

# SEESAC

South Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons

AR/009

27 June 2003

## SEESAC ACTIVITY REPORT

### UNDP AND SEESAC SALW AWARENESS TRAINING FOR BOSNIA RED CROSS SOCIETY

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| SEESAC FUNCTIONAL AREA      | FA 4 - SALW Awareness and Communications Strategy      |
| SEESAC OPERATIONAL ACTIVITY | SG 1 – Capacity Building<br>SG 7 – Training Activities |

#### Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 25 June 2003.

On 25<sup>th</sup> June 2003 SEESAC provided a core group of Mine Risk Education trainers from both entities of BiH with a one-day introduction to the problems surrounding SALW proliferation, and the options for developing safe and effective SALW Awareness among school children. The event was hosted by UNDP, which is the international organization tasked with coordinating SALW actions in BiH. UNDP's planned SALW project includes a significant SALW Awareness component and strives to integrate SALW Awareness into an integrated, comprehensive strategy for addressing the SALW problems affecting the country.



As elsewhere in South Eastern Europe, the widespread proliferation of SALW is a serious problem in BiH, yet the serious consequences are still not widely publicised. NGOs such as the Red Cross Society are influential members of civil society, and have an important role to play in the fight against SALW proliferation and its effects.

The presentations and discussions during the training covered definitions and technical questions about SALW, their global and regional effects, good and bad practices in SALW Awareness, and gathering information for project planning purposes. In an interactive afternoon session, the participants worked in groups to produce sample 'core messages' for possible use in their campaigns. Two sets of messages were developed, both targeting children, but each for use in different contexts. Messages designed solely to raise children's awareness of the dangers of SALW included **'my curiosity could mean the loss of my life'**, whereas **'less weapons means more games'** were created to support a weapons collection programme by SFOR and national authorities by using children as a route to try and change the behaviour of parents. With over 100 field

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activists currently working in schools delivering Mine Risk Education, the Red Cross Society is well equipped to take these messages into the field, but will develop a methodology to test the messages before wider field use. The messages designed during the training have a role to play in the BiH SALW Awareness programme, but to be fully effective 'core messages' should be developed to compliment the operational objectives of a BiH National SALW Strategy.

SEESAC will be supporting this project by providing further training and by making it's forthcoming 'SALW Awareness Support Pack' (SASP) freely available to the Society. The SASP will examine the SALW Awareness related projects that have happened so far in the region and build on them to develop a best-practice handbook with supporting campaign materials in CD Rom format. It will be a resource that all actors in SEE who undertake SALW Awareness work can use from August 2003 onwards. With the active participation of the Red Cross Society and UNDP BiH, it will be possible to field-test a draft version of SASP during Autumn 2003 to ensure it's suitability and effectiveness for use throughout the region.



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