



GHANA

WEAPONS & AMMUNITION MANAGEMENT



INTRODUCTION

In July 2019, the Government of the Republic of Ghana in cooperation with UNIDIR, implemented a national weapons and ammunition management baseline assessment in Ghana. Led by national authorities, in particular by the Ghana National Commission on Small Arms (NACSA), the objectives of this round of consultations were to establish a baseline of the existing Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) activities and procedures in place, to identify areas to be strengthened, and to present recommendations for policy and programmatic responses to build a national framework governing the management of arms and ammunition.

The national consultation offered the opportunity for representatives, experts, and practitioners from various institutions and security agencies in Ghana to engage in dialogue, build trust, and improve needed cooperation between them to design and implement a strong national WAM framework. The exchanges and information provided in the course of the national consultation and bilateral meetings with senior representatives of relevant national institutions with WAM oversight, were consolidated into a report and shared with the Government of Ghana to support its efforts in improving its national weapons and ammunition framework.

This publication is an extract of the baseline assessment report delivered to the Ghanaian national authorities. It is a snapshot of the summary of the main findings and options identified for the enhancement of Weapons and Ammunition Management in Ghana.

It presents the strategic and operational WAM efforts in Ghana as identified during the baseline assessment in July 2019 and highlights the practical recommendations provided to Ghanaian authorities.

GHANA



ACCRA

POPULATION:	4.666 MILLION
REGION:	GHANA
CAPITAL:	ACCRA
ANNUAL GDP:	2.22 BILLION
DATE OF ASSESSMENT:	JULY 2019

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Ghanaian National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons

NACSA

Ghanaian Armed Forces

GAF

United Nations Development Programme

UNDP

United Nations Mine Action Service

UNMAS

West African Action Network on Small Arms

WAANSA

Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Center

KAIPCTC

Ghana Police Service

Ghana Custom Division

Ministry of Defence

Bureau of National Investigation

Minerals Commission of Ghana

Ghana National Firefighters Service

Ministry of National Security

METHODOLOGY

UNIDIR defines WAM in a comprehensive manner covering the oversight, accountability and governance of arms and ammunition throughout their management cycle, including the establishment of relevant national frameworks, processes and practices for the safe and secure production and acquisition of materiel, stockpiling, transfers, end use control, tracing and disposal.

This holistic approach is essential in ensuring that efforts to better regulate arms and ammunition are undertaken in alignment with broader security sector, rule of law, armed violence reduction, counter-terrorism, and peacebuilding processes, and not in isolation. Research emphasis is placed on national and regional approaches to WAM in pursuit of a national and regionally owned process, and to support a 'bottom-up' and evidence-based approach.

This Country Insight on Ghana is part of a series of Country Insights that seek to promote knowledge, and raise visibility and awareness on the WAM context, progress made, and areas for enhancement in the African States that have conducted WAM baseline assessments with

support from UNIDIR. It is aimed to serve as a reference for international partners for providing assistance and technical support for improving weapons and ammunition frameworks in the relevant country.

Information contained in this Country Insight presents key findings and recommendations of the baseline assessment conducted in July of 2019. It does not reflect the progress made or any changes implemented after the assessment and should be taken to be indicative only of the situation at the time of the assessment.

Building on the multi-year WAM baseline assessments in Africa, UNIDIR in partnership with the African Union [AU] and the ECOWAS Commission aims **to enhance knowledge and dialogue among States, regional organisations, the United Nations and expert NGOs on good practices and lessons learned, as well as on the means and methods to further strengthen national and regional approaches to WAM in Africa.**

NATIONAL CONTEXT

While Ghana is widely regarded as one of the safest and most stable countries in West Africa, the Ghanaian authorities have faced a range of domestic security challenges, including localized conflicts over access to resources, political tensions, drugs and arms trafficking as well as armed criminality. Despite a lack of official data on the latter, there is a perception among the population of rising levels of armed crime, particularly in urban areas, including robberies and kidnappings often perpetrated with locally manufactured firearms.

Ghanaian security agencies are also focused on preventing the contagion from the growing threat of terrorism in the region, flowing down from Mali. Cross-border Sahelian terrorist groups are operating in closer proximity to Ghana's borders with Burkina Faso, its direct neighbour to the North, which has become one the main operating theatres for regional transborder al-Qaeda-affiliated

groups. Since 2018, the frequency of terrorist attacks and numbers of resulting casualties, including among the ranks of Burkinabe security agencies, has substantially increased. Most attacks against security forces result in the looting or seizure of significant quantities of weapons and ammunition, thereby bolstering the resources and operational capacity of groups that rely on regional state arsenals as their main source of materiel. Since 2018, groups have also steadily increased IED attacks, including utilizing explosive materiel used in mining such as that found in Ghana which is both imported and produced illicitly in the country.

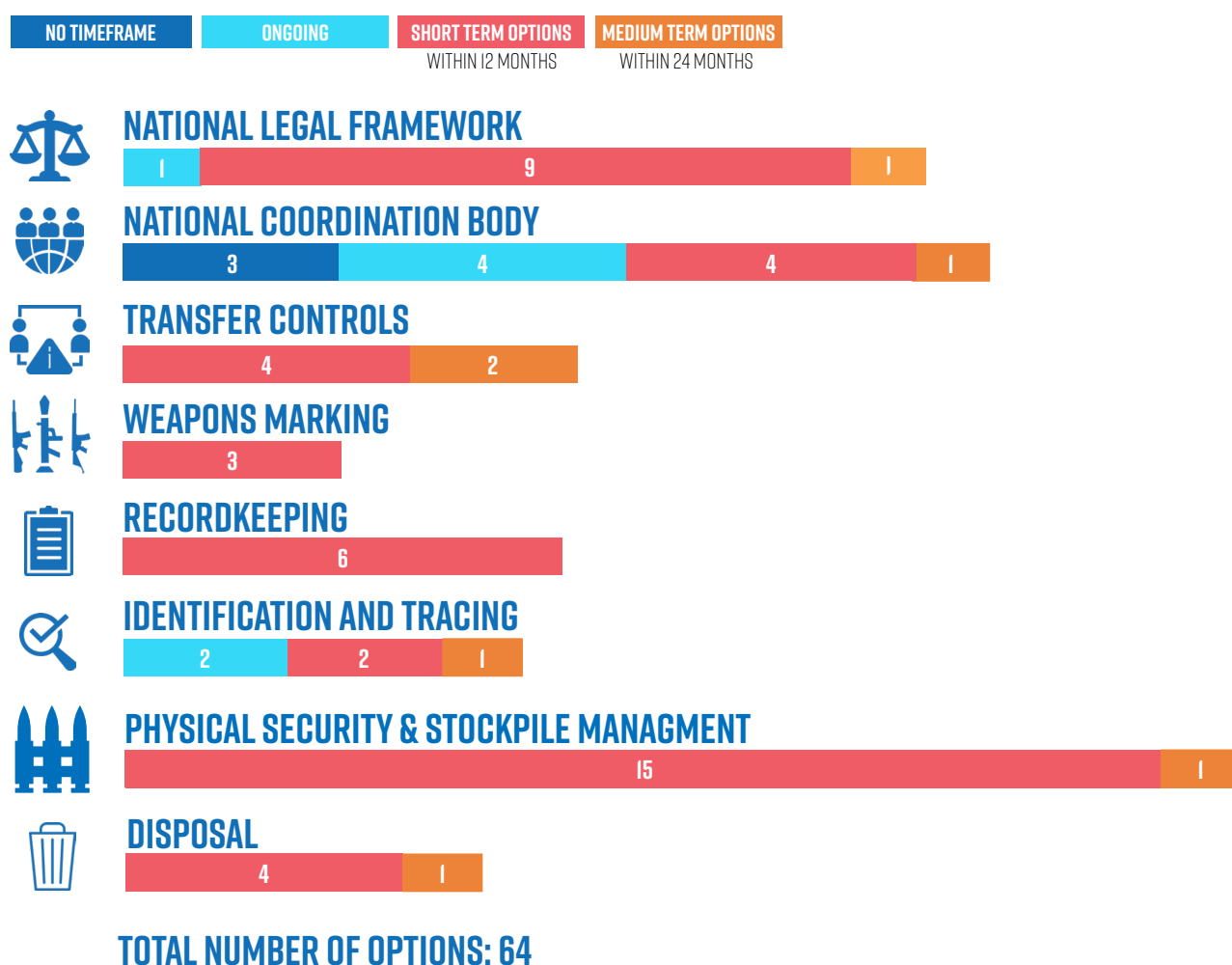
Ghana is on high alert against this significant transborder threat and has focused substantial resources on reinforcing its security and defence capacity, including through the steady increase of its defence budget.

The current atmosphere of stability in Ghana and the existence of political will to reinforce the capacity of the security sector presents a real opportunity for national security stakeholders and institutions to focus time and resource on the design and implementation of a robust weapons and ammunition management framework, thereby addressing some of the key issues set out in this report.

At the request of the Ghanaian authorities, the assessment particularly focused on ammunition management: As

of July 2019, Ghana was facing difficulties with the management of obsolete, unserviceable, and unsafe ammunition which presented significant financial, safety and security challenges, particularly for the Army. The authorities are also especially keen to improve the management of serviceable ammunition storage areas. While the unplanned explosion in the main GAF ordnance depot in January 2019 did not result in any casualties, the event raised significant concerns about the management of ammunition from the authorities as well as the wider population.

OVERVIEW OF WAM ENHANCEMENT OPTIONS



📍 ACCRA, GHANA



TECHNICAL PILLAR I: NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK



KEY FINDINGS

- Ghana is party to most politically and legally binding international arms control frameworks, but at the time of the assessment, lacked resources to achieve effective reporting in line with guidelines set by UN transparency instruments.
- Participants in the consultation highlighted the need to implement a review of the existing obsolete national legal framework governing WAM so it could be brought in line with international instruments and technical guidelines. As of the date of the assessment (July 2019) key WAM activities were not regulated, including brokering, transit, trans-shipment and the processing of seized weapons and ammunition by security agencies. The new framework should also set the foundations for prosecuting non-compliance.
- The design and adoption of comprehensive national WAM legislation would also underpin the design of much-needed WAM policy, national norms and related Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These are crucial tools to support Ghanaian WAM practitioners in planning and implementing their work in a safe and efficient manner.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

1.	Enforcement of legislation to protect lands close to storage areas from encroachment (priority)	Land Administration Project; Special Planning Unit; GAF; Civil Society (awareness raising)
2.	Conduct a comprehensive revision of national laws and regulations on weapons, ammunition, and explosives in line with regional and international instruments, standards, and guidelines. Initial gap analysis and priority identification in relation to options 3 through 11	Board of GNACSA; MOI; Attorney General
3.	Review and develop joint-service ammunition and explosives national standards	MOD
4.	Issue of unlawful manufacture of explosives	Minerals Commission; National Security
5.	Integration of brokering regulations	GNACSA; MOI
6.	Issue of shared responsibility in the authorization of transfers (imports) – Creation of inter-institutional technical Committee	Board of GNACSA; MOI; MOD
7.	Establishing clear and objective criteria to assess civilian access to a firearm license	GNACSA; Police (CID); MOI
8.	Issue of storage of black powder and pyrotechnics	GNACSA; Minerals Commission; Police
9.	Seizures of arms, ammunition and explosives	Police
10.	Assess the institutional structure and placement of the GNACSA to improve its effectiveness	GNACSA Board (proposal); Cabinet (approval)
11.	Provisions for small arms control trainings for government officials	GNACSA

TECHNICAL PILLAR 2: NATIONAL COORDINATION BODY



KEY FINDINGS

- As of July 2019, there were a number of national entities involved in the implementation of WAM activities. However, at the time there was no single, centralised national institutional WAM framework that governed coordination, planning and implementation of WAM activities at both the strategic and operational levels. In order for the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons (NACSA) to fulfill the role of national WAM coordinating mechanism, its place within the government apparatus (currently under the Ministry of Interior) needs to be changed and its mandate broadened. The Commission will have to increase its visibility and secure technical and financial support from Ghanaian governmental actors and foreign stakeholders.
- Based on the outcome of this Baseline Assessment, a WAM roadmap needs to be clearly informed and designed by the future coordinating mechanism so WAM activities are coherent and mutually reinforcing rather than being implemented in an ad hoc manner, as was the case in July of 2019.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

NO TIMEFRAME	12.	Rename NACSA to reflect their broader mandate	
	13.	Position NACSA under the Presidency rather than the Ministry of Interior	
	14.	Define a sustainable model for funding GNACSA activities, projects and programs	MOI; MOF; GNACSA Board; Civil Society
	15.	Identify international and regional best practices in National Coordination Bodies to assess the GNACSA (processes and coordination mechanisms)	GNACSA Board
ONGOING	16.	Identify roles and assign responsibilities for reporting by the GNACSA to international instruments	GNACSA; GAF; Police; Customs
	17.	Review and implementation of coordination mechanism to address technical issues at the operational level	GNACSA Board
	18.	Mapping potential opportunities for collaboration between the GNACSA and national intelligence agencies	GNACSA; BNI; Nat Security; GAF (DI); Police (CID); Customs (Preventive)
SHORT TERM	19.	Equip the GNACSA with broader mandate and adequate resources	Cabinet
	20.	Promote ECOWAS Commission's support to GNACSA	GNACSA; International partners; WAANSA
	21.	Comprehensive review of WAM training needs for security agencies (GAF, Police, Customs, Minerals Com, immigration, EPA)	GNACSA; MOD; MOI; KAIPTC
	22.	Training on MOSAIC and the IATGs	GNACSA; GAF; Police; Customs; immigration; Minerals Commission; International partners; KAIPTC

- 23.** Establishment of information exchange mechanism between agencies to share information on transfers of weapons, ammunition and explosives

MOD; MOI; MOF;
Minerals Commission;
GNACSA

TECHNICAL PILLAR 3: TRANSFER CONTROLS



KEY FINDINGS

- As of July 2019, two main procurement channels exist in Ghana: one through the Ministry of Interior and another through the Ministry of Defence.
- Ghanaian authorities comply with the ECOWAS exemption request and provide the regional organisation with information regarding all arms and ammunition procurement, even for heavy weapons and ammunition which are not covered by the Convention.
- NACSA is not part of the acquisition or the exemption request processes. Any WAM coordination mechanism should be made aware of arms, ammunition and explosives procured by the country.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

- | | | |
|------------|--|--|
| 24. | Defining the role of GNACSA in the arms and ammunition transfer process | Attorney General;
GNACSA Board |
| 25. | Ensure that the board of GNACSA is integrated in the ECOWAS exemption request process | Attorney General;
GNACSA Board |
| 26. | Establish an interconnected system for transit of arms, ammunition and explosives | Customs; Police; National Security |
| 27. | Establish an interconnected system for the internal movements of civilian arms (registry, private magazines) | GNACSA; Police; National Security; MOI |

EQUIPMENT

- | | | |
|------------|---|-----|
| 28. | Acquisition of hardware and software (+network) for data-entry by armorers in the regions for the Police Service (arms registry, movements of firearms and ammunition between magazines, etc) | MOI |
|------------|---|-----|

TRAINING

- | | | |
|------------|--|----------|
| 29. | Training needs analysis for security agencies (including armorers) | MOD; MOI |
|------------|--|----------|

TECHNICAL PILLAR 4: WEAPONS MARKING



KEY FINDINGS

- The Ghanaian authorities have already made significant progress in terms of marking State-owned weapons in line with ECOWAS provisions, particularly those of the Armed Forces.
- Unlike most countries in the region, Ghanaian security agencies are eager to cooperate with NACSA on this issue and complete the national marking campaign.
- Following training, the marking of Police firearms is on the verge of starting; this will allow the Police to conduct a concrete stock-take of their arsenals. NACSA has obtained the green light from the Procurement Authority to procure four additional marking machines to support the implementation of this phase of the marking strategy.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

30.	Investigate suitable marking equipment for polymers	GNACSA; MOI
31.	Develop policy, regulations and programming for the marking of weapons	GNACSA; MOD; MOI
32.	Development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for marking of weapons	MOD; MOI

TECHNICAL PILLAR 5: RECORD KEEPING



KEY FINDINGS

- As of July 2019, all security agencies had an accounting system in place, but while registers at HQ-level were computerised, field units were still accounting for their stocks on paper.
- With regards to civilian-owned weapons, the Police Central Firearms Registry now has access to an electronic database. A crucial resource for managing the data of more than 1.2 million registered firearms and to check the 1.1 million for which licences haven't been renewed and therefore currently remain unaccounted for.
- As of July 2019, there was no centralised database of all SALW held by security agencies and licenced civilians, as required by the ECOWAS Convention. This complicates management of the national stock and internal tracing of weapons.
- While all security and defence forces seize weapons and ammunition, most of them do not record them.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

33.	Creation of electronic accounting systems for arms and ammunition within security agencies	MOD; MOI
34.	Centralization of a national arms database (transfers, seizures, stocks, etc.)	MOD; MOI; National Security
35.	Development of SOPs for recordkeeping	GAF; Police; Customs; Minerals Commission; Immigration; Prisons
36.	Ensuring that electronic databases are compatible with each other	National Security; MOI; MOD
37.	Creation of a central database for explosives (commercial)	Minerals Commission

EQUIPMENT

38.	Procurement of software and hardware for electronic accounting of all arms and ammunition registered in the country	MOI; MOD; GNACSA
-----	---	------------------

TECHNICAL PILLAR 6: IDENTIFICATION & TRACING



KEY FINDINGS

- Domestic tracing of seized or recovered firearms is extremely limited, reflecting the fact that law enforcement agencies tend to regard the capture of illicit weapons as an end in itself, rather than an investigative opportunity.
- NACSA would be eager to develop its international tracing capacity. The Commission has already been responding to several tracing requests as well as initiating some of its own to support national investigations.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

39.	Reinforcing profiling and tracing unit to conduct ammunition analysis (seizures, battlefield, crime)	GNACSA
40.	Conduction of illicit ammunition data collection and analysis	Police; GNACSA
41.	Establishing monitoring procedures for recovered materiel at the national level and coordination mechanisms within the State and with other States to share information on diversion cases	National Security; Police
42.	Development of unit level SOPs for identification, profiling, and tracing of illicit arms and ammunition	Police; Customs
43.	Development of regulations for establishing arms and ammunition identification and tracing units	GNACSA; GAF; Police

TECHNICAL PILLAR 7:
PHYSICAL SECURITY & STOCKPILE MANAGMENT



KEY FINDINGS

- All security agencies have significant needs with regards to storage facilities, most of which date back to the '60s, lack space and do not comply with international technical guidelines.
- Security and defence forces, particularly the Armed Forces, are facing significant issues with regards to ammunition management. The lack of adequate policies, regulations and SOPs, as well as resource constraints, make ammunition management unsafe and inefficient.
- The Army's main Base Ammunition Depot (BAD) presents a high security risk for inhabitants who have encroached into the surrounding perimeter. With the rapid urban development, the old facility now sits in the middle of a very densely populated area. Poor safety and security measures mean that the facility should be relocated as a matter of extreme urgency to avoid a more serious unplanned explosion than the incident which took place in January 2019.
- Security and defence forces all highlighted their crucial needs regarding training ATOs and EOD officers to be able to manage ammunition as there is a severe shortage of qualified personnel. Most participants in the consultations were not familiar with the IATG, reflecting a general lack of knowledge about international technical guidelines.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

SAFETY

44.	Enforcement of commercial explosives regulations	Minerals Commission; National Security
45.	Review ammunition procurement policy	MOD; MOI
46.	Identify the authority that will issue Explosive Limit Licenses for warehouses that store black powder	MOI
47.	Technical review of overall ammunition storage capacity and structure with the view of developing a new storage facility	MOD
48.	Conduct fire risk assessment for each storage facility	GAF; Police; National Fire Service

49.	Comprehensive review of lightning protection for ammunition and explosives storage facilities	GAF; Minerals Commission; International partners
50.	Develop comprehensive firefighting response for all storage sites	MOD; MOI

TRAINING

51.	Building capacity of ammunition technical officers and other ammunition related posts	MOD; MOI; KAIPCTC; International partners
52.	Develop and implement gun safety training for civilian arms users	MOI

SECURITY

53.	Assess the security situation at Police Stations and ensure that arms and ammunition are not stored together when inappropriate	Police
54.	Find a new location for a national magazine for the Police Service to separate the storage of arms and ammunition	Police
55.	Disposal of surplus and obsolete weapons, ammunition and explosives to decongest national magazines	GAF; Police; GNACSA; International partners
56.	Conduct a safeguarding risk assessment in the GAF BAD	GAF

TRAINING

57.	Building capacity on stockpile management security measures for security forces	GAF; Police; Minerals Commission
-----	---	----------------------------------

EQUIPMENT

58.	Explore temporary and movable fit for purpose armouries options	Police
59.	Securing storage sites boundaries	Police; Minerals Commission

TECHNICAL PILLAR 8: DISPOSAL



KEY FINDINGS

- Ghanaian security agencies tend to keep obsolete and surplus materiel in their facilities as they have limited resources to dispose of the materiel.
- The Army is the only body with the capacity to destroy ammunition and explosives and to support other agencies in this regard. However, its capacity is limited and significant stockpiles of obsolete ammunition are awaiting disposal, posing real security risks.
- In addition to limited capacity, there was a general lack of motivation at the senior management and strategic levels to destroy stocks of obsolete ammunition due to their perceived financial value and a lack of awareness of the broader benefits associated with this particular aspect of WAM.
- The absence of any national regulations lead to ad hoc destruction of items and the use of controversial disposal methods, including sea dumping and the potential sale of unwanted materiel to international brokering companies.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 60. | Development of well-structured ammunition and explosives management regulations and guidelines to deal with means and methods of disposal | GAF; Police; Minerals Commission |
| 61. | Conduct disposal of surplus, obsolete and unserviceable ammunition and explosives to reduce the safety risks and potential effects in civilian population due to encroachment | GAF; Police; Minerals Commission; International partners |
| 62. | Development of internal procedures and MOUs that include budget for disposal of ammunition in peace missions (TCC) | MOD; MOI |

EQUIPMENT

- | | | |
|-----|---|----------------------------------|
| 63. | Development of disposal plan with identification of equipment and training needs requirements | GAF; Police; Minerals Commission |
|-----|---|----------------------------------|

TRAINING

- | | | |
|-----|---|--|
| 64. | Strengthening capacity in line with provisions of disposal plan | GNACSA; GAF; Police; Minerals Commission; International partners |
|-----|---|--|



**Knowledge
Ideas
Dialogue
Advice**

GHANA



LOOKING AHEAD

The exchange of good practices and lessons learned in strengthening WAM policy and practice in Africa seeks to enhance the knowledge of States, regional organisations and international partners on ways to establish and implement comprehensive national and regional frameworks governing the full lifecycle of arms and ammunition.

This publication presents a holistic approach to weapons and ammunition management with a special focus on the Republic of Ghana. This holistic approach to WAM contributes to achieving broader peace, security, and development goals including but not limited to conflict prevention, armed violence reduction,

accountable security sector, protection of civilians, and advancing the Agenda 2030.

UNIDIR encourages the Community of States, regional organisations, and relevant international partners to examine the options suggested for enhancing WAM in each Country Insight and use them as a basis to inform the planning, implementation, and assessment of future WAM projects in the relevant country.

ABOUT UNIDIR

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is a voluntarily funded, autonomous institute within the United Nations. One of the few policy institutes worldwide focusing on disarmament, UNIDIR generates knowledge and promotes dialogue and action on disarmament and security. Based in Geneva, UNIDIR assists the international community to develop the practical, innovative ideas needed to find solutions to critical security problems.

www.unidir.org
© UNIDIR 2020

Acknowledgments: UNIDIR would like to express its gratitude to the Government of Ghana for their facilitation and cooperation for the baseline assessment project.

WAM baseline assessment expert team: Manuel Martínez Miralles, Mohamed Coulibaly, Savannah de Tessieres, Paul Grimsley, Nils Holger Anders, Andrew Grantham, and Fred Ampiah.

Original report: Savannah de Tessieres and Himayu Shiotani

Edited by: Manuel Martínez Miralles, Anna Mensah, Natalie Briggs & Erica Mumford

Design & Layout: Eric M Schulz & Kathryn Paletta