

IASC WORKING GROUP

XXXVI Meeting

Rome, 22-23 April 1999

Background Document for Item 1c

IASC WG Reference Group on Small Arms

Date: 17 March 1999
Time: 10:00-12:30
Place: OCHA/PAID Conference Room, DC1-1340, New York
Participants from: UNICEF, UNDP, OCHA, ICRC, WFP, UNHCR, SCHR (Chair)
Observer: DPKO

Introduction:

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss methodologies for collecting agency data on the humanitarian impact of small arms and light weapons. A draft discussion paper, prepared by OCHA with the inputs of RGSA members, on methodology and possible indicators served as the basis for discussion.

Discussion Points:

1. The work of the RGSA should complement the work of the DDA/CASA process and that we were not planning to collect arms transfer data, but rather data relating specifically to the humanitarian impact.
2. We should try and focus on more quantitative indicators at this stage rather than more qualitative ones. However some suggested qualitative indicators could be provided to encourage agency thinking in that direction.
3. The RGSA should begin with a modest approach, focussing on data available at headquarters rather than extensive canvassing of field offices.
4. Some agencies might nevertheless wish to contact field staff in a limited number of countries.
5. We need an inventory of what is available at headquarters. Targeted date: report to September IASC Working Group Meeting.
6. The work of the RGSA is unlikely to be ready to feed into the Secretary General's report on the Protection of Civilians which will be presented to the Security Council in September. However, members of the RGSA are encouraged to feed in directly relevant information to go into the report.

Action Points:

1. OCHA will revise the paper on thematic guidance focussing on areas of concern.
2. The revised paper will be circulated to the members of the RGSA.
3. A cover letter will be circulated with the paper by the RGSA Chair asking agencies to:
 - ◆ establish a focal point for small arms;
 - ◆ do an inventory of relevant data available at headquarters;
 - ◆ encourage agencies to suggest additional indicators which might be specific to their organisations;
 - ◆ where relevant, agencies would be encouraged to add information that they might have from the following 12 countries: Afghanistan, Albania/Kosovo, Angola, Burundi, Cambodia, Columbia, Guatemala, Mali, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, South Africa, and Sudan.
4. The RGSA would report back to the IASC-WG at its September 1999 meeting (and give a progress report at its April 1999 Meeting).