



NIGER



WEAPONS & AMMUNITION MANAGEMENT



INTRODUCTION

In August 2018, the Government of Niger, in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the ECOWAS Commission supported the implementation of a national weapons and ammunition management (WAM) baseline assessment in Niger. Led by the national authorities, the objectives of this round of consultations were to establish a baseline of the existing WAM activities and procedures in place, to identify areas to be strengthened, and to present recommendations for programmatic and policy 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 Nigerien institutions and security agencies 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 Niger to support its efforts in improving its national weapons and ammunition framework.

This publication is an extract of the baseline assessment report shared with the Nigerien national authorities. It is a snapshot of the summary of the main findings and options identified for the enhancement of WAM in Niger. **It presents the status of strategic and operational WAM efforts in Niger as identified during the baseline assessment and highlights the practical recommendations provided to the Nigerien authorities as of August 2018.**

NIGER



POPULATION:	24 478 MILLION
REGION:	WEST AFRICA
CAPITAL:	NIAMEY
ANNUAL GDP:	12.93 BILLION
DATE OF ASSESSMENT:	AUGUST 2018

KEY STAKEHOLDERS

National Commission for the Control and Collection of SALW	CNCCAI	Ministry of Economic Affairs	ME
Ministry of Interior	MI	Gendarmerie	
Ministry of Justice	MJ	National Guard	
Ministry of National Defence	MND	Police	
National Army	NA	Customs	
Economic Community of West African States	ECOWAS	Civil Protection	
Water and Forestry Authority		European Union Capacity Building Mission in Sahel	EUCAP-Sahel
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	MFA	Humanity and Inclusion	
Ministry of Finance	MF	Mines Advisory Group	MAG
		Security and Defence Forces	SDF

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, counterterrorism, 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 Niger 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 August of 2018. 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

The illicit circulation of arms and ammunition in Niger continues to exacerbate the wide range of internal and external security threats that the country endures, despite being politically stable since the last coup d'état of 2010. Located at the confluence of the Sahel's most violent conflicts, Niger is facing a growing threat from cross-border Al Qaeda and Islamic State-affiliated groups, leading its security forces into deeper military engagement on multiple fronts in the region. Domestically, the State is struggling to enforce security throughout its vast territory and to tackle the armed violence that feeds on inter-communal tensions and grievances from past rebellions that have been left largely unaddressed. Armed banditry, trafficking of weapons and drugs, and violent community disputes all have a detrimental impact

on social and economic development.

Since 2013, Niger has significantly enhanced its security capacity and become a key partner in the fight against terrorism. Regional and western nations have invested significantly in supporting the development of the country's security sector. Most terrorist activity is concentrated around the border areas with Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria, where security force barracks and their weapons and ammunition stocks have become a primary target. Reinforcing WAM is therefore a critical area that requires attention, not only in terms of mitigating against this risk, but also as part of broader security sector development dynamics in the country.

Niger has served as a key transit route for weapons heading into conflict zones but the deterioration of the country's security situation has resulted in an increase in the domestic demand for weapons, particularly for small arms and ammunition. Sources of illicit weapons are manifold but include diversions from national stockpiles from neighbouring countries due to the collapse of State control over portions of its territory, including Libya, Mali and Nigeria. In addition to looting of military stocks by terrorist groups in the border areas, several cases of diversions by Nigerien officials exploiting the country's ineffective WAM procedures and infrastructure have also been reported.

While Niger has never hosted a United Nations peace operation, the country has a long track record of experience in arms control efforts and policies: multiple Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)-type programmes were launched following past rebellions, civilian weapons collections were conducted, and increasing levels of physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) activity were implemented. The authorities have also actively supported regional efforts to tackle illicit trafficking of weapons through their efforts to implement the ECOWAS Convention. Niger is the first country in the region to have set up an operational National SALW Commission in 1994.



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OVERVIEW OF OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT



TOTAL NUMBER OF OPTIONS: 38



TECHNICAL PILLAR 1: NATIONAL LEGAL FRAMEWORK



KEY FINDINGS

- Niger is party to most politically and legally binding international arms control frameworks but lacks resources to achieve effective reporting in line with guidelines set by United Nations transparency instruments, or the ECOWAS Convention.
- The backbone of the national arms control legislation as of August 2018, dated back to 1963, and was obsolete and did not reflect international and regional binding provisions.
- The Nigerien authorities had completed a full review of the relevant national legislation and drafted a comprehensive Firearms Bill which was under legislative review in August 2018.
- The Firearms Bill includes provisions that are critical to the design and implementation of any effective WAM framework, the adoption of which is now a matter of emergency.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

SHORT TERM

1. Alongside technicians and civil society, continue and finalise the bill review process until its adoption and enactment

CNCCAI; MND; MI; ME/F; ME; MJ; MFA; Senior officials of SDF; General Secretariat of the Government (GSG); Council of State; NA; Civil Society Organisations (CSOs); Technical and Financial Partners (TFPs)

MEDIUM TERM

2. Draft and adopt regulatory texts

CNCCAI; MND; MI; ME/F; ME; MJ; MFA; Senior officials of SDF; GSG; CSOs

MEDIUM-LONG TERM

3. Once the new law has been adopted, disseminate the law and sensitise State actors and the population on its provisions and changes with the former legal framework, in collaboration with civil society

CNCCAI; MND; MI; ME/F; ME; MJ; MFA; Senior officials of SDF; GSG; Council of State; NA; CSOs; TFPs

TECHNICAL PILLAR 2: NATIONAL COORDINATING MECHANISM



KEY FINDINGS

- While a range of security agencies were implementing WAM activities in August 2018, the CNCCAI had emerged as the de facto coordinating body for WAM issues.
- As of August 2018, there was no National Action Plan to guide and plan WAM activities at the strategic and operational levels. While the CNCCAI had created tools and was mobilising resources to implement WAM initiatives, there was no comprehensive WAM framework in place, resulting in activities being delivered in an ad hoc fashion.
- Despite the fact that Niger has never hosted a United Nations Operation, a range of international partners are supporting WAM efforts, including international specialised NGOs, bilateral partners and foreign military partners.
- National ownership needs to be reinforced through better coordination of international support.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

4.	Develop and adopt a new 3-year National Action Plan (2018-2021) taking into account the recommendations of the current report, as well as those activities highlighted in the PSSM Priority Matrix developed in 2016 (CNCCAI/WRA/SAS)	CNCCAI, MND, MI, ME/F, ME, MJ, MFA, Senior officials of SDF, NA, CSOs, TFPs
5.	Sensitise senior civilian and military authorities on the frameworks, institutions and commitments linked to regional and international instruments to which the Niger is bound, in particular the ECOWAS Convention and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)	CNCCAI; ECOWAS; ATT Secretariat; CSOs; TFPs
6.	Operationalise and strengthen the capacity of the CNCCAI regional bureaux in order to use them as a solid basis for the implementation of projects outside Niamey	CNCCAI; MND; MI; ME; MJ; ME/F; CSOs; SDF; GSG; TFPs
7.	Submit an initial report on ATT implementation, followed by annual reports to ensure the active participation of the Niger in the meetings and work sessions of state parties	CNCCAI; MND; MI; ME; ME/F; MJ; MFA; SDF; CSOs
8.	Mobilize capacity and resources for ATT implementation at the national level, and at the international level if required	CNCCAI; MFA; TFPs
9.	Create a coordination forum/working group with international and regional donors and contractors involved in WAM activities, through the organization of quarterly meetings, in order to avoid duplications of efforts and the implementation of activities that do not respond to the needs identified by national authorities	CNCCAI; TFPs

TECHNICAL PILLAR 3: TRANSFER CONTROLS



KEY FINDINGS

- Since the last coup d'état in 2010, the collective procurement system for all security agencies had been abandoned and acquisitions were being processed on an individual and ad hoc basis, resulting in a lack of oversight of weapons procurement and high levels of corruption-related risks.
- Niger became a key partner in the international fight against terrorism in the Sahel. Through military cooperation, the Government was being supplied with significant quantities of weapons and ammunition; however, the security forces had difficulty managing the materiel according to international standards due to insufficient technical and financial resources in August 2018.
- In addition to substantial support from international partners, Niger has significantly increased its national defence and security budgets, including for the procurement of military materiel. Niger had not submitted any request to ECOWAS for an exemption to import weapons at the time of this assessment, despite being required to do so, and continued to face challenges in implementing the ECOWAS Convention effectively.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

10.

ECOWAS Convention:

- To systematically request an exemption to ECOWAS prior to any transfers of SALW, ammunition and related materials (Form A), including donations
- Identify a focal point for exemption requests within the Ministry of Interior
- Encourage the security and defence forces (SDF) to share data related to the delivery of materiel to focal points (to inform Form B)

CNCCAI; MND; MI; ECOWAS; Senior officials of SDF

11.

Ensure relevant technical personnel are present during the delivery of materiel to conduct inspections and ensure it meets the specifications set out in the purchase order

SDF; brokers; MND; MI

12.

Create a committee (inter-ministerial and/or technical) to work on transfer-related questions (implementation of the ATT, ATT reporting, procedures relative to exemption processes within the ECOWAS Convention)

Actor(s) to be identified

13.

Work towards re-centralisation of procurement processes and arms importation management through a single national acquisition channel

MND; MI; MF; ME; MJ

TECHNICAL PILLAR 4: MARKING



KEY FINDINGS

- Marking is a priority WAM pillar for the CNCCAI, which has set up a marking committee and developed a national marking strategy that, as of August 2018, still needed to be adopted by the relevant leadership.
- Despite the existence of this strategy, and the acquisition of equipment and delivery of training, the implementation of marking efforts remains modest at best, mainly due to a lack of buy-in from a number of security agencies whose leadership perceive marking as low priority.
- The implementation of a marking campaign would allow for a national inventory of what is actually held in stocks and the identification of obsolete, hazardous and surplus materiel.
- In line with the ECOWAS Convention, marking should take place prior to any transfers to the country. In the future, Nigerien procurement offices should obligate suppliers to mark materiel before any transfers occur as a condition of sale.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

14.

Sensitise high-level stakeholders about the necessity and benefits of weapons marking, in compliance with the ECOWAS Convention and international standards

Actor(s) to be identified

15.

Finalise the National Marking Strategy and ensure its validation by the national authorities and senior stakeholders in the security and defence forces

Actor(s) to be identified

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| 16. | Request arms manufactures and brokers to mark all weapons in compliance with ECOWAS Convention provisions prior to any transfers. | Actor(s) to be identified |
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| 17. | Find a way to conduct marking on other materials besides iron | Actor(s) to be identified |
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| 18. | Mobilise resources and logistics for the effective launch of the security and defence forces' weapons marking campaign | Actor(s) to be identified |
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TECHNICAL PILLAR 5: COLLECTION AND RECORD KEEPING



KEY FINDINGS

- All security agencies had an accounting system in place, however, while registers at the HQ-level were computerised, most field units still accounted for their stocks based on paper records as of August 2018.
- National databases for state- and civilian-owned materiel as well as for lost, stolen and seized materiel were crucially lacking.
- Shortcomings in recordkeeping within each security agency render the centralisation of data extremely difficult to implement.
- Niger was provided with software by RECSA, to serve as the national database; however, this was not yet operational in August 2018, due to technical issues.
- Targeted sensitisation efforts are required to address the reluctance of security forces to share information regarding their stockpiles with other agencies.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

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|-----|---|-----------------|
| 19. | Address issues associated with the installation of the RECSA database (security and defence forces and civilian weapons possession) | CNCCAI |
| 20. | Security agencies to share information on seized weapons with all security and defense forces and the CNCCAI on a systematic basis | SDF; CNCCAI |
| 21. | Upload data into the RECSA database and gradually install servers for each security and defence force | CNCCAI; SDF; MI |
| 22. | Expand the use of computerised registers from HQ to field level units | SDF |

TECHNICAL PILLAR 6: PROCESSING AND TRACING OF CAPTURED AND SEIZED WEAPONS



KEY FINDINGS

- All security forces seize weapons and ammunition and hold them in their own facilities where they are generally neither destroyed nor stored according to international stockpile management guidelines.
- Due to limited resources and increasing demand, many Nigerien security agencies use serviceable seized weapons and ammunition.
- Law enforcement agencies tend to regard the capture of illicit weapons as an end in itself, rather than an investigative opportunity. The Police laboratory has received forensics training and equipment and would like to be called upon on a more regular basis when arms and ammunition are used in criminal acts.
- While the Nigerien authorities had not sent out any tracing requests to international counterparts as of August 2018, the CNCCAI and representatives of security agencies had received training in weapons identification and tracing processes. Nigerien authorities have to clearly identify the body responsible for processing and issuing tracing requests.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

SHORT TERM	23.	Securitisation and/or destruction of seized material, in compliance with ECOWAS Convention provisions and international standards	CNCCAI; SDF
	24.	Sensitisation of security and defence forces on the handling of weapons suspected of use in criminal activity	SDF
	25.	Identify a relevant entity for issuing and processing international tracing requests and coordinate support from relevant authorities	Actor(s) to be identified
MEDIUM TERM	26.	Develop a national level mechanism on for the exchange of seizure-related information, including domestic tracing efforts and the sharing of investigative outcomes	Actor(s) to be identified
	27.	Familiarisation with INTERPOL's iARMS capability on seized materiel, and employ INTERPOL resources when conducting investigations	INTERPOL National Central Bureau (NCB); SDF

TECHNICAL PILLAR 7: PHYSICAL SECURITY AND STOCKPILE MANAGEMENT



KEY FINDINGS

- PSSM is the pillar on which most WAM efforts have focused to date, particularly on the construction and refurbishment of adequate storage facilities with the support of international partners.
- In order to ensure consistency in PSSM activities and implement them in compliance with international guidelines, the Nigerien authorities as of August 2018 were planning to develop national PSSM norms and encourage security forces to develop relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).
- All security agencies have significant needs with regards to storage facilities and border areas vulnerable to terrorist attacks will be prioritised.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

SHORT TERM	28.	Prioritise security posts and munition storages in border areas most affected by terrorist attacks for PSSM activities	Senior officials of SDF; CNCCAI
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29.

Upgrade and incentivize recruitment for the role of storage managers/armourers by allocating bonuses linked to specialization, and provide a clearer career development path

MND; MI; MF; ME; MJ

30.

Develop national PSSM norms and related WAM SOPs in line with international guidelines (ISACS, IATGs, MOSAIC)

CNCCAI (PSSM Committee); senior officials of SDF; CSOs; TFPs

31.

Identify suitable locations away from urban areas for the relocation and storage of explosive ammunition.

MND; MI; MF; ME; MJ; Ministry of Lands and Housing (MLH); territories/communities; Senior officials of SDF

32.

Involve military engineers in the process of rehabilitation and construction of storage facilities

MND; TFPs; National Fire Service (NFS)

33.

Sensitise the highest executive and security authorities of the defence and security forces on the benefits of effective PSSM

CNCCAI; Senior officials of SDF; TFPs; CSOs

TECHNICAL PILLAR 8: WEAPONS COLLECTION



KEY FINDINGS

- Since its creation, the CNCCAI has coordinated a number of arms and ammunition collections throughout the country, the bulk of which took place before 2013 while an amnesty on the surrender of illicit arms was still in place as of August 2018. The CNCCAI was planning to resume this activity and continue to sensitise the population to the risks associated with illicit weapons possession.
- Participants in the national consultation cautioned that weapons collections and disarmament activities may not be adequate or could even be harmful to the population in areas prone to armed violence and terrorism and where State security provision is limited.
- In order to understand local dynamics fully and design evidence-based programming, the CNCCAI would like to implement a national SALW survey.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

34.

Conduct a national survey on weapons and ammunition in Niger

Actor(s) to be identified

TECHNICAL PILLAR 9: DESTRUCTION



KEY FINDINGS

- As of August 2018, all security agencies had substantial quantities of materiel awaiting destruction, but did not all have the means to do so. This results in materiel being kept in poor conditions and consuming considerable space in armouries.
- While Niger possessed equipment to cut firearms in August 2018, security forces did not always have the resources to destroy ammunition for light and heavy weaponry and would need some support from international partners in this regard.

OPTIONS FOR WAM ENHANCEMENT

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------------------------|
| 35. | Obtain the necessary machines, logistical means and equipment for the destruction of weapons and ammunition | Actor(s) to be identified |
| 36. | Identify priorities and establish a schedule for the destruction of weapons and ammunition awaiting destruction by region | Actor(s) to be identified |
| 37. | Pursue trainings for the security and defence forces on destruction | Actor(s) to be identified |
| 38. | Strengthen the capacity of the security and defence forces and implement a mechanism for the destruction of obsolete weapons and ammunition | Actor(s) to be identified |



NIGER



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 Niger. 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

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.

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