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# Firearms and Ammunition Trafficking in Eastern Africa



## Abstract

This Issue Paper examines the current dynamics of firearms trafficking, principal actors, and to what extent illicit firearms trafficking occurs among Eastern African Member States, and in Mozambique. It provides an overview of current trends and hot-spots and demonstrates how Member States and regional actors are responding to these challenges, and where opportunities exist to strengthen cooperation among governments, regional bodies, international organizations, and civil society to combat illicit firearms trafficking, including their parts and components, and ammunition.

The nexus between terrorism, organized crime, and firearms trafficking will continue to undermine Eastern African regional efforts to resolve political conflicts, enhance socio-economic development, and sustainable peace in the Eastern Africa. The dynamics of illicit firearms trafficking in the region are compounded by armed conflict and protracted intercommunal violence. As the operative differences between terrorist, armed, and organized crime groups become increasingly blurred, traffickers are exploiting opportunities to engage in cross-border illicit trade. To address these challenges, Eastern Africa Member States should enhance efforts to implement the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, regional small arms control instruments and the UN Programme of Action, as well as other important mechanisms including the Arms Trade Treaty and International Tracing Instrument. At the same time, these efforts should be accompanied by programmes to address security and socio-economic needs of communities where firearms demand and trafficking are prevalent. Furthermore, efforts should be directed towards strengthening criminal justice system overall and enhancing the resilience of the public institutions to corruption.

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## 1. BACKGROUND

In Eastern Africa, the Regional Office of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC ROEA) supports Member States to address key security and justice challenges through holistic and integrated programming. The UNODC's *Regional Programme for Eastern Africa (2016-2022) - Promoting the Rule of Law and Human Security in Eastern Africa* provides a robust international cooperation framework. This publication has been produced by the UNODC ROEA Countering Transnational Organized Crime, Illicit Trafficking and Terrorism Programmes with the support from the Government of the Kingdom of Norway.

The UNODC Global Firearms Programme is aimed at assisting states in building robust criminal justice systems to effectively respond to organized criminality related to trafficking in firearms, its parts and components. The programme supports

Member States' efforts to prevent and counter illicit manufacture, trafficking and diversion of firearms into the hands of criminal and terrorist groups, and to effectively investigate and prosecute firearms-related crimes and their perpetrators. Its efforts revolve around universal adherence to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol against the Illicit Manufacture of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components and Ammunition (Firearms Protocol).

In addition, complementary to these efforts, other key programmes play an important role, such as the Anti-Corruption Programme, the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, the Terrorism Prevention Programme, the Global Maritime Crime Programme, the Global Wildlife and Forest Crime Programme, and the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP).

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The scale of illicit small arms and light weapons trafficking in Eastern African Member States and Mozambique<sup>1</sup> is alarming. From the Horn to Mozambique, and throughout the Great Lakes and Rift Valley, the misuse of firearms is disrupting regional economic and social development, exacerbating intercommunal conflict, and undermining political stability and public safety, all with devastating consequences for people and communities in both rural and urban areas.

In Africa, cross-border trafficking accounts for a significant proportion of the illicit weapons in circulation.<sup>2</sup> Based on an independent estimate, twenty percent of an estimated 40 million civilian-held firearms in Africa are in the focus area of the paper.<sup>3</sup> Some of these firearms are acquired by legal means, but most of them are unregistered and possessed illegally. A firearm will always find a willing buyer on the black market, be that an armed group, a herdsman seeking protection for livestock, or a street criminal with a record of violent offences.

- 1 For this Issue Paper, select Eastern African Member States, members of the Eastern Africa Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization (EAPCCO) were included in the scope, and namely Burundi, DRC, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Albeit not an EAPCCO Member State, Mozambique is included in the scope of this study due to the intensity of cross-border and maritime trafficking activities.
- 2 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019, p. 38. At a global level, cross-border trafficking by land is the most common method (See UNODC. "Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020." P. 10).
- 3 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019, p. 38. At a global level, cross-border trafficking by land is the most common method (See UNODC. "Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020." P. 31).

Firearms, their parts and components, as well as ammunition are easy to conceal and transport, making firearms trafficking a lucrative crime. There is a wide range of actors involved in trafficking firearms, from local dealers to international gun runners, selling and transporting illicit firearms by land, sea, and air. These actors include, among other, organized criminal groups, urban gangs, terrorist, and armed groups, as well as individual civilians.

Member States in Eastern Africa are subject to varying levels of firearms trafficking activity. Where national institutions lack capacity, domestic and cross-border smuggling intensifies. But measuring the magnitude of the problem, and monitoring patterns in firearms trafficking dynamics and modalities of transport, is challenging. This difficulty is, in large part, due to the limited capacity of Eastern African Member States to intercept traffickers and seize illicit firearms, as well as to robustly collect and record seizure data.

Member States shape anti-trafficking responses based on several factors. These include the overall prevalence of civilian-held firearms within national borders, and prevailing patterns of armed violence, or armed crime. While one Member State might prioritize enhancing state-stockpile security as a preventative measure against weapons diversion, another might emphasize criminal justice enhancement and legal frameworks development to prosecute trafficking offenders. The sustainability

of measures aimed at reducing firearms trafficking depends on inter-state and regional cooperation, including the sharing of trafficking-related information to assist the coordination of cross-border security, seizure of illicit firearms, and disruption of criminal networks involved.

Despite the challenges, there are several notable achievements in combatting illicit firearms trafficking in Eastern Africa. Most Member States have established national focal points and national commissions on small arms, a critical mechanism to coordinate the implementation of arms control measures, including anti-trafficking initiatives. In addition, through voluntary collection and formal disarmament efforts, Member States have collected and disposed of tens of thousands of illicit firearms from civilians and armed groups.

Nonetheless, the intense pressure remains on Member States to keep pace with evolving trafficking methods and networks, making strengthening national, regional, and global cooperation an essential way to respond to and combat firearms trafficking. To this end, the collection, analysis, and sharing of data on illicit firearms trafficking, including seizures, and arrests between Member States, as well as the sharing of law enforcement and criminal justice experiences, is critically important to better understand current illicit firearms dynamics and discover good practices in illicit firearms control.

### 3. OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

This Issue Paper examines the current dynamics of firearms trafficking, principal actors, and to what extent illicit firearms trafficking occurs among Eastern African Member States, and in Mozambique. It provides an overview of current trends and hot-spots and demonstrates how Member States and regional actors are responding to these challenges, and where opportunities exist to strengthen cooperation among governments, regional bodies, international organizations, and civil society to combat illicit firearms trafficking, including their parts and components, and ammunition.

Research for this Paper was largely desk-based, relying on academic papers and reports, UNODC reports (including Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaires, IAFQs), Security Council resolutions and other UN documents, as well as African Union and other regional organizations' reports and documents, and media articles. Interviews with several institutions in Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Tanzania were also conducted to gain nuanced insight into the specific trafficking dynamics.

## 4. KEY FINDINGS

The nexus of terrorism, organized crime and firearms trafficking will continue to undermine regional efforts to resolve political conflicts, enhance socio-economic development, and contributions towards building peace in the Eastern Africa. The United Nations has repeatedly emphasized the threats posed by terrorist and organized criminal groups with regard to illicit firearms, their proliferation and misuse, stressing that Member States take national ownership as a guiding principle in all matters related to small arms and light weapons, including through enhancement of cross-border cooperation and exchange between national focal points, harmonizing national action plans with regional strategies, and streamlining firearms control efforts with those related to women, peace and security.<sup>4</sup>

While arms trafficking affects Member States differently, a consistent focus on how terrorist, armed, and organized criminal groups operate will help understand broader dynamics of illicit firearms trafficking and inform strategies to combat the proliferation of illicit firearms locally and globally.

The dynamics of illicit firearms trafficking in Eastern Africa are compounded by armed conflict and protracted intercommunal violence. As the operative differences between terrorist, armed, and organized crime groups become increasingly blurred, traffickers are exploiting opportunities to engage in cross-border illicit trade. Further research

is needed to better understand how terrorist and armed groups interact with organized crime. While terrorist, violent extremist, or armed groups may publicly adhere to ideological beliefs based on xenophobia, racism or other forms of intolerance, or resort to violence in the name of religion or belief, the partnerships they form with local criminal networks are not ideologically motivated.

Using force to eliminate the threat posed by terrorism and violent extremism, as well as by the activities of an armed group may be an effective short-term solution, yet it opens the way for potential human-rights abuses, alienation of local communities, their radicalization and rearmament, and consequently does not address illicit firearms proliferation and trafficking in medium to long term.

Eastern Africa Member States should enhance efforts to implement regional small arms control instruments and the UN Programme of Action, as well as other important mechanisms including the Arms Trade Treaty and International Tracing Instrument. At the same time, these efforts should be accompanied by programmes to address security and socio-economic needs of communities, often pastoralist and rural, where firearms demand and trafficking are prevalent. Furthermore, efforts should be directed towards strengthening criminal justice system overall and enhancing the resilience of the public institutions to corruption, one of the drivers of illicit firearms trafficking.

<sup>4</sup> UNSG, "Small Arms and Light Weapons: Report by the Secretary General." S/2021/839; See also UNSC resolutions S/RES/2482 (2019), S/RES/2462 (2019), S/RES/2370 (2017); S/RES/2322 (2016); S/RES/2195 (2014); S/RES/2129 (2013)

## 5. OVERVIEW OF FIREARMS AND AMMUNITION TRAFFICKING DYNAMICS

In 2018, an independent estimate of the total number of civilian-held firearms within Eastern African Member States, as well as in Mozambique, was over 5.8 million.<sup>5</sup> An overwhelming majority of those firearms are unregistered and illegally possessed.

Durable commodities, many of the illicit firearms in civilian possession in these Member States can be traced back to 1970s, to the arms imports during the Cold War era, when automatic and long-barrel rifles flooded the region. Many of these weapons remain in use today, including Mauser K98s, Simonov SKSs, and the ever-ubiquitous AK-pattern rifle.

With the profound changes that followed the end of the Cold War, large state-controlled stockpiles in several instances were looted and subsequently distributed among civilians and armed groups, or trafficked across borders where they would be used to arm groups engaged in nascent conflicts.<sup>6</sup> Pastoralist communities in the region were heavily affected, as evidenced, for instance, by the sharp increase in armed violence in the Karamoja area of Uganda from the 1980s onward.<sup>7</sup> Remote and stretching across national borders, the greater Karamoja Cluster, inclusive of adjoining areas of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda, remains a trafficking hotspot.<sup>8</sup>

### 5.1 Sources of illicit firearms

This section highlights general trends and dynamics of firearms trafficking in Eastern Africa, including common trafficking routes, types of weapons trafficked, and several of the actors involved.

#### 5.1.1 Firearms trafficking typology

Within the region, the most common source of trafficked firearms is from other African Member States,<sup>9</sup> moving across borders in passenger vehicles, lorries or trucks, motorcycles, by foot, or by a variety of other methods used to move large and small quantities. However, many African Member States experience capacity challenges to intercept and report trafficked firearms. This has an impact on understanding of the scope of trafficking modalities.<sup>10</sup>

A common type of illicit firearms trafficking is the so-called 'ant-trade', involving the movement of small quantities of firearms, parts, and components, and ammunition piece-by-piece over a period.<sup>11</sup> Ant-trade trafficking relies on simple means of transport, a motorcycle, by foot, a passenger bus, or migrating livestock. While the quantities of weapons transported are small, perhaps a single weapon or a satchel of bullets, over time this type of trade can

5 Karp, Aaron, "Global Firearms Holdings Database, Small Arms Survey Geneva, 2018.

6 Mark Bradbury and Sally Healey, "Endless War: A Brief History of the Somali Conflict," ACCORD, Issue 21 (2010). Available at: <http://www.c-r.org/accordarticle/endless-war-brief-history-somali-conflict>; Akabwai, Darlington, and Priscillar Ateyo, "The Scramble for Cattle, Power and Guns in Karamoja." Tufts University, Feinstein International Center. December 2007; on Ethiopia, see CITATION; Klare, Michael, "The arms trade in the 1990s: changing patterns, rising dangers." *Third World Quarterly*, Vol 17, No. 5, pps., 857-874. 1996.

7 Carlson, Khristopher, Keith Proctor, Elizabeth Stites, and Darlington Akabwai. "Tradition in Transition: Customary Authority in Karamoja, Uganda." Tufts University. October 2012. Pg. 12.

8 Mulugeta, Mercy Fekadu. "Small Arms and conflict among East African Pastoralists: Karamoja (in)security complex." Cambridge University Press, *Africa*, Vol. 87. Issue 4., Cambridge University Press, October 2017, pgs. 739-757. <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/africa/article/abs/small-arms-and-conflict-among-east-african-pastoralists-the-karamoja-insecurity-complex/9F4E853ECEA65A9F0DE4667DCF617297>; Kushner, Jacob, "Bandits, cows and bullets: the gangs turning to guns in Kenya." *The Guardian*, 20 June 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2017/jun/20/rustlers-bandits-and-gun-runners-the-gangs-ying-for-cattle-in-kenya>; Ken Matthyssen, Sergio Finardi, Brian Johnson-Thomas and Peter Densaert. "The Karamoja Cluster of eastern Africa: Arms transfers and their repercussions on communal security perceptions." International Peace Information Service. December 2010.

9 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019.

10 UNODC. "Global Study on Firearms Trafficking 2020." P. 89. [2020\\_REPORT\\_Global\\_Study\\_on\\_Firearms\\_Trafficking\\_2020\\_web3.pdf \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/documents/trafficking/2020/2020_REPORT_Global_Study_on_Firearms_Trafficking_2020_web3.pdf)

11 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019. p. 38.

result in the movement and accumulation of a significant volume of illicit weapons and related material, satisfying large-scale demand over months or longer.<sup>12</sup>

Due to the furtive nature of this type of trade, it is difficult to detect, seize, and quantify exactly how much firearms-related material is trafficked in this manner. Along Kenya's northern border with Ethiopia, for example, this type of method is believed to occur on a nearly daily basis.<sup>13</sup>

Trafficking of firearms and ammunition by large road convoys is another, albeit less common, method. Yet, like the ant-trade, the volume of illicit firearms trafficked in this manner is also difficult to quantify as it is more likely to happen in areas where law enforcement capacities are limited. This type of trafficking is more likely than ant-trade to potentially involve public officials moving weapons to groups and forces they voluntarily or involuntarily cooperate with.

Large international shipments are another method, including by maritime routes or by air. Both air and maritime shipments may be legal exports from their country of origin, but upon import, are knowingly diverted to a group or country with falsified end-user certificates. Over the past decade, several maritime trafficking seizures off the Eastern Africa coastline have revealed trafficking dynamics and the actors involved.

Seaports, including illegal ports, line the eastern coast from the Red Sea southward, from Eritrea to Mozambique. Maritime traffickers, some of whom have been formally trained in seafaring, navigation, cargo handling, and so on, are proficient in moving illicit firearms through shipping channels to ports en route to final destinations.<sup>14</sup> In addition to the region's developed sea ports, over 10 thousand kilometers of coastline, from Eritrea to Mozambique,

provide ample opportunity for traffickers to move illicit firearms and other goods from sea to land.<sup>15</sup>

## 5.1.2 Diversion from state stockpiles

The diversion of firearms and ammunition from state stockpiles is a significant source of illicit firearms, contributing to the proliferation and circulation of illicit weapons to civilians, armed groups, gangs, and other groups including pastoralists. Stockpile diversion can result from several factors, including poor weapons-management practices and security procedures, theft, and intentional leakage, often facilitated by corrupt officials with access to weapons stores, including police and military stores, or others under the control of wildlife or custodial services.

One of the most notable state-stockpile diversions occurred in Libya in 2011. Like the diversion of state stockpiles in the Karamoja region of Uganda, large diversion events will likely result in the intensification of cross-border trafficking. In the case of Libya, tens of thousands of assault rifles, man-portable air defense systems, and other weapons, were trafficked out of Libya across the Sahel, North Africa and into Sudan, and, possibly, Somalia.<sup>16</sup>

State-weapons diversion can also happen during legal transfers. This type of diversion entails the authorized transfer of controlled items approved for export to a specified end-user, but during the transfer, the exported materials are, in part or in full, redirected to an unauthorized recipient.<sup>17</sup> Transfer diversions can be deliberate or may happen as a result of theft or loss due to negligence, for example.<sup>18</sup>

Eastern African Member States manufacture weapons – an additional dimension to weapons diversion. Firearms and ammunition-manufacturing Member States include Kenya, Ethiopia, Tanzania,

12 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019; UNODC, "Global Study on Firearms Trafficking – 2020." Page 11.

13 Interview, UN programme officer, Nairobi, 16 November 2021.

14 Bahadur, Jay, "An Iranian Fingerprint? Tracing Type 56-1 assault rifles in Somalia." Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. November 2021. p. 9. <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GITOC-An-Iranian-Fingerprint-Tracing-Type-56-1-assault-rifles-in-Somalia.pdf>

15 UNSC, 'Final report of the Panel of Experts on Yemen.' S/2021/79. Pg. 29.

16 UNODC. Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment', *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime*, February 2013, [http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/West\\_Africa\\_TOCTA\\_2013\\_EN.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/West_Africa_TOCTA_2013_EN.pdf); [https://www.unodc.org/documents/toc/Reports/TOCTAWestAfrica/West\\_Africa\\_TOCTA\\_FIREARMS.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/toc/Reports/TOCTAWestAfrica/West_Africa_TOCTA_FIREARMS.pdf); See also Marsh, Nicholas, "Brothers Came Back with Weapons: The Effects of Arms Proliferation from Libya." Prism 6, no. 4. 2017. pg. 90. [https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/prism/prism\\_6-4/prism\\_6-4.pdf](https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Portals/68/Documents/prism/prism_6-4/prism_6-4.pdf)

17 Schroeder, Matt and Helen Close, and Chris Stevenson. 2008. 'Deadly Deception: Arms Transfer Diversion.' Small Arms Survey. Small Arms Survey 2008: Risk and Resilience. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 112-53.

18 Schroeder, Matt and Helen Close, and Chris Stevenson. 2008. 'Deadly Deception: Arms Transfer Diversion.' Small Arms Survey. Small Arms Survey 2008: Risk and Resilience. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 112-53; Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019.

and Uganda,<sup>19</sup> but the diversion of locally manufactured firearms appears to be low. Kenya, for instance, began manufacturing firearms only in April 2021,<sup>20</sup> but as the productivity increases, so too will the potential for their diversion from manufacturing plants or weapons stockpiles.

While diversion of locally made weapons appears low, that is not the case for regionally manufactured ammunition.<sup>21</sup> Over half of the ammunition used among military and other authorized users in Eastern Africa is estimated to be manufactured locally,<sup>22</sup> and some of this ammunition leaks into the possession of civilians and armed groups. This has been documented among pastoralist groups in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia, in areas including the Karamoja Cluster where armed cattle rustling and general insecurity prevail.<sup>23</sup> A study investigating these dynamics in northwestern Kenya found that 40 per cent of ammunition on the black market was sourced from Kenyan armed forces, easily identifiable by its headstamp, 'KOFK', the Kenya Ordnance Factories Corporation in Eldoret.<sup>24</sup> Mapping ammunition types used by pastoralists can reveal the fluidity of intra-state circulation and cross-border trade,<sup>25</sup> and in the case of the Karamoja Cluster, the multi-directional movement of ammunition among allied and adversarial groups alike.

### 5.1.3 Types, prices, and origins of trafficked firearms

The types of firearms trafficked into and within Eastern Africa vary, but there are common types and evident trends. A natural factor determining these dynamics is what traffickers and dealers have access to. In some areas, firearm types are so profuse that buyers can place orders for their preferred weapons, as alleged to be the case in the Illemi Triangle area bordering Kenya, Ethiopia, and South Sudan. The abundance of cheap legacy weapons, those still in circulation from the 1970s and 80s, provide a regular source of durable and cheap firearms.<sup>26</sup> More sophisticated weapons can also be sourced. In Turkana, Kenya, belt-fed PK machine guns are a prized weapon among pastoralists and are said to mitigate the frequency of raids from the nearby adversarial groups when it is known that high-caliber weapons, such as PKMs, are in use.<sup>27</sup>

Although in smaller quantities, weapons are also alleged to arrive from Yemen, with speed boats moving them from Al Mukalla, B'ir Ali, Balhaf, and Ash Shihr on the Yemeni coast to Somalia.<sup>28</sup> These weapons are further trafficked into Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Sudan, and Central African Republic. As the trafficked weapons move further from Yemen, their value increases significantly. For example, Saudi Arabia-manufactured G3 rifle, commonly found in Yemen can be sold for USD 500 in Yemen but is reported to cost USD 1500 or more when trafficked into Somalia.<sup>29</sup>

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- 19 See Globalsecurity.org, "Ethiopia's Defense Industrial Base." <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/ethiopia/industry.htm>; Mutua, John. "Kenya opens first Sh4bn arms plant." *Business Daily*. 9 April 2021. <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/corporate/companies/kenya-opens-first-sh4bn-arms-plant-3354970>; Holtom, Paul and Irene Pavesi, "Trade Update 2018: Sub-Saharan Africa in Focus." Small Arms Survey, December 2018. Page 49. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/S-Trade-Update/SAS-Trade-Update-2018.pdf>; <https://ipisresearch.be/publication/arms-and-ammunitions-factories-in-africa/>; <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/bd/corporate/companies/kenya-opens-first-sh4bn-arms-plant-3354970>
- 20 Kenya produces a 5.56mm AR-15-type rifle, with plans to begin production of 9mm pistols, and 7.62mm rifles, by 2026. See Binnie, James. "Kenya opens rifle factory." *Janes*. 14 April 2021. <https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/kenya-opens-rifle-factory>
- 21 DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania, and Uganda manufacture ammunition. Other African manufacturers outside of the geographic scope of this study include Mali, Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Angola, Namibia, South Africa, Sudan and Zimbabwe. (see Holtom Paul and Irene Pavesi, "Trade Update 2018: Sub-Saharan Africa in Focus." Small Arms Survey, Trade Update, December 2018. P. 49. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/S-Trade-Update/SAS-Trade-Update-2018.pdf>. See also IPIS Research, "Defense Related-companies in Africa", accessed 5 October 2021. <https://ipisresearch.be/publication/arms-and-ammunitions-factories-in-africa/>
- 22 Ken Matthysen, Sergio Finardi, Brian Johnson-Thomas and Peter Denssaert. "The Karamoja Cluster of eastern Africa: Arms transfers and their repercussions on communal security perceptions." International Peace Information Service. December 2010.
- 23 Wepundi, Manasseh, Eliud Nthiga, Eliud Kabuu, Ryan Murray, and Anna Alvazzi del Frate, "Availability of Small Arms and Perceptions of Security in Kenya: An Assessment." Special Report. Small Arms Survey, June 2012. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/C-Special-reports/SAS-SR16-Kenya.pdf>
- 24 Bevan James. "Arsenals Adrift: Arms and Ammunition Diversion." Small Arms Survey 2008 Yearbook, Cambridge University Press. 2008. Pg. 43.
- 25 Bevan, James. "Blowback: Kenya's Illicit Ammunition Problem in Turkana North District." Small Arms Survey. June 2008.
- 26 Doki, Charlton and Adam Mohamed Ahmad, "Africa's arms dump: following the trail of bullets in the Sudans." *The Guardian*. 2 October 2014. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/02/-sp-africa-arms-dump-south-sudan>
- 27 Interview, Turkana pastoralist, 21 October 2013.
- 28 Jay Bahadur (2021). 'Follow the Money: The Use of Hawala Remittance System in the Yemen-Somalia Arms Trade', Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Following-the-money-The-use-of-the-hawala-remittance-system-in-the-Yemen%E2%80%93Somalia-arms-trade.pdf>
- 29 Michael Horton (2020), 'Arms from Yemen will Fuel Conflict in the Horn of Africa', Jamestown Foundation, <https://jamestown.org/program/arms-from-yemen-will-fuel-conflict-in-the-horn-of-africa/>

The same route is also used to move irregular migrants across the Red Sea. There are reports that boats transporting irregular migrants from Bosaso to Yemen return with smuggled goods, including weapons, which are sold to local armed groups, weapons traders, or Al-Shabaab or Da'esh-affiliated fighters.<sup>30</sup> Boat operators are often hired by both migrant smugglers and weapons traffickers.<sup>31</sup>

The prices some of these weapons attract is substantially higher in the Horn than in Yemen, and traffickers are moving them great distances to Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Mozambique, where they can sell at five or six-fold black market prices than in Yemen. A Saudi-made G3 rifle, for instance, that sells for approximately USD 500 in Yemen, can cost several thousand dollars in Ethiopia. Likewise, rocket propelled grenades can sell at a price ten times higher than the buying price in Yemen.<sup>32</sup>

Larger shipments are arriving to the Horn of Africa from Iran. Since 2018, Chinese assault rifles 56-1 and M80s, with serial numbers in proximity suggesting they are from the same factory, have been identified in Yemen and Somalia.<sup>33</sup> While weapons are destined for Yemen, some of these are shipped in dhows to the coast of Somalia<sup>34</sup>, where transshipment takes place. If smugglers are intercepted in this location, prosecution after their arrest could be quite complicated<sup>35</sup>, which results for the naval forces to adopt a “catch and release” strategy, limiting intelligence gathering.<sup>36</sup>

Since 2015, there have been ten large seizures of weapons and ammunition along the route from Yemen to Somalia.<sup>37</sup> One dhow intercepted by the USS Monterey in May 2021 was carrying dozens of anti-tank guided missiles, thousands of type 56 assault rifles and hundreds of machine guns, sniper rifles and rocket-propelled grenade launchers.<sup>38</sup> In addition, the Puntland Maritime Police Force seized weapons in four separate cases in May and July 2021, one of which was reportedly intended for Al-Shabaab and contained thousands of ammunition rounds and dozens of weapons.<sup>39</sup>

While most of the weapons transported by dhows are destined for Yemen, an investigation by the Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime documented a significant presence of weapons in Somalia, where over 400 weapons were identified in 13 locations across the country.<sup>40</sup> In addition, Type 56-1 rifles were also identified in locations bordering Ethiopia and Kenya, suggesting onward movement.<sup>41</sup>

Maritime interdictions in recent years reveal the range of weapon types flowing across the Gulf of Aden, including Iranian- and Chinese-made weapons, PK machine guns, AK-pattern rifles, anti-tank missiles, pistols, rocket propelled grenades, and convertible imitation pistols, as well as several different firearms parts and accessories.<sup>42</sup>

30 Peter Tinti (2017). Migrant smuggling: Paths from the Horn of Africa to Yemen and Saudi Arabia. Institute of Security Studies, <https://issafrica.s3.amazonaws.com/site/uploads/aitwr-7.pdf>

31 *Ibid.*

32 Horton, Michael, “Arms from Yemen will fuel Conflict in the Horn of Africa,” Michael Horton, Terrorism Monitor, Jamestown Foundation, 17 April 2020.

33 Jay Bahadur (2021). ‘Snapping Back against Iran: The Case of the Al Bari 2 and the UN Arms Embargo’, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, [https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Snapping-back-against-Iran-The-case-of-the-Al-Bari-2-and-the-UN-arms-embargo\\_GITOC.pdf](https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Snapping-back-against-Iran-The-case-of-the-Al-Bari-2-and-the-UN-arms-embargo_GITOC.pdf)

34 Jay Bahadur (2021). ‘Snapping Back against Iran: The Case of the Al Bari 2 and the UN Arms Embargo’, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime, [https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Snapping-back-against-Iran-The-case-of-the-Al-Bari-2-and-the-UN-arms-embargo\\_GITOC.pdf](https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Snapping-back-against-Iran-The-case-of-the-Al-Bari-2-and-the-UN-arms-embargo_GITOC.pdf)

35 Arresting smugglers would require prosecution in the state of the interdicting force, which would require transfer of smugglers to that country, and imprisonment if found guilty.

36 Interview, UN Panel of Experts, November 2021.

37 *Ibid.*

38 UN Security Council (2021). Final report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia. S/2021/849.

39 UN Security Council (2021). Final report of the Panel of Experts on Somalia. S/2021/849.

40 Jay Bahadur (2021). ‘An Iranian Fingerprint? Tracing Type 56-1 Assault Rifles in Somalia’, Global Initiative against Transnational Organized Crime <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GITOC-An-Iranian-Fingerprint-Tracing-Type-56-1-assault-rifles-in-Somalia.pdf>

41 *Ibid.*

42 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, “Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa.” Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019. Pgs 33-34, 58; Chivers, CJ, and Eric Schmidt, “Arms Seized off coast of Yemen Appear to Have been made in Iran,” *New York Times*. Jan 10 2017 <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/10/world/middleeast/yemen-iran-weapons-houthis.html>; Global Initiative Against Organized Transnational Crime, Civil Society Observatory of Illicit Economies in Eastern and Southern Africa, Issue 10, July-August 2020. <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Civil-Society-Observatory-of-Illicit-Economies-in-Eastern-and-Southern-Africa-Risk-Bulletin-10.pdf> Globally, cross-border arms flow by land account for two-thirds of illegal firearms trafficking. (See, UNODC, 2020 report page 12). Seizures made of firearms and ammunition in the process of being trafficked provide critical data to better understand trafficking routes, supply chains and demand factors. Unfortunately, many Eastern African states lack the capacity to seize trafficked firearms and ammunition, and it is from seized weapons used during the act of committing an armed crime that most data can be gleaned from illicit firearms and help reveal their origins or method of diversion into criminal, or otherwise illegal, possession. For a list of weapon types from known maritime seizures of arms-trafficking dhows off the Somali coast in the Gulf of Aden and Indian Ocean, 2015-2021, see Bahadur, Jay, “An Iranian Fingerprint? Tracing Type 56-1 assault rifles in Somalia.” Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. November 2021. p. 10. <https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GITOC-An-Iranian-Fingerprint-Tracing-Type-56-1-assault-rifles-in-Somalia.pdf>

### 5.1.4 Craft-made firearms

Craft-made firearms are produced in Burundi, Kenya, Tanzania, and Mozambique, as well as in other countries across the continent.<sup>43</sup> Craft-made weapons are typically made by hand in relatively small quantities, are usually of simple design, and materials for their production most often sourced locally.<sup>44</sup>

Overall, the production of craft-made firearms is largely unregulated; legislative controls on craft-made guns are difficult to enforce due to the discreet nature of their production.<sup>45</sup> As such, the prevalence of their distribution is largely unknown. Craft firearms are not engraved with standard markings, making the tracing of craft-made weapons, for instance, seized at a crime scene, difficult to do. In Tanzania, the government has reported that domestically produced craft-firearms rank as the second-most important source of trafficked firearms in the country.<sup>46</sup>

Pistols are more commonly linked to urban crime, such as robberies and muggings, while long-barrel rifles and shotguns are more common in rural areas, used in wildlife poaching, hunting, or for self-defense and protection of livestock.<sup>47</sup> While craft-made firearms offer an alternative to more expensive industrial manufactured guns, craft firearms do not appear to supply armed groups in any significant way, and are mainly used by civilians for individual use. However, there are some examples of craft firearms being manufactured by armed groups.<sup>48</sup>

## 5.2 Enabling factors of firearms trafficking

### 5.2.1 Porous and insecure borders

Porous borders are the bane of law enforcement institutions and the joy of traffickers. Vast land and sea borders in region naturally complicate national and regional efforts to monitor and curb flows of illicit firearms and ammunition. Rural border areas are particularly prone to firearms trafficking, and where such areas suffer from protracted insecurity, there are acute challenges for both local communities and law enforcement institutions.<sup>49</sup>

Two-way trafficking appears to be a common feature across the region's national borders, with multiple factors dictating the flow and volume of trafficked firearms and ammunition. Areas adjacent to active conflict zones are naturally vulnerable to the proliferation of large quantities of illicit weapons. As armed conflict loses intensity in one area, outward weapons trafficking may intensify violence elsewhere, creating a new market for more trafficked weapons.<sup>50</sup>

In some areas, weapons regularly move back and forth across borders, within cross-border communities.<sup>51</sup> For example, people may move firearms across borders as part of their regular routine of transhumance, moving livestock from one grazing areas to another. In another example, people are known to move weapons across borders for temporary storage to avoid disarmament-collection campaigns or security sweeps.<sup>52</sup> Because

43 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019. P. 56.

44 Hays, G, and Nic Jenzen-Jones, "Beyond State Control: Improvised and Craft-produced Small Arms and Light Weapons." Small Arms Survey, Report, November 2018. <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-improvised-craft-weapons-report.pdf>

45 Berman, Eric, "Craft Production of Small Arms." Small Arms Survey, Research Notes. Number 3. March 2011. P. 1. [http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research\\_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-3.pdf](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/H-Research_Notes/SAS-Research-Note-3.pdf)

46 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019. P. 55.

47 Carlson, Christopher, Joana Wright, Hannah Dönges, "In the Line of Fire: Elephant and rhino poaching in Africa." Small Arms Survey, Cambridge University Press, 2015. P.21.

48 Small Arms Survey, Beyond State Control, Improvised and Craft-produced Small Arms and Light Weapons, 2018.

49 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019.

50 Khakee, Anna with Nicolas Florquin. 2005. 'Sourcing the Tools of War: Small Arms Supplies to Conflict Zones.' In Small Arms Survey. Small Arms Survey 2005: Moving Targets. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 159-77; Beven, James. "Blowback: Kenya's Illicit Ammunition Problem in Turkana North District." Small Arms Survey Occasional Paper Number 22. June 2008. Pg. 64.

51 Interview, Researcher, Nairobi., 27 October 2021.

52 Saferworld, People's Peacemaking Perspectives, Uganda Policy Brief. March 2012.

the movement of people and livestock across borders is fluid, yet a very normal activity (to facilitate trade, access resources, or simply to visit family and friends), monitoring illicit firearms flows in these areas is extremely difficult. As such, these dynamics highlight the importance of law enforcement working in tandem with local communities to design security structures that respond to the local needs.

## 5.2.2 Corruption

Corruption enables more than the facilitation of illicit firearms trafficking. It enables the illegal entry and exit of illegal commodities of all sorts, including commercial explosives, ammunition, and a range of

other counterfeit and illicit goods including wildlife products, drugs, and so on.<sup>53</sup> Factors that render border officials susceptible to corruption include poor external oversight and low discretionary authority of border posts and crossings, in addition to poor or irregular salaries paid to border officials.<sup>54</sup>

While some types of corruption may be casual and irregular, a one-off bribe, for instance, other forms of corruption are more systemic and institutionalized. The latter form is the most consequential due to the long-term impacts it has on countering illicit firearms trafficking, or other criminal activity, and is also the most difficult to address. When public institutions are weak and susceptible to corruption, terrorist and criminal groups can flourish.

# 6. FIREARMS TRAFFICKING DYNAMICS IN SELECT EASTERN AFRICAN MEMBER STATES

## 6.1 Selected States

### 6.1.1 Somalia

Despite being placed under an arms embargo since 1992, illicit arms continue to flow into Somalia. The UN Somalia and Eritrea Monitoring Group, and its successor, the UN Panel of Experts on Somalia<sup>55</sup>, has reported extensively on arms trafficking into and within the country, including investigations into multiple incidents of firearms and ammunition diversion from state stockpiles acquired by armed groups, including Al-Shabaab.

Over the past decade, illicit firearms have consistently flowed into the Puntland State of Somalia, with multiple weapon types and ammunition reportedly trafficked across the Gulf of Aden from Yemen. Illicit firearms trafficked through Puntland's port of Bossaso arm al-Shabaab, Da'esh in Somalia, and other armed groups.

Interdictions of maritime shipments reveal that large quantities of various types are being trafficked to Somalia, with weapon types including sniper and AK-pattern assault rifles, many of which bear markings consistent with Iranian-manufactured types. Other seized weapons include Type 73 MPMGs (manufactured in North Korea and used in

53 Interpol and ENACT, "Corruption as a facilitator for organized crime in the Eastern African Region." Analytical Report. 15 October 2019. <https://www.unodc.org/easternfrica/en/Stories/unodc-support-ctcoe-training-workshop-border-security.html>

54 Chêne, Marie. "Corruption at borders." CMI, U4Helpdesk Answer. 2018. <https://www.u4.no/publications/corruption-at-borders.pdf>

55 See Reports of the UN Panel Experts on Somalia <https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/751/work-and-mandate/reports>

Iran), PK machine guns, spare machine-gun barrels, mortar tubes, anti-tank guided missiles, and RPG launchers, among several ammunition types of a variety of calibers.<sup>56</sup> It is estimated that an average of four illicit shipments of weapons are received into Puntland each month.<sup>57</sup>

Diversion of weapons from state stockpiles is another source of arms for militant groups, including al-Shabaab, often resultant from poor stockpile management or deliberate leakage.<sup>58</sup> In several instances, leaked government weapons have been reported to be traded in local black markets and purchased by al-Shabaab fighters and civilians.<sup>59</sup> Other weapons have been acquired by non-state forces through battlefield seizures, including from AMISOM or government bases overrun by al-Shabaab.<sup>60</sup>

Independent estimates of civilian possession of firearms in Somalia range between 550,000 to over 1.1 million, depending on methodology and data used.<sup>61</sup> The magnitude of illicit firearms proliferation means that black market prices are often lower in Somalia than in neighboring states, where access to illicit weapons, and types more readily available in Somalia, is limited.<sup>62</sup> A G3 rifle, for instance, can cost several thousand USD in Ethiopia.<sup>63</sup> Notably, Al-Shabaab operations in Kenya have included weapons smuggled out of Somalia.<sup>64</sup>

Illicit firearms trafficking in Somalia involves a region-wide network of dealers and transporters,

crisscrossing the country from Puntland into South Central Somalia and onward across the greater East and Horn regions. Better understanding of how Somali smuggling networks interact with traffickers and dealers outside of Somalia can benefit from more examination, but several of the actors involved in Somalia have been revealed with UN expert reports, including dealers supplying both al-Shabaab, the Da'esh, and other groups.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to domestic trafficking networks, of great concern is trans-border cooperation among violent extremist groups. But a lack of clarity on how these groups exchange weapons, intelligence, and information about the tactical use of weaponry is unclear. Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Al-Shabaab have exchanged operatives in the past. While AQAP draws from al-Shabaab's intelligence organization, al-Shabaab stands to benefit from AQAP's experience in deploying a wider variety of weapon types, which may potentially compel the Somali group to broaden its weapons inventories and tactics.<sup>66</sup>

Organized criminal groups operating throughout the broader Horn region include several cross-border networks. Some of these same networks facilitate migrant smuggling, and evidence indicates that migrant and arms smuggling overlap in several respects, with similar methods and routes used for facilitating both crimes. However, more investigation of these dynamics is needed to reveal the nature of how migrant and illicit firearms

56 NY times article CJ Chivers, Eric Schmidt, Arms Seized off coast of Yemen Appear to Have been made in Iran, Jan 10, 2017. <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/10/world/middleeast/yemen-iran-weapons-houthis.html>; UNSC, "Letter dated 2 November 2017 from the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea." S/2017/924. 2 November 2017. Paras. 103-105; Horton, Michael, "Arms from Yemen will fuel Conflict in the Horn of Africa," Michael Horton, Terrorism Monitor, Jamestown Foundation, 17 April 2020; Jay Bahadur (2020). "Following the Money: The use of the hawala remittance system in the Yemen-Somalia arms trade." Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, Political Economy Report. September. See also SEMG 2018 paras 56-60 concerning European exports to UAS, and SA diverted through Yemen to Somalia.

57 Panel of Experts, Somalia, 2020 S/2020/949.

58 SEMG 2018 S/2018/1002, para. 25.

59 UNSC, "Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea." S/2016/919, 31 October 2016; Carlson, Christopher, "Measuring Illicit arms flows in Somalia." Issue Brief, Small Arms Survey, 2016.

60 Reuters. "Somalia's al Shabaab raid military base, loot weapons." September 22, 2019. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-somalia-violence/somalias-al-shabaab-raid-military-base-lootweapons-idUSKBN1W70CGOn> AMISOM, see Berman, Eric, Mihaela Rocovita and Matt Schroeder, "Making a Tough Job More Difficult: Loss of Arms and Ammunition in Peace Operations." Small Arms Survey, Report. October 2017. <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/U-Reports/SAS-MPOME-Report-2.pdf>

61 Carlson, Christopher, and Gergely Hideg, "Small Arms and Security Assessment: Somalia." UNDP and Small Arms Survey. Internal report. 2017; Karp, Aaron, "Civilian Firearms Holdings, 2017." Small Arms Survey. <https://www.smallarmssurvey.org/sites/default/files/resources/SAS-BP-Civilian-held-firearms-annexe.pdf>

62 UNSC, "Letter dated 2 November 2017 from the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea addressed to the Chair of the Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea." S/2017/924. 2 November 2017. Paras. 103-105; Horton, Michael, "Arms from Yemen will fuel Conflict in the Horn of Africa," Michael Horton, Terrorism Monitor, Jamestown Foundation, 17 April 2020; Jay Bahadur (2020). "Following the Money: The use of the hawala remittance system in the Yemen-Somalia arms trade." Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, Political Economy Report. September. See also SEMG 2018 paras 56-60 concerning European exports to UAS, and SA diverted through Yemen to Somalia.

63 Horton, Michael, "Arms from Yemen will fuel Conflict in the Horn of Africa," Michael Horton, Terrorism Monitor, Jamestown Foundation, 17 April 2020.

64 [[UNSC, [2018] S/2018/1002, Annex 2.3.]]

65 UNSC, [[2018] S/2018/1002]]

66 Horton, Michael. "Yemen: A Dangerous Regional Arms Bazaar." Jamestown Foundation. Terrorism Monitor, Vol. 15, Issue 12. 16 June 2017.

smuggling are related in terms of, for instance, migrant smuggling revenue financing the purchase of firearms in Somalia.<sup>67</sup>

## 6.1.2 Ethiopia

Instability in Ethiopia drives the proliferation of illicit firearms. There are no reliable estimates of how many firearms are in circulation in the country, and while some civilian-held firearms are sourced internally, including leakage from military stockpiles or through group and kinship networks, it is suspected that a vast number is acquired via overland trafficking from neighboring countries.<sup>68</sup> However, the nature of this activity, including modalities of smuggling of both cross-border and domestic circulation, is unclear. It can be assumed that demand for weapons and ammunition will remain high as violence persists.

A landlocked country, there are several trafficking routes into Ethiopia. One of these routes originates from South Sudan's Eastern Equatoria state, and crosses eastward through the Illemi Triangle area and further east into southern Ethiopia.<sup>69</sup> Such weapons are alleged to be sourced from militants affiliated with the Sudan People's Defense Army-in Opposition (SPLA-IO) and other armed groups. As the implementation of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS) unfolds at a slower pace than expected, fighters have left cantonment sites and are allegedly selling ammunition and weapons to smugglers, to be re-sold in markets in Kibish and other towns inside the Illemi area.<sup>70</sup>

There are many arms and ammunition circulating in Sudan, offering ample opportunities for weapons

to be trafficked into the bordering areas and further inland.<sup>71</sup> In the opposite direction, there are unconfirmed allegations of weapon transfers from Ethiopia to armed groups in Sudan.<sup>72</sup> On the southern border with Kenya, weapons trafficked across this border are believed to be sourced, in part, from as far as the Gumuz and Gambela areas of Ethiopia, with others sourced from OLA stockpiles and smuggled into Kenya.<sup>73</sup>

On the Somalia border, Ethiopia has maintained relatively tight control, but since 2019, there have been fewer government patrols on this border, resulting in an increase in arms trafficking, with suppliers moving large quantities into Ethiopia's Ogaden Somali region. Weapons trafficked from Somalia likely include supplies initially trafficking out of Yemen,<sup>74</sup> and traffickers are believed to transit illicit firearms through Ethiopia to reach Kenya, and onward to other Member States in the Great Lakes region. Some of those arms are alleged to include weapons from al-Shabaab fighters, recovered by AMISOM troops and sold to local dealers, then trafficked into Ethiopia before reaching other neighboring states.<sup>75</sup>

## 6.1.3 Djibouti

There is concern that Djiboutian ports could experience an increase in illicit arms flow activity,<sup>76</sup> already resulting in increased armed criminal activity in the country.<sup>77</sup> While Djibouti's ports provide a means to transfer arms shipments to governments as well as armed groups throughout the Horn of Africa, including into Sudan, South Sudan and Somalia,<sup>78</sup> the extent to which Djiboutian ports may be used to facilitate regional illicit arms flows is unclear; the United Nations Security Council,

67 Tinti, Peter. "Migrant smuggling: Paths from the Horn of Africa to Yemen and Saudi Arabia." Institute for Security Studies. *Africa in the World Report*. November 2017, p. 18.

68 Interview, government official, Addis Ababa, February 2020.

69 Interview, local Kenya-Ethiopia CSO official, Lodwar, via Whatsapp, 8 July 2021.

70 Interview, civil society representative, Lodwar, 3 November 2021; interview with researcher in Eastern Equatoria, 02 August 2021.

71 Manek, Nizar and Mohamed Kheir Omer. "Sudan Will Decide the Outcome of the Ethiopian Civil War." *Foreign Policy*, 14 November 2020. Conflict Armament Research, "New Sudanese Weapons in Blue Nile State." *Dispatch*. April 2017. [https://www.conflictarm.com/download-file/?report\\_id=2483&file\\_id=2484](https://www.conflictarm.com/download-file/?report_id=2483&file_id=2484)

72 Interview, government official, Khartoum. 23 October 2021.

73 Interview, researcher, Marsabit, 3 November 2021.

74 Horton, Michael, "Arms from Yemen will Fuel Conflict in the Horn of Africa." Jamestown Foundation, *Terrorism Monitor*, Volume 18, Issue 8. <https://jamestown.org/program/arms-from-yemen-will-fuel-conflict-in-the-horn-of-africa/>

75 Mohamed, Kassim., "Kenya: How Smugglers Are Flooding Country with Arms." *The Star*. 8 January 2013. <https://www.gunpolicy.org/firearms/citation/news/283>

76 Hansrod, Zeenat, "Revealed: How Djibouti filled in the gap left by Eritrea in arms trafficking." *African Liberty*. 19 September 2019. <https://www.africanliberty.org/2018/09/19/revealed-how-djibouti-filled-in-the-gap-left-by-eritrea-in-arms-trafficking/>

77 Hansrod, Zeenat, "Revealed: How Djibouti filled in the gap left by Eritrea in arms trafficking." *African Liberty*. 19 September 2019. <https://www.africanliberty.org/2018/09/19/revealed-how-djibouti-filled-in-the-gap-left-by-eritrea-in-arms-trafficking/>

78 Chiamaka Ihekwoaba, 'Djibouti's Doraleh port terminal: an arms trade hub in disguise', *The Nerve*, 3 September 2018.

for instance, has not taken up the matter, and independent investigations are uncorroborated.<sup>79</sup>

## 6.1.4 Eritrea

Migrant smuggling has become an important revenue source for criminal networks and terrorist groups to purchase firearms.<sup>80</sup> In Eritrea, according to the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, migrant smuggling and arms trafficking have been closely linked.<sup>81</sup> In 2018, the UN lifted its arms embargo on Eritrea following a report issued by the UN Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea that found no evidence from the preceding year of illicit arms transfers from Eritrea to Somali militant groups.<sup>82</sup>

## 6.1.5 Kenya

Kenya has struggled, as have other Member States in the region, to control supply and demand of illicit firearms for reasons linked to economic marginalization of pastoralist communities, inter-communal tensions and conflicts, cattle rustling, and insecure borders.<sup>83</sup> Illicit firearms are trafficked into Kenya from multiple sources, including all of its bordering Member States – Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda – and by sea routes.<sup>84</sup> Further, firearms have been diverted from government stocks and distributed by rogue government officials and security providers to unauthorized users, both in urban and rural areas.<sup>85</sup> Poaching is also problematic, albeit to a lesser

extent than other factors, including pastoral violence and armed robbery. In 2018, evidence of a high-caliber .358 hunting rifle used to poach elephants in areas where such firearms were not previously seen, is alarming.<sup>86</sup>

Turkana county borders Uganda, South Sudan, the contested Illemi Triangle area, and Ethiopia. Largely inhabited by pastoralists, cattle-rustling and inter-communal conflict with neighboring groups remains a persistent security challenge for local communities. Weapons cross into Turkana from South Sudan's Eastern Equatoria state from dealers, believed to be sourced from both government and opposition group suppliers in South Sudan. These weapons are reported to have included PK machine guns, AK-pattern rifles, hand grenades, and rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), among others.<sup>87</sup> This trade is alleged to involve non-local traders, a similar characteristic to what is happening in Marsabit, described elsewhere.<sup>88</sup>

However, the dynamics of the firearms trade are taking on a new dimension. A spike of migrants moved into Turkana from areas resulted in an uptick in firearms coming across the border, reportedly sold to facilitate migrants' movement further south to Nairobi, Kampala, and other southward destinations.<sup>89</sup> Lokichogio, a large commercial town near the South Sudan and Ethiopian borders, is reported to be a trafficking hotspot, where firearms sales and-resales on the local black market are facilitated.<sup>90</sup> The buyers of migrants' firearms appear to be mostly local pastoralists, who are trading cattle for cash to buy them. Non-local traders are

79 Schwarz, Matthias, "Arms Transfers in the Gulf of Aden." PRIF Spotlight, June 2021. [https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk\\_publicationen/Spotlight\\_0621.pdf](https://www.hsfk.de/fileadmin/HSFK/hsfk_publicationen/Spotlight_0621.pdf)

80 Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime. "Libya: a growing hub for Criminal Economies and Terrorist Financing in the Trans-Sahara, 11 May 2015. [https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/TGIATOC-Libya\\_-a-growing-hub-for-Criminal-Economies-and-Terrorist-Financing-in-the-Trans-Sahara-web.pdf](https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/TGIATOC-Libya_-a-growing-hub-for-Criminal-Economies-and-Terrorist-Financing-in-the-Trans-Sahara-web.pdf)

81 UNSC, Letter dated 20 June 2011 from the members of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea, S/2011/433. 2011, pgs. 95-97. <https://www.undocs.org/S/2011/433>

82 UNSC, "UN Security Council, Final Report of the Monitoring Group on Somalia and Eritrea." S/2017/924. 2 November 2017, p. 52.; Solomon, Salem. "UN Group Recommends Dropping Enquiry into Eritrea's Ties to Al-Shabaab." Voice of America. 13 November 2017. <https://www.voanews.com/africa/un-group-recommends-dropping-inquiry-eritreas-ties-al-shabab>

83 Muhreza, Frank E., Francis Wairagu and John Kimani. 2012. 'Disarmament Experiences in RECSA Region with particular reference to Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan and Uganda.' UNDP, August.

84 Wepundi, Manasseh, Eliud Nthiga, Eliud Kabuu, Ryan Murray, and Anna Alvazzi del Frate. "Availability of Small Arms and Perceptions of Security in Kenya: An Assessment." Special Report. Small Arms Survey. June 2012.; SRIC (Security Research and Information Centre). 2015. 'Availability and Misuse of SALW in Commission of Crime in Kenya's Urban Centres and Towns: Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu and Nakuru.' Security Research and Information Centre. March.

85 Chepsikor. 2018. 'Exposed! How the Flying Squad has been renting out guns to criminals.' *Daily Active Kenya*, 26 December; Ombati, Cyrus. 2018. 'Wanted policeman surrenders after close to one week in hiding.' *Standard Digital*. 25 January. <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001267264/wanted-policeman-surrenders-after-close-to-one-week-in-hiding>

86 Interview, wildlife conservation official, Nairobi, April 2018.

87 Interview, local CSO representative, Lodwar. via WhatsApp, 8 July 2021.

88 Carlson, Khristopher, internal report for Tullow Oil by Small Arms Survey, 2016, field interviews in Turkana South and Sigor sub-counties.

89 Interview, civil society representative, Lodwar, 3 November 2021.

90 HRW, *Playing with Fire: Weapons Proliferation, Political Violence, and Human Rights in Kenya*. May 2002.

also involved and are alleged to be smuggling their purchases to black markets in Nairobi and other destinations in Kenya.<sup>91</sup>

On Kenya's western border with Uganda, cross-border trafficking has seen reductions in recent years. However, some two-way trafficking is suspected to continue (see the Uganda section in this report). Illicit firearms trafficking has also been active in the Mt. Elgon area of western Kenya,<sup>92</sup> and linked to the illicit trade of other commodities,<sup>93</sup> but the magnitude of illicit trading through this corridor is unclear with regard to firearms and ammunition.

The 680-kilometer Somalia-Kenya border is the most insecure of Kenya's vast borderland region, and firearms trafficking routes move westward to areas including Mandera and Wajir and further on through transit points, such as Hadado, and into Marsabit and Isiolo counties. The types of arms trafficked from Somalia include common G3 and AK-pattern rifles, popular among pastoralists, and pistols, popular among urban criminals for their concealability.<sup>94</sup> Facilitating this trafficking are both Somali and Kenyan traffickers, some of whom do so by commercial trucks or smaller vehicles, and as often happens, by foot.<sup>95</sup>

In 2018, AK-56 rifles, recovered from al-Shabaab operatives inside Kenya, were traced to supplies belonging to the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS), marking the first time that FGS firearms intended for use in a terrorist attack were seized outside of Somalia.<sup>96</sup>

On the Ethiopia-Kenya border, illicit firearms are trafficked into northern counties including Turkana and Marsabit, with some transferred further south

to other counties where they are distributed to various rural locations or to urban centers including Nairobi.<sup>97</sup> Other firearms crossing the Ethiopian border are alleged to have been sourced from western parts of Oromia, including the West Wellega Zone near the South Sudan border of Upper Nile state,<sup>98</sup> while others have entered Kenya from South Sudan on the border northwest near Lokichoggio or via Ethiopian land routes.<sup>99</sup> Other firearms routes to Kenya's northern counties are routed west through Mandera and Wajir, then into Marsabit, Isiolo and other locations.

On Kenya's southern border, there is an established trafficking route from DRC to Kenya via Tanzania, with involvement from criminal networks from Uganda, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zambia; illicit firearms are also flowing out of Kenya into Tanzania.<sup>100</sup>

In effort to counter firearms trafficking, local security units have been established that are comprised of members from different agencies, integrating officers from the police, Kenya Revenue Authority, and other specialized units into security 'teams'.<sup>101</sup> The assumption is that with multi-agency teams, opportunities to bribe officials to ignore smuggling will be less frequent as each unit will, in theory, police itself.

## 6.1.6 Uganda

Trafficking of illicit firearms in and out of the county's extreme northeastern region, Karamoja, has decreased significantly in recent. However, cross-border illicit firearms transfers with other pastoral communities in Kenya and South Sudan continue, and there are indications that in 2021 it was increasing.<sup>102</sup> Elsewhere in Uganda, concerns of

91 Interview, civil society representative, Lodwar, 3 November 2021.

92 Gastrow, Peter. "Termites at work: A Report on Transnational Organized Crime and State Erosion in Kenya - Comprehensive Research Findings." International Peace Institute. 2011. P. 84.

93 <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/news/article/2001263411/why-illegal-trade-along-kenya-uganda-border-may-not-end-soon>

94 Interview with National Police Service commander, Nairobi. 12 July 2021.

95 Gastrow, Peter. "Termites at work: A Report on Transnational Organized Crime and State Erosion in Kenya - Comprehensive Research Findings." International Peace Institute. 2011. P. 81.

96 UNSC, SEMG Somali report S/2018/1002., Annex 2.3.

97 Deo, ENACT <https://enactafrica.org/enact-observer/cross-border-arms-trafficking-stokes-the-embers-of-northern-kenyas-conflict>; Interview, civil society official, Lodwar, 27 September 2021. P 78.

98 Interview, researcher, Marsabit, 2 November 2021.

99 Interview, CSO representative and Marsabit resident, 1 November 2021

100 Gastrow, Peter. "Termites at work: A Report on Transnational Organized Crime and State Erosion in Kenya - Comprehensive Research Findings." International Peace Institute. 2011. P. 84.

101 Interview, CSO representative and Marsabit resident, 1 November 2021

102 Musoke, Ronald. "Karamoja's new wave of insecurity." *The Independent*. 20 September 2021. <https://www.independent.co.ug/karamojas-new-wave-of-insecurity/>

armed crime among private citizens is high, with illicit firearms trafficking supplying criminals and gangs in urban areas.

Relative to neighboring Member States, namely Rwanda, Kenya, Tanzania and Burundi, the total number of armed-crime incidents in Uganda is high.<sup>103</sup> The main sources of illicit firearms in the country include neighboring states. Many of the illicit firearms in circulation remain so after being initially leaked into private possession decades ago from state supplies.<sup>104</sup>

The common method of illicit firearms trafficking in Uganda can be characterized as small-scale, or anti-trade, and includes pistols and larger rifle-types such as AK-pattern guns and G3 rifles. Interventions to control this activity in remote pastoral communities continue to be challenging, as movement of firearms include public transport, motorcycles, herdsmen on foot, the involvement of women to dispel suspicions, and other furtive methods.<sup>105</sup> Trafficking routes into Uganda also crossover from the DRC, where militant groups have contributed to border-area insecurity and traffic firearms and ammunition.<sup>106</sup>

## 6.1.7 Democratic Republic of Congo

Illicit firearms trafficking is a central feature to eastern DRC's protracted conflict dynamics. In South Kivu Province, weapons are consistently trafficked across the Ruzizi River between Burundi and the DRC, or moved across Lake Tanganyika, another common route.<sup>107</sup> On the Ruzizi, Burundian armed groups link with other groups to facilitate

the transfer and acquisition of illegal weapons;<sup>108</sup> AK-pattern rifles are believed to be the most common weapon trafficked, with others including PKM machine guns, RPGs, ammunition of all sorts, as well as drugs and other equipment such as mobile phones.<sup>109</sup>

One method to traffic weapons involves the use of motorized canoes and multiple 'middlemen' to move weapons and ammunition. Water-crossing transfers typically take place at night to avoid border patrols on either side of the lake and appear to be done in smaller quantities but with some degree of frequency.<sup>110</sup>

Quantifying illicit firearms trafficking on the Burundi-DRC border is encumbered by poor record keeping. Borders-security and customs posts typically categorize seized weapons under a common header, such as 'other crimes'. In many cases, seizure data is not recorded at all.<sup>111</sup>

While the main source for trafficked weapons in eastern DRC has been from national stockpiles,<sup>112</sup> made available to unauthorized users through looting or deliberate leakage of state material, weapons trafficking from Burundi does represent a significant source.<sup>113</sup>

In North Kivu, significant amounts of weapons are trafficked or otherwise diverted into the possession of the ADF and other groups in the area, including large quantities of military weapons taken from the DRC military, the FARDC.<sup>114</sup> Weapons and ammunition taken from military units have included various ammunition types, including 7.62x39mm ammunition (used in AK-pattern rifles,

103 RECSA, "A Report of Analysis on Armed Crimes in East Africa Community Countries." Armed Crime Report. 2018. P. 4. <https://recsasec.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Armed-crime-PDF.pdf>

104 Mkutu, Kennedy., "Small Arms and Light Weapons among Pastoral Groups in the Kenya-Uganda Border Area." African Affairs, Vol. 106, No. 422. Pp. 47-70. January 2007.

105 Flourquin, Nicolas, Sigrid Lippott and Francis Wairagu, "Weapons Compass: Mapping Illicit Small Arms Flows in Africa." Small Arms Survey and African Union, Report, January 2019. P 42.

106 Saferworld, "Mapping the Small Arms Problem in Uganda: The Development of Uganda's National Action Plan on Small Arms and Light Weapons." May 2007.

107 Alusala, Nelson, "On Cross-Border Small Arms and Light Weapons Trafficking Between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Burundi." Action on Armed Violence. December 2015. P. 5.

108 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 16 Aug 2017, S/2017/672/Rev.1 (page 29, and paras. 45-50).

109 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 16 Aug 2017, S/2017/672/Rev.1 (page 29, and paras. 45-50).

110 Alusala, Nelson, "On Cross-Border Small Arms and Light Weapons Trafficking Between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Burundi." Action on Armed Violence. December 2015.

111 Alusala, Nelson, "On Cross-Border Small Arms and Light Weapons Trafficking Between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Burundi." Action on Armed Violence. December 2015. P. 20.

112 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 16 Aug 2017, S/2017/672/Rev.1, page 31.

113 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 4 June 2018, S/2018/531, page 32.

114 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 7 June 2019, S/2019/469 page 11, para 43

among other firearm types) and 7.62x54mm ammunition (for PKM machine guns). Diverted firearms include PKM machine guns, several AK-pattern rifle types, as well as anti-tank bombs, RPG-7 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, and 60mm mortars.<sup>115</sup>

### 6.1.8 Rwanda

One year after signing the Nairobi Protocol on small arms, the Rwandan government held its first-ever weapons-destruction event, destroying over 6,000 illicit and surplus firearms in April 2005.<sup>116</sup>

Within the greater Great Lakes region, and inside eastern DRC and its adjacent territory to Rwanda's western border, several non-state armed groups and militias perpetrate widespread crime and armed violence, and are engaged, to varying degrees, in the areas trade in illicit goods including firearms. These factors, among others, negatively impact Rwandan security and shape regional patterns of arms trafficking. Organized criminal groups operate in Rwanda and are involved in a variety of activities, including trafficking various illicit goods, including weapons.

### 6.1.9 Burundi

Some of the weapons held by civilians today were acquired during or following outbreaks of violence in Burundi from 1972 onwards. There have also been incidents of civilians overrunning government stockpiles, adding to domestic circulation of illicit firearms and cross-border trafficking with neighboring states.<sup>117</sup> An estimated 100,000 firearms were held by civilians in 2005;<sup>118</sup> that estimate increased to 238,000 by 2017.<sup>119</sup> There are multiple armed groups present within Burundi and other groups with provenance in Burundi operating

outside its borders in neighboring states, including the Resistance for the Rule of Law in Burundi (RED-Tabara) and Republican Forces for Burundi (FOREBU), both with access to illicit firearms and engaged in trafficking within DRC border areas.<sup>120</sup>

Gaining clarity on the volume of illicit firearms trafficking activity occurring on the Burundi-DRC border is encumbered by poor record keeping among security officials; seized weapons data is not disaggregated from other illicit commodities seized.<sup>121</sup> At the national level, government data from 2016-17 indicates that a total of only 235 firearms were seized, a vast majority of them classified as "sub-machine guns."<sup>122</sup>

The areas believed to be experiencing the highest prevalence of illicit firearms proliferation are also those with the highest crimes rates, including Bubanza, Bujumbura, Mairie, and Cibitoke.<sup>123</sup> All of these areas either share a land border with the DRC or are separated from it by Lake Tanganyika.

### 6.1.10 Tanzania

Firearms trafficking across Tanzania's long and porous borders is a challenge to control. There is also a general lack of security and monitoring of illicit goods trafficking into maritime port areas, including Dar es Salaam, further contributing to the proliferation of small arms. Along Tanzania's coastline, smuggling is prevalent and those involved are reliant of weapons to secure their trades. For instance, in 2018, there were 45 reported illegal ports used by traffickers.<sup>124</sup>

Black market exchange of illicit firearms is a problem. Reported cases include the exchange of firearms for basic goods, including maize, livestock, or other commodities, in several regions throughout Tanzania including parts around Arusha such as

115 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 7 June 2019, S/2019/469 page 39, para 202.

116 Alusala, Nelson. "Disarmament and reconciliation: Rwanda's concerns." ISS Paper 108, June 2005. <https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/98715/PAPER108.pdf>

117 RECSA, "An Assessment of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Fragility Situations: Burundi." 2018.

118 Pézard, Stéphanie and Nicolas Florquin, "Small Arms in Surundi: Disarming the Civilian Population in Peacetime." Small Arms Survey, Special Report. August 2007. P 14.

119 Small Arms Survey, "Civilian Firearms Holdings, 2017." [http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Weapons\\_and\\_Markets/Tools/Firearms\\_holdings/SAS-BP-Civilian-held-firearms-annexe.pdf](http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/Weapons_and_Markets/Tools/Firearms_holdings/SAS-BP-Civilian-held-firearms-annexe.pdf)

120 UN Security Council, Final Report of the Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of Congo." 16 Aug 2017, S/2017/672/Rev.1 page 12.

121 Alusala, Nelson, "On Cross-Border Small Arms and Light Weapons Trafficking Between the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Burundi." Action on Armed Violence. December 2015. P. 20.

122 UNODC, "Global Study on Firearms Trafficking – 2020." Page 107.

123 RECSA, "An Assessment of Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation and Fragility Situations: Burundi." 2018.

124 Ndawana, Enock, Mediel Hove and Sylvester Ghuliku. "Tanzania: Small Arms Proliferation in East Africa and National Security." Conflict Studies Quarterly, Issue 23. April 2018, pp. 48-77. Management and Control Division of the Tanzania Immigration Service Department

Sale, Loliondo and Ngorongoro, areas populated by pastoralists.<sup>125</sup> In recent years, elephant poaching has been strongly linked to increased criminality, corruption and the proliferation of firearms.<sup>126</sup>

Despite the updated Firearms Control Act (2015), there is still no provision relating to stockpile management and Tanzania needs assistance in this area.<sup>127</sup> As with other countries in the region, financial assistance to develop and implement programmes at reducing illicit weapons in circulation, and preventing the diversion of state weapons, is a key area that needs to be addressed.

Along with technical assistance, financial assistance could go a long way toward the establishment of a data centre on small arms and light weapons, general capacity building, public awareness campaigns, disarmament operations, construction of armories, and training of personnel in physical security and stockpile management (PSSM), including safe & secure destruction of collected and surplus weapons.<sup>128</sup>

Despite these challenges, the legal framework in Tanzania has been successfully harmonized in line with the Nairobi Protocol; the regional instrument's provisions have been largely domesticated into Tanzanian law, including the establishment of the Central Firearms Registry under the Firearms and Ammunition Controls Act, 2015. Disposal provisions now also meet the requirements of the Nairobi Protocol.<sup>129</sup>

## 6.1.11 Mozambique

Concerns of illicit firearms trafficking in Mozambique center around the emergence of violent extremists in the north of the country, in Cabo Delgado province. The principal group, Ahlu Sunnah Wal Jamaah (ASWJ), has steadily increased its firearms usage. While reporting in 2018 described the group as 'poorly armed',<sup>130</sup> from 2019 onward its strength and capabilities improved as it gained greater access to firearms and increased recruitment. In early 2021, the group was well equipped with grenades and assault rifles, and attacks with these weapons have become common.<sup>131</sup>

A main source of the group's increase of firearms is from state supplies, including theft from overrun stockpiles, as well as reported leakage from Mozambique's Defense and Security Forces.<sup>132</sup> As the group has increased in its strength, so, too, has its links with other violent extremist and terrorist groups including Da'esh – although these links are unclear. These dynamics are raising concerns that ASWJ's ties with other groups could lead to increased access to funds and, in turn, illicit weapons.<sup>133</sup>

Another concern with regard to illicit firearms trafficking in Mozambique is in relation to wildlife poaching and rhino horn trafficking. The legal import of high-caliber hunting rifles into Maputo, later seized from poachers illegally hunting rhino in South Africa – including Kruger National Park – is well documented.<sup>134</sup>

Some of these firearms included legally imported CZ-Brno 550 rifles, subsequently allegedly diverted from government stockpiles to poachers.<sup>135</sup> An

125 Nikwame, Marc. "When Firearms Are Exchanged for Livestock?" Tanzania Daily News. 29 March 2016; Nyakeke, Beldina. "Tanzania: Traders Swap Maize for Guns, Minister Told." The Citizen. 4 October 2011.

126 Kideghesho, J. R. (2016). The Elephant Poaching Crisis in Tanzania: A need to reverse the trend and the Way Forward. Tropical Conservation Science, 9 (1), 369-388. Doi : <https://doi.org/10.1177/194008291600900120>.

127 Tanzania, 2020 'International Assistance.' *National Report of Tanzania on its Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA)*; New York, NY: Permanent Mission of Tanzania to the United Nations.

128 Tanzania, 2020 'International Assistance.' *National Report of Tanzania on its Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA)*; New York, NY: Permanent Mission of Tanzania to the United Nations.

129 Tanzania, 2015 'The Firearms and Ammunition Controls Act', Part VII, Disposal of Firearms.

130 Tony Weaver, 'Unrest in Mozambique's northern Cabo Delgado stirs unease', Daily Maverick, 31 July 2018.

131 International Crisis Group, "Stemming the Insurrection in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado." Africa Report Number 303, 11 June 2021. Pg 37.

132 Daily Maverick, "Are Mozambique's insurgents closing in on illicit trafficking profits?" Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime 8 May 2020 <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2020-05-08-are-mozambiques-insurgents-closing-in-on-illicit-trafficking-profits/International-Crisis-Group-%20Stemming-the-Insurrection-in-Mozambique-s-Cabo-Delgado/>. Africa Report Number 303, 11 June 2021. Pgs. ii & 11.

133 International Crisis Group, "Stemming the Insurrection in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado." Africa Report Number 303, 11 June 2021. Pg 37.

134 Austin, Cathy Lynn, "Follow the Guns: An overlooked Key to Combat Rhino Poaching and Wildlife Crime." Conflict Awareness Project. 22 April 2019. <https://followtheguns.org/report.php>

135 Austin, Cathy Lynn, "Follow the Guns: An overlooked Key to Combat Rhino Poaching and Wildlife Crime." Conflict Awareness Project. 22 April 2019, p. 19 <https://followtheguns.org/report.php>

analysis of poaching rates in Kruger National Park and hunting rifle imports into Mozambique between 2010-2015 indicates an increase in both, at an almost parallel rate, during this 4-year period, and a corresponding drop of both in 2015 as South Africa increased its protection and anti-poaching measures in the park.<sup>136</sup>

## 6.2 State responses to firearms trafficking and intersections with organized crime/terrorism

States within the focus region have implemented a range of important initiatives to tackle illicit firearms trafficking and proliferation, including various instruments and measures, legally binding protocols and conventions, policy frameworks and national action plans, among several other activities.

Select examples of institutional and legislative responses to firearms trafficking include measures recently adopted in the DRC, Ethiopia, and Kenya. The DRC has established a national commission on small arms control. This important mechanism is positioned to assist with national counter terrorism and anti-organized crime initiatives vis-à-vis efforts to curb the proliferation of illicit firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition. In 2020, Ethiopia enacted its new firearms law, the Firearms Proclamation to provide for firearm administration and control in the country.

With regard to Kenya's Firearms Act, the Kenya's National Counter-Terrorism Centre (NCTC) works with government ministries in a policy advisory capacity, examining the law's efficacy with regard to terrorism, illicit firearms interdiction and policing. Further, the NCTC has assisted Kenya to expand evidentiary standards and enable greater use of electronic evidence and recorded testimony in terrorism prosecutions.<sup>137</sup>

Nearly every state considered within this study has established a National Focal Point or National Commission on small arms, including Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Somalia, Tanzania, Uganda, and several states have in place, or are updating, national small arms action plans.<sup>138</sup> In several states, formal cross-border cooperation mechanisms to combat illicit firearms trafficking and terrorism are in place. For example, Burundi implemented a road map of an integrated counterterrorism and nonproliferation of arms strategy, part of the UNOCA's regional strategy in Central Africa.<sup>139</sup>

Interstate cooperation among states in the region, as well as cooperation with international and regional agencies is key, and important progress has been achieved. Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, for example, cooperated with Interpol in 2021 to implement 'Operation Simba III', an operation targeting the trafficking of explosives materials, which exposed criminal trafficking networks and resulted in arrests of cross-border traffickers.

## 6.3 Cross-regional and regional firearms-control priorities

The states within the region have identified several priority areas to combat illicit trafficking, and counter terrorism and organized crime. They are listed below, categorized thematically.

### 6.3.1 Control of illicit firearms trafficking and proliferation<sup>140</sup>

The priority areas listed below are catalogued by main thematic areas of the UN Programme of Action in small arms, mirroring similar thematic areas of the Nairobi Protocol, SADC Protocol and ECCAS Convention on small arms.

<sup>136</sup> Author analysis, sourced from UN Comtrade and South Africa Department of Environmental Affairs.

<sup>137</sup> Interview, NCTC officials. Nairobi. 24 August 2021.

<sup>138</sup> Interview, Arms-control expert, Nairobi, 23 September 2021.

<sup>139</sup> See Arms Trade Treaty, <https://att-assistance.org/es/node/6443>.

<sup>140</sup> Priority areas listed here are drawn from the East African Chapter of the Silencing the Guns Continental Plan of Action.

- **Legislative and regulatory frameworks** are key to the implementation of international arms-control standards and national-level policy making, law enforcement, and prosecution in small arms control.

Priority areas include capacity-building and training for relevant stakeholders on legislative and regulatory frameworks and legislative assessment to identify gaps in existing laws and regulations.

- **Marking, record keeping and tracing** are fundamental preventative measures for states to implement to enable law enforcement agencies to trace seized or collected weapons to determine ownership, chains of custody and their use in crime.

Regional states have identified several priorities needs in this area, including the provision of marking machines and software, as well as training on who to use them and awareness of standard marking procedures including proper country and security agency marking codes. Further, states also express needs to harmonize national legislation on marking, record keeping and tracing legislation and development of standard operation procedures (SOPs) on firearms investigations. Strengthening inter-state information sharing and cooperation on investigations is also identified as a priority.

- **Physical security and stockpile management (PSSM)** encompasses the safe and secure storage of national stockpiles of weapons and ammunition, to prevent, inter alia, their diversion to unauthorized users and unplanned explosions resultant from poor storage practices.

Priority area within this area include enhanced prioritization of PSSM in national budgets and arms-control decision making, as well as development and distribution of training handbooks, SOPs and capacity-building strategies to improve current PSSM practices.

- **End use and user controls and brokering** refers to legal arms trade, involving both governments and authorized arms brokers who act as go-betweens connecting arms supplies with weapons buyers.

In this area, states have prioritized support to enhance common, inter-state understanding of end-user control systems and development of measures to strengthen end-user systems at national levels. Efforts to strengthen end-user verification mechanisms require cooperation with non-Africa states, as well.

Regional states recognize the need to conduct transfer-control assessments to identify weaknesses within existing systems and opportunities to strengthen them. Of important note, national agencies involved in arms transfers, including customs agencies and trade institutions, can be improved, and stand to benefit from updated legislation and regulations regarding import, export, and transit control of small arms. Developing and sharing comprehensive databases of arms brokers is also a priority among states.

- **Cross-border and international cooperation** focuses on strengthening communication, information sharing and joint cross-border law enforcement collaboration, including on illicit firearm tracing.

State priorities in this area include the strengthening cross-border cooperation mechanisms and joint border-force assistance. To facilitate this, states prioritize the development of legal frameworks where needed, and the establishment of a political platform that includes participation from regional states, as well as international weapons suppliers. States have also identified the need to increase cooperation and partnership with non-government actors, including civil society and the private sector. Trust-building measures with local borderlands communities is also a key priority area to enhance strategies to mitigate cross-border land trafficking.

- **Institutional structures and national coordinating mechanisms** are key to coordinate the implementation of national arms control activities and programmes.

Regional states have identified several priority areas, including basic awareness raising of national small arms focal points and commissions on their roles and collective responsibilities vis a vis national commissions and focal points. In some cases, the mandates of coordinating mechanisms are weak and need to be strengthened. Further, in several states, national action plans on small arms do not exist, meaning some states do not have long-term strategies on how to implement coherent plans of action in a coordinated, inter-agency manner.

- **Criminal justice responses** are critical to the maintenance of the rule of law and hold firearms trafficking offenders accountable.

The criminal justice element to curbing firearms trafficking extends from detection to investigative procedures and prosecution. Area priorities include assessment of states' capacity to conduct investigations, manage evidence, prosecute criminals, and adjudication of cases. Existing investigative and law enforcement functions are key, including the development of infrastructure for forensic ballistics investigations and increased familiarity with Interpol's International Arms Records and tracing Management System (iARMS), and other existing databases.

- **Embargo Enforcement** covers states adherence to international prohibitions of arms sales or transfers to sanctioned states or designated areas. In Africa, UN embargoes are in place for the Central African Republic, the DRC, Libya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Sudan.<sup>141</sup>

Among the key priority areas in embargo enforcement is states' need to improve their capacity and receive training on arms embargo monitoring and enforcement. Another key area is the development of a regional platform for states to share information at national and sub-national levels, which will benefit from a mapping of relevant agencies to oversee embargo enforcement, another priority area identified.

- **Voluntary Disarmament** refers to the collection of civilian firearms, both legal and illicit, for the purpose of their removal from society and permanent disposal, including destruction or other method.

Key state priorities here include the design and delivery of community security, peacebuilding, and alternative livelihood projects to complement voluntary disarmament activities. Another priority area is the development of legislation to regulate civilian possession in effort to mitigate further proliferation of arms among civilian populations. In many areas targeted for civilian disarmament, local security concerns may likely have contributed to arms proliferation, and in these areas, a state priority to provide for adequate security during and after weapons collection activities is key.

- **Craft Production** refers to hand-made artisanal weapons manufacturing, which is most often unregulated and illegal.

States recognize that the prevalence of craft-produced firearms in the Eastern Africa region is largely unknown, hence, it is a priority among states to assess the scope of craft production, and their distribution and use. A priority secondary to that is to reviewing existing legislation and policies to develop systems and regulations specifically with regard to craft manufacture and distribution to reduce the likelihood of such weapons being used to conduct crime.

<sup>141</sup> See the SIPRI Arms Embargo Database, available at <https://sipri.org/databases/embargoes>

- **Advocacy and outreach** involve state engagement with local communities and key stakeholders on small arms control matters.

In this area, state priorities include the introduction of small arms control issues into educational criteria as a method to raise local awareness, and over the long term, change societal attitudes about firearms and their use. In this regard, states' priorities also include enhanced engagement with national and local media organizations and civil society organizations.<sup>142</sup>

- **Data collection, monitoring and evaluation** involves enhancing governments and key stakeholders' understanding of the impacts

that small arms control interventions are having and identifying ways of how to improve future initiatives and maximize positive outcomes in small arms control.

Key priorities in this area include the provision of support to build capacity among relevant national and regional stakeholders and the establishment of observatories to collect data on small arms related seizure, injuries, crimes, and possession of small arms. Of particular importance is developing national and regional data gathering and analysis infrastructure and training people to do this work. Progress in this area will help support regional states by increasing data sources and usage of data under UNODC's global Monitoring Illicit Arms Flow Initiative.<sup>143</sup>

## 7. CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Terrorism and organized crime present Eastern Africa with several complex and multifaceted challenges. Addressing the underlying dynamics of both vis-à-vis firearms trafficking requires local, national and regional strategies and concerted action.

- **Armed conflicts** in the Eastern Africa will continue to compound national and regional efforts to control illicit arms flows. Ethiopia, Somalia, and the DRC are experiencing high levels of armed conflict, while other states continue face protracted armed violence and intercommunal clashes. Coupled with overall **regional volatility**, this dimension will remain a significant factor affecting efforts to reduce drivers of firearms demand and mitigate proliferation. The prominence of **non-state armed actors** is also alarming,

since multiple groups have been observed to engage in large-scale conflict with each other, or to cooperate against national forces.

- The role of illicit firearms in facilitating **sexual and gender-based violence** is a critical challenge for Eastern Africa, particularly in areas experiencing armed conflict and weak public institutions. Sexual violence is exacerbated by the proliferation of illicit firearms in post-conflict situations, as well, highlighting the need to overcome limitations in implementing international instruments and tackle sexual and gender-based violence.<sup>144</sup>
- **Terrorism and extremism** are among Eastern Africa's greatest threats and links to

<sup>142</sup> Within UNODC's Education for Justice initiative, a resource library provides an extensive open-access database of relevant and age-appropriate educational materials. See [www.unodc.org/e4j/resdb/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/e4j/resdb/index.html)

<sup>143</sup> <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/monitoring-illicit-arms-flows-initiative.html>.

<sup>144</sup> The Small Arms Survey developed a guidebook to assist states and other stakeholders to address gender dynamics within the broad scope of arms control, including examination of key global policy instruments and their convergence around gender, and considerations to mainstream gender into the small arms project cycle. See <https://smallarmssurvey.org/resource/gender-responsive-small-arms-control-practical-guide>

international extremist and armed groups appear to be strengthening. The UN Security Council has brought attention to the challenges of preventing terrorist and extremist groups from acquiring firearms in several UNSC resolution, including 2370 (2017), which encourages states to consider becoming a state party to relevant international and regional instruments on SALW control, and take appropriate measures to strengthen monitoring mechanisms vis-à-vis the international arms trade.<sup>145</sup>

- **Counter-terrorism and organized crime units** may lack capacity and resources in some Eastern African Member States. This can be problematic both in terms of domestic responses to counter terrorist and criminal activities but can also hamper coordinated cross-border initiatives and cooperation, including measures to mitigate firearms trafficking.
- The Eastern African region is fraught with porous and insecure border, complicating the administration of **cross-border controls and inter-state cooperation**. Authorities monitoring regional seaports and land border crossings will continue to be faced with the lack of proper infrastructure. These challenges can be exacerbated by the lack of capacity to perform appropriate record keeping and the resultant inadequate data collection at ports and borders where illicit firearms activity is particularly high. Further, regular, and reliable cross-border communication between state officials is often lacking. This complicates real-time coordination to intercept and pursue suspected traffickers and hinders long-term strategic cooperation.
- In some Eastern African Member States, **law enforcement agency cooperation and coordination** is complicated due to the lack of clearly defined roles and mandates with regard to cross-border firearms trafficking or, more generally, organized crime. These dynamics can be further complicated when

specialized counter-terrorism units are involved, or there are overlapping responsibilities vested in national and regional authorities.

- More generally within the region, several Member States do not have **national action plans (NAPs) in place** to coordinate small arms control programmes and interventions. This hinders coherent planning and implementation of activities to mitigate and control illicit arms trafficking and trade, both internally, and in cooperation with neighboring states. Eritrea, Djibouti, and Mozambique are among Member States that do not have such plans in place; Ethiopia is in the process of developing a NAP.<sup>146</sup> Further, more can be done in the development and implementation of NAPs by adopting a holistic and integrated approach, with regard to inclusion of civil society and other non-government stakeholders, including community and local authorities, and national research and statistics institutions, including universities. The UN has several entities that can assist national development and implementation of NAPs, including UNODC, UNDP, and UNREC, among others.
- Addressing illicit manufacture and trafficking of firearms from a **criminal justice** angle requires integrating law enforcement strategies, but capacity challenges and gaps in national legal frameworks do not always allow for holistic approaches. General challenges facing Member States in Eastern Africa include inefficient information gathering systems and analysis of existing data; insufficient resources and lack of specialized units dedicated to tracking existing trafficking trends; gaps in legislation criminalizing illicit manufacture, particularly with regard to craft-made firearms; weak investigative capacities related to firearms trafficking and illegal markets; and low capacity among law enforcement agencies and other officials to prevent, detect, investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases of arms trafficking and illicit manufacture.

<sup>145</sup> For a more detailed discussion on the links between terrorism and transnational organized crime, please consult CTCoE Issue Paper 3/2022: Nexus between Transnational Organized Crime and Terrorism in Eastern Africa.

<sup>146</sup> Ethiopia. 2020 'International Assistance.' *National Report of Ethiopia on its Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (UNPoA)*; New York, NY: Permanent Mission of Ethiopia to the United Nations.

- In Eastern Africa, pastoralism is widespread and is a primary livelihood for some populations with the region. At the same time, armed cattle raising, coupled with inadequate security provision make **rural firearms control and proliferation** a critical concern. Removing firearms and responding to local security threats in rural areas is complicated. In some cases, national responses failed to achieve sustainable results, while contributing to the deterioration of trust between local communities and governments. The region would benefit from the implementation of good practices in engaging pastoralist and rural communities in voluntary disarmament programmes which respect human rights.
- In the Secretary-General's September 2021 report on small arms and light weapons, **climate change** is highlighted as a potential risk multiplier, conceivably leading to increased demand for weapons in areas where climate-related tensions and conflict exist.<sup>147</sup> Thus, erratic cycles of drought and flooding in pastoral regions resulting from climate change may reduce access to grazing land and water may result in increased population displacement, leading to intercommunal tensions.
- In general, Member States in the Eastern African region have limited capacity to facilitate **illicit-firearms data-collection and analysis** to monitor transcontinental and regional cross-border trafficking and emergent trends. UNODC's 2020 Global Study on Firearms Trafficking underscores this point and reveals that more effort and participation is needed among Eastern Africa Member States to both strengthen national data-collection methodologies and data management to foster greater awareness and knowledge on firearms trafficking dynamics and trends. Concerning firearms seizures, the main focus of the Global Study, data is not always systematically collected, or in some cases, collected data is not shared outside of the agency that is responsible for it. In situations where firearms seizure data is collected, it is not always disaggregated by firearm

type or model, and most often does not include firearm markings or ammunition headstamp data.

Addressing data collection challenges is critical as data from seized firearms, parts and components, and ammunition can reveal material origins, ownership, or year of manufacture – information that can demonstrate chains of custody and identify sources. In UNODC's 2020 study, only two Member States in the Eastern Africa region, Burundi and Kenya, provided firearms seizure data through the Illicit Arms Flows Questionnaire (IAFQ). While other Member States in this region do collect seizures data – as national reports submitted under the UN PoA process indicate for several of them, submitting data through IFAQ would aid concerted planning and the development of joint strategies to curb cross-border illicit trafficking. Civil society organizations, research institutes, and other government agencies can learn from seizure data – or assist in the collection and management of it – and help to inform the development of programmes and policy responses to tackle firearms trafficking.

However, some Member States may still lack the capacity to record trafficking data, underscoring the importance of prioritizing data collection and analysis. Robust data collection and management training should also be provided to the responsible national law enforcement and criminal justice institutions, while benefiting from the participation and involvement of civil society and academia.

- Related to data collection capacity, **measuring progress and impact** of initiatives targeting illicit arms trafficking, as well as the terrorism-firearms-organized crime nexus, needs additional attention. At the regional level, the AU has not developed a monitoring tool to measure progress made within the StG 2030 Initiative, making it more difficult to assess the impact of programmes and activities undertaken at national and regional levels.

<sup>147</sup> UN Security Council, "Small Arms and Light Weapons." A Report of the Secretary General. S/2021/839, 30 September 2021. [https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/{65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9}/s\\_2021\\_839.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/{65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9}/s_2021_839.pdf)

- Some Member States in Eastern Africa face challenges in collecting seizure data, or more critically, have limited capacity to seize illicit firearms. Therefore, building up national **detection and seizure** capabilities is a critical first step within the broader criminal justice process, crucial to curbing illicit firearms trafficking.
- Many Member States have limited capacity to conduct rigorous **investigation and prosecution** procedures. One of the major challenges is inter-state cooperation on **firearms tracing**. A number of factors may contribute to this dynamic, including inadequately resourced criminal investigation units.<sup>148</sup> Furthermore, national inventory data of state-held firearms may be incomplete or inaccurate. Additionally, firearms seizure data, as with armed crime data, is often not disaggregated within national crime statistics by location, type of firearm used, and so on.
- Effective tracing is dependent on **firearms marking and record keeping**. Member States generally tend to prioritize marking and record keeping of firearms, but this activity is typically focused on police firearms, while other organized security forces are more difficult to include in marking programmes.<sup>149</sup> Further, rudimentary record keeping, e.g., ‘pen-and-paper’ methods, significantly reduce Member States ability to access records to respond to tracing requests in a timely manner. Finally, inter-state cooperation in tracing weapons is also dependent on the submission of formal requests from relevant authorities to trace firearms.
- **Illicit firearms collection** is another challenge. Many collection campaigns aiming to disarm entire communities, for instance, have achieved limited success, primarily because they are reactive in nature, seeking to remedy armed violence in the short-term, but without addressing underlining security and development concerns that underpin community-level demand and possession of firearms. In the

Eastern Africa region, these programmes often target remote and rural areas. However, responding to external threats and continuing intercommunal violence, some communities have rearmed. Another challenge is the management of weapons following their collection.

- Responsible **destruction and disposal** of collected firearms is critical to ensure they do not seep into illicit markets and back into the hands of civilians. Transparency of weapons collection activity allows for accountability, both in how collected weapons are managed (including transport and storage) and how they are disposed of (by destruction or other responsible means). Challenges may arise when transparency in illicit firearms collection is lacking and allow for collected weapons to be diverted – instead of being properly disposed of – to civilians or other non-authorized users. As a result, when collected weapons are found to have reentered circulation, this undermines community confidence and may deter future civilian cooperation in collection and disarmament activities, as well as lead to rearmament among disarmed communities.
- Related to the above but of broader significance, **state-stockpile security** remains a critical challenge for several Member States. It often stems from insufficiently rigorous policies and practices on firearms and ammunition storage and disposal. One cause for this is that some Member States do not allocate (or lack resources to do so) sufficient funds to physical security and stockpile management, as well as lack recourses to provide appropriate training. Preventing diversion of state-held firearms is dependent on, among other, appropriate transfer control, prevention of losses, thefts, and leakages, and prevention of renting arms from state-held firearms stocks.
- Other important challenges to address are **socio-economic** in nature and can be particularly acute in pastoralist communities. Member States in Eastern Africa would

<sup>148</sup> Eastern Africa Chapter, AU Silencing the Guns Continental Plan of Action.

<sup>149</sup> Eastern Africa Chapter, AU Silencing the Guns Continental Plan of Action.

benefit from integrating collection and civilian disarmament activities with socio-economic development initiatives, as not addressing the structural causes of firearms demand is likely to result in collection programmes limited success. Furthermore, governments would benefit from a stronger role of civil society, women, and youth in firearm collection and civilian disarmament programmes.

- Finally, an overarching challenge for the entire region is **limited financial and material resources** to support counter-firearms trafficking activities, collection, and

disarmament programmes. For instance, civilian weapons collection programmes require considerable financial resources; in 2018, an operation in Isiolo and Marsabit counties in Kenya cost approximately USD 300 thousand to mobilize police officers for three months to facilitate the collection of weapons and maintenance of security. When compared to the other allocations over the same period (for example, the annual budget of the Kenya National Focal Point, approximately USD 60 thousand), the figure reveals that without external support or additional allocations, such programmes may be too costly to implement.<sup>150</sup>

## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Eastern African Member States may consider the following recommendations towards more efficient national and regional responses to the firearms trafficking and its nexus with other forms of transnational organized crime and terrorism:

### 1. Develop regional and national mechanisms to systematically collect, manage and analyze illicit firearms seizure data:

**1.1** Undertake an initial assessment of institutional capacity and update legislation to enable systematic illicit-firearms data collection, management, and analysis.

**1.2** Encourage participation of civil society organizations and academia.

**1.3** Enhance data transparency on seizures, weapons collection, and disposal, and with regard to criminal justice processes and adjudication of illicit firearms-related cases.

**1.4** Establish guidelines for disaggregation of armed crime and seizures data.

**1.5** Encourage multistakeholder participation in global data-collection mechanisms such as the UNODC IAFQ, as well as enhance national reporting practices with regard to the implementation of the UN PoA.

### 2. Develop, update, or enhance national policy and legislative frameworks:

**2.1** Clearly define mandates, roles and responsibilities of national law enforcement and criminal justice institutions, prosecutors and judges in investigation, prosecution, and adjudication of firearms trafficking cases.

**2.2** Establishing integrated firearms tracing and investigation centers at national levels.

**2.3** Support national focal points (NFP) and national commissions (NC) on small arms to assist in the development of regional strategies and initiatives targeting terrorist and organized criminal involvement in cross-border firearms trafficking, as well as promote cooperation of NFPs and NCs with regional institutions, including the EAPCCO's Counter-Terrorism Centre of Excellence.

**2.4** Adopt a more holistic approach, including management, disposal, education and awareness raising along with justice responses.

<sup>150</sup> Interview, KNFP, Nairobi, 4 October 2018

**3. Identify existing gaps and challenges in the national criminal justice systems and mechanisms, from detection and seizure of illicit firearms to prosecution and adjudication of cases:**

**3.1** Promote integrated criminal justice responses to firearms trafficking and raise awareness of law enforcement and criminal justice practitioners of the crime of firearms trafficking and targeted responses to it.

**3.2** Enhance criminal justice response capacity at each stage, from detection to investigation, to prosecution, and adjudication of firearms trafficking cases.

**3.3** Support holistic criminal justice responses that address firearms trafficking and interlinked offences, including other forms of transnational organized crime.

**3.4** Engage with international and regional international organizations, including UNODC, the AU, and other specialized bodies to seek technical and material assistance where needed.

**3.5** Identify the needs and request specialized training courses for criminal justice practitioners through UNODC's Global Firearms Programme

**3.6** Continue strengthening collaboration with regional and international police organizations, including EAPCCO, SARPCCO, Interpol and Afripol.

**4. Expand the inclusion of socio-economic development elements into arms control strategies and initiatives:**

**4.1** Address the socio-economic drivers of civilian demand for firearms, including unemployment, limited access to education and health care.

**4.2** Take preventive measures against youth recruitment by terrorist, armed, and organized criminal groups.

**5. Ratify the international legal instruments addressing firearms trafficking and transnational organized crime to develop effective responses to firearms trafficking and related offenses by implementing provisions and harmonizing national legislation with international standards:**

**5.1** Ratify the Firearms Protocol.

**5.2** Ratify UNTOC.

**5.3** Ratify the Arms Trade Treaty to increase the preventive capacity, voice concerns, and scrutinize weapons transfers.

**6. Enhance physical security and stockpile management of state weapon stocks to prevent diversion of weapons into the possession of terrorist, armed and organized crime groups:**

**6.1** Provide adequate resources to sufficiently train, fund, and build infrastructure to support the effective implementation of physical security and stockpile management procedures.

**6.2** Strengthen national record keeping and inventory management.

**6.3** Create, update, maintain and enhance registries of civilian and state-held weapons, as well as seized, collected, and disposed firearms, in accordance with international norms and good practices, including by developing electronic registries and databases – from local police stations to national armories – to facilitate the efficient and effective tracing of all weapons.

**7. Enhance resilience of public institutions to corruption and proactively fight corruption in institutions involved in, among other, the acquisition, use, collection, disposal, and stockpile management of firearms:**

**7.1** Increase transparency of weapons transfers and procurement processes by security agencies by disclosing weapon types,

quantities, awarded contracts (i.e., contracts with arms manufacturers and dealers) and the financial transactions involved.

**7.2** Enhance and update national legislation to allow for increased oversight of the weapons trading and transfers.

**7.3** Enhance responses to the cross-border illicit firearms flows by establishing multi-agency security and customs units at border crossings to enhance the diversity of available expertise and increase self-accountability.

**7.4** Promote the inclusion of trained members of local communities and specific firearms expertise within such units, especially in the areas where firearms trafficking is prevalent.

customs controls, socio-economic programming to support security-related initiatives, physical security and stockpile management, and anti-corruption initiatives, among other.

## **8. Enhance cross-border cooperation:**

**8.1** Promote better border security governance through integration of and cooperation with counterpart units in cross-border communities.

**8.2** Empower local decision-making to respond to immediate security and trafficking responses.

## **9. Conduct further research on the nexus between firearms trafficking, terrorist and armed groups, and organized crime:**

**9.1** Examine the linkages between firearms trafficking and trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling.

**9.2** Conduct research on the links between firearms trafficking and drug smuggling.

**9.3** Further consider the nexus with emerging crimes, including environmental crimes.

**9.4** Promote cooperation and partnerships to develop data collection and information sharing tools to identify areas that need improvement and to better inform policy and programming in the areas of border and







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