

AUC-UNODA-RECSA JOINT PROJECT SUPPORT TO THE AFRICA AMNESTY MONTH

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION REPORT 30 APRIL 2022

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Silencing the Guns in Africa is one of the flagship initiatives of the AU's Agenda 2063¹, and aims to achieve an integrated, prosperous and peaceful Africa driven by its own citizens and representing a dynamic force in the international arena – an agenda that is strongly linked with the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The AU Summit, held on 9 and 10 February 2020, adopted “Silencing the Guns: creating conducive conditions for Africa's development” as the AU's theme for 2020.

In the quest for peace and development, African Heads of State and Government decided to recommit to collecting illicit firearms by extending the commemoration and conduct of the Africa Amnesty Month up to 2030. The extension of the implementation of the AU Master Roadmap of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa to 2030 was agreed during the AU Extra-Ordinary summit held on 6 December 2020² providing an important opportunity to strengthen collaboration.

Silencing guns in Africa by the year 2020 remains a very strategic plan for improving peace and stability in Africa. It stipulates the use of collective measures for all member states to avoid interests and power of single actors and yet, it requires an asserted/ collective effort to peace talks and agreements.

The threat posed by COVID-19 has considerably slowed the momentum of the silencing the guns agenda and has abruptly added to the existing challenges, slowing down the attainment of peace and development.

The triangular relationship between the African Union (AU), the United Nations office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) and Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons (RECSA) has been leveraged to foster efforts of Silencing the Guns

¹ African Union Commission, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want (2015)

² <https://www.peaceau.org/uploads/ext-assembly-au-dec-1-and-decl-1-xiv-e.pdf>

Initiative. The aim is to further accelerate collective efforts to end conflicts and crises in Africa.

Project Background

The need to operationalise the idea of silencing the guns was driven by the observation that sustainable development, as envisaged in Agenda 2063, could not occur in a context of rampant conflict, and thus required a firm, clear and coherent strategy, as well as a coordinated plan of implementation across multiple continental stakeholders (African Union, [2014](#) & Musau, [2019](#)). This, in turn, means that member states need to, and must be, willing to sign, ratify and domesticate existing normative frameworks on peace, security and governance.

One of the key milestones in a bid to accelerate the realization of Silencing the Guns Initiatives in Africa by 2020, the African Union declared the month of September from 2017 as the African Amnesty Month during the 29th AU Summit. This was to be observed annually each September till 2020 with the objective of encouraging citizens to participate and voluntarily surrender illegally owned weapons without fear of prosecution by the Governments.

The Africa Amnesty Month Project supports partnering willing Member States in the implementation of the “Africa Amnesty Month”. In 2021 the project received funding from the Federal Government of Germany to support three Member States, namely; Niger, Madagascar and Uganda through the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the African Union Commission (AUC) and coordinated by the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSA).

Project Specific Objectives:

- i. Reduce illicit ownership of SALW and their ammunition
- ii. Decrease levels of armed violence
- iii. Strengthen capacity of law enforcement/military on:
 - a. Outreach towards civilians including trust building measures such as community policing;
 - b. Establishing of voluntary weapons collection;
 - c. Stockpiling of SALW and ammunition including adequate marking, recordkeeping; and
 - d. Weapons destruction
- iv. Increase awareness through media among civilians of harmful consequences of illicit SALW ownership

The key areas of interventions of the project are:

- ⇔ To organize broad-scale media campaigns, National and local sensitization and outreach activities, including civil society organizations, women and youth;
- ⇔ To Safely collect and store illegally held SALW by civilians handed over during the campaign period;

- ⇒ To organize capacity-building workshops for members of defense and security services, including community-based policing concepts, and components of Physical Security and Stockpile Management;
- ⇒ To undertake secure destruction of SALW collected during the Amnesty campaign.

Africa Amnesty Campaign 2021 mirrors on the momentum created during implementation September 2020 Africa Amnesty. The project was funded by Federal Government of Germany through the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the African Union Commission (AUC) and coordinated by the Regional Centre on Small Arms in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSEA). It supported three beneficiary countries, namely; Niger, Madagascar, and Uganda.

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TABULATED SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES' STATUS PER BENEFICIARY COUNTRY

Beneficiary Country	Activity	Sub-activities	Implementation Status	Achieved results
Niger	Official Launch	Official public launch conducted	Held on 10 th November 2021 and was graced by the Deputy Minister in charge of cabinet affairs in the office of the President of Niger.	<p>↔ Made the project known to the general public, advocated for the fight against SALW, and got everyone sensitized to contribute to silencing the guns by 2030.</p> <p>↔ Involvement of the media, further facilitated awareness-raising of the wide-reach of the population</p>
	Media Awareness	Consulted recruited messages designed and disseminated	Campaigns were conducted in Madarounfa, Guidan Roumdji, Bangui and Sabon Guida	<p>↔ Developed tools and to continue the media campaign by focusing on community radios and covering other areas beyond those defined by the project</p>
	Local/Community Sensitisation	Missions conducted in Madarounfa, Guidan, Roumdji from 5 th to 12 th October 2021 Missions conducted in Bangui and Sabon Guida from 12 th to 19 th	The activity was conducted in Madarounfa, Guidan, Roumdji from 5 th to 12 th October 2021 Missions conducted in Bangui and Sabon Guida from 12 th to 19 th October 2021. The participants comprised of women, youth	<p>↔ Strengthen exchange and awareness-raising activities;</p> <p>↔ Greater emphasis on the surrender of weapons without susceptibility to judicial proceedings, to make a plea at the level of the judicial system to this effect;</p> <p>↔ provided greater support to local</p>

		October 2021	and community elders	<p>initiatives in the fight against the circulation of illicit weapons</p> <p>↔ strengthened collaboration with the defence and security forces to denounce, alert any suspicious act or person;</p> <p>↔ community members voluntarily returned the illicit weapons in their possession in return for Amnesty</p>
	Community Policing	Workshop held on 13 th October 2021	Workshop was held on 13 th October 2021 in Maradi and Tahoua Regions, more specifically the municipalities of Sabonguida, Bangui, Guidan Roudji and Madarounfa	<p>1. Increased the actions of sensitization of the populations on SALW;</p> <p>↔ Recommendations made to the CNCCA: Continue the activities of exchange and awareness-raising ;</p> <p>Fill the legal gap in the possession, trafficking and circulation of illicit weapons;</p> <p>Define the legal framework for amnesty on the issue of voluntary surrender of weapons;</p> <p>Further train LEAs on SALW and community policing</p>

				<p>Create or mobilize resources in favor of the LEAs for community policing actions</p> <p>Participant Shared the knowledge gained with peers and facilitated the voluntary surrender of weapons in favour of Amnesty Month</p>
	Collection, registration and marking of SALW	Held from 24 th November to 1 st December 2021	This was held from 24 th November to 1 st December 2021. 30 weapons were voluntarily surrendered and marked in the communes of Guidan, Roumji, Sabon, Guida and the department of Madaoua	30 weapons were voluntarily surrendered marked and destroyed at Maradi
Madagas car	Official Launch	Official public launch done on 16 th November 2021	The Official public launch was held on 16 th November 2021	The launch was symbolic with the country's commitment contribution to silencing the guns in Africa
	Media Awareness	Consulted recruited messages designed and disseminated	Campaigns were conducted in Ihorombe Region, the Upper Matsiatra Region and the Atsimo Andrefana Region.	Media campaign has been more than successful, it is desirable that the release of the fund be quicker than the project schedule

	Local/Community Sensitisation, Collection, registration and marking of SALW	Awareness conducted in the 119 districts	Awareness conducted in the 119 districts	1,079 weapons were collected as follows: 549 deposited with the Army; 358 filed with the Gendarmerie; 111 filed with the National Police; 45 filed with the districts; 06 offensive grenades deposited with the Army; 10 cartridges deposited with the Army;
	Public Destruction		weapons destruction ceremony was held on April 29, 2022.	Total weapons destroyed were 1194
Uganda	Official Launch	Official launch held on 24 th November 2021	Official launch held on 24 th November 2021 and was presided by Hon. Otifire the Minister of Internal Affairs	Campaigns were intensified to inform citizens on of effects of illicit SALW and on the need for voluntary surrender
	Media Awareness	Consulted recruited messages designed and disseminated	14 versions of amnesty campaign messages have been produced in seven languages and will be aired on selected radio stations in the target regions across Uganda.	Radio was considered as the major media player to raise awareness of the negative impact of illicitly owned and trafficked small arms and light weapons. Radio talk shows also played a major role, providing space for the audience to participate. Local opinion leaders, including those from faith and cultural institutions, civil society and government officials were considered for

				<p>participation in the radio programmes. The youth were considered as key players in the mobilization and were encouraged to participate in planned activities</p>
	Monitoring and Evaluation	<p>Consultant hired to conduct a perception Pre-project survey conducted in the selected regions</p>	<p>Consultant hired to conduct a perception Pre-project survey conducted in the selected regions</p>	<p>Recommendations of the M&E Report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↔ Need for massive and continuous sensitization of communities about the dangers of illegal fire arms ↔ Engaging the border countries in peace talks and to call upon citizens to surrender illegal fire arms and also to control their firearms. ↔ There is need for regional policy on handling and management of arms within Great lakes region ↔ There should be strict monitoring of porous borders to avoid entry and exist of fire arms among neighboring countries
	Public Destruction			<p>Public destruction event held on 28 April 2022 at Kotido where 378 weapons were burnt</p>

IN COUNTRY IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

1. Republic of Niger

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons is one of the main security challenges currently facing the ECOWAS Region and its neighbouring regional blocs. The trafficking and wide availability of these weapons fuels communal conflicts, creates political instability and poses a threat, not only to National Security, but also to Sustainable Development. Its widespread proliferation has contributed to alarming levels of armed crime and militancy. In Niger, for example, non-state armed groups continue to place insecurity on government forces on its borders. The flow of illicit weapons resulting from the Libyan crisis; the formation of organized criminal groups involved in trafficking in small arms and light weapons, drugs and trafficking in human beings continues to threaten regional security and stability, as evidenced by the activities of terrorist groups such as AL Qaeda, Boko Haram etc.

The Sahel area covers a vast geographical area with mountainous regions, often difficult due to lack of resources and the absence of the State in the most remote parts of the national territory. This situation very often forces local communities to collaborate with transnational criminal networks to survive. This gap also provides an opportunity for transnational criminal networks to extort fines, taxes and other illicit zakats from commodity traffickers and terrorist groups. Due to the above conditions, the proliferation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALW) is thriving in the Sahel countries both as a tool for implementing armed violence and the escalation of armed conflicts, but also as a commodity of illicit trade for terrorists and criminals of all stripes.

Also, through trafficking, this great availability of these weapons fuels communal conflicts, political instability and constitutes a threat, not only to national security, but also to Sustainable Development. The widespread proliferation of small arms and light weapons also contributes to alarming levels of armed violence, crime and militancy. The challenges of peace and security in West Africa are mainly to prevent conflict and promote development. Therefore, effective control of SALW proliferation and trafficking is one of the main global conditions for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). One of the main lessons learned over the past two decades is that where small arms and armed violence dominate, development suffers.

This circulation of illicit weapons has in recent years created instability in Niger's border areas with Nigeria, including during transhumance. Herders from arms

trafficking networks are often intercepted in the Maradi region. These weapons are often seized from women accomplices of traffickers, as is the case in the commune of Tibiri (Administrative Region of Maradi).

This is why as part of the Amnesty Month project in Africa "Silencing the Guns by 2030", the Niger National Commission on Small arms and Light weapons (CNCCAI), in addition to its arms control activities, has carried out weapons destruction activities. This project also complemented CNCCAI's awareness and arms control efforts on the borders with Nigeria.

Activities Brief

1. Awareness-raising missions

The awareness-raising team was led by the Permanent Secretary of the CNCCAI accompanied by experts and consultants. At each passage the meeting is in the presence of all social strata. The CNCCAI took care to explain to the audience the objective of the mission, to sensitize them on the stakes of this mission and the danger of the illicit possession of weapons, to call on them to collaborate. The new key word is this opportunity for amnesty for the voluntary surrender of weapons. The commission for a question of appropriation was relayed by the civil and military officials.

Hundreds of women, youth and men participated in the activity. The mission made an introductory presentation before launching the discussions that revolved around several issues related to SALW and the danger of unlawful detention. Quite remarkably, it is the participation of women in the various exchanges, with contributions of paramount importance.

2. The official launch of the Africa Amnesty Campaign 2021

The official launch was held on in Niamey on 10th November 2021. In attendance were representatives of UNREC/UNODA, RECSA, CNCCAI. The occasion was officially graced by the Deputy Minister in charge of cabinet affairs in the office of the President of Niger.

3. Media and awareness campaigns

CNCCAI designed and produced several tools namely the slogan of the campaign, the radio and audio-visual messages, the Kakemonos, the posters and leaflets, the audiovisual media coverage of the event (by the communication consultant), the production of several videos, etc. These tools were pre-tested and then disseminated during the awareness-raising. Media coverage was made with the support of national television in order to give a special stamp to the events.

On average, more than 2000 people were sensitized to the population, the communal and customary administrative authorities of the communes of Madarounfa, Guidan Roundji, Bangui and Sabon Guida.

4. Community policing workshop

The National Commission for the Collection and Control of Illicit Weapons (CNCCAI) organized on October 13, 2021, a capacity building workshop of the Law enforcement agencies (LEAs) and Magistrates on SALW and Community Policing in Maradi. The workshop brought together about fifty) magistrates, forces of the National Gendarmerie, the National Guard and the National Police of the departments in which the municipalities of intervention of the project are located, namely, Sabonguida, Bangui, Guidan Roundji and Madarounfa. The workshop was conducted in four sessions;

- ✓ Brief presentation of the Amnesty Month initiative and project in Africa: "Silencing the guns by 2030";
- ✓ Overview of the CNCCAI;
- ✓ Knowledge of SALW / Identification and tracing: exchanges and discussions;
- ✓ Conference-debate on Community Policing / link with arms control: exchanges and discussions

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

The National Commission for the fight of illicit Small Arms (CNCCAI) recruited a national consultant to conduct a public perception survey on the problems related to the illegal possession of SALW weapons in targeted areas in Niger namely: Maradi, Madarounfa and Sabanguida. The overall purpose of the survey was to establish an understanding of the security context perceived by the community with regard to the proliferation of illicit firearms in order to help measure the impact of the implementation of the Amnesty Month project in Africa.

Additionally, the survey served as a monitoring and evaluation tool for the impact of the implementation of the Amnesty Month in Africa project in Niger. The specific objectives of the perception survey were to:

1. Assess the current perception of community safety related to the factor of illicit possession and circulation of firearms in targeted areas of: Bangui, Guidan Roundji, Madarounfa and Sabanguida
2. Identify the challenges encountered in the implementation of civil disarmament initiatives in the respective regions;

3. Enable the project team to draw conclusions about the impact of project activities as well as provide lessons learned and recommendations for future initiatives in this area of work.

The data from the respondents was disaggregated giving 253 people in total these comprised of 77 women and 178 men, or 30 and 70% respectively.

4. Collection, registration and marking of weapons

This activity took place from 14 to 21 March 2022 and aims to collect, identify, mark and secure illegal SALW seized or voluntarily surrendered. This is an ongoing activity of the CNCCAI. For Amnesty Month, after the awareness campaign, several weapons, voluntarily surrendered, were identified, marked and secured and destroyed.

Indeed, about thirty (30) weapons were voluntarily surrendered, registered, marked and destroyed.

Following the implementation of this project, the CNCCAI welcomes the choice of activities and targeting made with the partners and thanks them for their contribution to the success of this project.

It recommends the continuity of the partnership between UNODA-AU/RECSA/CNCCAI partnership as part of the fight against the proliferation of SALW in the Sahel in general and in Niger in particular for a period from 2022 to 2024.

6. Republic of Madagascar

Activities Brief

1. Official launch for the Amnesty campaign was conducted on 16th November in Antananarivo. It was attended by Government Officials, Parliamentarians, FBOs, CSOs and International Community represented in Madagascar. The event was officially graced by the Minister of Defense who was accompanied by the AUC country representative to Madagascar.
2. Local awareness and weapons collection in the 119 districts of the 23 regions of Madagascar

The intermenstrual committee for amnesty month implementation (CIOMA) has focused its efforts on the awareness-raising, in particular on the need to reintegrate illegal and regular weapons, at the level of the 23 regions. This was only after the invitation to voluntary surrender was advanced.

Indeed, 94,985 weapons were registered in the database of the Directorate throughout Madagascar in 2021, while it is estimated at more than 200 000 weapons circulating throughout the country.

The assumption is that there are irregular and illegal holders throughout the country.

Of the five activities planned for this 2021 arms amnesty campaign, this report deals with "local awareness and weapons collection". Their objective was to inform, raise awareness and invite the population on the benefits of amnesty and to attract the support of the population with a view to participate in the restoration of peace by voluntarily handing over illegally held weapons and/or regularize irregularly held weapons. This involved the following tasks; designing and production of materials in Malagasy (the local language), advertising and broadcasting in Malagasy and on the focused group awareness campaigns particularly for; Lonake/Hazomanga/Ampanjaka/Sojabe; discussion with opinion makers, Responsible Minister, Governors, local elected officials, Defense and Security Forces (Military, Gendarmes, Policies) on the physical and moral integration of citizens who have returned to the weapons and whistleblowers.

3. Media Campaigns awareness

In order to better dispel fear, anticipate any resistance and above all to attract the support of the population and the various authorities on the ground, the media campaign relating to the concept of amnesty for weapons is more than the lever of the project. Madagascar held its first Month of Amnesty of Arms in 2018 however faced challenges due to lack of media sensitization campaigns for the citizens. It was thus necessary to redesign the message and especially that the target regions are further from the Capital where the use of weapons is almost traditional. This included; clip was designed by renowned artists and in the different dialects of the Malagasy language and a 40-second video spot, both were broadcast on the three national television channels; the Malagasy National Television, TV Plus and VIVA TV.

Additionally, almost all national and regional television channels broadcast the different stages of project implementation each time the weapons collection teams were within their jurisdiction.

Besides televisions, radio stations such as Radio Nationale Malagasy, Radio Don Bosco and Radio Antsiva simultaneously broadcast spots of 19 sec audio commercials during Awareness Month. The project activities from the opening ceremony and all the other activities, clips were shared on the new media of the Ministry of Defense National (Website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) and on the platforms of other partners like Orange Actus. Finally, interviews with senior officials

of the various institutions and departments as well as reports were made to make it an Amnesty 2021 film:

4. Monitoring and Evaluation

A national consultant was engaged by CIOMA to conduct a public perception survey on the problems related to the illegal possession of SALW weapons in targeted areas from Madagascar namely: 1) Matsiatra Ambony, 2) Ihorombe, 3) Atsimo Andrefana. This consultancy work was entrusted to civil society organizations in Madagascar, including the ROHY movement which brings together a hundred CSOs in Madagascar.

The overall purpose of the survey is to establish an understanding of the security context perceived by the community with regard to the proliferation of illicit firearms in selected regions of Madagascar in order to help measure the impact of the implementation of the Amnesty Month project in Africa.

Two surveys to have the "baseline" and the "endline" were conducted in the three target regions. These surveys were based on the questionnaires made available to the consultant. Thus³, two investigations were carried out, the first before the implementation of all amnesty month activities in Madagascar and the second after the end of amnesty month.

5. Destruction

The activity was held on 29th April 2022. Weapons collected by the different entities of the Defense and Security, were stockpiled as follows;

1. to the Joint Directorate of Logistics and Support for the Army, of which there are 552,
2. Directorate of Police Intervention Forces, of which there are 115, and
3. Pyrotechnics Centre for the Gendarmerie Nationale, of which there are 422.

7. Republic of Uganda

Activities Brief:

1. Official Launch

Public event took place on 24th November, 2021 in Kampala City and was graced by the Minister of Internal Affairs. In attendance were; UN representative in Uganda, AU representative, RECSA Executive Secretary, Senior Government Officials, CSO Representative, Media, Youth and Women Representatives and Senior Security Officials from UPDF and UPF. During the official launch the winners of the campaign slogans were recognised and the three (3) slogans adopted were⁴;

³See Annex

⁴<http://www.defence.go.ug/home/newsandevents/41.0>

« Embrace Peace, give up illegal guns », « Together, we can silence the guns », « Let us have the guns in the right hands ».

2. Media Campaign and Awareness Raising

Involved the engagement of a communication consultant to design and produce materials with the message translated in the seven languages of the 4 selected regions of; Rwenzori, Northern Uganda, Karamoja and Kampala Metropolitan Central region. The messages were been adopted for use in the production of the Amnesty Campaign Materials including; 1) Radio spots, 2) Banners, 3) Posters, 4) Amnesty them song, 5) Amnesty theme Video, 6) Amnesty media kit. Due to covid -19 pandemic, media coverage of the launch was made via internet live stream that made it possible for the event to be viewed and followed nationally and globally.

In addition, electronic media kit was sent out to media houses and the Uganda Peoples Defence Force (UPDF) Press Unit distributed footage for use by media houses in Uganda. The official launch was covered on social media platforms and had presence on Notifier, an electronic news publication. In preparation for the rollout in the four selected regions, the team organized a media brief which provided background information on the amnesty campaign and roll out strategy. The media brief was attended by 15 journalists representing the major media houses in Uganda. An updated electronic media kit was sent out to media houses news department.

It was noted that flexibility and adopting measures to achieve the intended objectives under challenging circumstances. Radio for that matter is the best option for reaching out to the wider audience in the implementation of the Africa Amnesty Campaign in Uganda working within the current budget allocation. For that matter, budget adjustments are considered to focus more on radio publicity.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation Survey

Overall purpose of this survey was to conduct a baseline survey to guide the implementation of the Africa Amnesty Month project in Northern Region, Karamoja Region, Rwenzori Region, Kampala Metropolitan regions. The survey shall help the project team and other stakeholders to get a clearer understanding of the security situation within communities in the above-mentioned regions. Perceptions of security in relation to the circulation of weapons were documented and analysed relating to the proliferation of illicit firearms.

The survey conducted in four (4) selected regions: Northern region (districts of Gulu, Omoro and Lira), Karamoja region (districts of Kotido, Napak and Moroto), Rwenzori region (districts of Kasese, Bundibugyo and Fortportal) and Kampala Metropolitan (districts of Kampala, Mukono and Wakiso).

N	Recommended Action	Description
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1	Need to conduct sensitization at community level	There is need to conduct community-based sensitizations and awareness campaigns so that people can embrace amnesty and voluntarily surrender the illegal guns.
2.	Promote community dialogues	These dialogues will help to promote Conflict resolution between communities and promote peace
3.	Use Media Channels to disseminate information	Engage media houses and journalists and find space on media channels such as radio and television to disseminate information compelling citizens to surrender illegal fire arms
4.	Joint efforts between security forces and community leaders	There is need to enhance join efforts in planning through peace committees and encourage communities to reach out to the population and encourage them to voluntarily surrender
5.	Need to identify focal point persons for voluntary surrender within the community	A clearly identified person should be put in place to handle issues related voluntary surrender.
6.	Need for economic empowerment projects	These will act as alternative sources of income for those illegally using guns to earn a living
7.	Focus the sensitizations on the Youth	The youth are more prone to use of illegal guns, so sensitizations should ensure that the youth are in the fore front of the voluntary surrender campaigns

4. Local Sensitisation Missions

A number of CSOs in the selected regions that a conflict hot spot targeted districts that a conflict hot spot including Kasese, Bundibugyo, and Fort portal (Rwenzori) Gulu, Lira and Amuru (Northern) and Moroto and Kotido (Karamoja). The participants were representatives local government leaders (RDCs, LCV chairpersons, Police Liaison officers, District Community Development Officers, District Internal Security Officers (DISOs), FM/Media, Field Monitors, Religious Leaders Elders and Civil Society Organizations engaged in Peace Building Initiatives.

5. Public Destruction of the collected and surrendered weapons, ammunitions and explosives

A public event for destruction was held on 28th April 2022 in Kotido-Uganda. 378 weapons were destroyed.

V. ASSESSMENT & OUTLOOK

The engagement within the AAM project with three African States was accompanied through the joint partnership between the African Union Commission (AUC), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), and the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA). The project proposed key activities, such as broad sensitization and outreach on the negative effects of the illegal possession of small arms and light weapons (SALW), capacity-building of law enforcement in trust-building mechanisms with communities through community-based policing workshops, and secure weapons collection, management.

In Niger and Madagascar all planned activities have been implemented except destruction of collected weapons which will take place from January to March 2022. In Uganda, Covid 19 Government restrictions have limited movements of activities implementing teams and therefore requested to be allowed to extend the project implementation until March 2022.

Lastly it worthy to note that National Small Arms Commissions (NATCOMs) and National Focal Points (NFPs) are the main implementing agencies at the national level, that have adapted the broader project outlines to their country-specific contexts along concrete activity plans, taking into account national capacities and needs.

The combination of this international, continental, regional and national partnership shows to be vital to generate high-level political support and national ownership, as countries have fully appropriated the concept and feel responsibility as AU Member States to deliver on their commitment to the African Union “Silencing the Guns” flagship initiative.

This generated not only crucial political momentum and increased visibility of NATCOMs and NFPs, but has also elevated SALW control and weapons and ammunition management (WAM) within the politico-security peacebuilding agenda at the national, regional and continental levels.

VI. Conclusion

The 2021 project implementation begun between October and November in the three beneficiary countries and initially activities were to be implemented until 31 December but due COVID 19 challenges and the end of the year holidays, the implementation could not be completed by December and therefore a no cost extension was requested and given until March 2022.

The UNODA team has done a commendable job to facilitate the transfer of funds to RECSA and RECSA has also disbursed funds to countries without delays.

In general, all the activities have been implemented in three countries with destruction which delayed due to requirements for a high political approval.

RECSA continued to avail its support to member states for the conclusion of the project activities and assisting National Commissions to develop capacities for narrative and financial reporting documents for submission to UNODA in the prescribed timelines.

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VII. Pictorial of the implementation



Guard of Honor for the Minister of Defense during the launching ceremony



**Remarks by Mis Hawa Representative of AUC to Madagascar
of Defense of Madagascar**

Official Launching Remarks by the Minister

Below are the pictures of collected weapons from illegal users in Madagascar





Display of locally manufactured weapons that were voluntary surrendered in Madagascar



DESTRUCTION IN MADAGASCAR – 1194 WEAPONS DESTROYED



Marking of Surrendered weapons in Niger





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Sensitisation Missions in Niger









Destruction in Niger



UGANDA LAUNCH ACTIVITY



Representative



Right to Left: Uganda NFP, AUC Representative, RECSA ES, UN Representative, Ministry of Defence

SALW DESTRUCTION IN UGANDA



Media links

1. Niger

<https://www.lesahel.org/lancement-officiel-du-projet-septembre-mois-de-lamnistie-en-afrique-faire-taire-les-armes-dici-2030-theme-retenu-pour-lannee-2021/#:~:text=%EF%BB%BFLa%20Commission%20Nationale%20pour,armes%20d'ici%202030%C2%BB.>

2. Uganda

<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/tea/news/east-africa/uganda-amnesty-surrender-illegal-firearms-3643168>

<https://www.mia.go.ug/media/campaign-youth-engagement-share-ideas-slogan-2021-africa-amnesty-month-uganda>

3. Madagascar

<https://la1ere.francetvinfo.fr/reunion/madagascar-1-089-armes-a-feu-remises-lors-du-mois-de-l-amnistie-1279072.html>



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