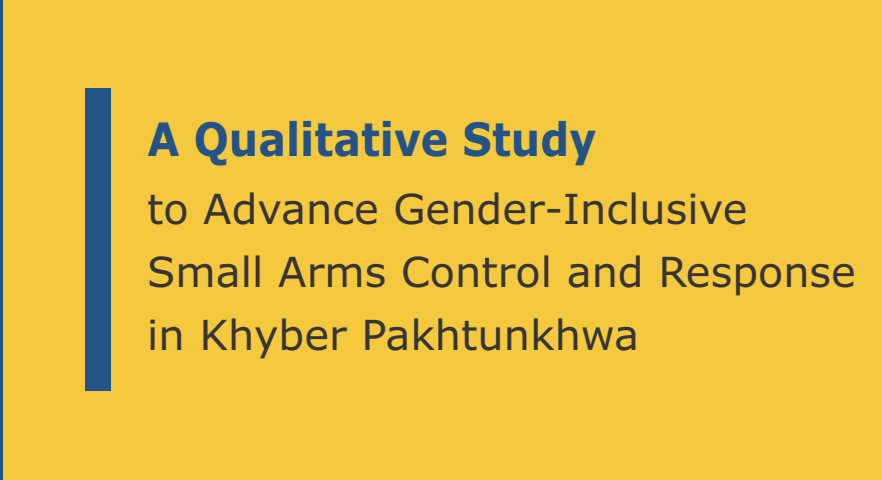




# “A Forgotten Connection”

SANA AHMAD



**A Qualitative Study**  
to Advance Gender-Inclusive  
Small Arms Control and Response  
in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa



**2023**



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We are hopeful that the findings of this report and the corresponding recommendations will contribute to informing the design of appropriate future interventions and follow-up strategic actions from community to policy level to promote gender-inclusive small arms control and gun-violence response.

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## 1 ABOUT BLUE VEINS



Blue Veins is a non-governmental women-led organization based in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan, working for the empowerment of women and other socially isolated groups. Blue Veins works to empower communities towards improving their status which is essential for them in realizing their full potential of social, political, and economic development and for promoting gender diversity and inclusivity.

Blue Veins is working in Pakistan since 1999 and has over one decade of experience in project implementation, management, research & policy development, stakeholder engagement & lobbying, awareness campaign, networking & partnership, community outreach and has implemented over 250 projects funded by international and national funding agencies. Blue Veins is an award-winning organization committed to build, strengthen and galvanize women & transgender person's collective power for a just and sustainable world – for all.

For more information about Blue Veins please visit <http://blueveins.org/>

Email address: [contact@blueveins.org](mailto:contact@blueveins.org)

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## 2. A ABOUT IANSA



The IANSA ‘International Action Network on Small Arms’ is the global movement against gun violence, linking civil society organizations working to stop the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons. It represents the voices of civil society on the international stage, for example in the UN process on small arms, and draws on the practical experience of its members to campaign for policies that will protect human security.

IANSA supports efforts to make people safer by reducing demand for such weapons, improving firearm regulation, and strengthening controls on arms transfers. Through research, advocacy, and campaigning, IANSA members are promoting local, national, regional, and global measures to strengthen human security. Increasing the role of women in global conversations on small arms and light weapons (SALW) related violence and encouraging the meaningful participation of women as stakeholders in the fight against gun violence, as opposed to passive victims is one of the objectives of IANSA work.

For more information about IANSA please visit <https://iansa.org/>

Email address: [iansa.network@gmail.com](mailto:iansa.network@gmail.com)

## 2. B ABOUT THE MAYPOLE FUND



The Maypole Fund is a small grant-giving organization that funds and support feminist activism for direct action, activities and projects to support disarmament policies and processes and closely related issues in locally relevant and appropriate ways.

For more information about The Maypole Fund please visit <https://www.maypolefund.org/>  
Email address: [maypolefund@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:maypolefund@yahoo.co.uk)

### 3. ABOUT THE RESEARCHER/AUTHOR

**Ms. Sana Ahmad**, is a young emerging women and human rights activist from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan, having a law degree with a specialization in Human Rights. She is working in the area of women's rights, gender equality, transgender rights, gender justice, sustainable development, peace building, gender-based violence, and youth engagement since 2017. Sana is a part of various CSOs and women rights networks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan including Child Rights Movement Khyber Pakhtunkhwa being provincial coordinator, End of Violence Against Women and Girls ERAW/G Alliance led by UN Women, Young Omang Network supported by Amplify Change, Joint Working Group of National Human Rights Institutions NHRIs on Girls Education by KPCSW, and representing Pakistan in the Global expert group on gender and HIV of EKHN.



Sana has conducted and served as author and co-author for several researches supported by International funding agencies including research on the identification of gaps in existing response services to gender-based violence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2017, exploring experiences of domestic violence survivors in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 2019, media representation on SGBV 2019, Gaps and Discriminations Faced by Transgender Community in Accessing Healthcare Services in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2017, factors influencing girl-child participation in Secondary School Education 2020 and Qualitative Analysis of the Relationship between Girls' Education and Early, Child and Forced Marriages in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, MalalaFund Pakistan 2022.

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[sana@blueveins.org](mailto:sana@blueveins.org)

## 4. Acronyms

ATT	<b>Arms Trade Treaty</b>
BV	<b>Blue Veins</b>
CSOs	<b>Civil Society Organizations</b>
DV	<b>Domestic Violence</b>
GBV	<b>Gender Based Violence</b>
IANSA	<b>International Action Network for Small Arms</b>
NGOs	<b>Non-Governmental Organizations</b>
POA	<b>Programme of Action</b>
SALW	<b>Small Arms and Light Weapons</b>
UN	<b>United Nations</b>

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## 5. Executive Summary

Gun violence is an urgent, complex, and multifaceted problem. However, the issue and its linkages with gender, and gender-responsive control are often overlooked. Amnesty International states that every day more than 500 people die from gun violence globally. And while men are the majority of the victims of gun violence, women, children, and non-binary gender persons are also victims and impacted in many indirect and often invisible ways.

In Pakistan, where according to media reports there are some 20 million legal and illegal weapons in the hands of individuals<sup>1</sup>, the annual rate of homicide involving small arms is 9.18% per 100,000 population including 5.03% of female homicide<sup>2</sup>. Murders by intimate partners and close family members in the name of honor are the most common form of homicide among women and the transgender community in Pakistan. And more than 90% of incidents of fatal violence against women, transgender, and gender non-conforming people in Pakistan involve a gun.

The possession and use of firearms are not only demonstrated to directly cause gender-based violence, but they also indirectly reinforce gender inequality. Pakistan is a country where patriarchal values heavily govern the social structure and power control. Firearms, marginally more often possessed by men, exacerbate patriarchal conceptions of masculinity that represent a threat to many women even within the households and hinder their ability to challenge gender inequality. While men are the predominating victims of gun violence in homicide, however, women are the most vulnerable behind closed doors, where guns are used to intimidate, control, hurt, and kill intimate partners.

While significant steps have been taken to control guns' possession through various legal and institutional measures, the integration of the gender perspective in prevention and response to gun violence and small arms control is still lagging and has not become an integral part of strategies employed to address the causes and consequences of use of small arms and gun violence. Applying a gender perspective to the small arms issue—understanding the different ways that men, women, boys, and girls engage in, are affected by, and respond to gun violence—is key to developing effective solutions to the problem.

To identify, explore and produce research-based recommendations and conclusions on gender-inclusive strategic points of actions and interventions, this research study has been conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study is the first of its kind in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which explores the existing linkages between guns, gender-based violence, and gender-responsive arms-control strategies and the need for further linkages, between gender-inclusive legislative and institutional actions and strategies on gun violence and small arms control.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/380032/the-weapons-trai-part-1-where-do-20m-illegal-arms-come-from>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/pakistan>

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The study collected data from 60 samples of Members Provincial Assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including ruling and opposition parties, representatives of Provincial Human Rights Institutions, Police officials, representatives of key government departments, Civil Society Organizations & Alliances, media, academia, and judiciary, consisting of 10, 5, 10, 10, 10, 5, 4, and 6 sample size respectively. The study adopted a qualitative approach to achieve the desired objectives and insights from the discussion with targeted research respondents.

The research explored and emanated various community strategic points of action and interventions, from community to policy level, to reduce armed trafficking, illicit possession, and gun violence. The study identified various community, institutional, and policy level issues and factors relevant to gendered impacts and perspectives in gun violence and armed trafficking. Despite the government numerous commitments at the national, provincial, national, and global level and recognition of the need for gender mainstreaming in policies and programming, it is striking how policies and laws regulating small arms control are still silent about these linkages in Pakistan and fail to acknowledge that gun violence and small arms affect women, men, girls or boys in different ways. The present research and data analysis reflects that the gender perspective is neither recognized nor adequately addressed by legislative and policy frameworks regulating small arms control in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and emphasize the urgent dire need to promote gender-inclusive strategies, programming, policies, and interventions at all levels is to control gun violence and reduce arms trafficking, illicit trade, and control.

## 6. Glossary of key terms<sup>3</sup>

<b>Gender</b>	Socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for males and females. Gender is context- and time-specific and is changeable
<b>Sex</b>	Sex refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that are defined as male and female
<b>Gender-responsive</b>	Policies, programs, or activities that are non-discriminatory concerning sex, equally benefit women and men and aim at correcting gender imbalances and inequalities
<b>Gender equality</b>	A state of affairs in which women and men have equal rights, freedoms, conditions, and opportunities to access and control socially valued goods and resources and enjoy the same status within a society.
<b>Gender-based violence</b>	... A general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of the normative role expectations associated with each gender, along with the unequal power relationships between genders, within the context of a specific society.
<b>Violence against women</b>	Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women
<b>Small arm</b>	Any man-portable lethal weapon designed for individual use that expels or launches is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet, or projectile by the action of an explosive, including, inter alia, revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, sub-machine guns, assault rifles and light machine guns, as well as their parts, components, and ammunition
<b>Light weapon</b>	Any man-portable lethal weapon designed for use by two or three persons serving as a crew (although some may be carried and used by a single person) that expels or launches, is designed to expel or launch, or may be readily converted to expel or launch a shot, bullet or projectile by the action of an explosive
<b>Gender-responsive small arms control</b>	Gender-responsive small arms control means that all policies, programs, or activities at every stage of a small arms control initiative are non-discriminatory concerning sex, equally benefit women and men, and aim at correcting gender imbalances and inequalities.

<sup>3</sup> <https://gensac.network/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Gender-Responsive-Small-Arm-Control-in-the-Decade-of-Action-for-the-SDGs.pdf>

## 7. Key Facts on Gender, Firearms, and Violence in Pakistan

- In Pakistan, where according to media reports there are some 20 million legal and illegal weapons in the hands of individuals, the annual rate of homicide involving small arms is 9.18% per 100,000 population including 5.03% of female homicide.<sup>4</sup>
- Murders by intimate partners and close family members involving guns in the name of honor are the most common form of homicide among women and the transgender community in Pakistan.
- According to government data, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, 52% of women faced intimate partner violence, while in the Newly Merged Tribal Districts such violence was reported to be 66%.<sup>5</sup>
- Compared to the rest of the world, the country is ranked at number four in terms of total civilian-owned guns and number 20 when comparing that number against its population.<sup>6</sup>
- The available media articles reflect that illegal arms worth between Rs3 billion and Rs4 billion have been smuggled into the country every year since the government of Pakistan restricted the import of firearms in 2015 by introducing a new statutory regulatory order (SRO).
- A study conducted in 2006, to assess the patterns of homicide, recorded the homicide rate in Peshawar alarmingly high as 86% of cases were caused by firearms.<sup>7</sup>
- According to Civilian Firearms Holdings, small arms survey 2017, the estimated total number of guns (both licit and illicit) held by civilians in Pakistan is 43,917,000.
- “Global study on homicide 2013” published by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) revealed, over 13,000 homicides were recorded in Pakistan only in 2012 with a rate of 7.7 homicides per 100,000 people, which was higher than the global average rate of 6.2.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/pakistan>

<sup>5</sup> <https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR354/FR354.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/2093657/illegal-industry-thrives-pakistan-amid-ban-firearms-import>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6246482\\_Analysis\\_of\\_homicidal\\_deaths\\_in\\_Peshawar\\_Pakistan](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6246482_Analysis_of_homicidal_deaths_in_Peshawar_Pakistan)

<sup>8</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/694501/homicides-in-2012-pakistan-worst-in-south-asia>

- Guiding gun control and related legislations in Pakistan includes the Pakistan Arms Ordinance of 1965, amended in 1991 and 2001, the Arms Rules of 1924, the Illicit Arms Act of 1991, the Penal Code of 1860, the Explosive Substances Act, 1908, the Explosive Act 1884, and the Arms Policy of 2012.
- The guns' control and regulatory laws of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa include the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arms Act, 2013, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Surrender of Illicit Arms Act, 2014, and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arms Rules, 2014.
- According to a media article published in July 2021, police held more than 17,000 people during a crackdown on illegal arms and ammunitions only in the initial 7 months of 2021 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.<sup>9</sup>
- Data shared by Gunpolicy.org showed that the estimated total number of guns (both licit and illicit) by civilians in Pakistan in 2017 was 43,917 while the number of licensed gun owners in the country by 2014 was reported to be 352,843. By 2017, this figure had jumped to around 600,000, and while the number of unregistered and unlawfully held weapons cannot be estimated.
- According to a recently published article by local media in October 2021, in the last 25 months, 42 citizens including women and children were killed, 30 cases of thefts and extortion, 6 cases of abduction, and some street crimes took place and the majority of the cases involved the use of guns by perpetrators.
- Blood feuds are one of the prevailing crimes which take hundreds of lives every year in KP and the majority of the killings take place in cross-firing. According to a media article published in September 2021, there are hundreds of blood feuds across the province that daily claim lives from both sides. Scores of passersby have also been killed after being caught in the crossfire.<sup>10</sup>
- According to the available data of police regarding the crimes, approximately 400 cases in District Peshawar are recorded in a year where small arms are used in cases of suicide and homicide against women.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.dawn.com/news/1633670/kp-govt-decides-not-to-issue-new-arms-licences>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/894330-blood-feuds-continue-to-plague-kp>

## Chapter 1

### Context and Approach

#### 1.1 Background of the study

The gendered nature of gun uses and gun violence is complex and multi-faceted in Pakistan, as are the issues of patriarchy and gender inequality. Pakistani society is chained in patriarchal systems and customs where a male is a prominent figure. Patriarchy and gun violence affect men and women in different ways. Pakistan is the fourth largest country in the world where civilians own as many as 43.9 million firearms or roughly 22 guns for every 100 citizens, where 80% owners are men, with the majority of firearms licensed for self-defense purposes.<sup>11</sup>

Gender-based violence and small arms are still a forgotten and overlooked connection in Pakistan despite the fact that the connection is very real. As such, it cannot be discounted. The use of small arms or guns themselves may not always be directly implicated in gender-based violence, but they are correlated and reinforce violence and gendered inequality, against women in particular. While men make a major number of victims of firearms but in the majority of the cases of gun violence against women, men are often represented as perpetrators. Furthermore, the presence of firearms in domestic spheres harms gender equality and bargaining power within the household.

The available media articles reflect that illegal arms worth between Rs3 billion and Rs4 billion have been smuggled into the country every year since the government of Pakistan restricted the import of firearms in 2015 by introducing a new statutory regulatory order (SRO). However, far from making the country any safer, the ban has led to a staggering rise in the sale of smuggled weapons, many of which use prohibited bores and modes of operation.<sup>12</sup>

While significant progress changes have been taking place, the integration of a gender perspective is lagging and has still not become an integral part of strategies employed to address the causes and consequences of small arms proliferation in Pakistan. Despite numerous commitments at the global and national level, this challenge has only been marginally tackled in the ongoing small arms control efforts. Countries are committed to “significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows” under SDG Target 16.4. One of the indicators for this target is that the proportion of firearms traced to their illicit origins must be measured and Pakistan is one of the signatories of Agenda 2030 which has also adopted SDGs as its national development framework.

The proliferation, use, and impact of small arms display evident gender dimensions. A growing body of research conducted worldwide has significantly contributed to the increased visibility of

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<sup>11</sup><https://www.forbes.com/sites/niallmccarthy/2020/10/14/the-countries-with-the-most-firearms-in-civilian-hands-infographic/?sh=73c91a8e2151>

<sup>12</sup><https://tribune.com.pk/story/2093657/illegal-industry-thrives-pakistan-amid-ban-firearms-import>

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linkages between gender, small arms, gender-based violence, and gender-inclusive small arms control and response. The available researches and reports demonstrate that the use, misuse, and effects of small arms are heavily gendered and have differentiated impacts on different communities especially on marginalized groups who are hit harder. Similarly, the need for gender-inclusive strategies, programming, policies, and interventions is also recognized worldwide as an important factor to control and reduce arms trafficking, illicit trade, and strengthen control.

In Pakistan, the Constitution only allows possession of weapons of limited categories under license. However, due to lax laws and abuse of power by influential, the number of guns imported has made Pakistan the ninth largest importer of arms across the globe in 2016.<sup>13</sup>

Firearms are instrumental in exerting violence, particularly regarding gender-based violence for which they are often used by the perpetrators of domestic violence against women. Due to the lack of research and data specific to the gender perspective in arms control, arms trafficking, and violence in the Pakistani context, we cannot fully know how and to what extent gun violence impacts society. We also do not know what role geography, race/ethnicity, age, gender, economic status, veteran status, disability, language, immigration status, and other characteristics play in gun violence affecting the population.

While the gender perspective plays an important role in shaping and understanding various aspects of small arms trafficking and gun violence, however in Pakistan the connection has not been explored, discussed, and analyzed yet by both government and non-government institutions. In Pakistan, gender-based violence is rooted in power inequality and discrimination, illicit weapons and arms also exacerbate gender-based violence by amplifying the power of the individual's organizations or groups responsible for social, political, economic, or political discrimination.

Widespread possession and use of weapons reinforces inequalities violently and tend to prevent women from fully participating in public and political life, and to hinder their access to and use of resources, business and employment opportunities. Easy arms' accessibility and availability contribute to facilitating or exacerbating violence against women, not only in situations of armed conflict but also in non-conflict situations.

According to Pakistan Health and Demographic Survey report 2017-2018, in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, 52% of women faced intimate partner violence, while in the Newly Merged Tribal Districts such violence was reported to be 66%. Guns and domestic violence are a lethal combination but are least discussed in the context of Pakistan. The mere presence of a gun increases the risk of domestic violence homicide by 500 percent. Like many other countries, in Pakistan, it is common that guns are used to intimidate and perpetrate violence and women especially are more at risk of arms misuse in a domestic context. Women are five times more likely to be murdered by an abusive partner when the abuser has access to a gun.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1942992/gun-control-democracies-lesson-pakistan>

Considerations of a gender perspective in addressing gun violence are necessary to develop evidence-based strategies and effective multifaceted solutions to counter the misuse of guns. In arms control and disarmament, a gender analysis can be useful to assess how the attributes, opportunities, and relationships associated with a gender identity may affect issues, such as the likelihood of being targeted by small arms and light weapons at home, prospects of becoming a victim/survivor of gun violence, the ability to access medical attention in the aftermath of armed conflict, and the long-lasting biological and physiological impacts of weapons on individuals.<sup>14</sup>

Global multilateral arms control and disarmament frameworks, including treaties, the United Nations Programme of Action (UNPoA) on small arms and light weapons, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolutions, urge member states on the integration of gender perspective in small arms control for successful interventions towards peacebuilding. Moreover, in recent years, the small arms control agenda has converged with a broader international policy on gender equality and women's empowerment. The **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** has linked small arms control to the peace, security, and development agenda, thereby simultaneously providing an interconnected framework of Goals, which goes beyond the security dimension. Goal 16 on peace, security, and strong institutions are specifically relevant to small arms control, but the control and regulation of small arms have implications for the realization of several Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment.<sup>15</sup>

As a part of its efforts towards gun violence control and GBV prevention, IANSA and Blue Veins conducted this study with the overall aim to increase and improve understanding, explore the connections, and produce research-based solutions on gender-responsive policies and strategies regulating small arms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan. The study is the first of its kind in Pakistan and seeks to reinforce the linkages between gender, gun violence, and arms trafficking.

The data analysis of the research clearly shows that the initiatives, measures, policy, and legal frameworks around small arms and weapons regulation and control in Pakistan lack the integrations of gender perspective. The lack of understanding over the linkages between gender and small arms among the stakeholders and community hinders the consideration of needs and concerns of women, men, girls, boys, and other vulnerable groups in small arms regulations. The responses of research respondents recognizing the need for gender perspective integration into policy measures highlighted different avenues and ways to advance gender mainstreaming in small arms control and gun violence prevention.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://www.unidir.org/gender-perspective>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.un.org/disarmament/gender-and-small-arms-control/>

## 1.2 About the study

The current study focused on mapping the gender-specific concerns to small arms in general, and with a particular focus on arms control, violence and response. The study assessed to what degree the gender perspective is integrated into current arms control and response (legislative and strategic frameworks) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, as well as explored with stakeholders what strategic actions and interventions are required to integrate a gender perspective into small arms issues and response, and in reduction of arms trafficking and violence.

The study also sought to promote awareness about the linkages between gender, gun violence, and small arms control. For this purpose, research targeted relevant key government and non-government stakeholders as respondents, as well as the wider expert public, and identified the main trends and gaps in policy response. Based on the findings and data analysis, the study proposes viable recommendations and strategic points of intervention to reduce arms trafficking and armed violence from a gender perspective for evidence-based gender-sensitive policy development, and the overall effectiveness of small arms control and regulation policies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The research will significantly serve as a practical tool to a diverse range of audiences, including government officials and bureaucrats, other institutional actors involved in policy making, legislation, and implementation (e.g., police, the judiciary, lawyers, etc.), non-government organizations (NGOs) and women's rights organizations (WROs), academia, media, human rights institutions and others. As it supports informed and evidence-based strategies, interventions, and actions for gender-sensitive policy development to reduce arms trafficking, illicit possession, and gun violence.

The research findings summarize the collaborative conclusions and identify priorities that will serve as the basis for the initiation of a dialogue among the community, policy makers, legislators, and enforcement agencies on their respective roles in promoting gender-inclusive policies and response to small arms control and gun violence.

### 1.2.1 Objectives of the research:

The study aimed to identify, explore and produce research-based recommendations and conclusions on gender-inclusive strategic points of actions and interventions, from community to policy level, to reduce armed trafficking, illicit possession, and gun violence. The research is the first Provincial level study in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa exploring gendered impacts and factors in gun violence and armed trafficking.

The specific objectives of the study include:

- To examine and explore the linkages between guns, gender-based violence, and gender-responsive arms-control strategies;

- To demonstrate existing linkages, as well as the need for further linkages, between gender-inclusive legislative and institutional actions and strategies on gun violence, armed possession, acquisition, illicit trade, and trafficking to reduce the number of deaths, injuries, and threats from firearms;
- To raise awareness among governments and civil society of how they can act to reduce firearms trafficking and violence and promote feminist and gender perspectives in addressing gun violence;
- Provide research-based recommendations and conclusions for strategic actions and strategies, from community to policy level, to reduce small arms illicit trade, trafficking, and violence against vulnerable communities.

### 1. 2.2 Methodology of the research:

The research adopted a qualitative methodology to achieve the desired objectives of the research. The research study collected data from a sample of 60 respondents including members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, representatives from Women Parliamentary Caucus, Provincial Human Rights Institutions, key government departments, Civil Society Organizations & Alliances, Police officials, media, academia, and judiciary. The study methodology adopted focus group discussions, and one-on-one interviews, key informant interviews, desk reviews, observations, and literature reviews to validate the data and findings of the study.

Qualitative research provides an in-depth investigation and flexible inquiry of a complex situation; such results provide a real-life, solid, and diverse factual overview (Ko de Ruyter & Scholl, 1998). The study used a wide choice of qualitative methods, with the most appropriate tools selected for different components of the study. Methods included:

**Literature review:** the study made a broad review of relevant and recent literature related to linkages between guns, gender-based violence, and gender-responsive arms-control strategies from different sources including national, international, regional, and context-specific reports, publications, and researches, media articles, media reports, different digital library portals, as well as search engines.

**Review of policy and legal landscape:** to explore whether and to what degree the existing legislative and policy frameworks around small arms control and regulation are gender response, review of available provincial and national laws on firearms and small arms and weapons control was made.

**Semi-structured interviews:** A qualitative study needs a direct and open-ended approach to select an appropriate approach, for instance, participant observation, non-participant observation, questionnaire, or document analysis. The interview method is a suitable method for such research due to the diversity of respondents. Therefore, a semi-structured interviews methodology was adopted. Interviews were conducted with members of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, representatives from Women Parliamentary Caucus, Provincial Human

Rights Institutions, key government department, Civil Society Organizations & Alliances, Police officials, media, academia, and judiciary. To improve the reliability of results and reduce the variability of responses, open-ended interviews were conducted.

Below is the sample composition and details of the focused discussions held for the study:

Respondents	Gender	Number & details
Members Provincial Assembly Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including ruling and opposition party	5 males 5 females	10 Including representatives from Women Parliamentary Caucus
Representatives Provincial Human Rights Institutions	2 males 3 females	5 1 from each department representing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on Status of Women Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission Directorate General of Human Rights Regional Office Peshawar, Ministry of Human Rights National Commission for Human Rights
Police officials	5 males 5 females	10 From different ranks of the police department
Representatives key government department	5 males 5 females	10 2 from each below Social welfare and Women Empowerment Department KP Ombudsperson Secretariat for protection against harassment of women at workplace Prosecution department Health Department Home and Tribal Affairs Department
Representatives Civil Society Organizations & Alliances	5 males 5 females	10 Representatives local, provincial and national organizations

Media	2 males 3 females	5 Print, electronic, and social media representatives
Academia	2 males 2 females	04
Judiciary	3 males 3 females	06 In service and retired judges, and lawyers
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>

**Data collection tool:** for data collection and over the variety of qualitative questions, a pre-designed open-ended questionnaire was used. The questionnaire was developed based on a review of different reports and researches to analyze and document gender patterns and trends related to interlinkages among gender, gun violence, small arms trafficking, gender-based violence, and gender-responsive arms-control strategies issues.

The questionnaire covered the following key areas to gather desired data for analysis:

- Level of understanding and knowledge about the linkage between gender, gun violence, gun violence, and gendered impacts and gender-inclusive small arms control;
- Available legal and policy framework around small arms control and perspective about the gender-inclusive legal framework;
- What is needed to improve current legislation and practice concerning small arms control;
- Recommendations on how a gender perspective can be promoted and options for future strategies around gender-response gun violence, illicit arms trafficking, and trade control.

**1.2.3 Challenges and limitations of the study**

A major inadequacy of the study is the limited availability and access to data. Very limited data was available for certain acute problems such as femicide and cases of gender-based violence involving guns, gender structure perpetrators and victims of armed violence, etc. Secondly, the data collection was made only from 3 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Peshawar, Charsadda, and Mardan), and the majority of the targeted respondents/stakeholders were based in Peshawar, Provincial Capital. Therefore, the results may not be easily generalized. Due to the limited availability of data and understanding among stakeholders regarding gender perspective in arms control, this study does not attempt to provide a comprehensive overview on gender and gun violence linkage in Pakistan or Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, nor has it been its purpose. It rather attempts to further initiate a dialogue among the community, policy makers, legislators, and

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enforcement agencies on their respective roles in promoting gender-inclusive policies and response to small arms control and gun violence.

#### 1.2.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are specified as ones of the most important part of the research. The research assured consideration of ethical issues throughout the assignment period. To ensure compliance with ethical standards, the risks, and benefits of the research were taken into consideration at all stages of the project.

The research was designed and conducted per recognized best practices and ethical standards. The study applied a process to minimize risks to respondents and maximize the potential benefits of participation. To ensure the safety and confidentiality of data and participants of the research, the following ethical principles or guidelines were considered and ensured during the research:

- All respondents of the research were above age 18.
- All research respondents were assured not to be subjected to force in any way to respond to the questions.
- Respect for the dignity of research participants was prioritized.
- Full consent of the respondents was obtained through the consent forms before the research.
- The protection of the privacy of research respondents was ensured.
- An adequate level of confidentiality of the research data was established. Names and information given by the respondents was be shared among them.
- All the participants were provided clear information about the objectives, purpose, and methodology of the research before the interview to avoid any kind of uncertainty.
- The anonymity of individuals and organizations participating in the research was ensured.

Respondents participated based on informed consent. BV sought consent providing sufficient information and assurances about taking part to allow individuals to understand the implications of participation and to reach a fully informed, considered, and freely given decision about whether or not to do so, without the exercise of any pressure or coercion.

## Chapter II

### Literature Review: The linkages between gender and gun violence

Small arms are a major contributor to the global burden of violence, featuring in almost half of all violent deaths that occur globally. Small arms are also a major factor in homicides worldwide, killing nearly 40 percent of victims of intentional homicides, which make up approximately 80 percent of all violent deaths. Addressing the drivers of small arms violence, including their illicit use and trafficking, will play an essential role in accelerating the reduction of violence by 2030. Gender shapes the causes and the consequences of gun violence. Strategies for small arms control will be most effective if they respond to the different risks that men, women, girls, and boys face from weapons and if women play a full role in their design and implementation.<sup>16</sup>

According to Amnesty International, more than 500 people die every day from gun violence. 44% of all homicides globally involve gun violence. There were 1.4 million firearm-related deaths globally between 2012 and 2016. The majority of victims and perpetrators are young men, but women are particularly at risk of firearms violence perpetrated by an intimate partner. Sexual violence can also be facilitated by firearms. Similarly, an estimated 2,000 people are injured by gunshots every single day. At least 2 million people are living with firearm injuries around the globe. Millions of people suffer the severe and long-term psychological effects that gun violence – or the threat of gun violence – brings to individuals, families, and their wider community.

Gunshot injuries are often life-changing and have an indelible impact on the victims' long-term mental and physical health. Some need permanent, lifelong care, and many others lose their ability to work, particularly in physically demanding jobs. Yet programs offering adequate long-term care, rehabilitation, and job retraining are virtually non-existent. The toll that gun violence has on victims, family members, and medical services has resulted in a chronic public health crisis – with remarkably little government response.<sup>17</sup>

Many cultures link guns with expressions of “masculinity.” The media, childhood toys, and the militarization of society all contribute to prioritizing this association. Alternative masculine behaviors that do not uphold violence are less obviously explored and frequently appear to be less validated. Other social inequalities, such as those exemplified in class and race differences, are also exacerbated when small arms are prevalent. For example, as the case study of South Africa shows, small arms in houses in which domestic workers are employed create an insecure working environment. In this particularly feminized, privatized, and exploited sector of labor, workers lack many forms of protection: for example, they face the threat of violence, rape, and

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<sup>16</sup> <https://gensac.network/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Gender-Responsive-Small-Arm-Control-in-the-Decade-of-Action-for-the-SDGs.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/arms-control/gun-violence/>

death if intruders attack the house in which they work. While men are often killed by strangers with guns, women are more at risk of armed violence from intimate partners or other men known to them. The presence of a gun in the home increases the likelihood that domestic violence will result in death. However, in many countries, national legislation does not address this issue.<sup>18</sup>

The impacts of these weapons can be vastly different for women and men, girls and boys, careful consideration of gender and age is rare in the formulation of small-arms policy, planning small arms collection or control, or even in small-arms research.

Yet a noticeable gap in this discourse has been a discussion of how gender ideologies, which shape and constrain the behavior of women and men, are influencing people's attitudes to small arms. Remarkably little attention has focused on the fact that gun ownership and misuse are highly gendered phenomena and brutally reinforce unequal social hierarchies that not only give men dominance over women and other men but also exclude young people from access to social, political, and economic power – and they exacerbate race and class tensions in violence-prone communities, as well as often perpetuating the repression of sexual minorities.<sup>19</sup>

The acknowledgments of linkages between gender and gun violence have gained increased critical attention both in terms of the need for research to further facilitate the understanding of the subject and the need to articulate the demand for practical attempts to prevent or remedy the destructive consequences that gun-related violence has on society, women and men, boys and girls. However, despite emerging practices, as well as recent ground-breaking developments such as the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, which urges governments to take into account the risks of gender-based violence when exporting arms, all the generated knowledge has still not had sufficient impact on policies. These developments have nevertheless given new urgency to the issue and have provided numerous insights into different aspects of SALW control, which consequently urge for gender concerns to be carefully considered when solutions are designed. These diverse aspects can be grouped into five main concerns where gender aspects play an important role in shaping and understanding SALW practices. (*'Gender, Attitudes and the Regulation of Small Arms: Implications for Action'*: Cukier, Wendy and James Cairns. 2009)

The misuse of small arms affects communities on many levels, making it challenging to quantify who is worst harmed by the ready availability and misuse of guns. Improved data collection is one part of bridging this knowledge gap. Small arms researchers and analysts can play a more active part in the collection of sex-disaggregated data on who is killed and injured by firearms and under what circumstances. As gun violence does not always result in death but generates a range of indirect impacts, research must be complemented with qualitative analysis to provide a fuller picture of the breadth of the effects of gun violence on women and girls, men and boys.

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<sup>18</sup> <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/resrep11088.6.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> <https://i.unu.edu/media/unu.edu/publication/12718/sexed-pistols-sample-chapter-shozo.pdf>

It is critical to note that women are subject to a disproportionate range of non-fatal threats due to the misuse of small arms, often commensurate with their low status or lack of legal protection in many contexts: peace or war, developed or developing nations. Accounts from both war zones and ‘peaceful’ communities illustrate the risks to women and girls from gun violence or the threat of it.<sup>20</sup>

Reducing the human cost of gun violence and controlling the arms trade may appear to be ambitious and complex tasks, and indeed require tackling several interconnected factors. Some relate to the weapons themselves, which must be controlled, and some relate to individual and group behavior, which must be influenced. The following human security framework for global action on gun violence identifies five overarching objectives for national action:

- (1) Regulating the use of small arms by civilians, armed forces, and nonstate armed groups;
- (2) Draining the existing pool of excess guns and ammunition;
- (3) Regulating the transfer, sale, and shipment of small arms;
- (4) Reducing the demand for guns; and
- (5) Responding to the needs of gun violence survivors.<sup>21</sup>

The international community has demonstrated an increased awareness of the relationship between illicit trade and the proliferation of conventional arms and GBV. In 2001, the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) issued a briefing note assessing the linkages between small arms issues and gender perspectives. In addition, the 2001 UN Program of Action on SALW (UNPoA) recognized in its preamble the ‘negative impact’ of the illicit trade in SALW on women. A subsequent UN General Assembly Resolutions on ‘Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control’, called upon states to include women in national and regional coordination mechanisms related to disarmament and arms control.<sup>22</sup>

Although the role of women in SALW control and disarmament processes was recognized in UNSCR 1325 (2000) and reiterated in several General Assembly resolutions, including UNSCR 2020 (2015), there is still a tendency for women’s organizations and women, in general, to be insufficiently included in decision making and policy development. This is often related to the traditional and persistent male dominance in the institutions regulating and implementing policies relevant for SALW control. As observed, the inclusion of women, women’s organization, and articulation of gender perspectives can also be hindered with the predominantly technical definition of SALW related expertise, which is more focused on the technical aspects of SALW where men still predominate, rather than on knowledge of violence where women have

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<sup>20</sup> [http://www.ncdsv.org/images/chd\\_womenmenandgunviolenceoptionsforaction\\_2005.pdf](http://www.ncdsv.org/images/chd_womenmenandgunviolenceoptionsforaction_2005.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> <https://peaceisloud.org/assets/uploads/2017/04/Missing-Pieces-A-Guide-for-Reducing-Gun-Violence-Through-Parliamentary-Action.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.sipri.org/commentary/blog/2019/inclusion-gender-based-violence-concerns-arms-transfers-decisions-case-arms-trade-treaty>

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longstanding expertise, which consequently `shapes how an issue is addressed'. (['Gender, Attitudes and the Regulation of Small Arms: Implications for Action': Cukier, Wendy and James Cairns. 2009](#))

Simply strengthening controls on the supply of guns will be of limited value in locations already saturated with guns: it is important to simultaneously reduce the number of unregulated weapons in circulation. This is especially the case in nations recovering from violent conflicts or with high rates of armed violence, where there are a great many risks associated with small arms circulation. Guns end up on the illegal market, where they are easily available for criminal or political purposes, and government-owned weapons not adequately managed and secured may be looted or sold by authorities illegally. It is now widely accepted in these circumstances that unless they are confiscated and collected—and preferably destroyed—guns will often end up back on the streets.

## Chapter III

### Available Policies, Laws, National and International Frameworks

A review of available provincial and national laws and international commitments of Pakistan and frameworks on firearms and small arms and weapons control was made, with the purpose to explore if and to what extent gender perspective is integrated into our available policy and legal frameworks around small arms control and what international commitments Pakistan has made with the international community to address the issue of gun violence through small arms control and illicit trade.

#### **International Framework**

##### **The United Nations Programme of Action 2001 to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects**

The UN Program of Action (POA) is a global framework adopted by all UN member states in 2001 whereby they committed to counter the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and control the negative consequences of Small Arms and Light Weapons. Since the adoption, all UN member states and the UN together are making efforts and supporting each other to implement POA at local, national, regional, and international levels. To regularly consider the implementation of POA, Review Conferences, biennial meetings of states and meetings of government experts are organized periodically. The most biennial meeting was organized in August 2021. Moreover, the implementation of the PoA is judged based on national reports submitted by the Member States. To date, 28 countries from Asia and the Pacific regions have submitted national implementation reports since the adoption of the POA in 2001.<sup>23</sup>

Effective implementation of UN POA requires concreted and multi-level actions and also to address small arms issues in all its dimensions including gender dimensions, gender-inclusive response, law enforcement, human security, and small arms control. Pakistan being a signatory to the UNPOA has been taking several administrative level measures to control small arms possession, sale, trade, purchase, and ammunition, etc. but we are still far behind in designing and implementing a gender-inclusive response to small arms control.

Relevance to the UN Programme of Action, the government of Pakistan has been making several efforts to combat small arms violence, trafficking, and illicit trade of light weapons. Including systematic marking and control over manufacturing and possession of small arms by civilians, law enforcement agencies, etc. end-user verifications for export applications, stockpile security arrangements, campaigning and measures against illegal weapons like destruction, criminalization of illegal weapons, etc. Despite the policy level measures, the reference to

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<sup>23</sup> <https://unrcpd.org/conventional-weapons/poa/>

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gender-inclusive prevention and response, and women's vulnerability to small arms possession and control remains unexplored and overlooked in Pakistan.

### The Firearms Protocol

The Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol) is the only legally binding instrument to counter the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition at the global level. It was adopted by resolution 55/255 of 31 May 2001 at the fifty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and it entered into force on 3 July 2005.<sup>24</sup>

The Firearms Protocol provides for a framework for States to control and regulate licit arms and arms flows, prevent their diversion into the illegal circuit, facilitate the investigation and prosecution of related offenses without hampering legitimate transfers. It aims at promoting and strengthening international cooperation and developing cohesive mechanisms to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition (firearms). Pakistan has not signed UN Firearm Protocol yet.

### Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) 2014

The international community adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) entered into force on 24 December 2014, is the first global set of rules governing the trade in conventional weapons. ATT is designed to combat unregulated and irresponsible arms transfers to promote regional and global stability, transparency, and accountability in the global arms trade. Through the ATT, States have agreed on robust international standards to help guide governments in deciding whether to authorize arms transfers. It provides cooperation and assistance to help countries develop adequate regulatory systems, and safe weapons stockpiles.<sup>25</sup>

Arms Trade Treaty is the international instrument which for the first time formally recognized the link between the international arms trade and Gender-Based Violence. According to this treaty (ATT, Article 7.4), the exporting State Party is legally obliged to “take into account the risk of the conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children”. Importantly, specific consideration to the role of gender in prevention and response and linkage of gender-based violence with small arms and light weapons can significantly contribute to the effective implementation of the ATT. However, there is still a lack of agreement on how this provision should be implemented at the national level due to limited understanding of the different forms of GBV and how such considerations can and should be factored into arms export decision-making.

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<sup>24</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/the-firearms-protocol.html>

<sup>25</sup> <https://unrcpd.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/UNRCPD-Project-on-Gun-Violence-and-Illicit-Small-Arms-Trafficking-from-a-Gender-Perspective-Activities-Outcomes-Recommendations.pdf>

According to Research Society by International Law, the ATT has left multiple ambiguities and plenty of room for self-serving interpretations and applications by State Parties. The fact that there is no central interpretative authority that can interpret and enforce these obligations only aggravates the problem and has, in effect, left the treaty quite weak and this is one of the reasons that even for the last 7 years since its adoption, 54 states including Pakistan have not signed the ATT.<sup>26</sup>

### Agenda 2030 and small arms control

Promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies for sustainable development is one of the most ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda and an aspect that is deeply intertwined with all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Small arms control and SDGs have strong linkages and dependency upon each other as both are aimed to strengthen peaceful societies free from violence. Gun violence, the flow of arms, both licit and illicit, can undermine and hinder the desired development and progress towards Agenda 2030 and Arms Trade Treaty ATT 2014. Both the ATT and SDGs require effective implementation by states at the national and local levels.

#### **SDG 16**

*Target:16.4: by 2030 significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime*

SDG 16 and its target have a specific emphasis on gun violence and small arms control and require effective multi-pronged response and efforts by state and non-state actors. Pakistan has adopted Agenda 2030 as its national development framework in 2016 and targets 16.4 and indicators 16.4.1 and 16.4.2 are national priority targets and indicators for required policy actions for the Pakistani government. If effective measures are taken to control small arms use, possession, illicit trafficking, and trade, it can have a positive impact on achieving the SDGs. Addressing the violence caused by small arms, light weapons, and their ammunition is critical in meeting the global and national commitments to reduce violence by 2030. Effective and practical responses must be provided with evidence-based strategies that address the way that gender shapes both the causes and consequences of gun violence.

### Other International frameworks that promote gender integration into small arms control

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<sup>26</sup> <https://rsilpak.org/2020/5-years-later-why-has-the-arms-trade-treaty-failed/>

There are many international instruments and documents, which Pakistan is party or signatory to, that promote gender integration and gender equality, including international conventions, treaties, and resolutions that can be used to integrate gender into policymaking and response to small arms control and gun violence reduction. The following are some of the most significant:

- **General Assembly resolution 65/69**

There is wide recognition that the equal, full, and effective participation of both men and women is vital to international peace and security. Since the adoption of the Security Council resolution (SCR) 1325 (2000) and the women, peace, and security (WPS) agenda, the world has witnessed an outpouring of efforts to engage women as “agents of change” in all disarmament and arms control processes. This positive trend has been advanced by involving women directly affected by armed violence as well as initiating women-led policy initiatives.<sup>27</sup>

In December 2010, General Assembly in its 65<sup>th</sup> Session adopted resolution 65/69 called “65/69 Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control” which recognizes the valuable contribution and participation of women to practical disarmament measures in the prevention and reduction of gun violence, small arms control, and armed conflict, and in promoting disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The resolution calls all UN member states for the promotion of the equitable representation of women in all decision-making processes about matters related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

- **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, in its 57<sup>th</sup> Session in March 2013 resulted in agreed conclusions to all forms and responses to violence against women and girls. The “agreed conclusions” adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women cover all forms of violence against women and girls, in all contexts and settings and recognize that the illicit use and trade in small arms and light weapons ‘aggravates violence, inter alia, against women and girls. The Commission emphasized mainstreaming gender perspective at all levels of decision and policymakers to address the issue of small arms control and its illicit use and trade as it facilitates Gender-Based Violence more specifically domestic and sexual violence against women and girls.

- **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)**

Pakistan ratified CEDAW on December 3, 1996, and has submitted 5<sup>th</sup> periodic reports till 2017 to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women against the measures the Pakistani government has taken to give effect to the provisions of CEDAW. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women during its 52 sessions in July 2012, adopted a

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Gender-fact-sheet-Jul2017.pdf>

statement that recognized the gender dimensions of small arms use and trade and its linkages with discrimination and gender-based violence against women.

The Committee through the statement urged all member states to recognize the potential gendered impacts of arms trade and trafficking especially illicit arms as women are disproportionately affected by armed gender-based violence.

The CEDAW Committee in concluding observations on the fourth periodic report of Pakistan adopted by the Committee at its fifty-fourth session (11 February – 1 March 2013) urged the Pakistani government to ensure a robust and effective regulation of the small arms trade as well as appropriate control over the circulation of existing and often illicit arms to enhance the security of women and girls. And to enact legislation strictly regulating the trade, sale, and possession of small arms and sanction its violations severely to promote women protection against violence, peace, and security.

- [Beijing Platform of Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women](#)

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted in 1995 is a visionary agenda for the empowerment of women and calls for actions for Equality, development, and peace. The Platform of Action is also adopted by Pakistan which makes a strong commitment to making bold and strategic actions to realize the recommended actions of the Beijing Declaration.

The Declaration explicitly links the arms trade to armed violence and outlines how women are both victims of armed violence and pivotal voices in arms control and disarmament efforts. It calls the governments to take action and recognize the need to combat illicit arms trafficking, trade-in arms, especially those arms that are particularly injurious or have indiscriminate effects and must address the investment for arms production and acquisition.

## **National Framework**

### **The Pakistan Arms Ordinance of 1965, amended in 1991 and 2001**

The Pakistan Arms Ordinance was enacted in 1965 to consolidate and amend the law relating to the sale, transport, bearing, or possession of arms, ammunition, or military stores in specific manners. The law prohibits the sale, and keeping of unlicensed arms and requires the seller of licensed arm owner to notify the Magistrate of the district or to the officer, in charge of the nearest police station as soon as possible about the sale. The law also prohibits the display, keeping of arms at certain places as prescribed by the government like in the premises of educational institutions and the premises of the hostels or boarding and lodging houses, in gatherings or processions of a political, religious, ceremonial, or sectarian character or the premises of Courts of law or public offices, etc.

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## **The Illicit Arms Act of 1991**

The Surrender of Illicit Arms Act' (XXI of 1991) was federal legislation in Pakistan enacted to combat illicit arms and ammunition trafficking in the country. The law declares certain kinds of arms as illicit and section 4 provides for the surrender of such illicit arms and also authorizes the federal government to notify at any time any other kind of arms or ammunition as illicit if required.

But the review and analysis of law reflect various flaws, jurisdiction issues, and legal lacunas which inhibit its effective implementation. The enforcement mechanism of the law lies with Federal Government and the operation of the provisions of the law at the provincial level is also subjected to the notifications of the Federal which is a flaw of the law and the provincial government cannot take any action under the Act.

Media articles and available analyses also reflect the delay in enforcement of the law. The law was promulgated in 1991 but was enforced in the four provinces after a decade on June 15, 2001. During these 10 years from the inception of the Act till 2001, illicit arms retention was legal as no action could be taken against the possessors.

Since the enactment of the Act, there have been very less initiatives taken by the government and non-government institutions for the promotion of the Act. Section 6 of the Act 1991 makes it mandatory for the federal government to give publicity to the provisions of the Act 1991 in the media. But we hardly see any such publicity on our print, electronic, and social media channels.

## **The Arms Policy of 2012**

The government of Pakistan, to regulate the issuance of arms licenses within the territorial jurisdiction of Islamabad Capital Territorial ICT, Azad Jammu, and Kashmir, and Gilgit-Baltistan formulated a comprehensive policy in 2012. For license, weapons are categorized under Prohibited and Non-Prohibited Bore weapons.

## **Provincial Framework**

After the 18<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendment in Pakistan, work related to the issuance of small arms licenses has been devolved to the provinces. In pursuance of this, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa enacted the following legislation concerning arms control:

### **The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arms Act, 2013**

The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arms Act, 2013 is the primary provincial law regulating the manufacture, conversion, repair, sale, transportation, bearing, or possession of arms or ammunition in the Province of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Act strictly prohibits the manufacturing, keeping, use, sale, and exposure of unlicensed arms and ammunition as defined

under the law. the law also empowers the provincial government to prohibit the transportation of arms in the province from time to time.

The law under its section 13 also prohibits display, keeping of arms at certain places as prescribed by the government like in the premises of educational institutions and the premises of the hostels or boarding and lodging houses, in gatherings or processions of a political, religious, ceremonial or sectarian character or the premises of Courts of law or public offices, etc.

Section 16 of the Act provides for penalty for unlicensed manufacturing, transportation, repair, sale and possession of arms, etc. in contravention to the law which includes imprisonment which may extend to twenty-five (25) years but shall not be less than ten years and forfeiture of the property, whether moveable or immovable. For effective implementation and to achieve the objectives of the Act, Rules were also notified as The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arms Rules, 2014 by the Government.

### **The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Surrender of Illicit Arms Act, 2014**

With the revocation of the Surrender of Illicit Arms Act, 1991, the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to regulate the surrender of illicit arms and improvement and control of the law-and-order situation, in the Province enacted Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Surrender of Illicit Arms Act, 2014.

The law declares certain kinds of arms as illicit arms in line with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Arms Act, 2013, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Explosives Act, 2013, and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Explosive Substances Act, 2013. Section 4 provides for the surrender of such illicit arms and also authorizes the Provincial government to notify for the prescribed time for the surrender of illicit arms to provincial authorities including Deputy Commissioner, Additional Deputy Commissioner Assistant Commissioner, Additional Assistant Commissioner, or officer-in-charge of a police station from respective jurisdiction.

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The review of the available laws and policy framework regulating arms control reflects that the laws are more focused on regulating the access and use of firearms, while combatting the domestic abuse by guns and keeping the guns out of the domestic abusers' hands is one of the ignored areas. Similarly, the available data shows a challenge to the implementation of the laws and policies. More effective legal mechanisms are required to track the use of guns. The reviews also reflect that there is no systematic integration or effort made to consider gender-related dynamics in the legal framework.

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## Chapter IV

### Analysis and Results

This study collected data from three districts in the province Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from 60 samples. Semi-structured interviews were used for collecting information besides, secondary sources were also considered to produce research-based recommendations for required actions towards arms control and gun violence integrating gender perspective. The data was analyzed using Miles and Huberman's (1994) approach and concept-mapping method. The following information indicates the results of the study.

#### ❖ **The perspective of gender mainstreaming in SALW control**

The respondents of the research were asked to share their perspective and understanding about the linkage between gender mainstreaming and equality and small arms use and control. Different responses were noted from the respondents of the research. The study also reflects that there was a lack of understanding and sensitivity among the respondents on gender-mainstreaming in small arms control and gun violence.

The respondents shared that gender perspective is absent or neglected even in the situation analyses and data collection on gun violence, and because of this, the gender concerns and mainstreaming go entirely unnoticed and are not addressed in strategic responses to SALW proliferation in the Pakistani context. One of the respondents from the Civil Society Organization shared that:

“Neither government nor any non-governmental organizing or institution consider local traditions, realities, concerns and gender dimensions in use of small arms and gendered impacts of small arms use and gun violence. And this is one of the reasons that the connection between gender equality and gun violence is not realized yet”.

It was highlighted that gender mainstreaming integration into small arms data collection and control measures has not been understood, explored, and initiated yet and there is no systemic effort available in this regard.

*The respondents emphasized on the need of awareness raising about gendered impacts of gun violence and why it is important to reduce small arms illicit trade, trafficking to prevent violence against vulnerable communities*

Increased awareness of the different threats men and women face from small arms can generate more responsive and inclusive policies that deliver better security outcomes. Concerted and targeted awareness-raising efforts among key stakeholders and decision-makers at local, national, regional, and multilateral levels were suggested by the respondents so that they become well-informed and motivated advocates for gender-responsive arms control in their individual and collective capacity.

### ❖ Gender disaggregated data on gun violence

While the deadly intersection of guns and violence affects all populations but it has a disproportionate impact on women, girls, sexual and gender minorities. In addition, women and sexual and gender minorities are highly vulnerable to severe forms of intimate partner violence involving guns but it is alarmingly little or no gender and sex-aggregated data available because of chronic underreporting, understanding, and recognition to the gender-responsive small arms control and gun violence response. The research findings explore that there is no evidence-based data or statistics available to outline the effects of the proliferation of firearms and armed violence on individuals.

Lack of gender-disaggregated data and its importance for gender-inclusive response and policy on small arms control is explored as one of the key factors and strategic needs by the research respondents. The respondents of the research reflected that evidence-based data is a pre-requisite to challenge the absence of a gender perspective in local, provincial, and national law and policies, by demonstrating that gender-responsive small arms control policies can work better because they address the reality of how arms circulate and are used in society and who gets more effected.

The representative from one of the Human Rights Institutions reflected:

*“Gender-disaggregated data is essential for understanding the local context around gun violence and demonstrating the linkages between gender and SALW and for the design of evidence-based gender-responsive policies. The police department holds a very important role to use a range of reactive and proactive strategies for evidence collection on gun violence covering data on victims and perpetrators of firearms-related incidents, firearm owners, persons holding a license to acquire/carry firearms and other relevant data have to be consistently disaggregated by gender.”*

To fully grasp the gender aspect on gun violence, small arms trafficking, trade, and use, it is necessary to understand how gender intersects with other factors such as age, race, class, ethnicity, place of living (urban/rural), etc. The study reflects that without research and data, it cannot be determined how and to what extent gun violence in all its forms impacts different populations especially marginalized and socially isolated groups. It is also important to explore and develop evidence-based data on what role geography, race/ethnicity, age, gender, sex, economic status, veteran status, disability, language, immigration status, and other factors play in gun and gender-based violence.

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### ❖ Evidence-based researches in the local context to further explore the linkages between guns, gender-based violence, and gender-responsive arms-control strategies

Gun violence, unfortunately, is one of the most understudied topics especially in the context of Pakistan, receiving significantly fewer resources, funding and attention as compared with other leading causes of death. The data analysis of the current research highlighted that evidence-based research in local context on guns use & misuse, linkages between guns and gender-based violence, gendered impacts of gun use, and gender-responsive arms-control strategies is vital to inform policymaking and program development.

Improved sex-disaggregated data collection through research and data analysis is vital to bridge the knowledge gap on who is killed or injured by firearms and under what circumstances to formulate gender-responsive strategies for small arms control. The respondents of the research emphasized that for evidence-based solutions and strategies to tackle the issue of gun violence, small arms trafficking, and illicit trade, it is necessary to produce more data and research in formatted form and present in a way that is accessible and relevant to the needs of community, decision-makers, service providers, policy makers, and other stakeholders.

In Pakistan, according to media reports, there are some 20 million legal and illegal weapons in the hands of individuals, and the annual rate of homicide involving small arms is 9.18% per 100,000 population including 5.03% of female homicide.<sup>28</sup>

Research-based facts and findings are needed to understand the scope of gun violence in all its forms, from suicides and domestic violence to community gun violence and unintentional shootings to police-involved shootings, so that evidence-based solutions can be developed. More generally, collaborative efforts are desperately needed to further research the root causes and potential solutions to the gun violence epidemic.

The respondents of the study emphasized that government and non-government research institutions need to join hands together and conduct country-wide researches on the root causes, risk factors, and solutions to gun violence in all its forms and small arms trafficking and trade to promote advanced understanding and knowledge around this issue. More data and evidence-based research can significantly contribute to effective interventions and outcomes, whether through policy or practice in the prevention of gun violence.

### ❖ The challenge of gender-responsive policy making

The promotion and integration of gender equality culture in the society require gender-responsive policy making which is one of the big issues of Pakistan. Pakistan is progressively strengthening the gender component of its laws, policies, and strategic planning documents.

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<sup>28</sup> <https://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/region/pakistan>

However, a sizable proportion of policy documents remain gender blind. It is an important factor to acknowledge that gender-responsive policymaking does not solely benefit women alone, but also addresses the needs and priorities of all persons regardless of their sex and gender. Gender-responsive policy-making not only considers the needs of all regardless of gender but aims to articulate ways to transform harmful gender norms that continue to hinder progressive changes in power relationships in society.

*One of the political parties representatives shared that “we have no systematic database on guns related deaths and impacts. with more generally, collaborative efforts are desperately needed to further research the root causes and potential solutions to the gun violence. It is important to facilitate better understanding among all stakeholders with regard to the contributing factors, forms of gun violence, impacts, factors involved in arms trafficking & illicit trade and other related issues through research studies.”*

The research findings reveal that there is an overall under-prioritization of gender concerns in policymaking especially related to small arms control and gun violence. The respondents of the research highlighted the fact that in Pakistan, the policymaking process is constrained by the disproportionately low representation and participation of women and gender-variant communities in policymaking spaces which means that understanding how these communities are challenged and ignored at the policy level.

The research further explores that there remains a wide knowledge and capacity gap over gender-responsive and inclusive policy-making in gun violence and small arms misuse control in Pakistan. There is a high level of gender analysis gap to identify the gender relevance in different kinds of small arms use and how different people and communities are differently affected by small arms violence based on gender and its interplay with other factors, such as class, age, and location. This knowledge and analysis gap is identified as one of the reasons for gender blind policies by the research respondents about small arms control.

The respondents highlighted that it is important to involve government and non-government stakeholders in the policy formulation processes and for those who are involved in planning, designing, formulation, and implementation of policies to have the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to address the various needs and priorities of women and men in different groups. Furthermore, diverse groups of stakeholders should be taken on board for the policy formulation and implementation processes around gun violence and small arms control so that relevant inputs are gathered and reflected through a bottom-up approach which is based on a wider consultative process that enriches the process.

The findings further recommend capacity development of civil society and government institutions to integrate gender into policies, planning, programming, budgeting, and monitoring

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on an urgent basis, both at the local and national level to address the issues of small arms misuse, trade, and trafficking and gun violence.

❖ **Lack of women leadership in policy and decision-making processes**

Another major challenge and need identified in this study is the underrepresentation of women in policy and decision-making processes. The respondents of the study recognized that women are disproportionately impacted by gun violence- but they are not at the table and in-ground to make policies and decisions to best protect themselves, their families, and communities. Media articles reflect that women form about half the population of Pakistan, but hardly 3% are involved in the decision-making process.

It is important to promote understanding of gender dimensions in gun violence and small arms control and the issue needs to be dealt with holistically and collaboratively. While the international instruments, documents, treatise, researches, and frameworks form a strong emphasis on gender mainstreaming to all dimensions of small arms control, it is unfortunate that in Pakistan this connection and women's participation in decision-making processes is not realized yet.

The findings of this research show that multisectoral efforts are needed to promote women's participation in the development and implementation of policies and involve gender equality mechanisms in establishing a strategic framework around small arms control. Women themselves have to play their role to dismantle this stereotype that small arms and light weapons control is not the exclusive domain of men. Women's meaningful participation in all aspects of control initiatives, from assessments and design, through planning and implementation, to monitoring and evaluation should be realized and their equal contributing role is needed to be strengthened in setting the agenda on small arms misuse and trafficking control, and gun violence reduction.

One of the female MPA respondents from the renowned political party of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa said that

*“Strengthening women voice in community matters and increasing their access to leadership positions at the grass-root level is the first step to promoting women meaningful participation at the departmental, provincial and governmental level decision making.”*

The key informant of the research said that to integrate a gender perspective in small arms control and promote the linkages between gender and gun violence, women with a wide background of experiences and social, economic, and cultural backgrounds must be actively involved in decision-making, guiding processes and taking on leadership roles to facilitate meaningful contributions.

Efforts to ensure that women and other excluded or marginalized groups, including people with other gender and sexual identities, are included in the policy and decision-making processes are

important as they are more likely to support strong measures to control access to small arms, and hold a major role in leading initiatives aimed at reducing the availability and misuse of weapons in domestic and public spheres.

#### ❖ **Promote the role of women parliamentarians and policymakers in small arms control**

Women lawmakers and policymakers hold a significant role in advancing gender equality by promoting gender-inclusive and response legislations. Gender inequality in politics correlates with broader gender inequalities in society. Therefore, improving women's representation and leadership in legislative bodies is closely intertwined with supporting parliaments' role -through their legislative, budgetary, oversight, and representation functions to make societies more inclusive and equal.

The key informant interviewers also discussed the role of women parliamentarians in promoting gender-inclusive legislation and regulations around small arms control. The findings explored that promoting women's participation in the area of governance is critical for enabling legislatures to better respond to gender needs and for narrowing the gender gap that exists in legislative and policy frameworks around small arms control.

Women parliamentarians must be engaged, mobilized, and encouraged to take lead on the issue of SALW control, whether at the level of legislation, policy, program, or project. The research respondents suggested that civil society organizations should put their efforts in developing knowledge and capacity building of women parliamentarians on gun violence and SALW control issues, facilitate their awareness and understanding of the gendered impacts of small arms use, invest and strengthen their lobbying capacity as parliamentarians to support gender-responsive legislative agenda at the parliamentary forums.

This research identified the role of the women parliamentary caucus of Parliament and four Provincial Assemblies of Pakistan as more contributing and significant as in the form of Caucus they are more likely to successfully shape the parliamentary agenda across the party lines. Women Parliamentary Caucuses should be made aware of the gender aspects of small arms issues through pro-active engagements to reform legislation and policy related to small arms and light weapons gender-inclusive and responsive.

#### ❖ **Strengthening the role of women's groups and movements**

Women support groups, organizations, and movements play a critical role in realizing change and commitments to gender equality from community to policy level but their role is often unrecognized, marginalized, and under-valued. An organized women's rights group of all kinds can potentially contribute to and have greater influence in building sustainable peace and resilience and thus their role must be promoted.

The research findings highlighted contributing role of women-led groups and organizations as key participants in initiatives to control small arms and light weapons from bottom to top level.

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By engaging communities and state actors, they can facilitate gender analysis on gun violence, provide inputs for small arms control policies and projects and facilitate the integration of a gender perspective at the policy level. By facilitating dialogues, discussions, and strategies on key issues related to gender and small arms misuse and connecting actors to promote knowledge, experiences, and ideas from the community on relevant issues, they can push collective actions at the policy level.

The research respondents discussed that women groups and organizations should apply long and short term efforts to address gendered aspects associated with small arms use, like by leading grass-roots community initiatives for demand generation around gender-inclusive small arms control response, promoting peace education, raising awareness of the vulnerabilities associated with the possession and use of small arms, engaging decision-makers to push gender-sensitive policymaking, promoting behavior change towards guns use, and by participating in the oversight, monitoring, and evaluation of small arms and light weapons control efforts.

#### ❖ **Engagement of men and boys in the prevention of gun violence**

Gun ownership is most common among men than women in the majority of cultures. Pakistan is a society where life is governed by strict tribal cultural norms, patriarchal perspectives, and religious beliefs. The patriarchal and cultural norms related to gun ownership play a prominent role in conditioning the concept of masculinity & power and ascribing certain roles to men such as protector, defender, warrior which could bear relevance for gun ownership. The current study also revealed that socio-cultural norms have prominent dominancy in control of guns and therefore engagement with men and boys is a pre-requisite to challenge the harmful practices and beliefs and foster attitudinal and behavioral transformation concerning firearms control.

Engaging men and boys in efforts to prevent and reduce gun violence and small arms use, trade, and trafficking are very important. The respondents suggested that more researched and programs are needed to explore the attitudes and beliefs of male family and community members on gun ownership and the role of masculinity in shaping these attitudes in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan. The relational aspect of the gender suggests that response to gun violence and small arms control must engage not only women but also men. From the responses we gathered through this research, to explore the notions of masculinity related to small arms ownership and use and develop the practical strategies to discourage them, pro-active engagement with men and boys is identified as priority required actions.

#### ❖ **Build consensus and foster collaboration among stakeholders**

The issue of gun violence is multi-sectoral and requires a comprehensive collaborative strategy to be addressed. The issue for being less discussed and explored also lacks the understanding and consensus among the stakeholders as well. The current study also identified multi-stakeholders' engagement to foster collaboration and common understanding as an effective strategy to promote gender-inclusive small arms control and gun violence prevention. It is necessary to promote common understanding and consensus among government and non-government

stakeholders concerning the important role that gender plays concerning small arms and light weapons-related behaviors, practices, and their very different impacts on women and men. The shared knowledge and consensus building can only then contribute to the sustainable integration of gender perspectives into small arms control initiatives.

The findings of this research highlighted and emphasized the key role of different civil society actors to foster multi-stakeholder engagement for the cause. The respondents suggested that Civil Society actors including media, non-governmental organizations, youth groups, social activists, and academia should join hands together to address gun violence and illicit small arms trafficking from a gender perspective, through collaborative efforts with government stakeholders. Awareness-raising, capacity building, dialogues, advocacy and lobbying campaigns on gender sensitivity, gender mainstreaming, and gender analysis on the issue of gun violence and small arms control as well as long-term mentoring, should be conducted to foster a strong consensus on this issue among all stakeholders.

Civil society, rights-based networks, advocates for Gender-Based Violence, and especially women's organizations can play a vital role in advocating for stricter policies and regulations to control the use of small arms and illicit weapons and balanced representation of women and men among stakeholders is an essential part of the integration of the gender perspective into small arms use trafficking and violence control.

The study has greatly emphasized on effective inclusion of gender analysis in arms control policies, laws, and programming in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa through collaborative partnership and advocacy initiatives to take up the issue and trigger discussion on public platforms.

#### ❖ **Arms control laws, regulations, and their implementation challenges in Pakistan**

The review and study of legislative and policy framework on small arms control in Pakistan and the responses of research key informants explored that there are several gaps in both legislation and implementation in this area that impede the effective prevention of armed violence. The existing laws and measures are completely gender blind and when gender dimensions are not adequately dealt with in legislative and policy frameworks governing small arms control and regulation, the success and effectiveness of interventions are limited.

The research respondents stressed that sensible gun laws and policies that must consider the gendered aspects of gun possession are required to reduce easy access to dangerous weapons, and control small arms trafficking and violence. It is essential to strictly regulate the possession of guns and to implement regulations closely and the government should amend all existing laws including the Arms Rules of 1924 and Pakistan Arms Ordinance of 1965 to increase the penalty for possessing illegal arms. The regulations dealing with the gun industry and sales should also be reformed to ensure strict accountability and adequate oversight over the marketing and sales of guns and ammunition.

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Strengthened legal and policy frameworks, tailored programming guidance, and training and capacity building can help to bridge the gap between the commitments and current practice on the ground. One of the respondents from the judiciary said that:

*“To promote gender mainstreaming in legislative and policy framework on guns’ control and violence, law enforcement officials, judiciary and other relevant service providers should be engaged in regular tailored capacity building workshops and trainings. Their capacity building can contribute to effective implementation of the laws governing small arms control.”*

The respondents suggested that gender-focused civil society actors and legal experts should play their role and actively participate in the assessment, design, and review of legislation, policies, and regulations on small arms and light weapons to highlight the complexity of the problem and identify unforeseen positive and negative effects, of legislative mechanisms related to controlling small arms and light weapons. Regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of small arms and light weapons legislation involving all relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies, as well as civil society organizations can enable the creation of more adequate, effective, and gender-inclusive small arms and gun violence control policies and regulations.

#### ❖ **Lack of sensitivity and training among officials on gender and gun violence**

Law enforcement agencies are the first responders who play a central and most critical role in responding to and preventing gun violence and crimes. The available researches, data, facts, and studies show that debate around the prevention of gun violence and small arms control rarely involve the potential role of law enforcement agencies. To move towards gender equality and gender-inclusive small arms control, changes are necessary to be made across the criminal justice system, and law enforcement agencies including the structure, institutional culture, behavior, capacity, and knowledge. Increasing female police officers in stations, on its own, will not lead to greater gender sensitivity.

The findings of the study highlight the need for regular and systematic capacity building and engagement programs for the law enforcement agencies including police, judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and other professionals, from both government and non-government organizations, on gender-inclusive response to gun violence and prevention. Law enforcement authorities can play a unique and essential role in educating policymakers and citizens on the realities of gun violence in the communities, and in developing common-sense, data-driven solutions to reduce firearm-related injuries and deaths from homicides, suicides, and accidental shootings. To implement well-coordinated mechanisms and structures among law enforcement agencies, sustainable efforts must be made to strengthen gender sensitivity among the service providers and enable them to use active and proactive strategies to prevent and respond to gun violence.

#### ❖ **Government-led plans and programs on gender and gun violence**

Guns have long been a part of Pakistani culture, especially in Pashtun society. Guns are considered a symbol of power and security and are used for different purposes. But there is no

denial in the fact that the availability of guns increases the risk of violent crime in society. Pakistan is a country where the homicide rate is recorded to be higher than the average global rate and guns are mostly found the tool used for such crimes. The findings of the current study also discussed and explored that there is a serious lack of government-led awareness-raising campaigns or programs against the 'gun-culture' and the patterns of small arms misuse for the community to promote prevention.

It is the primary responsibility of the government to promote preventive programs and measures against armed violence by integrating the issue across the laws and plans combatting different forms of violence including gender-based violence. National and provincial level comprehensive actions plan setting out guiding principles for mainstreaming gender in small arms control, building consensus, collecting and using sex- and age-disaggregated data, conducting gender analysis, addressing identified gender patterns, supporting the meaningful participation of women, and tracking progress using gender-sensitive patterns should be developed to address the issue of firearms control.

The research revealed that the issue of gun violence issue has not even been on the agenda of the gender equality mechanisms in Pakistan which is very important to address both the effects and causes of gun violence by integrating gender mainstreaming. The respondents suggested that Government needs to take a leading role and initiate effective, inclusive, and sustainable programming in collaboration with civil society actors by taking account of the different experiences of all genders, making sure small arms programs do not 'forget' important groups affected by or driving armed violence.

#### ❖ Behavioral change at the community level

Community mobilizing and engagement strategies remain very limited in Pakistan which holds the potential for transforming social norms and structures that are the root causes of gun violence. The cultivation of grassroots community leadership can enhance the long-term sustainability of violence prevention efforts.

The study explored that concerning firearms-related violence it is particularly important to address the problem from a community perspective and community engagement is a necessary part of preventing gun violence, in many ways. Programs that encourage attitudinal and behavioral transformation should be supported by government and non-government organizations, educating the community, building support among key stakeholders for prevention efforts, awareness-raising activities on the issue of gun violence, local campaigns with civil society actors on different forms and gendered impacts of small arms violence, developing programs that strengthen social networks, organizing community groups to challenge social norms that contribute to the use of violence, and advocating for community accountability and empowering communities for community-led solutions and interventions to prevent gun violence.

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## Chapter 5

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies for sustainable development is one of the most ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda and an aspect that is deeply intertwined with all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Addressing the violence caused by small arms, light weapons, and their ammunition is critical in meeting these global commitments to reduce violence by 2030. Effective and practical responses must begin with evidence-based strategies that address the way that gender shapes both the causes and consequences of gun violence.

The findings of the current study have summarized the collaborative conclusions and identified priorities that will serve as the basis for the initiation of a dialogue among the community, policymakers, legislators, and enforcement agencies on their respective roles in promoting gender-inclusive policies and response to small arms control and gun violence. The study contributed to exploring and reinforcing the linkages between gender, gun violence, and arms trafficking and emanated recommendations for research-based solutions on gender responsiveness of policies and strategies regulating small arms in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan. We anticipate that research findings will facilitate new ways and trigger debate around gender mainstreaming into gun violence and small arms control strategies and policymaking. It is crucial to design and implement strategies to reduce the widespread human security impacts it produces. We can no longer afford to remain in the dark about the complexities of how men and women view, use, and misuse guns, and how those attitudes and behaviors translate into risks and vulnerabilities.

Pakistan needs to make a bold step and adopt a multi-pronged strategy to fully meet existing international norms relating to gender and gun violence. Numerous international standards protect women's rights to equality, non-discrimination, gender-based violence, small arms control, and gun violence and Pakistan is a signatory to the majority of them. The study suggests that government should proceed with a review of all existing laws and guidelines regulating the control of arms, small arms trafficking, gender-based violence, and other related issues to integrate gender response.

The study further highlights the need for awareness-raising, discussion, research studies, advocacy, and lobbying campaign, and community and stakeholder targeted activities to facilitate shared knowledge, understanding, and sensitivity towards the issue of gun violence and connection between gender, gun violence, and small arms control. Young people and marginalized groups should be the priority target of all strategic interventions and activities for being particularly vulnerable to gun violence.

There is a wide-ranging, intertwined set of complex issues involving multiple stakeholders at different levels regarding small arms control and gun violence. The results of the focus group discussions, case studies analysis, literature review, available data, and in-depth interviews with

all the stakeholders reflect that the issues are complicated and require a multi-sectoral response with multi-pronged strategies. There are multiple facets to each issue and each requires policy solutions to improve the gender response and small arms control in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan.

The study concludes that diversity of the findings requires policy actions, which need to be integrated at all levels of response to gun control, and should provide an overarching solution to all major stakeholders while ensuring enough space on ground adjustments.

Following are the key recommendations emanating from the research findings:

- Engage young men and boys to promote positive, non-violent models of manhood attitudinal & behavioral transformation towards gun ownership and use through targeted programming.
- Promote equal and meaningful participation of both women and men in the development of disarmament policy that will directly or indirectly affect their lives.
- Promote local practices and strategies to lead community-based solutions to gun violence and use by tapping into local knowledge, resources, and effective traditions.
- Targeted community participation and awareness-raising campaigns should be initiated to promote understanding and sensitivity towards gendered impacts of small arms ownership, proliferation, and misuse among the community.
- Strengthen youth leadership from diverse communities at the grass-root level to promote local initiatives, on peacebuilding, violence prevention activities, gun violence, and gendered impacts of gun use at the community level.
- Media have a strong influence on attitudes of community and setting the agenda towards small arms and gender stereotypes. Engagement with media through sensitization on gender-specific impacts of small arms and light weapons possession and misuse should be made to support media efforts in this regard.
- Engage and mobilize organizations, researchers, and relevant actors to collect gender-disaggregated data on gun violence and also use gender as a category of analysis in processing data. This will make researches, findings, and resulting recommendations more convincing, broader, and likelier to facilitate the advancement of more effective means to control weapons through the gender perspective.

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- Awareness and knowledge on global norms and international instruments on gender, armed violence, and small arms and light weapons control should be disseminated through different media platforms and targeted programs.
  - Review all violence, gun control, security-related legislation, policies, and action plans to identify the area of improvements and possibilities of gender mainstreaming in the available legislative and policy framework.
  - Promote the inclusion of women in the discussion and mobilization process and improve their participation in decision-making processes to facilitate their meaningful contribution in promoting gender perspective in small arms control and promoting the linkages between gender and gun violence.
  - Record keeping and supporting mechanisms should be in place to restrict the acquisition of guns and ammunition by those who commit intimate partner or family violence. Standards are required to ensure that perpetrators of intimate partner violence—and those particularly at risk of perpetrating it—do not have access to guns.
  - Targeted capacity building and knowledge programs should be initiated for law enforcement officials to better understand the small arms issues related to the prevention of guns and gender-based violence.
  - Government should develop mechanisms and actions to ensure that women are involved in decision-making and other activities that information security policies, such as changes to national gun laws, or disarmament and development activities.
  - Ensure that the adoption of robust and effective arms policies be included in the list of legislative level measures to be taken to prohibit all forms of gender-based violence against women.
  - Foster partnerships with and among women’s and gender-focused organizations to encourage them to engage in ‘armed violence and gender-responsive control.
  - Create opportunities for women to become experts or to increase their expertise through targeted engagement activities aimed at government officials and civil society leaders and activists on the issue of small arms and gender response.
  - Effective monitoring and evaluation should be in place to capture the implementation of measures set to address small arms control, identify gender-specific risks and concerns for both women and men provide clear recommendations for further actions.

- With a focus to promote the integration of gender aspects in legislation related to small arms and light weapons, regular trainings and sensitization sessions should be organized for lawmakers and all relevant ministries and government departments who hold the contributing role in the implementation of gun control laws.
- Civil society organizations should play their role in facilitating information, knowledge sharing, and capacity building to government agencies about the gender aspects in legislation and policies related to small arms and light weapons.
- Government should initiate education programs on gender and women's issues, violence prevention, peace-building, education, tolerance, gendered impacts of gun violence, small arms misuse and its impacts, gun violence prevention, and gender response in small arms and light weapons control.
- Integrate a gender perspective into the process of issuing and renewing small arms licenses to civilians keeping in consideration the record of the concerned person on the usage of weapons.
- Capacity building and resources should be allocated for law enforcement agencies especially police for their regular capacity building on gender analysis, gender-disaggregated data, assessment of risks associated with the possession, proliferation, and misuse of small arms and light weapons, and monitoring of all relevant laws regarding the presence and use of small arms.
- Civil society groups should play their role in monitoring the implementation of the international, regional, national, and local commitment of Pakistan on gender mainstreaming and gender equality as they relate to small arms and light weapons control.
- Civil society organizations and groups should make collaborative efforts with the Women Parliament Caucus of relevant legislative Assembly on promoting women's political participation, decision-making, and leadership within the small arms and light weapons policy arena.
- Encourage the role of community leaders, influencers, local leaders, and actors at the community level to promote community dialogues and forums to discourage the harmful norms and beliefs associated with gun ownership and possession.

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- Civil society should strongly lobby with government and parliamentarians on gender perspective integration in all existing relevant laws on gun ownership, possession, control to improve small arms control.
  - Ensure multi-stakeholder engagement and participation in policy development, decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation processes related to small arms control laws, policies, and measures.
  - To reduce gun violence and the illicit arms flow women from different working areas and communities should be encouraged to play a leadership role in strategic areas within their respective communities.
  - Frequent discussion and dialogues between all the stakeholders should be supported and facilitated by government and non-government institutions to strengthen common understanding, knowledge, and sense of responsibility concerning gender-inclusive arms control response.
  - To promote greater awareness on the issue of gun violence and its gendered impacts and generate public debate around the issue, utilize multiple platforms of social media and other local means of communication like radio programs, transit media activities, TV programs, etc.
  - Joint efforts between government and NGOs have an increased potential to generate effective and successful measures to combat the illicit trafficking of SALW and the gendered impacts of armed violence.
  - Building a network and coalition of different actors/stakeholders including policymakers, legislators, media, government departments, civil society organizations, community leaders, academia, women and youth groups, SGM activists, and Human Rights Institutions can be highly effective to complement different actors' role with each other and engage in joint activities.
  - Create awareness in the society about the gendered impacts and dimensions of SALW through the effective and continuous engagement of community members, NGOs, and political parties at the local and parliamentary levels.
  - Fully integrate the collection of gender-disaggregated data into regular administrative data collection practices related to small arms control and use.

- Trainings and capacity building for policy and lawmakers on gender equality, gender analysis, and gender mainstreaming, with special emphasis on linkages between gender and small arms, guns and gender-based violence, guns violence impacts and factors, institutional responses to gun violence, and legislative and policy standards in this field of small arms control should be organized.
- Apart from mainstreaming gender into the small arms policy framework, gender perspective should be incorporated into other policies and laws regulating the response to violence or security-related matters.
- Targeted efforts among key constituencies of decision-makers at a local, provincial and national, level should be made so that they become well-informed and motivated advocates for gender-responsive arms control legislation and regulations.
- Sensible and strict gun laws should be enacted to reduce easy access to dangerous weapons and control small arms misuse.

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## Annexure A

### Questionnaire

Open-ended questions for semi-structured interviews for “A Qualitative Study to Advance Gender-Inclusive Small Arms Control and Response in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”

1. Do you think there is any link between gender, and gun violence?
2. What is your understanding of the linkage between gender, gun violence, and gender-responsive guns control.
3. What are your thoughts about the gendered impacts of gun violence in Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
4. Do you think guns have different impacts on men, women, children, and other vulnerable groups in our society.
5. What is your perspective about integration and consideration of gender perspective in guns’ control response or gun-related violence and cases.
6. Do you think gender-disaggregated data concerning gun-involved crimes can be helpful in any case?
7. What are your views about gender-responsive policy and legislation in Pakistan.
8. What are your thoughts about women's involvement in small arms or gun violence control.
9. Can women, if in a decision-making role, be an equal partner in small arms control and gun violence prevention?
10. What are your views about existing guns’ control and gun-related laws, policies, and measures in Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. and any improvement comments.
11. What you suggest about community-level required actions to promote understanding about gender-inclusive small arms control or enhance community role in gun violence prevention.
12. What government and relevant departments like police, judiciary, prosecution, etc. can do to promote gender-responsive small arms control.
13. What are your recommendations for gender-inclusive guns’ violence and small arms control and response in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan.

## Annexure B

### Information Sheet for Research Respondents

#### **“A Qualitative Study to Advance Gender-Inclusive Small Arms Control and Response in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa”**

##### **Who is conducting the research?**

My name is -----and I am inviting you to take in part in my research “A Qualitative Study to Advance Gender-Inclusive Small Arms Control and Response in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa” supported by Blue Veins and funding support of IANSA. I am working as a consultant for this research.

The research aims to identify, explore and produce research-based recommendations and conclusions on gender-inclusive strategic points of actions and interventions, from community to policy level, to reduce armed trafficking, illicit possession, and gun violence. The research will also be the first Provincial level study in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa exploring gendered impacts and factors in gun violence and armed trafficking.

##### **Why am I doing this research?**

I want to achieve the following objective through this research:

- To demonstrate existing linkages, as well as the need for further linkages, between gender-inclusive legislative and institutional actions and strategies on gun violence, armed possession, acquisition, illicit trade, and trafficking to reduce the number of deaths, injuries, and threats from firearms
- To raise awareness among governments and civil society of how they can act to reduce firearms trafficking and violence and promote feminist and gender perspectives in addressing gun violence
- Producing research-based recommendations and conclusions for required actions and strategies, from community to policy level, to promote gender-responsive guns control and reduce small arms illicit trade, trafficking, and violence against vulnerable communities.

##### **What will happen if you choose to take part?**

I will be pleased if you agree to take part being an important stakeholder and I will send you more details about my research and answer any questions you may have.

##### **Will anyone know you have been involved?**

All data will be treated confidentially and will be completely anonymized. I will not use your name and remove any personal details from my research to ensure you cannot be identified.

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**Could there be problems for you if you take part?**

You are very unlikely to face any problems when taking part but if there are any questions you feel uncomfortable answering; you have the right to stop the interview at any time. You also have the right to withdraw from the research at any time.

**What will happen to the results of the research?**

I will write up the results of the research to Blue Veins and IANSA who will further share the finding of the results with a wider audience. I will make sure anonymity is given. All data will be securely stored with me and I will not disclose any information.

**Do you have to take part?**

It is entirely up to you whether you choose to take part. I hope that if you do choose to be involved then you will find it a valuable experience.

**Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.**

**If you would like to be involved, please sign this information sheet and return it to me at -----  
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**If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can reach me at -----  
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