



Co-operating to Disarm

REGIONAL CENTRE ON SMALL ARMS

THREE YEAR REPORT

July 2018- June 2021

OUR VISION

A safe and secure sub-region in a peaceful continent free from arms proliferation.

OUR MISSION

To coordinate action against small arms and light weapons proliferation in the Great Lakes Region and the Horn of Africa and Bordering States.

CORE VALUES

Teamwork; Gender Sensitivity; Integrity; Transparency; Flexibility; Professionalism and; Partnership.



FOREWORD

Dear Distinguished Reader,

Welcome to the 3-year RECSA Report for the period FY2018 to FY2021. As the Executive Secretary at RECSA Secretariat, I have had a great pleasure to see RECSA continue to coordinate the implementation of Weapons and Ammunitions Management (WAM) in its Member States. RECSA envisions to have a safe and secure sub-region in a peaceful continent free from arms proliferation. All our efforts during the period have been geared towards implementation of interventions aimed at curbing diversion from Government stockpiles and reducing risks of unintended explosions.

During the reporting period, notable achievements have been realized in the areas of: Institutional development and strengthening through capacity building; Physical Security and Stockpile Management through improved weapons and ammunition management; Building capacity for Public Education and Awareness on SALW and strengthening the capacity of Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Reporting both at the Secretariat and Member States level.

I take this opportunity to appreciate the Member States for their financial contributions to the operations of the Secretariat and their willingness to implement provisions of the Nairobi Protocol and other SALW international instruments. My appreciation also goes to the international community for financing targeted SALW management and control interventions through bilateral arrangements with selected RECSA Member States.

Allow me in a special way to specifically thank the US Government for its continued support to the Secretariat over the years. I am also grateful to the African Development Bank (AfDB), United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Secretariat for the support extended to the Secretariat for specific programme work.

It is important to note that the outbreak of COVID-19 has brought to the bare the fact that the Secretariat and Member States have inadequate ICT infrastructural capacity to organise virtual engagements. It is important to note that COVID-19 is here to stay for some time and therefore Member States and / or donors should support the Secretariat to strengthen its ICT infrastructural capacity and that of National Focal Point Coordinators in order to continue engaging virtually.

Going forward, RECSA in collaboration with stakeholders and partners will continue coordinating the implementation of SALW control and management efforts in the RECSA region as well as contribute to continental resolve on combating illicit SALW proliferation.

Lt. Gen. Badreldin Elamin Abdelgadir

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|--------|---|
| AfDB | African Development Bank |
| ATT | Arms Trade Treaty |
| BICC | Bonn International Centre for Conversion |
| COM | Council of Ministers |
| CSOs | Civil Society Organizations |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| IPSTC | International Peace Support Training Center |
| MSAG | Multinational Small Arms and Ammunition Group |
| NAP | National Action Plan |
| PSSM | Physical Security and Stockpile Management |
| RECSA | Regional Centre on Small Arms |
| RSTS | RECSA Small Arms Tracing Software |
| SALW | Small Arms and Light Weapons |
| TAC | Technical Advisory Committee |
| UNPoA | UN Programme of Action on Small Arms |
| UNODA | United Nations Office of Disarmament Affairs |
| UNSCAR | UN Trust Facility for Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation |
| WRA | Weapons Removal and Abatement |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1. Background Information:

The proliferation and misuse of small arms is a worldwide, progressively complex and multifaceted phenomenon that affect people from all backgrounds. Due to their easy availability, low cost and manageability, small arms and light weapons (SALW) have become the weapons of choice in most conflicts in the world today and have helped raise levels of fragility and armed violence even in areas at peace.

Over the past two decades, the Horn of Africa and Great Lakes Region have experienced some of the most dangerous armed conflicts in Africa. The subsequent fragile situations which led to recent warfare in a number of countries such as Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Burundi, Somalia, South Sudan and Sudan further illustrate how SALW and their illicit circulation contribute to rapid and violent shifts of political regimes, instability, humanitarian crisis and terrorism, with a dreadful impact across the region. The resulting insecurity in most of the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa countries has thus created an environment conducive for not only massive proliferation of SALWs within and outside the countries; but also a high propensity to resort to armed violence to resolve disputes in the absence of properly functional institutions of the state for governance, law and order enforcement and security.

Consequently, the proliferation of arms in the Great Lakes Region and Horn of Africa has become a real threat to peace, security and development. In fact, it is a political, economic, social and cultural issue whose eradication needs support and guidance from governments, and other regional and international stakeholders. Small arms proliferation is not merely a security issue but is also an issue of human rights and development. The proliferation of small arms sustains and exacerbates armed conflicts, endangers peacekeepers and humanitarian workers, undermines respect for international humanitarian law, threatens legitimate but weak governments, and benefits terrorists and the perpetrators of organized crime. It has devastating effects on women and children, resulting in the unconscionable exploitation of children in armed conflicts and forced migrations thereby undermining human security and development. The proliferation of small arms also exacerbates the threats of violence that women and girls experience in conflict situations. SALW have been used to threaten women and communities to facilitate the perpetration of sexual violence.

2. Establishment of Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons

In order to address the effects of Small Arms proliferation, Member States agreed to a legally binding regional instrument called the Nairobi Protocol on the Prevention, Control and Reduction of Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States of 2004. RECSA has a membership of 15 States who are signatory to the Nairobi Protocol, namely: Burundi, Central Africa Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

In 2005, the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) was established with a mandate to coordinate the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol and build the capacity of Member States in Weapons and Ammunitions Management (WAM).

RECSA is an Intergovernmental Organization with juridical personality which enjoys diplomatic status by virtue of the Host Agreement entered into with the Republic of Kenya. It has three policy organs as per Article 9 of the Agreement Establishing RECSA, namely:

- Council of Ministers (CoM), composed of Ministers responsible for Internal Security in the Member States or as any other Ministry as decided by the respective Governments (Eritrea - Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia – Ministry of Peace and Rwanda – Ministry of Justice). The CoM is the supreme organ mandated to offer policy guidance to the functioning of RECSA. The current Chairperson of the Council of Ministers (CoM) is the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Deputised by the Republic of Kenya.
- The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) composed of the RECSA Executive Secretary, National Focal Point Coordinators of RECSA Member States and 2 members of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). TAC is the second highest organ charged with reviewing the annual work plans and budgets of the Secretariat and monitoring the implementation of the Secretariat's programs and activities. The current Chairperson of the Technical Advisory Committee is the Democratic Republic of Congo and deputised by Republic of Kenya.
- The Secretariat is the administrative body of RECSA charged with the day to day functioning of RECSA headed by the Executive Secretary.

CHAPTER TWO

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW) MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL INTERVENTIONS IMPLEMENTED

Since July 2018, RECSA Secretariat has continued to coordinate the implementation of SALW Management and Control interventions in the Member States guided by the Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 and partly that of 2020 – 2024. The implementation has been and continues to be focused on the achievement of the following expected outcomes arising from the four Pillars of the RECSA Strategic Plans:

- a) Strengthened capacity of RECSA Secretariat and National Institutions responsible for SALW management and control in Member States;
- b) Improved physical security and stockpile management in RECSA Member States;
- c) Increased awareness in Member States and publication of research reports on identified SALW thematic areas;
- d) Improved reporting of results and increased participation of special interest groups in SALW interventions.

This chapter highlights the achievements in the implementation of SALW Management and Control interventions as per the Strategic Plan Pillars namely: Institutional Development and strengthening; Stockpile Management; Generation and Provision of SALW Information; Results measurement through monitoring and evaluation

2.1 Institutional Development and Strengthening

Lack of effective coordination and information sharing between the many government departments and agencies that have a role to play in small arms control is often a significant barrier to tackling small arms-related problems and implementing regional and international small arms agreements. A National SALW Institution is therefore needed in each Member State to act as a coordinating body and focal point. Cognizant of this fact the Secretariat continued with the interventions highlighted below during the period.

2.1.1 Training of Secretariat Staff

During the formulation of RECSA Strategic Plan 2016-2020, one of the identified strategic gaps was the inadequate institutional capacity at the Secretariat. Accordingly, training of 12 Secretariat staff in specialized courses was prioritized and undertaken. AfDB project funds facilitated the training of all senior management staff (four Directors) in identified courses to improve their management skills in their respective Directorates. The project funds were also used to train three Principal Officers namely: Finance, Monitoring and Evaluation, Communication and Public relations. The officers were new at RECSA Secretariat and there was need to build their capacity in their respective dockets.

Finally, the Project Coordinator and Procurement Officer underwent a two weeks training in Management of Procurement Procedures for donor funded Projects as RECSA is funded by different donors with different procurement procedures hence the need to have staff who can ably handle the different procurement procedures under the different projects.

2.1.2 Capacity Building for SALW National Institutions in CAR and South Sudan

AfDB project funded a one (1) week training of National Institutions' staff in the two Member States was undertaken. The training was on how to run the operations of the National Institution covering areas of; office management, resource mobilization including proposal development, financial management and reporting, intervention planning, execution and reporting. The staff were also trained on the provisions of the International and Regional SALW instruments.

In addition, the two Member States were provided with office furniture and equipment to support smooth office operations. Finally, selected National Institution staff from CAR and South Sudan respectively undertook a bench-marking exchange visit to Burundi National Commission on SALW as one of the model SALW management and control national mechanism.



NAP Capacity Building Workshop - CAR



NAP Capacity Building Workshop - South Sudan

2.1.3 High Level Lobbying and Advocacy Meeting in Member States

The RECSA Executive Secretary has led delegations to all RECSA Member States except Somalia, Eritrea and Seychelles. In the Member States, he met with Senior Government Officials to lobby and advocate for the inclusion of SALW interventions in the Member State's development plans including allocation of resources to the cause of fight against the proliferation of illicit SALW and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).



RECSA ES and officers during a PSC meeting at the AU



RECSA ES and officers during a High Level Meeting with Police Officials in Tanzania



RECSA ES during a High Level Meeting with DRC Govt Officials and WRA representatives in Tanzania

2.1.4 Assessment of SALW National Action Plans Implementation in EAC Countries

The Member States in EAC were among the first to develop and implement SALW National Action Plans. In order to share experiences in SALW NAP implementation, an assessment was carried out in the Member States of EAC. The assessment report generated useful knowledge and information on how to develop, plan and implement SALW interventions. The report was validated and disseminated to all RECSA Member States. This information is useful for Member States that are yet to develop / or review SALW NAPs.

2.1.5 Member States' Cross border collaboration

The border-regions in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa have been characterized by conflicts fueled by the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons, politics of exclusion, lack of government security presence, weak justice systems, cross border spill

over effects, climate change shocks, as well as economic and social vulnerability. This has contributed to the fragility situations especially in the borderline region commonly known as Zone 3 (Uganda, Kenya, South Sudan and Ethiopia). Border communities are particularly prone to destabilization by illicit cross-border activities yet mechanisms for preventing and responding to these shocks are limited.

Premised on the above, with funding from AfDB organized a regional cross-border leaders' conference. The conference was attended by local leaders from the border-line communities and central governments of Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan, Somalia and Ethiopia. The objective was to enable leaders across the region share experiences on the existing cross-border resource management challenges and prioritize actions towards defining a lasting solution on cross-border challenges for sustainable peace and development in the region. At the end of the Conference, the resolutions below were adopted for implementation by Member States:

- i) On the challenge of RECSA Member States border porosity, it was agreed there should be a Regional Grand Plan to Strengthen cross-border collaboration and co-operation through the initiatives of: a) establishing and regulating cross-border livestock markets; b) undertaking regular electronic livestock branding; and c) establishing more border posts to allow ease of movement of people and goods.
- ii) Regional political instability was identified as major issue, adversely affecting border communities leading to internal destabilization. On this, the Delegates directed the Secretariat to facilitate Member States in prioritizing peacebuilding and conflict resolution mechanism through; regional peace committees and strengthening cultural institutions.
- iii) Absence of comprehensive, joint and coordinated regional disarmament programmes. Delegates recommended Member States to strengthen the regional disarmament programme through joint efforts.
- iv) Laxity in the trafficking and proliferation of illegal SALWs and pilferages and diversions resulting from poor stockpile management. To address this, the delegates directed Member States to strengthen weapons and ammunitions management at different levels by ensuring cross border joint capacity building initiatives, transnational community awareness on SALWs, mainly targeting the youth, women, and cultural leaders.
- v) Marginalization of border areas in RECSA Member States manifested by uneven development and lack of infrastructure, remains an issue among border pastoral communities. The affected Member States were advised to design regional socio-

economic development programmes focusing on markets, health, infrastructure, education and other basic needs.

- vi) High levels of vulnerability to natural disasters occasioned by climate change and ecological fragility can be addressed by building resilience capacity for cross border communities.
- vii) Inadequate political good-will which undermines cross-border collaboration and co-operation between state and communities can be treated by strengthening cross-border collaboration and co-operation and exchange of best practices. There is also need to support increased regional representation of issues of pastoral communities to the highest decision-making bodies such as EALA.
- viii) Failure to domesticate international and regional protocols into national policies and legislation on SALWs as well as disarmament and development can be addressed by undertaking review of the implementation status of the existing protocols. The peer review process will be an outcome of the following initiatives:
 - a) undertake cross-sectional study of the ungoverned spaces;
 - b) evaluation of implementation of existing protocols and policies to draw lessons for improving strategies for controlling SALWs
- ix) On the lack of data on the sources of illegal firearms, the delegates directed the Secretariat to undertake a regional study on the flow of illicit firearms and enhance the arms and ammunitions traceability methodologies.



Participants during the workshop



Working session during the workshop



RECSA AFDB Grant Manager – Mr Godfrey Bagonza



RECSA Executive Secretary - Lt. Gen. Badreldin Elamin Abdelgadir

2.1.6 Development of Policy Documents

Well aware that the RECSA Strategic Plan 2016-2020 and corresponding Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy and the Resource Mobilization Strategy were to expire at end of June 2020, the Secretariat in 2019 reviewed these policy documents and developed new ones for the period 2020 – 2024. The respective documents are expected to provide a roadmap for implementation of SALW interventions, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and learning of implemented interventions and resource mobilisation for the programmes.

2.1.7 Convening of the 12th TAC Meeting

In accordance with Article 11 of the Agreement establishing RECSA, the 12th Ordinary Meeting of the RECSA Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was convened by the Secretariat from 10th to 11th March 2021 at The Royal Tulip Hotel in Nairobi – Republic of Kenya. It hosted by the Republic of Kenya, the current Deputy Chair. The meeting was attended by the NFP Coordinators or their representatives from the following Member States: Republic of Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Republic of Kenya, Republic of the Sudan, Republic of South Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Republic of Uganda, the RECSA Executive Secretary and FECCLAHA representing Civil Society Organisations. Republic of Congo, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of Rwanda, Federal Government of Somalia and State of Eritrea were absent with apology.

Following deliberations on the items of the TAC meeting agenda, TAC made the following resolutions / and or recommendations;

1. The draft Communication Toolkit is validated. The Secretariat and Member States are advised to use the Toolkit in the day to day implementation of their mandates. The Secretariat is further advised to undertake capacity building of Member States on operationalizing the toolkit. This will support in enhancing visibility of RECSA and Member States' interventions.
2. The Executive Secretary's report for the period 2018 to 2021 is noted with appreciation. TAC recommended that the report be updated at the time of its submission to CoM for adoption.
3. TAC recommended that the CoM Chair, TAC Chair and Executive Secretary undertake high level advocacy and awareness raising in Member States (funds permitting) on RECSA work and Member States' obligations.
4. TAC recommended that Member States harmonize and domesticate international and regional SALW instruments to fast-track the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol.
5. Respective Member States' NFPs are urged to make follow up on their respective contribution arrears to RECSA Secretariat using the letters signed by the CoM Chair.
6. TAC appreciated the offer of land from the Republic of Kenya for the construction of RECSA Headquarters and urges the Secretariat to continue following up on the offer and report to the next CoM accordingly.
7. TAC recommended that the Secretariat convenes a 13th Ordinary Session of TAC just before the 10th Ordinary Session of CoM to review and recommend for adoption by CoM the following documents: RECSA draft Strategic Plan 2020 to 2024; 2-year workplan and budget 2020/2022; Audit reports 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020; Annual reports 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020



Discussion Session during the workshop



Group Photo of workshop participants



TAC-Chair during the workshop



TAC-Vice Chair during the workshop

2.2 Support Member States in Physical Security and Stockpile Management

This is a cornerstone pillar to RECSA's mandate. Accordingly, the following interventions were undertaken with the broad objective of improving the Weapons and Ammunitions Management in the respective RECSA Member States to reduce the risks of diversion and unintended explosions.

2.2.1 National WAM trainings for armorers'

One of the intervention to curb diversions and risks associated with unintended explosions is to improve the knowledge and skills of personnel in charge of Government stockpiles (armorers). With funding from AfDB and US Government grants, the Secretariat planned and executed one (1) week national trainings of 452 armorers in Weapons and Ammunitions Management (WAM) Best Practices. The trainees were drawn from: DRC-

80, CAR-80, South Sudan-80, Somalia-40, Kenya-106, Tanzania-48 and Rwanda-18. The beneficiary trainees are expected to share knowledge on WAM Best Practice in their respective Member States.



Group Photo during the Training Workshop



Participants showing their certificates after the course

2.2.2 Regional WAM trainings for armorers'

In partnership with MSAG and BICC, the Secretariat organized and conducted WAM trainings at a regional level in Nairobi from 2018 to 2020. 62 selected participants were drawn from Burundi, CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Uganda and Tanzania attended the trainings.

In the same vein, in March 2019, the Secretariat organized the final training session for national instructors. 11 instructors were certified after having attended four sessions of the training since 2018. The instructors are from: Burundi-1, Kenya-3, Rwanda-1, South Sudan-1, Uganda-2 and Tanzania-3.



Regional PSSM - 2019

2.2.3 Training of Trainers for National Instructors

In the bid to improve the PSSM standards in the RECSA region, training has been identified as one of the priority area in its strategic plan. RECSA until recently, has been using international instructors from Europe and America to conduct WAM trainings. In order to address this challenge, a one (1) month Training of Trainers (T.O.T) course was organized in May 2021 with the objective of increasing the regional pool of African instructors who can undertake National PSSM trainings in the RECSA region, thus ensuring sustainability and reduced training delivery costs. Twenty two (22) national instructors were certified and were drawn from: Central African Republic (05); Democratic Republic of Congo (06); Republic of South Sudan (06); Ethiopia (01); United Republic of Tanzania (01) and Republic of Rwanda (03). The certified national instructors are expected to lead in the improvement of WAM interventions in their respective Member States.



Training of Trainers Course

2.2.4 Provision of marking machines and training to DRC

In accordance with Article 7 of the Nairobi Protocol, the Secretariat with funding from the US Government procured and provided 10 Couth Marking Machines to facilitate the marking exercises especially in Eastern DRC where a total of 35,102 firearms have been marked as at the end of 2020. In addition, a total of 50 personnel drawn from the military and police were trained in the operation, maintaining and use of the Couth Marking Machines. The objective of marking firearms is to improve on identification and facilitate easy traceability thus contributing to improved accountability to curb diversion.



Handover of Marking Machines and Accessories in DRC



Training on the use of Marking Machines in DRC

2.2.5 Training on RSTS in DRC, Ethiopia and CAR

Firearms marking and electronic record keeping go hand in hand if full benefits are to be realized. In this view, the Secretariat conducted a training on electronic recordkeeping using the RECSA Small Arms Tracing Software (RSTS) for 20 selected participants drawn from the military and police in DRC, Ethiopia and CAR in July 2019 and 2020 respectively. The trained personnel are expected to spearhead the electronic recordkeeping of firearms in their respective Member States to improve on accountability of firearms thus curbing diversion.



RSTS Training in Ethiopia



RSTS Training in Central African Republic



RSTS Training in DRC



2.2.6 Provision of containerized armouries

The improvement of storage facilities for Government stockpiles is one of the best practices of Weapons and Ammunitions Management to guard against risks of diversion. The Secretariat with funding from the US Government supported the Kenya Border Police Unit (BPU) with 6 mobile containerized armouries in 2020-2021 financial year. The objective was to secure the BPU stockpiles for units deployed along the Kenya-Somalia border in the counties of Mandera, Garissa and Wajir from the Al-Shabab threats.



Handover of Containerised Armouries to Kenya Border Patrol Units

2.2.7 Provision of gun racks

In 2017 the Secretariat with funding from the US Government supported the construction of 4 permanent armouries namely; Dar-es-Salaam, Moshi, Dodoma and Zanzibar in the United Republic of Tanzania. The armouries were also installed with gun racks except the amoury at the Zanzibar Field Force Unit Police Headquarters. In 2019, the Secretariat provided 30 gun racks to make the amoury at Zanzibar Field Force Unit Police Headquarters operational.



Inspection of Gun Racks in Zanzibar



Inspection of Armouries



Handover of Armouries and Gunracks

2.2.8 Destruction of obsolete firearms

One of the best practices in weapons management is to identify obsolete stockpiles and ensure they are responsibly disposed to guard against the risk of circulating in the illicit market. With support from the US Government and UNODA, the Secretariat facilitated the destruction of 5,144 obsolete firearms in the Republic of Kenya in April 2021. The event was presided over by His Excellency Uhuru Kenyatta-President of the Republic of Kenya and witnessed by members of the diplomatic corps in Nairobi and other senior Government Officials as a sign of commitment in the implementation of the UNPoA and Nairobi Protocol provisions.



Obsolete firearms destruction exercise presided over by H.E. President Uhuru Kenyatta

2.2.9 Provision of shears crushing machine

In order to further build the capacity of Member States in implementing SALW destruction initiatives, the Secretariat with funding from the US Government provided a shears crushing machine to the Republic of Rwanda including training of operators of the machine. The machine is expected to facilitate the routine destruction of identified obsolete government firearms.

2.2.10 Development of PSSM Practitioners Handbook

In order to further strengthen the PSSM implementation capacity of Member States, the US Government in 2018 supported the development of a PSSM practitioners' handbook with the objective of trainees in PSSM having written document to refer to long after the training in the daily duties. The handbook is instrumental in improving the capacity of the host nations to assess stockpiles, operational procedures and infrastructure and provide ways for potential improvements to security and management and also to develop the

host nation's capacity to plan and execute PSSM interventions through introducing them to best international practices in PSSM. The handbook was produced in three (3) languages namely; English, French and Swahili.



Participants during the Validation workshop for the PSSM Handbook

2.2.11 Partnership with AU-UNODA

In partnership with the African Union and UNODA, RECSA Secretariat coordinated the implementation of the Joint AU-UNODA Project on the Africa Amnesty Month. The project was aimed at supporting selected African countries namely; CAR, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Cote d'Ivoire, Cameroon and Burkina Faso in firearms marking and records management, weapons collection and destruction or safe storage of weapons once illegally owned by non-state actors. The Amnesty Month contributes to efforts towards the "Silencing the Guns Initiative" in Africa.



Launch of the Africa Amnesty Month campaign in Ethiopia



Africa Amnesty Month campaign in DRC

2.3 Adaptive Research, Public Education and Awareness

Inadequate awareness on the link between small arms proliferation, violent extremism, radicalization, peace, stability and development continues to hinder the fight against SALW proliferation. However, there is a growing consensus that small arms proliferation, violent extremism, radicalization directly affects State welfare and individual well-being. In view of this, the Secretariat implemented the interventions below to further strengthen awareness raising efforts on the relationship between small arms proliferation, violent extremism, radicalization, peace, stability and development.

2.3.1 RECSA Communication Toolkit

In order to effectively discharge its mandate, the RECSA has to carry out intentional, strategic and coordinated communication activities with Strategic Partners.

With funding from the African Development Bank Group, the Secretariat developed a Communication Toolkit that was validated during the 12th TAC held in March 2021 in Nairobi. The objective of the Toolkit is to assist RECSA Secretariat and respective National Institutions in Member States responsible for SALW management and control to communicate strategically and effectively with various stakeholders in the execution of their mandates.



The communication consultant making a presentation during the workshop



NFP's making contributions during the workshop

2.3.2 Public Awareness

Under the joint AU-UNODA project, RECSA Secretariat supported the implementation of different public education and awareness activities. The Secretariat conducted country-wide public and media campaigns on voluntary surrender of firearms and ammunition in selected countries; Conducted information sharing and sensitization workshops for security forces on community policing; Distributed IEC materials (with key messages and slogans) on voluntary surrender and collection of firearms and ammunitions.



Official launch of the Amnesty Month in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, 23 September 2020.



Sensitization campaign on the voluntary hand-over of small arms in DRC's capital, Kinshasa, in September 2020.

2.3.4 Production and dissemination of SALW awareness materials

During the period under review, RECSA Secretariat continued with the development and dissemination of different SALW awareness materials and content across various platforms, including: RECSA Annual reports; SALW documentaries and films; RECSA social media; Print and broadcast media; RECSA Website articles; and RECSA leaflets.

2.3.5 Virtual engagements

In order to remain operational during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the Secretariat continued to engage with its partners using virtual means. RECSA participated in a number of meetings with different partners and member states including: The African Union; United Nations Office on Disarmament Affairs (UNODA); East African Legislative Assembly (EALA); The African Development Bank; East African Police Chiefs Cooperation organization (EAPCCO).

2.4 Mainstreaming Monitoring and Evaluation and Special Interest Groups in SALW Interventions

RECSA is committed towards monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Nairobi Protocol and the RECSA Strategic Plan 2016-2020 related to firearms management and control as well as mainstreaming special interest groups in all SALW interventions. Accordingly, the interventions below were implemented in the reporting period.

2.4.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Building

One of the objectives of a sustainable M&E system is to track progress and demonstrate results of interventions undertaken to ensure evidence-based decision making. Accordingly, the Secretariat in 2020, undertook capacity building trainings on Monitoring and Evaluation in the Member States of: Burundi, CAR, DRC, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda with the objective of facilitating Member States to operationalize the Regional Reporting Tool. To date, the Republic of Seychelles, Republic of Uganda, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Kenya and United Republic of Tanzania have so far submitted reports to the Secretariat using the Reporting Tool.

2.4.2 Monitoring/Assessment Missions

RECSA Secretariat conducted a number of joint monitoring missions to measure, assess and report progress of implementation of the SALW programs and interventions in South Sudan, DRC and Tanzania among others. The Secretariat is developing a Regional Databank for SALW statistics and information and encourage Member States to submit their reports quarterly as expected.



Inspection of Gun racks in Zanzibar



Inspection of 5th Containerized Armory in Kenya

2.4.3 Development of RECSA Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy 2020-2024

Cognizant of the need to generate, analyze and document data on progress made in the implementation of interventions. The Secretariat reviewed the insisting M& E strategy and developed a new Strategy pegged on the RECSA Strategic Plan 2020-2024. The Strategy provides a comprehensive framework for the Secretariat and Member States on data collection, aggregation, storage, reporting, dissemination and utilization.

CHAPTER THREE

FINANCIAL STATUS OF RECSA SECRETARIAT

In accordance with Article 14 of the Agreement Establishing RECSA, the finances of the Secretariat are derived from contributions of Member States as well as donations and grants from other sources. During the reporting period, the Secretariat received funds from Member States as well as donors as highlighted in the sections below:

3.1 Financial contributions from RECSA Member States

The Secretariat received contributions from the Member States of Burundi, Central African Republic, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda amounting to **USD 2,995,707** for the 3-financial years (2018/2019, 2019/2020, 2020/2021). For the same period, the outstanding arrears stands as at 30th June, 2021 is **USD 7,378,595**.

3.2 Financial contributions from Development Partners

The Secretariat received funding from the US Government, AfDB, UNODA and Voluntary Trust fund (ATT Secretariat) amounting to **USD 4,311,015** for the period 2018 to 30th June, 2021 to support the implementation of SALW management and control interventions in selected Member States as highlighted in the table below.

It is important to note that direct funding to RECSA Secretariat from donors is on the downward trend as many donors have shifted focus to funding Member States directly. The Secretariat supported the Member States of South Sudan and Kenya to directly receive funding in 2019/2020 under the Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF) from the ATT Secretariat. Member States are therefore called upon to pick interest and submit funding proposals directly to donors. The Secretariat will continue supporting Member States that show willingness to fulfill conditions set by inviting donors.

3.3 External Independent Audits

In accordance with the RECSA Finance Rules and Regulations and International Accounting Best Practices, the Secretariat engaged external auditors (PricewaterHouse Coopers – PWC) to audit its books of accounts for the period 2017/2018, 2018/2019, 2019/2020. The reports are ready for consideration by CoM. The audit exercise for the FY2020/2021 awaits availability for funds to engage the auditors.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHALLENGES DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

Over the years, RECSA Secretariat has faced a number of challenges that have impeded its growth and performance, and these include but are not limited to;

4.1 Member States Contributions and Arrears

Failure by member states to fulfil their annual financial obligations to support the smooth running and effective operations of the RECSA Secretariat as evidenced by the outstanding arrears.

4.2 Inadequate support for SALW interventions by Member States:

Some member states hardly prioritize small arms interventions in their medium and long term country strategies, plans and or budgets. When they do, they are overshadowed by the broad peace and security themes. It is highly recommended that SALW interventions

are clearly included in the respective member states' medium and long term development plans including allocation of commensurate financial and human resources.

4.3 Inadequate visibility of Member States interventions

Over the years, there has been little visibility of RECSA's work in the fight against the proliferation of illicit SALW. The Member States have consistently failed to highlight the success stories and challenges in the fight against the proliferation of illicit SALW. The little that is reported is about activities where the Secretariat is directly involved yet there is a lot of interventions being implemented by Member States. The lack of visibility therefore affects the chances of attracting funding from potential donors. It is a high time that Member States started submitting detailed quarterly reports consistently to the Secretariat to enrich the RECSA Annual reports and improve on the visibility of the good work being done.

4.4 COVID-19 pandemic outbreak

Like all organisations, the Secretariat has been affected by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant restrictions imposed by the different Governments. Costs related to COVID-19 tests and quarantine have accordingly affected the activities' budget lines. The outbreak has also affected the movement of RECSA Staff and Member States representatives in circumstances where the planned activities cannot be executed virtually.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

This report has presented a snapshot of RECSA Secretariat performance towards contributing to regional SALW control efforts in the Great Lakes Region, Horn of Africa and Bordering States for the period July 2018 to June 2021.

No doubt, the Secretariat has made significant progress not only in executing its mandate but also in facilitating implementation of regional and international instruments and mechanisms such as the UNPOA, ATT, Silencing the Guns Initiative and the Nairobi Protocol. In particular, the Secretariat has immensely contributed to building the capacity of member states to effectively secure and manage their stockpiles, improved their knowledge and reporting on small arms issues as well as increased participation of special interest groups in SALW interventions at both national and regional level. However, more work still needs to be done in the coming years.

The outbreak of COVID-19 has brought to the bare the fact that the Secretariat and Member States have inadequate ICT infrastructural capacity to organise virtual engagements. It is important to note that COVID-19 is here to stay for some time and therefore Member States and / or donors should support the Secretariat to strengthen its ICT infrastructural capacity and that of National Focal Point Coordinators in order to continue engaging virtually.

Going forward, RECSA in collaboration with stakeholders and partners will continue coordinating the implementation of SALW control and management efforts in the RECSA region as well as contribute to continental resolve on combating illicit SALW proliferation.