



# **KENYA NATIONAL FOCAL POINT AND LIGHT WEAPONS SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS PROLIFERATION**

## **PRESENTATION ON NATIONAL DATA ON ILLICIT ARMS FLOW AND IMPACT ON POLICY**

## Arms Trafficking flows in Kenya

- Much of the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa is awash with guns, predominantly small arms, and a large number of those weapons spill over into Kenya. Since the late 1970s countries bordering Kenya to the north (Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, and Uganda) among them have experienced long periods of unrest and internal armed conflict.
- Fighters from wars in these countries are a prime source of weapons brought into Kenya, which they often sell for subsistence.
- In addition, kinship ties among pastoralist communities that straddle international borders can facilitate the movement of firearms from one side to another, as well as the spread of localized conflicts.
- Kenya is vulnerable to illicit weapons trafficking through the same channels used for legal arms shipments. The country has long been a major transit point for illegal weapons shipments destined to war-torn countries in the Great Lakes region of Africa. The existence of an abusive armed conflict in the recipient country in some circumstances risks the weapons being diverted to an unauthorized third party (or of spilling back into Kenya)
- unscrupulous arms brokers and shipping agents in most cases use false documents, misdeclare cargo, file false flight plans, hide weapons in secret compartments in motor vehicles and shipping containers, and other covert tactics to traffic weapons undetected.
- **However, Kenyan customs authorities take a number of steps to rein in such illegalities, but better techniques and equipment are required to more systematically halt undeclared arms shipments.**

# Methods of Arms Trafficking:

- Illegal gun movements in Kenya happen in secret and are difficult to document. Most of the weapons entering Kenya's illegal market appear to be trickling in, transported by small-time traders. Taken together, they account for a steady arms influx.
- Kenya's border is porous and in large parts it is arid and thinly populated. Although there are nominal customs checkpoints at the main Kenyan entry points, the rest of the border is rarely patrolled and there are many smuggler routes along the border.
- Through the Black-market sales to criminal gangs, insurgents or individuals are not uncommon.
- Theft of government and privately owned arms by insurgents, criminal and separatist forces; too and
- Exchanges between insurgent and criminal organizations, whether for profit or in pursuit of common political objectives.

## **Demand and Supply factors:**

- Causes of arms demand are predominantly defensive motivations e.g. need to protect property, personal protection from other clans, but there are also cultural and gender-based motivations (e.g. culture of violence & warrior traditions)
- Ethnic/clan rivalries as feeders of arms ownership. The youth (as gangs or warriors) are also major owners

## **National estimates on illicit arms flows.**

According to the National Survey; (2012 conducted by KNFP and Small Arms Survey)

- 2.7% of households confirmed owning guns.
- Minimally, 170,000-210,000 households own at least one firearm each based on self-reports.
- Maximally, 530,000-680,000 households own arms
- These are concentrated in Northern parts of Rift Valley Region(11.3%), North Eastern Region (10.4%) and Upper Eastern Region ( 7.2%) There are other Regions with a smaller percentage Western , South Rift, Coast, Nyanza.(Below 2%)



# SALW TRAFFICKING IN KENYA



## The Domestic Impact

- The increasing availability of weapons has helped drive rising insecurity and crime in Kenya, where guns are commonly used to commit a range of violent acts. National security agencies through shared intelligence and multi-agency cooperation have however reined on the threat and are often ahead of the criminals
- Unlike other states in the Region, Kenya as a country has never been at war, but firearms appear to be on the rise, and high numbers of casualties have been reported. Acts of banditry, including armed highway attacks, cattle rustling are not uncommon in the country. Armed attacks unleash a vicious cycle of revenge attacks and escalating arms races between rival communities.
- averagely 1-5 victims of firearm-related deaths or injuries per month occur within certain communities in Kenya

# What is the Government Doing?

## Key areas

- Policy formulation and review of Legislative measures addressing illicit manufacture, trafficking illegal possession.
- Enhance measures on control , demand, supply, transfers of illicit SALW's.
- Promote Cooperation of state agencies with civil societies to develop action plans
- Embracing best practices on practical disarmament including voluntary Surrender of illegally owned SALW.
- Harmonized, Coordinated, Synchronized legislation at regional level.
- Information exchange – Police, Customs, border and immigration officials official on SALW flows.
- Partner/Donor support on programmes aimed at mitigating the threat of SALW's
- Enhance Physical Security and stockpile management of government owned arms.



**END**

**QUESTIONS**

