

are not always well-placed to play an effective role.

In this context, Canada is currently developing a strategic framework and action plan whose aim will be to identify issues central to gender and peacebuilding, and to define appropriate tracks for policy research and implementation. Consistent with this approach, Canada has begun to examine with NGOs, the UN and other governments how conflict, conflict prevention and conflict resolution processes can affect and engage women and men differently, as well as how to support and strengthen the contribution women and men can and do make to peacebuilding. With the Canadian NGO community, we are developing an operational framework to help us more fully understand the gender dimension of our work.

Meanwhile, Canada and the United States have jointly launched an initiative to develop a gender-sensitization training course for civilian and military participants of peace operations.

Small Arms Proliferation

Proliferation of small arms is a major threat to human security in many parts of the world. Countering this proliferation

requires better control and tracking of arms flows. It also requires finding ways of supporting local efforts at rebuilding social cohesion, restoring a sense of public security, restoring the authority and legitimacy of the state as provider of safety and security and strengthening civil society's capacity to engage in dialogue and action on security issues so that the public demand for weapons ultimately decreases.

Through the Peacebuilding Initiative, Canada has supported a number of initiatives aimed at addressing the small arms issue. These include support for a program to promote the exchange of weapons for farming tools in Mozambique and another program to exchange guns for consumer goods in El Salvador. It also included support for an initiative led by Mali to promote a West African regional arms moratorium. Canada has also helped fund a survey of the impact of small arms proliferation on South African communities by the respected South African Institute for Security Studies. In addition, Canada co-sponsored an international meeting in Orillia, Ontario in August 1998 which helped define a shared agenda between NGOs in developed and developing countries around the small arms issue.

Canada is currently finalizing a Peacebuilding Action Plan on Small Arms Proliferation aimed at:

- 1) improving the disarmament component of Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) activities;
- 2) supporting national and community-based small arms control efforts in the field;
- 3) raising awareness of the pervasive and detrimental impacts of small arms proliferation; and
- 4) exploring the challenging issues of governance that proliferation raises in conflict-affected societies.



CIDA Photo: Brian Atkinson. Guatemala.