Document (DoA)</p> <p>* Project Progress Reports – quarterly and annual</p> <p>*Communications Strategy and Action Plan</p> <p>*Media campaigns</p> <p>*Knowledge products</p> <p>*Other relevant reports</p> <p>*Relevant partner reports</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	<p>Evidence of an external Communications Strategy & Action Plan</p> <p>Evidence of effective international communication mechanisms</p> <p>Evidence partners are communicating results through their own channels</p>	<p>*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation</p> <p>*Data synthesis</p> <p>*Descriptive statistical analysis</p> <p>*Contribution analysis</p> <p>*Triangulation</p> <p>*Verification of data with Stakeholders</p> <p>*Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC</p>

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/ Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	*Did the project partners demonstrate ownership of the project's results through the communication of project activities through their own channels?					
Gender equality & women's empowerment, disability inclusion, LNOB and the realisation of Human Rights	*To what extent have gender equality, the empowerment of women and disability inclusion been addressed in the design and implementation of activities? *Were results in the areas of gender equality, women's rights and disability inclusion achieved? Has the project monitoring data been disaggregated by sex, age and disability?	*What barriers did women face? What are the recommendations for better inclusion of women in future similar interventions? *Is the gender marker assigned to this project accurate? *Was a twin-track approach adopted, combining targeted interventions for people with disabilities with mainstreaming disability inclusion across all project activities? *How did the PBF	* Project Document * Project Progress Reports *Project Monitoring Framework *Other relevant reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document review and desk research • Independent external research and reports • Key informant interviews • Email, phone and online follow-up where necessary 	Evidence of GEWE/LNOB/HR mainstreaming into project design and implementation Evidence of disaggregated data being collected by the project Evidence of strategies to reach those further left behind	*Qualitative and quantitative data analysis and disaggregation *Data synthesis *Descriptive statistical analysis *Contribution analysis *Triangulation *Verification of data with Stakeholders *Fact checking by UNDP SEESAC

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ	Key Questions	Specific Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Data collection Methods/ Tools	Indicators/ Success Standard	Methods for Data Analysis
	<p>*How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination?</p> <p>*How has the project contributed to a broader culture of learning and expertise exchange within the region?</p> <p>*How successful has the project been in incorporating/testing innovative approaches that address cross-country barriers?</p> <p>*How effective has the project been in facilitating intercountry</p>	<p>project ensure that persons with disabilities were included in project activities?</p> <p>*How were vulnerable groups involved in the project? Have any vulnerable groups been inadvertently excluded of the opportunity to benefit from project activities (during online or offline work)?</p>				

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Relevant Evaluation criteria and KEQ •	Key Questions •	Specific Sub-Questions •	Data Sources •	Data collection Methods/ Tools •	Indicators/ Success Standard •	Methods for Data Analysis •
	collaboration to manage these cross-border challenges?					

ANNEX III - INFORMED CONSENT PROTOCOL AND DATA COLLECTION TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

3.1 Informed Consent Protocol

Date: _____ Time: Start _____ End _____
Name: _____ Position: _____
Location: _____ Male ___ Female _____

Confidentiality and Informed Consent Statements: Thank you for taking the time to meet with us. My name is Joanna Brooks and I am conducting an independent final evaluation of the **Disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition project**. I have been hired by UNDP for this assignment but I am not an employee of UNDP and am independent from UNDP, SEESAC and the project. All information shared will be kept confidential and anonymous. I will aggregate and present findings from interviews in a way that cannot be tied back to any individual or organization. Therefore, please feel free to speak openly and candidly with me.

Your participation is voluntary. Please feel free to ask to skip any question that you do not feel comfortable answering or ending the interview at any point. In terms of use, I will produce a draft evaluation report following the data collection, which will be shared with UNDP and other stakeholders for their comments. I will then revise and finalise the draft based on the comments received. UNDP will be responsible for the circulation of the report.

Thank you again for your willingness to participate in this interview. Do you have any questions before we get started?

3.2 Key Informant Interview Guides

KIIs Guide for SEESAC Project Staff

Introduction

- Please describe your role in the project and for how long you have been involved.

Relevance

- How relevant is the project to UNDP, to the EU, to its partners and stakeholders and to the ultimate beneficiaries in the region?
- How did the project come about and what was the design process (assessments and analyses undertaken, engagement with stakeholders and beneficiaries, development of DoA etc.)
- To what extent the project efforts towards meeting the project objectives have been relevant to the specific needs/priorities of the authorities in the SEE (such as the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap)?
- Have the authorities in eight jurisdictions steered the project design and implementation? If yes, how? If no, why not?

- Have all relevant risks been considered when designing the project, and have the risks been regularly monitored and updated to respond to any changes in the environment in which the regional project have been implemented? Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how? To what extent were human rights, gender equality and social inclusion mainstreamed within the Project?

Coherence

- To what extent has the regional project been successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other relevant interventions of relevant institutions in eight jurisdictions in SEE, as well as interventions supported by other donors, avoiding duplication of efforts and adding value?
- Have the lessons learnt from previous projects been successfully implemented in the current regional project to maximize the coherence of action?

Effectiveness

- Has the project results framework been well-defined, gender responsive and effective in measuring the achievement of the project objectives and results?
- To what extent have the project activities been implemented, and have the intended objectives and results been achieved? What are the main project accomplishments?
- Have there been any delays in the project implementation, what have been the causes, and have they been resolved? Were adequate steps taken by the project to adjust its implementation strategy to the new circumstances and needs? What lessons have been learnt from changes to the originally planned activities?
- Is the quality of achieved outputs satisfactory? What are some of the specific challenges that were addressed and the challenges that remained relevant?
- To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented? Is the Project meaningfully focusing on gender equality and ensuring no one is left behind?

Efficiency

- Have the requested and provided funds been adequate to meet the needs identified by the project partners?
- Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results?
- Is the relationship between project inputs and results achieved appropriate and justifiable?
- Have there been any weaknesses in project design, management, human resource skills, and resources?
- To what extent has the project effectively managed risks and implemented robust monitoring and evaluation systems to inform decision-making and improve performance?

Impact

- Has the project, through the achievements/outcomes been effective in supporting the jurisdictions in the implementation of the national, international and regional instruments for reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition?

- What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the jurisdiction and regional levels?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions?
- Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?

Sustainability

- To what extent are the achieved outputs and outcomes sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project?
- To what extent have the project partners and key stakeholders taken an active role and ownership in implementing the project?
- To what extent have the capacities of institutions in jurisdictions been strengthened to sustain the results of the project?
- What are the elements that do and do not deliver sustainable results of the project activities?
- What are the innovations/ best practices that deserve to be further built upon?
- Have lessons learned been documented by the project regularly?

Communications and Visibility

- Did the project have a proper external communications strategy and action plan? Was the individual contributors' visibility adequately ensured?
- Has the internal communication with partners and key stakeholders been regular and effective? Have project partners/donors been regularly updated about the project activities?
- Have the project partners and key stakeholders been aware of the project results? If not, what could have been improved?
- Did the project partners demonstrate ownership of the project's results through the communication of project activities through their own channels?

Overall regional impact of the project

- How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination?
- Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how?
- Have the UNDP established new partnerships, or consolidated critical ones as a result of the regional project?
- To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented?
- Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide another similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the SEE? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners?
- Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?

Gender equality and women's empowerment, disability inclusion, LNOB and the realisation of Human Rights

- To what extent have gender equality, the empowerment of women and disability inclusion been addressed in the design and implementation of activities?
- Were results in the areas of gender equality, women's rights and disability inclusion achieved? Has the project monitoring data been disaggregated by sex, age and disability?
- How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination?
- How has the project contributed to a broader culture of learning and expertise exchange within the region?
- How successful has the project been in incorporating/testing innovative approaches that address cross-country barriers?
- How effective has the project been in facilitating intercountry collaboration to manage these cross-border challenges?

KIIs Guide for Representatives from SALW Commissions, Ministry of Interior and Border and Criminal Police

Introduction

- Please introduce yourself and your role and responsibility within the project. Which activities have you participated in?

Relevance:

- To what extent is the project in line with your priorities in terms of disarmament and arms control in your country/the region?
- What is the level of Government commitment to the project?
- How is the project aligned with and supports national and regional strategies/plans?
- Do you think the project was relevant to the needs & priorities of the target groups / beneficiaries?

Coherence:

- From your point of view, to what extent did the project complement interventions by different entities, especially other UN actors?
- Are you aware of any overlap or duplication with other initiatives?

Effectiveness:

- What have been the key achievements of the project and how were these achieved (methods, approaches etc.)
- What have been the main challenges and how were these overcome?
- What factors have contributed to achieving or not achieving intended project outputs and outcomes?
- What are the key lessons learned from the project and how can they be applied in future activities?

Efficiency:

- Was the project implemented on time – if not, why not?
- How would you assess UNDP's leadership of the project? Have there been any gaps or challenges? Would you change anything?

Impact:

- To what extent has the project been effective in supporting you (the jurisdictions) in the implementation of the national, international and regional instruments for reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition?
- What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the jurisdiction and regional levels?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions?
- To what extent has the programme delivered behavioural change and changes to social norms around illicit arms control? Do you see any changes in behaviour and understanding?

Sustainability:

- Will you continue with any of the project's results and activities after the end of the project (Peacebuilding Committees, Peacebuilding Plans, capacity building, other procedures, practices etc.)? If so, which ones and why? Are there any that you will not continue with? If so, which ones and why.
- To what extent will the government/ministry make financial and economic resources available to sustain the benefits achieved by the project?

Cross cutting themes:

- How did the project address gender considerations and were any efforts made to reach other vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities?

Do you have any comments, recommendation or inputs regarding the better implementation of the project activities?

Thank the participant.

KII Guide for Interview with the donor

Introduction

- Can you briefly describe your role within the EU and how long you have been engaged with the project.

Relevance and Coherence

- How relevant do you think the project is for a) the EU b) the jurisdictions in the region, c) the project's beneficiaries?
- To what extent were you involved in the design of the project? Were your views/inputs taken into account? Have they been since throughout the project implementation?
- How would you assess the level of internal coherence of the project, including UNDP's leadership role?
- Are you satisfied with the level of coherence and coordination of the project with other EU, UN and non-UN activities on SALW control and AVR in the region? Are there any gaps or areas, which could be strengthened?

Efficiency

- Do you receive narrative and financial reports in a timely manner? Are you satisfied with the quality and timeliness of these reports?

- Were there any issues related to efficiency in your cooperation with UNDP?
- Do you feel that the project offers value for money? Are its approaches and methods efficient? If not, why not?

Effectiveness

- How satisfied are you with the results achieved by the project to date?
- What have been the biggest achievements in the project and how were they achieved?
- What have been the biggest challenges in the project and how were they overcome?
- Could anything be strengthened?
- How did your internal reviews rate the project? Were any gaps identified?

Impact:

- To what extent has the project been effective in supporting the jurisdictions in the implementation of the national, international and regional instruments for reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition?
- What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions?
- To what extent has the programme delivered behavioural change and changes to social norms around illicit arms control? Do you see any changes in behaviour and understanding?

Sustainability

- What are the strategies for sustainability of the results of the project and how successful have these been? What level of national ownership for achieved results has been created? Are you confident that the project has a well-designed exit strategy?
- Where do you think gains made could be lost or stalled if the project is not able to continue its support?
- The EU is supporting a follow-on phase of this project – what led to that decision? Have any elements been changed and if so, why?

Cross cutting themes:

- How did the project address gender considerations and were any efforts made to reach other vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities?
- To what extent has the project promoted positive changes in gender equality, participation, and the empowerment of women? Were there any unintended effects?
- What are the recommendations for better inclusion of women and persons with disabilities in future similar interventions?
- How were vulnerable groups involved in the project? Have any vulnerable groups been inadvertently excluded of the opportunity to benefit from project activities (during online or offline work)?

Annex IV List of stakeholders met and their role in the evaluation

	NAME	INSTITUTION	FUNCTION	SEX
SALW Commissions				
1.	Predrag Savović	Ministry of Interior- Podgorica	President of the SALW Commission	M
2.	Ermin Pešto	Ministry of Security- Sarajevo	Assistant Minister, Head of SALW Commission	M
3.	Besfort Lamallari	Ministry of Interior/Chair of SALW Commission- Tirana	Deputy Minister, Head of SALW Commission	M
4.	Vlad Negura	Ministry of Internal Affairs – Chisinau	Head of the International Relations and European Affairs Directorate	M
5.	Marija Topalovska,	Ministry of Internal Affairs - Skopje	Chief Advisor for Legal and Normative Affairs, Sector for Legal Affairs, Department for Legal Affairs and Human Resources Management	W
Criminal Police				
6.	Stefan Milijanovic	Ministry of Interior - Belgrade	Assistant Head of Criminal Police Directorate	M
7.	Marijana Palvovic	Ministry of Interior - Belgrade	Chief Coordinator in Criminal Police Directorate	W
8.	Aleksandar Markovic	Ministry of Interior- Podgorica	Senior Police Sergeant I grade, Police Directorate, Sector for combating against crime	M
9	Ymer Ymeri	Ministry of Internal Affairs - Pristina	Chief of Organized Crime Unit	M

10	Schaip Nura	Ministry of Internal Affairs - Pristina	Head of Firearms Focal Point and Directorate of International Police Cooperation	M
11	Lindita Nushi	Ministry of Interior - Tirana	The Head of Firearms Focal Point/Firearms Trafficking Investigation Specialist	W
12	Dragan Vukadin	Ministry of Security - Sarajevo	Chief Inspector, Head of Sector for Operational Support, State Investigation and Protection Agency	M
13	Dejan Mitric	Ministry of Interior – Republika Srpska	Member of the SALW Coordination Board	M
14	Bojan Turanjanin	Border Police of BiH	Inspector for Data processing and Analysis	M
Border Police				
15	Slavko Vojinovic	Ministry of Interior- Podgorica	Head of Department of Border Control	M
16	Goran Markovic	Ministry of Interior - Belgrade	Head of Department	M
PSSM				
17	Jelena Lakicevic	Ministry of Interior - Belgrade	Head of SALW Registry Department, Common Affairs Directorate, Police Directorate, Ministry of Interior	W
External Partners and Donor				
18	Tomislav Curic	Delegation of the European Union to BiH & European Union Special Representative in BiH	Rule of Law Adviser	M
19	Marcello Repici	EU Delegation – Podgorica	Task Manager	M
20	Shenasi Iseni	Regional Cooperation Council	Senior Political Advisor	M

21	Martin van der Meij	Previously EUROPOL, now SEESAC	SALW Control Expert	M
22	Adam Piotrowski	Coast Guard and Law, Enforcement Unit, Operational Response Division	SNE Operational Officer, Law Enforcement Sector	M
23	Ida Scarpino	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD)	Political Affairs Officer	W
24	Katja Boettcher	United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean	Political Affairs Officer and Deputy Director	W
25	Slobodan Boskovic	OSCE	Project Officer	M
26	Nils Duquet	Flemish Peace Institute	Researcher	M
27	Karin Antonsson	Swedish Criminal Police	Inspector, Swedish police	W
28	Daniel Friedman	NYU Centre on International Cooperation (CIC)	Program Director, Halving Global Violence, Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies	M
29	Natalie Briggs	CIC and GENSAC	Network Coordinator, GENSAC	W
30	Ervin Muco	Head of the Municipality/Coordinator of Local Safety Council	Municipality of Elbasan, Albania	M
UNDP/SEESAC				
31	Randi Davis	UNDP Albania	Resident Representative	W
32	Ekaterina Paniklova	UNDP Montenegro	Resident Representative	W

33	Steliana Nedera	Istanbul Regional Hub (IRH)	IRH Manager	W
34	Nuno Queiros	UNDP Kosovo	RR Kosovo	W
35	Olena Ursu	CO Ukraine	Programme Specialist, Democratic Governance	W
36	Hana Salama	United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)	Researcher, Gender and Disarmament programme	W
37	Bojana Balon	SEESAC	Head of SEESAC	W
38	Juliana Buzi	SEESAC	Regional Cooperation Specialist	W
39	Jelena Bujakovic	SEESAC	SALW Project Coordinator	W
40	Alain Lapon	SEESAC	Chief Technical Adviser	M
41	Jelena Dinov Stefanovic	SEESAC	Operations Manager	W
42	Danijela Djurovic	SEESAC	Project Analyst	W
43	Jelena McCoy	SEESAC	MPTF Coordinator	W
44	Dragan Bozanic	SEESAC	Gender and research project analyst	M
45	Edin Serezlic	SEESAC	SALW Control Specialist	M

Annex V Results framework show progress made towards results

COMPONENT 1: Facilitation of regional cooperation and support for evidence-based policy-making on SALW control, thus further contributing to the reduction of the threat of illicit proliferation of SALW			
Specific objective	Description of activities	Project results/implementation indicators	Overall progress towards results/Progress towards results achieved
To strengthen regional cooperation, knowledge exchange and information-sharing on arms control;	Regional meetings of SALW Commissions (twice per year) in SEE focusing on information exchange and knowledge-sharing on, and standardisation of, arms control policies;	Organization of up to eight regional meetings of SALW Commissions; Enabling information exchange, knowledge transfer and standardisation of approaches;	Eight (8) regional meetings of SALW Commissions contributing to information exchange on knowledge sharing on current and planned activities on arms control. Achieved
	Regional meetings of SEEFEN (twice per year) focusing on operational information exchange and cross-border cooperation in fighting illicit trafficking of firearms;	Organization of up to eight regional meetings of SEEFEN (twice yearly) focusing on networking and information exchange between law enforcement firearms experts; Enabling information exchange, knowledge transfer and standardisation of approaches;	Nine (9) regional meetings of SEEFEN focusing on networking and information exchange between law enforcement firearms experts, knowledge transfer and standardisation of approaches. Achieved
	Provision of on-demand technical advice and expertise to SALW Commissions and SEEFEN in order to enhance policy development, design, adoption and implementation;	Enhancing capacities of SALW Commissions and SEEFEN members through targeted training sessions and the provision of technical and advisory support;	Technical and advisory support was provided to the SALW Commissions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia and Albania in their respective processes of developing new SALW Strategies and/or Action Plans; The capacities of SALW Commission members and SEEFEN members (41) have been strengthened through the provision of English language courses

			(North Macedonia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, and Albania) and the organization of operational coordination meetings (North Macedonia and Kosovo). Achieved
On-demand support for harmonisation of arms control legislation for relevant amendments regarding EU legislation on arms control and standardisation throughout the SEE region (2022-2023);	Organization of up to ten thematic workshops for the beneficiaries supporting harmonisation of legislation with the EU Acquis and standardisation within the SEE region;		Ten (10) workshops supporting harmonization of legislation with the EU Acquis were organized in five jurisdictions (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia and Serbia). Achieved
	Provision of expertise on legislative and policy updates with the aim of harmonisation with the EU regulatory framework and standards;		In Albania, a gap analysis and a table of concordance were completed for the draft Law on Weapons, advancing its alignment with EU regulatory framework. SEESAC provided also inputs to the Ukraine’s draft Law on the Civilian Circulation of Firearms. Two (2) Workshops were held to support harmonisation of legal framework in North Macedonia on 26 March 2021, Workshop to present findings of a gender analysis of arms control legislation and on 16–19 September 2024: Workshop in Struga to support the drafting and harmonization of the Law on Explosives for Civil Use. Two (2) Regional Workshops on Harmonization of Legislation in the Field of SALW and Explosives Control with the EU Acquis for the authorities coming from the Western Balkans, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine were organized in 2023 and 2024 in Brussels, Belgium.

			Achieved
Maintenance of the Armed Violence Monitoring Platform and regular dissemination of a SEE Armed Violence Monitor enabling capture of trends; Maintenance of the online information exchange platform and its enhancement through the development of policy-relevant on-demand knowledge products.	Publication of monthly monitors on armed violence trends throughout the SEE region;		Sixteen (16) monthly monitors on armed violence trends in the SEE published. Seventeen (17) Quarterly Regional Reports on armed violence trends in SEE published. Twenty (20) In-Focus Armed Violence Monitors, published. Four (4) Regional Arms Exports Reports (2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021) prepared and published. SEESAC's online information exchange platform updated regularly. Achieved
Support for SALW data collection and analysis based on recommendations of the regional SALW Surveys;	Ensuring data collection, analysis and dissemination from authorities based on SALW Survey recommendations; Further development of the weapons registry system in the Republic of Moldova;		Seven (7) Fast Facts on Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey published – providing snapshots of key data and trends from SALW Survey Reports. All equipment foreseen under Phase I for establishment of the Weapons Registry System in the Republic of Moldova delivered and handed over to the General Police Directorate. Achieved
Further integration of gender perspective in SALW control policy-making;	Integration of gender perspective in SALW policy-making;		Advanced Regional Gender and SALW Training for nineteen representatives of SALW commissions and gender equality agencies from the region in Herceg Novi from 16 to 17 October 2024. Support provided to SALW Coordination Board of Bosnia and Herzegovina in reviewing the draft Gender Action Plan. Achieved
Transferring of expertise to Belarus and Ukraine through facilitation of participation	Facilitating knowledge exchange and information-		Knowledge exchange and transfer of expertise with Ukraine has been facilitated through the participation of their representatives in the South

	in selected formal meetings and SALW control tools;	sharing with the authorities of Belarus and Ukraine;	East European Firearms Expert Network (SEEFEN), regional SALW Commissions meetings and Regional workshop on the Harmonization of Legislation Related to Arms Control. Achieved
COMPONENT 2: Support to capacity building of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms possession and trafficking			
Specific objective	Description of activities	Project results/implementation indicators	Overall progress towards results
To support capacity development of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking;	The provision of equipment and training for border management in countering illicit arms trafficking in support of border police authorities in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia, and the Republic of North Macedonia;	Development of up to six SOPs per border service;	Three (3) SOPs for countering illicit possession and trafficking of SALW were developed for the Albanian Border and Migration Police. Three (3) SOPs for Border Police Services of Montenegro were developed. Three (3) SOPs for Border Police Services of North Macedonia were developed. Three (3) SOPs for Border Police Services of Serbia were developed. Achieved
		Equipment for suppression of illicit arms trafficking procured, and training for usage of equipment provided;	Process for procuring equipment for Border Police Services of four (4) jurisdictions (Albania, North Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro) finalized and equipment delivered; Achieved
		Organisation of up to six thematic trainings per border services;	Seven (7) thematic trainings of trainers on firearms detection, risk analysis, emergency situation and investigations have been organized, for representatives of six jurisdictions (Albania, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia) in June, July and October 2023 and in December 2024. Achieved

The provision of equipment and training for criminal police in countering illicit arms trafficking in support of criminal police authorities in Albania, BiH, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and the Republic of North Macedonia;	Organisation of up to four regional workshops for border services;	Four (4) Regional Workshops of Border Services Officials held. Achieved
	Development of up to six SOPs per jurisdiction for criminal police;	Four (4) SOPs on the detection, risk analysis, FAE-related investigations, and emergency situations developed for the Criminal Police Services in Albania. Four (4) SOPs for the Criminal Police Services in Bosnia and Herzegovina were developed. Four (4) SOPs for the Criminal Police Services in Montenegro were developed. Four (4) SOPs for the Criminal Police Services in North Macedonia. Four (4) SOPs for the Criminal Police Services in Serbia were developed. Achieved
	Provision of equipment for criminal police, and training for the use of equipment;	The process of provision of equipment for the criminal police services finalized in six jurisdictions (Serbia, North Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania and Kosovo). Achieved
	Organisation of up to six thematic trainings for criminal police per jurisdiction	Six (6) thematic trainings for the Criminal Police Services in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, have been organized in 2023. Achieved
	Organisation of up to four regional workshops for criminal police;	Four (4) Regional Workshops of Criminal Police Representatives held. Achieved

COMPONENT 3: Improvement of capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction and training

Specific objective	Description of activities	Project results/implementation indicators	Overall progress towards results
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To improve capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction and training;	Support for enhanced security of police/authority of interior SALW storages and evidence rooms through infrastructure upgrades;	Security of one storage location enhanced in accordance with international standards and best practices;	Security of one storage location in the Republic of Moldova has been enhanced. Achieved
		Security of up to 18 evidence rooms increased;	Security of eighteen (18) evidence rooms (three (3) in Montenegro, three (3) in Kosovo, three (3) in Bosnia and Herzegovina, four (4) in Serbia, three (3) in North Macedonia) as well as two (2) evidence rooms in the Republic of Moldova has been increased. Achieved
	Support for destruction of surplus and/or confiscated SALW;	A total of up to 12,000 pieces of conventional weapons destroyed;	A total of 10,644 pieces of SALW, 4,998 parts and components of SALW and 50,000 cartridges were destroyed in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro and Kosovo. Achieved
		A total of up to 22 000 pieces of ammunition destroyed;	
	Provision of regional thematic workshops in the field of weapons and ammunition stockpile management; Strengthening the capacities of relevant state institutions to establish inspection systems;	Strengthening of capacities of relevant state institutions to establish inspection systems through the provision of up to three thematic workshops;	Three (3) regional workshops for the enhancement of conventional weapons and ammunition management were organized; The capacities of MOI of Serbia to establish inspection systems were strengthened through a series of trainings Achieved

Annex VI – List of Documents Reviewed

- [EU Council Decision 2024/3006](#)
- [EU Council Decision 2022/2321](#)
- [EU Council Decision 2019/2113, amending Decision 2016/2356](#)
- [EU Council Decision 2019/2111](#)
- [EU Council Decision 2018/1788](#)
- [EU Council Decision 2016/2356](#)
- [EU Council Decision 2013/730](#)
- Final reports on the implementation of EU Council Decisions
- [EU Strategy Against Illicit Firearms, Small Arms & Light Weapons & Their Ammunition - Council Conclusions \(19 November 2018\)](#)
- [EU Action Plan on firearms trafficking 2020-2025](#)
- [UN Programme of Action](#)
- [UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security](#)
- [The Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap](#)
- [Roadmap Action Plans](#) and SALW Strategies
- [Roadmap Regional Progress Reports](#) (KPIs and Narrative Reports)
- [Midterm review of Roadmap implementation](#)
- [SALW Surveys](#)
- Gap and capacities assessments conducted as part of the project (such as on legal harmonization framework, border, criminal police, customs services capacities on countering trafficking of firearms, FFPs, gender mainstreaming in legal and regulatory framework, PSSM, etc) endorsed by relevant authorities.
- [Reports on the gender analysis of small arms control legal and policy frameworks](#)
- [Policy-brief-Small-Arms-Control---The-Case-for-Gender-Mainstreaming.pdf \(seesac.org\)](#)
- EU Enlargement Package
- [SEESAC 2024 Year in Review](#)
- [The Berlin Process Summit on 14 October 2024, Berlin](#)
- [The EU - Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs](#)
- The [EU Western Balkans summit](#)
- [SEESAC at the Fourth Review Conference on the PoA hosting three side events 19-21 June in NY](#)
- [UN Secretary-General Report on Small Arms and Light Weapons \(SALW\) Highlights the Impact of Western Balkans Roadmap on Global SALW Control](#)
- [SEESAC Gender Strategy](#)
- [SEESAC Project Board Progress Report](#)
- [EUSAC VI Description of Action](#)
- [SEESAC MPTF Annual Reports for 2021, 2022, 2023](#)
- Any other relevant information available through other evaluations conducted within the context of the Roadmap implementation.
- Knowledge products developed under the project:
 - Knowledge product on the use of firearms in suicide incidents

- Study on Hand Grenades produced in the Western Balkans or originating from the Western Balkans and the Best Practice Manual
- Report on Arms Exports
- The Emergency Protocol for Safe Storage of Ammunition and Explosives (EP1)
- Emergency Protocol (EP2) on the safe transport of small quantities of surrendered or recovered ammunition and explosives for final destruction

Annex VII Terms of Reference (without Annexes)

I. Purpose

To engage Project Evaluation Expert to conduct the final evaluation of the regional project *South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition* ((CFSP) 2019/2111) (the regional Project).

II. Objective

The Consultant will be responsible for taking stock of implemented regional Project interventions in the period from 2020 to 2024, assessing their relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and overall impact. She/He will identify major achievements, their sustainability, and lessons learned and provide recommendations for the UNDP's future strategic approach and work in the field.

III. Background Information

The Southeastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) is a joint initiative of the UNDP and the Regional Cooperation Council. As such, it is an integral part of UNDP's work in the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region and has, since 2002, worked primarily to strengthen the capacities of national and regional stakeholders to control and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and thus contribute to enhanced stability, security and development in Southeastern and Eastern Europe. SEESAC also has a distinguished record of working closely with authorities to advance gender equality in the security sector.

Significant progress has been made in recent years in South-East Europe (SEE) regarding enhancing arms control and countering illicit arms trafficking. The SEE region, however, remains an area of concern and has been identified as a priority area in the 2018 EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms, and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition entitled 'Securing arms, protecting citizens' (the 'EU SALW Strategy'). Illicit firearms have a clear impact on internal and external security, by fuelling organized crime and terrorist acts in the SEE region and the EU. Therefore, establishing strong and efficient control mechanisms relating to arms transfers, use, possession, and stockpiling of arms constitutes a significant contribution to regional, European, and global peace and security.

To address the remaining challenges relating to SALW control, and to further support the authorities in addressing these challenges and reinforce the commitment to combatting illicit trafficking and misuse of SALW and firearms, a *Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024* (the 'Roadmap') was adopted at the Western Balkans Summit in London on 10 July 2018. The Roadmap has seven goals covering all functional areas of arms control and envisions the Western Balkans as a safer region, where comprehensive and sustainable mechanisms, fully harmonized with EU standards and other international standards, are in place to identify, prevent, prosecute, and control the illegal possession, misuse, and trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives. The Union adopted in 2018 a Council Decision in support of the coordination and monitoring of the Roadmap implementation ([Council Decision \(CFSP\) 2018/1788](#) followed by EU CD 2022/2321).

Following one of the key recommendations of the *Mid Term Review of the Roadmap*, the revision of the text of the Roadmap for implementation in the [period 2025-2030](#) was finalized following two rounds of

consultations during the Roadmap local coordination meetings as well as based on the written feedback by the donors and implementing partners. **The Roadmap 2025-2030** was then endorsed by the Western Balkans Ministers of Interior during the [EU - Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs](#) in Montenegro in October 2024.

SEESAC, as the executive arm of the *Regional Implementation Plan on Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons* (the 'Regional Implementation Plan'), supports the implementation of the Roadmap. Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 mandated SEESAC with the coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Roadmap. Coordination among institutions, international organisations, and donors under the Roadmap framework is mainly ensured through formal regional Roadmap coordination meetings focusing on taking stock of progress and information exchange, and through the provision of expert and technical support to local Roadmap coordination meetings. Monitoring of the implementation of the Roadmap is ensured through the development of biannual monitoring and evaluation reports documenting progress, challenges, and needs based on the commonly agreed Key Performance Indicators. In addition, SEESAC holds the secretariat role of the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) set up to support the implementation of the Roadmap. SEESAC is working closely with the European External Action Service (EEAS), the European Commission (DG HOME, DG NEAR), Europol, the European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (EMPACT), the EU Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), Interpol, NATO, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Global Firearms Programme and other relevant donors and international organisations that support disarmament and arms control activities in SEE.

About the project

SEESAC is currently implementing the [EU Council Decision 2019/2111](#)⁴¹ that envisages the provision of support to capacity building of the regional authorities to perform both preventive and repressive activities necessary to successfully identify, thwart, and counter the trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives from and through their jurisdiction. Project results directly contribute to the implementation of the *South East Europe Regional Implementation Plan Combatting the Proliferations and Impact of Small Arms and Light Weapons* and the *Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024*, as well as to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal 16 on peaceful and just societies, in particular targets 16.1 (Significantly reduce all forms of violence and death rate everywhere) and 16.4 (significantly reduce illicit arms flows).

The overall objective is to further contribute to improved security in the SEE region and the EU by combatting the threat posed by illicit SALW and their ammunition in and from SEE, Belarus, and Ukraine. Its implementation will deepen and complement the Union assistance on SALW control provided through recent Council Decisions 2010/179/CFSP⁴², 2013/730/CFSP⁴³, and (CFSP) 2016/2356⁴⁴ as well the Regional IPA funded project ***Support for Enhancing the Fight Against the Illegal Possession, Misuse***

⁴¹ This action builds upon the basis of the achievements under Council Decisions 2004/791/CFSP⁴¹, 2010/179/CFSP, 2013/730/CFSP, (CFSP) 2016/2356 and in complementarity with the Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788. It focuses on three main areas, maintaining the holistic approach to tackling the threat posed by SALW in the SEE region.

⁴² Council Decision 2010/179/CFSP of 11 March 2010 in support of SEESAC arms control activities in the Western Balkans, in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat the illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (OJ L 80, 26.3.2010, p. 48).

⁴³ Council Decision 2013/730/CFSP of 9 December 2013 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to Combat the Illicit Accumulation and Trafficking of SALW and their Ammunition (OJ L 332, 11.12.2013, p. 19).

⁴⁴ Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/2356 of 19 December 2016 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe in the framework of the EU Strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition (OJ L 348, 21.12.2016, p. 60).

*and Trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in the Western Balkans.*⁴⁵ It will also contribute to the achievement of the Regional Implementation Plan and Roadmap goals supported by Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/1788 and EU CD 2022/2321.

The action is contributing to strengthened regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and information-sharing on SALW control; further support to the development of a legislative and regulatory framework on SALW, firearms, and explosives, and its harmonization with the Union framework and standardization in SEE; continuous support to evidence-based policy-making on SALW control addressing the needs of both men and women; capacity building of border police and criminal police services of the Western Balkans to counter illicit trafficking and possession of firearms; improving physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction, and training; and building on the current work on the establishment of the Firearms Focal Points in SEE.

The action directly contributes to the implementation of the EU Security Strategy, the EU SALW Strategy, the EU Policy Cycle for organized and serious international crime (EMPACT Firearms), the Arms Trade Treaty, the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in SALW in All Its Aspects, the International Tracing Instrument, the UN Firearms Protocol, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, and the UN Disarmament Agenda, and specifically enhances regional cooperation in combating the threat posed by the spread of SALW and their ammunition. The project results also directly contribute to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda on peaceful and just societies, in particular targets 16.1 (significantly reduce all forms of violence and death rate everywhere) and 16.4 (significantly reduce illicit arms flows), and Goal 5 on gender equality. In addition, the project supports the implementation of the Commission’s Action Plan to target the illicit trafficking of firearms and explosives in the EU.

The project information is summarized in the table below:

Project title	<i>South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) disarmament and arms control activities in South East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition</i>	
Quantum project ID	00120071	
Corporate outcome and output	Regional Programme for Europe and the CIS (2018-2021): Outcome 3. Resilience Built to Respond to Systemic Uncertainty and Risk	
Countries and territories	Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo ⁴⁶ , Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine	
Region	South East Europe	
Date project document signed	04 February 2020	
Project dates	Start	Planned end
	1 February 2020	31 December 2024
Project budget	EUR 11,819,605.20 (US\$ 13,224,956.26)	

⁴⁵ https://www.seesac.org/News_1/SEESAC-Announces-a-New-Project-and-Continues-its-Decades-long-Work-/trees

⁴⁶ References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).

Project expenditure at the time of evaluation	[TBC]
Funding source	European Union (European External Action Service (EEAS)) US Department of State
Implementing party	UNDP IRH, through UNDP SEESAC, with the Ministries of Interior in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine

Project implementation approach

The project was established to act as a **regional cooperation facilitation mechanism** to enhance arms control and counter illicit arms trafficking through the development and implementation of evidence-based SALW control policies and standardization of approaches through regional cooperation. The project foresees **three main components**:

Component 1: Facilitation of regional cooperation and support for evidence-based policy-making on SALW control, thus further contributing to the reduction of the threat of illicit proliferation of SALW. This component aims at further contributing to strengthening capacities to design and implement evidence-based SALW control policies and standardization of approaches through regional cooperation at the strategic and operational levels. This is done through the facilitation of SALW Commissions meetings in SEE and the meetings of the South-East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN) that enable the information exchange and sharing of good practices contributing to the standardization of approaches in the region. Additionally, technical advice is provided to enhance policy development and implementation. In this context, support is provided for data collection and analysis, harmonization of SALW and explosive control legislative frameworks, and the consistent integration of gender perspective into SALW control policies.

Component 2: Further support to capacity building of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking. The component aims to strengthen the capacities of the authorities to perform both preventive and repressive activities necessary to identify and counter illicit possession and trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives from and through their jurisdictions. This is achieved through improved procedures, equipment, and training of the targeted law enforcement institutions.

Component 3: Improvement of capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction, and training. The component contributes to reducing the risk of proliferation through the enhancement of weapons and ammunition stockpile security, reducing surplus and confiscated stocks of SALW and ammunition, improving the physical security and stockpile management practices as well strengthening the inspection systems of law enforcement authorities in the region.

Management arrangements: The project is implemented by UNDP IRH, through UNDP SEESAC. It is managed by the SEESAC Project Manager, who acts as the regional project manager. UNDP Offices in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Moldova, North Macedonia, Serbia and Ukraine are regularly informed about the implementation of the project. UNDP SEESAC supports the overall coordination of the regional project based on continuous consultations with the project beneficiaries.

Main achievements

Component 1: Facilitation of regional cooperation and support for evidence-based policy-making on SALW control, thus further contributing to the reduction of the threat of illicit proliferation of SALW (is further contributing to strengthening capacities to design and implement evidence-based SALW control

policies and standardisation of approaches through regional cooperation at the strategic and operational levels. This is done through the facilitation of SALW Commissions meetings in SEE and the meetings of the South-East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN) that enable the information exchange and sharing of good practices contributing to the standardization of approaches in the region. Additionally, technical advice is provided to enhance policy development and implementation. In this context, support is provided for data collection and analysis, harmonisation of SALW and explosive control legislative frameworks, and the consistent integration of gender perspective into SALW control policies).

The project **strengthened regional cooperation, knowledge exchange, and information-sharing on SALW control** and further improved the development of a legislative and regulatory framework on SALW, firearms, and explosives. Representing the key regional platform for cooperation on a strategic level, eight (8) Regional Meetings of SALW Commissions⁴⁷ were organized from the start of the action on 1 February 2020 till the end of the project on 31 December 2024. SALW Commissions are **inter-ministerial bodies** established in each jurisdiction to plan, coordinate and monitor all arms control activities in each jurisdiction. The meetings gathered representatives from SALW Commissions and relevant institutions in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo*, Serbia and Ukraine facilitated regional cooperation and support for evidence-based policy-making in SALW control. The **10th anniversary** of the regional process of the SALW Commissions, highlighting a decade of collaborative activities and achievements in arms control.

Deepened exchange of operational information, know-how, and best practices among key stakeholders, while also advancing regional coordination. The project enabled nine (9) Regional Meetings of the South East Europe Firearms Experts Network (SEEFEN)⁴⁸. The meetings gathered senior police investigators, customs officials, prosecutors, ballistic experts, and representatives of border police from six Western Balkans jurisdictions: Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, and also representatives from Moldova, and Ukraine. The **SEEFEN** operates as the key **operational platform** for combatting illicit arms trafficking in Southeast and East Europe. It is composed of representatives from criminal police, ballistic units, customs administrations, border police and prosecution offices to share good practices and concrete cases of **cross-border cooperation** in countering the trafficking of firearms.

To further support the **harmonization of relevant legislation**, together with the DG HOME and the EEAS, and contribute to mutual information exchange, consultations, and sharing of recent experiences in the harmonization process, SEESAC organized two Regional Workshops on the Harmonization of Legislation related to arms control for the authorities coming from the Western Balkans, Moldova, and Ukraine. The Regional Workshops were organized in Brussels on [31 May – 01 June 2023](#) and [21 - 22 October 2024](#).

The Workshops serve as a vital platform for the Western Balkans, Moldova, and Ukraine to share updates on their legislative progress, address challenges, and gain insights into EU Acquis in these areas. Such workshops strengthen regional cooperation and alignment with the European Union's regulations in arms control. By sharing knowledge, experiences, and best practices, participating institutions are enhancing their efforts to combat the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. The workshop represents another step towards the South East and East European region aligning its legislative frameworks with EU

⁴⁷ The list of Regional SALW Commissions Meetings: [13th](#) and [14th](#) in 2021, [15th](#) and [16th](#) in 2022, [17th](#) and [18th](#) in 2023, [19th](#) and [20th](#) in 2024.

* *References to Kosovo shall be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).*

⁴⁸ The list of Regional SEEFEN Meetings: [13th](#) in 2020, [14th](#) and [15th](#) in 2021, [16th](#) and [17th](#) in 2022, [18th](#) and [19th](#) in 2023, [20th](#) and [21st](#) in 2024.

standards, ensuring effective arms control measures and the prevention of illicit possession and trafficking of firearms.

On-demand support for harmonizing arms control legislation was [initiated in 2022](#) with the backing of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Commission from **Kosovo** to work on harmonizing the existing national legislation on SALW with the relevant EU regulatory framework. On the request, [a workshop dedicated to the drafting of Kosovo's new Law on Explosives for Civil Use](#) was held in Pristina in September 2022 as part of the support SEESAC regularly provides to the region's authorities.

in **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, SEESAC supported a two-day [workshop on harmonization of the legal framework on arms control with the EU Acquis](#), held on 18-19 October 2022 in Banja Luka. The workshop gathered representatives of relevant institutions from Bosnia and Herzegovina involved in developing the legislative framework in the field of small arms and light weapons control.

In **North Macedonia**, the [Workshop on Draft Law on Civil Use of Explosives](#) was held on 16-19 September 2024, aiming to bring North Macedonia's legislation in line with European Union standards. The event brought together members of the newly formed working group of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of North Macedonia and representatives of relevant ministries that govern various aspects of explosives for civil use. SEESAC provided expert support during the workshop to assist in drafting the new legislation, ensuring it aligns seamlessly with the relevant EU regulatory framework.

In **Serbia**, SEESAC supported the Ministry of Interior of Serbia in [drafting the Law on Weapons and Ammunition](#) and addressing any existing gaps in alignment with the EU Acquis and relevant international practices. The MoI stressed the role of the new Law on Weapons and Ammunition in enhancing overall security and serving as an important step towards the European Union integration process.

The project regularly supports the governments in the region, as per their request and in line with the priorities. It assisted in the **establishment of the weapons registry system in Moldova and increased the capacities of the Criminal Police of Moldova to fight illicit trafficking of SALW**. It also supported harmonizing legislative and regulatory framework with the EU acquis, and standardization across the SEE.

It **continued supporting evidence-based policymaking** on SALW control addressing both men's and women's needs. To support beneficiaries and implementing partners, per their requests, for planning awareness-raising campaigns and other relevant activities, SEESAC regularly publishes and shares the data from the [Armed Violence Monitoring Platform](#) (AVMP). Data from the AVMP as well as knowledge products based on it are actively promoted by SEESAC, thus ensuring that the knowledge gained is utilized and integrated into the work of a wider SALW control community, which in turn facilitates sustainability of the knowledge itself. Upon their request, the SALW Coordination Board of Bosnia and Herzegovina was provided with two **tailor-made reports**; one shedding light **on the celebratory shooting** dynamics in this jurisdiction and the other providing a general **overview of firearms incidents** in 2021 and 2022 in BiH. In 2023, based on AVMP data, SEESAC compiled a brief on the young perpetrators and victims of firearm incidents as a contribution to the **report of the Secretary-General** on Youth, disarmament and non-proliferation.

SEESAC launched a new knowledge product series, the [In Focus - Armed Violence Monitor reports](#) in 2021, to provide information on the specific types of firearm incidents and the related topics and illustrate the magnitude of firearms' adverse impact on civilians. Drawing from the data collected, **twenty (20) In-Focus reports** were published delving into problems of domestic violence, accidental shootings, weapon seizures, and criminal context.

[Sixteen editions of the Quarterly Monitor](#) were also issued, identifying trends in armed violence in SEE.

Based on the data provided by relevant authorities, SEESAC also prepared and published the **Regional Reports on Arms Exports** for [2019](#), [2020](#), [2021](#) and [2022](#) which contain information on arms exports from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, confirming region's years-long commitment to transparency.

SEESAC continuously **transferred the SEE-acquired expertise**. Upon request of UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific UNRCPD, SEESAC supported the delivery of a [training on mainstreaming gender in small arms control](#) for relevant institutions in Bangladesh in 2022 in Dhaka. In the same vein, a **policy brief** titled [Small Arms Control – the Case for Gender Mainstreaming: Experiences from South-East Europe](#), was published in UNDP's 'Development Futures Series, as part of UNDP initiative aimed at sharing evidence and insights that are grounded in deep study, data and practice. SEESAC also participated in a number of UNODA-organized events that facilitated exchange of valuable information on mainstreaming of gender in SALW control on a global scale among key implementers. Through dissemination of valuable regional experiences and good practices identified, the project opened the door for replication of those practices on a global level and ensured sustainability of the earned knowledge.

In 2024, SEESAC organised **three side events** on the margins of the [Fourth Review Conference \(RevCon4\)](#) on the UN Programme of Action (PoA) to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and its International Tracing Instrument (ITI), which took place from 17 - 28 June 2024 in New York. The three side events were dedicated to 1) **Sharing of good practices** related to **SALW Control Roadmaps in the Western Balkans**, the Caribbean and Central America, organised jointly with UNODA 2) **Mainstreaming of a gender perspective into SALW Control: From Policymaking to Operations** organised jointly with UNODA and 3) **Investigations of firearms-related crimes** – good practices from Western Balkans.

The annual meetings of the Regional Steering Group on SALW in South East Europe were organized in [2020](#), [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#), and [2024](#) bringing together the representatives of SALW Commissions of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia and Serbia with the representatives of key donor countries, implementing partners and experts in the field. The meetings are regular exercise of monitoring the progress in the implementation of the [Regional Implementation Plan to Combat the Proliferation and Impact of SALW](#) and reviewing the achieved results, as well planning of SEESAC's support to the authorities.

Component 2: Further support to capacity building of law enforcement and border authorities in preventing and countering illicit arms and explosives trafficking (aims to strengthen the capacities of the authorities to perform both preventive and repressive activities necessary to identify and counter illicit possession and trafficking of firearms, ammunition, and explosives from and through their jurisdictions. This is achieved through improved procedures, equipment, and training of the targeted law enforcement institutions).

The action also contributes to a comprehensive approach to the capacity development of border and criminal police services in the Western Balkans to counter illicit trafficking and firearms possession.

Leaning on strategic cooperation in the region and furthering operational coordination is enabled through regular regional meetings of Border Police and Customs representatives from the Western Balkans. Five regional meetings have been organized: the first was online in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the following were organized in person in [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#), and [2024](#). Focused on enhancing border security and combating illicit trafficking of firearms, ammunition, explosives, and related materials, these events are part of SEESAC's efforts to promote disarmament and arms control activities in the region. The

meetings gather relevant Western Balkans law enforcement institutions and representatives of international organizations (OSCE, UNODC, UNDP and IOM).

Based on the *Needs Assessment Reports on Capacities of the Border Police Services in Countering Illicit Arms Trafficking* conducted under the Council Decision 2018/1788, the project supported the Border Police Services in Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, and Serbia, with equipment needed to counter illicit trafficking. Close collaboration with the authorities on the definition of technical specifications and throughout the procurement process ensured that the equipment purchased was compatible with existing equipment and that it could be maintained, directly contributing to the sustainability of the support.

To standardize and strengthen the work and procedures of Border Police and Custom Services in the region, SEESAC continued working closely with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX) to support the translation and printing layouts of its '[Handbook for Border Guards and Customs – regional Western Balkans version](#)' (the Handbook) to local languages. The very development of the Western Balkans version of the document, which adapts the content of the Handbook to the local setting - making it relevant, bolsters the sustainability of the effort to promote improved procedures. Furthermore, the Workshop on the addendum of the Handbook related to the influence of the war in Ukraine and migrant crisis on firearms trafficking in the SEE was organized by SEESAC, in cooperation with FRONTEX, in 2023 in Belgrade for the representatives of six Western Balkan jurisdictions.

In cooperation with FRONTEX, SEESAC organized **five training of trainers** for the representatives of Border Police and Customs Services from [Bosnia and Herzegovina](#), [Serbia](#), [North Macedonia](#), [Albania and Kosovo jointly](#) and [Montenegro](#) in 2023. The training methodology was based both on the provisions of FRONTEX's Handbook and the SOPs for Border Police Services developed by all Western Balkan authorities with SEESAC support. The training thus integrated various aspects of the work developed under the project, making the effort more comprehensive and sustainable.

Facilitating regional cooperation at the operational level, **four Regional meetings of Criminal Police representatives from Western Balkans and Moldova** took place in [2021](#), [2022](#), [2023](#) and [2024](#). Within the efforts of strengthening the strategic and operational capacities of the jurisdictions, the meetings enabled reflection on the current and future challenges in combatting the illegal possession, misuse, and trafficking of firearms in the Western Balkans while highlighting the invaluable information and knowledge sharing that occurs through regional cooperation.

Leaning on the needs assessments conducted under the EU Council Decision 2018/1788, a more comprehensive support to Criminal Police services in countering illicit arms trafficking through the development of SOPs, provision of equipment and training has also progressed. Based on the inputs from the Workshops dedicated to the development of the relevant **SOPs for the Criminal Police of Albania, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and North Macedonia** have been drafted, reviewed, finalized, and translated into local languages. In 2022, the **Video Content Analytics Platform** needed for more efficient solving of firearms-related crimes by the Kosovo Police was procured and delivered.

SEESAC organized a series of training sessions in [2023](#) focused on firearm detection, emergency situations, and practical implementation of the risk analysis methodology, aimed at enhancing the practical expertise of the Criminal Police Services in **Serbia, North Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, Montenegro, and Bosnia and Herzegovina**. The training advanced Criminal Police Services in firearms detection and the practical application of risk analysis methodologies.

Component 3: Improvement of capacities for physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction, and training (contributes to reducing the risk of proliferation through the enhancement of weapons and ammunition stockpile security, reducing

surplus and confiscated stocks of SALW and ammunition, improving the physical security and stockpile management practices as well strengthening the inspection systems of law enforcement authorities in the region).

The project enhanced the security of SALW storage and evidence rooms through infrastructure upgrades

In **Bosnia and Herzegovina**, three (3) evidence rooms were advanced through the upgrade works at three locations in 2023 (State Agency for Investigations and protection-SIPA, Border Police and Directorate for Coordination of Police Bodies BiH -DKPT). Security upgrades of three (3) evidence rooms at the local Security Centres of the Police Directorate in **Montenegro** (Bijelo Polje, Bar and Nikšić) as well as that of three (3) evidence rooms in **Kosovo** (Pristina, Prizren, Mitrovica South) were completed In 2021. In Serbia, upgrade of four (4) evidence rooms (Police stations in: Palilula, Novi Beograd, Stari Grad and Zemun) were completed in beginning 2024, and in **North Macedonia**, three (3) locations (Gazi Baba, Tetovo, and Prilep) were upgraded in the same period. In **Moldova**, upgrade works at one storage location (Balti), and two evidence rooms in Edinet and Buiucani were completed in 2024.

SEESAC supported **SALW disposal activities in four jurisdictions**. The project supported the Ministry of Security of **Bosnia and Herzegovina** in destroying **5413** SALW, and 4856 parts and components of SALW. In **Moldova**, **3,433 pieces of SALW**, 142 SALW parts and components, and 50,000 cartridges, were destroyed thus contributing to the prevention of the illicit trade and of destabilizing accumulation and misuse of SALW. In **Montenegro**, 798 pieces of weapons were melted down, including 77 of their parts and components. In **Kosovo**, **1,313 pieces of SALW** were destroyed within the scope of SEESAC activities. In order to further strengthen stockpile management and ammunition surveillance capacities of armed forces in the Western Balkans and Moldova, SEESAC organized the [Regional Workshop on Weapons and Ammunition Management](#) which builds directly on the success of the first [workshop on ammunition surveillance](#), organized with RACVIAC in 2022. In addition, in coordination with the US Department of State, a targeted [Proficient Level National Course on Physical Security and Stockpile Management of SALW and their Ammunition](#) was organized on 23-27 May, strengthening the capacities of 24 experts of the Serbian Ministry of Interior.

To increase the capacities of police officers of the **Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Serbia** in charge of **record-keeping of weapons and proper and safe storage of ammunition and weapons** in police stations/administrations, SEESAC organized four (4) training sessions on Physical Security and Stockpile Management for **200 representatives of the Ministry of Interior**. The trainings were held in [September](#) and in [October](#) 2023 and they were designed to raise the level of knowledge of police officers who are dealing with these tasks daily. Enhancing their capacities was seen to be of key importance for the proper storing, recordkeeping of weapons and disposal of weapons and ammunition.

IV. Evaluation purpose, objectives, and scope

1. Purpose

The purpose of the project evaluation is to provide an impartial review of the UNDP regional project in terms of its relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, sustainability, and, finally, communications and visibility. Also, the evaluation is essential for accountability and transparency, strengthening the ability of stakeholders to hold UNDP accountable for its development contributions. The key findings, lessons learnt, and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by the UNDP to assess the performance and value of the regional project, and as guidance for the future course of action in the field.

2. Objective

The evaluation objective is to examine the overall performance of the regional project *South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition ((CFSP) 2019/2111)*, and to provide a thorough understanding of the progress made by the authorities South-East Europe, in achieving project goals in combatting the threat posed by illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

It will assess how the outputs delivered the added value for the relevant authorities in Albania, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Kosovo to make progress from the strategic and policy level as well as the operational aspects of SALW control in three project areas: i) strengthening regional cooperation, knowledge exchange and information-sharing; ii) capacity building of border police and criminal police services of the Western Balkans in countering illicit trafficking and possession of firearms; and iii) improvement of capacities for PSSM through infrastructure security upgrades, surplus reduction and training.

Based on a substantive analysis of the effectiveness of the project approach through desk-top review, feedback from selected project partners, and other means of obtaining data, the evaluation is expected to assess cause and effect relations, identifying the extent to which the observed changes can be defined as transformational and can be attributed to the UNDP project.

The findings and recommendations generated by the evaluation will be used by UNDP, SEESAC and the South-East Europe authorities to have a better understanding of the progress and gaps.

3. Scope

The evaluation will cover the periods: **1 February 2020 - 31 December 2024.**

The evaluation will use a combination of desk-based review and select stakeholders' interviews and other means of obtaining data as deemed appropriate (refer to Annex 1&2). The List of key documents for the evaluation as well as key evaluation questions are provided in this document, while the contractor can make additional suggestions to the evaluation questions, and documents to be reviewed. The evaluation report should provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable, and useful. The evaluation will cover the jurisdictions participating in the implementation of the regional project: Albania, BiH, Montenegro, Serbia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Ukraine and Kosovo. The final project evaluation will take into consideration the political, economic, and social changes, notably changes that occurred during the four years of implementation of the regional project, and in particular, the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and political situation of the region, and the larger geographical context, including security-related developments during the time of the evaluation period in South East Europe.

V. Evaluation criteria and key questions

The evaluation should be guided by the following questions to determine the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, including lessons learned and forward-looking recommendations.

The guiding questions for the final project evaluation are summarised below. The overarching question for the overall project action is: What is the impact of this project? How does it contribute to the implementation of the relevant regional frameworks (such as the SALW Control Roadmap).

Relevance

- What is the progress in the implementation of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition ((CFSP) 2019/2111 as per its goals and overall targets?

- To what extent the project efforts towards meeting the project objectives have been relevant to the specific needs/priorities of the authorities in the SEE (such as the Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap)?
- Have the authorities in eight jurisdictions steered the project design and implementation? If yes, how? If no, why not?
- To what extent have gender equality and the empowerment of women been addressed in the design and implementation of activities?
- Have all relevant risks been considered when designing the project, and have the risks been regularly monitored and updated to respond to any changes in the environment in which the regional project have been implemented?
- a. Coherence**
 - To what extent has the regional project been successful in ensuring complementarity, harmonization, and coordination with other relevant interventions of relevant institutions in eight jurisdictions in SEE, as well as interventions supported by other donors, avoiding duplication of efforts and adding value?
 - Have the lessons learnt from previous projects been successfully implemented in the current regional project to maximize the coherence of action?
- b. Effectiveness**
 - Has the project results framework been well-defined, gender responsive and effective in measuring the achievement of the project objectives and results?
 - To what extent have the project activities been implemented, and have the intended objectives and results been achieved? What are the main project accomplishments?
 - To what extent were the regional project design and management arrangements effective and appropriate for meeting the project objectives?
 - Have there been any delays in the project implementation, what have been the causes, and have they been resolved? Were adequate steps taken by the project to adjust its implementation strategy to the new circumstances and needs? What lessons have been learnt from changes to the originally planned activities?
 - Is the quality of achieved outputs satisfactory? To what extent are key stakeholders/ project partners satisfied with the project implementation and the outputs delivered? What are some of the specific challenges that were addressed and the challenges that remained relevant?
- c. Efficiency**
 - Have the requested and provided funds been adequate to meet the needs identified by the project partners?
 - Have resources (financial, human, technical) been allocated strategically and economically to achieve the project results?
 - Is the relationship between project inputs and results achieved appropriate and justifiable?
 - Have there been any weaknesses in project design, management, human resource skills, and resources?
- d. Impact**
 - Has the project, through the achievements/outcomes been effective in supporting the jurisdictions in the implementation of the national, international and regional instruments for reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition?
 - What is the project impact and benefit on the implementation at the jurisdiction and regional levels?
 - What are the positive or negative, intended or unintended, changes brought about by the project's interventions?
- e. Sustainability**
 - To what extent are the achieved outputs and outcomes sustainable? Will the outputs lead to benefits beyond the lifespan of the project?

- To what extent have the project partners and key stakeholders taken an active role and ownership in implementing the project?
 - To what extent have the capacities of institutions in jurisdictions been strengthened to sustain the results of the project?
 - What are the elements that do and do not deliver sustainable results of the project activities?
 - What are the innovations/ best practices that deserve to be further built upon?
 - Have lessons learned been documented by the project regularly?
- f. Communications and Visibility**
- Did the project have a proper external communications strategy and action plan? Was the individual contributors' visibility adequately ensured?
 - Has the internal communication with partners and key stakeholders been regular and effective? Have project partners/donors been regularly updated about the project activities?
 - Have the project partners and key stakeholders been aware of the project results? If not, what could have been improved?
 - Did the project partners demonstrate ownership of the project's results through the communication of project activities through their own channels?

The following additional questions should guide the overall regional impact of the project:

- How (or whether) the regional project has contributed to boosting the regional approach to SALW Control including regional standardization, cooperation, transparency and coordination?
- Has the project contributed to SDGs #5 and #16? Has it indirectly contributed to other SDGs? To which and how?
- Have the UNDP established new partnerships, or consolidated critical ones as a result of the regional project?
- To what extent has the project implementation enabled UNDP to position itself as a critical actor in security sector reform in the jurisdictions where the project has been implemented?
- Are there lessons learnt and recommendations that could guide another similar regional project elsewhere? Has the project generated interest beyond the SEE? If yes, what are the benefits of such interest for the partners?
- Are there any spill-over effects that could be attributed to this project?

VI. Methodology

Based on the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, UNEG Norms and Stand for Evaluations \(2016\)](#) and in consultations with UNDP, the evaluation will be participatory, involving relevant stakeholders with due attention to gender perspective and use of gender disaggregated data.

The Project Evaluation Expert will propose an evaluation methodology and agree with UNDP on a detailed plan for the assignment as part of the Evaluation Inception Report. The proposed methodology should employ innovative participatory approaches and relevant quantitative, qualitative or combined methods to conduct the final project evaluation based on diverse evidence, using gender-disaggregated data and appropriate analytical methods. The Project Evaluation Expert is expected to combine the standard and other evaluation tools and techniques to ensure maximum reliability of data and validity of the evaluation findings. Evaluation methods need to generate feedback loops and insights that can be used in future planning to generate further transformational change. Stakeholder participation is an important source of data that can mitigate observational biases. The Evaluation Recommendations should be forward-looking and focused on adaptation to the changing system addressed by the project intervention.

Limitations to the chosen approach/methodology and methods shall be made explicit by the Project Evaluation Expert and the consequences of these limitations will be discussed in the proposed methodology.

The Project Evaluation Expert shall, to the extent possible, present mitigation measures to address these limitations.

The Project Evaluation Expert is expected to carry out the evaluation process with careful consideration of these Terms of Reference. In cases where sensitive or confidential issues are to be addressed in the evaluation, the Project Evaluation Expert should ensure an evaluation design that does not put informants and stakeholders at risk during the data collection phase or the evaluation report dissemination phase.

Standard UNDP evaluation methodology would suggest the following data-collecting methods:

- **Desk review:** The Project Evaluation Expert will conduct a detailed review of the project materials and deliverables, including the Project Document/Description of the Action, annual work plans, consolidated progress reports, etc. *An indicative list of documents for desk review is provided in Annex 1.*
- **Key informant interviews:** The Project Evaluation Expert will interview selected representatives of the partner authorities taking part in the project, other relevant stakeholders in jurisdictions, representatives of the donors and UNDP SEESAC. The Project Evaluation Expert will strive to encompass a diverse pool of interviewees, ensuring a comprehensive gender perspective is integrated. *An indicative list of main stakeholders that may be considered for meetings is provided in Annex 2.*

For the interviews, the Project Evaluation Expert is expected to address evaluation questions around relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact, as well as around communications and visibility criteria, according to the different stakeholders to be interviewed.

- Other methodologies, as appropriate, such as case studies, surveys, statistical analysis, social network analysis, etc. may be used as appropriate⁴⁹

The final methodological approach, including interview schedule, and data to be used in the evaluation, should be clearly outlined in the inception report and be thoroughly discussed and agreed upon between UNDP and the evaluator/s.

VII. Description of responsibilities

Key Responsibilities

Under the overall direction of the UNDP Evaluation Manager, the Project Evaluation Expert is expected to deliver the following products and tasks:

1. **The Inception Report (from 10 to 15 pages)** will be presented before the final project evaluation starts. The Inception Report sets out the conceptual framework to be applied in the evaluation. It includes the understanding of the evaluation objectives, theory of change, evaluation questions, and possible sub-questions, defines the detailed methodology, and provides information on data sources

⁴⁹ [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, Annex 2. Summary of common data-collection methods/sources used in UNDP evaluations](#)

and collection, sampling, and key indicators. The Inception Report should propose a work plan, schedule of tasks, plan of interviews (online), and evaluation structure and deliverables. The Evaluation Inception Report should follow the structure proposed in the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, p. 26-27](#).

2. **Data collection through desk review and Key informant interviews (KIIs):** Upon the approval of the Inception Report by the UNDP, the Project Evaluation Expert is expected to carry out the project evaluation. To collect data and insights on the project, the Project Evaluation Expert will undertake a desk review of key project materials and interviews, **which will be held online**, with the project partners and representatives of the authorities. SEESAC will support the organization of the interviews by providing contacts of institutions and individuals to be interviewed. SEESAC will inform the national authorities about the planned evaluation.
3. **Desk review** of key documents as indicated in Annex 1.
4. **Conduct selected interviews (at least 15)** as per the indicative list in Annex 2.
5. **Draft Evaluation Report (from 45 to 55 pages with 5 pages Executive Summary):** Based on the findings generated through desk review and data collected through interviews, the Project Evaluation Expert will prepare and submit the Draft Evaluation Report to the UNDP for review. The Evaluation Report should follow the guidelines and structure proposed in the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, p. 28-29](#).
6. **Evaluation review process** (and eventual dispute settlement): Comments, questions, suggestions, and requests for clarification on the evaluation draft will be submitted to the Project Evaluation Expert and addressed in the agreed timeframe. The Project Evaluation Expert should reply to the comments through the **evaluation audit trail document**⁵⁰ and not directly in the draft report. If there is disagreement in findings, these should be documented through the evaluation audit trail, while effort should be made to come to an agreement. The audit trail should follow the structure proposed in the [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, p. 30](#).
7. **The Evaluation Report** (from 45 to 55 pages of the main report text with 5 pages Executive Summary) should be logically structured, **contain** data and evidence-based findings, conclusions, lessons, and forward-looking recommendations, and be presented in a way that makes the information accessible and comprehensible. The structure of the Evaluation Report is briefly outlined below:
 - Title and opening pages
 - Project and Evaluation details
 - Table of contents
 - List of acronyms and abbreviations.
 - Executive summary (five pages maximum including key findings and recommendations)
 - Introduction
 - Description of the intervention
 - Evaluation scope and objectives

- Evaluation approach and methods
 - Data analysis
 - Findings
 - Conclusions
 - Forward-looking recommendations with Lessons learnt
 - Report annexes
8. **Summary of the Report (from 8 to 10 pages)** should include consolidated findings, challenges, lessons learned, and forward-looking recommendations of this final project evaluation.
9. **Presentation of evaluation findings:** Once the evaluation report is agreed with UNDP, the Project Evaluation Expert will participate in at least two meetings to present the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the evaluation to all relevant stakeholder

VIII. Deliverables and timeframe

The Evaluation Expert under UNDP Evaluation Manager supervision will contribute to the timely development of high-quality reports. The payments will be based on the successful completion of the deliverables and following the approval of Expert's deliverables progress reports in English by the UNDP.

The specific deliverables and timeframes are as follows:

Output	Deadline
Deliverable 1 Inception report (from 10 to 15 pages) proposing the methodology, including desk review materials and key informant interviews, work plan, and evaluation questions prepared and submitted to UNDP.	One week after the start of the contract
Deliverable 2 Draft Evaluation Report (from 45 to 55 pages maximum with 5 pages Executive Summary, font size 11 / 1 line spacing) completed based on the findings generated through desk review and interviews including findings, recommendations and conclusions, prepared and submitted to UNDP for review and comments.	Three weeks after the start of the contract.
Deliverable 3 Revised Draft Evaluation Report based on UNDP comments through audit trail document submitted to UNDP for review.	Three days after the provided feedback by the UNDP
Deliverable 4 The Final Evaluation Report (from 45 to 55 pages of the main report text with 5 pages Executive Summary) including findings, recommendations and conclusions, prepared and submitted to UNDP, including Summary of the report (from 8 to 10 pages), including consolidated findings, challenges, lessons learned, and forward-looking recommendations of this Evaluation.	Two days after the final feedback on the Draft Evaluation Report

<p>Deliverable 5</p> <p>The Report presented (in at least two meetings) to all relevant stakeholders.</p>	<p>Within a month following the finalization of the evaluation.</p>
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IX. Qualifications

The Project Evaluation Expert is expected to provide an independent and substantiated evaluation of the project achievements; capture underperformance and gaps, if any; triangulate findings among partners and key stakeholders and, last but not least – map lessons learned and provide strategic forward-looking recommendations. As such, previous experience in conducting evaluations is required.

The Project Evaluation Expert will work in close cooperation with the UNDP SEESAC team and will report to the UNDP Evaluation Manager⁵¹, who will oversee and support the overall final project evaluation process. The Project Evaluation Expert should act with integrity and respect for all stakeholders according to the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation.

Competencies and qualifications:

Core values

- Demonstrates integrity and fairness by modelling UN values and ethical standards.
- Displays cultural, gender, religious, racial, nationality and age sensitivity and adaptability.

Core competencies

- Demonstrates professional competence to meet responsibilities and post requirements and is conscientious and efficient in meeting commitments, observing deadlines and achieving results.
- Results-Orientation: Plans and produces quality results to meet established goals, and generates innovative, practical solutions to challenging situations.
- Communication: Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to convey complex concepts and recommendations, both orally and in writing, in a clear and persuasive style tailored to match different audiences.
- Team-work: Ability to interact, establish and maintain effective working relations with a culturally diverse team.
- Client orientation: Ability to establish and maintain productive partnerships with national partners and stakeholders and pro-activeness in identifying partners' needs and matching them to appropriate solutions.

Education

- MA degree in international studies, political or social science, public administration, law enforcement, or related fields (certificates in evaluation studies is an asset).

Experience and knowledge

- Required at least 4 years of relevant experience in leading and conducting complex and comprehensive evaluations in development and security context, including evaluations for multilateral organizations and covering multiple countries and territories.
- Experience in conducting evaluations across a range of thematic issues such as: international relations, rule of law, law enforcement, good governance, access to justice, sustainable development, human security, or related fields.

⁵¹ The **Evaluation Manager is not the project manager**. The Evaluation Manager leads the evaluation process and participates in all of its stages - evaluability assessment, preparation, implementation, management, and use. The responsibilities of the Evaluation Manager are listed in the UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, [Section 5, Roles and Responsibilities](#).

- Documented track record of delivering high-quality evaluations, showing excellent analytical skills, sound judgment, and ability to objectively evaluate project and programme in terms of processes and results achieved and propose clear conclusions and recommendations.
- Demonstrated sound knowledge of results-based management systems, as well as monitoring and evaluation methodologies.
- A good understanding of the political and social situation in the South East Europe jurisdictions is required.
- Excellent analytical and writing skills.
- Familiarity with the UN system and the EU integration process.
- Excellent written and verbal skills in English.
- Sound understanding of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.

Language

- Languages requirements: oral and written fluency in English.

X. Evaluation ethics

The Project Evaluation Expert shall not have any direct or indirect institutional or personal interest (such as financial gains as employees, consultants, individual contractors whether individually or through corporate ownership, participation or benefit), or those of his or her family members or his/her direct supervisor/s, of private or professional nature, in any of the projects implemented within the project framework. Project Evaluation Expert must declare immediately should they identify such conflict.

This evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG' [Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation](#)'. The evaluator must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing the collection of data and reporting of data. The evaluator must also ensure the security and confidentiality of collected information before, during, and after the evaluation and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information knowledge and data gathered in the evaluation process must be used solely for project evaluation purposes and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and its partners. The evaluators should be free from any conflict of interest related to this evaluation.⁵² All personnel engaged in the evaluation need to sign the [Pledge of Ethical Conduct, upon the signature of the contract](#).

X. Management and implementation arrangements

The Project Evaluation will be conducted independently.

The Evaluation Expert will report to the assigned Evaluation Manager, who will oversee and support the overall evaluation process, and assure high quality and independent implementation of the evaluation with the appropriate guidance from UNDP's Senior Management and in coordination with the Regional Project team.

The UNDP SEESAC Team will provide the required information and documents to the Evaluation Expert. They will also be responsible for providing support in establishing initial contacts with the interviewees before the organization of meetings and identifying interpreters, and covering the costs the interpretation (latter if required).

⁵² [UNDP Evaluation Guidelines, Box 7. Sources of conflict of interest in evaluation](#)

The Project Board will be available for interviews with the Evaluation Expert and will endorse the Final Evaluation Report following presentations of the evaluation findings, as necessary.

Application procedure:

Consultant is required to submit the following documents in his/her application:

- CV in English language containing date of birth, contact information (home address, phone number, e-mail) and timeline of work experience (including description of duties);
- Offeror's Letter (only PDF format shall be accepted) confirming Interest and availability for the Individual Contractor (IC) Assignment. Can be downloaded from the following link: <https://popp.undp.org/document/individual-contract-offerors-letter-undp-confirming-interest-and-availability-template>. The Offeror's Letter shall include a financial proposal specifying a total lump sum amount for the tasks specified in this announcement with a breakdown of costs (Offeror's Letter, including Annex 2, Table A: Breakdown of costs & Table B: Breakdown of costs by deliverables).

Additional Information:

- Individual Contract (IC) will be applicable for individual consultants applying in their own capacity. If the applicant is employed by any legal entity, IC would be issued upon submission of a Consent letter from the employer acknowledging the engagement with UNDP. Template of **IC with General Terms and Conditions** could be found on: <https://popp.undp.org/document/individual-contract-template>.
- Reimbursable Loan Agreement (RLA) will be applicable for applicants employed by any legal entity. Template of RLA with General Terms and Conditions could be found on: <https://popp.undp.org/document/model-reimbursable-loan-agreement>. In the case of the engagement of Civil servants under IC contract modality, a no-objection letter should be provided by the Government entity. The 'no-objection' letter must also state that the employer formally certifies that their employees are allowed to receive short-term consultancy assignments from another entity without being on "leave-without-pay" status (if applicable) and include any conditions and restrictions on granting such permission, if any. If the previous is not applicable 'leave-without-pay' confirmation should be submitted.

Engagement of Government Officials and Employees

- Government Officials or Employees are civil servants of UN Member States. As such, if they will be engaged by UNDP under an IC which they will be signing in their individual capacity (i.e., engagement is not done through RLA signed by their Government employer), the following conditions must be met prior to the award of contract:
 - (i) A "No-objection" letter in respect of the individual is received from the Government employing him/her, and;
 - (ii) The individual must provide an official documentation from his/her employer formally certifying his or her status as being on "official leave without pay" for the duration of the IC.
- The above requirements are also applicable to Government-owned and controlled enterprises and well as other semi/partially or fully owned Government entities, whether or not the Government ownership is of majority or minority status.
- UNDP recognizes the possibility that there are situations when the Government entity employing the individual that UNDP wishes to engage is one that allows its employees to receive external short-term consultancy assignments (including but not limited to research institutions, state-owned colleges/universities, etc.), whereby a status of "on-leave-without-pay" is not required. Under such circumstance, the individual entering into an IC with UNDP must still provide a "No-

objection” letter from the Government employing him/her. The “no objection” letter required under (i) above must also state that the employer formally certifies that their employees are allowed to receive short-term consultancy assignment from another entity without being on “leave-without-pay” status and include any conditions and restrictions on granting such permission, if any. The said document may be obtained by, and put on record of, UNDP, in lieu of the document (ii) listed above.

Annex VIII Signed Pledge of Ethical Conduct



ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION

PLEDGE OF ETHICAL CONDUCT IN EVALUATION



UNEG
United Nations Evaluation Group

By signing this pledge, I hereby commit to discussing and applying the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and to adopting the associated ethical behaviours.



INTEGRITY

I will actively adhere to the moral values and professional standards of evaluation practice as outlined in the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation and following the values of the United Nations. Specifically, I will be:

- **Honest and truthful** in my communication and actions.
- **Professional**, engaging in credible and trustworthy behaviour, alongside competence, commitment and ongoing reflective practice.
- **Independent, impartial and incorruptible.**



ACCOUNTABILITY

I will be answerable for all decisions made and actions taken and responsible for honouring commitments, without qualification or exception; I will report potential or actual harms observed. Specifically, I will be:

- **Transparent regarding evaluation** purpose and actions taken, establishing trust and increasing accountability for performance to the public, particularly those populations affected by the evaluation.
- **Responsive** as questions or events arise, adapting plans as required and referring to appropriate channels where corruption, fraud, sexual exploitation or abuse or other misconduct or waste of resources is identified.
- **Responsible** for meeting the evaluation purpose and for actions taken and for ensuring redress and recognition as needed.



RESPECT

I will engage with all stakeholders of an evaluation in a way that honours their dignity, well-being, personal agency and characteristics. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Access to** the evaluation process and products by all relevant stakeholders – whether powerless or powerful – with due attention to factors that could impede access such as sex, gender, race, language, country of origin, LGBTQ status, age, background, religion, ethnicity and ability.
- **Meaningful participation and equitable treatment** of all relevant stakeholders in the evaluation processes, from design to dissemination. This includes engaging various stakeholders, particularly affected people, so they can actively inform the evaluation approach and products rather than being solely a subject of data collection.
- **Fair representation** of different voices and perspectives in evaluation products (reports, webinars, etc.).



BENEFICENCE

I will strive to do good for people and planet while minimizing harm arising from evaluation as an intervention. Specifically, I will ensure:

- **Explicit and ongoing consideration of risks and benefits** from evaluation processes.
- **Maximum benefits** at systemic (including environmental), organizational and programmatic levels.
- **No harm.** I will not proceed where harm cannot be mitigated.
- **Evaluation makes an overall positive contribution** to human and natural systems and the mission of the United Nations.

I commit to playing my part in ensuring that evaluations are conducted according to the Charter of the United Nations and the ethical requirements laid down above and contained within the UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation. When this is not possible, I will report the situation to my supervisor, designated focal points or channels and will actively seek an appropriate response.

Joanna Brooks

28th April 2025

(Signature and Date)