



# UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

# Sahel Programme

## *Progress Report*

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This report has been drafted to give an overview of activities implemented under the Sahel Programme (XAMZ17) of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Regional Office for West and Central Africa in Dakar, Senegal.

This report has not been formally edited.

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# Context

The Sahel region is confronted with complex security and political challenges to the stability and development of the region, which are interrelated with humanitarian and developmental issues as well as the adverse effects of climate and ecological changes.

Armed conflict, the proliferation of arms

The activities of terrorist organizations are an important cause of insecurity and violent conflict. These include groups such as the organization of Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad (Boko Haram), Ansar Eddine, the Mouvement pour l'Unification et le Jihad en Afrique



For example, in its 2013 *Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa: A Threat Assessment*, UNODC assesses that regional supply can satisfy local demand for firearms. UNODC Image

and transnational organized crime and other illicit activities such as drug trafficking, and the increasing links, in some cases, with terrorism continue to pose a tremendous threat to peace and security in the region.

de l'Ouest (MUJAO) and Al Mourabitoun.

This recent surge in violence further exacerbates the extremely fragile humanitarian situation in the Sahel where at least 20 million people remain at risk of food insecurity and nearly 5 million children are at risk of acute malnutrition.

# Programme

Through its Sahel Programme (2014-2017), UNODC supports the development of accessible, efficient and accountable criminal justice systems in the Sahel, to combat illicit trafficking drug trafficking, organized crime, terrorism and corruption in the region.

The Programme has been developed within the framework of the UN Regional Integrated Strategy for the Sahel 2013-2017, which the UN Secretary-General launched in June 2013.

The Strategy was developed pursuant to Security Council Resolution 2056 (2012). in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to develop and implement a Strategy for the region encompassing security, governance, development, human rights and humanitarian issues.

The UNODC Sahel Programme contributes to the outcomes of the security pillar of the Strategy and concentrates on five priority areas of intervention:

1. National legislation and international cooperation mechanisms;
2. Border control and interdiction;
3. Accountable and efficient investigation, prosecution and adjudication of criminal cases;

4. Scientific evidence in support of investigations and proceedings;
5. Rehabilitation of imprisoned and/or detained terrorists.

The Sahel region refers to Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. To ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach to the challenges affecting the region, the programme also makes due linkages with neighbouring countries in the Maghreb region (Algeria, Libya and Morocco), as well as in West Africa (Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo).

Approval at technical level was obtained from participating countries at the validation workshop in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, in June 2013. Subsequently, approvals have been obtained at the Ministerial level from most participating countries.

Various assessment missions covering all thematic areas of the Sahel Programme have been undertaken during the reporting period and have served to define counterparts' needs in further detail and establish relationships with participating governments at the working level. A comprehensive assessment report is under development and scheduled for publication early 2015.

## *Supporting state building in Mali*

The security situation in the Sahel is aggravated by escalating instability in West Africa, which led to the military coup in Mali in March 2012 and the spread of armed violence in the country. The northern region of the country has become a safe haven for terrorist groups, some of which are believed to have links with similar groups, such as Boko Haram in Nigeria and Al Shabab in Somalia. While hard evidence still needs to be provided in this regard, there are reports that links exist between terrorist groups and organized crime groups. Some militant Islamists are thought to levy "taxes" on drug traffickers in return for safe passage, earning the groups a direct subsidy from illicit trafficking.

With a territory of over 1.2 million km<sup>2</sup> and porous borders with seven countries, Mali's challenges are daunting. They can only be resolved through sustained cooperation with its neighbours in the Sahel and the Maghreb.

A joint mission of Chief of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Mr Hervé Ladsous and UNODC Executive Director Mr Yuri Fedotov to Bamako, Mali, took place on 8 and 9 July 2014. They emphasized that countering



Executive Director of UNODC, Mr Yuri Fedotov (right), speaks to the press in Bamako, Mali, joined by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of MINUSMA, Mr Albert Koenders (left), and Head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Mr Hervé Ladsous (centre). UNODC Photo

drugs, crime, corruption and terrorism is essential to building peace and development in the country and region.

During the two-day mission, Mr Fedotov and Mr Ladsous met with Prime Minister Moussa Mara to discuss how UNODC can continue to support the Malian government's efforts against the groups involved in drugs, corruption and terrorism.

In comments made at the end of their joint mission, Mr Fedotov praised the efforts of the Malian government and the excellent cooperation between UNODC and DPKO in Mali and West Africa. "UNODC and DPKO have forged a close collaboration that capitalizes on each organizations' mandates and experience, but also views peacekeeping and fighting drugs and organized crime as interconnected issues calling for joint responses."

Mr Fedotov welcomed the work of the United Nations Multi-dimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) that is assisting the government of Mali to create peace and security in the country, with the aim of bringing the Malian crisis to an end.

Since June 2014, a UNODC law enforcement and criminal justice expert has been working with the authorities and international community in Mali. UNODC has re-engaged the authorities to focus

on the implementation of its National Integrated Programme against drug trafficking and organized crime (NIP), which has been suspended following the start of the conflict in Mali.<sup>1</sup>

In this context, UNODC is supporting the Malian government in developing legislation to guide the restructuring of security services involved in the fight against terrorism, transnational crime organized drug trafficking. This draft legislation aims to reduce duplication and strengthen the authority of the Malian state in combating terrorism and transnational organized crime. The draft bill integrates measures on ensuring integrity and ethical standards within law enforcement agencies, as well as provisions on human resources on ensure career development within institutions.

UNODC will focus its efforts in the coming period on mentoring the senior management of law enforcement agencies and increasing capacity in crime scene investigations and forensic science.

Further UNODC activities in Mali are described under the substantive sections of this report.

1. NIPs were developed in a number of countries in West Africa in line with an action plan of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

# *Preventing terrorism*

**Research reports underline the close linkages between terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime in the Sahel region. Providing assistance for countries in the region to build the necessary capacity for addressing the challenges of terrorism and organized crime in the Sahel is a crucial step for achieving the mutually reinforcing goals of security and development. Although many countries in the Sahel have ratified the relevant international instruments on terrorism, national legislation does not always reflect those commitments.**

As part of its terrorism prevention programme, UNODC organized a workshop on the adoption of the universal legal framework and relevant national legislation related to counter-terrorism in Chad in February 2014. This effort supported the criminal law reform to incorporate international provisions on counter-terrorism (the 18 universal instruments against terrorism) in domestic law, ensuring compliance with international obligations. As a result, the draft Penal Code, which was not fully compliant with international standards against terrorism, has been put under revision.

Also in February, a national training workshop on the legal framework against terrorism was held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. A total of 19 staff of the Ministry of Justice, judicial authorities (investigation offices, attorney's office), Ministry of Interior (police officers, criminal investigations division) and the National Gendarmerie participated.

Technical investigations in criminal matters and mechanisms for international cooperation in criminal matters (mutual legal assistance and extradition) were covered. The workshop contributed to better inter-agency collaboration of judges, prosecutors and judicial police officers.

UNODC organized a workshop on the universal legal framework against terrorism in Nouakchott, Mauritania in April 2014. Training was given in investigation/prosecution techniques and international cooperation. Representatives from the police, the gendarmerie and the judicial branch participated, contributing also to better inter-agency cooperation. The training was delivered in Arabic by local UNODC-trained trainers to ensure that participants from all regions in Mauritania would have a good understanding of the subject matter. A similar workshop was held in Senegal in May 2014.





**UNODC organized a workshop on the universal legal framework against terrorism in Nouakchott, Mauritania from 15 to 17 April 2014. UNODC Photo**

National workshops for the review of the Nigerian Civil Aviation Act (2006) and related laws were conducted in Abuja in July and September 2014, in response to an official request from the Government to support and contribute to the incorporation of relevant international obligations and standards in civil aviation matters. During the workshop the Directors of the Legal Services from all relevant represented agencies presented, analysed and commented on proposed amendments to the six civil aviation related laws.

UNODC organized a training on counter terrorism measures for Malian officials, in Bamako in September. Police officers, prosecutors and gendarmes from differ-

ent regions in Mali, including Timbuktu and Gao, participated in the course. Investigation techniques such as infiltration, interception of communications, and surveillance were discussed. In the northern regions, insecurity was raised as an impediment to conducting investigations.

To further international cooperation between Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger) in terrorism cases, UNODC established the Judicial Cooperation Platform. Through the Platform, prosecutors can establish contact with structures and interlocutors in other countries. The fifth annual meeting of the Platform is scheduled to be held in Bamako, Mali, in November 2014.

# Combating trafficking in firearms

The influx of former mercenaries recruited by Libya's ousted regime after the February 2011 revolution and the proliferation of firearms from Libya into the Sahel-Saharan region have increased the terrorist threat in this zone. In addition, none of the countries in the Sahel currently possess marking machines for weapons legally held by military and security forces. These marking machines are critical to establishing a tracing mechanism.

The procurement of eight marking machines for Burkina Faso (2), Mali (1), Niger (2) and Senegal (3) has been completed. Also software for record keeping of seized firearms has been made available and is currently adapted for use in the aforementioned countries. The machines will be used to mark weapons, as they are imported, with a code that can identify the country and year of import, as well as the end-user. This marking will facilitate forensic investigations, should arms later be found at crime scenes. In September and October 2014, training in firearms marking machines has been delivered to counterparts in Burkina Faso and Niger in cooperation with the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs.



A regional conference on “Strengthening the legislative and operational responses to Firearms trafficking in the Sahel region” was held from 25 to 27 February 2014 in Senegal. UNODC Photo

A regional conference on “Strengthening the legislative and operational responses to Firearms trafficking in the Sahel region” was held in February 2014 in Senegal. Experts from 12 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, Senegal, Guinea (Conakry), Chad, Gambia and Ghana) participated.

As a result:

- The participating states have agreed to support the UNODC Global Study on Firearms Trafficking by communicating focal points for compilation data on seized firearms.
- A proposal has been developed to establish a central firearms unit for processing all seized firearms.
- It has been decided to establish a regional network of firearms experts, composed of representatives from the police, justice and customs services.

Meetings with senior-level police officers were held in Dakar on 27 and 28 February 2014 on capacity building related to the marking and record keeping of firearms. Also, the refurbishment of storage facilities for seized weapons at police stations was agreed, and a committee to identify the posts to be refurbished was established. Following a meeting with

the *Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération et la circulation illicite des armes légères et de petit calibre* of Senegal, it was agreed to develop a detailed work plan to implement the outputs related to firearms control of the Sahel Programme.

With support of UNODC, draft firearms legislation has been developed in Senegal. The nearly completed draft is set to be adopted by a technical working group in the second half of 2014, before it will be officially submitted to Parliament. The draft legislation is in line with the firearms protocol of the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, but also with the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and other related Materials and the Arms Trade Treaty.

This legislation is set to replace the existing law from 1966, which contains outdated definitions and categories of weapons, and does not have provisions related to marking of weapons, registration of seized weapons or stockpile management.

In Chad, Mali and Niger, the recruitment of national legal experts is underway to support the review and update of national legislation related to firearms, in line with international standards.

## Controlling borders

**Although drug trafficking and illicit trafficking in remote desert areas do not go through official border crossing points, many goods destined for the countries of the Sahel enter in freight containers in West Africa's sea ports. Containers are an important part of the legitimate supply chain, but they can also be used to smuggle illicit goods, such as drugs, precursor chemicals, weapons, explosives and other forms of contraband.**

UNODC assists law enforcement in container ports to establish effective controls and counter the use of containers for illicit trafficking. Dedicated port control units (PCUs), comprising customs and other law enforcement officers have been set up in West African countries and staff are trained and equipped to identify and inspect high-risk freight containers with minimum disruption to legitimate trade and business. The CCP has so far established 28 operational PCUs in 17 countries worldwide. In West Africa, PCUs are operating in the ports of:

- Cotonou, Benin
- Accra, Ghana
- Dakar, Senegal
- Lomé, Togo

An exchange mission was undertaken and officials of the PCU in Dakar, Senegal, visited their counterparts in Lomé, Togo, in February 2014. Togo was selected as it is one of the better-managed PCUs in the region and therefore pre-

sented the Dakar unit with the opportunity to adopt some of Togo's best practices.

As a result of the visit, the JPCU in Dakar implemented improvements to the organization of its work, which included establishing clearer definitions of team members' responsibilities and instating daily team meetings to finalize the list of high risk containers to be inspected.

A container-targeting expert provided one week of mentoring services to the nine members of the JPCU team in Dakar in March 2014 on basic targeting and controls, such as risk profiling and physical inspection. A follow-up mentoring visit was conducted in July 2014.

These sessions highlighted the importance of establishing good working relations with shipping lines to ensure timely sharing of ships manifests. The manifests are a requirement for the JPCUs to do their profiling work.

Since this mentoring, the Unit's team head has had meetings with all the ship-

ping lines and the PCU now receives significantly more manifests than they used to, enabling them to profile a far higher proportion of containers arriving in Dakar Port than previously .

Following UNODC interventions, the head of the PCU and the Director-General of Senegal Customs have agreed to block containers using the clearance system of Customs. This will prevent direct interaction between the Unit and

importers or exporters, reducing the opportunity for corruption.

UNODC has supported the drafting of an agreement between the Ministries of Defence, Finance and Interior of Senegal to give a clearer role, mandate and budget to the PCU in the port of Dakar. A technical working group has agreed on a draft and it has been submitted to the Ministers for signature.



UNODC supports the Port Control Unit (PCU) in Dakar, Senegal, to develop effective working procedures. This photograph shows a container selected by the PCU based on pre-arrival targeting, and intelligence received from international partners. The container was subjected to a full physical inspection. Even though nothing was found on this occasion, it showed the unit's ability to act on intelligence, and work with stakeholders to carry out an effective search. The picture was taken on 19 March 2014. UNODC Photo

## *Improving justice systems*

Access to justice is a fundamental right, and has the potential to increase the equal, efficient, and just provision of justice to citizens of any country. In addition, strong and equitable justice systems foster economic growth and can prevent conflict. The unique cultures and challenges of the Sahel countries present complex challenges to the access to justice. Also, corruption among law enforcement officials and criminal justice authorities is on the high side in the region. This, along with the absence of rule of law in some countries, undermines effectiveness in State governance systems and creates environments that are conducive to illicit trafficking and organized crime.

The Network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime (WACAP) met in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, during the last week of May 2014. WACAP is an initiative of UNODC and judicial officials to strengthen the capacity of central authorities and prosecutors to combat all forms of organized crime and impunity. The forum facilitates the exchange of information between central authorities, prosecutors and judges. It provides the necessary tools to central authorities to manage international cooperation processes and develop a better understanding among participants of the application of relevant international, regional and bilateral legal instruments.



UNODC conducted a workshop of prosecutors and judicial officials in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso during the last week of May 2014. UNODC Photo

To promote and improve such international judicial cooperation between Sahel countries, UNODC is developing model legislation and training curriculum.

In September 2014, officials from countries in the Sahel region, as well as from Algeria and Morocco, agreed on next steps to improve the access to legal aid in their criminal justice systems at a regional workshop that UNODC organized in Bamako, Mali. Participants identified key gaps and priorities for their countries. Importantly, workshop participants agreed that they should work towards recognizing and utilizing paralegals in their legal systems as a way to extend legal advice and information to victims, accused and sentenced persons.

Paralegals can provide many basic services to clients of justice systems where not many fully qualified lawyers are available, for example in remote areas. With many citizens living far from urban centres, this is a challenge that most Sahelian countries face. The workshop provided an opportunity for the participants to hear about the success of paralegals in other African countries and about different models of delivery.

It was also suggested to establish a framework for cooperation in the region to exchange best practices and ensure harmonization of their legal aid policies,

in the format of a regional platform for cooperation. The participants further proposed that a uniform law on legal aid be developed for all the countries of the region. This is a timely request, as UNODC is already developing Model Provisions on Legal Aid, with the support of experts from different legal systems.

In cooperation with other development partners, UNODC organized a regional conference on asset disclosure by public officials in Dakar in May 2014. In addition to representatives from Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal also officials from other West and Central African countries participated.

The conference led to a comprehensive overview of the current legislation and practices in the region and to share technical experience between countries on asset disclosure by public officials. One of the important findings of the conference is that too few criminal justice officials are required to disclose their assets in West and Central Africa.

Moreover, the conference adopted a declaration ("Dakar Declaration on Asset Disclosure") outlining guiding principles for the adoption of better policies and practices with regard to the collection and verification of asset declarations.

# Implementation

Implementation of activities under the Sahel Programme in 2014:

**Direct beneficiaries: 480**

## February

1. Assessment mission with the UN Global Focal Point for Police, Justice and Corrections to Mali
2. Training on international terrorism legislation, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
3. Regional conference on firearms trafficking, Dakar, Senegal
4. Study-work visit on risk profiling of containers, Lomé, Togo
5. Workshop on drafting terrorism legislation, N'djamena, Chad

## March

6. Mentoring session for officials of the Joint Port Control Unit, Dakar, Senegal
7. Regional conference on the seizure and management of the proceeds of crime, Saly, Senegal

## April

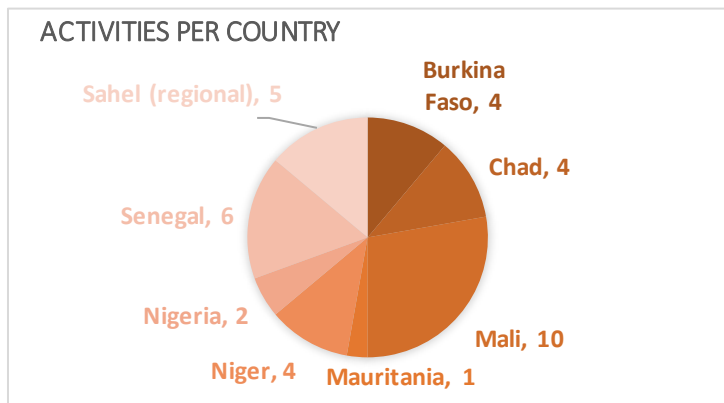
8. Training on international terrorism legislation, Nouakchott, Mauritania
9. Assessment mission to Mali
10. Assessment mission to Chad

## May

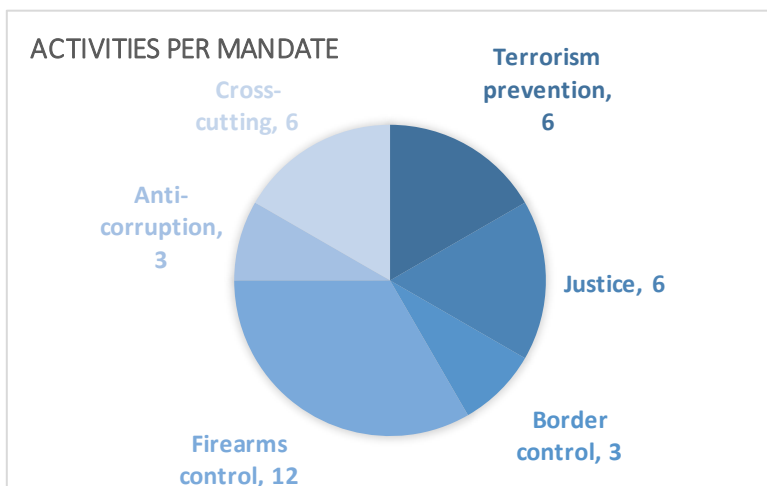
11. Workshop on drafting terrorism legislation, Dakar, Senegal
12. Regional Conference on Asset Disclosure, Dakar, Senegal
13. Workshop of the Network of West African Central Authorities and Prosecutors against Organized Crime (WACAP), Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

## June

14. Training on anti-corruption legislation for parliamentarians, Tera, Niger







15. Libya becomes signatory to UNODC Sahel Programme
16. Deployment of UNODC law enforcement expert based at MINUSMA, Bamako, Mali

## July

17. Recruitment of legal experts for revision of firearms legislation in Chad, Mali and Niger
18. Joint mission of UNODC Executive Director, Mr Yury Fedotov, and Head of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Mr Hervé Ladsous to Bamako, Mali
19. Algeria becomes signatory to UNODC Sahel Programme
20. Workshop on review of civil aviation legislation against terrorism, Abuja, Nigeria

## August

21. Procurement of firearms marking machines for Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Senegal

## September

22. Regional workshop on access to legal aid, Bamako, Mali
23. Workshop on the validation of draft firearms legislation, Saly, Senegal
24. Training on usage of firearms marking machines, Niamey, Niger
25. Workshop on drafting of civil aviation legislation against terrorism, Abuja, Nigeria
26. Workshop on legal framework against terrorism, Bamako, Mali
27. Advisory services on drafting legislation on international cooperation in Burkina Faso and Mali

## October

28. Training on usage of firearms marking machines, Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso
29. Review of legislation on the organization of the criminal justice system of Mali
30. Advisory services on developing training curriculum on international cooperation in Chad and Mali

# Coordination

Implementation is coordinated with the other UN agencies participating in the implementation of the UN Integrated Strategy, most notably with the UN Office for West Africa (UNOWA), DPKO and UNDP, including the offices of Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Sahel, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for West Africa and Head of UNOWA, and the Head of MINUSMA.

The Steering Committee of the Sahel Coordination Mechanism oversees the coordination of the activities of all the UN agencies involved in the implementation of the UN's Strategy. Within the

Steering Committee UNODC is a co-convenor, with UNOWA, of the Task Force on Security, one of three main pillars of the implementation of the Strategy, the others focusing on governance and resilience. The most recent meeting of the Committee was held in October 2014.

As implementation increases, UNODC has developed coordination mechanisms at the national level. In Mali, UNODC works closely with MINUSMA. In Niger, UNODC works with the capacity-building mission of the European Union, EUCAP, to ensure its interventions are synchronized with other assistance programmes.



**Special Envoy for the Sahel Ms Guebre Sellassie briefs the Security Council on 19 June 2014. UN Photo/Devra Berkowitz**

# Management

The UNODC Sahel Programme draws on the expertise of substantive teams of UNODC based at Headquarters in Vienna, Austria and the Regional Office in Dakar, Senegal. These include teams working on justice, firearms control, anti-corruption, terrorism prevention and container control.

Dedicated support teams are established in Bamako, Mali, and Niamey, Niger to support activity implementation. UNODC Regional Offices in Egypt and Nigeria also support implementation.

The coordination team is based in Dakar and is responsible for programme development, planning, financial management, monitoring, reporting and communications.

The total budget of the Programme is USD 59.4 million over the period 2014-2017.

At the time of publication of this report, approximately USD 15 million has been raised for the implementation of the Programme.

## Donors

The Sahel Programme is supported by:

- The Republic of Austria
- The Kingdom of Denmark
- The Republic of France
- The Federal Republic of Germany
- Japan
- The Kingdom of Norway



