

IMPLEMENTING THE GENEVA DECLARATION ON ARMED VIOLENCE AND DEVELOPMENT

SUMMARY OF SUGGESTED AREAS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

I *mplementing the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development* is a Handbook that provides government officials and other interested parties with clear, user-friendly suggestions on how to implement the commitments contained in the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the subsequent Outcome Documents of the 2008 and 2011 Review Conferences, and the Oslo Commitments on Armed Violence agreed at the 2010 Oslo Conference on Armed Violence.

Drawing upon a broad range of experiences on armed violence reduction and prevention (AVRP), this Handbook gives an overview of possible actions and entry points, and suggests key resources that can be drawn upon for further advice.



The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, endorsed by more than 100 countries, commits signatories to supporting initiatives intended to measure the human, social, and economic costs of armed violence, to assess risks and vulnerabilities, to evaluate the effectiveness of armed violence reduction programmes, and to disseminate knowledge of best practices.

The Declaration calls upon states to achieve measurable reductions in the global burden of armed violence and tangible improvements in human security by 2015.

The principal areas for implementation suggested in the Handbook are:

1. Understanding the context

- **Understand the nature of armed violence** by making a thorough assessment of the underlying causes and risk factors inherent in a given setting. A better understanding of the incidence and impact of armed violence can be gained through existing data collection, mapping, and analysis systems.
- **Use data to inform policy and programmatic responses** and to establish benchmarks against which to monitor their long-term effectiveness.
- **Develop common measurement systems** (with common indicators and methods) to make it easier to compare data, thereby enabling a better understanding of what works best in a given context.
- **Conduct assessments of the capacities and deficits** of institutions that have a key role in preventing and reducing armed violence, especially public security, justice, social and development planning institutions, as well as civil society organizations (CSOs), to better inform strategies for institutional capacity-building and so lead to a more effective response.
- **Consider preparing a national report on armed violence** aimed at raising national awareness about armed violence and describing suitable capacities and strategies to respond to it.
- **Establish a mechanism to coordinate national AVRDP efforts** in order to enable intra-governmental coordination and **set up a National Focal Point (NFP) within government** to act as an information and coordination resource.

2. Developing legal and policy frameworks, strategies, and institutional capacities

- **Establish a conducive legal and policy framework**, including the development and implementation of laws and policies on issues such as public or citizen security, violence prevention, national security, criminal justice, small arms control, border management, gender-based violence (GBV), and the rights of and support for victims.

- **Develop national strategies or plans of action**, including development plans and programmes to reduce and prevent armed violence and to address the key risk factors that foster it.
- **Strengthen the institutional capacities of government and CSOs in violence prevention and reduction** in ways that foster trust and confidence between governments and citizens.
- **Give special focus to municipal and district-level government institutions** and to community-based organizations (CBOs) that are close to the people affected by violence.

3. Developing and implementing integrated AVRP programmes

- **Draw on the evidence base** of best or promising practices and effective programming.
- **Develop direct programmes** to address the instruments (e.g. arms collection), actors (e.g. demobilization of armed groups), and institutional environments that protect against armed violence (e.g. reform of law-enforcement agencies and peace-building initiatives).
- **Emphasize indirect programmes** designed to address the risk factors that give rise to armed violence (e.g. programmes or interventions aimed at youths, the comprehensive rule of law, public education, and urban renewal).
- **Combine ‘direct’ and ‘indirect’ approaches** to address both the symptoms and the broader factors that give rise to armed violence.
- **Promote cross-sector programmes that bring together a range of strategies to reduce and prevent violence** (such as crime prevention, rule of law, justice, public health, urban planning and design, conflict prevention, and peace-building).
- **Consider broader development programmes** in which AVRP is not the key objective, but which produce favourable outcomes (e.g. programmes supporting education, health, and economic well-being).
- Integrate into policy and programme development initiatives that **recognize and protect the rights of victims and survivors of armed violence and provide for their needs**.

4. Monitoring and evaluating AVRP policies and programmes

- **Invest in strengthening national monitoring and evaluation (M&E) capacities**, including national and local systems for data collection and analysis and ensuring that these systems feed into an integrated response and prevention mechanism.
- **Share the findings of evaluations and experiences** with other signatory states in order to contribute to the evidence base of what is deemed successful.

5. Fulfilling international commitments to prevent and reduce armed violence

- **Encourage governments to implement and comply with existing international and regional agreements** and commitments related to small arms and light weapons (SALW), people affected by armed violence and associated risk factors, human rights, corruption, and drugs.
- **Support new international or regional conventions** or agreements which present additional opportunities to address factors that contribute to armed violence.

6. Increasing the effectiveness of partnerships and international assistance

- **Establish effective partnerships** with a wide range of stakeholders, such as CSOs, private sector, donor agencies, and international organizations.
- **Promote South–South and triangular cooperation** and initiatives that encourage countries facing similar capacity constraints as a means of sharing their experiences.
- **Invest in AVRП** through international donors seeking to strengthen government ownership and capacity in reducing and preventing armed violence; and drawing, as necessary, on the comparative strengths of other relevant partners (e.g. CSOs, international organizations, the UN and its specialized agencies, and the private sector).
- **Provide long-term strategic support through partnerships** with international aid agencies and combine it with short-term interventions and funding aligned with the sub-national development and security plans and programmes of affected states.
- **Document and disseminate information** about efforts that encourage collaboration among similar partnerships in other countries.

For more information see *Implementing the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development*, published in 2014 by the Geneva Declaration Secretariat.

Available at www.genevadeclaration.org/publications