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brief 23

Small Arms in the Horn of Africa:

Challenges, Issues and Perspectives

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brief *23*

Small Arms in the Horn of Africa:

Challenges, Issues and Perspectives

Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold,

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march *2002*

Zusammenfassung

German summary

Das SALIGAD Projekt

Der offizielle Titel des SALIGAD Projekts lautet Small Arms and Light Weapons: Assessing Issues and Developing Capacity for Peace in the Horn of Africa (Kleinwaffen: Bestandsaufnahme und Entwicklung von Strategien zur Konfliktbearbeitung und am Horn von Afrika).

Das Ziel von SALIGAD, das vor zwei Jahren ins Leben gerufen wurde, ist es, Vertreter von Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen und Regierungen sowie Wissenschaftler, die sich mit der Kleinwaffenproblematik beschäftigen, zusammen zu bringen, den Dialog zu fördern und zu erleichtern sowie Kapazitäten für Frieden in den IGAD Ländern zu schaffen. SALIGAD will:

- Daten vor Ort sammeln und die Verbreitung von Waffen in der Region, insbesondere den Einfluss von Kleinwaffen auf die Bevölkerung, erforschen;
- ein offenes Forum für den Austausch von Informationen bieten und das Kleinwaffen-Problem unter Entwicklungshelfern, Politikern und Wissenschaftlern bewusst machen;
- Strategien für den Umgang mit Kleinwaffen auf lokaler, nationaler und regionaler Ebene entwickeln;
- Forscher in der Region, die an diesen Themen arbeiten, direkt unterstützen und so Kompetenz schaffen.

SALIGAD wird von der Bundesregierung, vertreten durch die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ GmbH), und Brot für die Welt (BfW) gefördert. Unter der Gesamtleitung der GTZ wird das Projekt vom Internationalen Konversionszentrums Bonn – Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) als federführendem Institut im Team mit der International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG) durchgeführt.

Wie war die Arbeitsweise des Projektes?

Das Projekt hatte drei Schwerpunkte:

- Feldforschung und Sammlung von Daten durch Wissenschaftler vor Ort in verschiedenen IGAD Ländern.
- Dialog zwischen den verschiedenen Beteiligten aus Regierung und Nicht-Regierungsorganisationen sowie Initiativen vor Ort. Dies fand insbesondere in Kenia und Somaliland statt.
- Erste Schritte zur Fort- und Bewusstseinsbildung von kommunalen Entscheidungsträgern.

Es wurde uns schnell klar, dass wir von den Kommunen lernen können und sollten. Bei unserem Engagement in Garissa, Nord Kenia, und in Somaliland haben wir diese Erfahrungen bewusst angewandt. Diese Perspektive erlaubte es uns, die schon bestehenden einheimischen Kleinwaffenkontrollmaßnahmen sowie deren Durchführungsmechanismen besser zu verstehen und zu dokumentieren.

Welchen Einfluss hatten unsere Initiativen?

Folgende Herangehensweisen waren für unser Projekt wichtig:

- Wir wollten sicher gehen, dass Informationen und Daten nicht nur gesammelt, sondern auch sorgfältig analysiert werden, damit Spekulationen über die Anzahl von Waffen, ihren Umlauf und ihre Verwendung der Boden entzogen wird.
- Die Ergebnisse der Feldforschung sollten den Betroffenen durch das Dialog-Programm nahe gebracht werden. Ein fruchtbarer Dialog begann, der auf tatsächlichen Fallstudien anstelle wie früher nur auf bloßen Vermutungen zum Kleinwaffenproblem beruhte.
- Wir wollten die Konflikte auf kommunaler Ebene gemeinsam verstehen und - möglichst auf Grundlage der Vorschläge der Gemeinden - Problemlösungen zur Kontrolle und Überwachung von Kleinwaffen finden. Dies schließt die Organisation von Trainingseinheiten ein, in denen den Gemeinden die Forschungs-

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ergebnisse präsentiert werden, damit sie im Zuge des Lern- und Lehrprozesses ihre eigenen Kontrollmechanismen entwickeln können. Unser Partner in Somaliland war an der Organisation eines solchen Konfliktmanagement-Trainings beteiligt.

Alle Forschungsarbeiten wurden von Wissenschaftlern und Praktikern aus der Region durchgeführt, um sicherzugehen, dass am Ende des Projekts Fachkräfte aus den IGAD-Ländern selbst über Wissen in bezug auf den Umgang mit Kleinwaffen verfügen. Es war nicht immer einfach, Menschen zu finden, die an dieser Thematik interessiert sind und mitwirken wollten. Viele Wissenschaftler ziehen es vor in Bereichen zu forschen, die politisch weniger brisant sind. Uns hingegen, die wir auf diesem Gebiet tätig geworden sind, wurde klar, dass die Verfügbarkeit von Kleinwaffen, die billig, leicht zu verstecken und von langer Haltbarkeit sind, vieles behindert, nämlich

- humanitäre Hilfe,
- Wiederaufbau sowie
- die allgemeine Entwicklung.

Der verantwortliche Umgang der Gesellschaft und des Staates mit Kleinwaffen ist eine grundsätzliche Voraussetzung für die Schaffung von Gemeinwohl. Denn all zu oft hat sich gezeigt, dass Probleme, die mit gewaltsamen Mitteln scheinbar gelöst worden waren, doch bald wieder zum Aufflammen neuer Gewalt führten.

Mit der oben beschriebene Methode wollen wir einen bescheidenen Beitrag zu der Lösung des Kleinwaffenproblems leisten. Wir glauben, dass es absolut notwendig ist, afrikanische Abrüstungsexperten auszubilden, die die Dynamik der Kleinwaffenproblematik verstehen. Es ist ebenso wichtig, den Schwerpunkt auch auf die zivile Sicherheit in der Region zu setzen, indem die Nachfrageseite bei der Verwendung von Kleinwaffen analysiert wird. Die Arbeit von SALIGAD auf der Gemeindeebene ergänzt so die Arbeit anderer Organisationen, die sich vor allem mit der Angebotsseite und den Liefersystemen von Kleinwaffen beschäftigen. Der erste Teil dieser Veröffentlichung konzentriert sich daher auf die Nachfrage-Seite von Kleinwaffen am Horn von Afrika.

Der zweite Teil der Studie besteht aus den Ergebnissen von vier Feldstudien, die von SALIGAD in Auftrag gegeben wurden. Diese Studien beruhen auf Fragebögen und Interviews bestimmter Gruppen. Sie umfassen Gemeinden, wie in Kenia, aber auch Regierungsvertreter, wie in Gambella. Für die Studien wurde eine besondere Methodik zur Informationserhebung entwickelt sowie Fragebögen und Interviewleitlinien zur Datenerfassung entworfen. Die meisten gesammelten Informationen sind Primärdaten, die auf der Befragung von Betroffenen, Meinungsführern und Fachleuten aus diesem Bereich basieren. Da sich die Autoren mehrere Tage oder Wochen in der Region aufhielten, hatten sie

den Vorteil, neutrale Beobachter zu sein. Die Studien werden durch eine Literaturliste ergänzt.

Mohamoud Jama Omar konzentriert sich auf den Umgang der Gesellschaft und des Staates mit Kleinwaffen in Somaliland. Peter Marwa beschreibt und analysiert ein vor Ort entwickeltes Kleinwaffenkontrollsystem, das *Sungusungu* in Kuria. Seyoum Gebre Sellassie spricht das Problem der Verbreitung von Kleinwaffen im Grenzgebiet zwischen Äthiopien und dem Sudan an. Kizito Sabala konzentriert sich auf Verbrechen, die in Städten mit Waffengewalt verübt werden, und die Herkunft von Kleinwaffen in Nairobi, der Hauptstadt von Kenia. Es sei angemerkt, dass diese Forschungsarbeiten komprimiert und zusammengefasst wurden, um einen besseren Überblick über die Kleinwaffenproblematik in der Region zu gewähren. Manche Forschungsergebnisse wurden nicht veröffentlicht, um mögliche Repressalien gegen Autoren zu vermeiden, die an heikle Informationen gelangt waren.

Der dritte Teil dieser Veröffentlichung fasst zum einen die Ideen der Konferenz [1] in Addis Abeba im April 2001 zusammen, auf der die Forschungsergebnisse zum ersten Mal präsentiert und mit kommunalen Repräsentanten, Praktikern sowie Regierungsvertretern debattiert wurden. Zum anderen verdeutlicht er, wie das SALIGAD Projekt auf unterschiedliche Weise Dialogprogramme in der ganzen Region initiiert.

Mein besonderer Dank gilt den Wissenschaftlern und Protokollanten während der Konferenz, unserem Partner, der International Resource Group for Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG), insbesondere auch den Herren Botschaftern Kiplagat und Adala sowie Herrn Ernie Regehr – um nur einige Namen zu nennen. Ebenso möchte ich meiner Kollegin Isabelle Masson danken, die mit der Unterstützung zweier anderer Kolleginnen aus dem SALIGAD-Team, Tina Kühr and Abeba Berhe, die Texte sorgfältig zur Veröffentlichung bearbeitet hat. Vielen Dank auch an Renée Ernst und Herbert Wulf, die uns bei unserer Arbeit an diesem nicht immer unproblematischen Projekt stets unterstützt haben.

Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold
SALIGAD Projekt Director, BICC

1 Die Konferenz mit dem Titel: “Curbing the Demand for Small Arms in the IGAD States: Potential and Pitfalls”, organisiert von SALIGAD, fand in Addis Abbeba vom 23. bis 26. April 2001 statt. Mitorganisatoren waren die United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) sowie die International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG).

Introduction

The SALIGAD Project

The official title of the SALIGAD project is **Small Arms and Light Weapons: Assessing Issues and Developing Capacity for Peace in the Horn of Africa.** The project has been operational for the last two years. Our basic aim is to promote and facilitate dialogue, and to build capacity for peace in the IGAD countries[1] by bringing together representatives from NGOs, the academic community and governments on small arms and light weapons (SALW) issues.

More specifically, the project's objectives are to:

- Promote indigenous data collection mechanisms to study arms diffusion within the region, with an emphasis on the impact of SALW on people.
- Offer an open forum for the exchange of information, and help to promote awareness among development practitioners, policy-makers and researchers.
- Generate policy options regarding small arms and light weapons at local, national and regional levels.
- Directly support researchers in the region who are working on the issues outlined above, and hence to create capacity.

SALIGAD is funded by the German federal government, through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Cooperation Agency–GTZ), and by Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World–BfW), a major Protestant development agency based in Stuttgart, Germany. Under the overall supervision of GTZ, the project is being implemented by a team from the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), as the lead agency, and the International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG).

How has this been done so far?

The project has taken a three-layered approach:

- **Field research and data gathering have been conducted by local researchers** in various IGAD countries.
- **A dialogue has been initiated with and between various stakeholders** from government and non-governmental organizations, and grass-roots initiatives. This has been done fairly extensively in Kenya and Somaliland.
- **Initial steps have been taken to train and raise the awareness of community leaders.** Here we quickly came to understand that we can and should learn from the communities – as indeed we did in our engagements in Garissa, North Kenya and in Somaliland. This approach allowed us to better understand and document the indigenous small arms control and management mechanisms already present in these communities.

What has been the impact of our initiatives?

Our approach has been specifically designed to:

- Ensure that information and data are gathered and carefully analyzed, so that we do not need to speculate on the numbers of arms, their circulation and utilization.
- Bring the results of the field research to the attention of the concerned parties through the dialogue program. This has already enabled a more fruitful dialogue based on factual case studies and not merely on assumptions regarding small arms issues as was previously the case.
- Jointly understand conflicts at the community level and develop ways and means of controlling and managing small arms, based on the communities' own approaches. This involves organizing training sessions in which research findings are presented back to the communities so that they can develop their own control mechanisms in a learning/teaching process. Our partner in Somaliland has been involved in organizing such conflict-management training.

All the research has been performed by researchers and practitioners from the region in order to ensure that there will be people from the IGAD countries with expertise in handling issues of small arms and light weapons at the end of the project. It has not always been easy to find people with an interest in, and an inclination towards, this subject. For many researchers, it makes more sense to conduct research on less politically contentious topics. But many of us who are engaged in this field have realized that the availability of small arms, which are cheap, easy to conceal, and have a long shelf life, is hindering:

- Relief work
- Rehabilitation work and
- Development at large.

The control and management of small arms and light weapons are fundamental to building healthy communities. All too often it has been witnessed that problems which have apparently been solved using tools of violence, such as small arms, reemerge in new rounds of violence.

We want to make a modest contribution to overcoming the present small arms problem in the ways outlined above. In this endeavor, we believe that it is essential to produce African disarmament experts who understand the dynamics of small arms issues. It is also important to promote an increased focus on human security in the region through demand-side analyses of small arms use. SALIGAD's work at the community level thus complements the work of other organizations dealing with the supply side and delivery systems

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of SALW. The first part of this publication thus focuses on the demand side of small arms issues in the Horn of Africa region.

The second part is composed of the findings of four exploratory field research studies commissioned by SALIGAD. The studies were based on questionnaires and focused group interviews. They involved communities, as in the case of Kenya, and government officials, as in the case of Gambella. In all studies, a method for gathering information was developed and tools such as questionnaires and interview outlines designed in order to collect data. Most of the information gathered is primary data in as much as stakeholders, opinion leaders and people involved in the subject matter were interviewed. By staying in the area for several days or weeks the authors also applied 'non-participatory observation'. The studies are complemented by a list of references.

Mohamoud Jama Omar concentrates on the control and management of small arms in Somaliland. Peter Marwa describes and analyzes an indigenous small arms control system: the Sungusungu in Kuria. Seyoum Gebre Sellassie addresses the issue of small arms proliferation in the border area between Ethiopia and Sudan. Kizito Sabala concentrates on urban gun-related crimes and the source of small arms available in the capital of Kenya, Nairobi. It should be noted that these research papers have been condensed and summarized in order to better provide us with a comprehensive picture of small arms and light weapons issues in the region; some

findings were not included in order to avoid possible reprisals against authors who had come across sensitive information.

The third part of this publication not only summarizes the ideas debated at the Addis Ababa conference [2] held in April 2001, where these research papers were first presented and discussed with representatives of local communities, practitioners and government officials, but also reveals the various ways in which the SALIGAD project instigates dialogue programs throughout the region.

My special thanks go to the researchers and conference rapporteurs and to our partner, the International Resource Group for Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG), especially to Ambassadors Kiplagat and Adala and to Mr. Ernie Regehr – to mention just a few names. My thanks also go to my colleague Isabelle Masson who diligently shaped and edited the texts with the assistance of two other members of the SALIGAD project, Tina Kuehr and Abeba Berhe. Lynn Benstead, as BICC editor, gave the texts a "proper" English style. Many thanks also to Renée Ernst and Herbert Wulf who were supportive of this challenging project.

Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold
SALIGAD Project Director, BICC.

1 Members of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) are Eritrea, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda.

2 The conference entitled "Curbing the Demand for Small Arms in the IGAD States: Potential and Pitfalls" was held by SALIGAD in Addis Ababa from the 23–26 April 2001, and co-hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG).

1 Demand Dynamics in the Horn of Africa



Photo: UNICEF, Somalia, 1992



Understanding the Demand for Small Arms in the Horn of Africa

by Kiflemariam Gebre-Wold

Introduction

One of the main objectives of the SALIGAD project is to understand the demand for small arms in the Horn of Africa. But what is demand-side as opposed to supply-side analysis? Why approach the small arms problematic from this perspective? What are the implications for how the work is carried out and for how conclusions are drawn? And, more concretely, what are the main factors driving demand in the Horn of Africa?

Demand-side analysis is fundamentally interested in motivations. Why do people possess and buy small arms? What are the political, economic and social functions of guns, and what ideas (about violence, security, justice, authority, self, gender, etc.) inform these? Thus demand-side analysis does not only draw attention to the structural or root causes of gun violence but also to ways of thinking and cultural factors that contribute to the demand for small arms. Raising these questions opens the door to reducing demand.

From this perspective, the goal of reducing demand is "not to remove and eliminate the weapons from communities, but to render them unnecessary by a change in the community's perception of its identity and security" (Quakers UN Office, Project Ploughshares and BICC, 2000, p. 8).

Here are some of SALIGAD's key findings about the dynamics of demand in the region. However, it needs to be underlined that this short text does not attempt to paint a comprehensive picture of the demand for small arms in the IGAD region. Rather, these insights are gleaned from the action research which SALIGAD has already carried out. Other relevant dimensions of demand, which are not touched on here include:

- gender-based violence
- political struggles calling government legitimacy into question (for example internal rebellions or disaffection of nomadic groups).

These are important aspects of demand dynamics in the Horn of Africa, but our action research and exploratory studies have not specifically addressed these issues. I am thus only providing a piece of the picture, based on what we have explored and learned through action research and dialogue programs.

In general, the SALIGAD project has approached the small arms problematic in the Horn of Africa from the perspective of how these weapons have been integrated into 'normal' daily life as a way of expanding options, rather than approaching it as an aspect of abnormal 'times of war'. Small arms seem to have become tools which ensure that one's rights are not infringed and which enable the owner to acquire material goods and political gain by force.

My task during the early nineties was to advance rural development programs. At the time, I encountered farmers in the border area between Uganda and Kenya who asked me to get them AK-47s and instruct them in their use. As a development worker, I was baffled by this demand. Since then, I have learned through the SALIGAD project that individuals, communities and even states believe and act on the notion that well-being and security needs can only be satisfied through the acquisition of small arms and light weapons (SALW).

In the course of our research and different dialogue programs, we have come to learn that many people throughout the region, but especially in rural areas, see the acquisition of small arms as a

means of widening their options for:

- personal, communal, clan or larger family defense requirements
- protection from armed groups, bandits and other clans
- advancing or securing their interests, as they define them.

This has to be understood in the context of the reality of the state's presence in the Horn of Africa. According to many ethnic groups, national law cannot be secured by local police or other armed forces in rural and isolated areas. The promise of protection has not been kept. Many people believe that the best way they can avoid disaster and fend off attack is by arming themselves. The perceived inability of the law enforcement agencies to provide security in parts of the country is fundamental to understanding the dynamics of demand in the region.

In the Horn of Africa, human security means freedom from attacks from other groups (living in the same or neighboring districts) and freedom from physical harm, abuse and violence from state and non- state actors. At the same time, it often means the ability to move freely in search of grazing lands and important water points.

However, the brutalities witnessed in Somalia made the world believe that people in the Horn of Africa are essentially imbued with a warrior culture that cannot be tamed. Often this assumption lends itself to the belief that people in the Horn do not have the same human security desires as individuals elsewhere in the world. While it is true that some groups in the region may have a tendency to settle disputes by force, this can be understood as the by-product of a struggle for survival in which the use of armed force developed as the primary strategy to ensure access to essential resources. The 'warrior culture' can thus be interpreted as an indication of a desire for human security rather than of the absence of such a desire. It is the desire to protect oneself, one's family and kin group, coupled with the failure of the state to provide such protection, that drives demand in the Horn of Africa.

Demand-side Analysis at a Macro Level

The following two points highlight the root cause of the demand for small arms in the Horn of Africa from a macro-level perspective :

- Poverty and disparity attract small arms

Many people in the Horn of Africa, from civil servants to academics and church leaders, have told the SALIGAD team that social, political and economic injustices, massive poverty and marginalization have lead to a growing demand for small arms in their region. The demand for arms is easily satisfied as arms can be purchased, obtained through barter trade (for example, cattle in exchange for small arms and ammunition), or stolen from government depots.

Poverty and social injustice cannot be eliminated overnight. Nor will poverty reduction programs automatically lead to a decrease in the desire to acquire weapons for the protection of self and property. Although it seems logical to assume that greater prosperity must lead to some drop in the demand for small arms, current field experience tells us that we need to be cautious in how we go about implementing poverty reduction programs.

In a rural setting, development projects will often increase the standard of living of only a few people. Many will remain impoverished. Hence improving the economic situation might lead, at least initially, to increased demand for small arms, as rural society becomes divided between 'haves and haves not'. It is a matter of great practical relevance that development projects are now asked to assess the potential impact of their intervention on conflict in feasibility studies.

- Selective arming of ethnic groups

As noted above, many states in the Horn of Africa do not have the capacity to guarantee the security of their citizens. Facing this reality, many states in the region have, overtly or covertly, opted to arm groups in rural areas so that they can protect themselves. This has happened in Uganda and Kenya, and to a lesser extent in other IGAD countries.

This policy, practiced over the years by governments and provincial commissioners, has created a sense of community ownership of security. It has sent an unambiguous signal to communities that they should take care of their own security and solidified the belief among opinion leaders and heads of ethnic groups that the government itself is unable to take care of this basic need. It has been tantamount to a declaration of bankruptcy by the governments.

It also feeds the supply dynamics at the local level: groups such as the Turkanas, Samburus and Marakwets in Kenya gave away the weaponry they already held when provided with new arms by the state.

Once the government's credibility has been destroyed in this way, no community leader can make his or her community hand over small arms for destruction. As we have witnessed in the past, people simply reject the idea. In this situation, only a long-term and well-planned concept, which includes the participation of the communities concerned, can work. Short-cut solutions and quick successes like the mopping up of arms caches in the border area between South Africa and Mozambique are not replicable in the Horn of Africa.

Demand-side Analysis at a Micro Level

In addition to the above factors, which are associated with regional structures, we have also observed dynamics operating at a micro level. These can be summed up under the following three headings:

- Vendetta and warrior culture

Something that we might call a culture of vendetta or a warrior culture is noticeable in the highlands of Ethiopia and the lowlands of Somalia, and can be found elsewhere in the region. Although it is apparently diminishing, it is still a powerful factor. For example, we have observed that if a person from a family is killed, then revenge, as we call it, or justice, as they call it, must be carried out, often before the victim's burial ceremony. This naturally leads into a spiral of violence and feeds demand for efficient and reliable small arms. Celebration of the victor and his heroism is part of this dynamism. If, as we have often witnessed and been told in the course of this project, revenge is the driving force in such a conflict, then it is difficult for reconciliation to displace the built-in preference for retribution.

Though it is not the objective of the SALIGAD project to conduct intensive studies using anthropological methods, we have come across this issue while trying to understand demand. Of course, warrior culture is not found throughout the Horn of Africa, but it is a reality which needs to be reckoned with and understood.

- Bride price

In the Kuria study, we found that the circumcision of a boy signaled the beginning of his accumulating the necessary bride price. The dowry to be paid is measured by the number of cattle he can supply. His ability to rustle cattle is thus not only a mark of his bravery, but also decides his marriage. Reliable small arms enable the boy and his kin to steal more cattle, and minimize the risk of getting caught. What was done a generation ago with less lethal traditional weapons is now done with modern small arms. This and other traditional practices are a factor influencing the demand for small arms.

- Police force leasing of guns

People who visit police barracks and military or militia camps in the Horn of Africa are often shocked by the appalling living conditions. Police pay is low and payment irregular, and there are reports of funds allocated to the police being diverted. There is a lack of promotion and training opportu nities and equipment is poor. Many police officers complain that they do not even have the vehicles and the fuel to carry out normal duties such as patrolling because funds are misallocated by superiors.

This situation leads to criminals being armed. According to the SALIGAD study in Nairobi, individual police officers rent their arms to gangsters and bandits at night as a means of generating income. This feeds the demand for small arms, as citizens, who cannot rely on the police in these circumstances, arm themselves for self-defense purposes. Although little studied, our field observations and interviews indicate that income generation through selling, renting or leasing official weapons is a fairly widespread phenomenon.

While it is true that a force which is better trained, equipped, paid and motivated could end this depressing situation, caution must be exercised. Measures to strengthen the police are not necessarily desirable if they are not accompanied by human rights training and improved civilian controls. In Kenya, the public perception of the police is of a corrupt and brutal force which has little regard for protecting citizens. The professionalization of the police is complicated and can only work if citizens are convinced that the police are not only better-equipped but also accountable, and respect human rights.

Conclusion

The 2000 Nairobi Declaration on Small Arms and Light Weapons is the principal political document which can ensure political action,

legislative measures and civil society involvement to curb, control and manage SALW. Few signatory states (e.g. Kenya, Uganda) have actually set-up National Focal Points (NFPs) for SALW control, and the functioning of these NFPs leaves a lot to desired. Their concrete role, level of implementation and actors have to be clearly defined in order to make them operational, accountable and transparent.

The overarching declaration of the Organization of African Unity on illicit SALW control (Bakamo Declaration, 2000) is also an important framework for the African continent.

In order to make small arms control and management a reality in the Horn of Africa, it is of paramount importance that civil society at large should be given the opportunity to be fully and equally involved in the NFPs. But civil society will only be able to play a constructive role if and when the NFPs acquire knowledge, information and expertise on SALW issues. In order to conduct lobby work to reduce the demand for small arms, civil society and NGOs have to conduct fact-finding missions, studies and research on the misuse and excessive accumu-lation of SALW, both at the government and civilian level. The destructive utilization of small arms and their impact on urban and rural communities have to be carefully documented. NGOs must thus equip themselves with the tools of information gathering and the techniques of small arms control in order to be able to have an impact on the NFPs.

The governments of countries in the Horn of Africa will not be able to control and manage SALW on their own; the same is true for civil society. The devastating effects on the economy, society and human rights make nations ungovernable. It is therefore important that the NFPs take an all-inclusive approach.

A campaign to eliminate and ban all small arms and light weapons from the Horn of Africa region is most likely undesirable and probably unachievable; however, a few key challenges must be addressed in order to take a comprehensive approach to SALW control and management:

- A two-edge approach to small arms issues focusing on the demand side and supply control is essential.
- Without measures to address the desire and need for human security, especially in large urban centers and thinly populated rural areas, armed civilians will not refrain from continuously upgrading their arms arsenal
- Since the circulation and availability of SALW is made possible by porous borders in the Horn of Africa, joint border control by state authorities can be a first step for law-enforcement agencies to control the illegal flow of arms.
- An essential factor in the control of SALW remains the issue of ammunition supplies, without which available small arms cannot become tools of violence.
- Top priority must be given to the capacity, professionalism and adherence to human rights standards of security forces in the IGAD states.
- A great deal can be achieved by poverty alleviation measures and development programs as they lessen the reliance of civilians on SALW to obtain a livelihood.

Some of these political, disarmament and development issues are indeed intertwined and need to be addressed simultaneously. Basic, simple, initial measures, like taking the tools of violence out of the hands of civilians, are tangible steps towards what has been termed 'practical disarmament', but they are not enough in themselves. The possibilities and opportunities for small arms control and management in the Horn of Africa have not been fully explored, let alone measures introduced. Many options are available to governments and civil society alike, and they should be implemented as soon as possible in order to avoid more human casualties.

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2 Case Studies



Photo: SALIGAD, Small Arms confiscated by the Harar Town Police, Ethiopia, August 2001



Management and Control of Small Arms: The Somaliland Experience

by Mohamoud Jama Omar

Introduction

The problem of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Somaliland derives from a combination of historical and political factors. Somaliland was a British protectorate up to 26 June 1960 when it became an independent state and immediately and voluntarily merged with Somalia to create the Somali Republic, a country that was plagued by ethnic violence in the 1990s. Strong ethnic feelings turned into an asset, however, when it came to the control and management of small arms.

In the early 1960s, the country witnessed growing unrest among the people of Somaliland, who were resentful of their relative low representation in the Mogadishu government. After independence, Somalia had adopted a constitution, which somehow marginalized Somaliland. Opposition from Somaliland led to a series of political crises, which resulted in an attempted coup led by a group of Somaliland military officers on 11 December 1961. Growing frustration became a source of disaffection, culminating in the formation of the Somali National Movement (SNM) in London in April 1981, whose objective was to overthrow the military regime by use of force. SNM activities in and around Somaliland led to a series of harsh measures against Somaliland by the Siad Barre government. In turn this triggered a chain of events which led to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Problem Statement

During the reign of Siad Barre, the government of Somalia stockpiled arms intending to use them in the armed struggle to create a 'Greater Somalia' which was to include parts of Kenya, Djibouti and Ethiopia. In the course of its armed struggle, the SNM distributed a lot of weapons to sympathizers and auxiliary forces supporting its cause with the help of Ethiopia. Militias which were loyal to different clans sprung up. A lot of arms also got into civilian hands as the government began to disintegrate in the late 1980s, leaving armories open to which the civilian population had access. The possession of a huge number of arms by civilians, coupled with the lack of a strong central administration became a serious threat to life in Somaliland, in effect creating insecurity in this new and formative state in the mid-1990s. At this stage, traditional elders, sultans and chiefs who were de facto rulers in Somaliland met at successive clan conferences to resolve the situation. As a result of these conferences, the government of Somaliland put the issue of demobilization higher on its agenda in an effort to create a peaceful environment. This meant addressing the issue of arms possession by individuals, militia, SNM veterans, members of the Somalian former regular forces still on Somaliland territory, and other armed groups.

The exploratory study sought to investigate the dynamics of small arms proliferation in Somaliland in the first quarter of 2001 and to put into context the indigenous system used for managing and controlling small arms.



Findings

An overwhelming number of respondents said that it was easier to get a gun in Somaliland now than it had been in the past. Some respondents reasoned that they needed arms to protect themselves and their property; others explained that they needed the guns for the protection of the nation, since they, and generally the rest of the population of Somaliland, believed that there will one day be a war to unite Somaliland and South Somalia. The government has put in place regulations which prohibit the carrying of guns openly, but some respondents argued that such attempts to create peace and stability in the country have negated the purpose of self-protection.

Sources of Arms

Most of the respondents suggested that large numbers of small arms came into Somaliland during the Cold War period when Somalia was aligned with the then Eastern bloc countries, which armed Somalia as a socialist ally against capitalism. However, other respondents also argued that the large number of arms in Somaliland today came from the former Siad Barre regime itself. This regime armed separatist rebel movements in neighboring countries, specifically the Ogaden National Liberation Front (ONLF) against Ethiopia, and the Shifta against Kenya. The ONLF operated from remote districts of western Somaliland, such as Geestir, Dary Maan, Aw Barre, Tog-wajaale, Alley Bady, Balle Abane, Buhoodle and many others and depended on this *hinterland* for most of its activities. After the failure of the Ogaden war launched on Ethiopia by Somalia in 1977, Ethiopia sponsored anti-Siad Barre activities and enjoyed the sympathy of Somaliland nationalists.

The result was the birth of the Somali National Movement (SNM). In an attempt to counter SNM activities, Siad Barre armed local militias and a large number of Ethiopian refugees living in Somaliland. He concentrated his forces in Somaliland because he feared the Ethiopians, who were situated about 250 km from Berbera, a strategic port and commercial city in this part of the Horn region. Of Somalia's six military sectors at the time, three sectors constituting eight divisions equal to 50,000 troops were based in Somaliland. This means that at the height of the war there were hundreds of thousands of small arms in the hands

of government forces in Somaliland alone–including the militia, police and other paramilitary forces. Most of these arms fell into the hands of the Somaliland people at some stage during the war between 1981–1990.

Routes

The black market in Burao is the single most important source of small arms entering other areas of Somaliland. Recently, however, countries like Yemen, Libya, Eritrea and Djibouti have also given arms to the warlords in Southern Somalia. Those weapons infiltrate Somaliland as contraband through the black market. They are of great interest to groups with a political stake operating in Somalia.
At the time of writing this report, reliable information showed that Libyan AK-74s were on sale in Hargeisa. These had originally been supplied to the Mogadishu warlords but had somehow found their way back to Hargeisa.

Types and Number of Guns in Somaliland

Respondents identified 17 types of small arms found in Somaliland. They included AK-47 rifles (7.62mm), M-14 rifles (7.62mm), M-16 A1 rifles (5.56mm), SKS rifles (7.62mm), SAR-80 rifles (5.56mm), G3 rifles (7.62mm), anti-tank mortars and mines. Although it may be difficult to give a reasonable estimate of the number of guns in circulation, it is believed that 80 percent of able-bodied males in Somaliland possess a small arm of one kind or another, suggesting that there might be as many as 350,000 guns.

Prices of Guns

The only price respondents seemed to have agreed on is that of the AK-47, the Russian-made rifle, whose price was given as US $150. The AK-47 was the official weapon of the army, the police and the paramilitary forces of Somalia. Because of its wide availability most of the people were familiar with the weapon and how to use it. Ammunition for this gun (7.62mm) was to be found in abundance. Gun and arms dealers gave the price of the M-14 as US $300, while an M-16 costs US $120. The price of 7.62mm ammunition is US $0.20 per round. Other types of ammunition are not easily found and tend to go for an average price of almost a dollar because of short supplies.

Gun Culture

The culture of gun possession in Somaliland is probably as old as the history of the community itself. The people's nomadic way of life meant that they were dependent on owning livestock, which in turn became a source of conflict. People fought over scarce resources, and the use of weapons became part of their daily life.

In the survey, respondents were asked about their perception of having or not having guns. Those who possessed guns saw themselves as potential victors in the event of a conflict. Others argued that having a gun was a sign of prestige, power and authority. For example, a suitor who pays a dowry in camels is popular, but the suitor who can also offer a gun is believed to make a better husband. Giving a gun is a sign of wealth. It means that the person enjoys a higher quality of life and demonstrates his ability to sustain a family in the future.

In some sections of the community, particularly among the nomadic people, guns are considered necessary for protecting livestock against raids. All guns and fighters belong to a clan. Fighters who use the weapons do so on the instructions of clan elders. Clans donated their fighters during the SNM armed struggle and the war to drive out enemy troops from Somaliland.

When the war was over the clans reclaimed their fighters, who were often their sons. The control and management of the weapons therefore became the responsibility of the clans. Other respondents argued against this practice, however, saying that the moral obligations of individuals should play a greater part in the gun security. Still others viewed demobilization and reintegration as enhancing security.

Control and Management of Small Arms

Over 90 percent of the respondents said that the mechanisms used in the control and management of small arms in Somaliland were indigenous but rooted in the Islamic Sharia. The necessity to apply these traditional tools derives from a situation created by two factors:

- the victory of the SNM and
- the disintegration of the Siad Barre forces.

At the time of victory, the remnants of the regular Somali forces in Somaliland were estimated at 30,000 troops. These forces disintegrated and resorted to selling their personal weapons to raise money for food and transport to get out of Somaliland. At around the same time, the SNM is known to have had more than 10,000 troops. There were also thousands of militia members who had supported either side in the war. These groups caused considerable chaos between January and February 1991: murdering, looting, raping and fighting among themselves. An All-Clan Conference was held in Berbera on 22 February 1991 in an attempt to create peace and establish order. This conference decided that there would be an All-Clan Great Conference in Burao in April and May 1991. Participants at the Burao conference established the sovereignty of the state of Somaliland and also agreed to organize a series of conferences to deal with the problem of arms and security.

The peace efforts culminated in the Grand All Clan Elders Conference held in Borama from January to May 1993. A government was then formed and assigned the responsibility of resolving the arms issues and re-establishing peace. This task included the issue of demobilization and the control of small arms proliferation. In its plan to control small arms, the government formed the National Demobilization Commission (NDC) in November 1993, which started its work in January 1994. The Commission's mandate was to plan the demobilization and reintegration of armed men in the following three categories: SNM combatants, tribal and clan militias, and former regular army personnel.

One of the most important requirements in the reintegration process was that every soldier or fighter should come to the assembly area with his personal weapon. The clan elders were responsible for ensuring that the heavier weapons were surrendered, and were authorized to resolve any cases related to loss of arms through traditional mechanisms. A soldier who had lost or could not account for his weapon was required to pay compensation in the form of camels; camels were chosen as the fine because they are expensive and valuable assets, one camel costing approximately US $1000.

Analysis

Weapons were previously seen as a sign of prestige or power and also as a necessity in times of conflict. Following the 'disarmament' process, however, they were no longer regarded as a symbol of security, since relative peace existed in Somaliland. Moreover, carrying a gun in public was banned by the Somaliland government. The ban was enforced not only by the state apparatus but also by the clan elders. A new norm of social behavior was thus constructed and anyone who did not respect it was doomed to be publicly ridiculed and laughed at.

Clan ownership rather than the individual ownership of guns is the single biggest factor contributing to the peace prevailing in Somaliland. Indigenous control mechanisms and infrastructures already existed and their application was facilitated by the determination of the community to do something about the proliferation of arms. The lack of a strong central government compounded by independent and feuding clans created a situation in which a modern system of government was virtually ineffective and inappropriate. It has been argued that Somaliland has never practiced effective central government control over clans, elders, chiefs and sultans. This created and fostered loyalty to the old infrastructures and less loyalty to modern systems of government, such as courts, police, and local and central government institutions.

The fact that the people of Somaliland agreed – through various conferences – to settle their disputes actually led to disarmament mechanisms being endorsed and supported by traditional structures. The indigenous infrastructure was indispensable to effective state governance. Acceptability by all the people of a community meant that it could succeed. Continuity ensured that the state functioned. The people's loyalty to their traditional clan leaders was transmitted from the indigenous system to the new central authority, thus providing the continuity necessary for the smooth functioning of the new system. Flexibility ensured power sharing between all the clans. This in turn created confidence in the local institutions, and where this kind of flexible arrangement is exercised it promises a better future and less violent conflicts.

Weapons that reached Somaliland came by various routes. The largest quantities of small arms entering Somaliland came through Ethiopia and were channeled by SNM fighters and other sympathizers along unmarked routes in the hinterland to be used for the liberation struggle. Most of these weapons were found in large quantities in Hargeisa and Gabille.

The weapons entering Somaliland along the second route, from the south, came through Burao, a town with a population sympathetic to Somalia. Burao now, as in the past, boasts the largest small arms market in the region.

In the two regions alone where this study was conducted, Hargeisa and Berbera, we found that 17 different types of small arms and light weapons were in circulation. The wide variety of arms in Somaliland is, in part, the result of a foreign policy, which sometimes aligned with the East, and later with the West. At different times, both sides – East and West – supplied weapons to the Siad Barre regime.

Recommendations and Follow-up Measures

Though the most visible sign of the control and management of small arms is the fact that guns are not seen on the street, we should be cautious about considering this 'practical disarmament'.

What we are seeing is rather that:

- Small arms and light weapons are contained.
- A societal control is being exercised, which curbs the indiscriminate use of weapons.
- Arms are still in the towns and rural areas, and the chance that they may be used is foreseeable.

Yet what has been achieved is worthwhile when compared with the early 1990s when guns were rampant and used on a daily basis. The study recommends that full-fledged research be carried out to assess the extent of the spread of small arms within the Somaliland community and to find out as accurately as possible the number of guns circulating in Somaliland. Such research should also identify the actual types of arms and who owns them, and should study small arms control within clans, sultanates, chiefdoms etc.

Moreover, such a study would be able to establish the trade dynamics of arms in Somaliland, how these arms are transferred to other conflict areas, such as Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Central Africa, Djibouti, and Eritrea, and how the indigenous methods of controlling and managing arms in Somaliland can be sustained. Finally, it would be able to explain the relationship between culture, pastoralism and violence as the underlying causes of the proliferation of small arms in Somalia and the region as a whole.

Sungusungu in Kuria: An Indigenous Approach towards the Control and Management of Small Arms

by Peter Marwa

Introduction

The Kuria tribe lives in the South of Nyanza, neighboring the Luo tribe to the west and the Masai tribe to the north and to the east. The majority of the community lives in Tanzania, but the Kuria population in Kenya numbers 151,887 and occupies 581 square kilometers. The Kuria district is one of the most fertile areas in the Kenya Highlands, producing tobacco as a cash crop and maize and millet as subsistence crops.

In the 1980s and 1990s, the district witnessed a sudden increase in and intensification of cattle rustling, to the extent that even huge efforts by the police were fruitless. The involvement of small arms and light weapons in cattle rustling in Kuria aggravated the violence both within Kuria itself as well as within neighboring communities. Although it would be naïve to argue that this violence is due to small arms alone, respondents of this research nonetheless acknowledge that their availability in conflict-prone areas exacerbates and also prolongs conflicts, feeds instability and fuels crimes and banditry. Small arms foster the development of a culture of conflict and violence that, in turn, maintains and deepens poverty, which itself is again a reason for the demand for small arms. Apart from intercommunity rivalries, the violence involved in cattle rustling was also responsible for interstate tension between Tanzania and Kenya.

The weakening of state power in Kuria exemplified by the failure to deal effectively with cattle rustling led the community to lose its faith in the state's ability to provide a secure and stable environment. Incidents of raids on police stations and guns stolen and never recovered despite the use of strong-arm tactics exacerbated these feelings. Tackling the problem needed more police power and determination than the state provided. One serious handicap when dealing with criminal activities, especially cattle rustling and crimes involving the use of arms, was the police's inability to identify criminals and deal with them effectively. Criminals committed a crime, melted into the community or sometimes disappeared across the border into Tanzania, making it difficult for any effective law enforcement mechanism to catch them. Even when the community knew or had a rough idea who could have committed a crime, people were not prepared to give information for fear of being targeted by the criminals.

The Kuria *sungusungu* initiative became an alternative answer to the menace of cattle rustling. The term *sungusungu* simply means "ants" and describes the way the Kuria community tackled the endemic, violent cattle rustling; ants engulf their enemy and destroy it. The *sungusungu* process similarly involved the whole community working together to eliminate an enemy, this time violent cattle rustlers.



Sungusungu was a new term used for an indigenous system of governance; its exact origins are not known, but it was probably copied from a similar initiative in Tanzania's Mwanza region which had borne fruits. The composition, the process and the methods used were drawn from the *iritongo*, an indigenous age-old local government mechanism, which had three levels of power, the inchama, the *iritongo* and the *ichisaiga*, each with a different authority and responsi-bility. Before the coming of modern governance, *iritongo* dealt with conflicts, wars and violent crimes. Respondents stated that they believed that this system was superior to state responses to the escalation of violence stemming from the use of small arms by cattle rustlers and criminals. Most people in Kuria therefore looked back to those days with nostalgia, wondering why now, with more modern systems, there was so much crime and violence in the community.

Problem Statement

Cattle rustling has taken place in the Kuria district for many years, but the violence which characterized it in the 1980s was a new development due, in part, to the fact that small arms had found their way into the hands of the cattle rustlers of the Kuria, Masai and Kipsigis tribes. The flow of small arms and lights weapons altered the dynamics not only of cattle rustling but also of other criminal activities and raises fundamental questions about the functionality of states, especially questions concerning security and the administrative system.

The escalation of violence led the Kuria district administration to approve what appeared to be a parallel security structure in order to control cattle rustling and the circulation of small arms.
Our research seeks not only to understand how *sungusungu* was able to achieve demobilization and disarmament, but also to identify the sources of small arms, the routes and traffickers, the dynamics of circulation, and the numbers of small arms available. It will further seek to understand the underlying causes of the demand for arms.

Methodology

The largest portion of data in this paper came from primary sources. A variety of actors, such as cattle rustlers, elders, political and local leaders, women, youths, church leaders and government officials were interviewed to obtain material on their views on cattle rustling, the use of small arms, and the application of sungusungu. A different questionnaire was used for each category of respondent; a sample of the one used for cattle rustlers is included in the Annex.

There are strong links between socio-cultural factors, especially circumcision, and cattle rustling. In fact, the circumcision of boys is by far the most important reason for the manifestation of cattle rustling in Kuria.

Every four years, boys and girls who have come of age prepare for this initiation process. This important step in the growth and development of youth in Kuria has occasionally been postponed when the *inchama* has found that, if the circumcision were to go ahead, the majority of those circumcised would not find a dowry to marry due to drought, diseases or raids by other clans or communities. In such cases, the *inchama* would bless the youths to go outside the clan and obtain this wealth.

In fact, cattle obtained by such methods could only be used for marriage and not for any other purposes and were popularly known as *ichiabagaka*, meaning that which is acquired in the name of *inchama*. The growth of cattle rustling in the community is also due to the *moran* training process to prepare young men to defend their community against hostile enemies. A man who conducted a successful raid was seen as a leader and cattle rustling was therefore a means to identify leaders in Kuria.

Findings

Respondents identified two forms of cattle rustling in Kuria. The first type was "cattle stealing" and the second "cattle raiding".

- According to these sources, cattle stealing normally occurred within clans of the same tribe and were due to incidences where cattle were 'leased' by one clan member to a friend or a relative who would later fail or refuse to return them to their owner. In such cases, cattle would be recovered by stealth when they were out grazing. According to the respondents, when incidents of cattle stealing are reported to relatives, elders or clan leaders, the number of cattle recovered is often understated by the assailant and overstated by the victim which leads, over time, to reciprocal cattle stealing motivated by revenge.

- Cattle raiding is a violent form of cattle rustling that is discouraged between clans of the same tribe but encouraged as a way of training warriors to defend their community. It is thus a warlike form of cattle rustling. Cattle raiding, as Michael Fleisher found out, developed after the introduction of superior weapons and guns. Respondents also attributed the change to increased levels of poverty in the community. As Michael Fleisher also suggests, poor harvests compelled families to buy food and they tended to rely on cattle rustling to acquire the money needed to purchase food and meet other needs. (Fleisher, 1997).

Respondents reported that it was Kenya's homeguard policies which prompted the Kuria tribe to acquire illegal guns. These policies created a weapon imbalance between the Masai and Kuria communities. The Kenyan government armed the Masai homeguards[1], leaving out the Kuria and therefore triggering an arms race between the two communities. But where did the Kuria obtain their arms, how did they get them, and how many could there have been to cause so much disruption in life of the community?

Sources and Types of Small Arms

The survey and the focus group interviews identified three major sources:

- The first influx of small arms originated from the tribal police of the colonial government in 1960s who were armed by the government to guard against acts of cattle rustling in the community but who, in fact, leased their guns to cattle rustlers.

- Secondly, many small arms came through soldiers demobilized after the 1979/80 Tanzania-Uganda war. With their basic skills in weapon handling and night operations, these ex-combatants introduced another level of proficiency into cattle rustling. Cattle rustling soon became a war-like operation involving highly skilled fighters, something the police were not trained to deal with.
- More recently, guns have come from Somalia through Somali traders in Kuria.

There appear to be four types of small arms in circulation in Kuria:

- The Kalashnikov rifle, commonly know as the AK-47, is the most popular and by far most extensively used type of small arms.
- The G-3 rifle is the second type of gun found in Kuria.
- Thirdly, the SLR-6 is commonly cited as available and circulating among cattle rustlers and other criminals.
- Finally, the largest number of arms recently recovered in Kuria are a locally fabricated gun, *mogobore*.

Number of Small Arms, Prices and Circulation

In the focus group interviews, it was estimated that guns circulating in Kuria accounted for no more than 1000 precision guns and 1000 *mogobore* guns. The price of these small arms was said to have fluctuated a lot due to the dynamics of demand and supply. At the time of this research, at the beginning of 2001, the average buying price of an AK-47 was 10 heads of cattle or 30,000 Kenyan Shillings (US $400).

But how did such a small number of weapons create the impression of a constant influx of small arms in the Kuria district? Our analysis revealed that the many networks expanding across Kuria and Tanzania allow a gun used in one location to be moved quickly, sometimes even overnight, from that location to another. In an area with poorly developed infrastructures and a weak police system such as Kuria it is easy for people circulating small arms to avoid arrest and capture by the police.

Community leaders eventually decided to approach the government district administration in order to find an effective solution to a problem that was worsening. Respondents reported that a similar situation had arisen in 1985 at the height of inter-clan war. At the time, the government had given less than full approval to the *iritongo* system. This time around, the community leaders requested that the *iritongo* system be implemented without any constraints and that officials recognize its authority. These conditions were accepted by the Kenyan government district administration and the *sungusungu* as it was dubbed sprung into action in 1996. How did it work and did it achieve the intended community objective to reduce cattle rustling and small arms violence?

Sungusungu

Process and Structure

Sungusungu or *iritongo* in its revitalized form utilized the old governance mechanism involving three different levels: the *iritongo*, which investigates, judges and punishes; the inchama, which takes the appeal from *iritongo*; and the *sungusungu*, which replaced the *ichisaiga* as the enforcement wing of *iritongo*. *Sungusungu* functions as follows:

- Initial reporting of an incident is made to the *iritongo*, which now has a committee of twelve members (chairman, secretary, treasurer and nine members) responsible for the day-to-day running of its affairs.
- After careful consideration of the case in point, the committee can order the commander of *sungusungu* to investigate the case. *Sungusungu* enforcement level has a commander, a deputy, a secretary, a treasurer and several operatives. Their job is to carry out the orders of the *iritongo*. They seek, arrest and interrogate the suspect and present him together with their report to the *iritongo* committee, which decides further action. They liaise with the police when they have to arrest a violent criminal, especially when the recovery of guns is involved. The *iritongo* must reach a verdict and apportion blame. *Iritongo* decisions often mean that the guilty party must compensate the victim with a given number of cattle. The *iritongo* therefore combines prosecution and enforcement responsibilities.

An appeal to the inchama is a request for an oath to determine guilt. The process of an oath involves the suspect standing on seven magic sticks placed on top of a bare anthill completely naked in full view of his relatives and friends who must attend. The oath-taker raises his hands and recites the words: "I am not the person who stole the complainant's property. If I am lying, I'll be destroyed by the oath." The complainant will then follow the same process and say the following: "I know the suspect stole my cattle. If I am accusing him falsely, I'll be destroyed by the oath." It is believed by the community members that the curse does not only affect the suspect alone; it can affect other family members and relatives and even his descendants. That is why parents, brothers and wives have to be consulted before a suspect or a complainant goes through the oath process, and their presence during the oath is mandatory.

Efficiency

The efficiency of sungusungu in controlling and managing conflicts and small arms proliferation can only be measured by the way cattle rustling developed after it was introduced.

The Impact of Sungusungu on Cattle Rustling and Small Arms Proliferation

Situation before *sungusungu*	Situation after *sungusungu*
Rustlers staged daring raids.	Few cattle rustlers. Incidents of cattle rustling have been staged very discreetly.
Number of cattle stolen e.g. between 1990 and 1998 nearly 10,000 with a value close to 100 million Kenyan shillings.	Number of cattle stolen between 1998 and 2001 is nearly 80 with a value of about 1 million Kenyan shillings.
Number of cattle rustlers involved was up to several dozens.	Number of rustlers in the incidents mentioned above appeared to have been about two to three in each case.
There were many casualties.	No fatalities have been reported between 1998–2001.
Raiding done both during the day and at night time.	Stealing appears only to be done at night.
Rustlers confronted victims and fought off any attempt to recover the livestock leading to injuries and sometimes loss of life.	No violent fights have been instigated by cattle rustlers between 1998 and 2001.
There were frequent inter-clan and inter-communal wars resulting in loss of life and damage to property.	No violent inter-clan clashes have been reported since 1996.
Hardly any rustlers were arrested. Few were charged. Few convictions were obtained in court.	Those involved were arrested and exposed, and forced to compensate their victims.
Threatening witnesses became common-place.	No cases have been reported of witnesses being threatened.
People slept with their cattle in the same house.	Cattle are now kept in their own place out in the corral.
People did not venture out of their homes after seven in the evening.	People are seen moving about up to late at night.
Business premises robbed regularly.	No robbery of business premises has been reported for the last three years.
There were no cases of intermarriage between members of the Masai and Kuria tribes for a long time.	First cases of intermarriage between the Kuria and the Masai have been registered.

Analysis of Demand and Impact of Small Arms

Cattle rustling in Kuria seems to have been the result of interaction with the Kipsigis and the Masai tribes. The Kuria tribe became semi-nomadic, moving between Magena Marabu in the present day Transmara district of Kenya and Ikorongo in South Mara in Tanzania searching for pastures and water for their animals. The men moved with the animals leaving the women and children behind in more fortified settlements.

Women are an important motivating factor in the cattle rustling equation in Kuria and, as members of *iritongo*, they also take part in decision-making to eliminate cattle rustling. Warriorhood is connected with the initiation of both boys and girls. Boys and girls go through circumcision rituals between the age of 14 and 16. Until then, tradition prohibits them from engaging in sexual activities. After circumcision, it is expected that they will enter into marriage. It is in the interest of both the boys and the girls to get married, and if it seems that one is not going to do so for lack of dowry, pressure to get the dowry mounts. The pressure on girls is greater because they must get married before the next circumcision ceremony in order to escape being branded a "reject" by the community. For this reason, girls in this age bracket have been known to induce men to undertake cattle rustling, singing songs such as: *Chiarisia, chabora omolenti* – which means "the cattle across the river are well fed but there is no one to bring them to my home". Hence women are normally at the forefront to welcome men home from a raid.

The social behavior of the Kuria further changed their clothing, hairstyle and decorations. For example, Kuria *morans*, the young single warriors, dyed their hair red oak, wore bangles, necklaces and earrings similar to those of the Masai. Wealth and prestige were expressed in terms of animal ownership and not agricultural produce. A person with many heads of cattle was respected and considered rich by the community. Animals also became a medium of exchange; one could acquire food products in exchange for an animal. Marriage was only possible if cattle were given as the bride price. Practices such as the initiation ceremonies were only performed when animals were available for slaughter.

Political changes involving conflicts and wars became centered on animals. Like the Masai and Kipsigis, the Kuria were closely and intimately attached to their animals. The loss of a single animal from a community was enough to trigger acts of revenge, sometimes resulting in armed conflicts. As cattle rustling became a major source of conflicts, the communities involved adjusted to these in terms of defense and looked for more sophisticated weapons with which to defend themselves. According to Heald: "While territorial expansion was still an issue in some border zones . . . the relationship of the Kuria clan with each other and with neighboring groups is largely expressed through reciprocal cattle raiding" (Heald, 1995). Cattle rustling also led to other changes such as the building of stronger, well-secured houses with smaller entrances or doors to deter easy access by thieves. This form of construction and protection reveals that cattle rustling in the community was largely performed covertly at night. Thieves tended to break into the *boma*, the homestead, through the doors but when the use of firearms was introduced, rustlers who were unable to gain entry into the *boma* reverted to more aggressive tactics such as stealing during the day. As a counter-measure people reverted to sleeping in one house with their cattle. The weapons used for defense purposes also changed; more bows and arrows were acquired and, when possible, individuals who possessed large herds of cattle illegally acquired guns to protect their wealth.

The strong attachment the Kuria have for their animals is demonstrated by the way in which the cattle are secured and protected. Animals are housed in *obori*, a cattle corral, with houses built all around the homestead, while food is stored in granaries built outside the corral, implying that the Kuria value cattle more than food stores. Heald remarks: "Entering Kuria one is immediately confronted by a distinctive pattern of life in the scatter of heavily fortified homesteads with a circle of houses protecting the inner cattle corral and the corresponding lack of the usual sense of modernity" (Heald, 1995). But what Heald fails to see is that this whole concept of the circle of houses is to protect the cattle.

Popular traditional practices such as marriage and *isubo*, the men's graduation into elderhood, institutionalized cattle as an asset. As the value of cattle increased, they became a symbol of general wealth in the community. For example, the Kuria used to value the number of *amatara geibiakore* (granaries of finger millet) one had, but soon this changed to *ichitugo* (cattle). The importance of cattle and their value altered how people acted, thought and defended themselves, as well as affecting their social institutions. Cattle rustling seems to have been a by-product of the behavioral changes brought about by this attachment to cattle.

Thus, as the importance of cattle increased so did the menace of cattle rustling. Relationships among the northern Kuria clans, essentially the Inchage, Inchugu and Ingwe clans, are known to have strengthened the worship of cattle in complete contrast to the southern clans. The result was the alienation of the northern clans from the southern ones. More specifically, terms like abarogoro (people of the North) and *abanyancha* (people of the lake) became more pronounced because the *abarogoro* were associated with cattle rustling while the *abanyancha* were not.

But cattle rustling had an additional importance for the Kuria. From it they acquired the skills of fighting, and with these skills they began to respond and stage cattle raids into Masai territory. The intensity of cattle rustling directed against the Masai and Luo forced the latter to give way and led to the expansion of areas occupied by Kuria clans. The Abairegi moved on to occupy areas such as Matare, Gwitembe and further on.

The 'Frontier and Border Effect' on Cattle Rustling

One factor often ignored in a synopsis of cattle rustling, is the frontier and border effect in Kuria. The Kuria live across the border of two states, with the majority of the community living in Tanzania. Although the Germans did not rule Tanganyika for long, the form of indirect rule they applied endured. One consequence of this rule was the power bestowed on a Kuria chief known as Chief Mageta to stamp out cattle rustling in Kuria. Mageta expelled some hard-core cattle rustlers from Batimbaru to the border area of Buiregi as a way of getting rid of the menace from around his headquarters in Tarime. Thus cattle rustling spread from its traditional area, and today the Abairegi have a reputation as cattle rustlers. In a way, cattle rustling in Kuria set the stage for, and tone of, not only inter-clan relations but also inter-community relations.

The effects of boundaries and frontiers on Kuria were not particularly felt during the colonial period, as they seemed to only exist on the map of the administration. Both Kenya and later Tanzania were administered by the British after the Germans left Tanzania. The British instituted the same systems of governance, language, education, infrastructure, currency and behavior. For a rural community like Kuria, boundaries did not exist and open boundaries served cattle rustlers well.

Things changed abruptly after in-dependence. State nationalism set in: boundaries were enforced, frontiers defined, language and administrative systems altered,

and – most of all – ideology changed. The way nationals perceived each other changed. Cousins could no longer visit each other freely; border policing was tightened: permission had to be obtained for cross-border movement. Independence, therefore, changed the way people did things. One of the dynamics of these changes was the way cattle rustling conflicts were handled in both Kenya and Tanzania. All future developments in cattle rustling seem to have resulted from the post-independence frontier and cross-border treatment of cattle rustlers by the two states. The differences in handling cattle rustlers in two countries inhabited by the same type of people complicated the matter. The imbalance as far as punishments were concerned also meant that cattle rustlers concentrated in Kenya, where the punishment for such crimes was not as severe as in Tanzania.

Sources of Arms Circulation and the Impact on Cattle Rustling

On the basis of the interviews conducted, it was estimated that there were 1,000–2,000 guns in a population of 150,000. This means that one gun was available for every 75 people in Kuria. The effect of small arms was tremendous in a small area of only 600 square kilometers, with a population density of 300 people per square kilometer.

The easy circulation of guns has something to do with concealment. A rifle is by nature light and durable. It can be concealed and transported anywhere in Kuria without fear of damage. Few police controls and patrols mean that guns could move from one area to another very easily. The circulation of these weapons in the custody of experienced cattle rustlers had the most devastating effects on the conflict in Kuria.

The guns which made a real difference to cattle rustling and crime in Kuria were indisputably those brought into the area by ex-combatants in the violent conflicts of the 1980s in Uganda, where there were no controls on the accountability of weapons. The mode of transporting guns to the destination of demand defied conventional wisdom: some weapons were even disguised as corpses. Although it can be assumed that some of the guns were also transported as normal luggage, the form of transferring these weapons reveals a number of points: firstly, that the control of the guns at the place of acquisition was extremely tight and, secondly, that there was a risk of these weapons being discovered and this was reason enough to use this dramatic form of trafficking. The question is: How many guns could be transported under these conditions? It is most probable that the number of guns that reached Kuria from Uganda was not so high. We have come to estimate that only about one thousand precision guns turned up in Kuria.

Government Role in the Sungusungu Process

Cattle rustling in Kuria, and the guns that enhanced it, must be put into context. Rarely does an agro-pastoralist society retreat to the more primitive system of internecine societies. But it seems that poverty, unemployment, corruption and the involvement of guns changed the nature of conflict in Kuria. The government was thus compelled to accept the revival of an indigenous mechanism to resolve armed criminal activities. A senior government official argued that the government's choice was to either work with the *sungusungu* and achieve a certain amount of security or risk losing the battle to the criminal cattle rustlers. By turning to the indigenous mechanism of *sungusungu*, the government admitted that it had largely failed to stay on top of the cattle rustling menace, but it also admitted that indigenous systems were viable, if utilized properly. Since 1997, the sungusungu system has become actively involved in the control and management of cattle rustling; as a result, the use of guns has been reduced to the level it was before the introduction of guns. The government continues to encourage sungusungu and

discourages the police from interfering. It cannot be argued that the government is not aware of the full complexity of this situation. What seems to percolate to the surface is that the issue in Kuria was not just a question of cattle rustling, but an equation involving other serious problems, including interstate relations between Kenya and Tanzania.

Recommendations

Sungusungu has been operating for five years. Unfortunately, its existence is dependent on the goodwill of the provincial administration. It is indisputably disliked by the police system which frustrates its efforts on a regular basis by arresting members of iritongo and *sungusungu* operators.

But due to inadequacies in the police system, the police themselves are now recommending community policing to supplement their work and help to control crime. The introduction of community policing will lead to changes in the attitude of the police by increasing officers' willingness to share power and accept other players as core security managers.

Based on these considerations, the research recommends that the following policy gaps be addressed:

- A legal framework should be introduced defining the limits of *sungusungu* work in the fields of arrest, interrogation and punishment.
- A legal provision that defines relations between *sungusungu* and the police, the provincial administration and the judiciary system should be introduced.
- There is a need to fund proper research to determine which parts of the *sungusungu* process could be adopted, modified and legalized.
- Based on the insights gained at focal group interviews, it is recommended that the police should train *sungusungu* operators to conduct investigations in a more professional way. In addition, operators should be trained to do their work without violating the suspects' human rights. This appears to be a grave problem.

Finally, the sustainability of *sungusungu* requires the following actions:

- Harmonization of *sungusungu* and the state security system
- Dialogue workshops and seminars that bring together community leaders, government administrators and security agencies to work out ways of cooperating in order to protect human rights and
- Community awareness programs to target understanding of the rights and values of individuals and the community.

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1 Homeguards are selected civilians, often civil servants armed and, at times, trained by the government in the use of small arms, who are supposed to protect the community in which they reside against criminals and intruders of all sorts.

Annex

Sungusungu Research Questionnaire:

Cattle Rustlers

How long have you been cattle rustling?

Why did you choose this risky business?

Compare cattle rustling in the olden days and now. How many cattle did you steal on average and how many do you do now?

What risks does a cattle rustler face?

What weapons did cattle rustlers use in the old days and what do they use now? Why? When did the weapons change and why?

Describe how you go about cattle rustling planning, execution and disposal of the loot?

Why do you use violence?

When were guns introduced in cattle rustling?

How did you get the guns?

Who supplied you? Was it easy to get them?

How much did you pay for the guns? Did you pay in cash or in exchange for goods?

How did you conceal the gun?

What type of guns did you prefer and why?

Can you still buy the guns at present? What would be the price, where and how?

How do you transport these guns?

Have you been charged by *iritongo*?

Have you been subjected to *sungusungu* justice?

What do you think about the *sungusungu* methods of identification, conviction and punishment?

Do you know a fellow rustler who has not surrendered a gun and why has he not surrendered the gun? How did he escape the *sungusungu* operation?

Have you ever been arrested, charged or convicted by the legal system?

What was the result of that process?

What is the difference between that process and the *sungusungu* process?

The Gambella Region of Ethiopia: Small Arms in a Border Area

by Seyoum Gebre Selassie and Heran Sisay

There are two dominant ethnic groups in Gambella, Ethiopia [1], the Anyuak and the Nuer. The Anyuak have a markedly different production system from their Nuer neighbors. The former are cultivators with supplementary activities like hunting, gathering and freshwater fishing. The latter are predominantly cattle herders operating under a nomadic pastoralist production system. This system of production requires extensive mobility and large territories over which to roam in search of pastures and water. Since dry and wet season grazing regions are not found in the same ecological area, it is imperative that the Nuer move from one ecological zone to another, whereby they encounter resistance from groups upon whose territory they encroach. Access to cultivable and grazing land becomes an even more contentious issue as the population size increases.

The Anyuak and the Nuer engage in conflicts over issues of power over, and access to, natural resources. The most devastating conflicts were witnessed in 1992/93. According to respondents, they were due to disputes relating to agricultural and pastoral land, fishing and, last but not least, the quest for power at a regional state level.

There are Ethiopian Anyuak and Sudanese Anyuak, as well as Ethiopian Nuer and Sudanese Nuer. This fact, together with the porousness of the boundary between Ethiopia and Sudan, permits the unimpeded movement of people and goods across the boundary between the two countries. Nomadic pastoralists know no national boundaries, and since the population groups on both side of the border are, by and large, of the same lineage, applying the principle of citizenship in such situations is an impossible task.

Conflicts between the Anyuak and the Nuer usually take place during the dry season when they both experience severe water shortages. In the past, when the two groups became involved in a dispute that could eventually degenerate into an open conflict, neutral elders were gathered from different *kebeles* [2] to look into the causes of the dispute and take steps to prevent violence. If there had been violent confrontations resulting in the loss of life and property, penalties, proportionate to the harm each group had caused to the other, were imposed on both groups. This system of conflict resolution and management worked until the formation of the South Sudan Liberation Movement (SSLM) in the late 1960s when the notion of territorial exclusivity began to take hold of the minds of the Nuer.

The problem is further aggravated by the fact that there is quite a lot of border crossing from southern Sudan. The number of border crossings goes up and down as fighting between the government of Sudan and the southern rebel groups increases or decreases. The people of southern Sudan, under the leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and its military arm, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), have been waging a liberation war against the Sudan government for decades. A peace agreement, brokered by his Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, was signed between the north and the south in 1972. Relative peace was maintained until the agreement was abrogated towards the end of the 1970s. The struggle between the north and the south sheds some light on population movements from and into southern Sudan. Whenever the war between the north and the south is intensified, people flee, literally in droves, from their native land to Ethiopia since the latter is a convenient and safe haven. It was in this context, with such free movement of people across



the boundary, that illicit arms trafficking became rampant, thus contributing to worrisome instability in the region.

The first and the most sustainable sources of weapons appear to have developed at the time when the relationship between the Ethiopian and Sudanese governments was tense, and the Nuer amassed a considerable arsenal at the Ethiopian-Sudanese border. Another important source opened when the Riek Machar, a Nuer group which broke away from SPLA, retained their weapons and later exchanged these for food and clothing in Gambella.
The ability to move freely from the Ethiopian side of the border into south Sudan was vital for the liberation front to secure supplies and stage attacks. A lot of people thus began to move to Gambella, taking advantage of the difficulty of enforcing citizenship laws where birth certificates and identification papers are not common. With the SPLA serving as their major source of modern firearms, the Nuer were supplied with sufficient firepower to try to impose their will on the Anyuak. With the increased flow of modern arms into the Gambella through the agency of the SPLA, inter-ethnic conflicts have thus assumed the character of modern warfare, with heavy casualties sustained by both parties.

1 Gambella is a regional state according to the Ethiopian administrative structure. A region is comparable to a province.

2 *Kebeles* are administrative structures within cities and rural areas. They are composed of elected representatives, linked to the ruling party, who manage daily affairs in the *kebeles*.

The Proliferation, Circulation and Use of Illegal Firearms in Urban Centers: Case of Nairobi, Kenya

by Kizito Sabala

Introduction

In recent years, the security situation in Kenya's urban centers, especially in Nairobi, has reached crisis proportions due to gun-related crimes. There has been a huge increase in the number of car-jackings, cases of bank and highway robberies, and robberies in residential and business premises. Related to this is an increase in deaths, thefts of livestock and the destruction of property in the aftermath of livestock raiding in arid and semi-arid areas. The situation is aggravated by the unchecked influx of illicit small arms and the use thereof by some members of the general population.

This study was undertaken between October 2000 and March 2001. The purpose of the study was to establish the sources of firearms in Nairobi, identify the routes used to transport arms to the city, the means of transport, the nature of the weapons used in perpetrating crimes, and to examine firearm legislation. Other areas examined were the question of why people hold firearms illegally, the efforts being taken to address the situation, and policy recommendations.

Problem Statement

Kenya faces a serious threat from violent crimes associated with the illegal possession and use of firearms. The impact on the lives of the people and on investments is causing concern since a secure environment is critical for everyday activities as well as for investments and the growth of the tourist sector. It is estimated that there are more than 5,000 illegal firearms in Nairobi alone. With a population of 2.8 million people, this implies that one in every 560 Nairobians possesses an illegal firearm with an unknown quantity of ammunition.

The continuing high rate of gun-related crime in Kenya is a grim testimony of the inability of the security agencies to effectively contain the situation. Despite donor support, the law enforcement agencies still lack the necessary resources and capacity to effectively tackle the problem of arms-related crimes. This has led to dwindling confidence in the ability of the country's security machinery to guarantee security.

The issue of small arms has not been the subject of serious in-depth analysis in Kenya, and is still regarded as the preserve of the state security organizations. Hence, NGOs and other sectors of civil society are not involved in security matters. The study aimed to discover the magnitude of the problem in Nairobi.

Research Methodology and Instruments for Data Collection

The study used a qualitative approach to data collection. Information was coded and decoded then categorized according to the major objectives of the study. Interesting and personal experiences which revealed some insights into the problem were also recorded.



The analysis was carried out using police records, media reports, newsletters, conference reports, the Kenya Firearms Act and museum records. Interviews were conducted with police officers, military personnel, the National Security Intelligence Service (NSIS), the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), the business community, long distance drivers, media personnel, and customs officers.

Questions were designed according to categories of respondents and the kind of information needed. However, some questions were common to several categories of respondents. Despite limitations, such as lack of accurate data and access to some records, the study was able to come up with interesting insights into the trend and dynamics of the flow, circulation and use of illegal firearms in Nairobi.

Findings

Regional Security and Small Arms Circulation

All the countries of the Greater Horn of Africa have experienced varying levels of political or inter-communal violence since the 1960s. As a result of civil wars, there has been a continuous flow and circulation of illicit small arms in the region, estimated at several millions. Instability in neighboring countries, such as Somalia and Sudan, means that these remain major sources of illicit firearms reaching Kenya. States have imported arms for self-defense and for the maintenance of national security but numbers seem to have exceeded their national legitimate use. During the Cold War era, arms were used as a key instrument of diplomacy and both the Eastern and Western blocs used them for strategic reasons to gain influence and to compete for the allegiance of certain developing countries. Arms sales became a means of seeking alliances. Arms acquired during this time not only served to stabilize the ideological bondage between the suppliers and receivers, but also enhanced regional alliances and hostilities and heightened internal and sometimes regional instability.

Rebel movements such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) received arms from sympathetic governments like Uganda. They also raided government armories and purchased weapons from disgruntled government soldiers. Unfortunately rebel movements do not have mechanisms for tracking and monitoring how arms are used. Some of the guns

therefore ended up in cities. For this reason, rebel groups became the main agents, passing arms on from one conflict to another. Conflicts trends in the Greater Horn of Africa indicate that the region is not only a recipient of large quantities of arms but also that huge quantities circulate among the various protagonists, and finally get into civilian hands.

Poor policing of the expansive borders between Kenya and its neighbors has facilitated the influx of large quantities of small arms into Kenya. Individuals have been able to acquire weapons for overt criminal purposes. Towns on or close to the borders with Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan, such as Mandera, Moyale and El Wak in northeastern Kenya, are major entry points for illegal firearms.

Lokichogio, a town located in the north west of Kenya, is also a key point. Business in illegal firearms is thriving in these towns, but also in some interior towns like Isiolo, and they are major suppliers of illegal weapons to the country's urban centers. Eastleigh estate in Nairobi is known for trade in illegal firearms and counterfeit currencies.

Other minor sources of illegal arms include: arms destined for neighboring countries which are diverted, arms used for facilitating or accompanying drug trafficking to and from southern Africa, and arms entering the country with refugees. In some instances arms are stolen from police stations, from murdered police officers, or from civilians who have a gun license. Ethnic militias and armed communities also sell their arms to willing buyers after they have acquired better ones.

Means of Transportation

Wilson airstrip on the outskirts of Nairobi is a major point of entry for arms from Somalia. Light planes from Somalia and northeastern Kenya land at this airstrip on a daily basis. In most cases, there are few or no checks at all on passengers arriving from Somalia or northeastern Kenya – even though it is a gazzeted airstrip, which means there should be customs officials, immigration officers and police on duty.

Trailers, lorries and sometimes public vehicles are the major means by which arms are transported to Nairobi. When crossing into border towns, such as Garissa, people carry arms on their person or load them onto their camels. Evidence indicates that arms are transported along common roads and major highways, although the possibility that some pass through unofficial routes cannot be ruled out.

Small Arms and the Police Force

The enforcement of law and the maintenance of public order are becoming high risk tasks as security officials often face criminals armed with weapons more sophisticated than their own. The AK-47 remains the weapon most commonly used in criminal activities in Nairobi. This phenomenon is interesting: criminals in other countries prefer handguns, whereas the weapons used in armed criminal activities in Kenya are high velocity military-type guns. Pistols and revolvers are also common, and in some cases toy guns are also used.

People who engage in criminal activities are in most cases hard-core criminals with basic education levels. However, in some cases university graduates have been arrested or shot dead while taking part in criminal activities. Limited employment opportunities and the large number of jobless youths are two of the reasons why people hold illegal firearms.

Unfortunately, a legacy of distrust emanating from past police practices still exists between the police and the public. Stakeholders, like city center shop owners, are thus trying to raise public awareness about the need for more effective policing and adequate resources, and for the police to conduct their duties with respect for human rights. There is a strong political will to improve police performance on the part of the regional government, civil society, NGOs, experts and security officers. Stakeholders should take advantage of this to develop a comprehensive and focused action plan to deal with the proliferation, management, circulation and misuse of firearms in the region.

Analysis

Dimensions and Impacts

In recent years, there has been an alarming increase in gun-related crimes in Kenya. Many of these crimes were committed in urban rather than rural areas. Arms are used in car-jacking, kidnappings, rape, muggings, robberies of individuals and business premises, banks and forex bureaux. They are also used in animal and livestock rustling and raids on pastoral communities in the arid and semi-arid districts of Baringo, Samburu, Isiolo, West Pokot and Turkana among others.

From 1998 to August 2000, the Nairobi city center district recorded the highest rate of crime followed by the Eastlands area. Car-jacking and robberies remained common crimes. Most hijack victims were robbed and raped and, in some cases, even murdered. Some of the stolen vehicles were then used to commit crimes and later abandoned or taken across the border into Tanzania.

Some of the gun-related crimes are expertly executed indicating professionalism and, therefore, the involvement of ex-service men, dismissed police officers or, regrettably, those still in the service.

Furthermore, the criminals are sometimes armed with more sophisticated weapons than the police. Organized criminal gangs are gradually taking root in the country and generating a culture of violence, posing a national security risk and impeding development.

The increase in gun-related crimes in Kenya indicates that a large number of illegal firearms are in circulation. The situation is aggravated by the unchecked influx of illegal firearms into the country and their subsequent use by some members of the general population. In a nutshell, the easy availability of arms is directly linked to the prevailing level of insecurity in urban centers, evident in the aforementioned criminal activities. According to Kenya's Chief Licensing Firearms Officer, 75 percent of the country is awash with illicit arms.

Links between the illegal trade in small arms and conflicts in neighboring countries, particularly Somalia and Sudan, are not difficult to find. Most of the arms that flow through the poorly policed borders of the region originate from former Soviet States, European and Far Eastern countries.

There is also a strong link between escalating gun crimes and the level of poverty and unemployment and general levels of underdevelopment.

Combat and Control

Efforts to combat gun-related crimes by the police remain ineffective for a number of reasons. Firstly, policy formulations in the security sector are not informed by the situation on the ground. Secondly, the public is reluctant to divulge information to the police with regard to suspected criminals for fear of victimization, and because of the deep-rooted mutual distrust between the public and the police. Thirdly, the laxity of police officers in manning road-blocks, their inaction when crimes are reported, as well as the connivance of some police officers with other government officials and/or criminal groups impede the process.

The police have realized the importance of cooperating with various stakeholders (the business community, civil society organizations, the public and the church) in order to tackle the increasing crime rate in Nairobi. To this end, they are collaborating with various stakeholders in:

- Raising public awareness and increasing knowledge about the threat of illicit small arms in society. However, sensitization is yet to alter public behavior to a level where people are willing to volunteer information.
- Encouraging the public to divulge information about suspicious characters or known criminals. Indeed, on many occasions the police have appealed to the public to volunteer information that may lead either to the arrest of criminals or to the seizure of arms. Appeals have been made for specific information that can assist the police in tracking down suspects.
- Calling for viable action plans.
- Mobilizing resources to implement action plans. In this regard, the police, in collaboration with the business community in Nairobi, have:
- Established information centers within the central business district to enable the police to respond to urgent calls.

- Organized training workshops in public relations and other subjects for police officers.
- Facilitated patrols of the city at night by providing the police with a car, and are also planning to renovate the police stations in the city.
- Engaged in image-building campaigns.

The 'Fire Arms Act of Kenya'

In general, the Firearms Act is clear and adequate. Some of the provisions however, especially those which bestow the Department of Internal Security with powers on various issues, are too unilateral. The Minister in the Office of the President in charge of internal security and the Commissioner of Police are the two most important officers in this Act and as agents of the executive they can easily be manipulated. They are political appointees and are answerable to the executive. For example, in most instances people who are seen to be politically correct can be issued with firearms licenses even when they do not fit the criteria as spelled out in the Act. The reverse also holds true, as applicants who are not politically correct can be denied firearm licenses.[1]

Appeals are provided for in all the provisions regarding certification, acquisition, maintenance of premises, and the forfeiture of certificate and thus of firearms. At the same time, some of the sentences and fines are too lenient given the upsurge in gun-related crimes in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi.

The Act should be reviewed to include provisions for the destruction of recovered arms, both marked and unmarked, and inadequately marked small arms and light weapons.

Recommendations

Efforts to curb the inflow of fire-arms and minimize gun-related crime in Nairobi should take into account the national and regional context of the problem. Effective strategies to combat the increasingly sophisticated crimes involving firearms must be diversified and must combine law enforcement and awareness-raising aspects taking into account the specific culture and beliefs of different communities. They should include measures to:

- Provide adequate security to human life and property. The police force must redeem its image by ridding itself of dishonest officers. Moreover, the state should improve working conditions for junior police officers.
- Train police officers on how to handle informants.
- Dismantle the training camps[2] for community militias.
- Provide alternative livelihoods for armed communities which depend on their weapons for survival before disarming them.
- Destroy all the weapons collected.
- Encourage community policing but anchor it in the legal framework.
- Review the existing security laws including those that provide for the arming of homeguards.[3]
- Speed up the investigation of cases involving gun-related crimes.
- Increase public awareness in order to influence attitudes and inform response through the electronic and print media, seminars/workshops and sustained anti-small arms campaigns.
- Promote transparency and accountability in relation to the manufacturing, sale and accumulation of ammunition on national and regional levels.

- Use police information and data statistics to inform the formulation of laws in the security sector.
- Improve data collection and storage on gun-related crimes.
- Tighten the management and storage of small arms and light weapons ammunition legally held by authorized bodies.
- Implement measures to prevent illegal firearms from entering the country from neighboring states through joint border patrols.
- The constitutional review process should provide an opportunity for Kenyans to examine the security acts in order to determine how the sector can be reformed to meet the existing national, regional and international security situation.
- Co-ordinate the various efforts made to address the problem of small arms and light weapons at the local, national, regional and international levels.
- Address the issues of poverty, unemployment, underdevelopment and rising moral decay that foster violence and crime.
- Legal measures and international sanctions that prohibit weapons exports to conflict-prone zones should be put in place. Steps to monitor and verify adherence to these measures should be introduced.

1 These are claims from respondents which the study could neither confirm nor discard.

2 A survey conducted by the National Council of Churches of Kenya found that there were some training camps in the Rift Valley Province of Kenya.

3 Homeguards are community members known now as the Kenyan Police Reserve (KPR) trained by the Kenyan Police and equipped with small arms to protect the community.

3 Bringing Stakeholders Together



Photo: APFO, Participants of the Workshop
"Curbing the Demand Side of Small Arms: Lessons in East Africa", 12-16 December 2000, Kenya



SALIGAD's Dialogue Program: Concepts and Practice

One of SALIGAD's key areas of activity is to instigate dialogue programs. Dialogue is fostered at four different levels, each within its own area of impact. In concrete terms, this translates into four different kinds of forums:

Workshops are usually meant for people working directly or indirectly as research assistants, numerators or full-fledged researchers who actually conduct field work on the ground. Development and community workers are also often involved in the fieldwork and are thus included in these workshops, depending on the demand. The issues treated during most workshops range from research methodologies, research approaches and data collection tools to how action-oriented research can be performed with the help of the communities. Workshops are more technical in nature and the target group is usually limited to fieldwork practitioners.

Roundtables, by contrast, are either held before the action research takes place or following the completion of the research. When conducted after the research, they are generally conceived as platforms where the communities involved have a chance to give their feedback on the findings. Questions such as the implications of the research for the community are also discussed at these gatherings. Two such roundtables, co-sponsored and co-hosted by SALIGAD, took place in Kenya in 2000. Additionally, roundtables held before we embark on a (preliminary or full-fledged) research project bring together key local and national actors, church and civil society and serve as a means, both to introduce the project and to get a better understanding of the positions and perceptions of each group. They help to "set the ground" before any sort of research or small arms control methods are undertaken.

Conferences are usually an annual event in the life cycle of the SALIGAD project. They bring together policy shapers and makers from the IGAD states and NGOs, and researchers and development practitioners. Case study results are exposed to this audience for consideration, improvement and critique. At the same time, the shared experiences of these different groups help to raise the level of understanding of the small arms and light weapons issue and lead to better policy recommendations. Often the different actors from the IGAD region, our prime target group, do not have an opportunity to get together and explore their differences on and perceptions of SALW issues outside such conferences.

Training sessions are another way of reinforcing the dialogue program and trying to lead it to the implementation stage. Here community leaders, including government officials, learn and explore traditional and modern ways of controlling and managing small arms (for example, arms disposal and weapons collection schemes). By encouraging and generally working within local structures, be they governmental or non-governmental, the SALIGAD project attempts to deepen the conceptual and practical understanding of demand for SALW in the Horn of Africa through its dialogue program and other areas of activity. It became clear in the course of the SALIGAD project that one of the main issues would be the demand side of SALW. Local demand became a key issue in view of the existing small arms and light weapons in the IGAD member states and their circulation from country to country.

The Addis Ababa Conference Rationale: Bringing Stakeholders Together

The Addis Ababa conference on "Curbing the Demand Side of Small Arms in IGAD States: Potentials and Pitfalls", which was held in the Ethiopian capital from 23–26 April 2001, was organized by BICC as part of SALIGAD's dialogue program. While the basic intention of the conference was defined and determined by the concept of the project itself, its specific aims and rationale were reflected in the ground covered during each of the four days. It is not very usual in the Horn of Africa region for governments and civil society to discuss and debate the issue of small arms and light weapons. The governments of the region consider this to be a topic reserved for government intervention, and not an area open to NGOs. Our conference was thus one of the first large gatherings for the Horn of Africa, a few months before the "UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" in July 2001.

Four Days of Dialogue

Day One

On the first day, we gave the floor to government representatives and to delegates from the IGAD and OAU. Their contributions were intended to provide us with an understanding of the thinking and the level of discussion within regional and continental organizations. Over the past few years, IGAD has been consistently building and nurturing the idea of a "conflict early warning and response mechanism" (CEWARN).



Photo: SALIGAD, Roundtable with religious leader of different faith discussing small arms issues, Dire Dawa Workshop on "Small Arms in Different Regions of Ethiopia – Local Small Arms Control: Possible, to what extent?", Ethiopia, 27-30 August 2001.

This discussion will be continued within IGAD.

The OAU's November 2000 Bamako Declaration dealt with small arms issues in a holistic manner, making the point that: "It is vital to address the problem of the illicit proliferation, circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons in a comprehensive and integrated, sustainable and efficient manner through . . . the promotion of comprehensive solutions . . . that include . . . supply and demand aspects" (Bamako Declaration, Paragraph V.2).

This statement made the OAU of utmost importance for our conference, since the SALIGAD project tries to understand the demand side, without which – in the Horn of Africa region at least – a concept or regime for the control and management of SALW will not work. The presentations by Mr. Daniel Yifru, Director of Political and Humanitarian Affairs at IGAD, and Mr. Sam Ibok, Director of the Political Affairs Department of the OAU, were very helpful in clarifying the approaches and demonstrating the commitment of these two organizations. The first day thus gave NGOs and non-state actors a chance to listen to but also to question the doings and aspirations of the continental organization OAU and the regional forum IGAD.

Day Two

One of the issues when we talk of SALW in the Horn of Africa today is the appalling lack of quantitative and qualitative data. SALIGAD's case studies, conceptualized, coached and funded by BICC in collaboration with local partners in the Horn of Africa, definitely help to fill this gap. Their presentation on the second day gave all participants the opportunity to gain insight into some of SALIGAD's research work. It is unusual for organizations to open up their own work in such a transparent way and expose their researchers and collaborators to questions and requests to validate their work. Yet this is precisely what SALIGAD did–in the interests of a genuine dialogue. It was both a challenge and an opportunity for both researchers and other participants. The researchers returned to their duty stations with useful feedback which they can incorporate into their final reports and into future research.

Day Three

The field trip was deliberately placed in the middle of the conference, after participants had been exposed to the inputs of the first two days, and before we engaged in working group discussions on the fourth day. The trip gave us all the opportunity to leave the conference facility and "smell the ground". It was originally hoped that we would be able to visit representatives of the United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea, based in Adigrat, north Ethiopia, to discuss small arms control and management in the context of a peace process (like the one between Eritrea and Ethiopia). Unfortunately, it was not possible to do so because the Temporary Security Zone was in the process of being established, and UN officials felt that it was not a good time for

visitors. In the end, a trip was made from the provincial capital of Mekele to Zala Anbesa, a front town devastated by the war. The drive along the rough roads took much longer than anticipated and hence the time available for talking to the Ethiopian demining team and visiting Zala Anbesa was limited. Nevertheless, despite a very tight schedule, participants had an opportunity to see mined areas and talk to the demining team as well as to returnees to Zala Anbesa. The long journey itself allowed us to see the terrain and infrastructure and to catch glimpses of everyday life and war damage first-hand – as well as helping participants to grasp some of the realities of the small arms issue in the Horn in a very immediate way.

Day Four

The last day gave IGAD government representatives an opportunity to consider the "Small Arms Focal Points", established under the Nairobi Declaration on Small Arms in 2000, to present their views and explain their function. Representatives from Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya gave presentations, and other IGAD countries, like Uganda, were also represented, though not by focal points. Different working groups then took up several, relevant questions.
The next sections of this publication include summaries of policy recommendations and general reflections on the initiatives to reduce demand for small arms put forward at the conference.

Main Lessons Learned and Yet to Be Learned: Summary of the Ideas Discussed at the Addis Abeba Conference, April 2001[1]

Preamble

- The main focus and concern of the deliberations should remain the proliferation of small arms and their potential for misuse.
- We cannot address the demand for small arms in isolation from the question of supply if our aim is to seal loopholes. There are parallel and closely-linked actions at both the level of supply and curbing supply.

Key Issues

- The demand for small arms depends on the factors at play within a specific context. The nature and level of demand is the direct result of certain dynamics in a specific context. The IGAD context is that of a precarious geo-ecological region. The scarcity of natural resources predisposes communities to threatened livelihoods and existences, and leads to stiff competition for resources and conflicts.
- Politically, many of the IGAD states have been involved in or are just emerging from situations of armed conflict. These conflicts range from civil wars to inter-state and regional conflicts involving several countries at the same time. The region is also characterized by numerous latent conflicts within and between countries.
- This regional overview has created real or perceived needs for small arms. Some of these arms are acquired officially by governments but change hands during armed struggles. There is a dynamic of such legal, state-owned arms ending up as illicit arms in the hands of individuals within countries or across borders as a means of ensuring personal or communal security. Forced migration as a result of political instability is a major factor in the demand and spread of small arms within the IGAD region.
- There are significant underlying latent factors that contribute to the demand for small arms. These factors are complex and multiple and include the socio-cultural fabric of communities. These factors touch on the values and practices of peoples and have important gender and generational implications. For instance, most of the ethnic groups of the region have a warrior age-group which is

responsible for the defense of the communities. In the event of trigger effects, such as economic impoverishment or political violence, traditional ornamental arms such as spears and arrows are replaced by small arms which wreak more devastation. This means that in many of the communities, there is a very real potential internal demand for small arms which is exacerbated by intervening external factors.

- There is a need for pre-emptive measures to respond to these potential and latent factors in the demand for small arms.

- The factors creating demand for small arms are complex and involve multiple and concurrent actors and factors at the international/global, regional, national and local levels. Global policies and practices on environment, trade, funding, development etc. can have de-stabilizing effects that can be directly linked to this demand at most local levels. It is imperative that the lines of demand be traced through all these levels if the trend is to be curbed. Varied and multi-dimensional strategies, interventions and management modalities must be adopted with clear short, medium and long-term objectives.

- Such responses must identify the most critical parties to be involved at each level of intervention e.g. State and/or other central political powers and the civil society. This would help to ensure that the initiatives are coordinated and implemented systematically so that a body of knowledge and practices is developed. To this end, traditional structures and mechanisms of arbitration and administration should be valorized and defined in a relationship of complementarity with other state systems.

- There is a need to strengthen *de facto* and *de jure* institutions within the region so as to enhance their combined capacity to curb the demand for small arms. Such institutions include the judiciary, immigration/customs, military forces, police, religious and traditional systems. Coordinated responses should be promoted through capacity enhancement and technical support programs. The goal of these institutions should be to ensure the provision of human security and just governance.

There is a need to work towards efficient post-conflict management. Demobilization, rehabilitation and integration following armed conflicts should be accompanied by appropriate economic and social interventions, and democratization. Post-conflict management strategies should not be limited to ex-combatants but should target the general citizenry, especially internally displaced persons and refugees. The challenge would be to build confidence in security structures and facilitate the resumption of civil life. Appropriate development programs are an imperative if the vicious circle of demand for small arms is to be broken.

1 This paper is based on the summary of the main ideas discussed at the Addis Abeba Conference as rapported by Ms. Wangari Mwangi of Kenya.

From Durban to Addis: Demand-side and Practitioners' Experience[1]

The conference organized by BICC in Addis Abeba in April 2001 and co-sponsored by IRG and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) was part of the activities started in late 1999 by the Quaker UN Office (QUNO).

In November 1999, experienced community organizers from around the world were invited for a week-long seminar in Durban, South Africa. The main intention was to test the perception that:

- There was active, effective work being carried out to lessen the demand for weapons in communities.
- This work was based on principles and activities that, to some degree, were common amongst many groups, despite their apparent geographic diversity.

The most explicit evidence of consensus amongst the groups which participated in Durban – some of which attended a follow-up meeting in Nairobi in December 2000 – was that they kept an ongoing communication and shared ideas and techniques in the months after the Durban seminar on curbing small arms. In order to highlight areas of common concern and engagement, here are a few points from the Durban and Nairobi conferences, co-sponsored by QUNO, Project Ploughshares and BICC, and organized by the Africa Peace Forum (APFO).

Some Common Lessons Reinforced at the Addis Conference

Regional particularities:

- Cross-border scale of problems and solutions
  Due to porous borders, joint cross-border patrolling between neighboring states in the Horn of Africa is essential. However, the interests of the communities living on both sides of the border must be taken into account, since they have relatives and engage in trade relations across the border.
- Indigenous approaches to conflict management and security
  Small arms control mechanisms and punishments for the misuse of small arms by individuals exist in many rural communities. This largely untapped opportunity for the control and management of small arms should be studied further.

- Civil-military relations
  Civil-military relations mean indigenous, community-derived security and security sector reform such as community policing, judicial reform, arms collection and destruction.

- Crucial role of conflict-sensitive development practices
  Development projects and the demobilization and ultimate reintegration of ex-soldiers and combatants (not to forget their disarming) have to consider the local population into which these ex-fighters are integrated. Development projects, such as large commercial farming on land previously used by pastoralists, can trigger conflicts. The local population must also benefit from a development project which is primarily designed for ex-fighters.

- Rural situation
  In most parts of the Horn, the rural population is detached from decision-making in the capital. Rural folk do not consider borders established by states as something to respect. For them, trading and moving across borders is necessary for economic survival. This makes it difficult for governments to control these nomadic populations. The interests of nomadic people in crossing borders without hindrance and the interest of the state in controlling these borders, for example in controlling illicit small arms, are points of contention and need further dialogue between the respective groups.

Lessons More Strongly Developed in the Durban and Nairobi Seminars

Within the context of the demand side of small arms, more emphasis should be put on urban situations – especially the experience common to all five continents represented. Demand-side work is most clearly experienced as an aspect of development practice. People tend to resort to small arms when and if their rights are infringed, and their basic needs are not fulfilled. Development projects in pastoralist societies, where water and pasture land are scarce, could play a role in attempts to curb the demand for small arms.

- Economic aspects of development practice
  The revitalization of community development is a fundamental security need. It means for example rebuilding infrastructure as a common activity to pave the way for pastoralists to have easy access to an animal market or a slaughter house for their herds.

  These initiatives have to be open to all groups and deal with the problem of marginalization. For example, a number of countries in the Horn of Africa have a Poverty Eradication Plan. Such plans and activities must also reach marginalized and even criminal groups who use arms to “earn their living”.

- The involvement and empowerment of the community
  When assessing awareness-raising workshops on the impact of small arms, the field experience of the practitioners gathered in Durban, Nairobi and Addis Ababa has shown that security problems are embedded in general development issues. Finding ways to guarantee human security is not only a problem of the state, but also of the communities, which have to deal with issues related to security. Future activities should begin with an undirected dialogue on security, respond to locally defined needs, include self-directed programs, and ultimately lead to sustainable economic development.

- Participatory research
  When addressing the issue of small arms by conducting applied research, it is important to use non-structured participatory methods, which give room for the communities to be actors rather than mere objects in the research process. Ideally, the community should help to set the direction of research, based on its specific situation. Furthermore, local activities and experiences should be related to a wider international context.

- Attitude change – cultures of peace
  It became apparent in Nairobi, even more than in Addis Ababa, that the collection, storage and ultimate destruction of small arms and light weapons might not be the ultimate goal. In pastoralist areas, people carry small arms because the next police station is often far away. Hence they have to rely on self-protection for their herds and their families. It may be a first step to control the flow of those small arms and to prevent them from being used indiscriminately. The ultimate goal is not the elimination of weapons, but rather to render them unnecessary to the community. Each community needs to redefine its understanding of peace, and question the aspects of its own identity which lead to violence. Elders, women and youths – 'at risk' populations – play a crucial role within this process, and business, religious, sports and entertainment figures are all significant.

- The need for ongoing international networking among practitioners
  The sharing of information amongst practitioners from the Horn of Africa region is not a luxury, but rather a necessity. By exchanging information on failures and success, practitioners who work as 'peace promoters' within communities can consolidate their know-how and develop tools of peace and reconciliation. This in turn helps to pave the way for weapons collection programs.

Lessons from Addis for the Wider Global Community to Explore

- An immediate and comprehensive demobilization of various combatants is often not possible due to a lack of resources, poor infrastructure and management capacity of the agencies in charge. The encampment of various armed groups and their integration into a formal security force may be one of the necessary steps prior to an ultimate demobilization of ex-combatants scattered around the countryside.

- Gun control needs to be decentralized. A variety of local structures can be responsible for effectively controlling small arms and managing conflicts in their respective geographical area.

1 This paper is based on the summary of the main ideas discussed at the Addis Abeba Conference as rapported by David Jackman, Quaker UN Office, New York.

List of Abbreviations

APFO	Africa Peace Forum
BfW	Brot für die Welt (Bread for the World)
BICC	Bonn International Center for Conversion
CEWARN	Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (German Technical Cooperation Agency)
HOA	Horn of Africa
IGAD	The Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IRG	International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa
NDC	National Demobilization Commission
NFP	National Focal Points
NSIS	National Security Intelligence Service
OAU	Organization of African Unity
ONLF	Ogaden National Liberation Front
QUNO	Quaker UN Office
SALIGAD	Small Arms and Light Weapons in the IGAD countries
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SNM	Somaliland National Movement
SPLA	Sudan People's Liberation Army
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSLM	South Sudan Liberation Movement
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa

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The Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC)

an independent non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the transfer of former military resources and assets to alternative civilian purposes





The transfer of resources from the military to the civilian sector represents both a social and an economic challenge, as well as offering an opportunity for the states concerned. The sustained process of disarmament during the decade following the end of the Cold War has made defense conversion an important issue in many countries today. This process has now slowed down considerably, but the problems faced by those affected are far from solved. BICC's main objective is to make use of the chances offered by disarmament, whilst at the same time helping to avoid–or lessen–the negative effects.

This issue concerns a number of areas: What can scientists and engineers who were formerly employed in weapons labs do today? What is the fate of the roughly eight million employees who lost their jobs in the defense factories? Why are so many defense companies faring better today than they did ten years ago? Will all demobilized soldiers or former combatants find a future in civilian society? What action must communities take when suddenly faced with the closure of a huge military base? How does one solve the problem of the ready availability of small arms and light weapons?

It is BICC's task to tackle these questions, to analyze them on the basis of scientific research, to convey the necessary information, and to give advice to those involved – in short, to manage disarmament.

International think tank. BICC conducts research and makes policy recommendations. In-house and external experts contribute comparative analyses and background studies.

Project management and consulting services. BICC provides practical support to public and private organizations. For instance, BICC staff advise local governments confronted with the difficult task of redeveloping former military installations. BICC also combines development assistance with practical conversion work by helping in the fields of demobilization, reintegration and peace-building.

Clearinghouse. In its capacity as an independent organization, BICC supports and assists international organizations, government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, companies and the media, as well as private individuals. It hereby mediates and facilitates the conversion process at all levels – local, national and global. BICC collects and disseminates data and information on conversion to practitioners in a wide range of fields and institutions. BICC strives to reach researchers and practitioners as well as parliamentarians, the media, and the general public by means of a variety of tools including its library, its extensive on-line documentation services and its internet service (www.bicc.de). Furthermore, the Center documents the course of disarmament and conversion in its annual *conversion surveys* and produces a variety of publications.

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