

Caveats and Qualifications

There are four caveats/qualifications that need to be registered at the beginning of this report. First, the focus of this report – and the research that underpins it – is on the SALW-related activities of *states* and *international organizations* (IO). This is not to suggest that NGOs have not played an important role in addressing the SALW problem. Clearly, this is not the case – global civil society actors and academics have made, and continue to make, a significant contribution to the overall campaign. Rather, the decision not to include NGOs in this study is due to the rather more mundane fact that these important actors are the focus of a companion study. This being the case, this report will not address the SALW-related activities of various global civil society actors, except to count state and IO contributions to NGOs as an important element of their SALW-related programming.

The second caveat also has to do with scope. Specifically, while this report does not list 'epistemic' activities such as workshops, conference and research projects as a discrete form of SALW-related activity it does include them in its measures of overall state/IO spending. The reason for this is simple: although the charge of the study was to focus on the practical and operational dimension of multilateral SALW programming, it proved to be exceedingly difficult to disaggregate the epistemic and operational spending lines within the budgets of national governments and international organizations. Moreover, some states have judged these epistemic activities to be intrinsically important and have consciously decided to devote considerable resources to nurturing a global SALW-related epistemic community. Thus, while listing each and every epistemic activity would likely be both difficult and pointless, this report does factor this type of resource allocation into its overall spending estimates.

The third qualification also has to do with scope: What counts as *operational* SALW programming? Some programming and resource allocation, of course, is directly and obviously related to addressing the SALW problem (egs., weapons collection and destruction). Other activities, however, are more difficult to define with precision. For example, as the links between development, security and small arms become better understood, greater attention is being paid to addressing the 'root causes' of the SALW problem through the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of development. Does this mean that all development spending should ultimately be counted as SALW-relevant? Probably not. But, for some at least, the question of where to draw the conceptual line remains. In this report, programming and resource allocation is considered SALW-related only if it deals directly with the instruments of violence. Thus, broad development and poverty alleviation programmes are not treated as SALW-relevant (even though they arguably address the root causes of the problem), while development programmes that are focused specifically on dealing with small arms (eg., demobilization, disarmament and re-integration programmes) are included.

The final qualification has to do with the nature of the available data and the limits this places on a project like this. Simply put, at this juncture at least, developing a detailed picture of SALW spending by donor countries is impossible because governments themselves do not have a firm grasp on how much they are spending on what. A moment's reflection suggests two basic reasons why this might be the case. The first of these has to do with the kind of accounting problems always encountered when attempting to cost out a government project. The second – more important – reason, however, is a function of the fact that SALW-related activities tend to take place across government departments and agencies, with no single institutional actor providing oversight and coordination. The result is that no one person within the organization has a clear picture of overall programming and resource allocation or expenditure. Moreover, because of the time pressures related to meeting operational demands, it is often the case that even within relatively small government units no one is responsible for maintaining an ongoing inventory of SALW-related spending. To be sure, this varies from government to government. But the fact remains that if a detailed picture of SALW-related donor spending is to be developed in the future, it will probably require a formal *démarche* from one government to others asking