

Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap MPTF

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans

**PROJECT DOCUMENT**

Project title: Improvement of data and SALW collection practices and SALW related investigations	
Targeted jurisdiction(s): North Macedonia	
Participating organizations: UNDP North Macedonia	
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Implementing partners: Ministry of Interior, SALW Commission of North Macedonia	
Project number from MPTF-O Gateway (if existing project): N/A	
Relevant SDG targets: SDG 16, Target 16.1, 16.4, 16.a; SDG 5, Target 5.2	
Project duration (in months): Eight (8) months Anticipated start date: 01 January 2023 Anticipated end date: 31 August 2023	Total amount: US\$ 513,600 Sources of funding: 1. UN MPTF: US\$ 513,600 2. Other sources of funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government: US\$ ____ • UN Organization: US\$ ____
Brief project overview The proposed project builds on previously implemented activities as well as identified risks, needs and priorities of the country. It aims to i) improve implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) that allows gathering of SALW related data, with a particular focus on data collection related to domestic violence involving firearms, ii) improve analytical capabilities of the Forensics Department, and iii) improved weapons warehouse management and tracing capacities leading to decreased risk of proliferation of SALW and improved security.	
Project Gender Marker Score (1, 2, 3 or N/A): 2	

Names and signatures of the Participating UN Organizations

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DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Safety and security remain high on the agenda as two of the main priorities of today's society. The basic human rights of every citizen, regardless of age, gender, race, or religious affiliation, include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture. Therefore, any security breaches severely damage these basic rights and freedoms of every individual/citizen.

In that context, the presence of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) threatens both the lives and livelihood of individuals in the Western Balkan countries. Furthermore, the presence of illegal arms and illegal arms trafficking (IAT) is also a threat to the region as well as to the EU countries. The low cost and the availability of SALW on the market can also promote or feed into a culture of violence, where gun ownership becomes a symbol of power and status, and gun violence a first resort for the settlement of personal and political disputes. In this regard, well-coordinated interventions that directly contribute to SALW trafficking and improved criminal justice response are much needed and ensure an integrated and coherent approach in the fight against illegal SALW.

The recent crime trends, including the dynamics of trafficking in human beings, weapons, ammunition and explosives, the rapid advancement of technology, and the difficult history of armed violence in the region, as well as North Macedonia's aspirations for European integration have led to increased need to provide systematic and consistent approach to SALW-related security threats and to promote genuine partnership between citizens and the police. With implementation of project objective, the security of the warehouses for official weapons will be addressed, and with the procurement of new equipment and building the SALW evidence-based database, the capacities of the Macedonian police will be significantly improved. The implementation of the overall activities of the project will provide quick data exchange within police hierarchy in the country, building reliable SALW related database, essential for intelligence led policing.

The proposed project builds on already implemented activities as well as identified risks, needs and priorities of the country. The project aims at solving most pertinent issues of improving SALW-related practices and tackles some of the priorities identified by the national authorities, national and international experts. This project was also specifically designed to complement the efforts of the national institutions to create realistic and relevant evidence-based SALW policies and accurate risk assessments through the 'Improving National SALW-related Practices and Building Resilient Communities' project in North Macedonia.

The project will improve the capacities of the authorities in North Macedonia to create more violence-resilient communities through series of coordinated activities such as targeted trainings, workshops, analysis and improvement of existing processes and data collection/digitalization of procedures related to tracking domestic violence with a focus on incidents that involve firearms, procurement of a specific and much needed instrument (the Desktop, scanning electronic microscope with an energy-dispersion

detector; SEM-EDD) for forensics, creation of technical documentation for improvement on physical security and storage of firearms and explosives, as well as procurement of a marking machine.

The project is intended at improving data collection, sharing and analysis among different sectors of the Mol. The project also aims at considerably increasing the precision and speed of forensic firearms investigations by procuring specialized equipment for the Department of Forensics (Desktop SEM-EDD). To enhance the physical security and stockpile management, the project will produce a technical documentation as a prerequisite for an intervention at the much-needed increased physical security of one of the largest firearm storages in the country. By purchasing a marking machine, on the other hand, the project will also enable the authorities to implement the regulation on marking of imported and deactivated firearms, thus further enhancing their tracing capacities.

The implementation of these activities will directly aid to the sustainability of already achieved results within current projects and create an excellent groundwork for future activities. The project also aims to ensure complementarity with already implemented activities by both UNDP and other implementing partners in the country. Therefore, activities and outputs have been coordinated with UNDP SEESAC, as well as UNODC and OSCE in North Macedonia.

The project rationale was developed and agreed on during number of meetings with relevant Departments from the Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia and in coordination with the National SALW Commission. In light of the implementation of the **Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW/firearms and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024**, strengthening of capacities of law-enforcement institutions in area of identification and combating SALW, building on the efforts of past and current initiatives and focusing on identified priorities have been the main guiding principles of these discussions. The need to address the illicit arms trafficking (IAT) which is closely linked with other types of organized crime such as domestic violence, theft, drug trafficking, trafficking of human beings, migrant smuggling has also been addressed.

This project proposal is based on the organizational model People-Processes-Technology¹ and the approach aims at aligning these three important aspects to apply an effective and all-inclusive operational intelligence solutions.

Hence, the **objective** of the project is to improve data collection, dissemination, and analysis in the area of SALW, to increase the speed and reliability of firearm investigations, to improve SALW stockpile management, and to contribute to integration of gender perspective in these processes, thus contributing to improved criminal justice response in the fight against illegal arms trafficking (IAT) and illegal possession of SALW.

¹ The model of people, process, and technology (PPT) refers to the methodology which is used in most of the Law enforcement agencies in which the balance of people, process, and technology drives action: People perform a specific type of work for an organization using processes which are streamlined and improved by technology.

The project is aligned with the Roadmap² and strongly contributes to the implementation of the respective national strategies and action plans, notably to the new National SALW strategy 2022 - 2024.

The Roadmap goals the project directly contributes to are:

- **Goal 2** – By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led.
- **Goal 7** – Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.

The project is also contributing to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16 (Target 16.4) which stipulates that by 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime.



1. Project Background (situation analysis)

As part of the activities within the Roadmap for Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, North Macedonia has been working on several initiatives. Currently, UNDP North Macedonia is implementing the project “Improving national SALW related practices and building resilient communities”, funded by the German Federal Foreign Office through UNDP's Funding Windows mechanism. The project started in July 2019 and was completed on 31 July 2022. The objective of the project is to improve the capabilities of the Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia (MoI) for data collection, data sharing and analysis, thus enabling realistic and relevant evidence based SALW policies and accurate risk assessments.

Within the project “Improving National SALW related practices and building resilient communities”, two important software solutions have been developed, specifically for the Ministry of Interior. One of these systems, the Police Information Management System (IRDAM – Incident Recording, Documents and Activities Module), is an incident management tool that has the ability to collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative information and suitably disaggregated data on incidents, including misuse and trafficking of firearms. A key systemic weakness that was addressed through the current project is the lack of a standardized and institutionalized framework for data collection and accessibility on incidents involving firearms on local, regional, and strategic levels. To address this, the project produced a comprehensive needs-based analysis that included review of the current IT systems, procedures, and related documents.

² Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW/firearms and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024

The analysis included working with an International Consultant, national experts and a wide working group which consisted of 24 subject-matter experts as representatives from 12 different Departments from the Ministry of Interior. The work done by the working group, the International Consultant and the UNDP project team resulted in a detailed needs-based analysis report. This report presented the most pressing shortcomings in terms of digital tools needed and provided the basis for further defining of the scope for the system. According to the findings of the report, there are well defined structures and procedures for many processes in the MoI. These are underpinned by legislation, the Law on Police, the Rulebook on Police Work and SOPs. However, a large proportion of the police work is still paper based creating inconsistencies in terms of data gathering, sharing and analysis. These findings were also confirmed by site visits to police stations as part of the methodological approach during the needs analysis performed as part of the project. The needs analysis showed a lack of integrated information management, lack of a standardized and institutionalized framework for **data collection and accessibility on incidents on local, regional and strategic level, which have a detrimental impact on the effectiveness of many critical processes.**

According to the report, the available data systems at the time made it extremely difficult for analysts to collect, evaluate, and analyse SALW data and to produce and disseminate the best possible products to inform key decision makers. Therefore, it is imperative that improvements are made to these systems and processes to significantly enhance the quality and depth of the information that will improve all processes and help key decision makers more effectively identify serious and organised crime, SALW issues and prolific offenders, among others.

For example, MoI current software system, HOST, that collects data on acts where SALW is used, together with all acts for which a proposal is made to initiate criminal proceedings, is over 40 years old. Due to the outdated architecture of HOST, a software system that is not based on relational databases, SALW-related data extraction or data analysis, is not enabled. It is important to note that the situation is further exasperated having in mind that digital information and structured data on acts where SALW appears, but criminal proceedings were not initiated, are not collected anywhere, not even in the old HOST.

This meant that there was lack of much needed and necessary clear and reliable structured data on legal and illegal SALW misuse cases, armed violence incidents and other firearms related data, resulting in poor risk analysis and threat assessment.

Furthermore, the operationalization and automatization of the Firearm Focal Point (FFP) in North Macedonia under these circumstances was not feasible without development of a new software management system that will collect structured data on all incidents, activities and investigations that are conducted by police officers during their work on a case.

Additionally, one of the requirements of the FFP is that they can trace all weapons domestically and abroad. In this regard, 4 out of 6 jurisdictions in the Western Balkans received a marking machine in 2020 (funded by EU through EU Council Decision 2016/2356 implemented by UNDP SEESAC) except Bosnia and

Hercegovina and North Macedonia as the legal framework for import marking and deactivation marking was not in place. This legal issue has now been resolved in North Macedonia.

Based on the above findings, there was a clear need to develop a new digital tool. The newly developed Police IMS (IRDAM) as part of the project 'Improving National SALW related practices and building resilient communities' is an integrated information management tool for the Macedonian police. It is envisaged that 3.500 police officers on all levels in the police hierarchy will use the IRDAM system. The concept of this custom-based digital tool is established on the delegation of tasks meaning that every police officer has access to the IRDAM system, according to the position he/she holds, and according to the tasks received from the superior. The system has been designed to support all police activities across the country, especially focusing on firearm related incidents, while enabling higher- commanding officers, to easily and quickly access data from all police jurisdictions in the country. The IRDAM system is a tool for reliable and quick decision making, based on real data collected from everyday police work on the field, accessible on fingertip for higher-commanding officers, but also for police-analysts; achieved by implementing ad-hoc reporting, dashboards, and possibility to extract data from the system for more complex analysis. The integration with other systems, databases for persons, vehicles, and classification of firearms, gives the user immediate, relevant, and unified information. Following this example other integrations should be developed in the future, for example with the databases of missing persons or the database of persons for whom an international arrest warrant has been issued. This means that the system has the ability for upgrades and additions of new modules, such as modules for evidence and acting according to the SOP on various offenses, domestic violence, trafficking, drugs etc., different types of acts, but all that can be related with firearm misuse.

The second digital tool, the Weapons Registration Management System (WRMS), with 2016 support by UNDP SEESAC, was originally developed for the evidence of the legal weapons in the country. With the first component of the project "Improving national SALW related practices and building resilient communities", WRMS was upgraded with set of functionalities provided for legal entities dealing with import, sale and distribution of firearms and ammunition. The upgrade of the Weapons Registration System is particularly significant as it has enabled access to the MoI's servers and databases for external entities outside of the Ministry for the first time. The benefits of the WRMS 2020 are extensive in the way of precise and reliable evidence of legal-weapons movement and traceability in the country: from the data collected on import documents, detailed evidence about physical border crossing of the imported firearms, warehouse reception, in-out of the store, or sale to the authorized weapon owner.

Both the Weapons Registration Management System (WRMS) and the Police IMS (IRDAM) implemented through current project activities within the Roadmap have numerous long-term benefits. First, they are modern tools that contain structured collection of data as it related to firearms and incidents. Secondly, they offer the opportunity for further development, as they are modern, structured digital tools offering possibilities for future upgrades as needed. Finally, they are very important for the implementation of the Roadmap as they will assist in the operationalization of the FFP (Firearm Focal Point), and directly aid

toward achieving **Goal 2 of the Roadmap for Control of SALW - By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led.** The Firearms Focal Point needs inputs on incidents and related data so it can function fully, and it is foreseen that both the WRMS and Police IMS - IRDAM) are integrated within the FFP. Therefore, the two aforementioned databases are mandatory for the full functioning of the FFP.

At this stage, the Police Information System has been created and 200 staff from the Ministry of Interior have been trained as trainers for different user-roles. The system has been procured, developed, tested, and installed at the Ministry of Interior. However, further efforts are needed as the Ministry of Interior addresses challenges that generally are not able to be foreseen during the different phases of system development but are very commonly associated with wider user acceptance of IMS systems in daily use. Some of these are - addressing of connectivity issues, making alterations to some functionalities based on 'real time' user experience, system reports, and further training. A total of 200 users have been trained on the 'train the trainer' method. However, given the large number of users, the implementation of the system was not part of the scope of the Funding Windows project. Even though the project beneficiary has shown a strong commitment to implement the Police IMS, the Ministry requires further support to implement the system and achieve its operationalization. Numerous experts within the project have testified to the 'technological darkness' in which Police force operates, and there is a consensus among representatives from project beneficiary that there is substantial further assistance needed for the developed digital solutions to become fully operational. It is envisaged and important to stress that this system should be used by about 3,500 police officers across the country, making it by far the largest digital tool ever implemented by Mol. Therefore, the Mol is currently discussing a staggered/phased approach (possibly by city or region), in order to avoid possible disruption in the current workload and manage risks.

The project beneficiary needs further assistance and expertise with implementation efforts in achievement of the vision for this system to become the main, daily operational digital tool for the Police, and with specific focus on SALW. The operationalization of the IMS is a crucial step toward the larger goal of combatting the illicit possession, trafficking and misuse of SALW, as the Police IMS is focused on gathering data on firearms. As such, the project will work with experts and vendors to address operational and technical challenges along the way of implementation of the system.

Additionally, there is a **need to support the Forensics Department in Mol.** The Department for Criminal and Technical Forensics reports on examination of firearms and ammunition, traces from firearms ignition, provides evidence used in criminal events within the territory of the Republic of North Macedonia.

The skills of the forensic scientist along with the equipment/instruments they have at their disposal are paramount for effective firearm investigations. As such, forensics has a special role in firearm related investigations and is a major contributor in combating serious and organized crime as there is direct

correlation between the quality of the forensic evidence and the adjudication of cases of illicit trafficking, possession, and misuse of SALW.

In forensics, there are several methods for detecting micro-traces of firearms ignition. However, the current techniques used in relation to gunshot residue analysis (GSR) in the Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia are several decades old and largely outdated.

Due to the above-mentioned, other methods have been developed, and as the most selective and sensitive instrumental method is the analysis of micro-traces of firearms ignition with a scanning electronic microscope with an energy-dispersion detector (SEM-EDD). This instrumental method is much more selective because it determines the morphology and elemental composition of the micro trails that are created during firearms ignition.

Gunshot residue (GSR) analysis plays an important role in the determination of when a firearm has been used in a crime. Established GSR analysis techniques are based on the use of a scanning electron microscope (SEM) technique which is used to scan the sample and find suspect GSR particles. Both software and hardware are fully integrated to enhance user-reliability and analysis speed, therefore aiding in investigation of incidents/crimes where firearms have been used. There is a clear need for procurement of this instrument which will considerably aid in the investigation process involving SALW. Furthermore, a visit by a team of forensic experts from Germany as part of the recent TAIEX project at the Ministry of Interior that observed the work of the forensics team in North Macedonia recommended the use of this instrument, as it is not only more reliable, but also much faster and easier to operate. By implementing the new method of work in the Ministry of Interior, only feasible with the purchase of the machine and training of the employees, the Ministry will be able to apply and fulfil its accreditation on the ISO/IEC 17025 Standard on Testing and Calibration Laboratories.

Obtaining the desktop SEM-EDD will enable the implementation of this method, which is currently considered as the safest and most useful for determining the remnants of firearms ignition in persons who have a reasonable suspicion that they have committed a crime using a firearm. The goal of the Ministry of Interior to fulfil accreditation according to ISO/IEC 17025 standard, will enable data exchange during bilateral and international investigations, and the evidence produced will be usable and readable for every accredited laboratory in EU. Hence, addressing this gap in the process of forensic investigations will be exceptionally beneficial as it will directly aid adjudication of cases of illicit trafficking, possession, and misuse of SALW and improve criminal justice response.

Finally, the **record keeping for official firearms utilized by police officers, as well as stockpile management** has been a challenge for MoI. The overall control of the number and types of firearms in the country, including official firearms, is crucial to create a 'full picture' to authorities, which provides full control of the situation thus significantly contributing towards informed decision-making and combating firearms trafficking. The Ministry of Interior has identified the need for systemic improvements in this area. Improperly governed and managed stockpiles of SALW may proliferate, deteriorate, become

damaged or create an imminent safety risk. The national authorities require assistance to perform their stockpile management duties in accordance with international standards and good practices, thus ensuring that they are capable to perform all stockpile management responsibilities. A major problem in these storage sites is the physical security, followed by the precise record keeping of the stored items and the duration of their storage (in terms of the period upon which a certain item is no longer safe to be stored and must be destroyed). There are several weapons storages in the country, however, the Ministry of Interior is of the view that storage in Gjorche Petrov should be priority due to its size and location. This stockpile storage is the largest in the country for official weapons and it is located in a very central suburb in the city of Skopje, North Macedonia. The warehouse complex "Gjorce Petrov" has a total of 13 buildings belonging to the Ministry of Interior (storage block houses).

Although the facilities are located in the area of the old barracks and are guarded both by MoI and the Ministry of Defense, it is considered more than necessary to install video surveillance and to secure the location in accordance with international standards. The current state of the site which does not concur to international standards, raises serious concerns about public safety, and cross-border trafficking of weapons in the region and beyond. There is only one ring of security fence around the field and no video security system is installed on site; meaning that the current situation is not following the international standards for weapons-warehouse security. Addressing these concerns is at the heart of the EU strategy to combat illicit accumulation and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition. Additionally, having detailed access to official weapons held by the Ministry of Interior in the country would be complementing the initiative in relation to the physical security of storages and would provide the Ministry much needed, fast access to records relating to official firearms and storage records.

The United Nations Firearms Protocol forms the basis and demands that all imported weapons are import marked. In addition to this, the EU Deactivation regulation foresees that all deactivated weapons are marked upon deactivation and verification. Both national legal requirements are already in place (Bylaw on Deactivation, and Law on marking which includes production marking and import marking) and will be included in the new law on weapons for which the working group is established and drafting.

In order to provide sustainable results to current activities and address these additional challenges and with UNDP is proposing additional/new interventions. These interventions are fully aligned with the goals of the Roadmap and directly aid in achieving the set objectives of the new National SALW Strategy 2022 – 2024.

Furthermore, the objective of the project has been coordinated with other implementing partners working on SALW control in the country. To ensure synchronization of efforts, UNDP North Macedonia is in continuous contact with UNDP SEESAC which is providing, since 2002, comprehensive support to the North Macedonian efforts to advance SALW control both at policy and operational level. Such support includes: strengthening of the capacities of the SALW Commission in North Macedonia through targeted training, capacity building and provision of required tools for the work of the Commission; technical assistance in development of national policies on arms control based on evidence, including the SALW

Strategy and Action Plan; support in mainstreaming of gender perspective through data collection, analysis and training; expert support in harmonizing the arms control legislation with the EU Acquis. Support for awareness raising efforts has been provided through assistance of the MoI in their campaigns, and most recently through the establishment of a regional Task Force through which North Macedonian representatives will be able to expand their knowledge and gain direct assistance. UNDP North Macedonia coordinates with UNDP SEESAC also on Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) efforts where SEESAC has done substantial work in the past and is planning an upgrade of three evidence rooms (Gazi Baba, Prilep and Tetovo). SEESAC also organizes regional workshops on PSSM which representatives of North Macedonian institutions attend. Countering illicit arms possession and trafficking is an area of particular concern to both SEESAC and UNDP North Macedonia. In addition to organizing regular meetings of the South East Europe Firearms Experts Network and other regional trainings and workshops attended by the North Macedonian representatives, SEESAC has provided active support for the establishment and currently for the operationalization of the Firearms Focal Point in North Macedonia, through expert technical support, tailor-made trainings, provision of equipment etc. More recently SEESAC has been providing support to border and criminal police services of North Macedonia in strengthening their capacities for countering illicit trafficking of firearms through development of SOPs, training and equipment. Given the diverse scope of SEESAC's work in SALW control they represent a key partner and source of information. Close cooperation and information exchange by the project will be ensured in particular in view of the ongoing comprehensive support by SEESAC to the Firearms Focal Point and the criminal police to ensure most efficient synergy of the efforts.

UNDP has also been in regular communication with OSCE and UNODC in the country to prevent the possibility of duplication and to ensure complementarity and sustainability of implemented activities of SALW control. UNDP has had regular and active presence at the local and regional Roadmap coordination meetings organized by SEESAC. The UNDP team in Skopje also has additional local meetings with colleagues from OSCE to discuss ongoing and future efforts in the area of SALW control.

The OSCE mission in Skopje has been working on several activities in SALW control. OSCE has been working on illicit SALW detection capacity of the MoI by increasing K9 capacities, including proposal for upgrading infrastructure for K9 locations to increase operability and capacities infrastructure, as well as development of SOP, training program and updating regulations for the use of K9 capacity in detecting SALW.

To ensure that activities implemented by OSCE and UNDP are carefully coordinated and streamlined, there has been regular communication between the two organizations. This has been the case with the project "Integrated institutional approach toward combating IAT and SALW" which UNDP is currently implementing with UNDP Kosovo under the MPTF programme. As part of the activities within this project UNDP is organizing a mass awareness campaign on the dangers of IAT and SALW both in North Macedonia and Kosovo in the second half of 2022. OSCE plans to organize an awareness raising campaign in 2023. This campaign is likely to focus on destruction and deactivation awareness and possibly other areas. The

team in UNDP in Skopje is working with the team at OSCE to ensure continuity and complementarity of efforts within this activity.

Within this project proposal, there are two activities which require close coordination between UNDP and OSCE, namely Activity 1.1.1 Preparation of an implementation plan and further training for the Police IMS (IRDAM) and Activity 1.3.3 Procurement of marking machine.

As part of activity 1.1.1 Preparation of an implementation plan and further training for the Police IMS (IRDAM), UNDP will train police staff to use the Police IMS (IRDAM). OSCE mission in Skopje on the other hand is working on development of digital training platform for the Ministry of Interior Training Centre. UNDP will continue coordination with OSCE and seek to upload training materials that have been developed for the Police IMS (IRDAM) and WRMS (Weapons Registration Management System) as part of the project "Improving national SALW related practices and building resilient communities" implemented as part of the Funding Window programme. This will ensure a wider access and opportunity for knowledge sharing among the police staff.

Furthermore, as part of the activity 1.3.3 Procurement of marking machine, UNDP will procure a laser marking machine to meet both national and EU deactivation requirements and regulations. UNDP will also provide user manual and basic user training of operators as part of this activity. OSCE will provide a specialized printer and paper needed and printing of the deactivation certificates, therefore ensuring comprehensiveness of efforts in the area of SALW.

UNDP also has regular coordination with UNODC. UNODC is currently implementing activities in the Republic of North Macedonia mostly within the scope of the regional project "Criminal justice response to firearms trafficking in the WB." UNODC is working primarily with the Ministry of Justice, the Prosecution, the Judiciary, the Academy on judges and prosecutors, the court experts, the Customs and the Police. The objective of these activities is to achieve harmonization of the criminal law and establishing a baseline on the changes required for implementation of the UN Firearms Protocol criminalization provisions. Besides this, UNODC has also been working on improving detection of firearms their parts and components and explosives in postal parcels. To this end a gap and needs analysis has been developed by UNODC and Macedonian Customs. During consultations with UNDP, colleagues from UNODC have advised that they plan to continue these efforts and continue to work on increasing the capacity for customs officials to detect firearms and illegal parts or components during inspection of postal and fast parcels.

It is important to note that all implementing partners have advised that they are *not* working on developing comprehensive digital solutions such as the WRMS (Weapons Registration Management System), or the Police IMS (IRDAM), developed by UNDP. However, colleagues from the implementing partner agencies have all stressed the importance of collecting relevant, correct and timely data to ensure that SALW related practices are evidence based and compliment efforts by other implementing partners. This also ensures there is no duplication of efforts.

These activities linked together show a comprehensive approach in the fight against illegal arms trafficking and towards achieving increased criminal justice response.

2. National Ownership

The proposal has been developed in close consultations with relevant Departments within the Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia:

- Bureau for Public Security - partner for all activities of Output 1.1. and Activities 1.3.1 & 1.3.2.,
- Department of Criminal and Technical Forensics – partner for all activities of Output 1.2.,
- Department of Uniform Police
- Department for weapons, ammunition and explosives – partner for Activity 1.3.3.

Additionally, UNDP North Macedonia Country Office has received a request letter for agreed activities within this project from the Head of the SALW Commission (attached as Annex 6 to this document).

The project is designed around the idea of determining priorities for further intervention and implementation within the framework and goals of the Roadmap, as well as building on already implemented activities. During this process, the main partners were consulted from the onset of the project in order to ensure that the stakeholders understand and agree to the process in which they will collectively be involved through the project's actions. This created a sense of ownership and it is an ongoing practice that will continue throughout the implementation of the project. The partnership already created with the MoI of North Macedonia through the current projects will allow for more sustained results in the framework of this proposed project and within the framework of the Roadmap.

The SALW Commission in North Macedonia will play a pivotal role in coordination and monitoring of project activities. This project proposal has been developed with contributions received from both the SALW commission in North Macedonia as well as specific departments, subject-matter experts and Managers from the Ministry of Interior with substantial working knowledge and experience in the field of SALW control. During the process of developing this project proposal numerous consultations were held with senior and expert representatives from the Ministry of Interior. They clearly emphasized the need to strengthening prevention, detection, information sharing and investigations of SALW in all forms of serious and organized crime. Police departments in North Macedonia underlined that to prohibit access to illegal weapons there is pressing need to have a long-term, systematic approach that is aligned with efforts in the area of SALW made to date in order to ensure sustainability of results. Aligning and addressing the needs of different departments in regard to SALW would ensure a more comprehensive and coordinated response toward illegal arms trafficking and improved criminal justice response.

UNDP North Macedonia meetings/consultations organized with local stakeholders:

- 15.03.2022 – Consultation with Bureau for Public Security.
- 17.03.2022 – Consultation with Bureau for Public Security.

- 22.03.2022 – Consultation with the Department of Criminal and Technical Forensics.
- 18.04.2022 – Consultation with the President of the SALW Commission.
- 19.04.2022 - Consultation with Bureau for Public Security.
- 20.04.2022 – Consultation with the Department of Criminal and Technical Forensics.
- 31.05.2022 – Consultation with the Department of Uniform Police
- 06.06.2022 – Consultation with the President of SALW Commission.

UNDP North Macedonia also held several consultative meetings in the period 15.05.2022 to 15.06.2022 to adjust the approach and develop this project proposal.

The project will ensure local ownership of activities. The Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia will nominate coordinators for each output of the project. Regular meetings with selected expert staff and managers on the project beneficiary from the Departments directly involved in the implementation of the project will be held on regular bases. The project coordinators will closely work with UNDP North Macedonia CO and will be directly involved and responsible for implementation of activities. The project will also meet with the Head and representatives from the National SALW Commission regularly to update them on progress of activities and ensure their commitment to planned results.

The Roadmap goals have been translated into national action plans. Therefore, the project will contribute directly to achieving the Roadmap goals and meeting the commitment of the Government of North Macedonia. The project specifically targets the following goals:

Goal 2. By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led.

- Strengthen capabilities for data collection, sharing and analysis.
- Prevent IAT through analysis and improvement of processes.
- Prevent IAT through improved institutional capacities, provision of specialised equipment and training.
- Systematically destroy all surplus stockpile FAE in an environmentally benign manner.

Goal 7. Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition, and explosives.

- Strengthen the capacities of MoI to establish inspection systems and implement Life Cycle Management of SALW and ammunition
- Ensure safe and secure SALW/firearms and ammunition storage facilities designated based on identified needs and in accordance with international standards.
- Increase human resources and administrative capacities of MoI for monitoring, oversight and evaluation of the firearms and ammunitions stocks

The project will directly support and complement the implementation of the new National Strategy for Control of Small Arms and Light weapons 2022-2024. This new SALW Strategy and related Action Plan has been designed in strict correlation with the Goals of the Roadmap. Project results will also have wider positive effect on other relevant security-related strategies and plans.

3. Project Objective

Building on the country's commitment to achieve sustainable solutions to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and its ammunition, the project will adopt a systematic and holistic approach to solving most pertinent issues of improving SALW-related practices of the national authorities and create synergies with already implemented activities in the area of SALW control. By focusing on attaining three of the seven Roadmap goals (namely, Goal 2, and Goal 7) the project objective will be to further improve data collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on SALW, to increase the speed and reliability of firearm investigations, and improve SALW stockpile management, thus contributing to the fight against illegal arms trafficking (IAT) and illegal possession of SALW.

4. Expected Results

The project aims at improving data collection, sharing and analysis among different sectors of the MoI - primarily Department of Civil Affairs, Department of Criminal Investigations, Department of Forensics, and the Department of Uniform Police (both across regional centres and police stations). This is crucial given that current state of technological development and the urgent need for improvement and sustainability of already achieved results as part of the current activities and efforts within the Roadmap.

The project also aims at considerably increasing the precision and speed of forensic firearms investigations by procuring specialized equipment for the Department of Forensics.

To enhance the physical security and stockpile management, the project will produce a **technical documentation as a prerequisite for an intervention at the much-needed increased physical security of one of the largest firearm storages in the country; as well as record keeping of firearms for official use.**

The project will also enable the authorities to implement the regulation on marking of import and deactivated firearms, thus further enhancing their tracing capacities.

The above results directly aid to the sustainability of already implemented activities within current projects of the Roadmap and create an excellent groundwork for future activities.

As shown above, the Project is designed with sustainability in mind and aims to ensure institutionalisation and broader dissemination of evidence-based and sustainable practices. **The intervention will thus contribute to a comprehensive approach in the country which is expected to create synergies with**

current, related projects towards closer monitoring and control of SALW, and planned, future projects. By fulfilling its objective, the project will achieve faster and more precise firearm investigations that are evidence based, and intelligence led.

Throughout the project special accent will be given to recognition of linkages between gender and SALW, especially as they relate to gathering and using data in the context of domestic violence. Consistent integration of gender concerns into SALW data collection and analysis and policy frameworks will be perused in order to develop adequate strategies to counter the misuse and proliferation of SALW. Those activities will ensure gender mainstreaming throughout the entire course of the project with the project team, supported by the Gender Specialist.

To achieve the project's objective, the following results which will be fulfilled by implementing several different activities.

At the outcome level the project will result with enhanced police operations and improved criminal justice response in the field of possession, misuse and trafficking of small arms and light weapons through improved data gathering process and improved technology and capacities.

Output 1.1: Improved implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) that allows gathering of SALW related data.

Indicator 1.1.1 Implementation plan for training related to the Police Information System, developed

Indicator 1.1.2. Further training related to the Police Information System completed for 150 trainees according to the developed implementation plan.

Indicator 1.1.3 Technical documentation for upgrade of the Police Information System has been prepared, particularly related to firearms investigations, specifically to the domestic violence context.

Output 1.2: Improved analytical capabilities of Mol's Forensics Department to improve criminal justice response.

Indicator 1.2.1 Successful procurement of the specialized equipment for Forensics Department.

Indicator 1.2.2 Guidance document developed

Indicator 1.2.3. Training implemented. 3-days training for 4 Mol staff from the Forensics Department, related to the usage of the new equipment.

Indicator 1.2.3 Exchange of knowledge, experiences, and information with colleagues from UNDP Serbia completed.

Output 1.3: Improved weapons warehouse management and tracing capacities that leads to decreased risk of proliferation of SALW and improved security.

Indicator 1.3.1 Needs-based analysis for official/stored firearms developed.

Indicator 1.3.2 Technical documentation for video and physical security of the storage facility in “Gjorche Petrov” is developed in accordance with international standards.

Indicator 1.3.3 Marking machine is procured, user training is provided. The number of Mol staff members that need to be trained is between 5 and 10.

5. Activities

Below is a list of activities that will be carried out to improve capacities of the authorities to improve data collection/sharing/analysis, increase its capabilities in criminal investigations involving firearms and positively contribute toward improved criminal justice response and overall security. The activities will be closely coordinated to increase knowledge and expertise and promote a more integrated institutional approach in dealing with firearms-related incidents and cases.

In close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior as the project beneficiary, the project objective will be achieved through three outputs:

Output 1.1 - Improved implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) that allows gathering of SALW related data

This important incident management tool has been designed with focus on firearm incidents within the Roadmap’s current project, ‘Improving National SALW related practices and building resilient communities. As part of this project, a new Police IMS has been developed. The system has been designed to support police activities across the country, especially focusing on firearm related incidents, while enabling, for higher commanding officers, easily and quickly accessible data from all jurisdictions. The system has been developed in accordance with current legal and operational requirements, tested and installed on the premises of project beneficiary. Furthermore, 200 police officers have been trained to use the Police IMS on the ‘train the trainer’ basis. It is anticipated that the system will have over 3,500 users, making it the largest system ever used by law enforcement authorities. This creates obvious implementation challenges on the ground which relate to technical, HR and operational aspects which were not part of the scope of the current project. Therefore, further operational and IT support is needed. The proposed project will focus on developing an implementation plan which will include a phased plan for implementation across the country. The plan will include activities, timelines, risk matrix, issues register, visits to police stations, regional centres and central units/departments of the police, trainings performed. The Ministry of Interior has advised that they would find the implementation of the system of this size challenging, and they need further support with activities which will normally accompany operationalization of digital tools with high number of users in large organizations, such as the Police.

In addition, the proposed project will focus on how the system can better identify and record gender related incidents. Despite the recent legislative changes, the high share of women killed with firearms within the domestic context in Macedonia is persistent. The data shows that murder by intimate partner is the most common form of female homicide in Macedonia and a gun is the weapon of choice in majority of cases which reflects the high lethality of firearms in domestic violence context. The national institutions have faced an increased scrutiny over cases of domestic violence and therefore see addressing this particular criminality as a priority and as a risk to safety, especially in the sense of gender-based violence. The increased ability to collect and share data regarding gender-based violence will contribute significantly to the more efficient management of these cases.

The project has also identified further need for 'on the job' and classroom trainings. Given the high number of users, both 'on the job' and classroom trainings will be provided to police officers, so they can be better acquainted with the tool, understand how the system supports current processes, and embrace the systems' full potential and benefits.

Activities:

Activity 1.1.1 Preparation of an implementation plan and further training for the Police IMS (IRDAM) -

The project will look at working with a dedicated team within the Ministry of Interior and the contractor/vendor to develop an implementation plan that will contain tasks related to making the system fully operational. The development of this implementation plan will involve joint working group/teams composed of representatives of the Ministry of Interior and the Bureau of Public Safety, who are fully familiar with the system. After development and adoption of the implementation plan by MoI representatives, this activity will include field visits to different police stations, addressing ad-hoc issues related to daily use of the system, and coordinating training adjustments and workshops. This activity is exceptionally important as a follow up to the development for the Police IMS which was created as part of the project "Improving national SALW related practises and building resilient communities". This activity is crucial given the high number of users which is approximately 3,500. The project will also map further needs as they relate to use of this specific tool which can be a part of a future initiatives/projects within the Roadmap, focused on combating illicit arms possession and trafficking. A total of 200 police officers were trained as a part of the current project 'Improving National SALW related practices and building resilient communities. The project beneficiary has expressed a need for a staggered/phased approach in the implementation of the system in order to manage possible risks and avoid disruption to police activities. As part for this phased approach, the project beneficiary will need support with further user training of additional police, most likely both classroom and 'on the job' training. The proposed project will thus also address the need for further 'on the job' and classroom trainings as part of implementation efforts. UNDP is also working with OSCE to address sustainability of training efforts. OSCE has advised that they are working on designing a digital training platform where training content can be attached. UNDP will continue to seek information regarding the progress of the development of

the digital platform, so that training materials developed under this project can be attached to the training platform in the future, thus ensuring faster and wider knowledge sharing practices in the future.

Activity 1.1.2 Needs - based analysis for module on domestic violence - Simultaneously, the project team will also look at working with an independent IT consultant to produce a further needs-based analysis, particularly related to firearms investigations, specifically to the domestic violence context. Statistics show that domestic violence remains a serious issue in the country. For examples, a recent Study on Femicides in North Macedonia performed as part of the current project showed that 53.5% of murders of women between the period 2008 – 2016 were performed with firearms. Having a systematic, digital module on domestic violence will considerably assist in keeping track of first-time offenders, repeat offenders, victims of domestic violence and actions taken by the police officers. The aim of this activity is to produce a needs-based analysis for a module within the Police IMS which will gather gender related statistics, especially in regard to domestic violence and in correlation to firearms.

Output 1.2 – Improved analytical capabilities of MoI’s Forensics Department to improve criminal justice response – In order to assist with efforts in firearm related criminal investigations, the Ministry of Interior has approached UNDP with an official request for procurement of a specialized equipment The Phenom Perception GSR Desktop SEM. **This instrument looks at gunshot residue.** Gunshot residue analysis (GSR) plays an important role in determining whether a person has used a firearm in a criminal act. The currently established techniques in the micro tracing/residue unit are based on using a colour test which represents an indication for presence of gunpowder. This is a very old method that has been redundant for decades. Forensic labs nowadays use scanning electron microscope (SEM) which is used for finding gunshot residue. A standard, specialized methodology - Energy Dispersive Spectroscopy (EDS) is used for **identifying** and quantifying elemental composition. **This type of equipment ensures an exceptionally high level of reliability, speed, and certainty in securing all important, indisputable evidence in investigations involving firearms.**

Activities:

Activity 1.2.1 Procurement of specialized equipment - In collaboration with the project beneficiary, the project will organize a procurement procedure for purchase of the instrument **the Phenom Perception GSR Desktop SEM.**

Activity 1.2.2. Development of Guidance and training of 4 MoI staff from the Forensics Department. A 3-day user training will be organized for 4 selected MoI staff from the Forensics’ Department.

Activity 1.2.3 Exchanging experience with other UNDP offices - The project will also reach out and collaborate with colleagues from UNDP Serbia seeing that they have developed guidelines for forensic investigation of domestic violence, including the use of firearms in this context. Consultation will be organized for exchange of knowledge, experiences, and information.

Output 1.3 – Improved weapons warehouse management and tracing capacities that leads to decreased risk of proliferation of SALW and improved security

The attention within this component is placed on the importance of stockpile management, including the safe storage of small arms, ammunition, and explosive ordnance. Improperly governed and managed stockpiles of SALW may proliferate, deteriorate, become damaged or create an imminent safety risk.

The rationale behind the following activities is to help national authorities perform their stockpile management duties in accordance with international standards and good practices, thus ensuring that they are capable to perform all stockpile management responsibilities. The added value to this activity is that the Ministry of Interior will have a much better visibility of firearms in their possession and thus will be well informed and able to plan regular destruction of old firearms, improving safety and security. At the same time, within this project output will look at the possibility of including complete record keeping of the Technical Booklet/warehouse evidence of every official weapon of the Ministry of Interior, which would include the following aspects: monitoring of the stationary and individual weapons possession/accountability (records), electronic records of the so-called Technical Booklet for each piece of weapon, servicing, handover and/or destruction of the weapon, accurate electronic preview of all storage sites in the country where the permanent or temporary service weapons are stored. The goal is to provide considerable improvements in terms of stockpile and official records, warehouse storage management and traceability, therefore contributing to overall weapons control, and thus reduce an imminent risk of proliferation.

This component will also address the gap to be able to trace weapons domestically and internationally. To facilitate this the United Nations Firearms Protocol forms the basis and demands that all imported weapons are import marked. In addition to this, the EU Deactivation regulation foresees that all deactivated weapons and essential components, are marked upon deactivation and verification. Both legal requirements are already in place (Bylaw on Deactivation, and Law on marking which includes production marking and import marking) or will be included in the new law on weapons for which the working group is established and drafting. The project envisages to provide a marking machine to the Ministry of Interior to be able to implement the before mentioned requirements. This will then fully close the gap on tracing in North Macedonia.

Activities:

Activity 1.3.1 Needs-based analysis for official firearms - The project team will work with the project beneficiary and expert/vendor to produce a needs-based analysis relating to firearms for official use. The expert/vendor will analyse current processes and procedures governing firearms for official use, as well as the necessary equipment, software and hardware required for tagging, barcoding, tracing, and record-keeping of firearms for official use. The needs assessment will provide the necessary information and detailed assessment of the current situation. Note: According to the Serbia's best practice in the region,

we do understand that official weapons are tagged with barcodes to facilitate 'in' and 'out' movement of firearms.

Activity 1.3.2 Technical documentation for storage facility "Gjorche Petrov" - The security upgrade of the storage facilities for official weapons in Gjorche Petrov are much needed. The storage facility "Gjorche Petrov" is the largest in the country and located in a central suburb in the country capital, Skopje. The current state of the storage facilities is such that it is run down and requires much needed repairs and additions in terms of fencing, roofing, video surveillance and record keeping to meet very specific international standards. Detailed assessment of the current situation will be done through this project, however based on the information received from the MoI representatives, there is only one ring of fence, which is damaged on couple of places, there is no video surveillance/ computer network and few of the buildings need roof interventions. The storage consists of 13 individual buildings, the security of which has been placed in charge of the MOI, physically distant and with no video surveillance at all. Although the facilities are located in the area of the military barracks and are well guarded by representatives of MoI and Ministry of Defense, more systematic approach is needed, by creating technical documentation for video and physical security of the location in accordance with international standards. In its current state, this storage could represent a danger to the general public and potential risk to theft and proliferation of SALW, since it doesn't follow the international security standards for this type of facilities. Therefore, an explosive limit license calculation for this storage location will be carried out by SEESAC later this year, to determine the maximum amount of stored ammunition and explosives for this location. This calculation will be supplemented by this project's in-depth analysis of the location and based on that detailed assessment findings an important intervention will focus on providing a technical documentation from a vendor which will provide all the necessary detailed itemized specification regarding the work that needs to be undertaken to ensure that the storage facility meets required standards. In 2019 The Ministry of Interior in North Macedonia produced a Handbook for safe storage and guarding of firearms. This document was produced in collaboration with OSCE. This Handbook is based on international initiatives adopted by countries such as the 2001 UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the nationally adopted Strategy for Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW Control Strategy 2017 – 2021). This Handbook lists the standards required for PSSM – physical safety and stockpile management.

The security upgrade will ensure that law enforcement weapons and ammunition are kept in a safe and secure way and further prevent unauthorized access to them. The project will look at performing a needs-based analysis and produce a technical documentation for the needed improvement to storage facilities that require timeline, design, and approach for works execution (civil works, electrical works, CCTV, and access control), to be prepared in close coordination with the beneficiary. Obtaining beneficiary consent to the technical design is required for this activity closure.



1.3.3 Procurement of a Marking machine - In collaboration with the project beneficiary, the project will organize a procurement procedure for the purchase of a laser marking machine. As part of this activity, basic user training and guidelines will be provided to the operators. The number of MoI staff members that need to be trained is between 5 and 10.

At a later stage UNDP will endeavour to support the Ministry of Interior with the development of technical documentation that would include procurement of necessary hardware, software, and related equipment, as well as actual technical and construction activities needed, that will participate in completion of sequence of activities in MoI for SALW-tracking and evidence. The new project will organically follow the activities implemented under this output. The above-mentioned interventions have an added benefit as their implementation will contribute directly toward the ability to systematically decrease the surplus of SALW and ammunition.

6. Sustainability of Results

The project is designed to ensure that the capacities, knowledge and products created in all of the project phases and in all the outputs are retained after the project ends. The project has been developed based on the needs of North Macedonia's guiding policy and legal frameworks. As such, the project development is also based on extensive consultations with main beneficiaries and stakeholders, which ensures institutional buy-in. The capacity development element and equipment throughout interventions will contribute to the sustainability of results due to its people – processes – technology approach. In addition, the following will also support the sustainability of results:

- Work methodologies are based on best international practices.

- The guidelines and trainings developed for MoI staff with this project are going to be incorporated into the training strategy for the Macedonian Police
- The equipment will be officially handed over to the beneficiary and according to the donation agreement that will be signed, the beneficiary agrees to bear future maintenance costs upon completion of the project.
- Maintaining regular consultations with partners and stakeholders to identify any changes and risks that may affect the sustainability measures.
- Capitalize on the strong interest and dedication of the MoI and the National SALW Commission on SALW control in the country and Western Balkans region and ensure institutionalisation of the new products, practices, and knowledge products in the MoI departments through close coordination and monitoring of achieved results.

As shown above, the Project is designed with sustainability in mind and aims to ensure institutionalisation and broader dissemination of evidence-based and prevention practices through identification and creation of knowledge, competences, and products at a national level. The intervention will thus introduce a comprehensive approach in the country which is expected to create synergies with other related interventions towards closer monitoring and control of SALW and an improved decision-making process. As specified, UNDP is in regular contact with other implementing partners, ensuring complementarity and sustainability of efforts in the area of control of SALW.

7. Risk Identification and Management

The following risks have been identified and the mitigation measures proposed with regard to the implementation of the project “Improvement of Data and SALW Collection Practices and SALW Related Investigations”:

- Risk 1 - Political instability, causing decision delays and/or lack of commitment to project objectives:
 - Project activities have been designed in close cooperation with representatives from the relevant institutions to obtain strategic compliance and commitment and create sense of ownership. The initial political support was secured through signature of request letters, and with establishment of the project boards, this risk will be minimized.
 - UNDP’s preferential access to the government and long-standing partnership with public sector stakeholders will guarantee high level political commitment and endorsement of the project.
- Risk 2 – Political and Global crisis, causing production and distribution delays of equipment and engagement of experts.
 - This risk is across project activities but is most relevant for Output 1.2 and Output 1.3 (procurement of the 2 specialized instrument - marking machine and the equipment for Forensic Analysis). The crisis in Ukraine so far effected many aspects in energy, production, and distribution of the goods in Europe. The COVID-19 crisis, even now under control, is possible to escalate again. The global crisis can affect production, distribution and import of special

equipment that is planned to be procured. To mitigate the risk, UNDP will proactively reach out and inform a wide network of relevant vendors of ongoing tenders for the purchase of equipment.

- Risk 3 - Ineffective coordination between departments and weak management and operational capacities of the project beneficiary.
 - The project will establish coordination with designated staff and managers who already have experience in project management, expertise in SALW and are familiar with the work and objectives of the National SALW Commission or are part thereof.
 - The project will establish working groups from representatives from each of the departments that are directly affected by implementation of activities and design mechanisms for regular cooperation to ensure flow of information with the aim of achieving project's objectives.
- Risk 4 - Possible overlapping activities with the UNODC, OSCE and EU projects:
 - The UNDP North Macedonia project team is in regular communication with other international organizations/donors working on SALW related projects, like UNODC, OSCE, EU office and other international organizations in order to coordinate implementation and avoid potential overlapping of the activities.

8. Cross-cutting Issues

The project responds to development of inclusive and effective practices in SALW-related data collection and analysis, organisational improvement and mechanisms for better prevention and control of misuse and proliferation of firearms. Moreover, these efforts will increase the transparency and accountability across the Ministry of Interior as the main project beneficiary. By fulfilling its objective, the project will address people's safety and quality-of-life whilst addressing the current challenges in terms of improved criminal justice response, and the wider goals of gender, good governance, and a more just and inclusive society for all.

Throughout the project special accent will be given to recognition of linkages between gender and SALW, especially in first Output of the project where data will be analysed with the specific objective for future digitalization of gender related incidents involving firearms. Consistent integration of gender concerns into SALW data collection and analysis will be addressed with the aim of developing adequate strategies to counter the misuse and proliferation of SALW. Those activities will ensure gender mainstreaming throughout the entire course of the project with the project team and supported by the Gender Specialist.

The project goals will be achieved through capacity development, provision of technical assistance, and procurement of instruments and products based on as innovative approaches, so there will be negligible impact to the environment.

Furthermore, the implementation of activities will considerably reduce the impact on the environment in the future. The project aims to further strengthen the capacity of the project beneficiary for improved digitalization of processes. This objective will contribute toward sustainable, positive environmental benefits.

9. Communication and Visibility

By capturing activities, results and lessons learnt, this communication and visibility plan aims to support the project in its efforts to secure long-term commitment from national partners to work towards achieving synergies and commitment in implementing comprehensive knowledge-based approach in preventing gun violence.

This communication and visibility overview aims to support the “Improvement of Data and SALW Collection Practices and SALW Related Investigations” project throughout the project period.

The Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap MPTF Visibility Guidelines will be the main guidance reference in the implementation of communications and visibility activities.

Overall communication objectives of the plan are as follows:

- To ensure that project beneficiary and the public see this project as part of the regional initiative for sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW with UNDP SEESAC support and direct support from MPTF;
- To provide timely and accurate information on the activities and progress of the project;
- To inform decision and policy makers about the progress of the project in order to motivate their support and action.
- To demonstrate the benefits and advantages of having evidence-based approach to SALW control, with measures ranging from capacity building and IT solutions to mainstreaming gender;
- To increase visibility of MPTF;

Primary target group is the direct beneficiary - The Ministry of Interior (Mol), Senior and Middle Management, expert staff and police officers from the Ministry of Interior and the Bureau for Public Safety, as well as the general public (where appropriate).

The communication activities will aim to ensure that the target audience are aware of the activities and results that need to be achieved as part of the project, as well as all ongoing initiatives within the Roadmap for control of SALW. UNDP project staff in cooperation with main designated project coordinators from the Mol will present the results and impact to motivate staff and secure their active involvement and ongoing commitment to the project. Also, the decision-makers will be provided with timely information on the project progress and ensure their continuous support during project implementation and beyond.

The secondary target group will be the general public with the aim of raising awareness of the national and regional efforts to provide sustainable solution to the firearms issues and develop priorities in line with citizens' needs. The public will be regularly informed of the project progress and results/impact, highlighting the focus on the beneficiary and wider context of the benefits for the society and the wider region.

Finally, the third target group include the international community, civil society and the private sector. The plan is to inform Embassies, NGOs and private-sector associations and other entities of the activities by sharing of project activities and progress. The goal will be to raise interest for possible partnerships and support of similar projects in the future that would magnify the impact of this initiative/project. Project activities, results and impact will be communicated clearly to the rest of the donor community.

The main message is that supporting MoI to create relevant evidence-based SALW policies goes a long way in creating an improved criminal justice response and ultimately towards peace and more just, safe and violence-resilient communities.

The communication channels and tools will include mass and social media, digital communication, audio-visuals, promotional materials, and events. Information on the activities completed under the project will be properly distributed through official social media accounts. Promotional materials bearing the donor, Roadmap and UNDP logos and insignia will be distributed to event attendees. The appropriate events and official activities will be covered by mass media (journalists invited, press releases sent to media).

All communication, information and press statements will be in line with MPTF Visibility Guidelines.

10. Knowledge Management

The project 'Improvement of Data and SALW Collection Practices and SALW related investigations' aims to further improve data collection, analysis, and dissemination of information on SALW, to increase the speed and reliability of firearm investigations, improve SALW stockpile management, thus contributing to the fight against illegal arms trafficking (IAT) and illegal possession of SALW.

Within the activities of the project a needs-analysis of processes relating to incidents and cases of domestic violence with focus on firearms will be produced. The project will also look at transferring training materials relating to the use of The Phenom Perception GSR Desktop SEM which is going to be procured as part of Output 1.2 and the marking machine, procured as Output 1.3. The project is also going to produce a detailed technical documentation for the needed improvement to storage facilities that require timeline, design, and approach for works execution (civil works, electrical works, CCTV, and access control).

Regular experience and lessons learned throughout implementation of activities will be an integral part of the networking with purpose of ensuring information flow. Furthermore, to increase the impact of the

project, close synergies will be ensured with other UNDP-implemented interventions in the field of democratic governance. Knowledge, good practices and lessons will be captured regularly, as well as actively sourced from other projects and partners and integrated back into the project.

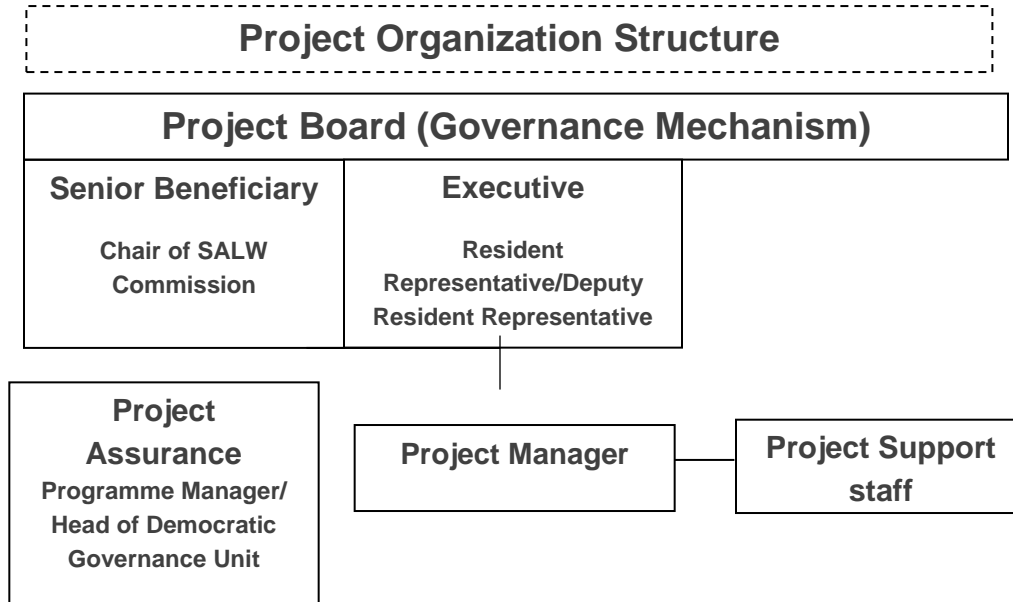
11. Project Management Structure

UNDP will have full responsibility for the overall management of the Project, including monitoring and evaluation of interventions, achieving of the objectives and specified results, and the efficient and effective use of resources.

UNDP North Macedonia will implement activities in close collaboration with the project beneficiary for the achievement of immediate objectives as well as for the administration of financial and human resources. The management of allocated funds will be carried out in accordance with UNDP financial rules and regulations, based on a work plan with a detailed budget. UNDP Macedonia manages overall implementation, while reporting back to donors is done with coordination assistance from the MPTF Secretariat.

The daily management of the project will be carried out by the UNDP team in North Macedonia under a Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). UNDP shall be responsible for the overall management and administration of the project, primarily regarding the responsibility for the achievement of the outputs and the stated outcome.

The Project Board Members are going to be, the President of National SALW Commission and the Heads of MoI Departments, beneficiaries of the project activities. The Project Board members will be consulted by the Project Manager for decisions when the project exceeds tolerances, normally in terms of time and budget; reviews will also be conducted at designated decision points during implementation. Similarly, UNDP will be accountable to the Project Board for the use of project resources. UNDP will delegate managerial duties for the day-to-day running of the Project to the Project Manager whose prime responsibility is to ensure that the project produces the results specified in the project document, to the required standard of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost. The Project Manager will report directly to the Programme Officer, Head of the Democratic Governance Unit. The role of the Project Board as part of the Quality Assurance process, will be to monitor the project's progress, lessons learnt, and decide on the way forward.



The Project Board will hold meetings quarterly, or more frequently if deemed necessary. The Board will monitor programme progress, decide on strategic decisions to ensure continued coherence between implementation and goals and objectives, decide on respective annual work plans and budgets, and revise annual plans, and requests for funds presented by UNDP.

Project Assurance: The Project Assurance role carries out objective and independent project oversight and monitoring functions, ensuring that appropriate project management milestones are managed and completed. The UNDP Programme Officer is responsible for this function.

Project Team: Implementation of the project will be carried out by the project team. The Project Manager is responsible for managing the capacity development of and ties with institutions/partners at the national level, achieving the overall project outputs and day-to-day management of the project implementation.

Project Associate is responsible for the overall administrative and financial/budgetary matters related to the project implementation, prudent use of funds, regular and accurate reporting, and general support to the project coordination and project manager in achievement of project's output(s).

The Project Specialist is responsible for analysis of processes and procedures as they relate to the specific work of the project beneficiary, with emphasis on the processes that are going to be revised and/or are related to this project. The Project specialist is actively involved in coordination of activities within the project. Furthermore, the Project Specialist acts as a digital/IS specialist in relation to all activities relating to improvement of IT infrastructure.

Western Balkans SALW Control Roadmap MPTF

United Nations Multi-Partner Trust Fund for the implementation of the Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition in the Western Balkans



Annex 1: Project detailed budget

Project Proposal Budget						
Title of Project Proposal: IMPROVEMENT OF DATA AND SALW COLLECTION PRACTICES AND SALW RELATED INVESTIGATIONS						
Implementing entity: UNDP North Macedonia						
Project implementation period: 1 January 2023 – 31 August 2023 (8 months)						
		Activities	Description of expense	2023	Total	
IMPROVED CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE IN THE FIELD OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS THROUGH IMPROVED DATA GATHERING PROCESS	Output 1.1. Improved implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) that allows gathering of SALW related data	Activity 1.1.1: Preparation of an implementation plan for the Police IMS (IRDAM)	Contractual services - Company/Local Consultant	9,500	9,500	
			Contractual services - training for 150 police officers (venue, refreshments, training materials)	10,000	10,000	
			Local travel (taxi, fuel and paytolls)	500	500	
		Total Activity 1.1.1			20,000	20,000
		Activity 1.1.2: Needs - based analysis for module on domestic violence	Contractual services - Company/Local Consultant	20,000	20,000	
			Total Activity 1.1.2		20,000	20,000
	Total Output 1.1			40,000	40,000	
	Output 1.2. Improved analytical capabilities of Mol's Forensics Department to improve criminal justice response	Activity 1.2.1: Procurement of specialized equipment	Procurement of specialized equipment	200,000	200,000	
			Total Activity 1.2.1		200,000	200,000
		Activity 1.2.2: User training	1 training for users of specialized equipment (venue, accommodation, refreshments, interpretation)	5,000	5,000	
			Total Activity 1.2.2		5,000	5,000
		Activity 1.2.3: Exchanging experience with other UNDP offices	Travel (fuel, accommodation and DSA costs for participants travelling to Serbia)	5,000	5,000	
			Total Activity 1.2.3		5,000	5,000
	Total Output 1.2			210,000	210,000	

Outcome 1: ENHANCED POLICE OPERATION, MISUSE AND TRAFFICKING	Output 1.3. Improved weapons warehouse management and tracing capacities that leads to decreased risk of proliferation of SALW and improved security	Activity 1.3.1: Needs-based analysis for official firearms	Contractual Services - Local Consultant	6,000	6,000	
			Consultations/Workshops	4,000	4,000	
		Total Activity 1.3.1		10,000	10,000	
		Activity 1.3.2: Technical documentation for storage facility "Gjorche Petrov"	Contractual services - Technical design and documentation	20,000	20,000	
		Total Activity 1.3.2		20,000	20,000	
		Activity 1.3.3: Procurement of a Marking machine	Procurement of specialized equipment	115,000	115,000	
		1 training for users of specialized equipment (venue, refreshments, interpretation)	5,000	5,000		
	Total Activity 1.3.3		120,000	120,000		
	Total Output 1.3		150,000	150,000		
	Total Outcome 1		400,000	400,000		
	Project Management	Project management costs	Project Manager - Contractual services		21,200	21,200
			IT Specialist - Contractual services		19,600	19,600
			Project Associate - Contractual services		17,600	17,600
Gender Specialist (20%) - Contractual services				4,000	4,000	
Programme Officer (10%)				5,600	5,600	
Procurement Officer (5%)				2,800	2,800	
Communications Specialist (20%) - Contractual services				3,600	3,600	
Laptops and accessories				300	300	
Networking and security				200	200	
Communication services				600	600	
E-mail subscription				1,000	1,000	
Office rent & maintenance				3,000	3,000	
Office supplies				500	500	
Total PM:		80,000	80,000			
TOTAL costs of activities & PM				480,000	480,000	
GMS 7%				33,600	33,600	
TOTAL Budget (GMS included)				513,600	513,600	

Annex 2: Project budget by UNDG categories

Budget per UNDG categories		
Title of Project Proposal: IMPROVEMENT OF DATA AND SALW COLLECTION PRACTICES AND SALW RELATED INVESTIGATIONS		
Implementing entity: UNDP North Macedonia		
Project implementation period: 1 January 2023 – 31 August 2023		
UNDG Budget Category	2023	TOTAL
Staff and other personnel costs	74,400	74,400
Supplies, Commodities, Materials	315,000	315,000
Equipment, Vehicles and Furniture including Depreciation	0	0
Contractual Services	79,500	79,500
Travel	5,500	5,500
Transfers and Grants to Counterparts	0	0
General Operating and Other Direct Costs	5,600	5,600
Subtotal	480,000	480,000
Indirect Support Costs	33,600	33,600
TOTAL	513,600	513,600

Annex 3: Project results framework

Result	Indicators	Baseline	Target	Means of verification
Outcome 1: ENHANCED POLICE OPERATIONS AND IMPROVED CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE IN THE FIELD OF POSSESSION, MISSUSE AND TRAFFICKING OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS THROUGH IMPROVED DATA GATHERING PROCESS.				
Output 1.1: Improved implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) that allows gathering of SALW related data	1.1.1. Implementation plan related to the Police Information System developed.	1.1.1. No implementation plan (0)	1.1.1. Implementation plan developed.	1.1.1. Copy of the plan.
	1.1.2. Technical documentation for upgrade of the Police Information System has been prepared, particularly related to firearms investigations, specifically to the domestic violence context.	1.1.2. No final documentation (0)	1.1.2. Phases for development of new functionalities of the system is introduced (related to domestic violence in the context of firearms).	1.1.2. Software specifications, technical documentation, and manuals; actual data for Incidents, Documents and Activities collected.
Output 1.2: Improved analytical capabilities of Mol's Forensics Department to improve criminal justice response	1.2.1. Successful procurement of the specialized equipment for Forensic Department.	1.2.1. N/A (0)	1.2.1. Upgraded Forensic Department with modernized equipment that can support effective forensic work.	1.2.1. New specialized equipment is installed and used by well trained professionals.
	1.2.2. Guidance document developed, and training implemented in the Forensics Department, related to the usage of the new equipment	1.2.2. No training and no guidance document related to usage of the new equipment (0)	1.2.2. Upgraded Forensic Department with modernized equipment that can support effective forensic work.	1.2.2. New specialized equipment is installed and used by well trained professionals
	1.2.3. Exchange of knowledge, experiences, and information with colleagues from UNDP Serbia completed	1.2.3. N/A (0)	1.2.3. Completed as planned	1.2.3 Exchange records.
Output 1.3: Improved weapons warehouse management and tracing capacities that leads to decreased risk of proliferation of SALW and improved security	1.3.1. Analysis of current processes and procedures governing firearms for official use, as well as the necessary equipment, software, and hardware required for tagging, barcoding, tracing, and record-keeping of firearms for official use, is developed	1.3.1. No analysis (0)	1.3.1. Developed and adopted organizational guidelines and procedures for warehouse management and SALW-tracing capabilities in Mol	1.3.1. Technical documentation and SOPs for tracing of SALW are adopted.
	1.3.2. Technical documentation for video and physical security of the storage facility in "Gjorce Petrov" is developed in accordance with international standards and in line with national construction legislation and regulations.	1.3.2. No technical documentation (0)	1.3.2 Technical documentation developed and endorsed as planned.	1.3.2. Technical documentation for video and physical security of the "Gjorce Petrov" storage facility.
	1.3.3. Marking machine is procured and installed	1.3.3. No marking machine (0)	1.3.3. Installed.	1.3.3. Procurement records. Handover.

Annex 4: Project risk matrix

#	Description ³	Category ⁴	Impact & Likelihood ⁵	Risk Treatment/ Management measures ⁶	Risk Owner ⁷	Current status ⁸
1	Risk 1 - Political instability, causing decision delays and/or lack of commitment to project objectives	Political, Strategic	I = 4 P = 3	Project activities have been designed in close cooperation with representatives from the MoI to obtain strategic compliance, commitment and create sense of ownership. The initial political support was secured, through signature of support letters, and with using the established relations for cooperation on previous UNDP CO projects, this risk will be minimized.	RR, Programme Manager, Project Manager, UNDP North Macedonia	Not started yet
2	Risk 2 - Political and Global crisis, causing production and distribution delays of equipment and engagement of experts	Political	I = 4 P = 3	This risk is across project activities but is most relevant for Output 1.2 and Output 1.3 (procurement of the 2 specialized instruments - marking machine and the equipment for Forensic Analysis). The crisis in Ukraine so far effected many aspects in energy, production, and distribution of the goods in Europe. The COVID-19 crisis, even now under control, is possible to escalate again. The global crisis can affect production, distribution and import of special equipment that is planned to be procured. To mitigate the risk, UNDP will proactively reach out and inform a wide network of relevant vendors of ongoing tenders for the purchase of equipment.	Programme Manager, Project Manager, UNDP North Macedonia	Ongoing
3	Risk 3 - Ineffective coordination between departments, management, and operational capacities of the project beneficiary.	Operational, Organizational	I = 3 P = 3	The project will establish coordination with designated staff and managers who already have experience in project management, expertise in SALW and are familiar with the work and objectives of the National SALW Commission or are part thereof. The project will establish working groups from representatives from each of the departments that are directly affected by implementation of activities and design mechanisms for regular cooperation to ensure flow of information with the aim of achieving project's objectives.	Project Manager, Programme Manager, UNDP North Macedonia	Ongoing

³ Brief description of the risk, including potential future event and its cause

⁴ Social, Environmental, Financial, Operational, Organizational Political, Regulatory, Strategic

⁵ Impact: effect on the project if the risk were to occur on scale of 1 (low) to 5 (critical). Probability: estimate of the likelihood of the risk occurring on a scale of 1 (not likely) to 5 (expected)

⁶ What actions have been taken/will be taken to counter this risk

⁷ Person or entity with responsibility to manage the risk

⁸ Implementation status of risk management measures and their effectiveness and relevant changes in context

4	Risk 4 - Possible overlapping activities with the UNODC, OSCE and EU projects	Organizational, Strategic	I = 3 P = 2	The North Macedonia programme/ project team is in regular communication with UNODC and OSCE officials and will in order to avoid potential overlapping of the activities.	Project Manager, Programme Manager, UNDP North Macedonia	Ongoing
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Annex 5: Project multi-year work plan

	Activities	Sub-activities	2023							
			Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Outcome 1: ENHANCED POLICE OPERATIONS AND IMPROVED CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSE IN THE FIELD OF POSSESSION, MISUSE AND TRAFFICKING OF SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS THROUGH IMPROVED DATA GATHERING PROCESS	Output 1.1. Improved implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) that allows gathering of SALW related data									
	Activity 1.1.1: Preparation of an implementation plan for the Police IMS (IRDAM)	Contractual services - Company/Local Consultant								
		Contractual services - training for 150 police officers								
	Activity 1.1.2: Needs - based analysis for module on domestic violence	Contractual services - Company/Local Consultant								
	Output 1.2. Improved analytical capabilities of Mol's Forensics Department to improve criminal justice response									
	Activity 1.2.1: Procurement of specialized equipment	Procurement procedure, delivery and handover								
	Activity 1.2.2 User training	1 training for users of specialized equipment								
	Activity 1.2.3. Exchanging experience with other UNDP offices	Travel and exchanging experience activities								
	Output 1.3. Improved weapons warehouse management and tracing capacities that leads to decreased risk of proliferation of SALW and improved security									
	Activity 1.3.1: Needs-based analysis for official firearms	Local Consultant								
		Consultations/Workshops								
	Activity 1.3.2: Technical documentation for storage facility "Gjorche Petrov"	Contractual services - Technical documentation								
	Activity 1.3.3: Procurement of a Marking machine	Procurement procedure, delivery and handover								
		1 training for users of specialized equipment								