Public health organizations and agencies can work with security and arms control experts to strengthen each other’s roles in preventing violence and achieving the SDGs, reduce violence against women, girls, and children, and reduce homicides and injuries from firearms.

Multi-agency collaborations can be powerful forces to bring the best practices of all to bear on institutional and structural violence challenges. They can help broaden relationships that may extend into the armed violence prevention and arms trade control worlds.

For example, “Fostering Alternative Care for Troubled Minors,” a project of the International Juvenile Justice Observatory, aims at training legal and alternative care professionals, social, youth and health workers, psychologists and other actors involved in the juvenile justice and alternative care fields in several EU Member States to strengthen their response to the needs of children in conflict with the law who have psychological problems or disorders.

The program also aims to strengthen interagency and multidisciplinary cooperation in alternative care systems to improve their capacity to respond to children’s needs, as well as raise awareness on the rights of the child. Preventing gun violence in communities, as called for in agreements such as the PoA, can be an important part of these efforts.

Parliamentarians can play a vital role in passing and implementing international and regional arms control agreements as well as supporting national public health initiatives and policy agendas that can help achieve all the SDGs and promote peaceful and inclusive societies.

IPPNW has partnered with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) at regional meetings of parliamentarians and at United Nations meetings on the arms trade to help educate delegates about a public health approach to violence prevention. We have discussed how health professionals and parliamentarians and legislators can work together to achieve the SDGs and the goal of peaceful societies. IPPNW’s policy recommendations to States have included the following:

- Implement national collection of data on gun-related injuries and deaths, use the data to calculate the costs of gun violence, and implement the public health model to identify and monitor proposed interventions.
- Include health care professionals on National Commissions on Small Arms in order to help assess strategic investments based on highest needs and to interface with WHO Violence Prevention Focal Points in more than 100 countries.
- Improve the health infrastructure for survivors of armed violence, including improving communications and coordination among medical providers and social service agencies.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Multidisciplinary collaborations among health professionals, legislators, security and justice experts and others to address all the drivers of armed violence, including the arms trade and socioeconomic and health issues, can help synergize efforts to achieve the SDG goals on armed violence prevention.

5. REFERENCES