

Methodological Annexe to Armed Actors Issue Brief No. 3

Evolving Traditional Practices: Managing Small Arms in the Horn of Africa and Karamoja Cluster

About this research

The purpose of this study is to examine local demand, use, and management practices of firearms in selected agro-pastoralist areas of Kenya, Somalia, South Sudan, and Uganda to provide evidence that may support national and international actors as they engage with local leadership and youths to reduce armed violence and strengthen local and regional firearms control initiatives. Thus, the study is structured around three main research objectives, namely to:

- 1) examine firearms holdings and circulation in rural communities, specifically regarding:
 - firearms ownership;
 - the perception of security and firearms; and
 - factors behind the demand for firearms;
- 2) analyse experiences of theft as well as accidental death and injuries, and examine traditional practices regarding:
 - securing weapons holdings;
 - avoiding accidental death or injury; and
 - preventing firearms theft; and
- 3) provide examples of initiatives aimed at preventing firearms incidents, reducing armed violence, and strengthening local and regional firearms control initiatives.

The four research areas were selected partly based on practicality, that is, access to survey data from previous Danish Demining Group (DDG) and Small Arms Survey studies as well as accessibility to communities to collect data from focus group discussions and key informant interviews specific to this study. At the same time, all areas are highly relevant to the research objectives due to the presence of pastoralist communities and high levels of firearms possession and circulation. The research areas are as follows:

- Garissa, Isiolo, Turkana, and West Pokot counties, northern Kenya;
- the autonomous region of Somaliland, north-eastern Somalia;
- Eastern Equatoria state, south-eastern South Sudan; and
- Karamoja, north-eastern Uganda.

The analysis undertaken in response to research question 1 relies upon quantitative household survey data collected by DDG and the Small Arms Survey and is combined with a review of information in secondary sources as well as focus group discussions and key informant interviews conducted specifically for this study. Research question 2 prompted an analysis based primarily on the focus group discussions and key informant interviews conducted for this study, while research question 3 required a review of secondary sources.

Data gathering

This study takes stock of previous research on crime, security, and small arms and light weapons by DDG and the Small Arms Survey in the Karamoja region and in the Horn of Africa. Information is drawn from household surveys as well as focus group discussions and key informant interviews carried out in Kenya, Somaliland, Eastern Equatoria (South Sudan), and Karamoja (Uganda) between 2008 and 2013.

Between 2008 and 2009, DDG and the Small Arms Survey collected data on community safety and firearms among 157 communities in 32 districts in Somaliland (DDG and Small Arms Survey, 2009). The stratified random sample included 2,846 households to guarantee the representativeness of both rural and urban areas.

In late 2009, DDG and the Small Arms Survey carried out a household survey of approximately 2,400 households in Eastern Equatoria (South Sudan) to assess the perception of development, governance, and security challenges (Mosel and Murray, 2010, p. 1).

In 2011–12, DDG and the Small Arms Survey undertook a household survey in three districts of Karamoja (Uganda) to understand conflict and insecurity between and within ethnic groups as well as between the state and the Karimojong. The sample covered 2,368 households (Kingma et al., 2012).

In 2012, the Small Arms Survey carried out research in Kenya together with the Kenya National Focal Point on Small Arms and Light Weapons, an interagency directorate within the Office of the President in the Ministry of State for Provincial Administration and Internal Security (Wepundi et al., 2012). The stratified random sample included 1,837 households distributed among 31 out of 47 counties, including the areas of Kenya believed to be most burdened by firearms issues.

For the purposes of this study, qualitative data on the pastoralist communities in the four different settings was compiled to create a purposeful data collection (DDG and Small Arms Survey, 2013). Data from household surveys carried out by DDG and/or the Small Arms Survey in the four locations was collated in a consolidated database (Pavesi, 2013). Tables 2 and 3 present summaries of the characteristics of the quantitative and qualitative data.

In addition, between August 2012 and March 2013 focus group discussions were conducted with groups of men, women, young men, and young women in Kenya, Somaliland, South Sudan, and Uganda. Similarly semi-structured key informant interviews were conducted with the police, military, traditional leaders (elders, chiefs), local civil society, and selected civilians in the same locations.

In Kenya, focus group discussions were held in Garissa, Isiolo, Turkana, and West Pokot counties (Wepundi, 2013). Four focus group discussions—one each for men/elders, women, young men, and young women—were held in each of the counties (see Table 3). A total of 26 key informant interviews were conducted. Due to the security dynamics at the time, only ten interviews were conducted in West Pokot, five each in Garissa and Turkana, and six in Isiolo.

In Somaliland, the qualitative data was collected in the Baligubadle, Salahlay, and Sheikh districts, with four focus group discussions per area and a total of 27 interviews. Four focus group discussions per area and a total of 30 interviews were held in South Sudan's Budi,

Kapoeta South, and Kapoeta North counties. In Uganda, there also were four focus group discussions per area and a total of 30 interviews in three parishes in Amudat, Kaabong, and Kotido districts (Lynge, 2013). Altogether, this study is based on qualitative information gathered through 52 focus group discussions and a total of 113 key informant interviews.

Table 2 Characteristics of quantitative data, by location

Characteristics of quantitative data	Kenya	Somaliland	South Sudan	Uganda
Year	2012	2008–09	2009	2011–12
Coverage	31 counties	32 districts	Eastern Equatoria	Karamoja
Household survey sample	1,873	2,846	2,394	2,368
Pastoralist respondents/sample	107 (5.7%)	357 (12.5%)	145 (6.1%)	702 (29.6%)
Reference	Wepundi (2012); Pavesi (2013)	DDG and Small Arms Survey (2009); Pavesi (2013)	Mosel and Murray (2010); Pavesi (2013)	Kingma et al. (2012); Pavesi (2013)

Table 3 Characteristics of qualitative data, by location

Characteristics of qualitative data	Kenya	Somaliland	South Sudan	Uganda
Year	2012	2012	2012	2013
Coverage	Garissa, Isiolo, Turkana, and West Pokot counties	Baligubadle, Salahlay, and Sheikh districts	Budi, Kapoeta North, and Kapoeta South counties	Amudat, Kaabong, and Kotido districts
Number of focus groups	16	12	12	12
Focus group participants*	160	114	120	116
Key informants	26	27	30	30
Reference	Wepundi (2013); DDG and Small Arms Survey (2013)	Lynge (2013); DDG and Small Arms Survey (2013)	Lynge (2013); DDG and Small Arms Survey (2013)	Lynge (2013); DDG and Small Arms Survey (2013)

Note: * Focus groups discussions were conducted with separate groups of men/elders, women, young men, and young women in each location.

Finally, information from secondary sources was taken into account, along with anecdotal evidence, recounted experiences, and observations made by DDG field teams in Somaliland, Eastern Equatoria, and Karamoja and by the lead author in Kenya, Manasseh Wepundi.

Limitations

The fact that data was collected in four different contexts at varying times with instruments that were not harmonized for all the countries places some limitations on the study. Nevertheless, the research aims to highlight important similarities among pastoralist communities in different settings.

First, the questionnaires used to collect data at the household level were designed to serve the objectives of each specific study, each of which had a slightly different focus. While the surveys carried out in Kenya, Somaliland, and South Sudan clearly looked at firearm ownership and attitudes towards small arms, the Karamoja study had the narrowest firearm-related scope. This translates into different questions, or similar questions with different wording, limiting the comparability of survey findings. In addition, issues regarding translation and specific cultural aspects, such as a respondent's level of awareness regarding small arms issues, may have led to varying interpretations of concepts and questions among survey respondents and key informants.

Second, the data collection carried out in the four regions did not specifically target the pastoralist communities, as reflected by different sample designs and the relatively small proportion of pastoralist respondents compared to the overall size of survey samples. As a result, the study findings may not be generalizable to the greater pastoralist communities.

Due to these limitations, any generalizations and comparisons based on the analysis presented in this study should be made with caution.