

Weapons for Development Pilot Project Final Report

1. Executive Summary

- Project Title:** Weapons for Development Pilot Project
- Project :** Promoting and building peace and security in rural villages.
- Project Period:** 26th April 2001 to 15th November 2002
- Project Site:** Snuol district is situated close to the Vietnamese border approximately 100km south east of Kratie town in Kratie province. 5 target communes were selected.
- Funded by:** Royal Netherlands Government, Canadian Government, EU ASAC

Objective

The *Weapons for Development* pilot project was intended to test an innovative mechanism for promoting peace and security in Cambodia through a reduction of weapons-related violence, a reduction in overall numbers of illegal weapons and explosives which were left from the war, and an increased confidence among the general population in the permanence of peace and security; through developing a better working relationship between civilians and the security forces.

Outline

The exchange of weapons was negotiated between the EU ASAC Field Manager and community representatives, including the Commune Councils and most importantly the Village Development Councils. Weapons were voluntarily handed in during the project period, as public confidence grew. Some were publicly handed in, some arrived anonymously, and others were hidden in places which were subsequently revealed to the authorities. Weapons have continued to be handed in at a consistent level since the project officially ended in November 2002.

The Weapons for Development pilot project was implemented through a partnership between EU ASAC and Partners for Development (PFD), an NGO with extensive experience in Kratie province. The pilot project was funded through a grant from the Royal Netherlands government, the Canadian government and the European Union.

2. Planned Output Indicators against Actual Output Indicators

<i>Planned Indicators</i>	<i>Actual Indicators</i>
<i>Output 1: Reduce the number of weapons and explosives in order to make Cambodia a safe place with fewer arms. The surrendered weapons are destroyed in public and explosives are destroyed safely.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Several hundred weapons to be collected through the voluntary hand-in by target communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,251 weapons were voluntarily handed in 14,354 explosives were voluntarily handed in 369 weapons in 2 caches were located in surrounding mountainous area.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publicly destroy all collected weapons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3,236 weapons were destroyed in five “Flame of Peace” ceremonies between 03.07.01 and 13.12.02 conducted with the participation from the villagers, newspapers and TV 369 of these weapons from 2 caches were destroyed on-site in a surrounding heavily forested area. 15 weapons stored at the district level await destruction
<i>Output 2: Make a modest contribution to local human security and rural development, through income generation and better food, education, health and transportation access in the target districts. Local development objectives are promoted through WfD, CC(s) and their development partners are leading the WfD Process.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to hygienic water supply for the target population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 53 drilled water wells with hand pumps were dug in 5 target communes, providing water to 4,794 people 21 hand dug wells were repaired in 5 target communes (Pir Thnou, Srey Chas, Khsim, Svay Chreas) providing water to 1,320 people Sanitation training provided to 6,114 people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve provision of education to reduce illiteracy in the target area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 schools (3 classrooms) were constructed in 1 target commune (Pir Thnou) 2 wooden schools (2 classrooms) were repaired in 1 target commune (Khsim). Latrines were constructed at all schools.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve transport access for the target population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 wooden bridge with concrete abutments was built in Svay Chreas commune. 5 sections of rural road constructed through FFW with rice donated by WFP.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access to healthcare for the target population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 health post constructed in Svay Chreas commune
<i>Output 3: Enhance the capacity of the security forces to produce confidence in lower levels of violence and crime. Raising public awareness in the target area through coordinated training, workshops and meetings with the participation of local authorities, police, military, gendarmerie, villagers, especially women, and monks.</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Security forces and community leaders provided training on small arms issues and good governance by CIHR Security forces provided specific 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 350 individuals from police, gendarmerie and commune councils received training on weapons issues and good governance, human rights, democracy and community role 135 police officers provided professional

<p>professional training by Ministry of Interior</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local security forces practice better law enforcement • Police committed to providing security and fair judgment in community • Local security forces and villagers will collaborate on law enforcement. • Improved relationship between villagers and local security forces, so that confidence between both sides increases and security improves 	<p>training by Ministry of Interior national trainers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less use and misuse of official firearms in the target communes by security forces. • Security forces in the local community have better morale and self-esteem. • Perception of crime in Snuol was radically decreased during the project period. Compared to the pre-project period, the security situation was positively transformed • Relationship between villagers and security forces was improved; villagers now keep in touch with police concerning security related issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A decrease in crime in the target area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% decrease in crime between 1999 and 2001 • Serious crimes decreased between 2001 – 2002 • Non-serious crimes decreased between 2001-2002
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting meetings, trainings and workshops on weapons collection through voluntary hand-in. • Publicize the WfD results as part of a wider peace-building campaign to encourage a safer, arms-free Cambodia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings and workshops were conducted in every village in the target area with civilian and security forces participating. • 135 officers from the security forces have an improved knowledge of firearms issues • Grassroots community networks established through which weapons collection continues without presence of EU ASAC. • Provincial, political and security authorities outside of Kratie are fully aware of the benefits of voluntary weapons hand in programme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment will be provided to police and gendarmerie in the target area to improve their ability to carry out their duties, with specific focus on mobility, visibility and communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 135 security force officers have improved mobility and efficiency and visibility. • 10 steel cupboards were distributed; 6 to the commune level police, 2 to the gendarmerie and 2 to the district level police. • 40 mountain bikes were distributed to the police in the five target communes; 30 to the commune level police, 5 to the gendarmerie and 5 to the district level police. • 24 Viva 110 c.c. motorcycles were distributed; 14 to the commune level police, 5 to the gendarmerie and five to the district level police. • 10 Kenwood 50 watt radios for fixed base communication were distributed; 6 to the commune level police, 2 to the gendarmerie and 2 to the district level police. • 40 Kenwood 5 watt radio hand-sets were distributed; 30 to the commune level police, 5

	<p>to the gendarmerie and 5 to the district level police.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 Canon cameras were distributed; 6 to the commune level police, 2 to the gendarmerie and 2 to the district level police. • 1 computer with printer was distributed to the district level police • 10 whiteboards were distributed; 6 to commune level police, 2 to gendarmerie and 2 to district level police. • 1 video camera was distributed to the district level police.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting families will raise morale of the security forces, improving their work and respect for their duty and not worry about their families • Income generation capacity of police wives will be improved • Police wives received training on their professional skill and vocational. • Improvement in income generation capacity, food production / consumption, education and health in the target area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Police families trained in self-reliant food production, income generation, nutritional education and basic animal husbandry. • 24 pairs of oxen were provided to 24 police families • 16 pairs of buffalo were provided to 16 police families • 1 pair of chickens were provided to 1 police family • 4 water pumps were provided to 4 police families • 2 generators were provided to 2 police families • 21 families were provided with equity (in the form of goods) for establishing sustainable small businesses.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Placing posters in public areas to raise local awareness of the illegal weapons issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5000 posters were published and posted in the villages, communes and districts

3. Narrative Report

3.1 Weapons Collection

Positive Impact

Between April 2001 and November 2002, the WfD pilot succeeded in collecting 3,251 weapons and 14,354 explosives (including rounds of ammunition, grenades, TNT etc) from the five target communes. This was a significant increase over the ‘several hundred’ initially estimated during the feasibility stage. The extent of this success relied on a number of factors:

1. Cooperation and enthusiasm of the civil and security authorities at all levels
2. The weariness of war and violence in the target area and the desire for peace and security.
3. The promise of development in exchange for the voluntary hand in of illegal weapons
4. Utilising the community networks and personnel established by PFD in the target area.
5. The personal influence of the field manager in the target area.

Whilst the extent of local physical security cannot be judged solely on numbers of weapons collected, the removal of more than 3000 weapons from Snuol district has undoubtedly had a significant impact. The Klerx¹, Buwalda² and PFD³ evaluations all point to drastic improvements in the local perception of security. The field manager, a local resident, displays real pride in the fact that people in his area can now travel freely after dark.



Above / Below: Weapons collected in Snuol through the WfD pilot project.

Problems Encountered

Whilst collecting more weapons than initially estimated was a success for the pilot project, it also demonstrated the difficulty in accurately assessing the numbers of weapons that exist in any given area, both before the project begins and once it is completed. A series of inter-linked proxy indicators had to be assessed in order to judge the risks posed by small arms in a given area and the effectiveness of any project to collect them. Indicators can be divided between universal and location / culture specific.



A universal indicator could be the number of weapons-related incidents reported to the police. A good example of a culture-specific indicator would be the Khmer practice of shooting into rain clouds to drive away bad spirits. A lack of gunfire during a

¹ The household survey showed that 68% of the target group believed that security had improved

² “The results of the project are well noticed and valued. appreciation is based on the increasing security as the people feel it, the development incentives received, the number of collected weapons and the decreasing number of armed crimes since the project was launched. The project contributes to an increasing confidence of the people in the public authorities” P19: Evaluation Mission, J. Buwalda, October 2002

³ See PFD Quarterly Report to Period December 2002, included on P10-P11 of this report.

rain storm is a good proxy indicator that attitudes towards weapons have changed. Assessing the direct impact of the project locally is relatively easy though assessing the direct impact of the pilot project in relation to the nationwide process of normalisation is more difficult.

The issue of non-violent conflict resolution must also be addressed. Removing weapons from a community does not necessarily remove the natural recourse to violence as a dispute-solving tool, especially if those communities have accepted violence for considerable periods. It was not the aim of WfD to eradicate violence but addressing the root causes of violence in communities is crucial to building sustainable peace.

Finally, whilst the pilot project was successful in collecting large numbers of weapons and increasing security in the target area, the surrounding communes and districts continued to suffer from problems related to small arms. This is not a fault of the pilot project but rather demonstrates the need for a coordinated approach and an expansion of the project to surrounding areas.

3.2 Weapons Destructions

Positive Impact

Of the 3,251 weapons collected under the WfD programme, all but 15 of these weapons have been publicly destroyed in a number of ceremonies. The extensive numbers of explosives collected were destroyed by CMAC. A large destruction ceremony was organised in Kratie town on 3 July 2001 where 5,124 weapons were destroyed, 2,754 of which came from the pilot project in Snuol. This destruction ceremony was attended by the provincial governor, representatives of non-governmental organisations and thousands of local people.

Flames of Peace have both a significant public awareness impact on the local population (who can see for themselves that the weapons handed in are not being sold or used for repressive purposes), the regional population (who can see that Kratie province is becoming more secure and less isolated) and the international community (which can see that Cambodia as a nation is making progress towards peace).



Above left: Flame of Peace in Kratie, July 2001



Above right: Local Flame of Peace in Snuol

Problems Encountered

Whilst the vast majority of the weapons collected during the project were destroyed, the political and legal processes for destroying the weapons were not always smooth. The weapons for the large Flame of Peace in July 2001 had been taken to military storage facilities in Kratie and organising their release required the intervention of the provincial governor. As the nationwide programme of public weapons destructions has progressed, many of these problems have disappeared. Whilst small-scale destructions at the point of collection have the greatest public awareness impact, gaining official permission for them and destroying the weapons sufficiently proved to be difficult.

3.3 Development Component

Positive Impact

The partnership between EU ASAC and PFD resulted in high quality, sustainable development outputs thanks to the extensive experience of PFD in the target area. Of particular importance was the emphasis placed by PFD on the need to work closely within communities to ensure that all stakeholders understood how to effectively manage the development they received. The Village Development Councils (which had already been established by PFD) were a crucial instrument for effectively prioritising development needs, disseminating the Weapons for Development philosophy and organising community responsibilities. Successfully achieving the latter elements proved more difficult.



Above left: A health post in Svay Chreas commune constructed by PFD in exchange for weapons.

Above right: A water well in Snuol commune constructed by PFD in exchange for weapons.

Both the Klerx⁴ and Buwalda evaluations praised the high quality of the development provided by PFD. Both the Klerx⁵ and Buwalda⁶ evaluations recommended that development incentives should be limited to US\$ 10,000 per commune in line with Seila levels of investment nationally.

The development projects provided in exchange for weapons have been mapped on a GPS/GIS system. A map of the target area showing all development projects and the weapons exchanged for them is attached as Annex One. A list of the development provided and the number of beneficiaries is attached as Annex Two.

In addition to the development funded through the Netherlands grant, five sections of rural road were also constructed, under the supervision of PFD. These roads were paid with 100 tons of rice through the Food for Work mechanism established by the World Food Programme.

⁴ P12, Annex 6 P4 and Annex 7, P6: Snuol Review Study, G. Klerx March 2002

⁵ P15: Snuol Review Study, G. Klerx March 2002

⁶ P23: Evaluation Mission, J. Buwalda, October 2002

Problems Encountered

The partnership between PFD and EU ASAC worked very smoothly, aided by the fact that EU ASAC hired experienced ex-PFD staff as field workers.

The main development problems experienced were those linked to the onset of the monsoon seasons and the inability to access the water table in some areas (notably the rubber plantation in Snuol) despite numerous attempts.

One concern raised by the Klerx evaluation⁷ was whether the target population fully understood that the development was provided in exchange for weapons. This links with the assertion by the Buwalda evaluation⁸ that public awareness needs to be an ongoing process within the target areas.

Communication between the EU ASAC Phnom Penh office and the field officer in Snuol was often very difficult largely due to the remoteness of the project site. On occasion this led to problems only being discovered after they had occurred. An effective system of communication is essential to the success of WfD.



Above left: A school in Khsim commune constructed by PFD in exchange for weapons

Above right: School latrines in Pir Thnou Commune constructed by PFD in exchange for weapons.

⁷ P12: Snuol Review Study, G. Klerx March 2002

⁸ P22: Evaluation Mission, J. Buwalda, October 2002

3.4 Police Support

3.4.1 Provision of Equipment

Positive Impact

Overall, the provision of equipment to the police has had a positive impact as displayed through discussions with the police in the target area, the unhindered access by PFD staff to the most remote areas of Snuol⁹ and the findings of the Klerx¹⁰ and Buwalda evaluations.¹¹ The increased mobility, visibility and ability to communicate has greatly improved the professional capacity of the local police, reflected by a decrease in crime and improved security.

The motorbikes, bicycles and radios have been of greatest benefit since transport and communication continue to be the biggest obstacles nationwide to an effective police force. Interventions across large distances are now possible allowing criminals to be stopped as they attempt to enter or leave an area. The cupboards have also been successfully utilised for storing police documents though they are entirely unsuitable for securely storing weapons or ammunition. The whiteboards were not universally utilised immediately, but were soon used to good effect by the police to plan and display work schedules.



Above: Snuol police use a radio provided by EU ASAC.

Problems Encountered

There were a number of problems encountered in the early stages of the police support element, principally linked to the correct usage of equipment. Since the Royal government is unable to equip the national police, any transport assets available are predominantly the personal property of individual officers and are used accordingly.

Convincing the police in the target areas that the equipment was essentially a part of their uniform was a slow process. At first the police could not understand why their wives were unable to use the motorbikes to go to the market and why their children could not ride the bicycles to school. This problem was largely overcome by emphasising the need for the police to appear professional if they wished to gain the respect of the local community. By the end of the project this message had been effectively disseminated.

To put the issue into context, before the project began, it was very common for local police to lend their uniforms to friends or family who wished to wield influence in a given situation. This practice has also largely been eradicated. It should be noted that the local gendarmerie were far more disciplined than the police in the use of the equipment.

⁹ PFD Quarterly Report to period 31 December 2003, Points 4,5,6,7

¹⁰ “With a radio system in place, there is more and quicker communication in case this is necessary” P11, Snuol Review Study, G. Klerx, March 2002

¹¹ “(A) quick response to criminal activities..... is indispensable to achieve peace and security. Therefore the (police support) component cannot be eliminated from the project” P24, Buwalda Evaluation

3.4.2 Police Training

Positive Impact

The professional skills training to the police succeeded in providing a skills base which enables the police in Snuol to effectively utilise the equipment given to them. The radios, motorcycles (particularly in chase and arrest situations) and whiteboards (to plan work schedules more effectively) are now all used as an integral part of the daily routine.

The most effective element of the professional skills training related to report writing. One of the biggest problems facing EU ASAC in judging numbers of weapons in the target area stemmed from the complete lack of police records. There was no means of telling how many weapons had been collected from where. Since the start of the WfD pilot project, the local police have now been keeping up to date records of all weapons and explosives that are collected as well as general crimes committed in the area. These reports have formed the basis of the collection reports sent by the field manager which are attached as Annex Three.

Good governance and democratic principles were dealt with during the CIHR training and were particularly effective for the wide ranging participation by all officers in the target areas. Judging the direct impact of human rights training is far harder than professional skills training, with proxy indicators again being most useful. Reports from the field all point to an improvement in police-civil relations fuelled largely by the improved professional capacity of local officers.

Problems Encountered

The police training component was implemented in two separate parts; the professional training by the Ministry of Interior and the good governance by the Cambodian Institute for Human Rights (funded by a grant from the Canadian Government). At the time of implementation, this was the only real option open to EU ASAC but in practice, this separation proved not to be the most cost-efficient and effective means of training.

A particular aim of the training was to encourage cooperation between the Ministry of Interior and civil society. EU ASAC has now made efforts in 2002 / 2003 to combine the two elements and has succeeded in producing a single training curriculum and framework which is implemented by the Ministry of Interior and one of the national civil society groups simultaneously.

The small amount of training provided to the police cannot be expected to transform the force over a short period of time. Many problems still occur within the force related to professional capacity. However, the training can be seen as a significant first step towards building a respectable, motivated and trusted police presence in Snuol.

The Klerx report¹² outlined a number of concerns relating to the financial efficacy of the Cambodian Institute for Human Rights (CIHR), the agency responsible for the implementation of part of the police training. Such concerns had already been raised at this point through a number of other CIHR donors (such as the EU, Canada and the US) and at the end of 2002, CIHR collapsed amid serious allegations of fraud.

¹² Annex 6, Page 2, Snuol Review Study, G. Klerx March 2002

3.4.3 Police Family Support

Positive Impact

According to an evaluation carried out by KAFDOC¹³, the police family support component succeeded in a number of respects. Many of the wives stated that they now no longer needed to “disturb or interfere with their husbands’ duties” in relation to their living standards.¹⁴ Many of the families engaged in small businesses were now able to earn between 2000 Riel and 10,000 Riel per day more than before. Families who received animals had succeeded in mating them or renting them as transport / farm animals to surrounding families.

A number of families traded in their items for other income generating goods when they were unable to effectively increase their income with what they were provided. One family purchased dresses to be used by local families during weddings which over 10 or 15 weddings per season allowed them to earn between 100,000 Riel and 150,000 Riel per season. Another family used capital from their grocery store to open a small butchers business.

The major lesson learnt from this component is that assisting the families of police undoubtedly allows the police to focus better on their duties. However it is crucial that this component is implemented sensitively in relation to the perception of the local community and the needs of the families themselves.

Problems Encountered

There were a number of difficulties with the provision of support to the police families:

- The organising, purchasing, distributing and monitoring of the equipment overstretched the human resources of EU ASAC despite the assistance of a local NGO. The limited experience of EU ASAC in implementing income generation programmes compounded this.
- Constant, long-term monitoring and support of this element was essential to assess its effectiveness and monitoring over a longer period has not been possible.
- Ensuring the equipment provided was maintained and utilised (correctly) and not sold at a later date proved difficult. Disputes, selling of the goods, creating unfair local competition and creating too narrow a commerce base in a small area have all been factors¹⁵.
- Accurately assessing the direct impact of the equipment provision on the ability of police families to earn more income and thus reduce corrupt practices on the part of the police has proved to be very difficult. This comes in part from the fact that provision of different items to different families makes it difficult to objectively assess their impact and in part from the lack of a structured monitoring system.
- Relations with the provincial authorities became strained, especially in Kratie, when EU ASAC refused to simply provide the provincial government with the funds to purchase the equipment itself.

¹³ Khmer Association for Development of the Countryside Cambodia (KAFDOC) used by EU ASAC to monitor the Police Family Support component.

¹⁴ P1, A report on the assessment of the EU ASAC project in Snuol District, KAFDOC, February 2002.

¹⁵ Klerx evaluation and PFD quarterly report December 2002

3.5 Perception of WfD impact by Partners for Development.

Douglas Ebbot, PFD Kratie Provincial Program Officer submitted the following assessment of the effect of WfD on the target area.

“Overall the EU ASAC – PFD agreement evolved into a good partnership for providing development interventions in Snoul District.

1. The development activities involved in WfD closely mirrored what PFD had done in the past. This program was a good fit for PFD because it provided funding to expand on the interventions available in the villages. PFD had already established the community organisation structure (Village Development Committees) in most villages in Snoul District and had raised their awareness through various assessment processes. This allowed EU ASAC to come in, and through further community participation, decide on what development projects offered would be best suited for that particular village in return for the weapons collected. Our experience with community based water supply, school construction/repair, and school latrines allowed us to carry out the activities the same as we were doing in the other districts in Kratie Province.
2. We have found that proper organisation of the community by taking the time to explain in detail the development process and define the roles and responsibilities of all involved parties, greatly facilitates the implementation of projects. During the early stages of the program, there was a lack of communication between EU ASAC and both the communities and PFD regarding specific projects. PFD relied too much on EU ASAC to provide relative and pertinent information to the villages. Adjustments were made for PFD to take a more active role in the planning and preparation portion of the development activities. An example of this involved the placing of wells within the communities. PFD spent more time with villagers during the site selection process in order to agree on a location that is acceptable for all potential users.
3. There were some initial problems between EU ASAC Phnom Penh and their field officers in Snoul regarding communication, reporting and delegation of responsibilities. This didn't have much effect on the development side of the program, but I think that it did affect the weapons collection process. The WfD field officers had vast experience in community organisation and development, but they had no previous experience in the collection of weapons.
4. When PFD first started working in Snoul District back in 1997, we were limited to two communes, Ksim and Svay Chreas. PFD didn't begin activities in the other three communes until 2000. Security was the major issue that prevented us from expanding our coverage area. Following the final surrender of the organised Khmer Rouge in 1998, there were still reports of roving bands of thieves up until 2001, which continued to restrict access to some villages. As we enter 2003, security in Snoul has really become a non-issue, and the biggest factor now affecting access to villages is road conditions.
5. The Bednet distribution team for malaria prevention actually entered Snoul in 1996, but they weren't aligned with PFD until 1997. They recollect that the early years were very dangerous, especially when travelling on the roads. They have noticed a drastic improvement in security over the last couple of years. This past year they had no reservations at all about travelling to even the remotest villages in Snoul.
6. Members of the Community Organisation team started activities in Snoul in late 1997. They report that during the first couple of years, when working in Snoul villages, it was very common to see guns and weapons prominently displayed both in houses and out in public. Now when they enter villages, no weapons are seen at all. They also said that before there were many incidents and altercations in the villages that

involved guns. They remember that it wasn't uncommon to hear about 3-5 gun involved killings per month in Snoul District. Now there are none.

7. Overall, the attitude of Snoul residents regarding the WfD programme is favourable. They report a greater sense of security and with it a more positive feeling regarding their future. Farmers note that the theft of animals and other household items has decreased. Villagers' one complaint about the program is the singling out of the police families for receiving additional support. Most families are as poor or poorer than the police and don't understand why they can't receive some economic stimulus or a bicycle as well.
8. The security situation for the entire province has improved, but there are still pockets that continue to have the reputation of being more dangerous, such as the interiors of Kratie & Sambo Districts. When travelling to these areas, personal weapons are still visible, which may account for the perception of being a security risk."

Douglas Ebbot
27 January 2003¹⁶

¹⁶ PFD Quarterly report to period 31 December 2002

3.6 Lessons learnt from the pilot project

- Implementing a Voluntary Weapons Collection Programme (VWCP) through the combination of public awareness, weapons collection, police support and provision of small-scale development projects is undoubtedly successful in removing significant numbers of weapons from local communities and working toward sustainable peace, community relations and development.
- Each of the separate components of the programme is significant to its potential success and WfD must be approached holistically to achieve maximum effect.
- Implementing a WfD project requires the cooperation and dedication of the civil and security authorities at all levels; national, provincial, district and commune. Building a working relationship with those authorities is crucial to the success of any WfD project.
- Implementing a WfD project requires building or utilising sustainable grassroots community networks in order to effectively disseminate the message that possession of illegal weapons detracts from physical and human security.
- Effectively coordinating the link between political cooperation at the national and provincial level and grassroots community networks is essential to the success of WfD.
- Accurately assessing exact numbers of weapons in target areas is almost impossible and a monitoring system based on inter-related proxy indicators must be adopted in order to judge success.
- There are many interrelated factors which influence both the continued possession of illegal weapons and the decision to voluntarily hand them to the authorities.
- The public awareness component must be continuously pushed and repeated in the target areas in order to have a lasting impact.
- Public destruction of collected weapons has a significant impact on people's perceptions of the sustainability of peace and security in their area. It also serves to effectively publicise the WfD programme beyond the immediate target area.
- A long term monitoring system needs to be put into place to judge the success of the programme on an ongoing basis after the end of the direct donor involvement. This monitoring system should take into account the continuing efforts of the police to collect weapons and levels of physical and human security.
- WfD, in combination with a process of national post-conflict normalisation, can have a very rapid impact on local security, though long-term social factors which lead to violence and mistrust within communities take longer to address.
- Maintaining effective communication between the head office and the field is crucial to maintaining the adequate flexibility and support required to successfully implement WfD.
- EU ASAC should work as far as possible in conjunction with organisations which are already implementing development programmes with a view to strengthening those projects by adding security improvement.
- WfD projects should seek to expand beyond their initial target areas in order that the successes of the project do not represent isolated pockets but rather a systematic approach across a whole province or area.