

## Monitoring Illicit Firearms Flows: UNODC's Approach to SDG Target Indicator 16.4.2

**16** PEACE, JUSTICE  
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INSTITUTIONS



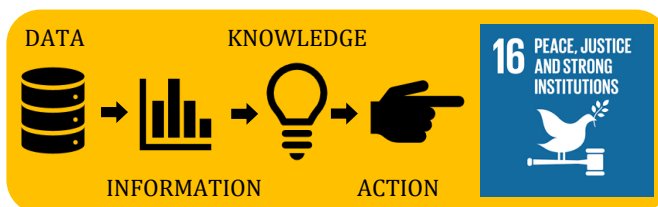
### Context of the Project

The illicit trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition is a **complex, transnational crime** often linked to and a catalyse of other forms of organized crime and terrorism.

With Goal Target 16.4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs), Member States acknowledged this crime as an **impediment to peace, security and, ultimately, development** and committed to significantly reducing illicit financial and arms flows and combatting all forms of organized crime by 2030, among other targets.

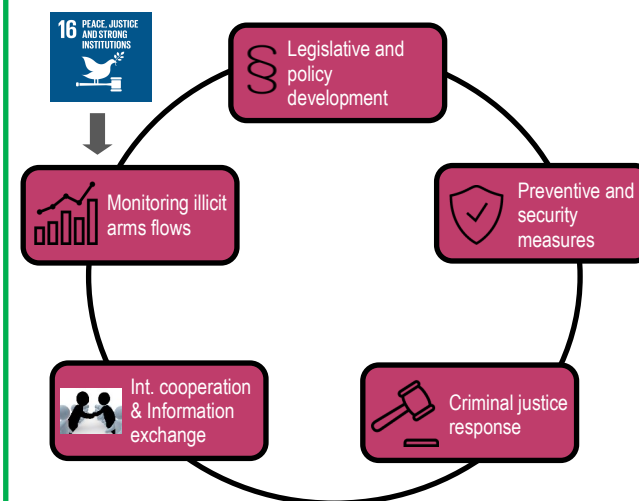
To achieve the target of reducing illicit arms flows, criminal justice systems, including the law enforcement sector, must **anticipate and address trends, routes and patterns in firearms trafficking** early on. However, the **lack of reliable information** on firearms trafficking hampers information exchange as well as cooperation among States, and thereby represents a strong impediment for effective prevention, investigation and prosecution of this transnational crime.

**Better understanding** the nature and extent of illicit trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition constitutes an important condition for **evidence-based decisions** against this phenomenon at policy and operational levels. Regularly **collecting and analysing firearms data**, both at national and international levels, can help to design **concrete action** against firearms trafficking and to achieve target 16.4 of the SDGs.



### UNODC's Firearms Data Collection and Analysis Work

Monitoring illicit firearms flows constitutes a key pillar of **UNODC's integrated approach on firearms**.



In 2015, UNODC published the first Study on Firearms to **address the lack of reliable evidence on firearms trafficking**. By developing this Study, the UNODC created a structure for future systematic data collection and analysis.

In 2016, the Conference of Parties to the Organized Crime Convention **mandated** UNODC to continue to **collect and analyse quantitative and qualitative information and suitably disaggregated data on trafficking in firearms**, their parts and components and ammunition, taking into consideration the usefulness of the UNODC Study on Firearms 2015 as a starting point for further analysis as well as target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

With the generous support of the European Union, the data collection methodology has been updated in close consultation with Member States as well as firearms and statistical experts. As co-custodian of target indicator 16.4.2, UNODC launched its new **Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire** in June 2018.



## How does UNODC Support Monitoring Target Indicator 16.4.2?

UNODC promotes a proactive approach that helps to translate firearms data into concrete action. The three main components of this approach are:

### Data Collection and Analysis

The **Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire (IAFQ)** provides the opportunity for UN Member States to share qualitative and quantitative data on seized, found, and surrendered firearms, their parts and components and ammunition on regular basis. This global exercise is facilitated by **national focal points**.

### Technical Assistance

To address challenges that may arise in the scope and accessibility of national data, UNODC provides **templates** for in-the-field data collection, data **aggregation tools**, and law enforcement training, among other offerings.

### Champion Country Initiative

Selected Member States operate as “**champion countries**” in their respective regions, advocating for evidence-based policy and operational decision making to counter the illicit trafficking in firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition.

## How can Member States Support the Effective Monitoring of Illicit Arms Flows?

Several measures undertaken by Member States can help to monitor illicit arms flows and create a basis for effectively countering this phenomenon, including:

- ➔ Consistent **marking** and **recordkeeping** of all manufactured and imported firearms;
- ➔ **Recording** and **tracing** of all firearms seized in a criminal context;
- ➔ **Cooperation** in tracing;
- ➔ Regularly **analysing** seizure data and tracing results;
- ➔ Designating a **national focal point** for the IAFQ who exchanges and receives data from all relevant authorities at the national level;
- ➔ Periodically **sharing data at the international level** to support the identification of transnational trafficking trends and patterns.

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UNODC’s global data collection initiative provides **unique opportunities** for creating the **evidence base** needed to tackle the trafficking in firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition.

**All Member States** are invited and strongly encouraged to participate in this important exercise.

## About the UNODC Global Firearms Programme

The Global Firearms Programme (GFP) is the UNODC’s designated instrument for **preventing** and **combatting** the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition. The Programme was created to assist Member States in **building adequate criminal justice systems** to effectively respond to the challenges posed by organized criminality specifically related to trafficking in illicit firearms, and to promote and assist in the implementation of the Firearms Protocol supplementing the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.



For further information on GFP or to express interest in receiving assistance, please contact:

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