

Guidelines



How to establish
and maintain
gun-free zones

<<Since we are gun free, we are no longer afraid to walk at night. There are no more shots heard and we can sleep in peace. >>

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www.un.org/disarmament

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Foreword

Armed violence—the intentional, threatened or actual use of arms to inflict death or injury—takes many forms and has devastating consequences around the world. Although politically motivated armed conflict continues to be a serious problem, more than two-thirds of reported victims of armed violence in 2011 lived in countries not officially in armed conflict. According to the *Global Burden of Armed Violence*,¹ more than half a million people die worldwide every year as a consequence of armed violence. The indirect consequences of armed violence extend far beyond these numbers when one considers injuries, forced migration and the impact of violence on people's livelihoods.

In an attempt to prevent and reduce armed violence, some governments and communities have established gun-free zones (GFZs). A variety of locations such as schools, businesses, municipal buildings, parks and plazas, or entire villages have been declared GFZs in different countries. However, the expertise on how to establish and maintain GFZs has not been consolidated or systematically analysed.

The focus of these guidelines is on areas which have emerged from situations of pervasive crime and an absence of effective law enforcement—such as post-conflict settings or urban slums—in which illicit gun carrying is still a key element in real and perceived individual insecurity. The guidelines proposed herein were developed based on the assessment of case studies dealing with such challenging circumstances.

Clear and comprehensive guidance on how to establish and maintain a GFZ, can assist national governments, local authorities, as well as international development and peacebuilding organizations in their efforts preventing and reducing armed violence anywhere in the world.

¹ www.genevadeclaration.org/measurability/global-burden-of-armed-violence/global-burden-of-armed-violence-2011.html.

Introduction

Gun-free zones (GFZs) are to be found in every country. Legislation may differ, but typically civilians are not allowed to bring a gun into police stations, courts, parliaments, sports stadiums, airports, etc. While these areas could technically be qualified as “gun-free zones” (“gun-free” always applying to civilians, not to military, police, or even private security companies), they are not the focus of these guidelines. These guidelines centre on GFZs established as a—mostly regional or local—complement to existing national regulation, as a specific ad hoc tool to prevent and reduce armed violence in communities where a large proportion of (attempted) homicides are perpetrated with guns: countries affected by high levels of armed violence (above 20 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants) or countries in post-conflict settings.

Although GFZs may be known by different names in different places, the concept is the same: geographically limited spaces where the carrying or possession of guns is prohibited for civilians in order to reduce armed violence and promote public safety. GFZ characteristics and operation may differ in different circumstances, based on the type of restriction (on *gun carrying* or *gun possession*), the extent of their coverage (certain areas within a community or e.g. an entire village) and their duration (temporary or permanent). Our focus is on setting up GFZs in post-conflict settings or urban slums, where a return to civility is supported through multiple initiatives each of which add to an improved community fabric.

GFZs are initiated by national and local governments—sometimes in conjunction with development and post-conflict peacebuilding projects—, by business or not-for-profit organizations, or directly by communities at the grassroots level. By prohibiting gun-carrying or possession in areas saturated with armed violence where the vast majority of firearms possession is illicit, GFZs can in certain circumstances create “islands of safety”.² Such zones may

² The concept of a GFZ as an “island of safety” was first introduced by Kirsten, Adèle and others (2006) “Islands of safety in a sea of guns: gun-free zones in South Africa’s Fothane, Diepkloof, and Khayelitsha.” Working Paper of the Small Arms Survey, January. Geneva, Small Arms Survey.

help change social norms and attitudes towards guns by reducing the perceived need to carry/possess a gun and providing alternatives for the assumption that guns increase safety. At the outset, it is important to highlight that for GFZs to reach the desired outcome—reduce armed violence—they need to be wanted but also respected and enforced. Consequently, functioning law enforcement / rule of law is essential. GFZs need to be established in conjunction with other arms control, violence prevention and community security measures.

GFZs have been implemented to reduce crime-related armed violence, to prevent election-related armed violence or in post-conflict situations where weapons left over from conflict threaten peace, security and development initiatives.

Countries where GFZs have been implemented include Colombia, El Salvador, Philippines, Sierra Leone, the Solomon Islands, Senegal, South Africa and Venezuela. The guidelines provided in this document draw extensively from the lessons learnt of those experiences.

The information contained in the present guidelines has been obtained from existing literature (evaluations, programme reports, laws, ordinances, manuals) and interviews with representatives from civil society, international organizations and government who have played roles in the implementation of GFZs. The guidelines reflect the good practices that need to be followed when establishing a GFZ. It goes without saying that local specificities always need to be taken into account and that the guidelines be adapted accordingly.

Gun-Free Zones

1. Scope

The GFZ guidelines are a compilation of good practices aimed at providing guidance and support to national and local authorities, as well as to communities that are affected by armed violence, in their efforts to use GFZs as a means to reduce and prevent armed violence. In particular, these guidelines aim to:

- Answer questions on the rationale for establishing GFZs;
- Provide advice on procedures and steps for establishing, maintaining and evaluating GFZs;
- Provide information on effective practices based on previous experience.

The guidance provided by this document may also be relevant to UN agencies, international, regional and sub-regional organizations and non-governmental organizations that are engaged in or supporting the establishment, maintenance or evaluation of GFZs as a means to reduce or prevent armed violence.

2. References

The application of these guidelines fully supports the following global standards:

International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS), Module 05.10—Conducting small arms and light weapons survey, available on www.smallarmsstandards.org.

Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS), Module 4.10—Disarmament, and Module 4.11—SALW control, security and development available on www.unddr.org.

3. Terms and definitions

For the purposes of these guidelines the following terms and definitions shall apply.

The term “gun-free zone” refers to a geographically limited space where the carrying or possession of guns by civilians is prohibited in order to reduce armed violence and promote public safety.

The term “gun” refers to a firearm or a small arm.

The term “firearm” refers to any portable barrelled weapon that expels, is designed to expel or may be readily converted to expel a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive.

The term “small arm” refers any man-portable lethal weapon designed for individual use that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive.

The words “shall”, “should”, “may” and “can” are used to express provisions in accordance with their usage in ISO standards.

a) **“shall” indicates a requirement:** It is used to indicate requirements strictly to be followed in order to conform to the document and from which no deviation is permitted.

b) **“should” indicates a recommendation:** It is used to indicate that among several possibilities one is recommended as particularly suitable, without mentioning or excluding others, or that a certain course of action is preferred but not necessarily required, or that (in the negative form, “should not”) a certain possibility or course of action is deprecated but not prohibited.

c) **“may” indicates permission:** It is used to indicate a course of action permissible within the limits of the document.

d) **“can” indicates possibility and capability:** It is used for statements of possibility and capability, whether material, physical or causal.

4. Understanding GFZs

4.1 Goals, intermediate and long-term outcomes

GFZs contribute to the ultimate goal of reducing armed violence. Figure 1 explains how the establishment of GFZs is supposed to lead to the intermediate and long-term outcomes necessary to reach an ultimate goal—reduction of armed violence and the creation of

a safer public space. The establishment of GFZs can lead to three intermediate outcomes:

- Changes in social norms and attitudes related to guns;
- Improved policing and/or police-community relations;
- Fewer guns entering GFZs.

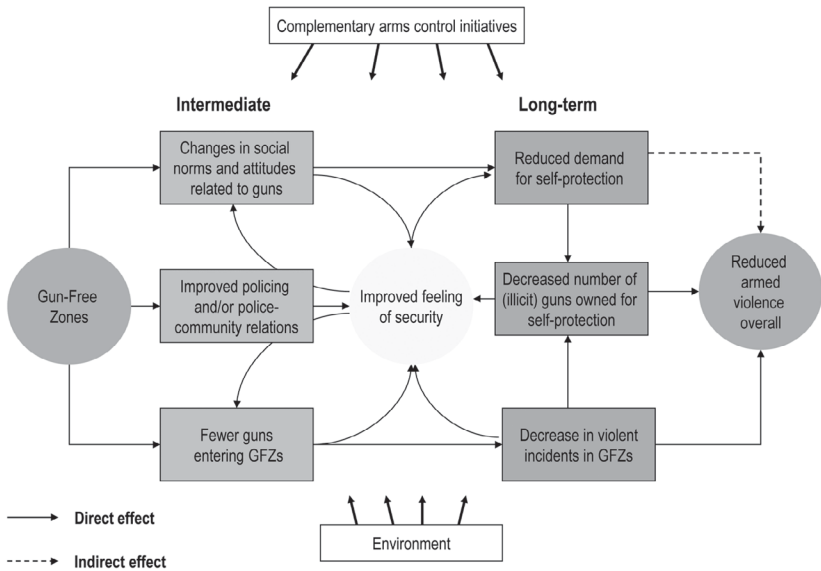
These intermediate outcomes may have a positive influence on individual and collective perceptions of security, which in turn can lead to the three long-term outcomes:

- Reduced demand for self-protection;
- Decreased number of (illicit) guns owned for self-protection;
- Decrease in violent incidents in GFZs.

The intermediate and the long-term objective contribute together to the reduction of armed violence overall.

It is important to highlight that external factors, such as the environment and complementary arms control initiatives, contribute to the successful achievement of the goals and outcomes of GFZs. As Chapter 5 will show, establishing a GFZ will never work as a stand-alone initiative. Attention to effective policing must always accompany such an initiative; and the intermediate and long-term outcomes of GFZs may be further enhanced by complementary arms control initiatives.

Figure 1—How GFZs work



4.2 Advantages and limitations of Gun-Free Zones

4.2.1 Advantages

- a) Can be easily implemented, as little technical knowledge is required;
- b) Can deliver impact in a shorter period of time than most other arms control policies;
- c) Address issues of social norms related to guns and demand for them, which are rarely addressed by other arms control initiatives;
- d) Serve as a vehicle to mobilise communities to participate in a wider debate about gun control and armed violence reduction policy;
- e) Can promote dialogue among national and local authorities, police and communities on armed violence and safety issues;
- f) Empower communities to take charge of their safety.

4.2.2 Limitations

- a) Are unlikely to end armed violence without supplementary measures to control arms supply and improve community security;
- b) Are unlikely to achieve their desired results if a zone's gun-free status is not well communicated to or understood by the public;
- c) May not deter all individuals from carrying guns into GFZs;
- d) Risk to be quickly undermined if violations are not adequately dealt with.

5. Assessing the suitability of GFZs to prevent and reduce armed violence

Before choosing to establish a GFZ, it needs to be thoroughly assessed whether a GFZ is an adequate response to address the armed violence problem prevailing in the geographical area concerned. This assessment needs to contain detailed information on:

- a) Particular dynamics of armed violence and levels of use and misuse of guns within the geographical area concerned;
- b) Legal feasibility of restricting the carrying or possessing of guns.

It remains important to highlight that GFZs are only one piece of the puzzle to reduce and prevent armed violence. GFZs should not be established in isolation and should always be accompanied by other arms control initiatives. Therefore, in assessing the suitability of such an initiative, a parallel assessment needs to be undertaken focusing on which arms control initiatives would complement the GFZ initiative.

GFZs have been established in different contexts, which can be grouped into three clusters:

- Reducing crime-related armed violence;
- Preventing election-related armed violence;
- Building peace in post-conflict settings.

5.1 Reducing crime-related armed violence

5.1.1 Understanding the dynamics of crime-related armed violence

An assessment of the particular dynamics of armed violence and levels of use and misuse of guns within the geographical area concerned, helps to determine the potential for a GFZ to prevent and reduce armed violence in that particular situation and what characteristics the GFZ should have. Where possible, the assessment should be based on data collected from relevant ministries or municipal documents such as those responsible for internal security and health. Some countries keep reliable data in hospital and morgue records and/or in local law enforcement institutions and other health facilities.³

A 2003 study in **El Salvador** to determine the impact of armed violence, to explore attitudes about firearms and to analyse the existing legal framework at that time, found that 65% of homicides were committed with firearms, half of which were legally owned.

UNDP and Sociedad Sin Violencia, Informe Armas de Fuego y Violencia (San Salvador, 2003).

The assessment should include:

- a) Number and percentage of homicides perpetrated with guns;
- b) Number of hospitalizations for treatment of gun injuries;
- c) Predominant locations where homicides and armed incidents take place;
- d) Predominant days and times when homicides and armed incidents take place;
- e) Locations where people feel most unsafe;
- f) Identification of the main victims and perpetrators (age, sex, socioeconomic status, criminal records, etc.);

³ Data collection is recommended to be undertaken in accordance with the procedures outlined in ISACS module 05.10. www.smallarmsstandards.org.

- g) Specific areas where guns are carried openly, if applicable;
- h) Number of guns owned legally by civilians;
- i) Estimate of number of guns owned illegally by civilians;
- j) Main sources of legal and illegal guns;
- k) Types of gun that are being used (including make, model, and calibre).

5.1.2 Assessing the legal feasibility of Gun-Free Zones

An assessment of the laws and regulations regarding guns should be undertaken to determine if GFZs can legally be established.

In **El Salvador** an assessment completed in 2005 determined that a complete ban on carrying firearms would violate national law, which recognized the right to carry a weapon under legally permitted circumstances. Therefore, the recommendation of the study was to limit GFZs to specifically designated areas.

Cano, *¿Vivir sin armas?*, 22.

The assessment should inquire if:

- a) Relevant gun laws already include limitations on the possession or carrying of guns;
- b) Existing law permits national governing bodies such as Ministries of Public Security, Interior, Justice, and National Commissions or local authorities, such as mayors, chiefs, traditional authorities to regulate public spaces and/or implement temporary limitations on gun carrying or possession.

The national governing body or the local authority in charge of the space where a GFZ will be established, may create executive orders or municipal ordinances to implement a GFZ. These executive orders or municipal ordinances are subsidiary to the national legislation or local/municipal ordinances.

In some cases, it may be necessary to change national gun legislation before GFZs can be considered.

A different type of GFZ: South Africa—grass-roots movement to establish GFZs in private locations

The establishment of GFZs in South Africa was largely a grass-roots movement spearheaded by the NGO Gun Free South Africa (GFSA) and spread throughout the country as an increasing number of locations voluntarily declared themselves gun-free. The GFZs were established in accordance with anti-trespassing laws, where individuals carrying a gun could be denied access to privately owned spaces, such as buildings, businesses or institutions that have a GFZ policy. GFZs were enforced by private means and visitors would be asked to leave their guns in locked safes at the entrance. In case there were no locked safes, visitors were advised of the rule and asked not to enter the GFZ. Bringing a gun into such a GFZ could be prosecuted as civil offence.

5.1.3 Complementary arms control initiatives

Complementary arms control initiatives implemented together with the GFZ may include:

- a) Awareness-raising campaigns;
- b) Weapons collection and destruction programmes;
- c) Revision of national legislation on gun control;
- d) Training for law enforcement;
- e) Improvement in management of government weapons stockpiles;
- f) Promotion of public occupation and ownership of public spaces (through cultural activities and physical improvements).

5.2 Preventing election-related armed violence

5.2.1 Understanding the dynamics of election-related armed violence

In order to determine the potential for a time-limited GFZ during an election period (months leading up to elections, during the elections themselves and weeks following the announcement of the result of elections), the risk of election-related armed violence on the one hand and the particular dynamics of armed violence on the other hand need to be assessed.

The Commission on Elections (COMELEC) of the Philippines issued a 45-day ban on the carrying of firearms. Under the terms of the ban, civilians are not allowed to carry firearms outside of their homes, even if they are licensed. Only uniformed police officers or soldiers on duty are authorized to carry guns, and the law is so stringent that off-duty police officers who are in possession of firearms will be subject to arrest. Politicians are prohibited from hiring bodyguards during the election period and possessing firearms as they campaign around the country.

Comelec Resolution Number 9715 of 18 June 2013

Where possible, the assessment should be based on data collected from relevant ministries or municipal documents.

The assessment should include:

- a) Clear timeline of election-related activities (including official start of campaigning, dates for political rallies, public gatherings);
- b) Analysis of factors that can lead to election-related armed violence (such as flawed voter lists, misuse of incumbency, lack of transparency, dominance of political dynasties);
- c) Identification of towns and provinces that are thought to be vulnerable to violence during election season;
- d) Identification of private armies and militias and their possible role;
- e) Election-related homicides in past elections.

5.2.2 Assessing the legal feasibility of GFZ

An assessment of existing laws and regulations regarding gun ownership should be undertaken to determine if (temporary) GFZs can legally be established.

The assessment should inquire if:

- a) **Electoral law** does not prevent a gun ban;
- b) Relevant **gun laws** already include limitations on the possession or carrying of guns;
- c) Existing law permits national governing bodies such as Ministries of Public Security, Interior, Justice, and National

Commissions, Electoral Commissions or local authorities, such as mayors, chiefs, traditional authorities to implement temporary limitations on gun carrying.

The national governing body or the local authority in charge of the space where a GFZ will be established may create **executive orders** or **municipal ordinances** to implement a GFZ. These are subsidiary to the national legislation or local/municipal ordinances.

In some cases, it may be necessary to change gun legislation before GFZs can be considered.

5.2.3 Complementary arms control initiatives

Complementary arms control initiatives implemented together with the GFZ may include:

- a) Special training of law enforcement agencies on proper arms handling in a manner to contribute to free and fair elections;
- b) Improvement in policing capacity and security sector reform;
- c) Weapons collection and destruction programmes;
- d) Improvement in management of government weapons stockpiles.

5.3 Building peace in post-conflict settings

5.3.1 Understanding the dynamics of armed violence in post-conflict settings

An assessment of the particular dynamics of armed violence within the geographical area concerned, helps to determine the potential for a GFZ to prevent and reduce armed violence. Where possible, the assessment should be based on data collected from relevant ministries or municipal documents such as those responsible for internal security and health.⁴

The assessment should include:

⁴ Data collection is recommended to be undertaken in accordance with the procedures outlined in ISACS module 05.10. www.smallarmsstandards.org.

- a) Number and percentage of homicides perpetrated with guns;
- b) Number of hospitalisations for treatment of gun injuries;
- c) Effectiveness of law enforcement (e.g. clearance rate), and perceptions of security within the population;
- d) Predominant locations where homicides and armed incidents take place;
- e) Identification of the main victims and perpetrators (age, sex, socioeconomic status, criminal records, etc.);
- f) Estimate of number of guns owned illegally by civilians;
- g) Location of known or rumoured illegal stockpiles.

5.3.2 Assessing the legal feasibility of GFZ

An assessment of the laws and regulations regarding guns should be undertaken to determine if GFZs can legally be established. GFZs in post-conflict settings cover usually whole villages and communities and ban the possession of guns rather than only carrying guns.

The assessment should inquire if:

- a) Relevant gun laws already include limitations on the possession of guns;
- b) Existing law permits national governing bodies such as Ministries of Public Security, Interior, Justice, and National Commissions or local authorities, such as mayors, chiefs, traditional authorities to regulate public spaces and/or implement limitations on gun possession.

In the **Solomon Islands**, once the Peace Monitoring Council was satisfied that a village no longer contained weapons, a ceremony was held, where village leaders signed a “weapons-free declaration”: a solemn pledge that they would work to keep the village free of all weapons in the future.

The national governing body or the local authority in charge of the space where a GFZ will be established, may create **executive orders** or **municipal ordinances** to implement a GFZ. These executive orders or municipal ordinances are subsidiary to the national legislation or local/municipal ordinances.

In some cases, it may be necessary to change gun legislation before GFZs can be considered.

5.3.3 Complementary arms control initiatives

GFZs in post-conflict settings are always implemented with programmes for the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of former combatants.⁵

Complementary arms control initiatives implemented together with the GFZ may include:

- a) Weapons collection and destruction programmes (part of DDR programmes);
- b) Stockpile management (part of DDR programmes);
- c) Awareness-raising programmes;
- d) Training of law enforcement officials.

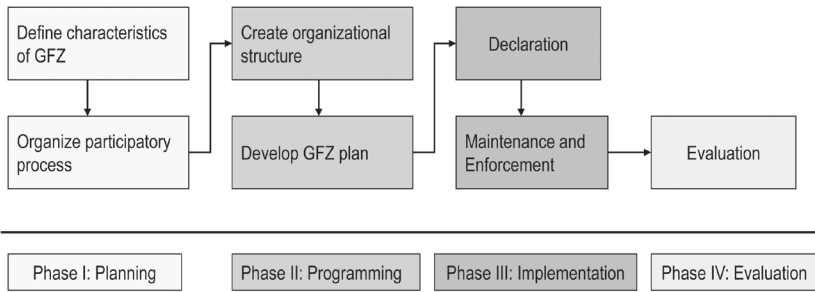
6. Phases to establish a Gun-Free Zone

The establishment of a GFZ—whether aimed at reducing crime-related armed violence, preventing election-related armed violence, or contributing to building peace in post-conflict settings—consists of 4 phases:

- Phase I “Planning”;
- Phase II “Programming”;
- Phase III “Implementation”;
- Phase IV “Evaluation”.

⁵ For more information on DDR programmes, consult the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration standards (IDDRS) developed by the United Nations: www.unddr.org.

Figure 2—Steps to establish a GFZ



6.1 Phase I: Planning

6.1.1 Defining characteristics of GFZ

6.1.1.1 Defining areas

Defining the areas where GFZs should be established depends on the assessment as detailed in Chapter 5.

While GFZs to prevent election-related armed violence as well as GFZs in post-conflict settings are often entire villages, GFZs to reduce crime-related armed violence are generally established in public spaces within the municipalities.

Where local leadership and support exist for the initiative, GFZs may be established in areas:

- a) Where armed violence is most prevalent (districts, municipalities, or villages);
- b) Where emotions can flare up, often combined with intoxication (nightlife quarters, sports stadiums, fairs, large public events);
- c) Where conflictuous interpersonal confrontation should be especially discouraged (schools, hospitals, retirement homes);

In South Africa, venues were strategically targeted when they i) had leadership close to the community (religious institutions, NGOs), ii) had a geographic link to conflict and/or the negative consequences of gun violence (health facilities, bars) and iii) were commonly agreed-upon areas where many vulnerable gather (schools, hospitals).

d) Where people make use of their political rights (polling stations, political rallies, party central offices, convention centres);

e) Other places where people gather (markets, parks, beaches).

While some of those areas might be privately owned, such as bars, nightlife quarters, they are publicly accessible and have to comply with public law.

Public and private space in **New York City**

An example of a ban that applied to publicly as well as privately owned places, is the smoke-ban in restaurants, bars and public spaces in New York City, USA. The municipality has enacted laws and policies that prohibit smoking in (publicly owned) parks, beaches and pedestrian plazas, as well as (privately owned) restaurants, cinemas, theatres and bars.

6.1.1.2 *Defining time span*

A GFZ can be temporary or unlimited in time. The time-span of the GFZs depends on the assessment of the existing legislation and risk factor for armed violence (as described under chapter 5).

In **Colombia**, GFZs were limited to holidays, weekends after paydays, and elections.

In **Senegal** and the **Philippines** the ban on carrying a gun was limited to the election period.

The GFZs established in post-conflict settings together with disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, such as in **Sierra Leone** and **Solomon Islands**, are permanent and comprehensive.

A temporary GFZ can be:

a) Restricted to certain days (holidays, weekends following paydays, etc.);

b) Restricted to months, in particular the election period;

c) Limited to a certain number of weeks or months (if the legislation does not allow a permanent ban).

6.1.1.3 Defining type of restriction

GFZs can put either a restriction on *possessing* or a restriction on *carrying* a gun within the geographical area concerned. GFZs focusing on possession have generally been implemented in post-conflict settings where former combatants and other civilians were given the opportunity to turn in their guns.

In December 2011, **Senegal's** Interior Minister issued a decree to ban the carrying of guns for a period of four months which included presidential elections. During that period, the carrying of arms, ammunition and explosive devices of all categories was prohibited across the national territory. No weapon, regardless of its category or nature, could be transported outside of homes or workplaces.

Arrête Ministériel n° 14796 MINT/DGPN/DST/DAM
en date du 30 décembre 2011

In case of restriction on carrying, while the carrying of guns in a GFZ is prohibited, citizens are still allowed to own/possess guns.

6.1.2 Organizing a participatory process

6.1.2.1 Identifying stakeholders and supporters

An analysis of all relevant stakeholder groups should take place from the outset of the planning phase. Stakeholders should be analysed at both the national and local levels and include actors responsible for the legal framework and standardization, communication and enforcement, as well as those people most directly affected by GFZs.

Some stakeholders to be considered include:

- a) National government (relevant ministries such as those responsible for internal security, justice, defence, health, education, communication, etc.);
- b) Parliamentarians;
- c) Local government officials (mayors, traditional village authorities, etc.);
- d) National and local police;
- e) Business sector;

- f) Women’s groups;
- g) Youth groups;
- h) NGOs;
- i) Academics;
- j) Specialists in armed violence;
- k) International and regional partners;
- l) Religious organisations.

6.1.2.2 Undertaking an inclusive process of consultation

An inclusive process of consultation and/or discussion about GFZs should be initiated at the national and local levels, involving all main stakeholder groups identified.

The discussion should include:

- a) Reasons for considering GFZs;
- b) Characteristics of GFZs (envisaged areas, time span, restrictions);
- c) Enforcement of GFZs.

The results of these discussions should be considered in the design of the GFZ initiative. Experience shows that when all stakeholders are involved from the planning phase, they are more likely to take ownership of the initiative and participate in their implementation. Special attention should be given to ensure the participation of women, adolescents and youth groups in the process of consultation.

In **Sierra Leone**, community public-awareness meetings were held to present the concept, debate the issue and vote on becoming a gun-free chiefdom. Through consultation processes, it was hoped that collectively stakeholders would come to a consensus on establishing GFZs. This consensus then created the community buy-in, trust and social cohesion necessary for GFZs to be successful.

In **El Salvador**, municipal ordinances were circulated and received input from the business sector, religious institutions and other civil society groups. This could be seen as a different way of consulting with the community in a larger, urban environment.

6.2 Phase II: Programming

6.2.1 Creating an organizational structure

After the initial stakeholder analysis and consultation process, the following should be determined:

a) Organizational structure necessary (distribution of tasks—who does what—among the different stakeholders) to plan and implement GFZs;

b) Structures to carry out the work of implementing GFZs that would need to be created at the national, district (optional) and local levels, their goals and mandates.

6.2.2 Developing a Gun-Free Zone plan

Developing a comprehensive GFZ plan is essential. It should take into consideration input from an inclusive consultation process. Ideally, the GFZ plan will be developed by a group containing local or national authorities, law enforcement officials, civil society representative and where applicable regional or international partners.

This Gun-Free Zone plan should consist of four parts:

- a) Background information;
- b) Logical framework;
- c) Budget;
- d) Overview of responsibilities and organizational structure.

The background information should include:

- a) Summary of the assessment (see chapter 5);
- b) Underpinning legal framework for GFZs (see chapter 5);
- c) Whether it is a ban on carrying or a restriction on possession;
- d) Areas to be designated as GFZs, if applicable;
- e) In case of temporary GFZ, applicable time span (see chapter 5);
- f) Communication strategy (see chapter 6);
- g) Enforcement strategy, including measures to be taken when GFZ are violated (see chapter 6);
- h) Complementary arms control initiatives.

The logical framework should include the following information:

- a) Timeline;

- b) Goals and desired outcomes of GFZs;
- c) Activities to be undertaken to establish and maintain the GFZs;
- d) Impact and outcome indicators, including plan for monitoring and evaluating the success of GFZs in achieving desired outcomes;
- e) Analysis of possible risks that can be encountered when establishing GFZs.

The budget should include information on human resources, financial and logistical aspects, in particular the following:

- a) Human resources necessary for the implementation; including local-level GFZ coordinators and facilitators, if applicable;
- b) Procurement cost of necessary tools to enforce the GFZs (such as metal detector, storage boxes, signage, etc);
- c) Production and dissemination of information, including communication campaigns and materials;
- d) Holding of community discussions;
- e) Positive incentives offered to maintain an area gun-free, if applicable;
- f) Training for law enforcement and other officials charged with enforcing the GFZ, if applicable.

If the budget items can be absorbed by existing budget lines, this should be confirmed and clearly indicated in the plan.

Clear overview of responsibilities should detail:

- a) Organizational structure (see paragraph 6.2.1);
- b) Minimum steps to be taken by owners of places to be declared a GFZ and by administrators/staff working in a GFZ, if applicable;
- c) Definition of officials responsible to enforce the GFZ;
- d) Law enforcement and other enforcement officials that need relevant training, if applicable;
- e) Roles and limits of private actors.

The GFZ plan should be approved by the relevant authorities and funding should be secured from the outset to avoid loss of credibility and momentum in the implementation of the GFZs.

6.2.3 Communication strategy

GFZs will only be effective when they are adequately communicated to the public. It is therefore important to think from the outset how the population will be informed about the gun free status. Informing the population about the establishment of GFZs starts before the formal declaration of GFZs.

A communication strategy usually includes the following elements:

- a) Summary/overview of strategy;
- b) Goals (general)/objectives (specific);
- c) Target audience;
- d) Key messages;
- e) Strategies (approaches)/tactics (tools);
- f) Budget;
- g) Implementation plan with accountabilities, priorities and timelines;
- h) Evaluation (what success would look like).

Tools to inform the population about the establishment of a GFZ include:

- a) Publication of relevant decree in official gazette or journal;
- b) Press releases;
- c) Public service announcements;
- d) Announcement on webpages or through social media;
- e) TV and radio spots;
- f) Announcements in supermarkets, laundromats, schools, public transport stops;
- g) Partnership with national actors, singer or sports person that support the GFZ initiative.

6.3 Phase III: Implementation

6.3.1 Declaring Gun-Free Zones

Formal declarations should be made for each GFZ location.

The declaration should include formalization of the agreement or policy for that location to remain gun free during the agreed period.

In order to be effective, the gun-free status needs to be communicated publicly.

This can be done through:

- a) Community celebrations;
- b) Public events;
- c) Press releases;
- d) Press conferences.

In the **Solomon Islands**, local authorities from weapons-free villages signed a weapons-free declaration stating their commitment to remain gun free.

In **Sierra Leone**, weapons-free chiefdoms signed an official weapons-free statute and prosecution document noting that individuals in possession of weapons afterwards would be prosecuted.

In **South Africa**, venues such as the network of BP petrol stations issued a formal declaration of their gun-free policy.

Media may be involved in covering the establishment of a GFZ as it can contribute to disseminating information about GFZ locations to the public and to bringing positive attention to these locations.

Upon declaration, the gun-free location should be marked with signs communicating its gun-free status at all main entrances to the GFZ and at various locations within it. Signs that use visual symbols or logos can be useful for quickly communicating the message with few words and standardizing the message across different GFZ locations. The standardized logo or sign created specifically for the GFZ initiative will help to enhance the public's feeling of being part of the initiative and can create a feeling of ownership by citizens.

6.3.2 Maintaining Gun-Free Zones

In order to maintain GFZs it is important that the zone's gun-free status is continuously communicated and reinforced to visitors, regular users of these spaces and new users, members or staff and administrators.

Some techniques for communication involve:

- a) Ensuring that GFZ signs remain visible;
- b) Making use of media (television, radio, newspaper, websites, social media) to communicate gun-free status;
- c) Verbally informing visitors, regular users of these spaces, new users, members or staff and administrators;
- d) Having an official institutional or community GFZ policy and explaining that policy to new staff or community members upon their induction (have the status on all internal and external communication such as letter heads);
- e) Promoting awareness-raising campaigns;
- f) Publishing penalties in case of violation of GFZ status.

6.3.3 Enforcing Gun-Free Zones

Adequately enforcing GFZs is essential to their effectiveness. GFZs may be enforced in several different ways depending on the location, resources and desirable methods.

Means to enforce GFZs include:

- a) Asking gun carriers to store their gun in a safe before entering a GFZ;
- b) Use of metal detectors;
- c) Use of physical searches upon entrance;
- d) Periodic patrolling, search and seizure by police;
- e) Installation of police checkpoints;
- f) Positive incentives, such as community development projects, for communities that remain gun-free.

In **South Africa** during the 2010 Football World Cup, all tickets sold had a list of rules which included the stipulation that guns were not allowed into the stadiums.

Different enforcement methods may be required for different locations. It is most important that action be taken consistently when a GFZ is violated.

Depending upon the GFZ, such action may include:

- a) Asking a gun carrier to leave the premises;
- b) Applying a fine;
- c) Seizing the weapon;
- d) Applying civil legal charges;
- e) Applying criminal legal charges.

In **El Salvador, Colombia, the Solomon Islands, and Sierra Leone** carrying a gun into a GFZ could lead to seizure of the gun and financial and criminal penalties.

Importance of consistent and systematic enforcement

- The consequences of violating a GFZ should be clear, standardized across different GFZ locations and enforced.
- The consequences of violating the gun-free status should be straightforward and predictable across all GFZ area.
- Those responsible for GFZ enforcement (i.e. local police, administrators of GFZ venues, local authorities) should be involved in the planning process of GFZs to ensure effective enforcement and maintenance later on.
- The type of action to be taken should be clear in the minimum steps for implementing a GFZ outlined in the GFZ Plan.
- Local authorities and/or staff of GFZ locations should be aware of what actions to take and who to contact in the case of a violation.
- These stakeholders, especially police and private security guards, may require training and special resources to adequately enforce GFZs.
- Positive incentives for areas that remain gun free can greatly enhance GFZ enforcement.

6.3.4 Continuous capacity-building for those involved in implementing GFZs

It should be clearly defined in the GFZ plan who will be responsible for which action under which circumstances. Stakeholders tasked with enforcing GFZ status may include:

- a) Traditional village authorities;
- b) Village or outside monitors;
- c) Village committees elected to implement GFZs;
- d) Organizational structures created in the planning stage;
- e) Local governments;
- f) Police;
- g) Owners, administrators, staff and private security guards of specific GFZ venues.

These groups may require continuous capacity-building to effectively implement GFZs. Where possible, it is best if the organizational structure at the national level, and/or a specific institution or organization that is a member of the organizational structure can provide such resources necessary to individual GFZ implementers and locations.

6.4 Phase IV: Evaluation

6.4.1 Evaluating Gun-Free Zones

Armed violence is not a static phenomenon; it adapts and changes with time—so should GFZs. Periodically GFZ initiatives should be comprehensively evaluated and lessons learnt documented.

The evaluation should include:

Results

- a) Analysis of changes in gun homicide rates, gun injury rates and rates of gun-related violence;
- b) Changes in perceptions of security within and outside of GFZs;
- c) Changes in social norms and perceptions about carrying or possessing a gun;
- d) Changes in demand for guns;
- e) Actual decreases in carrying or possession of guns.

Implementation

- a) Resources and training that were provided;

- b) Means to communicate GFZs;
- c) Means to enforce GFZs;
- d) Number of GFZ violations;
- e) Actions taken to address violations.

Lessons learned and recommendations

- a) Challenges encountered while establishing GFZs;
- b) Lessons learned so far;
- c) Recommendations for improving the continued operation of GFZs.

The evaluation should include impact and outcome indicators. These indicators should reflect the agreed outcome as well as the medium- and long-term impact as reflected in Figure 1—How GFZs work.

GFZ outcome and impact indicators

Goal: reduced armed violence overall

Indicator 1: gun homicide rate (city, or state level)

Indicator 2: hospitalizations for injury with a gun (city, or state level)

Intermediate outcome 1: fewer guns entering GFZs

Indicator 1: ratio of guns confiscated by police in GFZs to the number of police searches (or patrols) performed in GFZs

Indicator 2: frequency with which survey respondents report seeing guns carried in GFZ areas

Alternative

Indicator 1: number of violations reported by staff or security in GFZ areas

Intermediate outcome 2: change in social norms and attitudes related to guns

Indicator 1: percentage of survey respondents who consider carrying a gun in public to represent a threat to community safety

Indicator 2: percentage of survey respondents who believe having a gun makes them safer

Intermediate outcome 3: improved policing capacity and/or community relations

Indicator 1: number of search and seizures/weapons collections performed

Indicator 2: change in the accuracy/level of statistics generated on armed crime

Indicator 3: percentage of police interviewed/responding to a survey indicating perception of increased capacity to control guns

Indicator 4: percentage of survey respondents (population) indicating perception of increased efficiency of the police to control guns

Intermediate outcome 4: improved feeling of security

Indicator 1: level of security felt in specific GFZ areas, as reported by survey respondents

Indicator 2: level of security felt in general in the community, as reported by survey respondents

Alternative

Indicator 1: reported frequency of hearing gunshots

Long-term outcome 1: reduced demand for self-protection

Indicator 1: percentage of survey respondents that report wanting to purchase a gun for self-protection and protection of family

Indicator 2: percentage of survey respondents that report intending to purchase a gun

Long-term outcome 2: decreased number of (illicit) guns owned for self-protection

Indicator 1: guns registered

Indicator 2: percentage of survey respondents who report having a gun in the home

Indicator 3: guns turned in (to police or in voluntary buybacks and amnesties)

Long-term outcome 3: decrease in violent incidents in GFZs

Indicator 1: number of homicides committed in or near GFZ areas

Indicator 2: percentage of survey respondents who have witnessed a violent incident with a gun in a GFZ

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs

Enquiries on regional assistance:

UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa
mail@unrec.org

UN Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia
info@unrcpd.org

UN Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean
info@unlirec.org