

# Voices of survivors: the different faces of gun violence



**By Laura Lyddon**

IANSA Women's Network  
May 2011

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### About the author

Laura Lyddon produced this publication during a part-time internship at IANSA, between October 2010 and April 2011. She recently graduated from the University of Bristol with an MSc in Gender and International Relations, and has now been awarded a scholarship to undertake PhD study there in the area of gender and international security, focusing on Costa Rica. Laura has worked for several years in the UK Higher Education sector predominantly doing student recruitment (marketing and publications). She has travelled extensively in Asia and Central America, lived and worked in Australia, and volunteered in Nicaragua. Laura learnt about IANSA while writing her Masters dissertation on '(En)gendering the Arms Dynamic'.

Contact details:

Email: lcyddon@gmail.com

### About the artist

Chiara Perini is an Italian-born London-based artist who uses the language of visual arts to address, analyse and discuss social and anthropological issues. Gender and education system are dominant themes in her work. Currently she explores violence as a constant power relation among humans.

Contact details:

Mobile: 0044 (0)7905 277809

Email: chiara.perini@hotmail.com

### Contributors from the IANSA Women's Network

The idea behind this project formed in 2008 and since then a number of interns and volunteers have assisted with outreach to survivors and translations of testimonies. Thank you to Lucie Carenza, Yolanda Aguilar, Linda Machata, Daniel Pardo and Sophie Yeoman, who worked on the project with Sarah Masters, IANSA Women's Network Coordinator at the London Secretariat.

Most of all we thank the women who contributed their stories for this publication, and we are grateful to the many members of the IANSA Women's Network who helped us compile the testimonies. We also thank colleagues at the IANSA Secretariat for their ongoing support.

---

First published by the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) in May 2011.

All rights reserved. This publication is copyright, but may be reproduced by any method without fee for advocacy, campaigning and teaching purposes, but not for resale. The copyright holders request that all such use be registered with them for impact assessment purposes. For copying in any other circumstances, or for re-use in other publications, or for translation or adaptation, prior written permission must be obtained from the publishers.

Copies of this report are available to download at: [www.iansa-women.org](http://www.iansa-women.org)

Original language: English

International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA)  
56-64 Leonard Street  
London EC2A 4JT  
United Kingdom  
[www.iansa.org](http://www.iansa.org)

# Introduction

## Women affected by gun violence speak out

This publication features 16 testimonies acquired by IANSA of women survivors of gun violence. The testimonies are from a number of different countries and the violence occurs in various contexts and situations. The one common denominator in all of these stories is the misuse of guns.

The choice of the countries featured is based on responses from IANSA women and it is striking to see the similarities that exist even though the countries in which the armed violence occurs may be worlds apart. The stories demonstrate that gun violence is not confined to just one particular region of the world, a particular race, class or section of society, and that no one is immune from its potential effects. The cases indicate the use of arms in a range of situations such as domestic violence and crime; the countries in which they take place range from Afghanistan to the United States, Portugal to Namibia. These issues and the significance of the availability of firearms, are relevant to countries irrespective of their political or religious situation, developmental status, and whether they are experiencing conflict or peace.

Although men represent the majority of victims of death from armed violence as well as mostly being the perpetrators (over 90% of gun homicide victims are men; of the 50,000 people who commit suicide with a gun every year, 88% are men<sup>1</sup>), those who survive them are impacted upon profoundly. We will see from the survivors' testimonies that women are psychologically, socially, economically and emotionally affected by the loss of a member of their family to gun violence, as are their families when it is they who are killed. They may also suffer further consequences as a result of a gunshot injury to themselves.

The testimonies also reveal that guns do not need to be fired in order to constitute armed violence and cause devastation in women's lives. The threat of their use enables people to exert power, to intimidate, and to carry out other crimes and it means that women (who are the minority of users and owners) are victimised in different ways. We will see cases when guns have been used in facilitating rape, sexual abuse and domestic or intimate-partner violence. While these dimensions of gun violence are less visible and therefore harder to quantify, these testimonies give voice to them and demonstrate that they are a social reality in a number of contexts.

Trying to order and categorise these testimonies was very difficult as they are individual lived experiences. The Small Arms Survey identifies a number of categories for armed violence including direct-conflict deaths, indirect conflict deaths and non-conflict armed violence. It identifies the latter as incorporating: **homicides, suicides, extrajudicial killings**, and other forms of death or injury, such as those resulting from domestic violence or **domestic, or gender-based armed violence** ...<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of analysis some of these categories will be adhered to in this publication.

As the testimonies unfold it will become clear that it is not always easy to assign them to categories – some incidents fall into more than one, and there are many overlaps. A telling example of this is the testimony from Pakistan (presented on p.) where a **suicide** occurs as a result of the threat of **homicide** which would have been carried out as an **honour-crime**, a phenomenon which is fundamentally part of **gender-based violence**.

For each testimony some background details on the country in which it occurred and the type of armed violence are given. The information presented here is necessarily affected (and limited) by what is available for each country and the relevant type of violence.

# Transcending the dichotomies

Gun violence is often presented in terms of opposite extremes such as: war v. peace, victim v. survivor, legitimate v. illegitimate, licit v. illicit, us v. them, and public v. private. The testimonies show that gun violence transcends these dichotomies (which are considered below) and that the consequences to human beings are often the same, whatever the circumstances.

## **War v. peace**

Contrary to popular belief, small arms and light weapons (SALW) kill (through homicide or suicide) up to five times more people per year in countries at peace than in those at war<sup>3</sup>. This is a staggering reality, and it must be recognised that, for every time that someone is killed, there may be countless numbers of times when guns are used to commit other types of violence. In many of the testimonies, the country featured was experiencing conflict or had recently experienced it. Conflict clearly has an impact – aside from the armed violence of the warring factions, domestic violence, homicides and crime all increase in times of conflict, often due to a heightened culture of violence, social and economic disruption and impunity for crimes. This is aided and exacerbated by the proliferation of SALW. However, not all regions of a country experience conflict in the same way. In the case of Sudan the violence was committed in a part of the country not experiencing conflict. The USA (which has incredibly high rates of gun-crime) has not fought a war on its own soil (apart from the ‘war on terror’) since the Civil War of the 1860s. However, they have prosecuted numerous wars away from home, and therefore it can be argued that militarisation of society perhaps has a part to play.

Distinguishing gender-based violence that occurs in non-conflict settings separately from that which occurs in conflict settings is also problematic. The use of arms in facilitating gender-based violence, threats and deaths cuts across this dichotomy even though it varies in scope and severity. It is argued that “[e]fforts to draw hard lines between conflict and crime are not particularly relevant from women’s perspectives.”<sup>4</sup> Incidences of gender-based violence against women are included together in this publication, and whether they occurred in countries experiencing conflict or not, whether the outcome was death, rape or coercion. These reflect the wider issues that face women, which are part of the same continuum of violence against women, transgressing national boundaries, war and peace.

## **Victims v. survivors**

Every person victimised by gun violence who has lived to tell the tale is a survivor. Those who do die have relatives and friends who survive them and who cannot help but be affected by what happened. The term ‘survivor’ has been used to indicate the resistance, survival and agency of the women featured in this publication. Women are not just the victims and men not just the perpetrators of gun violence. Women are also survivors, carers, and activists, and in some cases they also encourage the demand for guns and are gun users themselves.<sup>5</sup> It is important to empower women by recognising their agency – even though they are victims they are survivors first and foremost.

**Public v. private**

This is particularly relevant to gender-based violence – what may happen behind closed doors in peacetime is often made more public (and magnified) during conflict. Also, contrary to popular belief, firearms are particularly dangerous to women in the private sphere (i.e. in their own homes) irrespective of who owns the gun and whether it is owned legally.<sup>6</sup>

**Licit v. illicit, legitimate v. illegitimate**

As will be seen, the legal ownership of guns does not necessarily reduce their power and potential to cause harm. We shall see that often the power is wielded behind closed doors in cases of domestic violence. Guns may also be legally owned in the first instance and then sold illegally. While the use of arms by the military in war may be legitimate, their use in facilitating the rape of civilians is illegitimate. Certainly in cases of conflict, the warring sides may have different understandings of what is a legitimate use of force. In non-conflict cases, the use of arms by the state can result in extra-judicial killings where the lines between legitimate and illegitimate become blurred.

**Us v. them**

As with the dichotomy of war v. peace, many people are under the illusion that gun violence happens to other people, not them. The first testimony particularly highlights how this is not the case.



# Homicide

## USA

*"Quite frankly, I never expected to be a victim of gun violence and now I hear that same remark by so many others who have a microphone shoved into their face following yet another gun death. I was a part of the great American denial that gun violence wouldn't come knocking at my door. Of course, I now know that 80 Americans die of gunshot wounds every day in the United States and 8 of that number represents our children and teens. Sometimes, I feel that if I could communicate to others the pain and loss of our wonderful Matthew, then surely we as a society would stop this madness of allowing the unregulated proliferation of guns into the hands of those who should never ever be in possession of such a lethal weapon. However, the pain I feel is beyond my ability to put into mere words. I can only say that the pain is very deep and unrelenting.*

*Matthew, age 21, was full of life and had a marvellous sense of humour, just like his Dad. He was a gifted student and had a double major in physics and math, loved to read, perform magic tricks and play the violin and electric guitar. He travelled across the country to spend the summer in New York while on a college summer break. He soon met a young model. While they were on their third date, they were approached by three young teens wielding two guns who demanded his wallet. Before Matthew could hand over his wallet they shot him in the head and fled the scene just as they had done 45 minutes earlier when they had shot and killed an ex-Marine and father of two children. Matthew died within an hour and all our hopes and dreams we all had for his bright future died, too. Our family will forever mourn his loss.*

*I have often thought that the United States has been at war for a long time ... how can you explain so many deaths a day and not believe that we have a daily war at home*



### Life Expectancy

78 years (men),  
82 years (women) (UN)<sup>7</sup>

**In the US, societal norms and state laws enable a cultural legitimacy of owning and carrying guns. Many people in the US believe that having a gun makes you safer – that it has a deterrent effect.**

**In a study of high-income countries the rate of firearm homicides for 15–24 year olds in the US was over 40 times higher than the other countries studied.<sup>8</sup>**

**Having a gun in the home increases the overall risk of someone in a US household being murdered by 41%; for women, the risk is tripled.<sup>9</sup>**

**While street crime and gang culture makes up a large proportion of the deaths by gunshot in the US, it is also important to emphasise how many people are killed by guns in their own home.**

**Research shows that, in the US, women are twice as likely to be shot dead by an intimate male partner than killed in any other way by a stranger.<sup>10</sup>**

**The costs of gun violence to American society are estimated to be \$100 billion dollars a year.<sup>11</sup>**

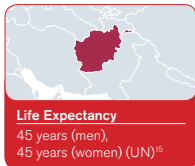
**According to research, US taxpayers shoulder the burden of almost half of the medical costs of gun violence. In 1994 this was \$1.1 billion.<sup>12</sup>**

*complete with so many death and injuries? Since the spring following his death, I have worked for sensible and common sense gun laws, first by founding a local organisation known as Orange County Citizens for the Prevention of Gun Violence and then later working to form a network of local chapters like ours across the country. Following the Million Mom March in Washington, DC in 2000, there was a surge of new chapters all across America. Today those chapters are part of the Million Mom Chapters that are a part of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence. I proudly serve as President Emeritus of the Million Mom March. I hope that the terrific work of these grassroots chapters will change local, state and national laws to prevent what happened to Matthew so other families will never have that awful knock on their door informing them of the gun death of a loved one. We all deserve and should have the right to live in safe and peaceful communities."*

With an estimated 270 million privately-owned guns (the world's largest civilian arsenal), the United States has 88 guns for every 100 people, more than any other country.<sup>13</sup>

---

This testimony, along with the next one from Afghanistan, reveals that "Women may have more in common with women from opposing sides than with the men in their own societies".<sup>14</sup>



# Afghanistan

*"My name is Jamela. I am from and live in Afghanistan. At the age of 21, in 1987, I was married to one of my relatives. We had three children together and we shared a happy life for nine years, until 1996.*

*One January evening, around 18:30, strangers broke into our house and shot and fatally wounded my husband. My husband was in a coma for 4 days until he died, leaving me to support our three children alone. It is painful to remember the events and share my experience. His murderers were never found and never brought to trial.*

*I feel very sad, alone and ashamed about my current situation. Before my husband was shot and killed we were a happy family. This event has changed everything.*

*I hate bullets, guns, bombs and battles. I am a woman who has to fight for survival and I am now both mother and father to my children.*

*I thank IANSA for the work they are doing to raise the voices of women affected by gun violence. I want peace and an end to violence."*

Afghanistan has suffered years of war and unrest. After being invaded by the Soviet Union in 1979, for the next 10 years the country was a battleground between Soviet troops and the mujahideen who were backed by the US. After the Soviet defeat and withdrawal in 1989 there were more years of internal fighting and struggles for power; by the late 1990s most of Afghanistan was under the control of the Taliban. After September 11, 2001, the US and its allies invaded Afghanistan as part of the 'war on terror', to bring down the Taliban. Troops from many countries still remain there.

The years of chronic instability and insecurity have taken its toll. The Afghan state has limited powers, particularly outside the capital Kabul. Warlords, politico-religious fundamentalists<sup>16</sup>, and the drugs trade are but a few of the threats to security.<sup>17</sup> This situation is exacerbated by the availability of SALW. The many years of conflict have produced a vast amount of war debris, with weapons and ammunition spread all over the country and often in civilian hands.<sup>18</sup>

According to the Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS UK) Global Monitoring Checklist on Women, Peace and Security (2009), Afghanistan has one of the highest numbers of widows in the world – they estimate that in Kabul alone there are around 70,000 'conflict widows'. These women are marginalised and have limited access to assistance. Furthermore, over 87% of women in Afghanistan are affected by domestic violence, which is compounded by discriminatory laws such as the 2009 Shia Law.<sup>19</sup>

A United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) project ran during 2003–2005 particularly seeking to disarm and disband illegal armed groups in addition to a public awareness campaign aiming to change attitudes with regards to the possession and misuse of illicit firearms. Some key achievements are considered to be:

- Over 43,000 light and heavy weapons collected
- 510 illegal armed groups disbanded
- Nearly 31,000 metric tons of ammunition collected
- 66 development projects underway or completed.<sup>20</sup>

With an estimated 1 million privately-owned guns, Afghanistan ranks at no. 46 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Afghanistan there are 4.4 guns for every 100 people.<sup>21</sup>





# Extra-judicial killings

Extra-judicial killings incorporate armed violence that results in death committed by "agents of the state against its citizens".<sup>22</sup> Agents of the state include the police and other security forces – groups that are not only considered 'legitimate' possessors of firearms, but are entrusted by the state to use them for 'legitimate' purposes. The state is therefore to a large extent able to define what is 'legitimate' and what is not. The Small Arms Survey reported that a large proportion of armed violence by state actors took place in over 30 countries in 2006. In the same year over 12 countries at peace reported over 50 extra-judicial killings.<sup>23</sup>

## Brazil

*"I never beat my children. The first time they were beaten was by those police officers. My name is Elisabete Medina Paulino, I am 42 years old and I am the mother of Rafael and Renan Medina Paulino. They were murdered in the parking lot of the concert hall 'Via Show'. I got married when I was very young. I wanted to be a mother and a housewife. I stopped studying to look after my first child, Dani. I never wanted to have a nanny. I thought that nobody could have taken better care of them than me. I only managed to finish secondary school after I had my daughter. After the birth of my first grandchild, I stopped again. I looked after the baby so that my daughter could work. Once again, I gave up a career so that I could be a grandmother. I was a grandmother when my sons died.*

*Rafael was the eldest. He was eighteen and Renan was thirteen. They were very lively boys who had great plans and were full of potential. Rafael wanted to be a physiotherapist and Renan wanted to be a judge. He wanted to fight impunity and corruption. My sons had dreams. They wanted to change things.*

*On 6<sup>th</sup> December 2003, everything changed. The boys were at Via Show, on Dutra Avenue. They were murdered by police officers and the bouncers.*

*My youngest son was the first to go to the concert venue. He did not even know that his brother and cousin, Bruno, were also going. It was the first time that he had gone out in the evening. I paid for a van to take him and bring him back. Later on, his cousin and brother decided to go.*

*On the way out there was some trouble with a friend in the parking lot. The bouncers went up to him, took him aside and started to beat him hard. When my sons and Bruno went to see what was happening to their friend, the bouncers did not care, they just beat up everybody.*



### Life Expectancy

70 years (men),  
77 years (women) (UN).<sup>24</sup>

**Investigations of this case revealed that the young men were tortured and shot dead by military policemen doing extra work as security guards.<sup>25</sup> This testimony highlights that it is not just in 'weak' or 'failed' states, or those experiencing conflict, where the misuse and abuse of arms by state officials occurs.**

**The rate of armed violence in Brazil exceeds that of some countries experiencing conflict. Over 500,000 Brazilians have died from gun-inflicted injuries between 1979 and 2003 (more than four times the number of deaths recorded in the Arab-Israeli conflict during 50 years).<sup>26</sup> Armed violence by state actors is only an element of the problem in Brazil. The country has some of the most extreme social and economic inequalities in the world which has contributed to high levels of urban crime. These, combined with negative perceptions of the criminal justice system, mean that vigilante justice and extrajudicial killings are supported by many people.<sup>27</sup> While this particular case received a lot of attention, there are many others that have gone unacknowledged. The cultural legitimacy of gun ownership and use (such as by police) in society at large, means "[t]he risk of dying from homicide for a young man aged 15–29 in the Americas region is nearly 28 times higher than the average worldwide risk".<sup>28</sup>**

**Brazil passed a number of laws, since committing to the UN Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, which are geared towards regulating the marking of firearms and ammunition. The National Arms Registry (since 1997) also established penalties**

*Then they saw that they had gone too far. They took the boys to Caxias, to an abandoned farm where they killed them and threw them into a pit.*

*At four in the morning, when the van was supposed to bring my son home, I was downstairs waiting. I did not sleep, waiting for him. Then, people arrived and told me that Renan was coming with his brother and cousin. I waited. Five o'clock came, then six, and they still did not arrive. At seven in the morning, we went to Via Show, to trace their steps. We tried to find out what was going on. The police said there had been no fight that night and that it had been quiet. They even argued with us, saying: 'No, your sons must have gone to the beach, after the show, they'll be home soon ...' My son was very responsible; he would never have done that. Never. Especially if he was with his younger brother. That is why I became desperate. Then, his friends started to search all the beaches in Rio, but we knew they had not gone to the beach. I waited with my sister-in-law. We searched and we reported the incident to the police.*

*Our friends, the neighbours, the whole neighbourhood closed Brazil Avenue on Sunday and then the Security Office sent the police to find out what was happening. The press started to report that the boys had not been found; we were on television all the time and it was even shown abroad. People who live in Europe, our friends, saw it, even a friend of my son's who lives in Switzerland ...*

*We were desperate for days. We did not know anything. We did not know whether they were dead or alive, who had killed them, or why they had been killed. We did not know if they had got mixed up in something. My sons were not bad boys, no! I never hit my children. I never gave them a single smack."*

for illegal carrying/ownership of firearms, shooting, careless storage/handling, and illegal trading/trafficking.<sup>29</sup>

The 2003 Disarmament Statute in Brazil is one of the strictest in the world, prohibiting all civilians from public carrying of firearms which is limited to police, military and private security companies. It also mandated a national referendum for October 2005 where Brazilians voted on whether or not to prohibit outright all civilian firearms possession with certain exceptions for ranchers and shooting clubs.<sup>30</sup> The most visible activity initiated by the Statute was a national gun buy-back campaign launched in 2004 to promote peace, raise awareness of the dangers and problems of gun violence, and collect weapons. In less than a year and a half nearly 500,000 guns were collected. The Ministry of Justice claims that, since this initiative, homicide rates have begun to decrease – reversing the trend of increasing rates from 1992.<sup>31</sup>

With an estimated 14.8–17.6 million privately-owned guns, Brazil ranks at no. 8 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Brazil there are 8 guns for every 100 people.<sup>32</sup>

Research done by Richardson and Kirsten revealed that a contributing factor in civilian gun ownership was the idea that owning a weapon makes you safer.<sup>33</sup>

# Gun violence is gendered

In certain contexts, such as recent wars in African nations, women and children can be the overwhelming majority of victims of armed violence but, in general, it is primarily men who are killed or injured from gun violence. Gun use among civilians overwhelmingly occurs among marginalised men, by age, class, economic status, race or a combination of these.<sup>34</sup>

Brazil is a stark example of how gun violence is gendered. In Rio de Janeiro, young men are 24 times more likely than women to die from armed violence. Age is also a significant factor as men between the ages of 15 and 29 are twice as likely to be killed by armed violence as the rest of the male population.<sup>35</sup> It is predicted that 50 years from now there will be six million men 'missing' from the Brazilian population due to traffic accidents and homicides (and it is expected that the majority of these will be from armed violence).<sup>36</sup>

The statistics above are a visible representation of the association between gun violence and masculinity. Whether in popular culture or on the 'streets', images and constructions that link gun use/ownership with successful masculinity have a significant role. In a study in Portugal of young male gun users of firearms it was revealed that owning a gun was considered to (re)enforce their social status as it symbolised power, money and virility.<sup>37</sup> This sexualisation of weaponry, particularly guns, is nothing new. Feminists have long pointed out the phallocentrism of weapons. A saying in the US Army, which is chanted alongside a physical gesture towards the penis, goes: 'This is my rifle, this is my gun. This one's for killing, this one's for fun'.<sup>38</sup>

The NGO Instituto ProMundo has demonstrated that the association between violence/guns and notions of masculinity can be changed – the organisation works with men using educational activities and group discussions to promote non-violent behaviour.<sup>39</sup>

## Where are the women?

Research in Brazil has shown that some women help to perpetuate the idea that a man with a gun is sexy and desirable, in addition to carrying/hiding guns for partners and using them themselves.<sup>40</sup> Evidence from Portugal also revealed that young women (both actively and unconsciously) participate in, and contribute to, associations of violence and/or gun ownership with masculinity.<sup>41</sup> On a more positive note, women in Brazil have also played a huge role in pushing for tighter gun laws at the state and national level, including campaigning to pass a referendum that would ban gun sales throughout the country.<sup>42</sup>

Even though (as discussed earlier) men represent the majority of 'direct' victims of gun violence, when women are killed, it is men who are mainly the perpetrators and guns are "often a preferred weapon".<sup>43</sup> The ownership of guns by men also exacerbates the risk of women being threatened, intimidated, coerced, abused and raped both by men they know (the private) and those they do not (the public).<sup>44</sup> While the "view that women and girls are always the victims of gun-related and other forms of gender-based violence, and that boys and men are always the perpetrators" has been challenged,<sup>45</sup> "women suffer disproportionately from firearms violence given that they are almost never the buyers, owners or users of such weapons".<sup>46</sup> Women are less likely to be killed by guns probably precisely because they are less likely to own them – they ultimately pose less of a threat both physically (by not having a gun) and often psychologically, by

not being socialised into having the 'masculine' traits required. Under patriarchy, women are "culturally disarmed" and this "may be quite as effective as the physical kind".<sup>47</sup>

In addition, the presence and availability of guns magnify gender power dynamics because their use and ownership is mainly by men, which in turn reinforces men's power. This perpetuates the association between masculinity and gun ownership and in turn fuels a cycle of violence. Small arms facilitate gender-based violence which most commonly manifests itself as violence against women.

### Gender-based violence

There are different understandings and interpretations of 'gender-based violence' and it often becomes a synonym for 'violence against women'. What needs to be made clear is that gender-based violence affects, and can be aimed at, both men and women. The UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), states that gender-based violence against women is violence "directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately".<sup>48</sup>

The same logic therefore applies to gender-based violence that is carried out on men. Examples of gender-based violence particularly experienced by men during conflict may include: forced recruitment into armies or rebel groups, massacres of civilian men, and abuse or imprisonment of men who refuse to fight.<sup>49</sup> Sexual violence against men as a means of 'emasculatation' is also now increasingly acknowledged as means of gender-based violence against men which occurs in times of conflict and 'peace'.<sup>50</sup>

When gender-based violence is carried out on women (such as sexual violence against women in conflict), it may also still be *experienced* by men as witnesses, and will also have repercussions for men as husbands/fathers/sons and members of the community. Furthermore, in societies where women are considered the 'possessions' of men, a 'violation' of the women is considered to be a violation of the property of men, and therefore an act aimed at them.

### Violence against women

Due to the nature of patriarchal society, women and girls are particularly vulnerable to being targets of gender-based violence and represent the overwhelmingly majority of direct victims. Article 1 of the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women states that:

"The term 'violence against women' means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."<sup>51</sup>

The use of 'gender-based violence' as a term for 'violence against women' highlights the gender inequalities in which much of this violence is rooted.<sup>52</sup> Violence against women is an expression of misogyny and an unequal gender system, and is recognised as a violation of human rights. It often takes on different forms according to local conditions: specifically, gender relations/inequality, and cultural/historical traditions.

Some examples of these would be honour-crimes, female genital-cutting, trafficking, and sexual violence against women in conflict.

### **The role of guns**

It is not just on the streets that gun violence or the threat of it takes place. Particularly for women victims, gun violence often takes place in the intimacy of their own home. And it is not just 'criminals' or corrupt officials who are the perpetrators – in most cases for women it is someone known to them.

Guns do not need to be fired in order to constitute armed violence. The threat of their use facilitates an untold amount of abuse that is virtually impossible to quantify. Whether the violence takes place in the privacy of a bedroom by an intimate partner or in a public place by a group of soldiers, the weapon and its power remain the same even though the magnitude and scope of the abuse may vary.

*"Violence against women in the family and community, and violence against women as a result of state repression or armed conflict, are part of the same continuum: much of the violence ... against women in militarised societies and during armed conflict is an extreme manifestation of the discrimination and abuse that women face in peacetime ... [T]he presence of guns invariably has the same effect: more guns means more danger for women."<sup>53</sup>*

Again it is something that is hard to categorise, but the types of violence against women featured in this publication can be considered to come 'under': **domestic violence, honour crimes and sexual violence in conflict**.



# Domestic violence

The term domestic violence can incorporate intra-familial and intimate-partner violence. These terms can refer to people who are or have been intimate partners or family members. It can include, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional violence.<sup>54</sup> Domestic violence can affect both women and men, but, due to the pervasive inequality of gender systems, women are more affected. Intimate-partner violence and sexual coercion are considered to be the most common and universal types of violence against women throughout the world. Research findings reported that between 10 and 52% of women studied had suffered physical abuse by an intimate partner and between 10 and 27% of women and girls had been sexually abused in their lives.<sup>55</sup>

If a perpetrator of domestic violence has access to a gun, then it is more likely to result in death for the victim. In the US 66% of women killed by their partners are shot. In another study in the US, the findings were that if there was a firearm in the house the likelihood that intimate-partner violence became lethal increased five-fold.<sup>56</sup> We will see from the testimonies below the power that a gun can wield in these cases, even if it is never fired.

## Portugal

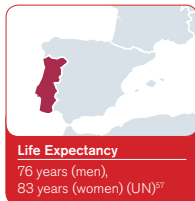
***"I saw the gun for the first time when I said I wanted to go the courthouse and end our marriage."***

*"Anna's marriage was mired in violence from nearly the beginning. For years, she spent days and nights waiting in nervous anticipation of a strike. Finally, she gathered the courage to seek the consultation of a recommended lawyer. When her husband discovered the meetings, he responded with the purchase of a rifle popular among Portugal's hunting community and threatened to use it to kill her if she continued with the divorce proceedings. His intent to regularly remind Anna of the gun's presence was never masked. The rifle travelled with him in his car, and certain nights would be placed on the nightstand while the couple slept. Anna would remain awake in fear of her life. In her own words, "There are no words to describe the constant fear ... the anguish."*

*Anna's daughter was also subject to abuse. Most frequently during the numerous occasions she attempted to stand between her mother and father in times of conflict. Anna once attempted to sleep in the comfort of her daughter's bed. The husband responded by forcing the two into his own bed at knifepoint.*

*These threats were consistently accompanied by acts of physical abuse. Anna recalls being pinned to a kitchen wall by a wooden table and having small pieces of furniture and household items thrown at her. She recalls the rage climbing to such a high level that day that she feels she may have been killed if she hadn't escaped.*

*One day, her husband inexplicably left the car at home that he regularly took to work. Also left behind was the hunting rifle. Anna and her daughter burned the wood of the hunting rifle, rendering it useless. Despite her husband's*



**A nationwide survey of women victims of domestic violence in Portugal, was conducted in partnership with IANSA and Associação Portuguesa de Apoio à Vítima (APAV) in between October 2009 and March 2010.**

**37% of the respondents said their abuser owned or had access to a firearm. It was reported that a verbal threat of using the firearm was more common than seeing it or having it aimed at the victim. 39% did not know if there was a gun in the house. The uncertainty of 'not-knowing' may have perpetuated the cycle of domination and abuse as much as in the cases where they did know. The idea that the abuser did or may have had access to a firearm may also inhibit physical (and verbal) self-defence, and make leaving the abuser even harder – as bullets can be fired from a distance.**

**77% of the respondents said that they would feel much safer if Portugal forbade the sale of firearms to civilians.<sup>58</sup>**

**Firearms accounted for 57.1% of homicides on females in Portugal between 2000 and 2008.<sup>59</sup> It is estimated that the annual economic cost of the use of firearms in Portugal is 210 million Euros.<sup>60</sup>**

**Some revisions to Portuguese law in 2009 now mean that firearms licences are to be denied to, or revoked from, applicants with a history of domestic violence, and that firearms are to be seized in reported cases of domestic violence.<sup>61</sup> However, the minimum age for ownership**



*promises to buy another, and assurances its acquisition would not be difficult, he never did. Anna still has no explanation why. Finally, she was able to escape.*

*Anna receives only mild support from her family. Her son, completely shielded from the violence by her husband, has trouble understanding the magnitude of the problem and his mother's subsequent response. Others appear indifferent, scared, without understanding, or in disagreement with her divorce and her relationship with the local women's shelter. The church and her faith fill this void. She seeks this position of advocacy to help present victims, but anonymity to avoid recognition by her ex-husband and relatives.*

*Anna speaks because she can only use her unfortunate past to create a future quite different for others. She expressed this desire to me, and spoke in support of IANSA's proposals to seek family member approval of gun license requests. Perhaps this would have obligated her son to know his father possessed a weapon. Perhaps something would have gone differently?."*

and use of 'class D' firearms was reduced from 18 years to 16 years at which age an individual requires parental supervision of any hunting activities.<sup>62</sup>

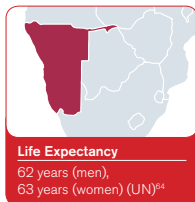
With an estimated 900,000 to 2.6 million privately-owned guns, Portugal ranks at no. 55 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Portugal there are 8.5 guns for every 100 people.<sup>63</sup>

# Namibia

*"I'm 30 years old ... I've got 2 boys, age 4 and 5. I got married in 2004. I met him where we work. He is sometimes very, very abusive. He likes beating you up over simple things which you can sit down and resolve ... He is always threatening "I will shoot you" and "I will kill you" ... There was a time that he decided he was gonna kill me and then he got his car and opened the boot and he was trying to force me inside the boot to drop me in the sea but luckily somebody saw and called the police and the police came and they dragged me out of the boot ... What's so confusing is that it's your husband – somebody you love and trust – who is treating you this way.*

*There was another time ... I was at home with my sister and my kids, then he just appeared. He grabbed the gun, pointed it in my face and said that me and the boys had to leave ... When we drove off my sister called the cops. By the time the cops arrived we had already passed the road blocks ... while we were on our way, he stopped the car and dragged me out, pointed the gun to me and said he was going to kill me while my little boys were watching ... I ran and he was running after me but luckily he didn't shoot me ...*

*There were lot of times when he was using the gun, not to shoot me, but to threaten to kill me. I didn't know when the day was gonna come when he would actually do it ... He was so aggressive, sometimes I thought 'he's gonna lose it, he's gonna do it' ... In most cases when you read the newspapers, when you hear people talking, you hear that they first talk about it – they're gonna do it, they're gonna do it – and at the end, they finally [do] it, so I thought it's gonna happen, soon if I don't take action against it and if I don't seek for help ... then it might be too late for me.*



Namibia gained independence from South Africa in 1990 and has enjoyed relative stability since then although the HIV/AIDS epidemic is thought to affect a quarter of Namibians.<sup>65</sup>

Namibia is a signatory to the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) without reservation. It has a new domestic legal framework to address violence against women and children which includes the Combating of Rape Act, the Combating of Domestic Violence Act and amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act designed to protect vulnerable witnesses.<sup>66</sup>

However, research indicates that one in three Namibian women have experienced intimate-partner violence and that married women are more likely than single women to suffer from gender-based violence.<sup>67</sup> More than a third of Namibian men surveyed felt that 'wife-beating' was justifiable.<sup>68</sup>

In the Namibian Firearms and Ammunition Act there is legislation outlining people 'unfit' to possess arms and therefore obtain a licence. This may include people with an "inclination to violence". There is no specific provision for gender-based or domestic violence.<sup>69</sup> However, a [domestic violence] protection order can include a provision 'directing the respondent to surrender any firearm' and, 'if appropriate', a provision to suspend firearms licenses during the protection order and/or a provision authorising the police to search for and seize a weapon.<sup>70</sup>

*According to the law you can take a protection order from the magistrate. I did that and I came to Women's Solidarity to seek for help ... I'm taking action now even if I have to knock on every door which can help me before this thing gets out of hand. I would say to women out there who are scared about what their husbands are gonna do to them, if we don't speak out no one is gonna hear us and know how we are suffering. I'm willing to take a stand and make a change. I might impact somebody else's life, some other lady who cannot speak out.*

*I have been silent for too long now. I've been carrying this thing for six years now, and really I think enough is enough now. We have to come out and tell our story so that others can hear our stories and try and help where they can. My life has turned around completely the way I didn't expect it to be. I [had] dreams, I wanted to achieve certain things in life, but then you trust somebody and then this person, he promises you the world, and at the end you just end up like this, being abused, being threatened ... I think we should stand up against abuse and rape and threats. As women we are powerless. Men normally take advantage of our weaknesses. But if we stand up for each other and we hold hands I think we can fight against crime and abuse and rape. So I would tell all the other ladies which are out there, just come out and tell your story. There are people that are gonna protect you. The law is there, there are measures that can be taken. These evil men, husbands and boyfriends, they can be stopped before it's too late."*

**With an estimated 260,000 privately-owned guns, Namibia ranks at no. 110 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Namibia there are 12.6 guns for every 100 people.<sup>71</sup>**

# El Salvador

*"One day in July 2007 my husband arrived at our home and was very upset to find me not there. I had actually only gone to the supermarket! So he called my parents' house where I had been earlier to pick up my daughter who normally stays with my mother when I am busy. I ran back home and when I arrived I showed him the supermarket receipt as evidence of my whereabouts, but he was really angry and ignored everything that I told him. He began to insult me with obscene language.*

*The following day, he was putting his gun in its case and we started to argue again. My daughter wasn't with us as I had taken her to my mother's house. He began insulting me again, saying that I was the worst mistake of his life, the worst thing that had happened to him, and how much he hated me. He left his gun on the table and said, 'go to bed now, you won't wake up tomorrow'. I was so scared that my head and stomach were aching. He continued to frighten me, saying he was going to mutilate me – cut off my breasts, make a necklace with my fingers. He said he would give up everything just to watch me suffer physically and mentally.*

*The gun was still on the table and he picked it up, threatening me with it. Fear had invaded me, that's why I decided to report him to the police, especially seeing as he'd done exactly the same the previous May. He'd said that he would kill both of us, to which I said that I didn't want to die because of our child. He'd put the gun to his forehead, saying that he would kill himself. The lights were off and he carried on threatening me with the gun saying how much he wanted to kill me.*



## Life Expectancy

68 years (men),  
77 years (women) (UN)<sup>72</sup>

**El Salvador is the most densely populated state on the mainland Americas. It is highly industrialised but has deep social inequality and suffered an intense civil war in the 1980s.<sup>73</sup>**

**It has one of the highest rates of homicide in the world: 55 deaths for every 100,000 inhabitants (as of 2006). Although this has significantly decreased since the mid-1990s, the role of guns is still paramount – in 2006 gun violence accounted for 80 out of every 100 deaths. Most victims are men aged 15–39 years of age, but in recent years the number of female deaths has increased.<sup>74</sup>**

**Private security companies have become ever-present in El Salvador – there are more personnel working for these companies than the National Police. This is in part due to the increasing public security threat of maras (gangs).<sup>75</sup>**

**According to research, domestic violence is considered socially acceptable by a large proportion of the population<sup>76</sup> and the incidence of domestic violence is high – women's organisations estimate that around 90% of women have suffered from domestic violence.<sup>77</sup>**

**Convicted offenders may receive sentences ranging from 6 months to one year in prison and are prohibited from carrying guns and using drug or alcohol. However, according to the UN Special Rapporteur On**

*I am really scared. He is such a violent person and he keeps on threatening me. I cannot sleep at night because I worry that I won't wake up or that he'll torture me. My husband works as a private security officer and his gun is legal. There should be more control. He could kill me anytime."*

With an estimated 400,000 privately owned guns, El Salvador ranks at no. 89 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in El Salvador there are 5.8 guns for every 100 people.<sup>72</sup>



**Violence Against Women, laws are not consistently applied and enforced and therefore domestic violence is "widespread and tolerated".<sup>73</sup>**

In 2003 armed violence cost El Salvador US \$1.7 billion, the equivalent of 11.5% of GDP, and more than twice as much as the country spends on health and education combined. In El Salvador, treatment of gunshot wounds uses up more than 7% of the public hospital system's budget. The annual cost of gunshot wounds is the same as the budget for one hospital.<sup>74</sup>

El Salvador is considered to have some of the weaker gun laws in the region but between 2002 and 2007 there were nine reforms by the National Assembly. These included restrictions on the number of guns each household can legally own per year, increasing the legal age of carrying a weapon from 18 to 21 and increasing the number of gun-free zones.<sup>80</sup>

In 2000 there were 170,000 firearms registered nationally – In 2006, this had increased to 211,577 (although it is estimated that there were around 500,000 actually in circulation).<sup>81</sup>

# Syria

*"The woman who was killed was 25 years old at the time of the accident. She was married and had three children. Her husband was a farmer. They lived a calm and happy life in their house in the countryside, near Aleppo City in the North of Syria. She was content looking after her home and her children. Like many of the villagers, they shared and cultivated the land with their families. The village, and indeed the whole country, is generally safe and it's rare that gun violence, or any gun related crime is heard of.*

*A few weeks before the accident, her husband and his father began to quarrel over the rights to the land. There were no official documents or deeds that could be used to resolve the fight. On 5 June 2006 a heated argument broke out between the two of them. They were both extremely angry. The father left the house only to return later with a gun with which he shot and killed the woman and her three children, and severely injured his son. After a few hours he gave himself up to the police. He had owned the gun for a long time and had never had a licence. The easy availability of such a gun and the family conflict resulted in a horrific disaster and the mother and her three children had their lives, their family home and their happiness destroyed. Now the old man is facing trial, and he is filled with deep pain, sadness and sorrow for what he did. I believe that this real story is an important lesson, and we should never forget the devastation that a gun can bring to a human life anywhere in the world."*



## Life Expectancy

73 years (men),  
77 years (women) (UN)<sup>83</sup>

**This case is clearly a case of intra-familial violence or domestic violence but it may also tell us something about the commodification of women and children.**

**Those applying for a firearm licence in Syria are subject to background checks. These include checking mental, criminal and domestic violence records. The law states that a firearm licence should be revoked or denied if there is a past history or 'apprehended likelihood' of domestic violence.<sup>84</sup> There does not seem to be widespread awareness of the law nor is there information available about how it is being implemented. The Syrian authorities maintain records of civilians licensed to acquire, possess, sell or transfer a firearm or ammunition.<sup>85</sup> As is the case in many countries, data is not available on the number of deaths by firearms in cases of domestic violence in Syria.**

**With an estimated 735,000 privately-owned guns, Syria ranks at no. 62 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Syria there are 3.9 guns for every 100 people.<sup>86</sup>**

# Sudan

*"My name is Regina. I am a health visitor. When Viola, my youngest daughter, fell pregnant by her boyfriend, his parents forced him to break up with my daughter, who agreed. He then left for Khartoum to go to university and my daughter remained here in Wau, where she had to stop studying in order to take care of her baby, with my help.*

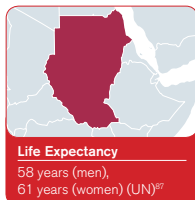
*When the baby turned one, another man asked my daughter to marry him and she agreed. Somebody told her old boyfriend that Viola was due to marry another man and he returned from Khartoum immediately.*

*On Christmas day, in the evening, the young man knocked at my door. I welcomed him in and gave him some cake. After some time he left, but when I went to collect his plate I noticed that he had left a knife behind. I began to doubt his intentions—worrying that he was up to something. But, as my daughter was at her fiancé's house, I wasn't too concerned.*

*The next morning, men came to inform me that my daughter had been shot the previous night and was now in a critical condition. I flew to the hospital in order to identify her. We took her body home. The pain I felt cannot be described.*

*Viola's fiancé had witnessed her murder. He explained that while they were at home, the young man had knocked at their door and shouted for Viola. When she went outside to tell him to stop he had shot her. She was two months pregnant and her son was 16 months old.*

*After the trial the boy was condemned to be hung. I accept this punishment, but refused any kind of compensation money as I want this crime to be noticed and prevented. I want to make others aware of the danger of possessing*



Sudan has experienced internal conflict (commonly referred to as a civil war between the north and south) on and off since gaining independence in the 1950s which culminated in 2005. Although it has often been simplified as the north versus the south, or Muslim versus Christian/animist, like many recent conflicts it has been much more complex.<sup>88</sup> There is still major conflict and widespread violence in the western region of Darfur which has displaced two million people and killed more than 200,000.<sup>89</sup> The country is due to split in two in July 2011.

This in addition to regional conflict and inadequate border control has exacerbated the problem of SALW in Sudan.

Settings of conflict can increase the incidence of 'other' forms of gun violence, due to the increased availability and proliferation of firearms, and impunity for the crimes. Furthermore, this availability and proliferation increases the likelihood for violent conflict to reoccur.

There is no legal framework in southern Sudan for civilian arms possession and in northern Sudan the boundaries between armed civilians, armed militias and armed paramilitary forces are also unclear. Updating and strengthening national gun laws are therefore crucial for improving security.<sup>90</sup>

Due to the encompassing nature and length of the conflict, Sudan has become highly militarised and DDR has been incredibly difficult to achieve.<sup>91</sup>

*and misusing a gun – this young man had obtained his gun through a friend.*

*I now take care of my grandson, a 9 year old orphan. I am constantly worried as every day we hear news of gun violence in Southern Sudan and there is no security at all. Many people who used violence as a means to live have now had their weapons taken off them, but there is no formal reintegration process and Sudan remains a very dangerous place."*

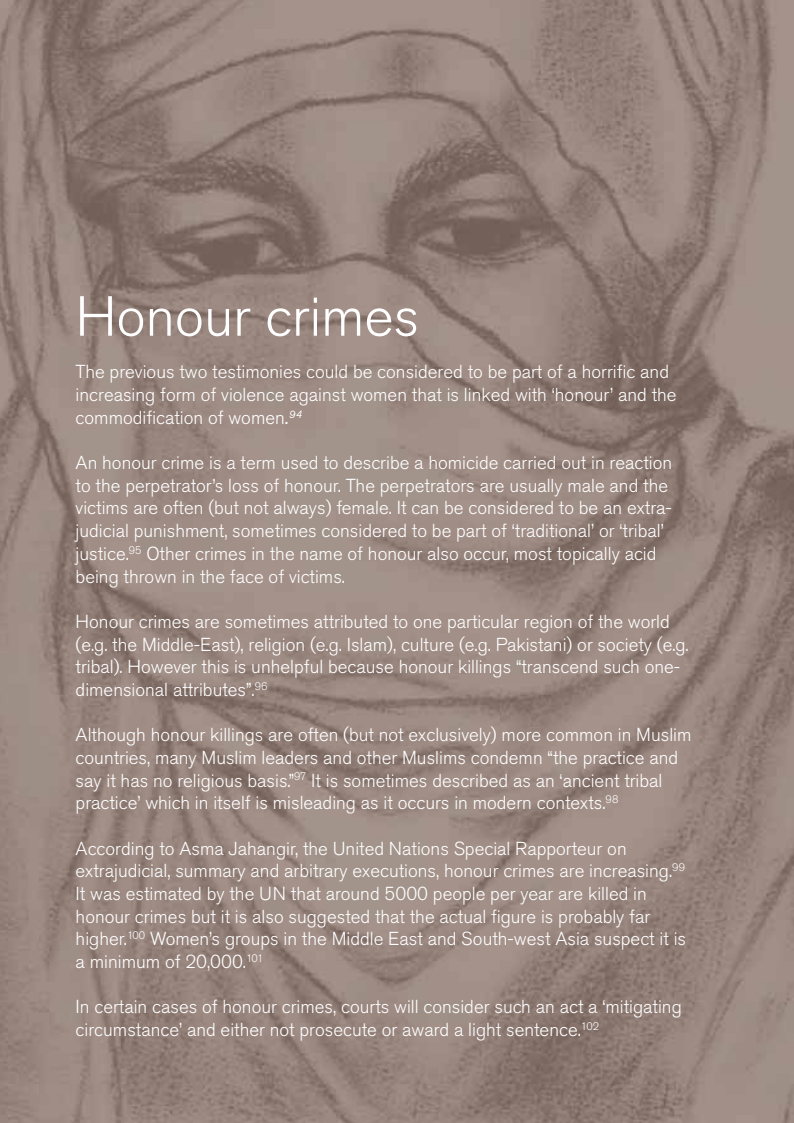
The testimony above demonstrates how, even in countries experiencing conflict, other forms of gun crime occur not necessarily related to the conflict, which also need to be taken seriously.

**A National Campaign in 2000 to encourage voluntary surrender of civilian weapons collected 9,441 weapons.<sup>92</sup>**

With an estimated 2 million privately-owned guns, Sudan ranks at no. 34 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Sudan there are 5.5 guns for every 100 people.<sup>93</sup>







# Honour crimes

The previous two testimonies could be considered to be part of a horrific and increasing form of violence against women that is linked with 'honour' and the commodification of women.<sup>94</sup>

An honour crime is a term used to describe a homicide carried out in reaction to the perpetrator's loss of honour. The perpetrators are usually male and the victims are often (but not always) female. It can be considered to be an extra-judicial punishment, sometimes considered to be part of 'traditional' or 'tribal' justice.<sup>95</sup> Other crimes in the name of honour also occur, most typically acid being thrown in the face of victims.

Honour crimes are sometimes attributed to one particular region of the world (e.g. the Middle-East), religion (e.g. Islam), culture (e.g. Pakistani) or society (e.g. tribal). However this is unhelpful because honour killings "transcend such one-dimensional attributes".<sup>96</sup>

Although honour killings are often (but not exclusively) more common in Muslim countries, many Muslim leaders and other Muslims condemn "the practice and say it has no religious basis."<sup>97</sup> It is sometimes described as an 'ancient tribal practice' which in itself is misleading as it occurs in modern contexts.<sup>98</sup>

According to Asma Jahangir, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary and arbitrary executions, honour crimes are increasing.<sup>99</sup> It was estimated by the UN that around 5000 people per year are killed in honour crimes but it is also suggested that the actual figure is probably far higher.<sup>100</sup> Women's groups in the Middle East and South-west Asia suspect it is a minimum of 20,000.<sup>101</sup>

In certain cases of honour crimes, courts will consider such an act a 'mitigating circumstance' and either not prosecute or award a light sentence.<sup>102</sup>

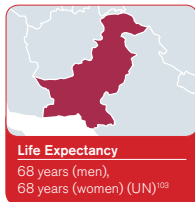
# Pakistan

*"My name is Nabeela, I am 28 years old and I am a graduate. I live with my mother in the remote village of Charssada. My sister Shakeela committed suicide by shooting herself with a 30-bore pistol.*

*Shakeela was a college student and engaged to our cousin. In September 2000, one of her friends got sick and didn't appear in college for a week. So she asked Shakeela to go to her house after classes to help her with the lectures she didn't attend. Shakeela didn't know her address, but her friend told her not to worry and that she will send her brother to pick her up from college. My sister informed us that she would go to her friend's house but she omitted telling us that she was going there with a man. She made a terrible mistake that day. In our pukhtton culture, women have to pay a heavy price when they forget that they have to live under the control of men.*

*On her way with the young man, she was spotted by her fiancé. He immediately came to our home and asked us about Shakeela. When we told him that she had gone to a friend's house to help her with studying, he started to shout and insult us. He left our house angry, and threatened to kill Shakeela in the name of honour. When she came home later that day, my mother beat her and abused her. Shakeela was terrified. She told us what really happened and asked her friend and his brother to come and explain the situation, but nobody, not even me, would listen or believe her.*

*The following day, my mother told her to forget about her studies and that she would stay at home from then on as she couldn't trust her anymore. That same afternoon, my cousin, to whom Shakeela was engaged, came to our house with a gun and opened fire. My mother fainted, while I tried to stop him, but he started to beat me and to point his gun at me. Shakeela rushed to lock herself in a room. Thanks to the help of our neighbours our lives were spared that day.*



**Evidence indicates that there is a significant link between a gun in the home and increased risk of suicide. Teenagers are especially seen as more at risk of committing suicide if they have access to a firearm.<sup>104</sup>**

**Although the death in this testimony was not an honour crime in itself, it was clearly the threat of it which precipitated the suicide.**

**Honour crimes are often linked to moral codes which demand chastity or virginity in unmarried women and girls and are sometimes communally sanctioned (by men and women). An act such as associating with a man outside of the family can cast a shadow on a woman's 'honour', and, therefore, her family's.<sup>105</sup> This sort of collective control can create intense oppression of women as it is in their 'bodies' that honour can be seen to reside.<sup>106</sup> Being accused of committing adultery is the most common reason for honour killings in Pakistan.<sup>107</sup>**

**While there are no official statistics for the number of honour killings in Pakistan, the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) estimates that there are around 1,000 per year<sup>108</sup> (20% of the UN estimate). If these figures are accurate, then Pakistan "probably has the highest per capita incidence of honour killings in the world."<sup>109</sup> Many cases go unreported and most are unpunished.<sup>110</sup> Although the information available is limited, at least 60% of victims of honour killings are women.<sup>111</sup>**

**Pakistan ratified UN CEDAW in 1996 which obliges the**

*Some of our relatives informed my father and my brothers, who were working in Saudi Arabia, about the situation, sticking up for my cousin. They were very angry but unable to come home because of their jobs. They told us that they would kill us on their return – they were working hard to support us, and we, in return, were disloyal and had brought shame to our family. We were terrified. Shakeela’s engagement was called off. My father, who would usually ring us on a regular basis, stopped calling. My eldest brother told my mother that his sister had to die for what she had done. He also told my mother that as soon as he returned to Pakistan he would kill her himself. In March 2001, my brother was coming home for the holidays. Two days before his arrival, Shakeela shot herself with a pistol because she was so afraid that he would do it. She chose to face death rather than him.*

*I am now 28 and I am still not married because nobody wants to marry a girl whose sister killed herself due to her ‘loose morals’. I feel very vulnerable and helpless. I see the men in my family passing guns around among themselves – having a gun in the home is something quite common here. I have always hated guns, now more than ever, not only because of my sister’s death but also because of the countless women who suffer. Currently I am doing a teaching job in small primary school. My father died in an accident two years ago. My brothers are still working in Saudi Arabia and they don’t support us anymore. This is why I have to work, to support my mother and myself.*

*As far as I am concerned there is no hope for the future. There is nothing left to hope for. But I hope for the future of other women in our society, when they will gain dignity and respect and will not be bought, sold, treated and killed like animals. When they will have respect and equal status in society.”*

**state to protect women from gender-based violence from both state and private actors. Some progress has been made as the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Bill was passed by the Pakistan National Assembly on 4 August 2009. However, armed domestic violence has not been acknowledged.<sup>112</sup>**

**The HRCP reported that firearms were used in 48% of honour killings in 2009.<sup>113</sup>**

**During June 2009 Awaz CDS conducted surveys in the 4 Districts of Southern Punjab (Multan, Muzaffar Garh, Jampur & DG Khan). 94% of respondents said they had been threatened by a gun, and 70% believed the gun was held illegally.<sup>114</sup>**

**It is thought that some residents in Karachi keep as many as 50 firearms under one licence.<sup>115</sup>**

**Pakistani civil society organisations, concerned with the levels of gun violence in the country have started a de-weaponisation campaign in Karachi. The Mutahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) filed a bill in the National Assembly in January 2011 seeking de-weaponisation across the country. The proposed law would ban the use of firearms and ammunition, their production, and their smuggling, throughout Pakistan.<sup>116</sup>**

**With an estimated 18 million privately-owned guns, Pakistan ranks at no. 6 in a comparison of the size of the civilian arsenals in 178 countries. This means that in Pakistan there are 11.6 guns for every 100 people.<sup>117</sup>**



# Sexual violence in conflict

Sexual violence and/or rape in war is not a new phenomenon but it has become increasingly recognised due to its visibility in recent conflicts.<sup>118</sup> The overwhelming majority of sexual violence documented is committed by men on women<sup>119</sup> (although sexual violence against men in war is becoming more acknowledged<sup>120</sup>). Not only do women's bodies become the battleground during conflict, they may be stigmatised later and rejected by family and society. Unlike in times of peace, rapes in war often take place publicly where they can be witnessed by family and members of the community.<sup>121</sup>

Rape in war can be opportunistic or a deliberate wartime strategy or weapon, and has many facets. It is used not only to demoralise and humiliate the enemy but to violate social and familial norms and break community/ family bonds, particularly as women are viewed as "repositories of a community's cultural and spiritual values".<sup>122</sup> A likely consequence of wartime rape may be unwanted pregnancies which can lead to stigmatisation of both mother and child. This



consequence is sometimes a desired effect of the violence, especially when wartime rape is part of a deliberate strategy to destroy an ethnic or social group, something which can now be considered genocide.<sup>123</sup>

Rape can result in severe physical injury including HIV infection, infertility and fistula, which themselves are likely to have profound social consequences for the survivors afterwards including marginalisation or exclusion from society. The psychological impacts are also severe and survivors often experience depression and trauma which can then lead to suicide.<sup>124</sup>

Wartime Rape is recognised as a crime against humanity. This has been confirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 1820, adopted in June 2008, concerned with addressing the issue of sexual violence in conflict. The resolution considers sexual violence in conflict to be serious international security issue which requires a response. The resolution calls for strengthening the protection of women from sexual violence.

**Small arms and light weapons** facilitate sexual violence against women and girls and in some cases women are raped with the guns themselves. The proliferation of firearms in conflict and its aftermath, and usual impunity for the crimes, means that incidences of sexual violence increase. It is also often exacerbated by a heightened culture of violence and strained gender relations.

# Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)

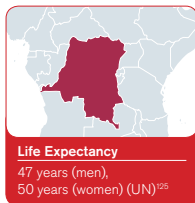
*"I was to be married on a Saturday. Between midnight and one o'clock the night before, while we were preparing for the wedding, the military burst in. They forced us to undress, and savagely beat us. They raped my mother, my two younger sisters and me. This was in the presence of my helpless father and brothers. Once they had finished, they forced my father to give them the dowry that we had received from my boyfriend. On leaving, they made the women follow them to the Kahusi Bienga Park. Here, we were kept as slaves for four months.*

*After these incidents, my fiancé rejected me and demanded that we return the dowry. In order to repay him I had to accept any job that was going. But, by the grace of God, I finally managed to gather the same amount of money that he had given us.*

*These traumas affected me deeply. Furthermore, we needed support and refuge but no organisation would help us because, as raped women, we were regarded as being cursed.*

*We are not allowed access to aid, even though donors send money to help women and people like me. Because of our situation we were motivated to regroup and create the Union for Raped Women, Widows, Orphans and Child Victims of War (UFEVEOVIG)."*

The DRC has put in place a legal framework for protecting women from gender-based violence including a 2006 law against sexual violence, a national strategy to combat sexual violence and a zero-tolerance policy for criminal acts by the army including rape and murder. There are still serious challenges to this being enforced, however, and at present women are far from safe from sexual violence.<sup>131</sup>



Women's experiences of rape in conflict are many and varied. As in this case, civilian women can be kidnapped as sex slaves, sometimes then becoming 'wives' of the combatants. Women are also sometimes abducted and coerced into becoming combatants, bearing arms themselves and simultaneously become both victims and perpetrators of violence. Sometimes they choose to join armies (often to escape violence at home) and are then at risk of being raped by their 'comrades' or combatants on an opposing side.<sup>126</sup>

After gaining independence in 1960, the DRC has suffered from a multitude of conflicts both politically and economically motivated, most recently from 1998 to 2003. This conflict involved government forces backed by Namibia, Zimbabwe and Angola, fighting against rebels supported by Uganda and Rwanda.<sup>127</sup> Peace agreements were signed in 1998 and a transitional government formed in 2003, but, despite this, widespread violence continues, particularly in the east of the country. More than 5 million people have died in the conflict since 1998<sup>128</sup> and the country is in the grip of a humanitarian crisis with massive displacement of peoples, disease and malnutrition.<sup>129</sup>

Accurate figures are impossible to obtain, but it is estimated that tens of thousands of women and girls have been raped and sexually assaulted by combatant forces in the course of the armed conflict in eastern DRC, and this violence is still occurring.<sup>130</sup>



## Burundi

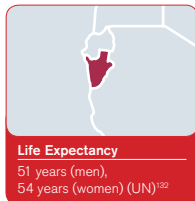
*"From 1991 to 1993 I worked as a professor at the high school in Mukenke. Among my students was a girl named Amina, who finished school in 1992. She was lovely, a brilliant student who also worked as a counsellor in a primary school.*

*"In October 1993 armed conflict broke out following the assassination of the first democratically elected and the first Hutu president of Burundi, Melchior Ndadaye. After that, a group of militiamen came and threatened Amina as she was a Tutsi – the same ethnic group as the military responsible for the president's death.*

*One early morning, about twenty armed men and boys arrived at the village, having killed anyone who appeared to be Tutsi on their way. They raped Amina until she fainted, leaving her for dead. Passing soldiers, collecting both bodies and survivors and shooting any Hutu who happened to cross their path, found Amina dying. They took her to a local college, and from there she was moved to a hospital to be resuscitated. It is a shocking story that will affect me for the rest of my life.*

*With God's help she eventually recovered her strength. As a result of this violation, Amina became pregnant. She gave birth to a baby boy, who she took care of with pride in spite of him being a constant reminder of that awful day.*

*I met her again two years later. She was living with people who had taken her in after her mental health had dramatically deteriorated. In spite of her condition she recognised me and told me this same story and although I already knew of her ordeal, her account still made me cry.*



Burundi is recovering from one of the 'new' wars of the 20th century. The 12-year civil conflict which began in 1993 was incredibly complex and involved various armed groups including government forces fighting against each other, and civilians. Violence was intense and diffused across the country. This inevitably increased the availability and misuse of firearms and was further exacerbated by the other violent conflicts taking place in the region: in Rwanda and DRC. The line between civilian and combatant became blurred particularly as civilians were issued with SALW by the government and armed groups and civilians also chose to arm themselves as a means of defending themselves.<sup>133</sup> It is thought that over the course of the conflict at least 300,000 people were killed (mainly 'civilians').<sup>134</sup>

Many of the combatants from the various sides committed huge atrocities including massacres of civilians and wide-scale sexual violence. The latter was used as a deliberate tactic by government soldiers and other armed groups to humiliate and degrade the 'enemy' and destroy societal and ethnic bonds. All sides were guilty of this practice and, at the same time, the occurrence of rape and sexual violence carried out by 'civilians' also increased.<sup>135</sup>

While the impunity of these crimes in this context of the war may have increased their occurrence, it must be

*Amina has never worked. She and her illegitimate child are regarded as a dishonour to their family and she depends on the kindness of others to survive. I haven't seen her in over seven years. I do not know if she is still alive, or what became of her child, whose father remains a nameless war criminal."*

acknowledged that the crimes were ultimately a form of gender-based violence and an extreme manifestation of discrimination and abuse faced by Burundian women during peacetime. The crimes committed during the 'war' thus served to further undermine the position of women, and sexual violence in post-conflict Burundi is still widespread. These crimes were, and continue to be, under-reported and under-punished.<sup>136</sup>

The previous section has highlighted the role of guns in gender-based violence. We must not assume that all women victims of gun violence in conflict have been raped, however. Although the previous two testimonies give a human face to what is now an internationally recognised problem (the use of sexual violence in conflict), this should not overshadow the fact that civilian women also account for many of the numbers of civilians injured and hurt by SALW in times of conflict, and the devastating impact this may have on their (and their families') lives.

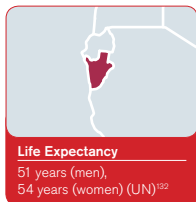






# Direct conflict deaths

Small arms are responsible for the majority of direct conflict deaths and an immeasurable amount of injuries. The majority of victims in conflict in the past 60 years have been civilians.



## Burundi

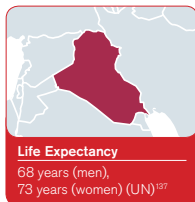
*"I was the victim of gun violence in Burundi – in the North-West province of Bubanza. It was in the November of 1997, a day that I will never forget. The Civil War was becoming increasingly fierce and was spreading across the whole country. Armed rival gangs would often come face to face with both each other and the regular army in the middle of villages – meaning no-one was spared as nobody knew which side anyone belonged to. In the end we had to flee, without stopping and without even knowing where we were going. We, the women and children, had especially good reason to leave as we were being targeted by rebel groups and the army for a variety of reasons – namely sex and slavery.*

*On the 16<sup>th</sup> December shooting broke out near our hiding place. Bullets were flying from all sides. We didn't know where to go, and then we heard the explosion. Three days later I found myself in the Prince Regent Charles Hospital in Bujumbura. My right leg had been cut off at the thigh, it was horrific.*

*Before I was a strong girl and by working on the land I was able to provide for my family and go to school. Now, with my false leg, I can neither work nor study and my family is destitute.*

*I feel like I have been reduced to nothing and I don't have the courage to go on. I am treated with contempt which just disgusts me as I never wanted a war. Now, not only am I unable to provide for myself but because of my disability I am rejected by society. The situation that faces my younger sister is no more encouraging. My parents are old and now living in extreme poverty and I often have to ask for help in order to dress myself as well as needing food and other supplies. In spite of it all, I remain hopeful that one day my country and the rest of the world will finally think about us and our situation. The telling of my story has also allowed this hope to grow even more."*

## Iraq



*"We rushed to run away. The soldiers shot everywhere... Though I felt pain somewhere in my body, I ran a short distance more. We reached a residential area, and then I stopped at a corner. My friends continued to run. "This is a safe place", I thought, as I could not run anymore. After a while I took a deep gasping breath to make sure I wasn't dreaming. The cold air reached deep down into my lungs. Cold air – really cold dry air unlike that from an open freezer or a crisp winter morning. There was something different about it, something heavy, almost destructive.*

*Shots were heard again. Suddenly I had to move on, but it felt as if all my organs were about to leave my body. In that very moment I felt something open and expand in my soul. I heard the whispers of my scattered thoughts in my disorganised mind, punctuated by the sound of my own breathing.*

*The fresh cold air hit me on my right side, and I had a very strange feeling in my stomach. I touched my body and could feel the warm blood trickle through my fingers and down my arm. I wanted to find out if I was seriously injured, but couldn't. My vision went blurry and my eyes were shaking every few seconds. My knees folded under me, I was falling down, down to the ground, and gradually couldn't feel my body..."*

In actively trying to flee from potential sexual violence this woman was injured in the crossfire like so many civilians in conflict.

## Indirect Conflict Deaths

It is important to note that the Small Arms Survey suggests that the number of people who die indirectly from armed conflict is far more than those who die violently during conflict. This is because the effects of modern conflict are far-reaching and include disease, poverty, malnutrition, the diversion of resources and limited access to basic health care, clean water and shelter. Indirect consequences of conflict also include destruction of a nation's infrastructure, economy and psyche, which can negatively affect the prospects for peace and contribute to more deaths and suffering.<sup>138</sup>



# Conclusion

This publication has shown some of the different ways in which gun violence is gendered and affects women and men differently, giving a voice to the thousands of faceless victims who represent the statistics of gun violence, and to the ones who go uncounted. The testimonies, which between them cover acts perpetrated over more than two decades, illustrate the enduring prevalence of such gun violence and the long term impact on the lives of those subjected to it.

These accounts demonstrate that while women in countries at conflict are vulnerable to gun violence by states officials or armies, it must not be forgotten that at the same time they are also still at risk of the same issues faced by women in contexts of peace such as crime or domestic violence. It must also not be forgotten that some women fortunate enough to live in countries at peace are also faced with gender-based violence, usually from an intimate partner or family member.

While to some, these 'issues' may appear to pale into insignificance compared to the nature and scale of what happens in armed conflict, these testimonies reveal why they should not be 'dumbed down', and that ultimately, they are part of the same continuum of violence against women, made easier by the presence of guns. They also show the impact and effect that losing a loved one to gun violence has, and ultimately that, whatever the context or situation, the bullet from (or shadow of) a gun fires (or intimidates) in the same way.

Many of the crimes against women are a product of an unequal and sometimes misogynistic gender system. While this is a massive issue in its own right, it must be recognised that it is exacerbated by the presence and availability of firearms. Firearms not only facilitate the violence that is symptomatic of this, but, due to their associations with masculinity, often perpetuate the system itself. Gender training is therefore necessary to try and break the link between masculinity and guns in addition to working with both men and women to promote a culture of peace.

Research has indicated that the availability of guns corresponds with levels of lethal violence in both contexts of peace and war.<sup>139</sup> Therefore decreasing their availability can go some way to decreasing violence. Much of this can occur at state level including the existence of laws and policies that regulate gun ownership; licensing and registration; making unlicensed possession illegal; creating and maintaining systems that allow weapons to be traced, as well as measures to deny access to a firearm or revoke licences from those who may misuse them (as in the case of domestic violence). However, we have seen cases where the misuse of firearms has occurred in countries which apparently have the necessary legal provisions in place that should prevent such incidents. This demonstrates the importance of implementation in terms of national laws and policy, to ensure that they are consistently applied and enforced.

The UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA) urges UN Member States to pass legislation to end the illicit production, sale and ownership of small arms, and to introduce tougher licensing requirements.<sup>140</sup> An enhanced understanding of gender-specific perceptions of peace and human security are crucial to ensure the full and effective implementation of the PoA.<sup>141</sup> In 2010, The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs Regional

Disarmament Branch (UNODA/RDB) and IANSA revised the “Guidelines for gender mainstreaming for the effective implementation of the UN PoA” in order to refocus efforts based on new developments, progress made and lessons learnt in the implementation of the PoA, as well as in the area of gender mainstreaming in peace and security. A combination of lack of political will to institutionalise and implement gender sensitive policies continues to frustrate efforts. Greater commitment of resources for promoting gender equality within the UN small arms process is needed.

An additional way of addressing availability is to have international mechanisms in place which control the legal supply of weapons through arms transfers, imports and exports. This would be the role of an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).<sup>142</sup> As per UN General Assembly Resolution 64/48, an ATT would be “a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms”. Discussions on the ATT present an important opportunity to examine the tools used to facilitate and commit acts of gender-based violence, most often small arms, in the context of decisions concerning international transfers of conventional arms.

If an ATT that includes small arms and ammunition was successfully implemented, it could help to prevent incidences of armed violence from occurring. It would enable the restriction of arms transfers to states where there is a substantial risk that the arms would be used in facilitating human rights violations and abuses or perpetuate “a pattern of or facilitate high levels of firearms-related homicide”.<sup>143</sup> States’ responsibilities to address gender-based violence are framed in international human rights law. In this way, the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence are inherently linked to the inclusion of a strong ‘international law’ standard in an ATT. This would lead to the prevention and prohibition of transfers of arms if they are likely to be used to perpetrate acts of firearms-related sexual and gender-based violence.

An appreciation of gender dimensions, as well as for the experience and expertise of survivors of gun violence, will have important consequences for the way in which successful long term strategies are formulated to help combat the global small arms crisis.

## Endnotes

- 1 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun Violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 2 Small Arms Survey, 'Non-Conflict Armed Violence', <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/armed-violence/non-conflict-armed-violence.html>.
- 3 Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 'Missing Pieces: Directions for Reducing Gun Violence through Parliamentary Action', July 2005, <http://www.hdcentre.org/publications?page=3&filter0=59>, p. 9.
- 4 Wendy Cukier, with Alison Kooistra and Mark Anto, 'Gendered Perspectives on Small Arms Proliferation and Misuse: Effects and Policies', in Bonn International Center for Conversion brief 24 - Gender perspectives on small arms and light weapons: regional and international concerns, 2002, [http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/SALW\\_GenderPerspectives\\_ICCI\\_July2002.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/assets/file/Resources/NGO/SALW_GenderPerspectives_ICCI_July2002.pdf), p. 25.
- 5 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun Violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 6 Marta Peça and Rita Santos, 'Domestic Violence and Firearms in Portugal' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 17–19, <http://www.ces.ucp.pt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 17.
- 7 BBC news, 'United States of America Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country\\_profiles/1217752.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1217752.stm#facts).
- 8 'Homicide, Suicide and Unintentional Firearms Fatality', Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, [Online] <http://www.bradycampaign.org/studies/view/191/>.
- 9 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun Violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 10 'Gun Violence: Women', Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, <http://www.bradycampaign.org/facts/gunviolence/factswomen?s=2>.
- 11 'Cost', Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, <http://www.bradycampaign.org/facts/gunviolence/costs?s=2>.
- 12 'The Medical Costs of Gunshot Injuries in the United States', The Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence, <http://www.bradycampaign.org/studies/view/137/>.
- 13 'United States – Gun Facts, Figures and the Law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/united-states>.
- 14 Wendy Cukier, with Alison Kooistra and Mark Anto, 'Gendered Perspectives on Small Arms Proliferation and Misuse: Effects and Policies', in BICC Brief 24, Gender Perspectives on Small Arms and Light Weapons: Regional and International Concerns, p. 27.
- 15 BBC News, 'Afghanistan Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1162668.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/country_profiles/1162668.stm#facts).
- 16 M.A. Nuhuman, 'Ethnic Identity, Religious Fundamentalism and Muslim Women in Sri Lanka' in Dossier 21, Women Living Under Muslim Laws (WLUM), <http://www.wlum.org/node/322>.
- 17 BBC News, 'Quick guide: Afghanistan', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/5140380.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/5140380.stm).
- 18 United Nations Programme of Action Implementation Support System, 'Country Profiles: Afghanistan' <http://www.poa-iss.org/CountryProfiles/CountryProfileInfo.aspx?Acc=M&Col=1>.
- 19 Gender Action for Peace and Security, 'Parliamentarian's Guide to Women, Peace and Security', <http://www.gaps-uk.org/docs/Parliamentarian%5C%27s%20guide.pdf>.
- 20 United Nations Programme of Action Implementation Support System, 'Country Profiles: Afghanistan', <http://www.poa-iss.org/CountryProfiles/CountryProfileInfo.aspx?Acc=M&Col=1>.
- 21 'Small arms in Afghanistan: Facts, figures and firearms law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/afghanistan>.
- 22 Small Arms Survey, 'Extra-Judicial Killings', <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/armed-violence/non-conflict-armed-violence/extrajudicial-killings.html>.
- 23 Small Arms Survey, 'Extra-Judicial Killings', <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/armed-violence/non-conflict-armed-violence/extrajudicial-killings.html>.
- 24 BBC News, 'Brazil Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country\\_profiles/1227110.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1227110.stm#facts).
- 25 Rede de Comunidades e Movimentos contra a Violência, 'The Justice System working Against Justice', <http://www.redecontraviolencia.org/Documentos/445.html>.
- 26 BBC News, 'UN Highlights Brazil Gun Crisis', <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/4628813.stm>.

- 27 United Nations, 'Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions Addendum: MISSION TO BRAZIL', <http://www.extrajudicialexecutions.org/application/media/%28Brazil%29%20G0912622.pdf>, p. 2.
- 28 WHO (2002), World Report on Violence and Health, pp. 274-5 in Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, *Hitting the Target: Men and Guns*, p. 2.
- 29 United Nations Programme of Action, National report for Brasil, 2008, <http://www.poa-iss.org/poa/poa.aspx>, p. 7.
- 30 Carolina Looty (Viva Rio), Pablo Dreyfus (Viva Rio), and William Godnick (International Alert), 'Small Arms Control in Brazil' [http://www.epnk.org/pdfs/MISAC\\_BrazilStudy.pdf](http://www.epnk.org/pdfs/MISAC_BrazilStudy.pdf).
- 31 United Nations Programme of Action, National report for Brazil, 2008, <http://www.poa-iss.org/poa/poa.aspx>, p. 9.
- 32 'Small Arms in Brazil: Facts, Figures and Firearms law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/brazil>.
- 33 Lydia Richardson and Adèle Kirsten, 'Armed Violence and Poverty in Brazil: A Case Study of Rio de Janeiro and Assessment of Viva Rio for the Armed Violence and Poverty Initiative', Centre for International Cooperation and Security, University of Bradford, March 2005, [http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/country/amer\\_pdf/americas-brazil-2005.pdf](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/files/portal/spotlight/country/amer_pdf/americas-brazil-2005.pdf), p. 4.
- 34 Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 'Missing Pieces: Directions for reducing gun violence through parliamentary action', July 2005, <http://www.hdcentre.org/publications?page=3&filter0=59>, p. 67.
- 35 Small Arms Survey, 'Gender and Violence', <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/armed-violence/non-conflict-armed-violence/gender-and-violence.html>.
- 36 Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 'Hitting the Target: Men and Guns', June 2006, <http://www.hdcentre.org/publications/hitting-target-men-and-guns>, p. 2.
- 37 Tatiana Moura and Rita Santos 'Small Arms Demand in Portugal: Profiles, Uses and Motivations' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 4-8, <http://www.ces.ucpt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 6.
- 38 Helen Michalowski, 'The Army Will Make a Man out of You' in Penny Strange, 'It'll Make a Man of You: A Feminist View of the Arms Race' in Diane E. H. Russell (ed.) *Exposing Nuclear Phallacies*, (Pergamon Press: New York, 1989), pp. 104-126, p. 120.
- 39 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun Violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 40 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun Violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 41 Tatiana Moura and Rita Santos 'Small arms demand in Portugal: profiles, uses and motivations' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 4-8 [Online] <http://www.ces.ucpt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 6.
- 42 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun Violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 43 Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 'Missing Pieces: Directions for Reducing Gun Violence through Parliamentary Action', July 2005, <http://www.hdcentre.org/publications?page=3&filter0=59>, p. 82.
- 44 Amnesty International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Oxfam International, 'The Impact of Guns on Women's Lives', 2005, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT30/001/2005/en/93676864-d53a-11dd-8a23-d58a9c0d652/act300012005en.pdf>.
- 45 Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 'Hitting the Target: Men and Guns', p. 1.
- 46 Amnesty International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Oxfam International, 'The Impact of Guns on Women's Lives', 2005, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT30/001/2005/en/93676864-d53a-11dd-8a23-d58a9c0d652/act300012005en.pdf>, p. 2.
- 47 Connell, R. W., *Masculinities*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, Second edition, 1995), p. 83.
- 48 UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, General Recommendation No. 19, Violence against women (Eleventh session, 1992), UN Doc. HRI\ GEN\ 1\ Rev.1, para 6.
- 49 Carpenter, C. R, 'Recognising Gender-Based Violence against Civilian Men and Boys in Conflict Situations', *Security Dialogue*, 37, 2006, pp. 83-103.
- 50 Wynne Russell, 'Sexual Violence against Men and Boys' in *Forced Migration Review 27*, Sexual Violence: Weapon of War/impediment to Peace, January 2007, <http://www.fmreview.org/mags1.htm>, p. 22.
- 51 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, UN General Assembly resolution 48/104, 10 December 1993, Article 1.
- 52 'Gender-based violence in Africa: Literature Review', February 2008, Population Council, p. 4, [http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/AfricaSGBV\\_LitReview.pdf](http://www.popcouncil.org/pdfs/AfricaSGBV_LitReview.pdf).
- 53 Amnesty International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Oxfam International, 'The Impact

- of Guns on Women's Lives', 2005, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT30/001/2005/en/93676864-d53a-11dd-8a23-d58a49cd652/act300012005en.pdf>, p. 2.
- 54 Domestic Violence London, 'What is Domestic Violence: Definition', <http://www.domesticviolencelondon.nhs.uk/1-what-is-domestic-violence-/1-definition.html>.
- 55 WHO Multi-country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women, World Health Organization 2005, [http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who\\_multicountry\\_study/Introduction-Chapter1-Chapter2.pdf](http://www.who.int/gender/violence/who_multicountry_study/Introduction-Chapter1-Chapter2.pdf), p. 5.
- 56 IANSA Women's Network, 'Women, Gun violence and the Home', <http://www.iansa-women.org/sites/default/files/newsviews/en-iansa-wn-information-kit.pdf>.
- 57 BBC News, 'Portugal Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country\\_profiles/994099.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/country_profiles/994099.stm#facts).
- 58 Marta Peça and Rita Santos, 'Domestic Violence and Firearms in Portugal' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 17–19 <http://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, pp. 18–19.
- 59 Almeida et. al., in Marta Peça and Rita Santos, 'Domestic Violence and Firearms in Portugal' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 17–19, <http://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 17.
- 60 Pedro Godinho and Joana Dias, 'Armed Violence Costs in Portugal: Hospital Costs, Productivity Loss and Intangible Costs Associated to Victims' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 14–16, <http://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 14.
- 61 Carla Afonso, 'The Legal Framework of Firearms and Ammunition in Portugal: Between Advances and Risks' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 20–22, <http://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 20.
- 62 Carla Afonso, 'The legal framework of Firearms and Ammunition in Portugal: Between Advances and Risks' in Violence and Small Arms: The Portuguese Case, 2010, pp. 20–22 <http://www.ces.uc.pt/nucleos/nep/media/Pax15-en.pdf>, p. 21.
- 63 'Small Arms in Portugal: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/portugal>.
- 64 BBC News, 'Namibia Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1063245.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1063245.stm).
- 65 BBC News, 'Namibia Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1063245.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1063245.stm).
- 66 Legal Assistance Centre, Namibia, 'Gender Research and Advocacy Project', <http://www.lac.org.na/projects/grap/grapobjective.html>.
- 67 Ministry of Gender Equality and Child Welfare, 'Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Study on Factors and Traditional Practices That May Perpetuate or Protect Namibians from Gender Based Violence and Discrimination', 2009, in Legal Assistance Centre, Namibia, 'Gender Research and Advocacy Project', <http://www.lac.org.na/projects/grap/grapobjective.html>.
- 68 Ministry of Health and Social Services, Namibian Demographic and Health Survey 2006–07 in Legal Assistance Centre, Namibia, 'Gender Research and Advocacy Project', <http://www.lac.org.na/projects/grap/grapobjective.html>.
- 69 Republic of Namibia, 'Promulgation of Arms and Ammunition Act', 1996, [http://www.adh-geneva.ch/RULAC/pdf\\_state/Namibia-Arms-and-Ammunition-Act-7-of-1996.pdf](http://www.adh-geneva.ch/RULAC/pdf_state/Namibia-Arms-and-Ammunition-Act-7-of-1996.pdf) p. 17.
- 70 Republic of Namibia, Combating of Domestic Violence Act, 2003, <http://www.lac.org.na/laws/pdf/domvio.pdf>.
- 71 'Small arms in Namibia: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/namibia>.
- 72 BBC News, 'El Salvador Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country\\_profiles/1220684.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1220684.stm#facts).
- 73 BBC News, 'El Salvador Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country\\_profiles/1220684.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/country_profiles/1220684.stm).
- 74 Cate Buchanan & Joaquín Chávez, 'Guns and Violence in the El Salvador Peace Negotiations', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2008, <http://www.hdcentre.org/files/EI%20Salvador.pdf>, p. 32.
- 75 Cate Buchanan & Joaquín Chávez, 'Guns and Violence in the El Salvador Peace Negotiations', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2008, p. 32.
- 76 UNHCR, 'El Salvador: Domestic violence; Recourse and Services Available to Victims (March 2006–July 2009)', <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,QUERYRESPONSE,SLV,4a7040bac,0.html>.
- 77 Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm and Rachel Kunz, Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007, p. 75.
- 78 UNHCR, 'El Salvador: Domestic violence; Recourse and Services Available to Victims (March 2006–July 2009)', <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/country,,QUERYRESPONSE,SLV,4a7040bac,0.html>.
- 79 IANSA, 'Armed violence and development', <http://www.iansa.org/workarea/armed-violence-and-development?page=2>.
- 80 Cate Buchanan & Joaquín Chávez, 'Guns and Violence in the El Salvador Peace Negotiations', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2008, p. 32.



- 81 Cate Buchanan & Joaquín Chávez, 'Guns and Violence in the El Salvador Peace Negotiations', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2008, p. 32.
- 82 'Small Arms in El Salvador: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/el-salvador>.
- 83 BBC News, 'Syria Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/801669.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/801669.stm).
- 84 GunPolicy.org, 'Small Arms in Syria: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/syria>.
- 85 GunPolicy.org, 'Small Arms in Syria: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/syria>.
- 86 GunPolicy.org, 'Small Arms in Syria: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/syria>.
- 87 BBC News, 'Sudan country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/820864.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/820864.stm#facts).
- 88 Richard Barltrop, 'The Negotiation of Security Issues in Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2008, p. 13.
- 89 BBC News, 'Sudan country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/820864.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/820864.stm#facts).
- 90 Richard Barltrop, 'The Negotiation of Security Issues in Sudan's Comprehensive Peace Agreement', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2008, p. 39.
- 91 'Sudan Country Profile', United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Centre, <http://www.unddr.org/countryprogrammes.php?c=35>.
- 92 United Nations Programme of Action Implementation Support System, 'Country Profiles: Sudan', <http://www.poaiss.org/CountryProfiles/CountryProfileInfo.aspx?Acc=M&Col=183>.
- 93 'Small Arms in Sudan: Facts, figures and firearms law', Gun Policy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/sudan>.
- 94 Amnesty International, 'Pakistan: Honour Killings of Girls and Women', September 1999, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA33/018/1999/en/9fe83c27-e0f1-11dd-be39-2d4003be4450/asa330181999en.pdf>, p. 4.
- 95 Are Knudsen, 'Traditional (in)justice: Honour Killings in Pakistan', in Lone Lindholt & Sten Schaumburg-Muller (eds), *Human Rights in Development Yearbook 2003: Human Rights in Local Living/Law*, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2005, p. 107.
- 96 Are Knudsen, 'Traditional (in)justice: Honour Killings in Pakistan', in Lone Lindholt & Sten Schaumburg-Muller (eds), *Human Rights in Development Yearbook 2003: Human Rights in Local Living/Law*, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2005, p. 108.
- 97 UNFPA State of World Population 2000, <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/ch03.html#3>.
- 98 BBC Ethics Guide, 'Honour crimes', [http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/honourcrimes/crimesofhonour\\_1.shtml#h2](http://www.bbc.co.uk/ethics/honourcrimes/crimesofhonour_1.shtml#h2).
- 99 UNFPA State of World Population 2000, <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/ch03.html#3>.
- 100 UNPA (United Nations Population Fund), *Lives Together, Worlds Apart: Men and Women In a Time of Change*, New York, 2000; Are Knudsen, 'Traditional (in)justice: Honour Killings in Pakistan', in Lone Lindholt & Sten Schaumburg-Muller (eds), *Human Rights in Development Yearbook 2003: Human Rights in Local Living/Law*, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2005, p. 107.
- 101 Robert Fisk, 'The Crimewave That Shames the World', September 2010, <http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/fisk/the-crimewave-that-shames-the-world-2072201.html>.
- 102 UNFPA State of World Population 2000, <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/ch03.html#3>.
- 103 BBC News, 'Pakistan Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/country\\_profiles/1157960.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/country_profiles/1157960.stm#facts).
- 104 Small Arms Survey, 'Suicide', <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/armed-violence/non-conflict-armed-violence/suicide.html>.
- 105 UNFPA State of World Population 2000, <http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2000/english/ch03.html#3>.
- 106 'Anatomy of Honour-Based Violence', <http://www.stophonourkillings.com/node/3773>.
- 107 Are Knudsen, 'Traditional (In)justice: Honour Killings in Pakistan', in Lone Lindholt & Sten Schaumburg-Muller (eds), *Human Rights in Development Yearbook 2003: Human Rights in Local Living/Law*, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2005, p. 109.
- 108 HRCP (Human Rights Commission of Pakistan), *State of Human Rights in Pakistan*, 2001, Lahore, 2002.
- 109 Are Knudsen, 'Traditional (In)justice: Honour Killings in Pakistan', in Lone Lindholt & Sten Schaumburg-Muller (eds), *Human Rights in Development Yearbook 2003: Human Rights in Local Living/Law*, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2005, p. 107.

- 110 Amnesty International, 'Pakistan: Honour Killings of Girls and Women', September 1999, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ASA33/018/1999/en/9fe83c27-e0f1-11dd-be39-2d4003be4450/asa330181999en.pdf>, p. 2.
- 111 Are Knudsen, 'Traditional (In)justice: Honour Killings in Pakistan', in Lone Lindholt & Sten Shaumburg-Muller (eds), *Human Rights in Development Yearbook 2003: Human Rights in Local Living/Law*, Norwegian Centre for Human Rights, 2005, p. 115.
- 112 Disarm Domestic Violence: Key initial findings, IANSA, 2009 <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/238>.
- 113 'Pakistan: Honour killings', IANSA, 2009 <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/381>.
- 114 Disarm Domestic Violence: Key initial findings, IANSA, 2009 <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/238>.
- 115 According to Rehman Malik, Pakistan Federal Interior Minister in Central Asia Online, 'Pakistan Moves to Disarm', [http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/caii/features/pakistan/main/2011/01/18/feature-01](http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en_GB/features/caii/features/pakistan/main/2011/01/18/feature-01).
- 116 Central Asia Online, 'Pakistan Moves to Disarm', [http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en\\_GB/features/caii/features/pakistan/main/2011/01/18/feature-01](http://centralasiaonline.com/cocoon/caii/xhtml/en_GB/features/caii/features/pakistan/main/2011/01/18/feature-01).
- 117 'Small Arms in Pakistan: Facts, Figures and Firearms Law', GunPolicy.org, <http://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/pakistan>.
- 118 Mackenzie, Megan, 'Securitizing Sex?', *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 2010, 12: 2, 202 – 221, p. 206.
- 119 Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm and Rachel Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007, p. 14.
- 120 Wynne Russell, 'Sexual Violence against Men and Boys' in *Forced Migration Review* 27, *Sexual Violence: Weapon of War*, Impediment to Peace, January 2007, p. 22, <http://www.fmreview.org/mags1.htm>.
- 121 Elvan Isikozlu, Ananda S. Millard, 'Towards a typology of wartime rape', Bonn International Centre for Conversion, 2010, <http://www.bicc.de/uploads/pdf/publications/briefs/brief43/brief43.pdf>, p. 50.
- 122 UNICEF. 1996. 'The State of the World's Children: Sexual Violence as a Weapon of War', <http://www.unicef.org/sowc96pk/sexviol.htm>, p. 1.
- 123 Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm and Rachel Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007, p. 15.
- 124 Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm and Rachel Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007, p. 15.
- 125 BBC News, 'DRC Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1076399.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1076399.stm#facts).
- 126 Amnesty International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Oxfam International, 'The Impact of Guns on Women's Lives', 2005, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT30/001/2005/en/93676864-d53a-11dd-8a23-d58a49c0d652/act300012005en.pdf>.
- 127 BBC News, 'DRC Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1076399.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1076399.stm#facts).
- 128 James Kearney, 'Strife in the DRC – a Situation the World Continues to Ignore', United Nations Association of the UK, November 2010, <http://www.una.org.uk/news/2010/1.11.2010.htm>.
- 129 Megan Bastick, Karin Grimm and Rachel Kunz, *Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*, Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, 2007, p. 41.
- 130 Amnesty International, the International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA) and Oxfam International, 'The Impact of Guns on Women's Lives', 2005, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/ACT30/001/2005/en/93676864-d53a-11dd-8a23-d58a49c0d652/act300012005en.pdf>, p. 38.
- 131 James Kearney, 'Strife in the DRC – A Situation the World Continues to Ignore', United Nations Association of the UK, November 2010, <http://www.una.org.uk/news/2010/1.11.2010.htm>.
- 132 BBC News, 'Burundi Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country\\_profiles/1068873.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/country_profiles/1068873.stm#facts).
- 133 Richard Bartrop, 'The Negotiation of Security Issues in the Burundi Peace Talks', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2008, pp. 13–15.
- 134 Richard Bartrop, 'The Negotiation of Security Issues in the Burundi Peace Talks', Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, March 2008, p. 17.
- 135 Amnesty International, 'Burundi: No Protection From Rape in War and Peace', 2007, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR16/002/2007/en/6e0e217b-d37f-11dd-a329-2f46302a8cc6/af160022007en.pdf>, pp. 6–8.
- 136 Amnesty International, 'Burundi: No Protection From Rape in War and Peace', 2007, <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/AFR16/002/2007/en/6e0e217b-d37f-11dd-a329-2f46302a8cc6/af160022007en.pdf>, pp. 6–8.
- 137 BBC News, 'Iraq Country Profile', [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/country\\_profiles/791014.stm#facts](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/country_profiles/791014.stm#facts).
- 138 'Direct Conflict Deaths', Small Arms Survey, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/armed-violence/direct-conflict-deaths.html>.

- 139 ICRC, 'Arms Availability and the Situation of Civilians in Armed Conflict', Geneva, 1999.
- 140 Cynthia Dehesa and Sarah Masters, *Joined-Up Thinking: International Measures for Women's Security and SALW Control*, IANSA Women's Network, 2010, <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/549>.
- 141 Statement of the IANSA Women's Network to the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms, New York, 14-18 June, 2010, <http://www.iansa-women.org/node/453>.
- 142 Amnesty International and International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), *How an Arms Trade Treaty Can Help Prevent Armed Violence*, 2011, p. 24.
- 143 Amnesty International and International Action Network on Small Arms (IANSA), *How an Arms Trade Treaty Can Help Prevent Armed Violence*, 2011, pp. 12–14.

# Voices of survivors: the different faces of gun violence

This publication features 16 testimonies acquired by IANSA of women survivors of gun violence. The testimonies are from a number of different countries and the violence occurs in various contexts and situations. The one common denominator in all of these stories is the misuse of guns.

Although reliable data is not available, more than 1 million people a year are believed to be direct survivors of armed violence – people who have been shot, with potentially disabling results. Many millions more are affected by armed violence, through the trauma of losing a family member, or of being threatened at gunpoint (including armed domestic violence, and sexual violence against women, men and children).



The IANSA Women's Network is the only international network focused on the connections between gender, women's rights, small arms and armed violence.

We are grateful to the Government of Norway for its support.