

THE CONVENTIONAL ARMS PROLIFERATION IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES: STAKES AND THREATS

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
General Studies

by

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2019

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE				<i>Form Approved</i> <i>OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.					
1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 14-06-2019		2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) AUG 2018 – JUN 2010	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Conventional Arms Proliferation in Sub Saharan African Countries: Stakes and Threats				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S) Major Rachid Fiali				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2301				8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT Sub Saharan Africa continues to experience the destabilizing effects of the circulation and misuse of illegal Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Significant human suffering and material and financial losses are the primary consequences. Since independence from European colonialism, many armed conflicts within the region often end in widespread stock piles of arms that are difficult to control by weak and inappropriate mechanisms. The purpose of this thesis is to highlight the primary factors contributing to the proliferation of illegal SALW in sub Saharan Africa, such as porous borders and weak institutions due to the absence of real political will, and corruption. State and non-state actors exploit the widespread availability of SALW to advance their interests through violent means, particularly in failed and corrupted states. To address this issue, the thesis proposes an integrated proactive approach using all national power instruments, including political, socio economic, and informational measures. The study focuses more specifically on the role of military action to address this issue.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS The Conventional Arms - Sub Saharan African Countries - Threats					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT (U)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 86	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT (U)	b. ABSTRACT (U)	c. THIS PAGE (U)			19b. PHONE NUMBER (include area code)

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

THE CONVENTIONAL ARMS PROLIFERATION IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICAN COUNTRIES: STAKES AND THREATS, by Major Rachid Fiali, 86 pages.

Sub Saharan Africa continues to experience the destabilizing effects of the circulation and misuse of illegal Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW). Significant human suffering and material and financial losses are the primary consequences. Since independence from European colonialism, many armed conflicts within the region often end in widespread stock piles of arms that are difficult to control by weak and inappropriate mechanisms. The purpose of this thesis is to highlight the primary factors contributing to the proliferation of illegal SALW in sub Saharan Africa, such as porous borders and weak institutions due to the absence of real political will, and corruption. State and non-state actors exploit the widespread availability of SALW to advance their interests through violent means, particularly in failed and corrupted states.

To address this issue, the thesis proposes an integrated proactive approach using all national power instruments, including political, socio economic, and informational measures. The study focuses more specifically on the role of military action to address this issue.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First, I thank my God for His help in achieving this thesis.

I would like to express my special appreciation and thanks to my thesis committee, chaired by DeEtte A. Lombard, my two readers Dr. Louis A. Dimarco and Mr. John N. Cary, whose constant and insightful guidance made it possible for me to succeed in this work. I would especially like to thank Mr. Edward D. Jennings, my staff group advisor, for his continuous and remarkable advice, my instructors for the knowledge they provided to me, and my classmates from staff group 19D for their professionalism. I also grant the role of my sponsors (Mark French and Tanju Karabulut) for making my stay and that of my family in the U.S. enjoyable throughout this year.

Most importantly, I wish to thank my loving wife Fatima Arhim, my wonderful children Badr and Jennat for their patience and support. I would like also to thank my parents, whose love and inspiration are with me in whatever I pursue.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE THESIS APPROVAL PAGE	iii
ABSTRACT.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	vi
ACRONYMS.....	viii
ILLUSTRATIONS	x
TABLES	xi
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Overview of Sub Saharan Africa	1
Current Situation.....	7
Purpose of the Study	8
Primary Research Question	8
Secondary Research Questions	8
Assumptions.....	9
Definitions of Terms	9
Limitations	12
Scope and Delimitations	12
Significance of Study.....	12
Chapter Conclusion.....	13
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW	16
Chapter Introduction	16
Understanding the Illegal SALW Proliferation	16
Factors Contributing to SALW Flows	16
Vast and Porous Borders.....	16
Multiple Sources of Illegal SALW Proliferation	17
Why Should We Focus on the Category of SALW?	19
Past and Current Efforts to Regulate SALW Proliferation in Sub Saharan Africa... 20	20
The UN Firearms Protocol.....	20
The UN Programme of Action on SALW and its International Tracing Instrument	22
Nairobi Protocol to Control SALW in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States	23

The Protocol on the Control of Firearms in Southern African Development Community (SADC)	26
The AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa.....	26
Summary and Conclusion	27
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	31
Qualitative Methodology	31
Common Characteristics to Qualitative Research	32
Major Qualitative Research Genres	33
Why is a case study the focus in this thesis?	34
Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic Approach.....	35
CHAPTER 4 ANALYSIS	37
Factors Causing the Illegal Proliferation of SALW	37
Large Porous Borders	37
Militarized Society.....	39
Limited Capacities to Control Illegal SALW Flow	42
Weak Arms Control Mechanisms	44
Indirect Contributing Factors of Illegal SALW Flow	45
External Factors	50
Threats of Illegal SALW on Nigerian Security	51
Political Violence.....	51
Inter-Communal Conflicts	51
Violent Extremist Organizations Threats: Abuses by Boko Haram	52
Obstacles to Sustainable Development	53
Summary of Findings.....	54
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	59
Introduction.....	59
Mitigation of Illegal SALW Proliferation	59
Political Commitment	60
Efficient Economy Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development	63
Information Toward Promotion of Civic Education and Culture of Peace	64
Military and Security Forces Commitment.....	65
Recommendations for Future Studies.....	67
BIBLIOGRAPHY	69

ACRONYMS

AMU	Arab Maghreb Union
AU	African Union
ATT	Arms Trade Treaty
CENSAD	Community of Sahel-Saharan States
CICS	Centre for International Cooperation and Security
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
DIME	Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic
EAC	East African Community
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
GER	Girls Education Rate
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ISACS	International Small Arms Control Standards
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
ITI	International Tracing Instrument
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NATCOM	National Committee
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PCASED	Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development in Africa
PoA	Programme of Action
POC	Point of Contact
REC	Regional Economic Communities

RECSA	Regional Center on Small Arms
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
UN	United Nations
VEO	Violent Extremist Organization
VGN	Vigilante Groups of Nigeria

ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page
Figure 1. Population Pyramid in Sub Saharan Africa in 2017	4
Figure 2. Firearms Protocol Ratification by Region	22
Figure 3. Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa Countries Members of Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW	25
Figure 4. Areas of Field Research and Number of Key Informant Interviews Conducted, Nigeria, 2017	41
Figure 5. Reported Share (Percent) of Craft Weapons Used to Commit Crimes Involving Firearms, According to Law Enforcement Agency Personnel and Specialist Interviews, Nigeria, 2017.....	42
Figure 6. Ethnic Groups in Nigeria	49

TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Sub Saharan Countries by Geographic Region.....	3
Table 2. Key Health Indicators for North East States and Nigerian National Average....	47

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Overview of Sub Saharan Africa

The United Nations (UN) geoscheme for Africa divides the continent into five regions, four of which are in sub Saharan Africa: Eastern Africa, Middle Africa, Southern Africa, and Western Africa.¹ Correspondingly, sub Saharan Africa is geographically defined as the area located South of the Sahara Desert, in contrast with North Africa situated North of the Sahara Desert. According to these definitions, sub Saharan Africa is a geographic area that covers 54 African countries in mainland Africa and six island nations excluding the North African countries that are mostly inhabited by Arabic-speaking people and looking to the Mediterranean Sea (see table 1).

Ecologically, sub Saharan Africa is home to large contrasting regions, or biomes, consisting of the Sahel, the savanna belt, the tropical rainforest, and the Horn of Africa. The Sahel region is the transitional area between sub Saharan Africa and North Africa. The Sahel, which is negatively affected by intermittent droughts and consequential famines, stretches from the Atlantic Ocean on the West to the Red Sea coast on the East.² This sub region includes, from West to East, parts of Northern Senegal, Southern Mauritania, central Mali, Northern Burkina Faso, the extreme South of Algeria, Niger, the extreme North of Nigeria, central Chad, central and Southern Sudan, the extreme North of South Sudan, Eritrea, Cameroon, the Central African Republic and the extreme North of Ethiopia.

While the savanna belt is South of the Sahel region, the tropical rainforest is concentrated West of the African Great Lakes and covers most of the Congo region and

the Southern coastal area of West Africa. The region is characterized by a tropical wet climate with between 63 and 78 inches (1600 and 2000 mm) of rainfall per year.³

Finally, the Horn of Africa is considered as a sub region of East Africa that includes Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, and Somalia. It is globally dominated by a hot, semi-arid climate and desert. The Horn of Africa is also used to define a political region that consists of Kenya, Sudan, and Tanzania. The very hot weather, exacerbated by climate change, puts more pressure on the social, economic, and security systems in this region. Millions struggle to survive, especially in failed and weak countries who are exposed to recurrent drought, diseases, migration, and famine.

Table 1. Sub Saharan Countries by Geographic Region

Eastern Africa (22)	British Indian Ocean Territory Burundi Comoros (Island) Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia French Southern Territories Kenya Madagascar (Island) Malawi Mauritius (Island)	Mayotte (Island) Mozambique Réunion Rwanda Seychelles (Island) Somalia South Sudan Uganda United Republic of Tanzania Zambia Zimbabwe
Middle Africa (10)	Angola Cameroon Central African Republic Chad Congo	Democratic Republic of the Congo Equatorial Guinea Gabon Sao Tome and Principe
Southern Africa (5)	Botswana Eswatini Lesotho	Namibia South Africa
Western Africa (17)	Benin Burkina Faso Cabo Verde (Island) Côte d'Ivoire Gambia Ghana Guinea Guinea-Bissau Liberia	Mali Mauritania Niger Nigeria Saint Helena (Island) Senegal Sierra Leone Togo

Source: United Nations Statistics Division, “Geographic Regions,” United Nations, accessed January 10, 2019, <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49/>.

One of the most important characteristics of sub Saharan Africa is its growing young population. Representing approximately 14.37 percent of the world populace, with an estimated population of 1,078 million in 2019, sub Saharan Africa’s primary population is made up of working age individuals and children aged 14 and under.

Nigeria is the most populous country (over 199 million people) followed by Ethiopia (over 109 million). The growth rate of sub Saharan Africa is estimated at 2.66 percent.⁴

According to World Bank statistics, eight of the world's top ten countries with the youngest populations are in sub Saharan Africa. For instance, the median ages in Niger, Uganda, Malawi, Mali, and Zambia are below 17 years. With a median age of 15.3, Niger is the most youthful country in the world.⁵ Consequently, many states struggle to ensure decent standards of living in terms of education, healthcare, food security, and employment because of their limited socio economic development capacities (see figure 1).

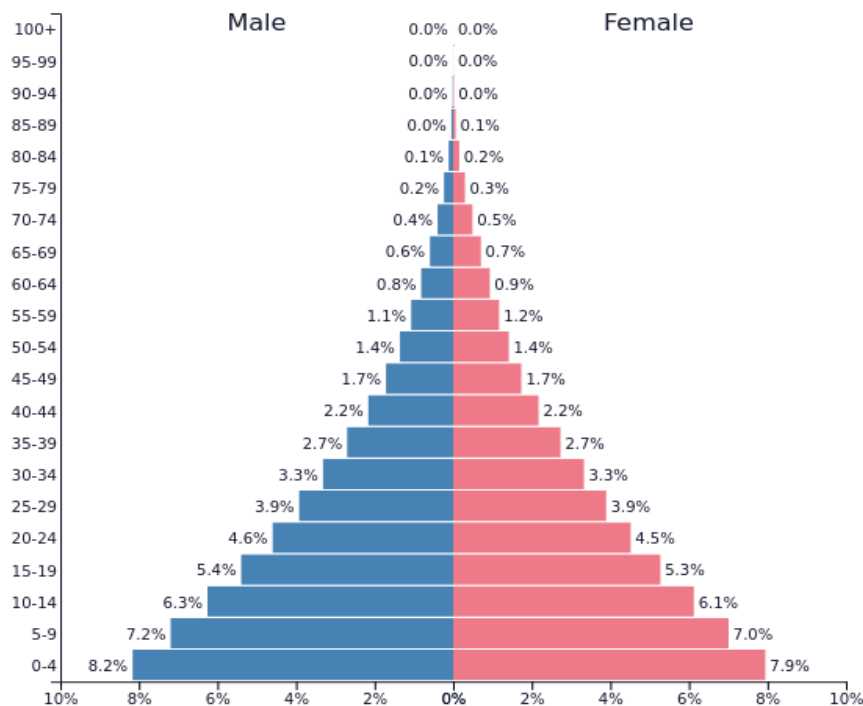


Figure 1. Population Pyramid in Sub Saharan Africa in 2017

Source: Population Pyramid, "Sub Saharan Africa," accessed January 28, 2019, <https://www.populationpyramid.net/sub-saharan-africa/2017/>.

Additionally, the population of sub Saharan Africa is one of the most culturally diverse in the world. Christianity is generally found along the coastlines because of the colonial influences. Islam is mostly practiced in West Africa as a consequence of the historical trade caravans. Other native beliefs are found all over the region and most of them share communal traditions and prioritization of family and tribe rather than individualism. Although, the people speak over 1,000 different local languages and dialects, the official languages are English and French.⁶

The African Union (AU) rarely uses the term sub Saharan Africa, instead it prefers referring to the eight Regional Economic Communities (RECs) established by the Abuja Treaty in 1991.⁷ Only the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) includes countries that are not in sub Saharan Africa: Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco and Tunisia, which are located in North Africa. Sub Saharan Africa countries are members of the following seven RECs:

1. The Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CENSAD), in the North;
2. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in the West;
3. The East African Community (EAC), in the East;
4. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), also in the East;
5. The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), in the South-East;
6. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), in the center;

7. The Southern African Development Community (SADC), in the South.

Generally, sub Saharan Africa is the poorest and least developed region in the world, depending on factors being assessed. The enduring legacy of colonialism, the lack of true democracy, the extreme poverty, and the inter-ethnic conflicts are among the grave problems that hinder the social and economic development of this region. In fact, between the 15th and 20th centuries, Africa was colonized by European powers exploiting natural resources such as gold, oil, diamonds, and human capital. Millions of native Africans were victims of the worldwide slave trade. By the late 1960s, most sub Saharan African nations recovered their independence from their colonial masters by either peaceful or violent means. However, the region continued to be overwhelmed by ethnic conflicts and enduring poverty.

The most violent conflict was undoubtedly the Rwandan genocide of 1994, in which an estimated 800,000 people were slaughtered in just 100 days.⁸ Other illustrations of violence include the First Congo War (October 1996 – May 1997), the Second Congo War (August 1998 – July 2003), and the unresolved conflict in the Darfur region in Western Sudan. The Darfur conflict was triggered by an insurrection against the Sudanese government's disregard in 2003.⁹ These conflicts, among others, have consumed the involved nations' resources resulting in poverty, diseases, and instability. However, one of the most intriguing factors contributing to this situation undoubtedly is the illegal proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in many sub Saharan African countries. It is estimated that out of the 640 million SALW circulating around the world, 100 million are found in Africa and about 30 million in sub Saharan Africa.¹⁰

Current Situation

Sub Saharan Africa is the area most affected by the proliferation and use of illegal SALW. Although armed conflicts have significantly decreased in the past decades, SALW flow continues to threaten security, especially in some post-conflict zones. The current armed conflicts involve primary intrastate actors that use this abundant, easy to operate, and affordable category of weapons. SALW are used to threaten civilians, wage civil wars, deter humanitarian assistance, and impede peacekeeping activities. As an example, the circulation of huge numbers of SALW in the Central African Republic aided the efforts of many militias fighting for control of natural resources. Since December 2012, sectarian Christian (Anti Balaka) and Muslim (Seleka) militias have been waging ethnic war with high levels of violence. As a result, the security and political situations have increasingly worsened. More than 2,600 people have died and more than 1 million are displaced, creating an urgent humanitarian crisis. Today, more than 14 armed groups, emerging from the Anti Balaka and Seleke, are benefiting from the availability of SALW in order to control the country's wealth.¹¹

The deteriorating security situations in other states are explained by the fact that many sub Saharan African states have not established adequate regulatory structures to control the flow and the use of weapons. This situation facilitates traffickers to trade SALW within fragile countries and also toward states with firm regulatory measures. For instance, the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) Africa, an African non-profit organization that partners to build knowledge and skills to secure Africa's future, stated in its AU Peace and Security Council Report that Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire, both considered as organized states, are points of entry for illegal SALW into weaker states in

West Africa, while Mali is a point of entry into North African countries known for their solid regulatory structures.¹²

Purpose of the Study

Illegal arms proliferation fuels armed conflicts, domestic and transnational crimes, and terrorism with considerable human, material, and financial losses. This proliferation of illicit SALW undermines security and stability in sub Saharan Africa. Thus, the purpose of this study is to increase contextual knowledge regarding how the flow of SALW contributes to insecurity in the region.

Primary Research Question

The proliferation of SALW threatens the security of individuals, societies, and states. Sub Saharan Africa is one of the regions in the world facing persistent challenges related to the illegal flow of arms that fuel civil wars, domestic and transnational crimes, and exactions of Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO).

This research addresses the following question: How does the illicit proliferation of SALW threaten security and stability in sub Saharan Africa? Then, the study suggests recommendations to mitigate key issues, especially the role of military institutions in cooperation with key stakeholders.

Secondary Research Questions

In order to address the primary research question, it is necessary to analyze these three secondary questions:

1. What are the main factors causing the illegal proliferation of SALW in sub Saharan Africa?

2. Who are the main stakeholders in this issue?
3. How can we mitigate the effects of SALW proliferation in this region?

Assumptions

Given the current security situation in failed and fragile countries in sub Saharan Africa, complicated by the impact of various factors, SALW proliferation will continue to challenge the region. Although most of the concerned countries have made significant efforts to address this issue, present conditions are extremely unfavorable and main stakeholders who benefit from SALW flow are not discouraged.

This security trend in sub Saharan Africa is dominated by both non-state actors, such as criminal organizations, and terrorism activities that aggravate the situation. Experts assert the obligation to promote an integrated and proactive approach using all national power means. In this regard, the military instrument has a substantial role in addressing SALW proliferation. Therefore, after identifying the different threats of SALW flow, this study provides insight into the use of military power to attempt to mitigate this issue.

Definitions of Terms

Arms diversion: is the process by which holdings or transfers of arms that are authorized by relevant states (and are subject to their legal controls) are delivered to unauthorized end-users, or are put to unauthorized uses by authorized end-users.¹³

Broker: a person or entity acting as an intermediary that brings together relevant parties and arranges or facilitates a potential transaction of small arms and light weapons

(SALW) in return for some form of benefit, whether financial or otherwise. Parties to an arms deal include buyers, sellers, transporters, financiers, and insurers.

Within the context of these intermediary activities involving small arms and light weapons, a broker might:¹⁴

1. Serve as a finder of business opportunities for one or more parties;
2. Put relevant parties in contact;
3. Assist parties in proposing, arranging or facilitating agreements or possible contracts between them;
4. Assist parties in obtaining the necessary documentation; and
5. Assist parties in arranging the necessary payments.

Conventional weapons: Conventional weapons encompass a wide range of equipment not limited to armored combat vehicles, combat helicopters, combat aircraft, warships, SALW, landmines, cluster munitions, ammunition and artillery. Conventional weapons are the most common type of armament globally and historically the most commonly used in conflict. Conventional weapons exclude weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons.¹⁵

Illegal oil bunkering: The illicit removal and storage of oil from a pipeline or other distribution system.¹⁶

Muzzle-loading ‘Dane guns’: the Dane gun was originally a type of long flintlock musket imported into West Africa by Dano-Norwegian traders prior to the second half of the 19th century.¹⁷ The term is now used primarily by Europeans living along the West African coast to generally describe any indigenously made firearm of this type. Dane

guns were made of obsolete parts and traded to Africans. Some were assembled in Europe, or the parts traded and the guns completed by Africans.¹⁸

Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW): the SALW include both civilian, private, and military weapons that fire a projectile with the condition that the unit or system may be carried by an individual, a small number of people, or transported by a pack animal or a light vehicle.

Small Arms include revolvers and self-loading pistols, rifles and carbines, assault rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns.

Light Weapons include heavy machine guns, hand-held under-barrel and mounted grenade launchers, portable anti-aircraft guns, portable anti-tank guns, recoilless rifles, portable launchers of anti-tank missile and rocket systems, and mortars of calibers of less than 100 mm.

To this list, the Small Arms Survey¹⁹ has added single-rail-launched rockets and 120 mm mortars as long as they can be transported and operated as intended by a light vehicle.²⁰

Unconventional weapons: Unconventional weapons may refer to any weapon not considered to be a conventional weapon. They include Weapons Of Mass Destruction (WMD) that can cause widespread destruction or kill large numbers of people, especially nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons in unconventional warfare. They may also include improvised weapons.²¹

Working age: The working age population is defined as those aged 15 to 64. The basic indicator for employment is the proportion of the working age population aged 15 - 64 who are employed.²²

Limitations

There are many limitations to this research. First, not all aspects of this complex topic can be analyzed because of the limited time available to conduct the research. Also, all information for this project is obtained using open source documents, such as books, magazine and journal articles, and internet sites. It would be more comprehensive if this research incorporated consultations of politicians, security personnel, and populations in the concerned sub Saharan Africa countries. Knowing that the mitigation of SALW proliferation requires the cooperation, integration, and synergy of all instruments of national power, this study is more focused on the role of the military and security force to address this issue.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this research is defined by some intended delimitations that restrict and direct this work. Since the dedicated time to this project is quite short, the research is geographically limited to the sub Saharan African countries, particularly to Nigeria which is used as a case study. Therefore, the results of this research may not apply to the entire region or may not be applicable to other countries. Also, the study is limited to the last three decades, specifically since the end of the Cold War, during which time sub Saharan Africa has experienced a large number of violent armed conflicts. Finally, the research focuses more on the security aspect rather than the political and economic aspects.

Significance of Study

This research seeks to provide a better understanding of the threats of SALW proliferation in sub Saharan Africa and focuses on the role of the armed forces and

security forces in coping with this issue. The results of this study may be useful to military professionals and government leaders in order to enhance peace and security in the region.

Chapter Conclusion

This chapter presented an overview of sub Saharan Africa. It provides a description of this region in terms of its geography, population, economy, and culture. More importantly, this chapter portrays the security situation in some countries of this region that provides the specific context for the study. Also, the limitations and delimitations defined the guidelines of the research. Chapter 2 will review literature related to the problem being investigated.

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¹¹ Nathalie Baptiste, “The Central African Republic’s Forgotten Crisis,” *The Nation*, September 11, 2014, accessed January 29, 2019, <https://www.thenation.com/article/central-African-republics-forgotten-crisis/>.

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¹³ Owen Greene and Elizabeth Kirkham, “Preventing Diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons: Issues and Priorities for Strengthened Controls. Biting the Bullet,” Policy Report, February 1, 2009, accessed January 29, 2019, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/preventing-diversion-small-arms-and-light-weapons-issues-and-priorities-strengthened>, 11.

¹⁴ United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, “Arms Trade Treaty Implementation Toolkit,” United Nations, September 2016, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://www.att-assistance.org/sites/default/files/2016/09/ATT-Implementation-Toolkit-Module-9.pdf>.

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¹⁷ “Dane Gun,” Wikipedia, November 23, 2018, accessed April 24, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dane_gun.

¹⁸ “Dane Gun from the African Slave Trade,” Fagan Arms, accessed April 24, 2019, <https://www.faganarms.com/products/dane-gun-from-the-african-slave-trade-u224>.

¹⁹ The Small Arms Survey is a project of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, Switzerland. The Survey also has an office in

Washington DC. It provides expertise on all aspects of small arms and armed violence. As a global center of excellence, the Small Arms Survey generates evidence-based, impartial, and policy-relevant knowledge and analysis on small arms and armed violence issues for governments, policy-makers, researchers, and civil society. “Mission,” Small Arms Survey, April 18, 2019, accessed May 8, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/about-us/mission.html>.

²⁰ “Definitions of Small Arms and Light Weapons,” Small Arms Survey, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/weapons-and-markets/definitions.html>.

²¹ “Unconventional Weapon,” Wikipedia, accessed January 31, 2019, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unconventional_weapon.

²² “Demography - Working Age Population - OECD Data,” The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, accessed April 22, 2019, <https://data.oecd.org/pop/working-age-population.htm>.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter Introduction

This study examines how the illicit proliferation of SALW threatens security and stability in sub Saharan Africa. In spite of multiple efforts introduced to control arms, the continued illicit flow of SALW is an indicator of security gaps that are exploited by sophisticated criminal networks. This situation requires an exhaustive understanding and prompt action. Subsequently, conducting a literature review of the existing body of knowledge on SALW proliferation in sub Saharan Africa will help to build a broad understanding of the surrounding issues and identify specific areas of interest.

Many authors and governmental and non-governmental actors have contributed to enhancing understanding of the illicit proliferation of the SALW phenomenon in this region.

Understanding the Illegal SALW Proliferation

Factors Contributing to SALW Flows

Vast and Porous Borders

Many sub Saharan African countries have unsecured and porous borders making it easy for illicit traffickers to smuggle arms. Transnational criminal organizations and armed groups are very mobile in uncontrolled border regions, especially in conflict zones, ungoverned spaces, and fragile states. Also, traffickers use sea routes to ship their illicit arms and ammunition between countries. Additionally, many countries lack sufficient resources to ensure effective security and law enforcement presence.

European colonialists divided the African continent into zones of influence motivated by political and economic interests rather than boundaries that respected the ethnicity and culture of populations. These inherited borders are extremely porous due to the splitting of ethnic groups. As a result, many African governments struggle to administer and control their territories due to these imposed colonial borders. In this context, Freedom C. Onuoha, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Political Science, University of Nigeria Nsukka, posited in his report “Porous Borders and Boko Haram’s Arms Smuggling Operations in Nigeria” that one of the most significant illustrations of the difficulty to govern over porous and heterogenic territories is the case of Nigeria where the Boko Haram insurgency has intensified.¹ Nigeria has large porous borders with Cameroon, Niger, Benin, and Chad. These border areas are either mountainous or in the jungle. Terrorists and smugglers take advantage of this terrain to smuggle SALW into Nigeria. Nigeria’s Minister of Interior, Abba Moro, recently disclosed that there are over 1,499 irregular (illegal) officially identified entry routes into Nigeria.²

Multiple Sources of Illegal SALW Proliferation

The clandestine nature of illicit arms trafficking and the associated complex transnational criminal networks make it difficult to accurately identify the actors involved. Given this type of challenge, Nelson Alusala, a research consultant at the Institute for Security Studies in Pretoria, South Africa, in his article “Africa and arms control, challenges and successes,” speculated that in Africa the illegal arms market is supplied by three main sources: diversion from legitimate governmental stockpiles, battlefield losses, and international actors acting in complicity with internal actors.³

First, the diversion of governmental stockpiles and weapons into the illicit market is one of the main sources of illicit arms proliferation in sub Saharan Africa. Rebels attacking government forces to seize their arsenals or poorly paid soldiers trading arms with rebels are the principle ways of arms diversion. In addition, arms diversion has also been observed during African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations (PKO). For instance, according to the Small Arms Survey ⁴ review of 11 peace missions deployed in Sudan and South Sudan by the AU and the UN, from 2002 to 2014, it is estimated that there were at least 22 notable incidents in which peacekeeping troops lost arms and ammunition.⁵

Second, governmental arms can deviate into illicit circulation through corrupt sales, theft or surrender to an enemy. In November 2012, with the help of diverted arms and ammunition, the Congolese Revolutionary Army rebellion, known as the March 23 Movement rebellion, succeeded in invading Goma. This victory over government forces was mainly assisted by the involvement of the commander of the land forces, General Gabriel Amisi, accused of selling arms and ammunition to rebel groups. Also, the rebels seized a large number of government arms depots after the army had run away.⁶

Third, the complicity of international exporters and internal governmental actors make it very difficult to track and prosecute arms dealers in sub Saharan Africa. One reason for this situation is the sensitivity of arms-related matters, in which most governments are not inclined to reveal acts of arms trade. Arms transactions implicate networks or a supply chain of interconnected actors, often including government authorities, prominent politicians and businessmen. As a result, it is unusual for states to demonstrate the capacity, audacity, and will to trace and prosecute suspicious arms

actors, especially when senior officials of the government are involved in such transactions.

Why Should We Focus on the Category of SALW?

One of the dominant features of the armed conflicts in sub Saharan Africa is the fact that more death and suffering results from SALW than from major conventional arms such as tanks, aircraft and warships. The multiple advantages of SALW that make them so attractive and suitable to widespread violence and terror include:⁷

1. Low cost because SALW require less sophisticated technology;
2. Wide availability since millions of such weapons, whether newly produced, given away as donations to sub Saharan African countries or recycled from conflict to conflict are available;
3. Increasing lethality that often matches or exceeds that of national security forces;
4. Simplicity of use needs little training to use effectively, which increases their use in conflicts involving untrained combatants and children;
5. Durability since SALW require little maintenance and remain operational for many years; and
6. Portability and concealability. SALW can easily be carried by individuals or light vehicles, trafficked to areas of conflict, and concealed in shipments of legitimate cargo.

Importantly, because major conventional arms are easy to track and most of the time financially out of reach of many sub Saharan countries and organizations, SALW

proliferation is the real challenge in the region because the weapons are affordable, mobile, available, and easy to use.

Past and Current Efforts to Regulate SALW Proliferation in Sub Saharan Africa

Since the end of the Cold War, SALW have increasingly attracted scholarly and policy attention, primarily because of their dramatic role in intensifying intra-state conflicts and threatening national security even in countries that are relatively at peace. Consequently, most of the sub Saharan African countries were among the first to take substantial action through various international and regional initiatives, operational frameworks, and legal instruments that ultimately initiated the international processes for the control of SALW.⁸ The existence of these multiple instruments demonstrates the complexity and multi-dimensional aspect of the SALW flow issue. At the international level, Africa represents the majority of countries party to the UN Firearms Protocol. At the continental level, the SADC Protocol, Nairobi Protocol, ECCAS Convention, and ECOWAS Convention are the main legally binding regional instruments aimed at curbing the illegal trade in SALW. For each instrument, the relevant regional organization assists its member states in meeting small arms commitments.⁹

The UN Firearms Protocol

At the global level, the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, adopted on 31 May 2001 and entered into force on 3 July 2005, is the only legally binding instrument to counter the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. This Protocol supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and provides a

framework for state entities to control and regulate legal arms and arms flow, prevents their diversion into the illegal circuit, and facilitates the investigation and prosecution of related offences without hampering legitimate transfers.

By ratifying or acceding to the Firearms Protocol, states make a commitment to adopt and implement a series of crime-control measures that aim at:

1. Establishing as criminal offence the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms in line with the Protocol's requirements and definitions;
2. Adopting effective control and security measures, including the disposal of firearms, in order to prevent their theft and diversion into the illicit circuit;
3. Establishing a system of government authorizations or licensing intending to ensure legitimate manufacturing of, and trafficking in, firearms; and
4. Ensuring adequate marking, recording and tracing of firearms and effective international cooperation for this purpose.¹⁰

The African continent includes the majority of signatory and acceded countries to the Firearms Protocol which shows an interest and awareness of arms proliferation by their respective governments. Among the 114 states ratifying this protocol, 35 are African states (see figure 2).

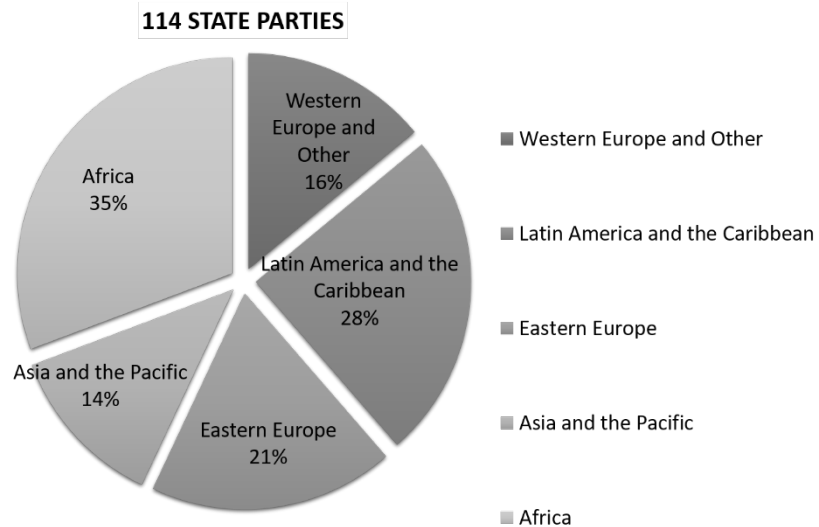


Figure 2. Firearms Protocol Ratification by Region

Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “The Firearms Protocol,” United Nations, accessed January 28, 2019, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/the-firearms-protocol.html>.

The UN Programme of Action on SALW and its International Tracing Instrument

Sub Saharan Africa countries as UN member states agreed in 2001 to adopt the UN Programme of Action (PoA) on the illicit trade of SALW aiming to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in SALW in all its aspects.¹¹ The state members agreed to improve national SALW laws, import/export controls, stockpile management, and cooperation and assistance engagement.

In addition, sub Saharan states engaged in improving weapons tracing as a part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI) in 2005. Adopted by the General Assembly, this instrument requires states to ensure that weapons are properly marked and that records

are kept. Furthermore, the ITI provides a framework for cooperation in weapons tracing fulfilling one of the governments' commitments made in the PoA.¹² The implementation of the ITI involves the following measures:

1. Adopt appropriate national regulations;
2. Designate national points of contact (POCs);
3. Render international assistance;
4. Cooperate with United Nations and INTERPOL; and
5. Submit a biennial national report.¹³

Finally, other treaties and initiatives have been adopted by some sub Saharan African countries to address the problem of illegal SALW proliferation. The most important is the UN Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Entered into force on 24 December 2014, the ATT objective is to regulate the international trade in conventional arms – from small arms to battle tanks, combat aircraft and warships. In this regard, the UN is committed to support the signatory states' efforts to ensure that arms in private ownership do not enter illicit circuits and that exporters and importers need to ensure those arms are transferred and stored safely, and do not end up in the wrong hands.¹⁴

Nairobi Protocol to Control SALW in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States

After the fight against colonialism to achieve independence, civil wars and instability have characterized the sub region of the Horn of Africa and the Great Lake countries. As a result, an increasing amount of SALW are in circulation across this sub region. In its struggle to avoid more destruction and human suffering, the states of this area adopted the Nairobi Protocol (see figure 3).

Created in 2005, the Regional Center on Small Arms (RECSEA), which is headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya, has the primary objective to ensure the effective implementation of the Nairobi Declaration agreed to in 2000 and the Nairobi Protocol adopted in 2004 and entered into force in May 2006.¹⁵ The Nairobi Protocol recommends that state parties should consider international instruments relating to the prevention, combating and eradication of illicit manufacturing of, excessive and destabilizing accumulation of, trafficking in, illicit possession of and use of SALW when implementing such instruments within their jurisdiction.¹⁶ Most of RECSEA's funding comes from external donors, in particular the EU, Japan, and the United States.



Figure 3. Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa Countries Members of Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW

Source: Small Arms Survey, *Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA)*, May 16, 2012, accessed January, 2 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/tools/ro-poa/profiles-of-regional-organizations/Africa/recsa.html>.

The key actions conducted by RECSA include:

1. Assisting state parties to develop national action plans (as part of its wide-ranging Best Practice Guidelines) to help meet their commitments under both the Nairobi Protocol and the PoA;
2. Helping its members harmonize their national small arms legislation with the objectives laid out under the Nairobi Protocol;
3. Developing members' capacity to control small arms brokering activities (in 2009);

4. Raising funds to procure machines to mark members' small arms and training members in how to use them; and
5. Integrating civil society organizations to share their expertise with government officials.¹⁷

The Protocol on the Control of Firearms in Southern African Development Community (SADC)

Southern Africa is one of the sub Saharan Africa sub regions that has suffered directly due to the consequences of the availability of vast quantities of SALW. The result is decades of armed conflicts and militarization. After a long series of diplomatic consultations and with the expertise of the Europe Union, the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Material in Southern African Development Community (SADC) was adopted on 14 August 2001 and entered into force on 8 November 2004.¹⁸ This Protocol is an instrument that looks to:

1. Prevent and combat the illicit manufacturing of firearms, ammunition, and other related materials;
2. Regulate the legal import and export of SALW;
3. Curb the transit of these weapons across and within the region; and
4. Harmonize national legislation on the manufacture and ownership of SALW.

The AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa

Widespread distribution of SALW in many parts of Africa has contributed significantly to the persistence of violent conflicts and disruptive crisis situations.

Consequently, many AU heads of state were pressed to voice their determination to stop the flow of illicit SALW. Additionally, they adopted the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by the year 2020 during the AU Peace and Security meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia in 2016.¹⁹ But, the short timeframe set for this action going from 2017 to 2020 seems unrealistic.

The initiative to silence the guns is determined by the AU Summit to be very urgent and relevant, and immediate implementation will provide prompt and positive impacts on African socio-economic development. In addition, mitigating SALW proliferation will enable a Peaceful and Secure Africa, which is one of the seven African Aspirations claimed by a consultative process with the African citizenry.²⁰

As a part of its effort toward silencing the guns, the AU has launched an initiative called “Africa Amnesty Month” for the surrender, collection, and destruction of illicit SALW. The month of September of each year, till 2020, is therefore designed for this purpose. To achieve its objective, the initiative stated that persons who surrender their illegally owned weapons shall not be subject to arrest or prosecution. In this context, many sub Saharan Africa governments were committed to support this initiative as in the case of the Zambian government action to implement a program aiming to encourage citizens to voluntarily surrender their guns.²¹ However, many obstacles, such as the absence of capacity and actual political will of some sub Saharan African countries, impede the effective implementation of this roadmap.

Summary and Conclusion

The proliferation of illegal SALW in sub Saharan Africa is the outcome of both legal distribution, led by national governments struggling to equip their security forces,

and illegal distribution encouraged by unsecured borders, corruption, and arms trafficking. Uncontrolled SALW facilitate conflicts, exacerbate tensions, and tip the balance towards violent confrontations. Also, illicit arms flow reduces the chance to achieve peaceful solutions and negotiated settlements of disputes.

This alarming situation has caused African governments to adopt multiple treaties, initiatives, and programs. The main instrument implemented to regulate the control of SALW is the UN Arms Trade Treaty, but it is coupled with other international and regional instruments on arms control, such as the UN Firearms Protocol, the UN Program of Action and its International Tracing Instrument, and the Nairobi Protocol.

¹ Freedom C. Onuoha, “Porous Borders and Boko Haram’s Arms Smuggling Operations in Nigeria,” Aljazeera Centre for Studies, September 8, 2013, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://studies.aljazeera.net/en/reports/2013/09/201398104245877469.html>.

² Ibid.

³ Nelson Alusala, “Africa and Arms Control Challenges and Successes,” ENACT Africa, 03 April 2018, accessed January 28, 2019, <https://enactafrica.org/research/policy-briefs/africa-and-arms-control-challenges-and-successes>, 4.

⁴ The Small Arms Survey is a global center of excellence whose mandate is to generate impartial, evidence-based, and policy relevant knowledge on all aspects of small arms and armed violence. It is the principal international source of expertise, information, and analysis on small arms and armed violence issues, and acts as a resource for governments, policymakers, researchers, and civil society. It is located in Geneva, Switzerland, at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies.

⁵ Small Arms Survey, *Diversion of Arms and Ammunition in Peace Operations, Observations Based on Missions in Sudan and South Sudan* (Geneva, Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, September 2015), accessed January 28, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/about-us/highlights/highlights-2015/highlight-rn54-diversion.html>, 1.

⁶ Al Katanty, Djaffar, “Congo’s Kabila Appoints Army Chief under U.S., EU Sanctions for Alleged Violence,” *Reuters*, July 15, 2018, accessed January 30, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-congo-security-military/congos-kabila-appoints-army-chief-under-u-s-eu-sanctions-for-alleged-violence-idUSKBN1K50K4>.

⁷ “Small Arms and Light Weapons: Controlling the Real Instruments of War,” Arms Control Association, 1 August 1998, accessed January 30, 2019, https://www.armscontrol.org/act/1998_08-09/mkas98.

⁸ Elli Kytömäki and Valerie Yankey-Wayne, *Five Years of Implementing the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons* (Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 2006), 28.

⁹ Small Arms Survey, *Efficacy of Small Arms Control Measures and National Reporting: Learning from Africa* (Geneva, Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, August 2013), 1.

¹⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “The Firearms Protocol,” United Nations, accessed January 31, 2019, <http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/firearms-protocol/the-firearms-protocol.html>.

¹¹ United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, *Information Bulletin*, no. 1 (October 23, 2018), United Nations, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/2018/10/23/savinglives-issue1/>.

¹² United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, “Programme of Action on Small Arms and its International Tracing Instrument,” United Nations, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/salw/programme-of-action/>.

¹³ United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, “International Tracing Instrument,” United Nations, 2017, accessed January 2, 2019, https://s3.amazonaws.com/unoda-web/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2018-03-22-ITI_UNODA_PrepCom.pdf.

¹⁴ United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, “Arms Trade,” United Nations, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/convarms/att/>.

¹⁵ “Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA),” Small Arms Survey, May 16, 2012, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/tools/ro-poa/profiles-of-regional-organizations/Africa/recsa.html>.

¹⁶ Republic of Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Djibouti, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, State of Eritrea, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of the Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Uganda, *The Nairobi Protocol for the Prevention, Control and Reduction of SALW in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa*, April 21, 2004, accessed

January 2, 2019, <http://www.poa-iss.org/RegionalOrganizations/RECSA/Nairobi%20Protocol.pdf>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Premium Times, “2014 31st National Radio Science Conference (NRSC),” April 2014, accessed March 22, 2019, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/national-conference/wp-content/uploads/National-Conference-2014-Report-August-2014-Table-of-Contents-Chapters-1-7.pdf>.

¹⁹ “African Union Master Roadmap of Practical Steps to Silence the Guns in Africa by Year 2020 (Lusaka Master Roadmap 2016),” accessed January 2, 2019, <https://issAfrica.org/pscreport/uploads/AU%20Roadmap%20Silencing%20Guns%202020%20pdf%20en.pdf>, 1.

²⁰ “About Agenda 2063,” African Union Headquarters, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://au.int/en/agenda2063/about>.

²¹ “Zambia to Launch Voluntary Gun Surrender Program,” CGTN Africa, accessed January 31, 2019, <https://Africa.cgtn.com/2018/09/11/zambia-to-launch-voluntary-gun-surrender-program/>.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to answer the question: How does the illegal proliferation of SALW threaten the security in sub Saharan Africa? Chapter 1 presented an overview of sub Saharan Africa in terms of geography, population, economy, culture, current security situation, and finally stated the primary and secondary research questions. Chapter 2 reviewed literature covering the existing body of knowledge on SALW proliferation in sub Saharan Africa, primarily the diverse factors contributing to arms flow and the multiple political initiatives and instruments adopted to address this issue in this region.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the research methodology that the author used to analyze the research topic. This study is a qualitative methodology describing and analyzing illegal SALW proliferation using Nigeria as a case study. The aim is to understand the current situation through the identification of direct and indirect factors of illegal SALW proliferation undermining the security in Nigeria. Then, the study identifies reasonable measures to mitigate the destructive effects of illegal SALW circulation in order to achieve a better security end state using a combination of national power instruments namely Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic (DIME) means.

Qualitative Methodology

This research will use qualitative methodology based on a case study. In opposition to quantitative research, which uses numerical data to identify significant

trends leading to the determination of causal and correlative relationships between multiple variables, qualitative research is a main research methodology in social science. The purpose of qualitative research is understanding the interaction of factors of a specific phenomenon through the collection, analysis, and interpretation of non-numerical data. In other words, the qualitative research enables one to learn about some aspects of the real social world and to generate new understandings that can be exploited.¹

Common Characteristics to Qualitative Research

Qualitative research takes place in the field. In contrast to experimental laboratory conditions, qualitative research is oriented toward the natural (real) world by gathering data about sensory experience: what people see, feel, hear, taste, and smell.²

Qualitative research uses multiple methods. These methods are interactive and humanistic such as the techniques of interviewing, observing, gathering documents, and analyzing material culture.

Qualitative research focuses on context. A detailed understanding is gained by exploring the complexities of the lived world.

Qualitative research is emergent rather than prefigured. Researchers try not to impose a rigid framework prior to the study.

In contrast with quantitative research approaches, qualitative research focuses on description, analysis, and interpretation.

Major Qualitative Research Genres

There are various designs or strategies of inquiry to qualitative research. Examples of the major genres (designs) are ethnography, phenomenology, sociolinguistic research, and case. Each genre has its purpose, method, and traditional and critical questions. Ethnographic genre seeks to understand the culture of people or settings, phenomenological genre seeks to understand the lived experiences of a small number of people, sociolinguistic genre looks for meaning in words, gestures, and signs, while the case studies genre seeks to understand a larger phenomenon through intensive study of one specific instance.³

However, it is very important to mention that qualitative research has both benefits and shortcomings. On the positive side, qualitative researchers value the messiness of the lived world since they assume that an in-depth understanding of a specific phenomenon is gained by exploring its complexities and the context in which attitudes, behaviors, interactions, events, and social processes interact.

Also, the set of methods (designs/genre) used in qualitative research has the benefit of being flexible. Researchers generally tend to use a conceptual framework that can be changed, modified, and refined once more intriguing questions are discovered.

On the negative side, researchers may influence the data by bringing personal bias to their interpretation of the findings. Therefore, one should use caution and in depth analysis to eliminate or reduce these types of research bias. Finally, the findings are not usually generalizable since the study's scope is fairly limited.⁴

In regard to the above explanation, the qualitative research methodology is more suitable as it allows an in depth understanding (analyzing and interpreting) of how the

illegal SALW flow threatens the security and stability of sub Saharan African countries. The analysis and interpretation of data will highlight the main factors and obstacles that challenge the security of the country used in the case study. Thus, the study will underline appropriate measures the country can implement to mitigate the issue by using the DIME approach.

Why is a case study the focus in this thesis?

There are many different definitions of case study as a research method. Still, the definition given by the American social scientist Robert K. Yin is probably one of the most cited and useful. The definition has two parts: (1) the scope of a case study inquiry and (2) its features.

1. “A case study may be defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident.
2. A case study inquiry copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to coverage in a triangulation⁵ fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.”⁶

The case study research is the preferred method in situations when the main research question is a “how” or “why” question and in which multiple sources of evidence are used. These sources are the existing literature and theoretical perspectives

that provide relevant data which facilitate understanding and help us to answer the research question.⁷

Case studies use descriptive, heuristic, and inductive modes through multiple, flexible methods. What is going on in this case? what are the actors doing? how are they doing it? and what are the outcomes? are generally the traditional questions formulated in case studies. The critical question that is generated from the previous questions could be: how do the patterns of action and interaction in this case affect power relationships? do they produce existing inequalities? and how? ⁸

In regard to the strengths and advantages of the case study and the limitations and delimitations mentioned in chapter 1, the thesis uses the case study of Nigeria to better gain the understanding of the illicit SALW proliferation phenomenon. The result is the depth of description that may, by analogy, shed light on or provide insights about similar cases in other sub Saharan Africa countries. The choice of Nigeria for the case study can be explained by the fact this country is subject to significant contrasts. Nigeria is a vast territory with an area of 356,669 square miles (ranked 14 in Africa).⁹ It has the highest gross domestic product (GDP) with \$376.284 billion (according to International Monetary Fund statistics in 2017) and the largest population in Africa (over 199 million in 2019).¹⁰ However, Nigeria remains a country with high levels of poverty.

Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic Approach

In order to mitigate the destabilizing effects of illegal SALW proliferation, Nigeria has to consider the implementation of an integrated approach that incorporates all national power instruments. First, the government must understand the complexities and the context in which SALW proliferate. Then, after identifying the obstacles impeding

the achievement of the desired end state, Nigeria has to efficiently use its national resources. These resources are integrated through the Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic instruments.

¹ Gretchen B. Rossman and Sharon F. Rallis, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research: Learning in the Field*, 4th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2017), 4.

² Ibid., 8.

³ Ibid., 81.

⁴ “What Is Qualitative Research?” ThoughtCo, January 14, 2019, accessed February 30, 2019, <https://www.thoughtco.com/qualitative-research-methods-3026555>.

⁵ Triangulation: A method used in qualitative research that involves crosschecking multiple data sources and collection procedures to evaluate the extent to which all evidence converges.

⁶ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2014), 16-17.

⁷ USC Libraries, “Organizing Your Social Sciences Research Paper: Theoretical Framework,” University of Southern California, accessed March 30, 2019, <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/theoreticalframework>.

⁸ Rossman and Rallis, *An Introduction to Qualitative Research: Learning in the Field*, 81.

⁹ “Which Countries Border Nigeria?” World Atlas, August 09, 2018, accessed January 30, 2019, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/which-countries-border-nigeria.html>.

¹⁰ “Report for Selected Countries and Subjects,” International Monetary Fund, accessed January 16, 2019, <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2018/01/weodata/weoselgr.aspx>.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

This chapter analyzes data and facts to answer the primary research question: How does illicit SALW proliferation threaten the security and stability in sub Saharan Africa? In addition, the qualitative study will help answer three secondary research questions:

1. What are the main factors causing the illegal proliferation of SALW in sub Saharan Africa?
2. Who are the main stakeholders in this issue?
3. How can we mitigate the effects of SALW proliferation in this region?

The escalation of armed violence and criminal activities is undoubtedly the function of the vast availability of SALW. The proliferation of illicit SALW in Nigeria serves as a case study to better answer the defined questions. First, the study focuses on identifying the main supply factors causing the illegal proliferation of SALW. Then, the researcher analyzes the threats of these arms on Nigerian security, especially in the Niger Delta and the Northern part of the country.

Factors Causing the Illegal Proliferation of SALW

Large Porous Borders

The highly porous and ill-defined borders of many sub Saharan Africa countries facilitate the illegal SALW proliferation exacerbating violence and human suffering. Despite the effort of security institutions like the armed forces, police, and customs service, Nigerian borders are described as large and porous. Located on the Western side

of Africa, Nigeria is a vast country covering an area of 356,669 square miles, the country's borders have a length of approximately 2,515 miles. Nigeria shares borders with four countries: Niger for 930 miles to the North, Chad for 54 miles to the North-East, Cameroon for 10,050 miles to the East, and Benin for 480 miles to the West.¹ Along the Southern Atlantic coastline in the Gulf of Guinea, the maritime border has a length of 530 miles with numerous seaports. The illicit arms and ammunition trafficking occurs primarily in the oil-rich Niger delta and in the North Eastern part of Nigeria where the terrorist group of Boko Haram is very active.

The poor identification of many sub Saharan African borders impedes cooperation among national border security representatives in fighting against illegal arms proliferation. All over the world, national borders generally evolved to reflect its peoples' heritage in terms of linguistic, ethnic, and occasionally religious partitions. However, sub Saharan Africa borders are defined differently. The borders were defined by European colonialists who divided African territories based on colonial interests rather than cultural and socio-economic considerations of local communities. This situation regarding borders has always created tensions between Nigeria and its neighboring countries. On Nigeria's South-East border, despite the official handover of the oil-rich Bakassi peninsula by Nigeria to Cameroon in 2006 under the International Court of Justice verdict, ending years of border dispute, many bloody clashes occur from time to time claiming lives. As an example, in 2017, 97 fishermen were killed in the Bakassi peninsula by the Cameroon forces when a Cameroonian paramilitary unit was enforcing a \$300 fishing levy.²

Unfortunately, instead of an advanced cross-border cooperation to fight illicit activities, many clashes have occurred between security forces of Nigeria and its bordering countries or between the indigenous communities and local officials. This situation makes the circulation of people, drugs, and more specifically arms and ammunition difficult to control, especially when the sub Saharan African countries deploy insufficient capabilities.

Militarized Society

Since their independence from European colonialism, many sub Saharan African countries have suffered from the militarization of the society, contributing to the existence of large stockpiles of SALW. As Nigeria gained its independence from Britain in 1960, the military establishment imposed severe restrictions on many ethnic groups, resulting in violent clashes and sporadic armed conflicts. This situation has led to a large number of SALW circulation, especially after the Nigerian civil war from 1967 to 1970.

Similarly, even though military rule ended in 1999, many fights occurred between ethnic groups and the local communities were obliged to protect their lives, families, tribes, and properties by acquiring arms and ammunition. According to the United Nations Centre for Peace and Disarmament, there are approximately 500 million assorted firearms in West Africa, of which 70 per cent, approximating 350 million, are in Nigeria.³ This significant number of SALW can be explained by the rise in demand due to multiple reasons.

In many parts of Nigeria, recurrent armed conflicts have pushed individuals and communities to procure small arms. Within a climate of fear and scarcity, local populations consider weapons as being vital for self-defense, tribal security, and hunting.

The acquired firearms are used to fight against armed groups and criminal gangs or during inter-religious clashes.

Another factor of the proliferation of small arms is craft weapons production. Although, this category of SALW is considered illegal by the Nigerian government, the traditional production of firearms flourishes for several reasons. First, the artisanal arms are fabricated by hand, and with less expertise and, therefore, they are not expensive in comparison to industrially manufactured and sophisticated weapons. Second, in some Nigerian states, arms ownership and clandestine craft production of firearms is a tradition often transmitted from one generation to the next within the same family. The craft weapons are used in under-policed areas, for hunting, to celebrate traditional and cultural festivities, and as a main income generating activity.

Based on extensive research in four Nigerian states (Adamawa, Anambra, Benue, and Plateau) conducted by the National SALW Survey between May and July 2017, 17 per cent of civilians possess craft weapons in rural areas and 10 per cent in urban areas (see figure 4). Research points out that traditional communities are still strongly attached to the traditional firearms as symbols of power, wealth, and prestige. In addition, in the surveyed Nigerian states, craft producers employ a variety of blacksmithing techniques to produce several types of arms varying from muzzle-loading ‘Dane guns’ to 9 mm semiautomatic pistols based on Beretta models, and to assault rifles and sub-machine guns.⁴

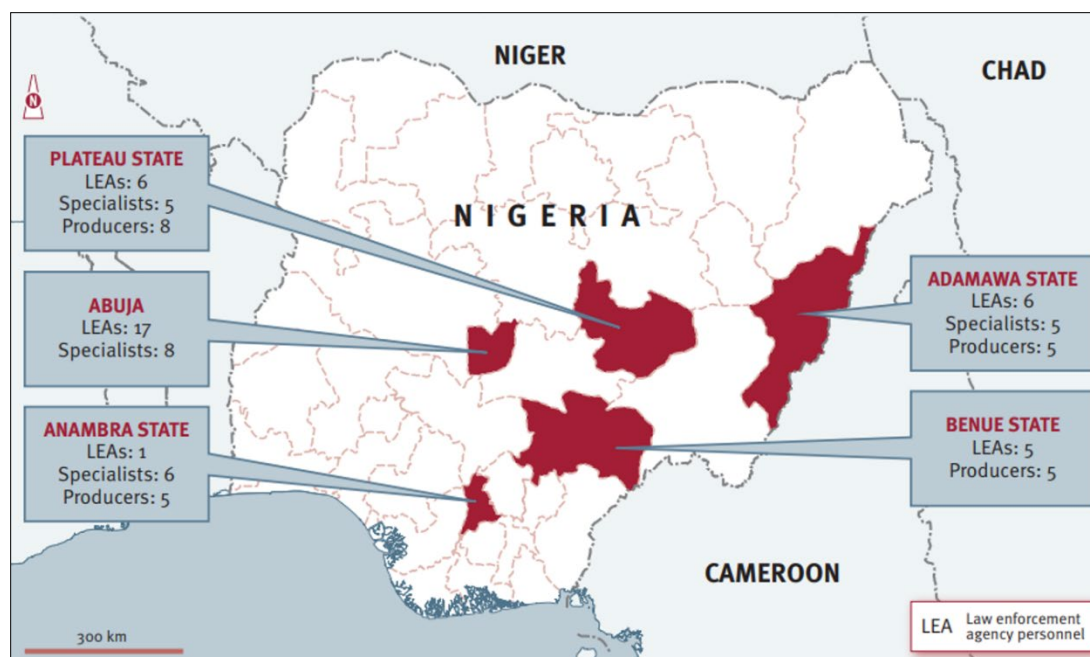


Figure 4. Areas of Field Research and Number of Key Informant Interviews Conducted, Nigeria, 2017

Source: Matthias Nowak and André Gsell, *Handmade and Deadly Craft Production of Small Arms in Nigeria* (Geneva, Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, June 2018), 6, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Nigeria-craft-weapons.pdf>.

The inquiry also revealed that the share of crimes committed using craft firearms is significant in Nigeria. In Benue and Plateau states, traditional weapons were used to commit more than 50 per cent of crimes, including armed robberies, muggings, kidnappings for ransom, and terrorism activities (see figure 5).⁵

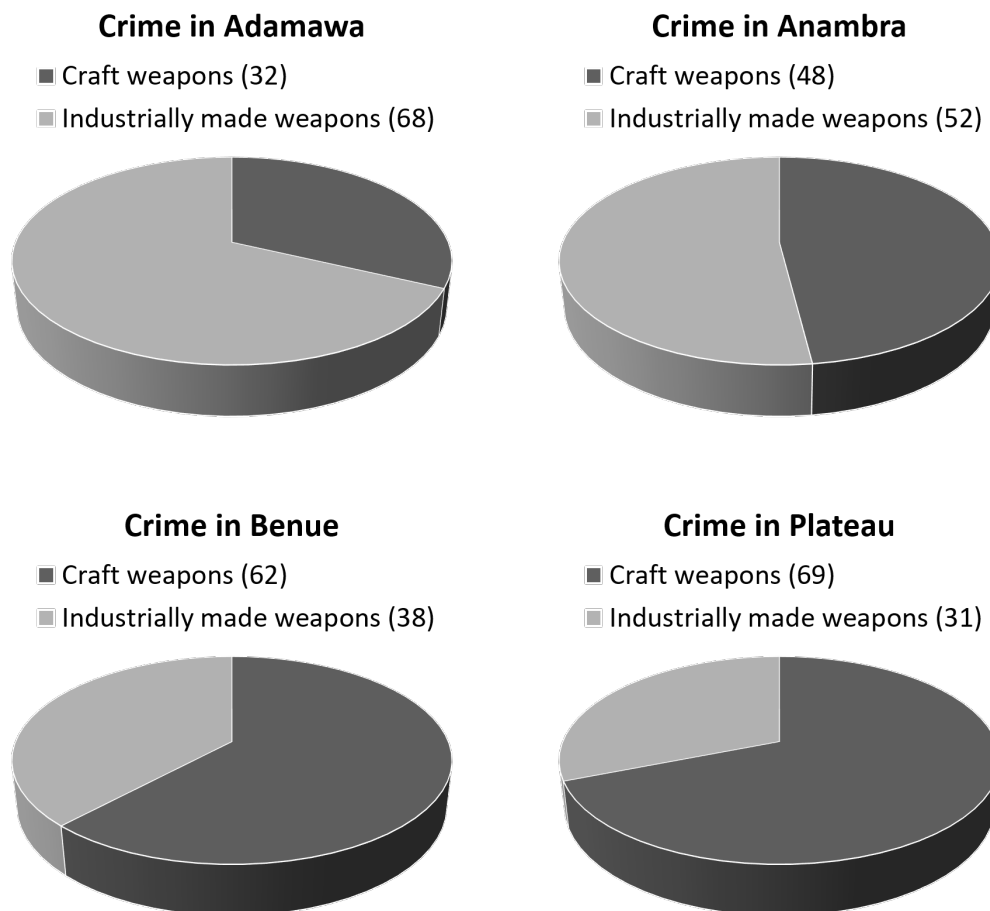


Figure 5. Reported Share (Percent) of Craft Weapons Used to Commit Crimes Involving Firearms, According to Law Enforcement Agency Personnel and Specialist Interviews, Nigeria, 2017

Source: Matthias Nowak and André Gsell, *Handmade and Deadly Craft Production of Small Arms in Nigeria* (Geneva, Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, June 2018), 6, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Nigeria-craft-weapons.pdf>.

Limited Capacities to Control Illegal SALW Flow

Sub Saharan African governments deploy insufficient resources to address the issue of illegal SALW flow. Since the return to democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999, the principal security force responsible for security and law and order is the police supported

by the army, the navy, the customs service, and the Mobile Police Unit. However, these security forces lack effective resources and training, especially given the lengthy porous nature of the borders. The few Nigerian officials deployed along the borders and at key entry points are incapable of controlling the illegal traffic of arms. According to the Inspector General of Police, Ibrahim Idris's declaration in September 2017, the Nigeria Police Force was operating at a ratio of one officer to 600 people, which is far below the UN policing ratio of one to 400 persons. This means that the federal government has to recruit 31,000 police officers annually over the next five years to meet effective policing requirements across the country.⁶

The inability of the security forces has led to the creation of security gaps that often push local communities to establish their own local security arrangements. Two major actions taken by these communities are the use of vigilante groups and the establishment of community armories. Vigilante Groups of Nigeria (VGN) is a non-governmental organization proliferating in the 1990s with the headquarters in Kaduna and 12 zonal offices across the whole country. Examples of VGN are many. In 1998, the Bakassi Boys was initially a group patrolling the Ariaria market in Aba, South-East of Nigeria. This group quickly spread across the city and was successful in preventing crime. In 2000, the state government renamed them the Abia State Vigilante Service, providing them with funds and equipment. However, this Vigilant Service was criticized for misuse of force including political killings. Another example of a VGN is the Hisbah Vigilante Group, which operates in Zamfara and Kano states in Northern Nigeria. In 2000, they implemented Sharia law in this area. By 2003, laws were passed to regulate the Hisbah to become a highly structured organization, operating in uniforms and marked

vehicles, and broadcasting a weekly radio program. However, the Hisbah was accused of force abuses and they have often clashed with the federal police. These two VGN continue to operate in spite of the federal bans implemented in 2006.⁷

Generally, this community based security policing organization is saddled with the role of reducing criminal acts, protecting lives and properties, providing intelligence information to the police, and arresting and handing over suspected criminals to the police.⁸ However, even though these unregulated VGN seem to have enhanced community security and reduced crime in some cases, they have sometimes misused or abused force. Thus, they cannot be as effective as the governmental police force.⁹

Weak Arms Control Mechanisms

The Nigerian government failure to implement national legislation on SALW proliferation worsened national security. After the civil war from 1967 to 1970, the Nigerian government's failure to execute a comprehensive disarmament and arms destruction program aggravated the proliferation of illicit arms trafficking. In addition, Nigeria failed to convert some of the armed militias into professional and disciplined national army or police forces.

Guided by a ECOWAS moratorium and code of conduct on the import, export and manufacture of light weapons in Africa, as well as the Programme for Coordination and Assistance for Security and Development in Africa (PCASED), Nigeria established a National Committee (NATCOM) to monitor the illicit circulation of arms as directed by the PCASED. However, this NATCOM has achieved poor results in terms of reduction of SALW. The first NATCOM was created in July 2000 and focused on the proliferation and illegal trafficking of SALW in order to provide answers on the sourcing of illegal

small arms and to collect information on SALW proliferation in Nigeria. The second NATCOM created in May 2001, aimed at implementing the 1998 ECOWAS Moratorium. Unfortunately, these NATCOMs have accomplished very little due to the absence of political will, chronic underfunding, corruption of law enforcement agencies, and lack of institutional capacity and technical expertise. Rather than being established as an independent commission the committee has been placed under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Staffing of the Committee is not permanent, but rather individuals with other full-time appointments are asked to serve in the Committee. The Committee produced an ambitious work plan in 2003, but was unable to implement these activities.¹⁰

Indirect Contributing Factors of Illegal SALW Flow

The lack of economic opportunities and social injustice, in addition to an environment of poor governance, and political corruption constitute indirect contributing factors that create favorable conditions to use the available SALW in sub Saharan countries. The lack of economic opportunities to create more employment for the growing population indirectly contributes to the growth of societal dissatisfaction that sometimes leads to violent and criminal activities in sub Saharan Africa. Sub Saharan Africa has the youngest and fastest growing population of any region in the world. Nigeria currently is the seventh largest country in the world in terms of population with 199 million people in 2019.¹¹ This situation substantially underscores the need for sustainable economic growth to ensure more job opportunities for the increasing young population.

However, Nigeria's inability to provide sufficient jobs, especially in the Northern part of the country, has created discontent among the population leading, in some

extreme cases, to the use of the existing weapons to protest, deter, and threaten the national government. More importantly, armed gangs and radical groups such as Boko Haram exploit the social malaise of local communities and government ineffectiveness to drive the North-East part of Nigeria to instability and social unrest. According to the quarterly journal published by the Center for Complex Operations at the National Defense University, PRISM, Boko Haram's original argument regarding the unemployment problems is, "these people go to college, they come out, and then they have nothing! Western education is really giving them nothing."¹²

In the North-East geopolitical states of Nigeria (Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe), social injustice encompasses lower rates in basic social standards such as health care, education, and sanitation.

First, despite important investment in the health and nutrition sector in the last two decades, Nigeria did not meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) for healthcare. The health service remains fragile and ineffective, with recurrent eruptions of infectious diseases such as cholera, measles and meningitis (see table 2). Almost half of all childhood deaths were a result of malnutrition. Health care sector challenges also include inefficient public budgets, shortages of skilled health professionals and essential medications, low quality of care, limited private sector in the health service, and weak management.¹³

Table 2. Key Health Indicators for North East States and Nigerian National Average

State	Full vaccination 1-2 years	Deliveries with skilled birth attendants
Adamawa	34.2	37.3
Bauchi	18.3	7.9
Borno	7.7	19.2
Gombe	31.3	21.7
Taraba	25	17.6
Yobe	10.1	20.5
Nigeria	22.9	48.7

Source: The Federal Republic of Nigeria, “North-East Nigeria,” accessed January 31, 2019, <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/25778/110424-v2-WP-NorthEastNigeriaRecoveryandPeaceBuildingAssessmentVolumeIIweb-PUBLIC-Volume-2.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, 52.

Second, there is a significant contrast in education statistics between the Southern and Northern states, in terms of school attendance rates, especially for its girls. Nigeria has the highest number of children out of school in the world as there are 10.5 million children not being educated.¹⁴ Private education is more prevalent; however, it is dominated by children from wealthier families in the South. Religious schools are more predominant in the North and generally attended by children from poorer families. In the North-East, 42 percent of children attend religious schools, however the majority of them do not integrate national education subjects into their curriculum. Similarly, the contrast in the Girls Education Rate (GER) between the South and North is also significant, especially at the upper secondary level. In 2013, the North-East registered a basic education GER of 63 percent at the primary level and 42 percent at the lower secondary level comparing to almost 100 percent in all Southern states. In addition, the quality of

teachers between the North and South is not equal. Qualified educators tend to be in the South, especially in urban areas and private schools. In the North-East, the teaching process encounters significant challenges such as inadequate school facilities and a lack of instructional materials.¹⁵

Third, access to a water supply and sanitation is far below the national average in the six North-East geopolitical states of Nigeria. For instance, in Yobe state, access to an improved water supply dropped by 6.6 percent (50.3 to 43.7 percent), from 2008 to 2013. Similarly, open defecation practices in Borno state, the epicenter of the Boko Haram insurgency, increased significantly by 3.5 percent (19.2 to 22.7 percent), from 2007 to 2011. Open defecation practice in the North-East is one of the highest, at 34 percent with the national average being 28.5 percent.¹⁶

Nigeria's failure to provide decent basic social services has created favorable conditions for upheaval and discontent in the affected local communities in the North-East states of the country. Other factors have also contributed to the deterioration of the socio economic situation. Endemic desertification and flooding interrupt farming activities considered the main source of income for most of the population.

Even though Nigeria is considered Africa's biggest oil exporter with the largest natural gas reserves on the continent, a large portion of the population endures persistent challenges of poverty. According to the World Poverty Clock, Nigeria has 46.4 percent of their people living in extreme poverty (less than \$2 per day per person), with 71.5 percent estimated to be in the North-East zone, the poorest part of the country.¹⁷ Other critical issues include youth unemployment, poor infrastructure, illiteracy and insecurity.

Poor governance coupled with the aggressive competition for political power and economic resources threatens the national security of many sub Saharan African countries. Nigeria is highly diverse due to its large population that encompasses two major religions, Islam in the North and Christianity in the South, and over 350 ethno-cultural groupings speaking more than 500 languages (see figure 6).¹⁸

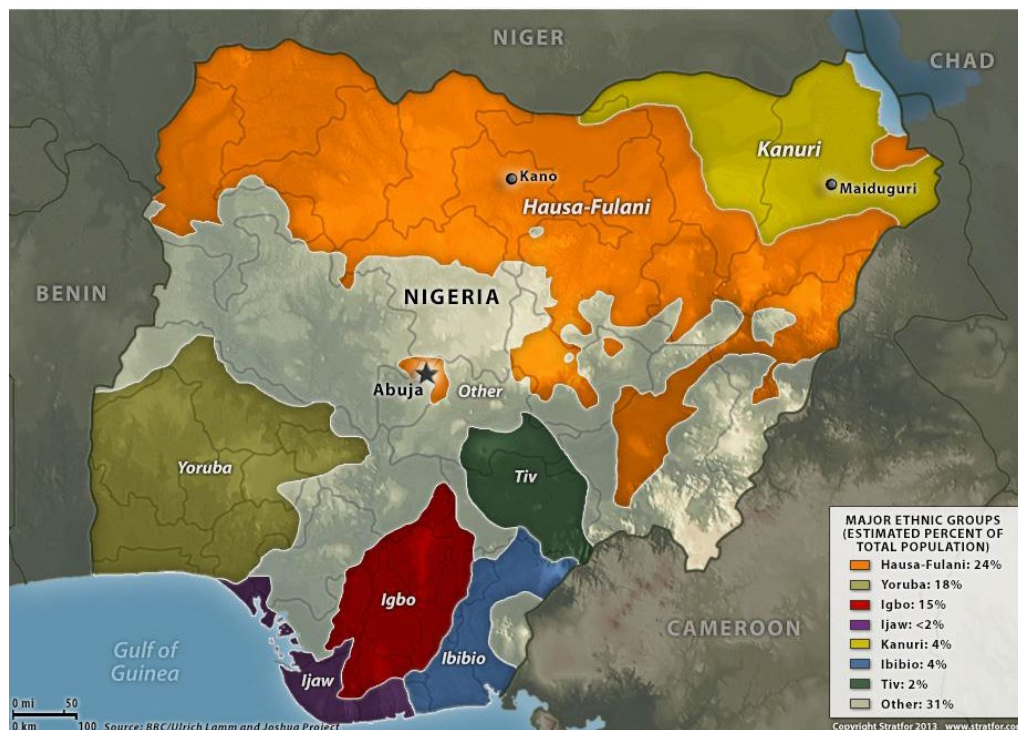


Figure 6. Ethnic Groups in Nigeria

Source: ACAPS, “Society and Communities,” accessed January 30, 2019, <https://www.acaps.org/country/nigeria/country-profile>.

This multi-ethnicity has been exploited, usually for political reasons. Avid political classes exploit the extreme poverty and very low educational development among the mass of the populace.¹⁹

Aggressive competition for economic resources using corruptive practices has impeded sustainable socio economic development in Nigeria. Although corruption is criminalized by a strong legal framework, primarily by the Criminal Code and the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act, Nigerian enforcement of anti-corruption legislation remains weak. Corruption risks are prevalent throughout all institutions, particularly in the oil sector.²⁰ Corruption and poor governance have shaped a negative perception of many ethnic groups, especially when indigenous populations see many natural resources taken away without any improvement of their socio economic life. According to the National Bureau of Statistics a total of 32,70 billion barrels of Nigerian crude oil valued at approximately \$330 billion has been produced between 1961 and 2014, without any significant positive impact on the lives of its average citizens.

External Factors

The widespread availability of SALW across many sub Saharan African countries produces a favorable environment in which VEO activities flourish. Nigeria has suffered from the violence and instability occurring in the Sahel region and West Africa. Despite the significant results of regional and international military interventions into Northern Mali and Cote d'Ivoire, the existence of huge numbers of illegal SALW threaten the security of the region as a whole and particularly Nigeria. In West Africa, reports indicate that there are seven to eight million SALW estimated to be in circulation in the sub-region. One million out of this figure is currently in circulation in Nigeria.

Threats of Illegal SALW on Nigerian Security

The pervasive availability of these weapons fuels political instability, inter-communal conflict and poses a grave threat, not only to security, but also to socio-economic development.

Political Violence

The existence of SALW in Nigeria leads opposing political parties and their supporters to commit violence and atrocities especially during election campaigns. This prevailing security and governance challenge is the result of the hostile political atmosphere created by corruption and ethno-religious competition. Guns have been acquired to threaten, kidnap, and assassinate political opponents.²¹ During elections, the large number of SALW available enabled politicians to create armed gangs and instigate political violence at local and state levels.²² According to Human Rights Watch, after Muhammadu Buhari's defeat in 2011, more than 800 people were killed in post-election protests in the North of Nigeria. In 2015, more than 160 people were killed in election-related violence, according to the European Union.²³

Inter-Communal Conflicts

Inter-communal violence remains a serious concern as illegal SALW have been used almost everywhere in Nigeria. The availability of firearms during an argument can easily escalate the level of violence producing losses in lives and can encourage some robbers to commit crimes that could be avoided. According to a Human Rights Watch 2019 report, competing claims to land and other resources lead to repeated violence between herdsmen and farmers, as well as related cattle theft and banditry in many

Northern states, including Zamafara and Kaduna.²⁴ In June 2018, in apparent retaliation after farmers killed five herdsmen for allegedly trespassing on farms in Plateau state, herdsmen attacked villages in the area, killing 86 and injuring hundreds, including women and children. Following the June attack, suspected herdsmen killed 51 people and kidnapped about 24 others in Numan, Adamawa state in September 2018. Zamfara state was the worst affected by frequent bandit attacks, who killed at least 400 people and displaced over 38,000.²⁵

Violent Extremist Organizations Threats: Abuses by Boko Haram

The proliferation of illegal SALW has helped VEOs to undermine Nigerian security. Multiple factors - including weak governance, corruption, unemployment, and persistent intercommunal conflicts - have created favorable conditions to fuel violence and instability in the North East region of Nigeria. Boko Haram founded in 2002 in Maiduguri, Nigeria, is still the most dangerous VEO operating around the Lake Chad basin, primarily in North Eastern Nigeria, but spilling over into the neighboring countries of Chad, Cameroon, and Niger. With a goal of establishing a caliphate, or Islamist state, in Nigeria, the group has carried out large-scale attacks. These include an attack on the UN headquarters in Abuja in 2011, the abduction of nearly 300 schoolgirls in April 2014, and the multi-day massacre of the Northern town of Baga and surrounding villages in January 2015 that killed approximately 2,000 civilians. In November 2018, Boko Haram attacked a military base in Borno state—looting weapons, equipment, and vehicles, and leaving more than 100 soldiers dead.²⁶

According to a January 2019 Defense Post report, since 2009 Boko Haram has claimed the lives of some 30,000 people, and displaced over two million.²⁷

Obstacles to Sustainable Development

Beyond the direct costs such as the loss of human life and lasting psychological and physical scars on survivors, the misuse of illegal SALW has severe implications for social and economic development in sub Saharan countries and particularly for the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In the Niger Delta region of Southern Nigeria, the indirect costs were comprised of the loss of economic capital and productivity, the collapse of basic social services, and the decline in the quality of life.

Despite the implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program, also known as the Amnesty Program, by the Nigerian government, to answer the increasing violence throughout the prior decade, the proliferation of illegal SALW impeded economic development in the Niger Delta. The Amnesty Program was set up in 2009 by former President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua (2007 - 2010) to put an end to the violent activities of the emerging armed groups in the Niger Delta. It is estimated that Nigeria lost about \$1.6 billion between 2006 and 2008. If the scale of losses is calculated between 2000 –2010, Nigeria would have lost close to \$100 billion to this crisis. This includes the cost resulting from vandalism of oil infrastructures, illegal oil lifting, ransom for kidnapping oil companies' employees and billions of dollars spent by oil companies on corporate security.²⁸ In early 2018, it is estimated that illegal oil bunkering ranged from 10 percent to 15 percent, or a minimum of 200,000 barrels per day out of the official production rate of just over 2 million barrels per day.²⁹

Other negative impacts resulting from the Niger Delta crisis included capital flight and aridity of investment opportunities. As a result of insecurity, oil companies

directed their investment to Angola, Australia, Brazil, Gabon, Ghana and Senegal. So far, Nigeria has lost about \$200 billion of capital investments to the Niger Delta crisis.³⁰

The DDR program offered benefits to militants who handed over their weapons and demobilized. These benefits included a formal education in Nigeria or abroad, small loans to start businesses, as well as a significant monthly allowance of about US\$400. Also, leaders of militant groups were offered highly profitable contracts in the oil industry and other sectors of the economy. Unfortunately, the program failed to achieve its goals for several reasons. First, the sharp fall in oil prices caused difficulties for the Nigerian government to fund the program.³¹ Second, the program did not address the main root of socio-economic problems for meaningful and long-term reintegration of former combatants into civilian life at the same time.

Indeed, the Niger Delta crisis has been raising some social and humanitarian challenges as basic social services collapsed. The crisis has affected jobs as most companies, for fear of losing their staff, have either shut down or relocated to other parts of Nigeria and even other countries. Also, the atmosphere of fear which often deprives the population of necessities to resume socio-economic activities forced some communities to displace into the forests and swamps, often with serious health conditions.

Summary of Findings

Chapter 4 identifies the factors causing the illegal SALW proliferation in Nigeria and how this issue affects Nigerian security and stability, especially in the North Eastern part of the country and the oil-rich Niger Delta. The description, analysis, and

interpretation of the findings show the following factors contributing to illegal SALW proliferation:

The highly porous borders facilitate illicit arms and ammunition trafficking. Also, ill-defined borders such as in the Bakassi peninsula create recurrent tensions between the local communities and impede the cooperation between Nigeria and Cameroon in fighting against illegal arms proliferation.

The violent ethno-religious clashes that Nigeria has witnessed since its independence has led to a large number of SALW circulation.

The craft firearms production in under-policed areas contributes to the proliferation of illegal SALW.

The limited resources deployed by the Nigerian government to address the issue have pushed local communities to establish the VGN who are often accused of abuse and misuse of force.

The Nigerian government failed to implement an effective Amnesty Program. The government has failed to convert the armed militias into a professional national army or security force, which has aggravated the proliferation of illegal arms.

The lack of economic opportunities and the failure to provide basic services, within an environment characterized by poor governance and corruption has created dissatisfaction among the population. This situation has led, especially in the North-East states of the country, to the use of the existing SALW to undermine Nigerian security.

The violence and instability in the Sahel region and West Africa have contributed to the widespread proliferation of SALW in Nigeria and created favorable conditions for the increasing VEO's activities.

The existence of SALW fuels political violence especially during election campaigns, inter-communal conflicts, and threatens the security and socio-economic development of Nigeria. More importantly, the proliferation of illegal SALW has helped VEOs such as Boko Haram to undermine Nigerian security.

How to mitigate the destructive effects of illegal SALW proliferation in Nigeria, as well as the recommendations for future research, will be discussed in chapter 5.

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⁴ Matthias Nowak and André Gsell, *Handmade and Deadly Craft Production of Small Arms in Nigeria* (Geneva, Switzerland: Small Arms Survey, June 2018), 6, accessed January 30, 2019, <http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/fileadmin/docs/T-Briefing-Papers/SAS-BP-Nigeria-craft-weapons.pdf>.

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¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 50.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 56.

¹⁷ Yomi Kazeem, "Nigeria Has Become the Poverty Capital of the World," *Quartz*, June 25, 2018, accessed February 8, 2019, <https://qz.com/africa/1313380/nigerias-has-the-highest-rate-of-extreme-poverty-globally/>.

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CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The human and material cost of illegal SALW proliferation in sub Saharan African countries is immeasurable. The spread and misuse of illegal SALW cause, extend, and exacerbate ethno-religious violence, humanitarian crisis, and armed conflicts within the region. Today it is clear that the devastating effects of these arms are the result of multiple contributing factors. Corruption and limited state capacity, uncontrolled lengthy borders, ethnic and religious divisions, social and economic inequalities, and structural weaknesses remain prevalent across many sub Saharan countries.

Based on the interpretation of the findings from analysis in chapter 4, this chapter will provide major measures Nigeria could take to mitigate the effects of illegal SALW proliferation.

Mitigation of Illegal SALW Proliferation

By understanding that security solutions to illegal SALW proliferation in sub Saharan Africa are not always military solutions, addressing the security challenges of this issue implies the holistic use of all national power instruments. These instruments include DIME actions as the primary lines of effort.

Therefore, instead of treating the illegal SALW flow as an independent issue, the implementation of the proposed approach will focus on addressing the primary factors that create conditions for illegal SALW flow. For our case study, Nigeria must promote an integrated approach across all domains (DIME) to mitigate the destructive effects of

illegal SALW proliferation. The proactive approach will support its fight against armed groups, criminal militias, illegal oil bunkering in the Delta region, and the terrorist group Boko Haram in the North-East of the country.

Political Commitment

Nigeria has to set favorable political conditions to fight effectively against illegal SALW flow. Capable political leadership, good governance, and efficient policies are the major ingredients to succeed in that fight.

The first mission of the political elite is to fight the endemic corruption that negatively affects all the development domains. This requires that political leaders be the outcome of democratic and transparent elections and that these leaders are more responsive to people's needs and concerns and held accountable for their mandate in office. Also, Nigeria has to criminalize any political violence especially during electoral campaigns to discourage the use of guns and threats.

Good governance and transparency in the management of public affairs is vital to build societal trust contributing to stability. Effective leadership and good governance that could eliminate the scourge of corruption, have to be reinforced by appropriate SALW policies.

Theoretically, Nigeria has committed itself to ensure that it has effective national regulations and procedures to prevent and combat SALW proliferation. That commitment is stated and elaborated within UN agreements, particularly the UN PoA, and within the UN Firearms Protocol. Furthermore, these agreements are reinforced by numerous regional arrangements and national laws. Unfortunately, implementation of these agreements has not reached the desired expectations. Consequently, the Nigerian

government must declare a national emergency to combat the illegal SALW flow. The application of national, regional, and international agreements aimed at the mitigation of illegal SALW proliferation must be a political priority. Nigeria must consider the following major points:

- Overhaul and renovate the national legislation governing the possession, manufacture and use of small arms, with appropriate preventive and coercive measures.
- Provide adequate resources to the NATCOMs designated to propose viable solutions to the issues of small arms proliferation, disarmament and related problems and to implement the firearms legislation.
- Criminalize the traditional firearms production. Local blacksmiths who produce firearms should be offered a job substitution.
- Reinforce the implementation of the ECOWAS Convention on SALW, their ammunition and other related materials, adopted on 14 June 2006 and entered into force on 29 September 2009. Though, the success of this legally binding instrument regulating the manufacture, trade, possession, and disposal of SALW, firearms, ammunition, land mines, bombs, and missile systems remains tributary to the commitment not only of Nigeria, but also all ECOWAS state members.¹
- Relaunch concerted initiatives and measures to strengthen security forces in order to prevent and reduce SALW diversion from authorized transfers or holdings. This requires a combination of actions at national, regional and international levels. In this regards, Saferworld, an independent non-governmental organization, London, United Kingdom and the Centre for International Cooperation and Security (CICS), Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford, Bradford, United Kingdom issued the Biting

the Bullet Report providing a number of key issues and priorities to tackle SALW diversion.² The report includes the following measures:

1. Strengthening assessments of risks of diversion prior to authorizing SALW transfers by the adoption of a highly precautionary approach.
2. Preventing diversion through better end-use/end-user controls. The government of Nigeria should ensure that the authentication of end-use certificates is a central part of the SALW transfer licensing process. The recipient should also be bound by a no re-export commitment. Follow-up checks should also be a condition of any transfer license and clear sanctions should apply in the event of a breach of end-use undertakings.
3. Preventing diversion of SALW during transit. States apply widely differing standards with regard to SALW transit. Additionally, multilateral SALW control regimes are often unclear, inconsistent, and incomprehensive. Therefore, substantial international consultations are needed to unify and standardize transit procedures to avoid SALW diversion.
4. Tracing diverted SALW. Nigeria and its neighbor countries have to reinforce the effective implementation of the ITI as a major international tool to trace seized or discovered SALW. The ITI provides clear norms and modalities for cooperation in marking and recordkeeping the diverted arms in a reliable and timely manner.
5. Preventing diversion from SALW stockpiles. It is believed that the majority of illicit SALW have been diverted from authorized official or

civilian holdings, through loss, theft, corruption or neglect. Therefore, Nigeria has to develop comprehensive programs to ensure effective stockpile management, personnel training, and security at every stage of the transfer process in order to address the issue of SALW diversion.³

Finally, articles 50 and 51 of ECOWAS protocol on regional security provide a good framework for Nigeria and their neighbors that can reinforce the control of the circulation of SALW at border posts. However, Nigeria must engage in bilateral cooperation with Cameroon which is not bound by the ECOWAS moratorium since it is not a member of this organization, to fight illegal SALW proliferation.⁴

Efficient Economy Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development

In the objective to achieve national cohesion and sustainment development, Nigeria will need to enhance the welfare of its population by generating more job opportunities and providing basic needs. First, Nigeria should view job creation as a top priority, especially in the North-East region of Nigeria, which is widely exploited by the armed and terrorist groups. This action will allow millions of young people to have a sufficient revenue and therefore reduce poverty, criminality, and avoid rallying the armed groups.

Second, Nigeria has to promote inclusive socio-economic development in all the regions of Nigeria by satisfying basic needs in terms of social protection, health care, education, and infrastructure. In this regard, Nigeria should ensure equitable distribution of health workers, especially in rural areas and the North part of the country. But, this measure could not be achieved without actively managing medical brain drain as in 2017

an estimated of 35,000 Nigerian doctors are practicing abroad out of the 72,000 registered with the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria.⁵

Another action Nigeria should undertake is to provide sustainable income alternatives to the demilitarized groups and individuals whose source of revenue has revolved around the use of SALW over the period of conflict.

Information Toward Promotion of Civic Education and Culture of Peace

Information tools should emphasize an influential approach to limit the use of arms in the society. Citizen's sensitization, promotion of disarmament programs, and necessity of ethnic cohabitation are the main aspects to combat the proliferation of illegal SALW.

The contribution of local communities in fighting illegal SALW circulation is crucial. First, communities should develop an understanding that acquiring guns needs to be banned or at least regulated in most circumstances. Also, awareness campaigns have to emphasize the tragic related risks resulting from the widespread availability and misuse of arms. Legal owners of arms must ensure safe storage and proceed to the registration of weapons according to the established law.

Public and private media should be platforms of peaceful dialogue between different religions and ethnic communities for better cohabitation and a more cohesive society. More importantly, social media has a significant role during electoral campaigns. The media should be more professional, and fight rumors that might trigger political violence. Meanwhile the federal government has to democratize and guarantee the right of access to information. Nigerian media should focus on promoting a spirit of tolerance, reconciliation, and consensus between opposing political parties and their supporters and

initiate peaceful acceptance of the election's outcomes. Finally, school programs should teach the future generations the virtues of living together in peace and respecting cultural diversity.

Military and Security Forces Commitment

Addressing the challenges of illegal SALW flow means balancing an emphasis on professionalizing of Nigerian military and security forces with an equally serious long-term commitment to improve law enforcement, civilian intelligence, and border security agencies. In this regard, Nigeria has to consider the following measures:

Strengthen stockpile management of weapons and ammunition held by the Nigerian armed forces, police, and state security forces. These forces must codify stockpile management, improve safety and storage of SALW stocks, and firmly implement basic security measures. In this context, Nigeria can enhance the management and security of its SALW stockpiles by applying adaptive measures such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Best Practice Guide on National Procedures for Stockpile Management and Security.

Reinforce the role of the NATCOM by providing appropriate resources and decentralizing its activities. The NATCOM should include members from justice, security, ministry of defense, foreign affairs, and civil society. Also, restructuring NATCOM will enable a more efficient dissemination of information and a greater presence in all parts of the country with a headquarters and state, and community officials.⁶ The purpose is to provide shared intelligence through efficient communication and cooperation and to effectively reduce illegal circulation of illegal SALW, but also to detect, prevent, and control crimes.

Progressively integrate the Vigilant Groups of Nigeria (VGN) into controlled and formal security forces to enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement and avoid abuse or misuse of force. The VGN should receive the appropriate training to professionally merge with the military and security forces of Nigeria.

Increase the capacity of the security forces to identify, trace, and destroy illegal SALW captured from armed groups to prevent such arms from re-entering the illicit market.

Reinforce control of the entry points (seaports and airports), lengthy borders, and transit routes of illegal SALW. Joint road blocks and checkpoints assumed by a mix of military and security forces including the army, police, and customs will provide superior supervision and avoid corruption and conspiracy between arms traffickers and security forces.

Encourage community policing and collaboration to help state security forces in crime detection, prevention, and intervention. Local populace and officials' contribution is highly valuable since the residents in border areas better know the routes and procedures that traffickers use.

Convince communities to surrender their weapons and refrain from acquiring new arms through Nigerian security forces commitment to effectively carry out their mission of ensuring the security of the population. This implies improvement of military and security forces work conditions through adequate manpower, that is well trained, appropriately equipped, and morally supported by their leadership.

Enhance cooperation between Nigerian security forces to include police, customs, military, and intelligence services, in all domains. Sharing information, conducting joint

training exercises to enhance their action against banditry, crimes and terrorism, and coordinating their activities when fighting armed and radical groups will contribute to a significant reduction in the widespread flow of illegal SALW.

Improve cross-border cooperation and information-sharing between security forces of Nigeria and neighboring countries in order to combat the illicit SALW circulation. In this regard, effective cooperation should be directed by international and regional mechanisms and best practices such as the UN ITI, the UN PoA, the UN ATT, and the ECOWAS Convention.

Recommendations for Future Studies

In order to deepen the understanding and appreciation of the sub Saharan illegal SALW proliferation issue, a recommended area of future study is to extend the research to the whole continent by including the North Africa sub region. Since the collapse of Kaddafi regime in 2011, Libya has faced political turbulence and instability that has helped widespread SALW proliferation toward the Sahel region.

This thesis has used Nigeria as a case study using the DIME approach as a framework to mitigate the illegal SALW flow. Future researchers can use another country as a case study to explore and compare the findings, similarities, and differences between Nigeria and that country. Also, future studies can examine in depth one of the aspects of DIME or propose a different framework to approach the issue.

Future researchers are encouraged to reflect on how the sub Saharan African states should cooperate with international and regional organizations, specialized agencies, and neighboring nations, to effectively mitigate illegal SALW proliferation.

¹ “2006 ECOWAS Convention,” Weapons Law Encyclopedia, August 17, 2017, accessed March 25, 2019, <http://www.weaponslaw.org/instruments/2006-ecowas-convention>

² Owen Greene and Elizabeth Kirkham “Preventing Diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons: Issues and Priorities for Strengthened Controls. Biting the Bullet,” Policy Report, February 1, 2009, accessed January 29, 2019, <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/preventing-diversion-small-arms-and-light-weapons-issues-and-priorities-strengthened>, 4-5.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Anatole Ayissi and Ibrahima Sall, “Combating the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons in West Africa: Handbook for the Training of Armed and Security Forces,” United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research Geneva, Switzerland.2005/7, accessed February 10, 2019, <http://unidir.org/files/publications/pdfs/combating-the-proliferation-of-small-arms-and-light-weapons-in-west-africa-handbook-for-the-training-of-armed-and-security-forces-326.pdf>, 34.

⁵ “35, 000 Doctors Have Left Nigeria for the UK, US – Report,” Vanguard News Nigeria, December 30, 2017, accessed March 21, 2019, <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/12/35-000-doctors-left-nigeria-uk-us-report/>

⁶ Moses U. Ikoh, “The Nigerian Army Journal”, American College of Healthcare Sciences, accessed February 8, 2019, <https://beacon.by/softnet/the-nigerian-army-journal/9#/9>.

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