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TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME IN WEST AFRICA: A Threat Assessment

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Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa:

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Research

James Bevan (consultant - firearms), Louise Bosetti, Jenna Dawson-Faber, Neil Ford (consultant - oil bunkering and piracy), David Izadifar, Ted Leggett (lead researcher), Marine Mayer (consultant - fraudulent medicines), Thomas Pietschmann, and James Phillips (consultant - cocaine).

Graphic design, mapping support, and desktop publishing

Anja Korenblik, Suzanne Kunnen, Kristina Kuttinig, Deniz Mermerci

Supervision

Aldo Lale-Demoz (Director, DO)

Pierre Lapaque (Representative, ROSEN)

Alexandre Schmidt (former Representative, ROSEN)

Thibault Le Pichon (Chief, STAS)

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Key Findings

- The flow of cocaine through West Africa appears to have declined to about 18 tons, down from a peak of 47 tons in 2007. These 18 tons would be worth US\$1.25 billion at wholesale in Europe, providing West African traffickers with substantial income.
- Modes of conveyance for cocaine from South America to Europe via West Africa have shifted over time in response to enforcement efforts. Much of the cocaine headed to West Africa today transits through Brazil, from where Nigerian crime groups re-export the drug. Recently, these groups have been moving into containerized consignments and maritime shipping, adopting these methods in addition to their traditional methods of air couriering and postal shipments. From West Africa, an increase in the use of Benin as a departure point for air couriers has been noted.
- Methamphetamine production in the region is a growing concern, with two methamphetamine laboratories detected in Nigeria in 2011-2012. The main market for West African-made meth is East Asia, and to a lesser extent, South Africa. The income from trafficking West African-made methamphetamines to East Asia is remarkably high for such a new flow, but the long-term prospects are limited in light of competition from producers located in the destination markets.
- Due to the economic downturn, the flow of smuggled migrants from West Africa to Europe has declined in recent years. The prominence of the many routes has shifted significantly, with routes moving eastwards.
- Given the number of weapons still circulating from past conflicts in the region, there is very little need to import large numbers of weapons into West Africa. Most of the illicit flow of weapons in the region is diverted or stolen from licit national stocks held by the police and military. The recent flood of 10,000 to 20,000 firearms from Libya does represent a serious threat to stability in the region, a threat that appears to have been realized in northern Mali.
- The prevalence of fraudulent medicines is highest not in the markets where profits would be the greatest, but in those where chances of detection are lowest. At least 10% of the imported medicines circulating in West Africa are fraudulent, posing a grave threat to public health and safety.
- Maritime piracy has generated renewed attention in the Gulf of Guinea, with 22 pirate attacks occurring off the coast of Benin in 2011. In 2012, Togo became the new hotspot for attacks on petroleum tankers. These vessels are attacked because there is a booming black market for fuel in West Africa.
- Unless the flows of contraband are addressed, instability and lawlessness will persist, and it will remain difficult to build state capacity and the rule of law in the region. Each of these flows requires a tailored response, because the commodities involved respond to distinct sources of supply and demand.



Executive Summary

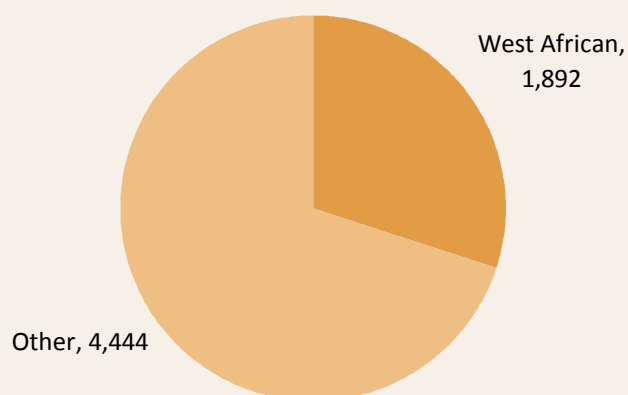
West Africa has long been the focus of United Nations attention, but it is only recently that the international community recognized organized crime as a key issue for the region. This recognition stems primarily from a single contraband flow – cocaine – a flow so large that its wholesale value on arrival in Europe would exceed the national security budgets of many countries in West Africa. While the threat of cocaine is clear, there are many other forms of organized crime that threaten the stability of the region. These threats are both a cause and a consequence of weak governance, a dynamic explored in the present report.

Understanding the cocaine flow requires some historical context. In the last decade, the world cocaine market has undergone a dramatic shift. Cocaine demand in the United States has been in long-term decline, with a particularly acute downturn after Mexico implemented a new national security strategy in 2006. But cocaine demand in Europe has doubled in the last decade, and cocaine is more expensive in Europe than in the United States. As European law enforcement agencies became aware of the threat in the mid-2000s, direct smuggling to the continent became more difficult. Cocaine traffickers in South America began to look for a staging area on the other side of the Atlantic, and found one in West Africa.

West African cocaine traffickers, especially those from southeast Nigeria, have long been active in global cocaine markets, including retail markets in many European countries. In 2011, looking only at four countries where comparable data are available (Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and Portugal), 30% of the foreigners arrested for cocaine trafficking were from West Africa. Small-scale transit through the West African region, primarily through commercial air couriers, is not new. But in the mid-2000s, a series of

remarkably large cocaine seizures were made along the West Africa coast, and a large number of cocaine couriers were detected on flights from West Africa to Europe. These suggested a flow of cocaine worth over one billion US dollars on arrival at its destination.

Regional origin of foreign cocaine traffickers arrested in Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and Portugal in 2011



Source: UNODC Annual Reports Questionnaire (ARQ)

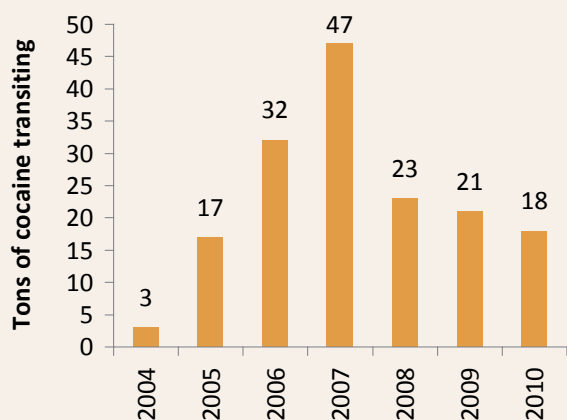
The detection of both maritime shipments and commercial air couriers peaked in 2007 and declined sharply thereafter. There is debate as to whether the flow of cocaine decreased commensurably or whether the traffickers have simply found less detectable ways of moving the drug. Today, it appears that a range of vectors are employed, including a much smaller number of large maritime shipments, private aircraft (including jet aircraft), shipping containers, commercial air couriers, and the post. The preferred method has shifted over time in response to enforcement efforts.

The threats from this flow in the region are manifold. Since no methodologically-sound drug use studies have been conducted since the advent of the cocaine flow, it remains unclear how being a transit region has affected local drug use. Cocaine-related corruption has clearly undermined governance in places like Guinea-Bissau. Of particular concern is the possibility that trafficking through the region could provide income to non-state armed groups, especially the various rebel forces in the Sahel and the terrorist group Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).

Based on an assessment of cocaine seizures in Europe, the flow of cocaine through the region appears to have declined to an estimated 18 tons, down from a peak in 2007 of an estimated 47 tons. While this is good news, it does not take a lot of cocaine to cause trouble in a region with poverty and governance problems. The entire military budget of many West African countries is less than the wholesale price of a ton of cocaine in Europe.

In the end, the gross volume of drugs transiting the region is less relevant than the way West Africa interacts with it. It appears a growing share is not merely the property of South Americans making use of West African logistic services, but that West Africans are playing an increasingly independent role in bringing the drugs into their region. One manifestation of this trend is the smaller size of shipments detected in recent years.

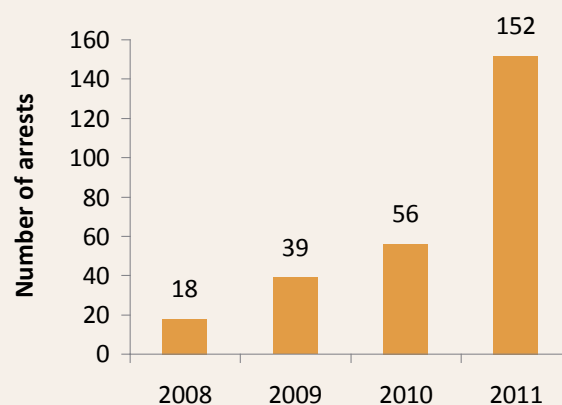
Tons of pure cocaine transiting West Africa on their way to Europe



Source: UNODC estimates

Another worrisome development is the emergence of drug production in the region. Two methamphetamine labs were detected in Nigeria in 2011-2012, and an estimated 3000 methamphetamine couriers traveled from West Africa (including Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal) to Asia (primarily Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Thailand) in 2010. The drugs carried by these couriers sold for about US\$360 million, a sizeable income for such a young flow. Unlike the cocaine flow, the bulk of the profits accrued to West African traffickers, and may ultimately find its way back to West Africa. West

Nigerian couriers arrested for methamphetamine trafficking in Malaysia, 2008-2011



Source: Royal Malaysian Police

Africa is also supplying methamphetamine to South Africa, a major consumer of the drug. Heroin is also detected with increasing regularity and in growing volumes, another indicator that groups based in West Africa are playing a growing role in the global drug trade.

Illicit drugs are generally smuggled in, but also problematic are pharmaceutical drugs transported through mainstream commercial channels. Some of these are themselves drugs of abuse, such as synthetic opiates. In the last year, at least 37 tons of illicitly imported painkillers have been seized in West Africa, mostly in Benin and Togo, most likely destined for markets in the Middle East. Others are fraudulent medicines: drugs that are not what they purport to be. In addition to the harm they inflict on users, some fraudulent medicines foster the growth of drug-resistant pathogens, which pose a global health threat. It is estimated that at least 10% of all essential medicines circulating in West Africa are fraudulent. But despite the damage they do to public health, there is no evidence at present that this flow is promoting instability.

In addition to drugs, there is great concern about the security implications of weapons trafficking in the region. Many weapons continue to circulate from past conflicts, and diversion from official weapons stocks is common. As a result, there is generally very little need to import large numbers of weapons into West Africa. But the recent flood of perhaps 10,000 to 20,000 firearms from Libya represents a serious threat to stability, a threat that appears to have been realized in northern Mali. It remains unclear whether drug trafficking enabled the current conflict, but there can be little doubt that firearms trafficking did.

In the last year, an old crime problem in the region received renewed attention: maritime piracy. In the past, most of the piracy in West Africa was confined to Nigerian waters, and much of this was related to the conflict over oil in the Niger Delta. But in 2011, 22 pirate attacks were executed off the coast of Benin, many of them aimed at vessels transporting

petroleum products. These attacks caused maritime insurance assessors to re-categorize Beninese waters as “high-risk,” increasing the cost of shipping to the country. As a result, port traffic declined by 70%. Taxes on trade account for half of Benin’s government revenues, and 80% of these are derived from the port of Cotonou. Thankfully, these attacks subsided as quickly as they began, but in 2012, Togo became the new hotspot for attacks on tankers carrying petroleum products, with 18 attacks by mid-year.

These illicit flows can affect stability and development in a range of ways. As suggested above, trafficking can benefit those non-state armed groups that control territory useful for smuggling. These groups can use the profits to purchase weapons or to promote corruption. Competition for trafficking routes can lead to conflict between groups. Illicit profits can also generate friction within groups, leading to splintering, in-fighting, and succession struggles. Rebels who make more money by participating in illicit markets than they possibly could in civilian life may be difficult to attract to the negotiating table. If military officials are also involved, parties on both sides of the struggle may prefer to maintain the status quo rather than pursue peace.

Smuggling is often accomplished not by stealth, but by corruption. The profits gained in some trafficking flows are sufficient to buy cooperation from high levels of government in some poor countries, thus undermining governance. In extreme cases, this can destabilize governments, as competing factions of officials seek to displace one another. Arguably the most affected country in this regard is Guinea-Bissau, a country whose annual economic output is less than the value of some of the cocaine seizures made in the region. The country has experienced several abrupt changes of government since the cocaine flows began, and senior officials in the military have been suspected of complicity in cocaine trafficking.

Transnational trafficking can also affect economic development. Under-served communities, particularly those in border areas, may profit from the flow of contraband, leading them further and further from the reach of the state. These livelihoods, being based on international crime, are not sustainable, but they may be seen as preferable to poverty, and may be violently defended when challenged. It may become difficult for legitimate commerce to compete with the facilitation of trafficking. The long-term prospects of this development model are bleak.

Transnational criminals are more likely to invest their profits in stable economies and hard currencies abroad than in transit countries. Some construction may be fostered, but often the object is a front for money laundering, such as unneeded hotels and casinos. Traffickers have little incentive to maintain these premises, and their attention shifts with unpredictable dynamics of transnational organized crime.

The violence and political instability associated with transnational trafficking may deter legitimate investment outside the extractive industries. Armed groups that have profited from trafficking may turn to predatory activities when this easy money dries up. Criminal activity is inherently unpredictable, and even domestic investors may look abroad when seeking investment opportunities. In the end, many professionals may seek to relocate to safer countries, eroding the human capital needed for sustainable development.

Solving these ills requires international cooperation. An essential step is to ensure the complete implementation of the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols. This will facilitate the mutual legal assistance, the extradition, and the technical cooperation needed to tackle these problems cooperatively. Given the limited capacity of local law enforcement institutions, every effort should be made to ensure that contraband never makes it to West African shores. The local demand for illicit drugs should be monitored closely and emerging problems must be nipped in the bud. Local efforts to screen out fraudulent medicines and destroy illicit arms should be supported. Technical assistance and legal advice are particularly needed in the effort to bring order to the local petrochemical industry. These efforts could pay great dividends in reducing corruption, promoting equity, resolving conflict, and undercutting maritime piracy.

Key Recommendations

- Mobilize States of the region to provide valid and reliable data, in order to better assess and analyze drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse problems affecting the region.
- Improve regional and international coordination efforts in dealing with the drug problem, as well as with respect to all related organized crimes in the region, through facilitating the exchange of criminal intelligence.
- Fight impunity through the harmonization of national legislation and strengthen current legal frameworks in order to effectively sentence identified criminals.
- Create, strengthen and mobilize synergies between relevant law enforcement structures to better respond to the threat of drug trafficking and TOC.
- Develop integrated programmes to combat drug trafficking and organized crime at the national and regional levels in full coherence with existing international standards.
- Focus on financial flows related to drug trafficking and transnational organized crime in order to cut off sources of funding.
- Facilitate quality drug treatment and rehabilitation services to contribute to the reduction of demand for illicit drugs, HIV transmission amongst drug users, drug-related crimes, incarceration and recidivism.



Introduction

This report focuses on West Africa, a collection of 16 nations that is home to around 325 million people. All these countries score poorly on human development indexes, and they are some of the poorest in the world. The region is also politically unstable – just under one third of the States have experienced a coup d'état in the last four years.

Organized crime in West Africa became an international security concern in the mid-2000s, due to the detection of large cocaine shipments transiting the region on their way to Europe. Subsequent assessments conducted by UNODC revealed that a number of transnational organized crime problems pose a threat to stability and development in the region, including oil bunkering, arms trafficking, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, toxic waste dumping, fraudulent medicine, cigarette smuggling, and the looting of natural resources.

The States of the region are currently facing significant challenges. Over the past few years, they have demonstrated their political commitment to make the fight against drug trafficking and transnational organized crime a priority. In collaboration with UN partners, several initiatives for promoting cooperation within the region have been developed, and a comprehensive regional approach was adopted.

Since 2008, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) has been engaged in a Regional Action Plan with the support of UNODC and UNOWA in order to address the growing problem of illicit drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse in West Africa in an integrated manner. Heads of State and Government of the region have renewed their commitment to the Regional Action Plan in June 2012. Besides promoting prevention

and the fight against these issues, this Plan requires regional cooperation in the areas of law enforcement, criminal justice, health, and data collection and sharing.

Since the 2010 Dakar Initiative, the Senegalese Ministry of the Interior has been committed to the drafting of a document in order to harmonize existing national legal instruments at a sub-regional level to fight drug trafficking in a coordinated and more efficient manner. The Bamako Declaration on Impunity, Justice and Human Rights, adopted in December 2011, identifies practical recommendations to fight organized crime, illicit trafficking, terrorism and piracy. It reasserts the importance of improving the legal framework of West African States in accordance with regional and international instruments aimed at facilitating international cooperation on these matters.

Although these political initiatives represent important steps, it has been difficult to evaluate any concrete results. Fighting organized crime remains a precondition to the consolidation of peace, security and political stability. Ensuring that criminal actors are identified, investigated, prosecuted and sentenced is also key to strengthening the credibility of national institutions and governments to their people and to external actors. It is critical to address the problems of continuing corruption, which undermine good governance.

In light of these challenges, the United Nations plays an important role in raising awareness among public authorities, the local population and the international community. The UNODC Regional Programme for West Africa 2010-2014 supports the implementation of the ECOWAS Regional Action Plan 2008-2011. Key initiatives under the Regional Programme include the West Africa Coast Initia-

tive (WACI), the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP) and the Global Container Control Programme (CCP). UNODC also supports the strengthening of anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing (AML/CFT) systems; supports Governments in strengthening their forensic capacity; provides specialized technical assistance to ECOWAS Member States on the criminal justice aspects of counter-terrorism and was instrumental in the launch of the Judicial Regional Platform for the Sahel in 2010. UNODC supports in the implementation of the UN Protocols against Trafficking in Persons and Firearms and Smuggling of Migrants, mainly through capacity building. Assistance is also being extended in the areas of drug use and HIV prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. In the area of research and analysis, UNODC has undertaken several studies and assessments, which form the basis for programmatic interventions.

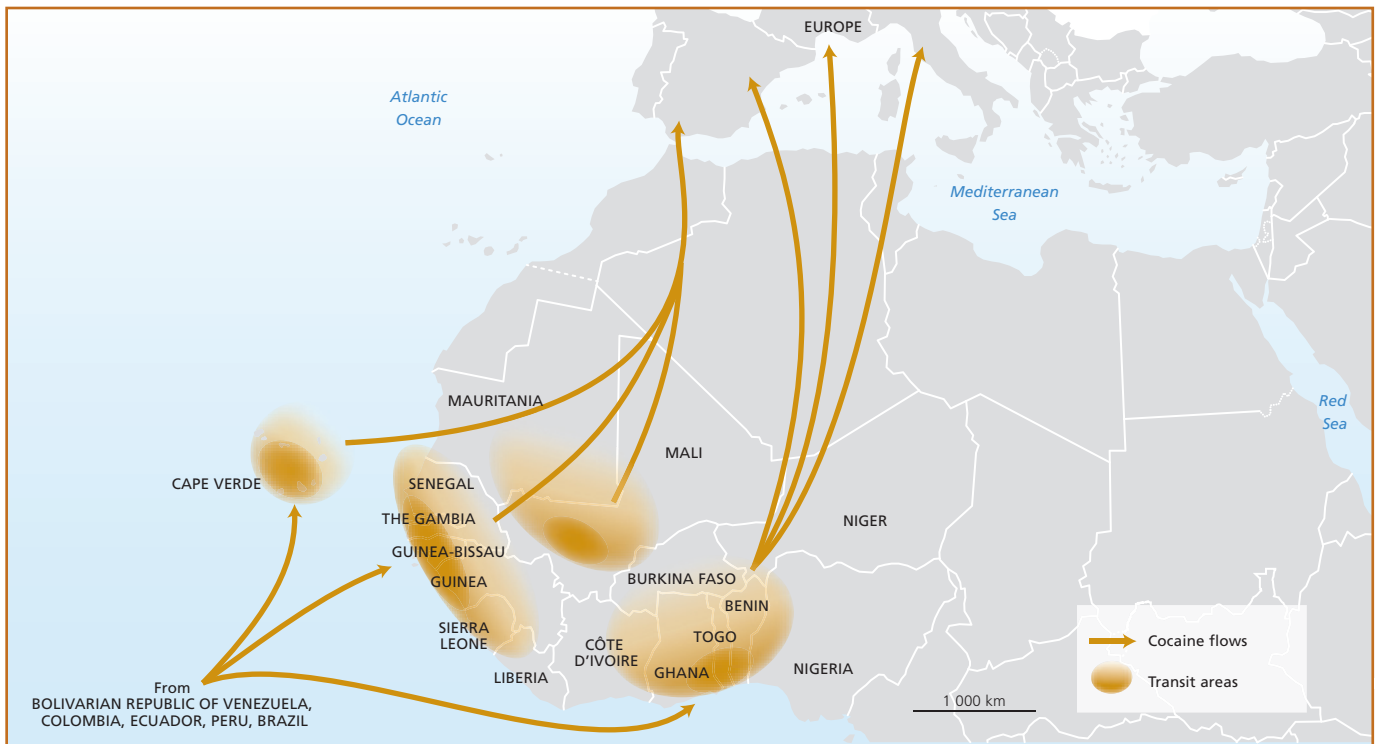
No State can successfully fight transnational organized crime on its own. Coordinated action, collaboration and cooperation are essential to reducing the effects of this type of criminality in West Africa. In this context, research is needed to guide programming and policy efforts.

Since the publication of the last UNODC threat assessment report on West Africa (2009), and despite the political commitment of the States of the region, there are indications that the crime situation in West Africa as a whole has diversified. The criminal organizations involved are now not only able to traffic tons of drugs – notably cocaine and, to a lesser extent, heroin – but also manufacture methamphetamines. The region appears to be experiencing an increase in drug consumption. Drug use, particularly cannabis, as well as cocaine, heroin, and amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS), has become an issue for public health and public safety. More recently, maritime piracy in the Gulf of Guinea drew international attention, as did the flow of weapons into the region following the conflict in Libya.

This report focuses on:

- Cocaine
- Methamphetamine
- Migrant smuggling
- Firearms
- Fraudulent medicines
- Maritime piracy

The purpose of this report is primarily descriptive: to assess the progression and emergence of transnational organized crime affecting the region. This report is not intended to be fully comprehensive – the omission of flows discussed in the past¹ does not imply that they have been resolved, only that other issues have arisen that are currently commanding greater international attention.



COCAINE FROM THE ANDES VIA WEST AFRICA TO EUROPE

What is the nature of the market?

Few transnational contraband flows have generated more alarm than the flow of cocaine through West Africa. Around 2005, it became clear that massive amounts of drugs, worth billions of dollars, were being shipped through one of the least stable regions in the world.² The signs were unmistakable:

- Between 2005 and 2007, a series of more than 20 major seizures were made in the West African region, involving thousands of kilograms of cocaine. Most of the seizures were made at sea, but some involved private aircraft or caches detected on land. These seizures appear to have been the tip of the iceberg: most were made due to the assistance of European navies or foreign tip-offs, and some were stumbled upon by accident.
- At the same time, hundreds of commercial air couriers were detected carrying cocaine on flights from West Africa to Europe.
- There were indications of high-level involvement in the drug trade in a number of countries in West Africa.

The risks were equally clear:

- If the drugs seized had made it to Europe, their retail value would have exceeded the GDP of some of the nations they transited, suggesting criminal organizations with greater resources at their disposal than the affected states.
- Since in some countries no legitimate commercial activity had the potential to generate incomes compa-

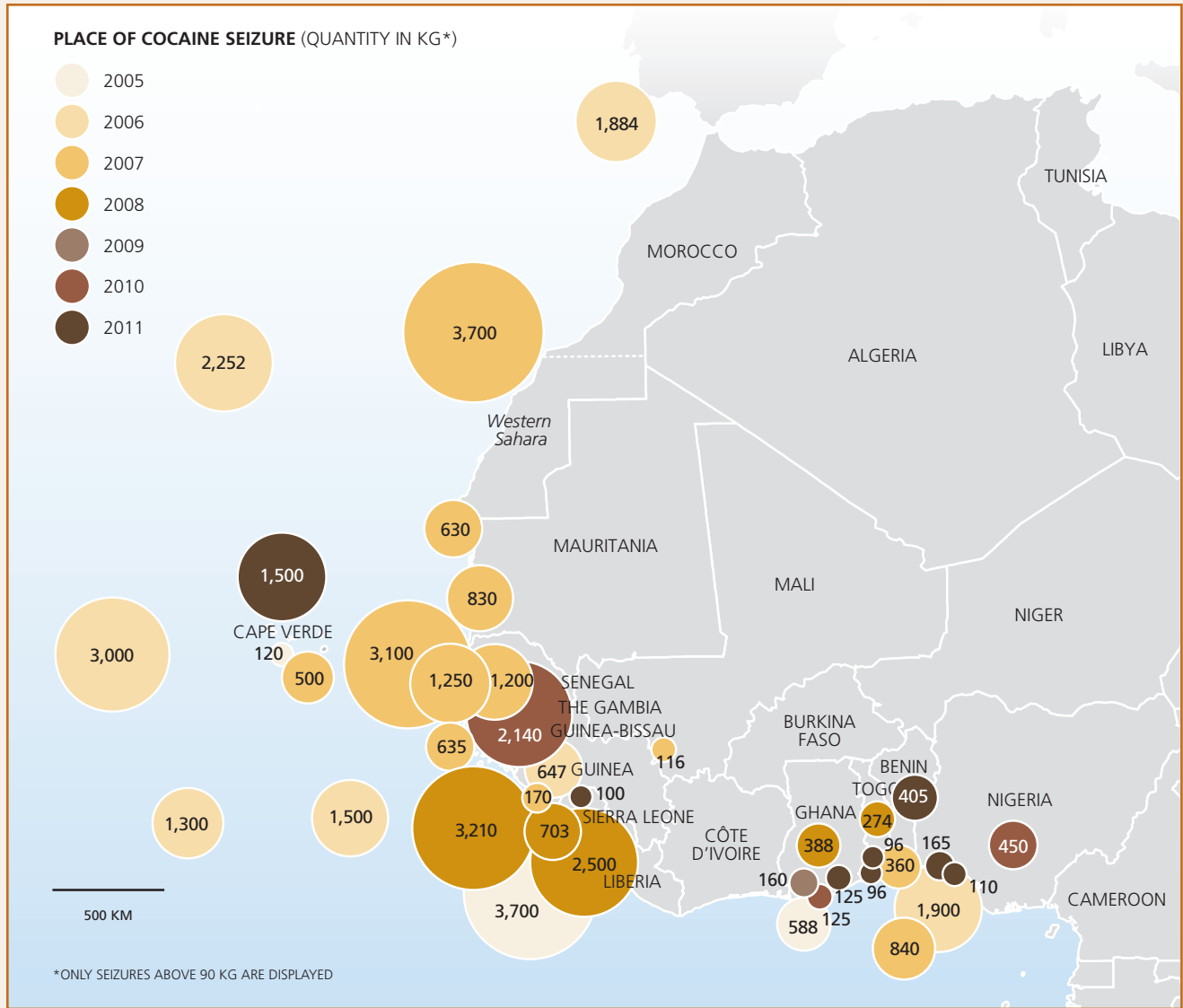
parable to the drug trade, it had the potential to “crowd out” other forms of economic activity. A similar risk pertained in the political sphere – pursuit of drug graft threatened governance and stability.

- There was fear that insurgents and extremists throughout the region would be in a position to facilitate trafficking, thus drawing resources to their cause and increasing the potential for violence.

Unfortunately, it appears some of these risks were realized:

- There have been a series of coups, attempted coups, and other forms of political unrest in Guinea-Bissau, including the assassination of President Vieira in 2009. While the conflict appears to have occurred along well-established political fault lines, competition for cocaine profits raised the stakes and augmented tensions between rival groups.
- When Guinean president Lansana Conté died at the end of 2008, it was revealed that members of his immediate family and elite military units had been involved in drug trafficking, allegedly making use of diplomatic passports and pouches to move cocaine.
- In Mauritania, high-ranking police personnel were convicted on charges relating to cocaine trafficking in 2010, but were released from prison in 2011 and subsequently disappeared.
- In The Gambia in 2010, the president dismissed most of his senior security staff for alleged involvement in drug trafficking, including the national police chief and his deputy, the navy chief, the deputy army chief, the head of the National Drug Enforcement Agency, his deputy, and his chief of operations. Several of these men were convicted of corruption in 2012.

Map 1: Major cocaine seizures in West Africa (2005-2011)



Source: UNODC Individual Drug Seizure database (IDS) and UNODC Field Offices in the region

- The Minister of Transportation of Sierra Leone was compelled to resign in 2008 when his cousin was found to be associated with a private aircraft containing over 700 kg of cocaine. Subsequent court testimony implicated the Minister himself.
- Many of the large seizures of cocaine made by West African governments later disappeared from police custody, indicating high-level law enforcement corruption.³
- There have been repeated allegations that insurgents and extremists in the Sahel have been gaining income from the trafficking of cocaine across the regions they control. It remains possible that these funds contributed to the recent rebellion in Mali.

But around 2008, there were a number of indications that this flow had begun to abate:

- Large seizures declined drastically. In 2007, there were at least 11 seizures of more than 100 kg of cocaine around West Africa, totaling over 11 tons; in 2009, a single seizure of 160 kg was made.

- The number of couriers emanating from the region also dropped off. In one database of air courier detections, 59% of the cocaine couriers detected in the second quarter of 2007 had originated in West Africa; in the third quarter of 2009, no couriers from the region were detected.

There are a number of possible reasons for this decline:

- For the South American traffickers, one of the virtues of using the West African route was its novelty – law enforcement authorities were not expecting cocaine to come from this region. By 2008, due to the international attention the flow received, much of this novelty had been lost.
- The political turmoil around 2008 and 2009 may have disrupted the channels of corruption that facilitated trafficking through the region.
- Prior to 2009, it appears that most of the cocaine seized was the property of South American traffickers, and that the West Africans were merely being paid for logistic services. When these seizures later disappeared from

police custody, South American partners may have concluded that they had been betrayed by the corrupt officials they were sponsoring, and severed relations.

- Multi-ton losses are painful for the traffickers who owned them. These losses may have led some to return to more traditional routes, or to change techniques for reaching West Africa.

Nevertheless, after 2007, a number of operations driven by West Africans have been detected. Despite the reduction in maritime seizures and detected couriers, it appears that some flow persists. Very large seizures of cocaine are still occasionally made in the region, including seizures of two tons in The Gambia in 2010, 1.5 tons in Cape Verde in 2011, and 1.6 tons in the Canary Islands (destined for Benin) in 2012.

How is the trafficking conducted?

There are several ways of getting cocaine from South America to Europe via West Africa, all of which appear to be operating in parallel, with the favoured technique varying over time in response to enforcement efforts. Both large and small shipments are encountered. Typically, the large shipments are the property of South American trafficking groups, while the smaller ones are owned by West Africans. Over time, Latin American involvement in the region appears to have declined, and so has the average seizure size.

In the past, large maritime shipments were favoured, but the seizures between 2005 and 2007 seem to have greatly reduced this flow, perhaps prompting a move to shipments in private aircraft. The aircraft used have grown progressively more sophisticated over time, from twin-engine propeller planes to commercial jets, capable of carrying multi-ton loads. Most of these have departed from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. At the same time, smaller shipments, within the range of West African groups, have been found secreted in maritime shipping containers. There is also traffic in much smaller amounts via commercial air couriers and the post, much of which appears to proceed from Brazil.

In the past, there have been three main hubs in West Africa for receipt and redistribution of the cocaine shipments:

- The northern hub, radiating from Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, The Gambia, and Senegal.
- The southern hub, centered on Nigeria, including Benin, Togo, and Ghana.
- An eastern hub, encompassing Mali and parts of Mauritania, of particular use in receiving consignments by air.

Once in West Africa, the drugs appear to proceed to Europe along a number of routes. Commercial air couriers can carry only small amounts, but their frequent use can offset this deficiency, and they also allow for great flexibility, moving drugs from any country in the region to any Euro-

The decline in large-scale maritime trafficking

Maritime movement from the West African coast to Europe is rarely detected nowadays. The most recent case was in October 2011, and involved a prominent family based in the Netherlands and in Praia, Cape Verde. The family ran a real estate business as a front and money laundering operation. Mother ships from Brazil and Suriname were met by smaller coastal vessels that ferried the cocaine to one of a number of properties owned by the group. These drugs were then shipped to Europe in a go-fast boat.

pean destination. Cocaine shipments can also be trafficked onward by sea (in containers, fishing boats, and pleasure craft), or by land or air across the Sahara to North Africa, where they are flown to Europe in light aircraft or shuttled across the Mediterranean in go-fast boats. As with the Atlantic routes, all of these approaches are utilized in parallel, with the preferred technique and routing changing in response to enforcement efforts.

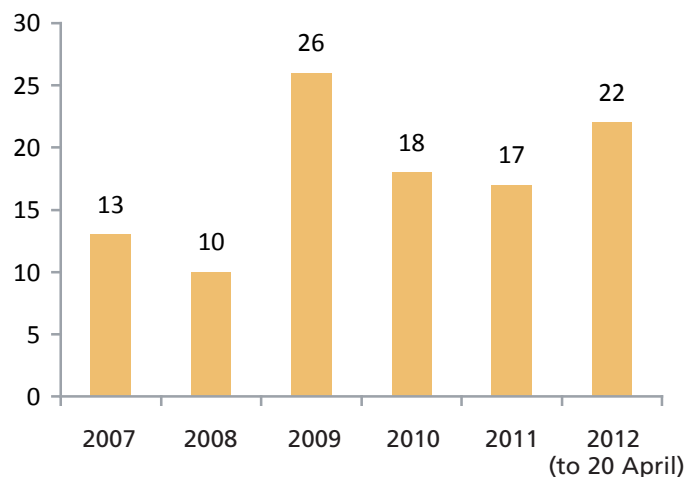
On arrival in Europe, the drugs may be sold to European or South American crime groups, or distributed through the extensive network of West Africans involved in retail cocaine distribution.

South America

Cocaine transiting West Africa comes from all three source countries: Colombia, Peru, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia. Most of the largest air and sea shipments detected recently have originated in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and the Venezuelan authorities report that all of the cocaine transiting their country comes from Colombia. But smaller containerized shipments have proceeded both directly from Peru and from Ecuador, a transit country for Peruvian cocaine. In addition, there are some containerized shipments (as well as a good deal of air courier and postal traffic) from Brazil. According to forensic testing, about 54% of the cocaine seized in Brazil comes from the Plurinational State of Bolivia, 38% from Peru, and only 7.5% from Colombia.⁴

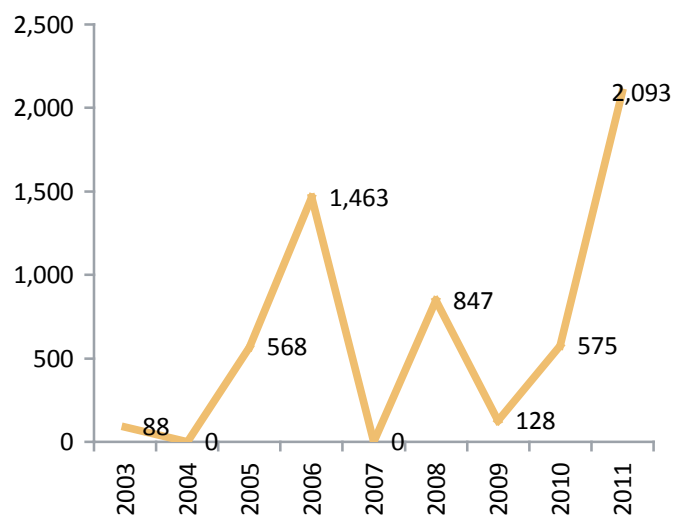
Cocaine is trafficked from the Colombian states of Norte de Santander and Arauca to the Venezuelan states of Zulia, Tachira and Apure. There is extensive coca cultivation and processing in Norte de Santander – labs have been found in Cúcuta, the capital, which sits on the border. Some of the drugs may proceed through areas controlled by the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) 10th and 33rd Fronts, as well as areas controlled by other groups. Laboratories are also found just on the other side of the border in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, some with the capacity to produce 500 kilograms of cocaine per week.⁵

Figure 1: Cocaine labs destroyed in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela



Source: National Antidrug Office of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

Figure 2: Kilograms of cocaine seized from shipping containers related to West Africa



Source: UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa seizure database

In the past, much of this cocaine proceeded by road or air to the east Venezuelan states of Bolivar and Anzoátegui before being flown out on private craft from commercial airports to West Africa. Barcelona, the coastal capital of Anzoátegui, was the primary departure point, although flights had been detected from Maracaibo (the ‘Air Cocaine’ flight) and Margarita Island.

According to the Venezuelan authorities, this path is no longer in use. Instead, most of the cocaine entering the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela appears to be moving north from airstrips in Apure province to destinations in Central America, particularly Honduras and Haiti. Set-backs in West Africa and the opportunities in Honduras after the 2009 coup may have led Venezuela-based traffickers to again shift their attentions to the US market. There have been some exceptions, however, discussed under “air routes” below.

If the flow from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela has declined, where is West Africa getting its cocaine? Brazil may be the answer, particularly for West African-owned shipments. Brazil has long been a source for Lusophone Guinea-Bissau, but it has become a source for countries throughout the region. The amount of cocaine trafficked to and through Brazil has increased remarkably in recent years, as reflected in growing seizure statistics. Sao Paulo is home to a large Nigerian community, possibly the largest in the region, and, according to the Brazilian authorities, this group has been progressively taking control of cocaine exports from Brazil, leaving the domestic market to local gangs.

Nigerians have long dominated commercial air couriership from Brazil: close to 90% of the mules arrested at the inter-

national airport in Sao Paulo report obtaining their cocaine from Nigerian groups. Most of these couriers fly to Angola or South Africa. On two flights from Sao Paulo to Luanda in 2011, the Angolan authorities screened every passenger and found more than 20 cocaine couriers on each flight. After providing for consumption in Southern Africa, the remainder is couriered from these countries to West Africa or directly to Europe.⁶

In the past, the Nigerians themselves couriered cocaine from Brazil, and they remain prominent on flights to Lagos or Doha (Qatar), an emerging transit point. But they are making increasing use of Angolan, South African, or European couriers, particularly on flights to the couriers’ home countries. Some of these European couriers are recruited in Europe, often by the European wives of Nigerian traffickers.⁷

More recently, the Nigerian groups have been moving into containerized consignments and even maritime shipping. According to liaison officers in Brazil, Nigerian groups organize up to 30% of the cocaine exports by ship or container from Santos, Brazil’s largest port, up from negligible levels a few years earlier. The Sao Paulo-based Nigerian groups are also responsible for a very large share of the postal shipments of cocaine leaving the country.

Transit to West Africa: containers

In the past, traffickers relied on large mother ships that offloaded cocaine onto smaller coastal craft. Few of these dedicated vessels have been detected in West Africa in recent years, but a growing number of seizures have been made from maritime containers, on both sides of the Atlantic. At least 27 of these seizures have occurred since 2003, including 12 in 2011 alone, totaling almost six metric tons

of cocaine. Some were clearly linked to the owner of the containerized cargo, but in other cases, the cocaine appears to have been added without the knowledge of the cargo owner. The drugs may have been added at the port of departure or anywhere along the route taken by the ship.

The largest detected seizure from a container, which took place in 2007, is highly disputed. The shipment, allegedly mixed in with a shipment of cement originating in Peru and destined for Nigeria, was originally announced at 14 tons, which would have placed it among the largest cocaine seizures ever. Samples of this seizure sent for forensic testing abroad showed no presence of cocaine, however. It remains unclear what share, if any, of the original seizure was cocaine.

Aside from this, the seizures have been in the low hundreds of kilograms, with an average weight of around 175 kg, much smaller than the large maritime seizures of the past. Only a small share of shipping containers are inspected, even in the most vigilant countries, so this would appear to be an ideal vector for smuggling drugs. But seizures from containers are relatively rare, suggesting that traffickers do not favour this technique for reasons of their own. Traffickers seem to dislike having large volumes of drugs out of their custody for an extended period of time. If losses occur, it is not clear who should be deemed liable. The process is also slow – containers can take weeks to cross between ports, and traffickers may rely on continuous turnover to remain viable. Finally, the fact that seizures have been made indicates that the process is not foolproof, and it is not clear that the rate of success offsets the logistical inconvenience of using containers.

Transit to West Africa: private aircraft

For the larger consignments handled by South American organizations, there appears to have been a period where maritime trafficking was traded for air trafficking. Probably the best known detection was the so-called “Air Cocaine” case in 2009, which involved a Boeing 727 found burned in the Malian desert, believed to have been carrying tons of cocaine. Subsequent investigations suggest this was not an isolated incident. In 2010, a Malian police commissioner was convicted in connection with a scheme to build an airstrip in the desert for future landings. According to the UK Serious Organized Crime Agency (SOCA), a Beechcraft BE 300 from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela landed in Mali, near the Mauritanian border, in January 2010. The cargo was unloaded and moved by 4x4 vehicles in the direction of Timbuktu before authorities lost track of the convoy. In August 2012, a Bombardier BD-700 jet was seized after traveling from Valencia (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) to Benin with 1.6 tons of cocaine aboard. When denied entry in Benin, the plane landed in the Canary Islands, where an international crew was arrested by the Spanish authorities.

A number of air trafficking organizations have been investigated, including those under the leadership of:

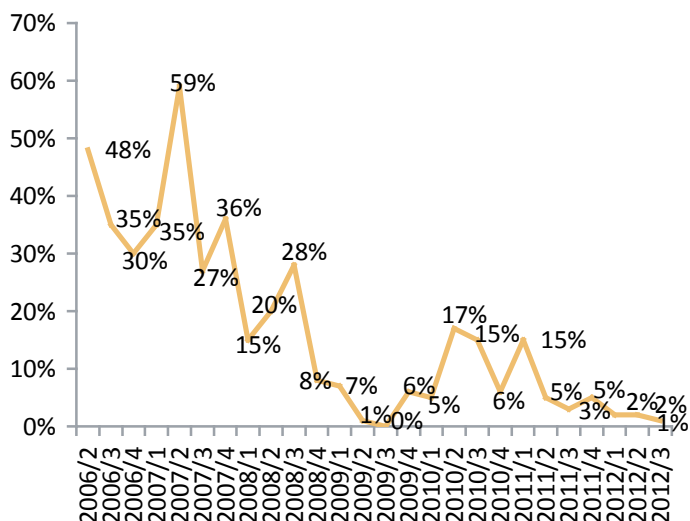
- *Jorge Solano Cortés*, a former member of the Cali Cartel, one of the first South American drug traffickers to use the West African route. He was detained in Togo in October 2008 and extradited to the United States. He was arrested alongside six other Colombians, one South African, one Ghanaian and two Togolese while planning to smuggle 500 kg of cocaine by air from South America to a landing strip in the northern part of Togo (Niamtougou). The cocaine was supposed to be sent by air to Lomé and then on to Europe in shipping containers.⁸
- *Jesus Eduardo Valencia-Arbelaez*, connected to the landmark seizure of 600 kg from a plane that landed in Sierra Leone in 2008, was arrested in Romania in 2009 while trying to buy more aircraft for his fleet, with the intent of flying multi-ton loads to West Africa. In recorded conversations with undercover agents, he claimed to have use of a military airfield in Guinea, and to have flown shipments to Guinea-Bissau and Liberia.
- *Walid Makled-Garcia* (“*The Turk*”), who was, according to the Venezuelan authorities, responsible for the majority of the cocaine trafficking by air from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to West Africa between 2007 and 2009.⁹ He was the part owner of a major airline company (*Aeropostal*) and a transport company (*Transgar*). He also owned several warehouses at Puerto Cabello. He was arrested in Colombia in 2011 and extradited to the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to face trial for drug trafficking, money laundering and murder. He has claimed high-level corruption facilitated his cocaine business.

Despite all this history and the recent seizure in the Canary Islands, both the Venezuelan and the Brazilian authorities say that there is very little private air traffic from their countries to West Africa today.

West Africa

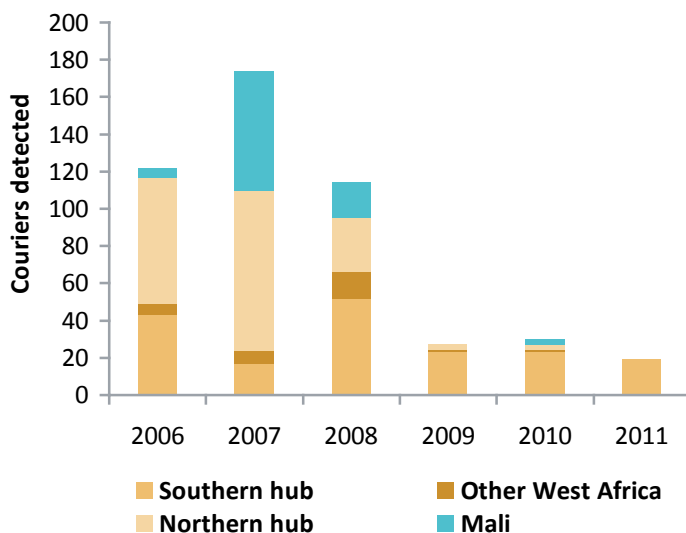
Due to the free movement of people and goods throughout the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region, drugs entering any West African country could, in theory, exit from any other one without passing through border controls. In practice, limited roads in Sierra Leone and Liberia break the region in two. In the south, the drive from Lagos (Nigeria) through Cotonou (Benin) and Lome (Togo) to Accra (Ghana) is less than 500 km and can be completed in one day. In the north, the cluster is linked not by proximity but by necessity. Guinea-Bissau, one of the primary countries of ingress for cocaine, lacks commercial air links to the destination markets, and connections from Banjul (The Gambia) are not much better. As a result, most air couriers in the north depart from Dakar (Senegal) or Conakry (Guinea). A third hub, particularly servicing air flights landing inland, emerged in Bamako (Mali) during the height of the trafficking.

Figure 3: Share of cocaine couriers detected in European airports that originated in West Africa



Source: IDEAS database¹⁰

Figure 4: Hub of origin of detected cocaine couriers on flights from West Africa



Source: UNODC

In all of these hubs, with the exception of Guinea-Bissau itself, Nigerian traffickers dominate the market. Most are resident in the countries where they operate, and make use of local partners, but the methods they use are typical of Nigerian traffickers globally. This includes a predilection for the use of commercial air couriers.

Transit to Europe: commercial air couriers

In the boom years of 2005 to 2007, West Africans were paid in cocaine for their services in facilitating shipments, and then trafficked these drugs onward to Europe on their own behalf. Most of this traffic appears to have occurred via commercial air couriers. But about halfway through 2007, the number of commercial air couriers departing from West African airports declined sharply. It now appears that less than one fifth of the cocaine couriers arriving in Europe are coming from West Africa: most are flying directly from Latin America and the Caribbean.

In addition to an overall decline, the profile of the couriers has changed over time.

A declining share of commercial air couriers are departing from the northern hub (Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, The Gambia, and Senegal), while a rising share are emanating from the southern hub (Nigeria, Benin, and Togo). There has also been a clear shift from Togo to Benin within the southern hub.

Transit to Europe: Sahel-Sahara

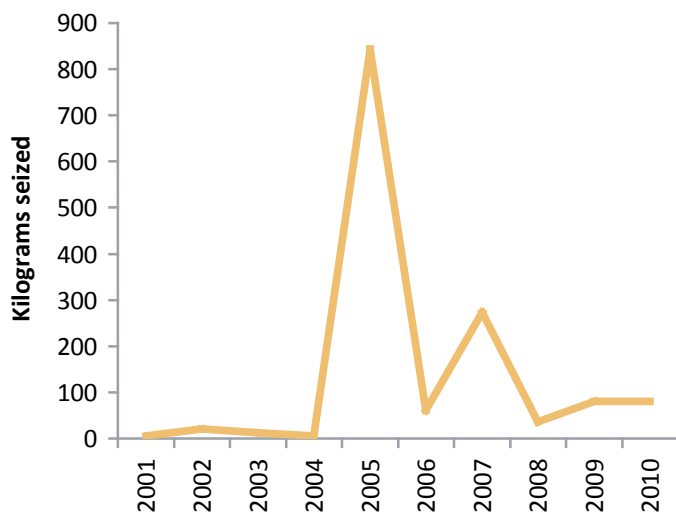
Some maritime traffic from West Africa to Europe has been detected, including some containerized shipments, but there has been very little recent evidence of this. Likewise, it does not appear that private aircraft are used to fly cocaine

directly from West Africa to Europe. There is clear, but diminished, air courier traffic. This leaves one possible additional route: across the Sahara Desert by land or by air to North Africa, and then by sea or by air across the Mediterranean.

On its face, the land route across the Sahara seems unlikely. The terrain is extremely harsh. Roads and refueling stops are limited. The route passes through politically unstable areas, the realm of violent extremists, insurgents, and bandits. Multiple borders must be crossed, meaning multiple security structures must be negotiated. And even upon reaching the Mediterranean coast, crossing into Europe means evading some very tight controls.

Still, the Sahara has been crossed by merchants for centuries, and it is clear that both migrants and all manner of contraband make the journey in great volumes every year. Though no large cocaine seizure has ever been made in the Sahara itself, and the largest seizure ever made in Mali was later declared to be hashish, there have been a number of peripheral indicators that the route is in use:

- There have been a number of documented air flights into the Sahel, some of which had the capacity to carry large volumes of cocaine. These drugs could have been moved back to the coast for onward transport, but then the advantage of an inland landing would be unclear. It is possible that the drugs from these flights were to be flown onward to North Africa in private planes, but even though Bamako was once a major source of couriers detected in Europe, it is unlikely that all these drugs could be moved through commercial flights alone.
- A few seizures have been made of cocaine moving northward into Mali by land, including 116 kg from Guinea and 49 kg from Burkina Faso in 2007.

Figure 5: Cocaine seizures in Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt

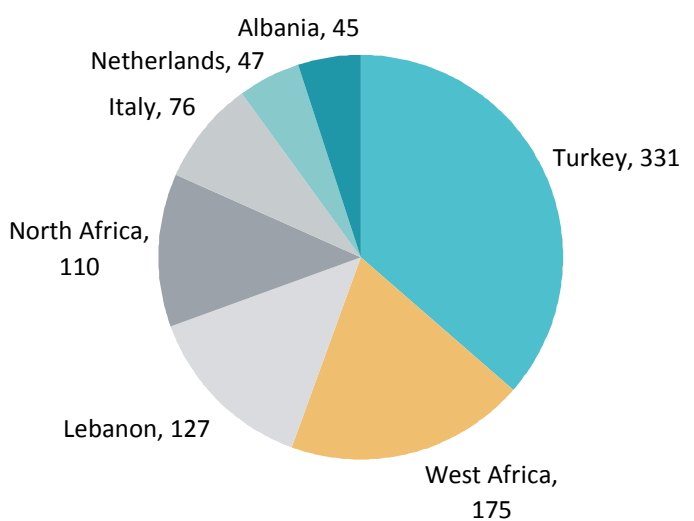
Source: UNODC ARQs

Seizures of cocaine in North Africa have been extremely limited, and this is not due to a lack of enforcement capacity. In 2010, Morocco seized 119 tons of hashish, but only 73 kilograms of cocaine. Of course, hashish production is concentrated in one small area of the country, and authorities understand the market very well, but similar ratios between hashish and cocaine seizures are found in other North African countries. If cocaine is proceeding through North Africa in large quantities, this flow has somehow managed to evade detection in a way that hashish has not.

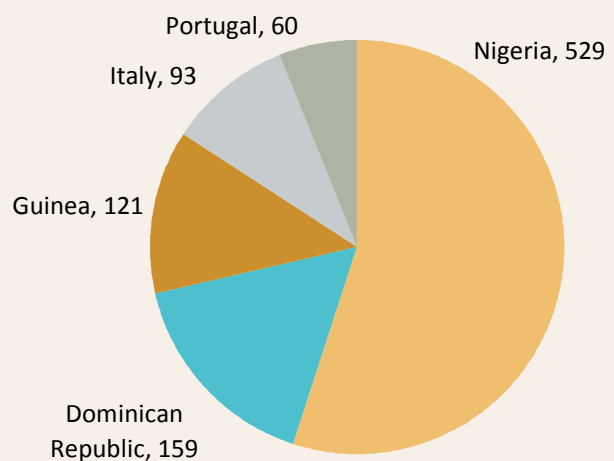
Retail in Europe

The largest European markets for cocaine remain the United Kingdom, Spain, and Italy, which collectively account for almost two-thirds of the cocaine users in Europe. Adding in France and Germany brings the total to more than three-quarters. These are the destinations West African traffickers are trying to reach. To get there, though, they may pass through a large number of transit countries, including those with good air links to West Africa.

Neither the United Kingdom nor France publish data on the nationality of the traffickers they arrest, but Spain, Italy, and Germany do, as do the authorities of the smaller markets of Switzerland and Portugal. West Africans, and specifically Nigerians, appear prominently in all of these markets. Looking at the latest data on Spain, Italy, and Germany, Switzerland, and Portugal, just under 2,000 West Africans were arrested for cocaine trafficking in recent years (either 2010 or 2011). If one in 10 of the active traffickers were arrested, this would suggest some 20,000 West African cocaine traffickers in just these five countries.

Figure 6: Foreigners arrested for cocaine trafficking in Germany in 2011¹¹

Source: UNODC ARQ

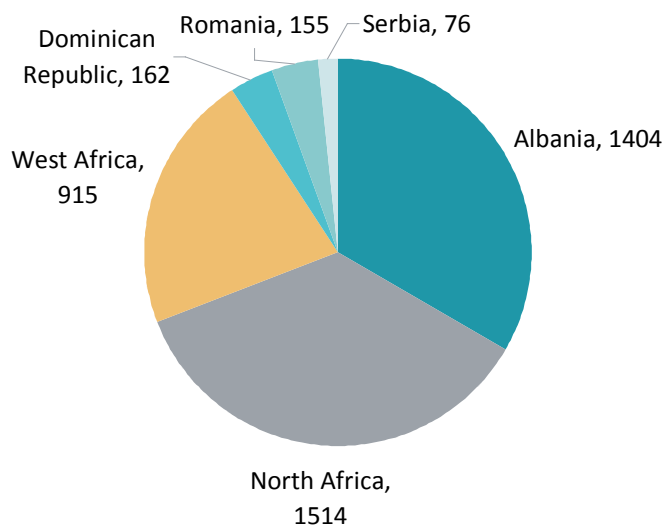
Figure 7: Foreigners arrested for cocaine trafficking in Switzerland in 2011

Source: UNODC ARQ

Who is doing the trafficking?

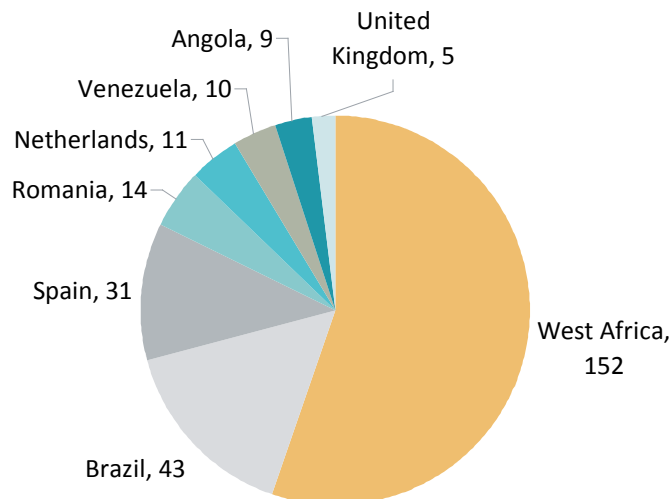
The trafficking is clearly a result of a confluence of interests between South American (Colombian and Venezuelan), West African (primarily Nigerian), and European groups. There are small West African communities in both Colombia and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, but the nerve center of Nigerians in South America is clearly Sao Paulo (Brazil). Colombians and Venezuelans have been arrested in a number of West African countries.¹² Europeans, including Europeans of West and North African ancestry, are also prominent in several West African countries, and West Africans dominate cocaine retail markets in several European countries.

Figure 8: Foreigners arrested for cocaine trafficking in Italy in 2010¹³



Source: UNODC ARQ

Figure 9: Foreigners arrested for cocaine trafficking in Portugal in 2010¹⁴



Source: UNODC ARQ

In South America, the most successful traffickers command considerable resources, and may have investments in a wide range of businesses. Some have close ties to the Colombian FARC. The traffickers themselves have credited their success to high-level corruption, so their networks could be said to include political and military officials.

In West Africa, the traffickers appear to be primarily Nigerian, although they may hold residence or citizenship in any West African country. Nigerians from the southeast of the country, particularly of the Igbo ethnic group, are especially implicated. Some of the reasons for this association are

historic: it was the southeast that attempted to secede during the 1967-1970 conflict. As a result, the Igbo diaspora is large and widespread. Ghanaians, Guineans, and Gambians are also prominently represented but with nowhere near the dominance of the Nigerians. Nigerian traffickers tend to move into less hazardous areas of business once they have accumulated a start-up stake, although there are exceptions. As a result, the individuals involved today may have moved on tomorrow, and it is difficult to identify stable centralized organizations. But as in South America, if corrupt officials are included, some very prominent personalities can be identified.

The impact of cocaine trafficking in Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau has been severely affected by the cocaine trade. Soldiers and politicians have been drawing revenue from cocaine. Journalists, police, judges, military officers, and even the highest elected officials have been kidnapped, killed, or cowed if they dared to challenge the traffickers. Traffickers too have fallen prey to their rivals. Among the casualties of the drug conflicts are then-President Vieira, General Tagme Na Wai, General Ansumane Mané, General Verissimo Correia Seabra, Commodore Lamine Sanhá, Deputy Hélder Proença, Governor Baciro Dabó and Colonel Samba Djaló.¹⁵

In a statement before the Security Council on 19 April 2012, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Guinea-Bissau, Mamadú Saliu Djaló Pires, directly blamed the recent coup on the Chief of Staff of the armed forces, Lieutenant General Antonio Indjai. He said the reason for the coup was to allow Indjai to “under-

mine the ongoing process of reform and assure his continuing collaboration with organized crime and drug trafficking in Guinea-Bissau.”¹⁶

He recounted the incident in which Indjai rose to his present position:

*On 1 April 2010, ... Lieutenant General Antonio Indjai invaded the premises of the United Nations in Bissau to “liberate” Rear Admiral Bubo Na Tchuto. He subsequently kidnapped the Army Chief of Staff, General Jose Zamora Induta, and imprisoned Prime Minister Carlos Gomes Júnior for several hours, in order to later put pressure on the Government and President Bacai Sanhá to appoint him and Bubo Na Tchuto chiefs of staff of the army and navy, respectively. They were confirmed in office through coercion and threats to the country’s civil authorities, the Prime Minister and President of the Republic.*¹⁷

He went on to describe a country where drug suspects were released by the military, where drug flights land on public roads with the protection of the army, and where soldiers beat and humiliate the police publicly.

Further down the chain still, air couriers can be of any nationality, but are generally run by Nigerian groups. For example, Africans arrested for cocaine trafficking in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela are generally Igbo Nigerians or South Africans, who are often recruited as couriers by Nigerian syndicates.

How big is the flow?

Determining the amount of cocaine transiting the region involves a process of triangulation. There are several sources of varying quality that can be compared in creating an estimate.

First, UNODC surveys of cocaine production in Colombia, Peru, and the Plurinational State of Bolivia give some sense of total supply. Less than 1,000 tons of pure cocaine have been manufactured in recent years. The rough amount available for European consumption can be calculated by subtracting seizures and consumption elsewhere in the world. Hundreds of tons are seized in South America, and a large share of the remainder is dispatched for the North American market.

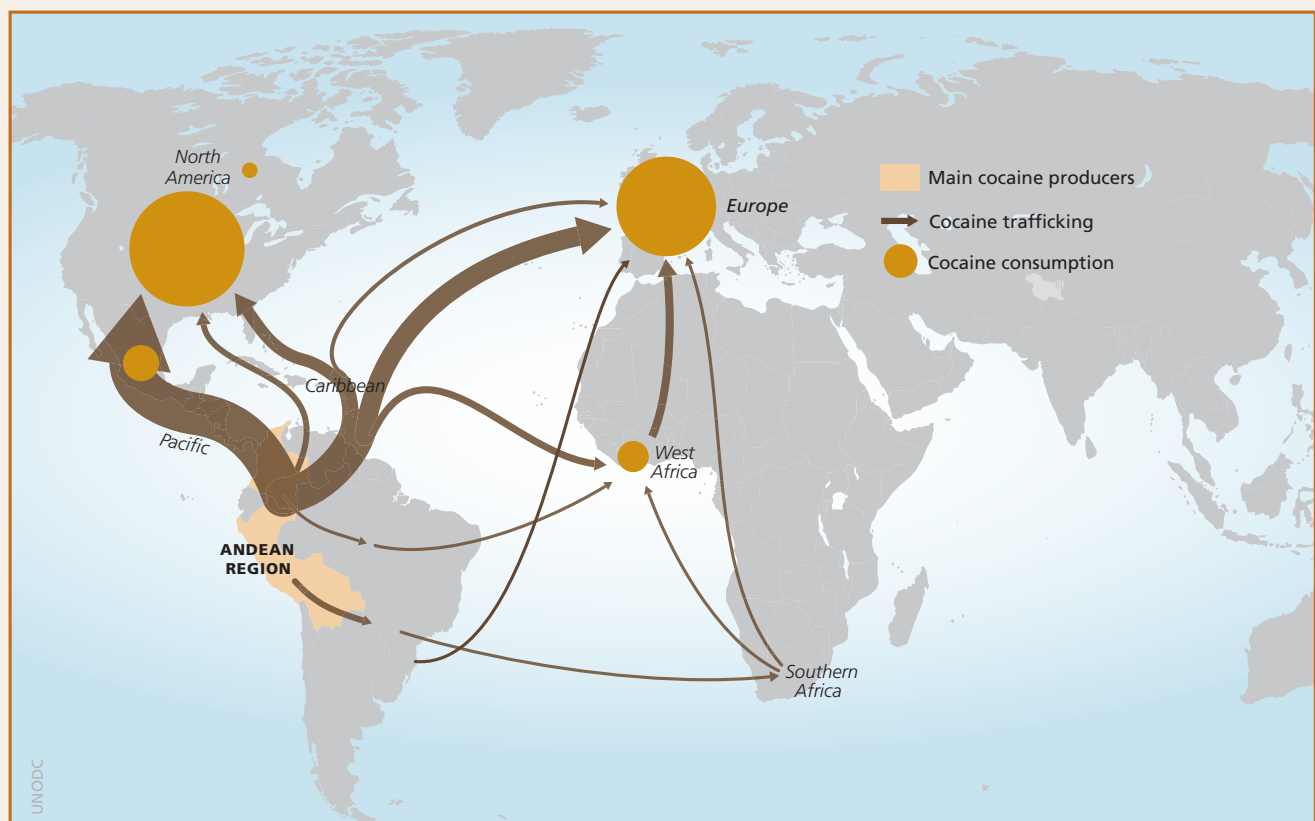
There is also good information on cocaine demand in Europe. Many countries conduct regular household surveys on drug use, and reinforce this information with school surveys and studies aimed at hard-to-access populations. Less is known about the amounts of drugs consumed by individual users, and price data are also problematic. But while no research is perfect, European knowledge on drug

use is among the best in the world. Based on UNODC estimates of the number of cocaine users and the amounts consumed per user, it can be deduced that about 130 tons of pure cocaine were consumed Europe in 2010.¹⁸

There are also comprehensive data on drug seizures in Europe stretching back for decades, and the European law enforcement agencies maintain consistently strong capacity to detect and seize drugs. In 2010, seizures in Europe amounted to some 62 tons. The bulk of these seizures took place at the wholesale level, where purity is around 68%, so around 42 tons of pure cocaine were seized that year. With domestic demand at 130 tons and seizures of 42 tons, the total amount of pure cocaine entering Europe can be estimated at some 172 tons.

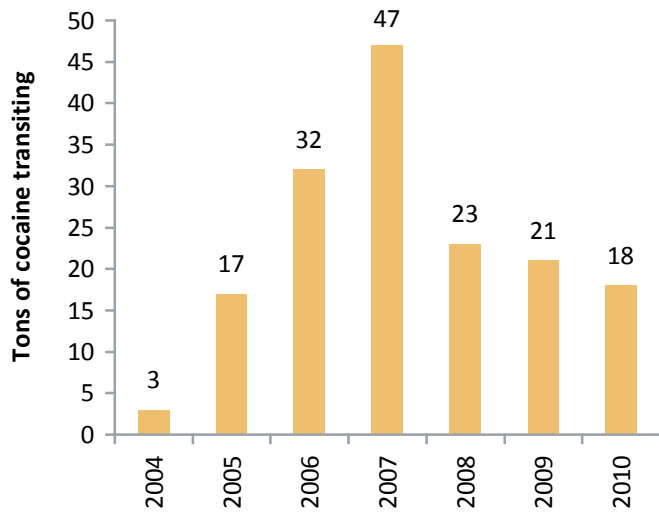
Estimating the share of this supply that transits West Africa is more difficult, and involves looking at various databases when the origin of individual cocaine seizures are recorded, including UNODC's Individual Drug Seizure Database. Based on different sources, the share of European seizures transiting Africa varied between 8% and 13% in 2010. At 10%, this would suggest 18 tons of pure cocaine crossed West Africa on its way Europe in that year. One kilogram of cocaine at wholesale purity of around 65% was priced at an average of around US\$53,000 in 2010, meaning these 18 pure tons would have been worth about US\$1.25 billion. Not all of this money is profit, of course, and the share that accrues to West African criminals remains unclear. But this figure gives a sense of the immense resources available

Map 2: Main global cocaine flows 2010



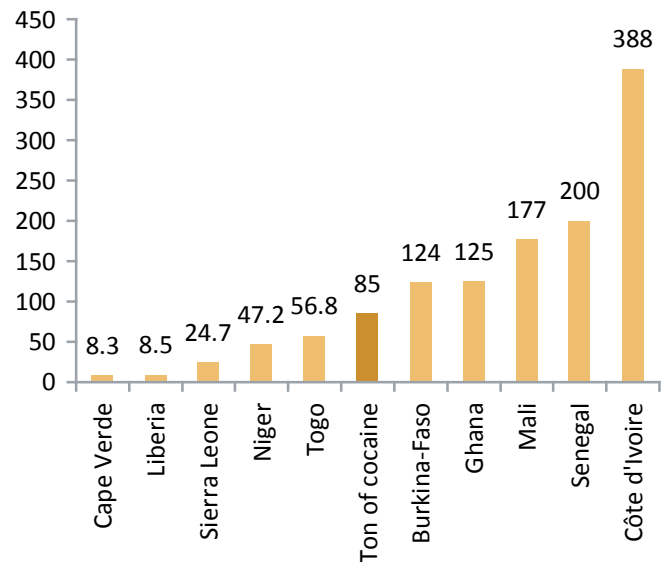
Source: UNODC

Figure 10: Tons of pure cocaine transiting West Africa on their way to Europe



Source: UNODC estimates

Figure 11: National military budgets in 2010 versus the value of one ton of pure cocaine in Europe



Source: Elaborated from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)

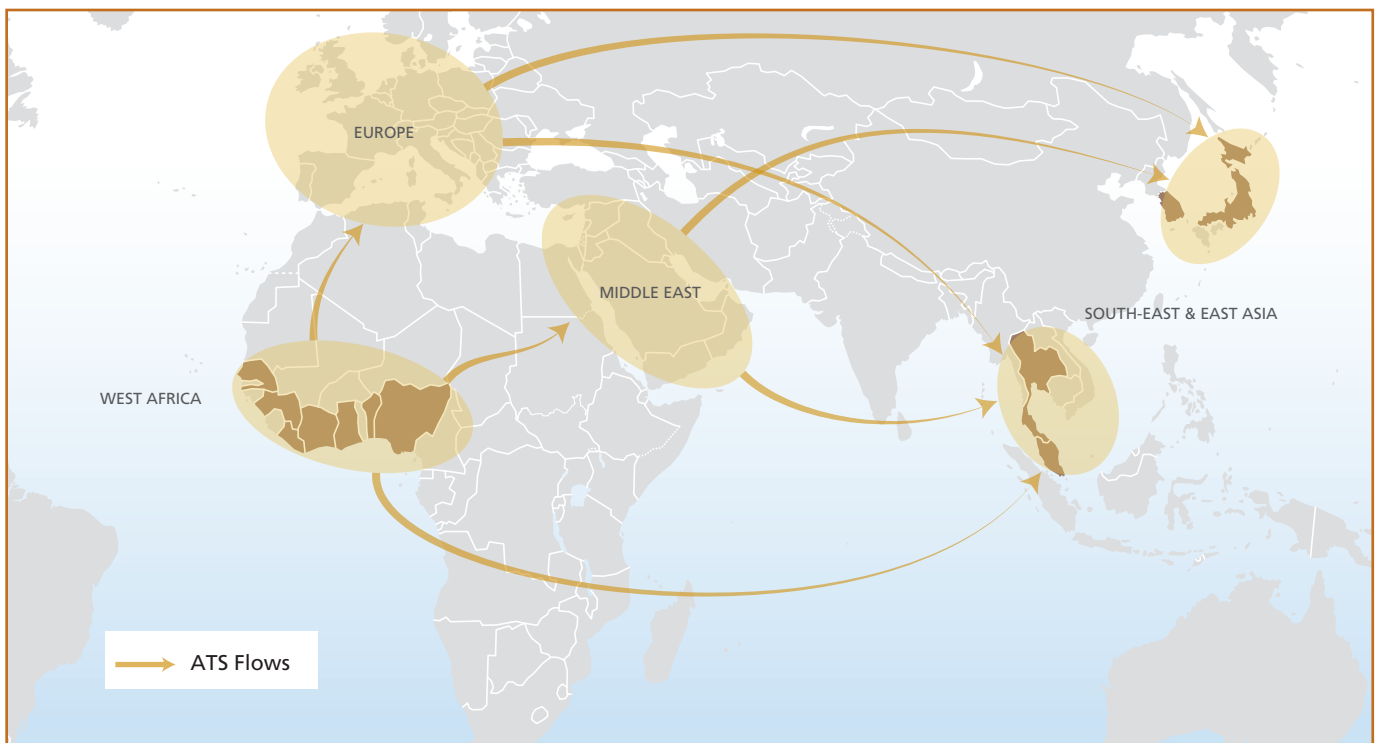
to traffickers to sow corruption and support violent groups in the region.

Implications for policy

It appears that international attention, including a series of remarkable seizures, has reduced the flow of cocaine through West Africa by more than half since 2007, but this reduction must be kept in perspective. How much illicit money is required to induce instability? The entire military budget of some West African countries is less than the wholesale value of a single ton of cocaine in Europe.

So, it does not require much cocaine to produce a lot of trouble in West Africa. As enforcement successes in one country may simply divert the flow to a weaker neighbour, the problem must be approached regionally, and the goal must be to make the region inhospitable to drug traffickers.

Given the fact that high-level public and military officials have been implicated, building local capacity must be viewed as a long-term solution to an acute crisis. Rather than demand too much of local partners, the international community will have to act to ensure that it is no longer advantageous for traffickers to make a detour through West Africa to reach the European market. International cooperation and information sharing will be key to protecting this vulnerable region.



METHAMPHETAMINE FROM WEST AFRICA TO EAST ASIA

What is the nature of the market?

West African involvement in transnational drug markets extends back at least as far as the 1970s. Nigerians, particularly those from the southeast of the country, have traditionally shuttled cocaine and heroin from diaspora communities near production areas (such as Karachi, Sao Paulo, and Bangkok) to diaspora communities in consumer countries. The West African sub-region itself played little role, aside from being an air stopover location and as a place to launder the profits. All this changed when the region became a cocaine transshipment zone in the mid-2000s.

Since the cocaine profits have begun to ebb, it is perhaps not surprising that traffickers are looking for new income streams. For the first time, evidence of large-scale drug production in West Africa has emerged. The drug – methamphetamine – has many advantages over plant-based drugs, not the least of which are low start-up costs and the ability to engage in production anywhere.

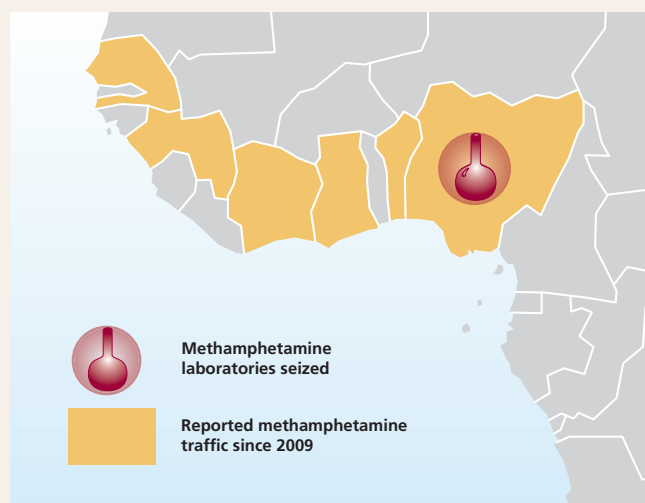
Nigerian smugglers may have gotten their start in methamphetamine in their traditional role as expert transportation and distribution agents. Traffickers could have been exposed to the drug through expat communities in various Asian countries and South Africa, and begun trafficking through West Africa. Detections of large numbers of methamphetamine couriers on flights between West Africa and Asia have been reported since at least 2008, two years before the first production sites were detected in the sub-region. Since then, a number of incidents have demonstrated synthetic drugs production in West Africa:

- Shortly after the 2008 coup in Guinea, the military government invited the international community to inspect a manufacturing operation they alleged had been linked to the Conté regime. More than 5,000 litres of sassafras oil and 80 litres of P2P were discovered – primary precursors for MDMA (ecstasy) synthesis. In one of the two locations where the chemicals were found (Kissosso), forensic analysis confirmed the presence of MDMA in a high-pressure reaction vessel, suggesting that some production had already occurred.
- About a year later, in May 2010, the first evidence of methamphetamine manufacturing in West Africa emerged. The US Government indicted members of a large international cocaine trafficking organization for attempting to establish an illicit laboratory for the large-scale manufacture of methamphetamine in Liberia. The methamphetamine was allegedly destined for the US and Japan.
- In July of 2011, the first operational facility was detected. The Nigerian Drug Law Enforcement Agency discovered a site with the capacity to manufacture 25 to 50-kilogram batches of methamphetamine just outside Lagos. Two men were arrested, both from southeast Nigeria.
- Eight months later, a second facility was identified in Satellite Town, Lagos. Some 41 kg of ephedrine and almost 5 kg of finished methamphetamine were seized. Three Bolivians and one Nigerian, an Igbo, were arrested. The presence of the Bolivians has yet to be explained.

The manufacturing of methamphetamine requires no advanced technology. Addicts have been known to synthesize the drug in their own kitchens using common decongestants. The difficulty lies in gaining access to sufficient

amounts of precursor chemicals (primarily ephedrine) to produce the drug in commercial quantities. Given the loosely regulated pharmaceutical industry in West Africa, this hurdle can be overcome. Once the precursors enter any ECOWAS state, they are easily relocated to whichever spot is most logistically convenient at the time. This makes it difficult to determine whether production is limited to Nigeria or whether it is more widespread.

Map 3: Methamphetamine in West Africa



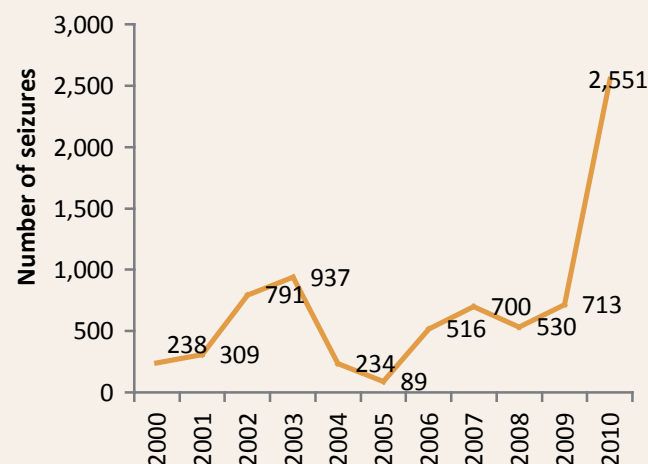
Source: Global SMART programme

Diversion of precursors has been detected in a number of countries in the region. Initially, these chemicals were probably sold to methamphetamine manufacturers abroad, but today these diversions may indicate production activity. In 2010, the International Narcotics Control Board, which regulates precursor imports internationally, reported stopping inappropriate shipments to Guinea, Niger, Nigeria and Togo, as well as to neighbouring regions in Africa. Suspended shipments of ephedrine or pseudoephedrine to African countries totalled more than 5.5 tons, far more than the facilities detected so far could process.

Local law enforcement statistics are of little use in determining the extent to which methamphetamine is trafficked

through the region. Part of the problem is that some countries lack the technology to distinguish between certain banned substances. When unsure, the responsible authorities may simply report that “psychotropic substances” were seized. These seizures have been reported in Nigeria, for example, for years, but have recently increased remarkably. Significant amounts of drugs testing positive for amphetamines were seized at the international airport in Lagos in 2010 (75 kg) and 2011 (45 kg).

Figure 12: Seizures of ‘psychotropic substances’ in Nigeria



Source: NDLEA Annual Report 2010

How is the trafficking conducted?

In a classic case of outsourcing, ephedrine, largely produced in East Asia and South Asia, is exported to West Africa, where it is converted into methamphetamine and shipped back to East Asia. Almost all of the detected trafficking to Asia has involved the use of commercial air couriers, a technique at which Nigerian traffickers excel. Couriers may swallow latex wraps of the drug, conceal it on their person, or hide it in items within their luggage, such as in African crafts and souvenirs.

Licit pharmaceuticals, illicitly diverted

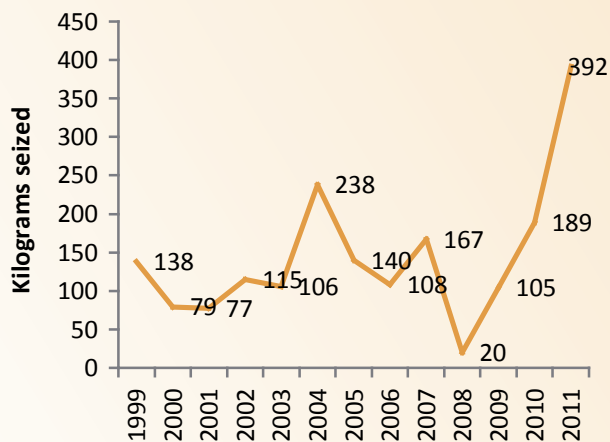
West Africa is a transshipment hub for licit pharmaceuticals that will be diverted for illicit use. A prominent recent example is the time-release synthetic opiate ‘Tramadol,’ which is extensively abused in the Middle East. Egypt, for example, has recently rescheduled this medication, as it is second only to cannabis as the most common drug of abuse in the country.¹⁹

Between 4 May and 18 May 2012, no fewer than 11 seizures of Tramadol were made by customs officials in Benin and Togo. Adding large seizures in December 2011 and June 2012, some 130 tons of the drug were seized in these two countries. These drugs were seized because the dosage (200 mg) was higher than the authorized dosage (50 mg). All imports were from India, and all but one listed Niger as a final destination. The designation of an inland destination may be for the purpose of avoiding coastal inspection. It is likely that the drugs were to be trafficked on to the Middle East, because Tramadol abuse is not a recognized problem in West Africa.

Heroin trafficking through West Africa

Alongside the rise in methamphetamine trafficking, there has been a clear increase in the amount of heroin transiting West Africa, largely through commercial air couriers. Nigerian traffickers are involved in heroin markets in many parts of the world, and the region has been used as a transit area in the past. As with cocaine, most of the heroin seems to be destined for the European market.

Figure 13: Heroin seizures in West Africa



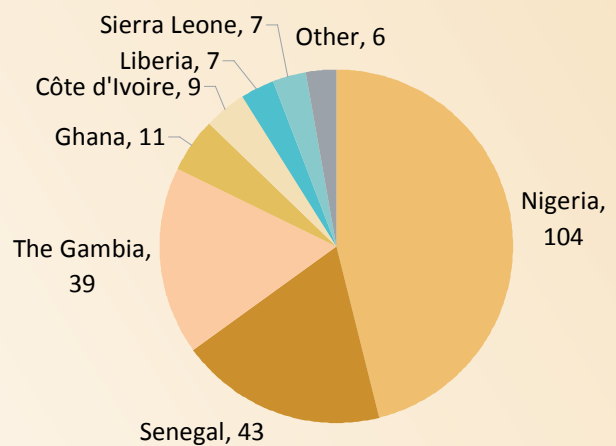
Source: UNODC Regional Office in West Africa

It appears most of the heroin enters West Africa via East Africa, sourced from South West Asia (including Iran) and Turkey. There are also direct commercial flights from Turkey to Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal, on which heroin can be couriered.

In addition to air couriers, there has been a recent series of seizures involving large volumes of heroin transported in shipping containers:

- In November of 2010, 139 kg were discovered entering Nigeria in a container from Bandar Abbas, Iran. The drugs were concealed in auto parts.²⁰
- In April 2011, Pakistani authorities inspected a container destined for Benin, and discovered 108 kg of heroin packed into matchstick boxes. Further investigation led to a further 266 kg of heroin hidden in rice bags at a warehouse.²¹
- A week later, 202 kg of heroin was seized at Cotonou seaport, in a container originating from Pakistan and destined for Nigeria.²²
- West African heroin traffickers are also active in destination markets. For example, during the first five months of 2011, 227 West African heroin traffickers were arrested in Italy.

Figure 14: Nationality of West African heroin traffickers arrested in Italy, January-May 2011



Source: Italian Ministry of Interior

Due to free movement within ECOWAS, the couriers may be dispatched from any airport in the region. Evidence of overland transport has been found from Nigeria to Benin, for example.²³ Methamphetamine has been found on couriers flying from Benin, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Senegal. It remains unclear which of these countries might host production, since any methamphetamine could have been supplied through Nigerian output.

In addition, departure from any given West African country does not mean that nationals of that country are running the operation. At the height of cocaine couriering to Europe (2005-2007), couriers were departing from nearly every country in the region, but almost all of the operations were being run by Nigerians who had relocated to other West African countries. Nigerian traffickers may employ couriers of less suspect nationalities, and they may also acquire pass-

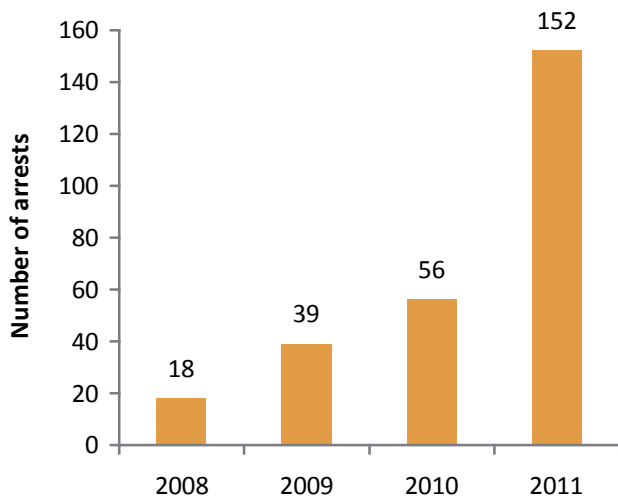
ports from other countries in the region, through fraud, forgery, or marriage.

Since flights from West Africa attract attention, couriers may fly through a number of other airports before arriving in East Asia. The choice of transit airports may also include the hubs of the airlines they choose to use. Some of the airlines that extend the most service to African countries are based in the Middle East, so these appear prominently among the transit countries.

The destination of these couriers appears to be the high-value methamphetamine markets in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Thailand. But on their way, couriers may transit a number of other East Asian countries, including China, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam.

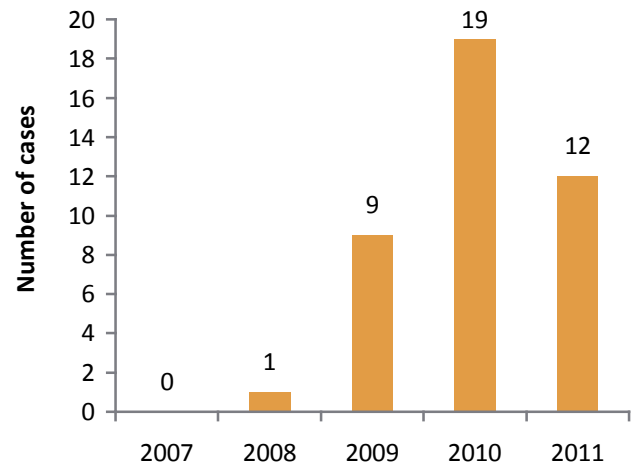
For example, to reach the Malaysian market, couriers typi-

Figure 15: Nigerian couriers arrested for methamphetamine trafficking in Malaysia, 2008-2011



Source: Royal Malaysian Police

Figure 16: Number of methamphetamine smuggling cases in Japan associated with West African organized crime groups, 2007-2011



Source: National Police Agency of Japan

cally depart from Ghana or Nigeria and may transit airports in the Middle East (Egypt, Qatar, Syria, United Arab Emirates), Europe (Germany), and South Africa. Some flights also transit Bangkok. The drugs typically enter the country at Penang, a state located on the northwestern coast of Malaysia, or at the international airports around Kuala Lumpur. Nigerian couriers have been detected in ever-growing numbers since 2008, with 152 apprehended in 2011 alone.

Who is doing the trafficking?

The only confirmed production sites to date were associated with Igbo Nigerians, and Nigerian nationals also appear prominently in the key destination markets. Drug trafficking grows in parallel to other licit and illicit commercial activities in Nigerian expatriate communities. New arrivals are typically given a start-up stake with the understanding that future supplies will be sourced from their benefactor. In this way, a street dealer transforms himself into a wholesaler and can begin importing drugs on his own behalf.²⁴

Initially, a new trafficker may be compelled to import the drugs on his own person, which is one reason why Nigerian nationals feature so prominently among the couriers detected. Once some experience and capital are gained, they may either acquire the passport of another African country or hire nationals of these countries to carry the drugs. It appears that well-established groups are now hiring nationals of Southeast Asian countries as couriers in order to reduce official scrutiny.

Today, Nigerian drug trafficking groups have been detected in almost every country in East Asia, and are particularly

active in Japan, the Republic of Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand:

- At airports in Japan, 59 “African” couriers were detected between 2007 and 2011, most of which were identified as Nigerian.²⁵ Throughout the country, 24 “Africans” were arrested for trafficking amphetamine-type stimulants in 2010.
- The number of West African air couriers arrested in Malaysia nearly doubled between 2009 and 2010, from 35 to 65, with Nigerian nationals accounting for 79% of the total.²⁶
- In Thailand, 22 Africans were arrested between 2010 and February 2011 carrying some 38 kg of crystal methamphetamine between them.²⁷ Igbo street dealers can be found in the red light district of Nana (Bangkok).²⁸
- In China, from 2004 through October 2010, a total of 418 West Africans were arrested for drugs, and two-thirds were identified as Nigerians.²⁹ Many of these were dealing heroin imported from Karachi, but others were involved in methamphetamine-related activity.³⁰

In Asia, the Japanese market is most prized, as the street price of methamphetamine is over US\$100,000 per kilogram, more than 10 times the price in Thailand. There is a small Nigerian community in Tokyo, some of whom have been in Japan for decades, running nightclubs and small import businesses. In Japan as in other Asian countries, Nigerian methamphetamine trafficking has evolved in parallel with trafficking from Iran. Iranian traffickers have outnumbered Nigerians in a number of key destinations in the past. The relationship between these two groups remains unclear.

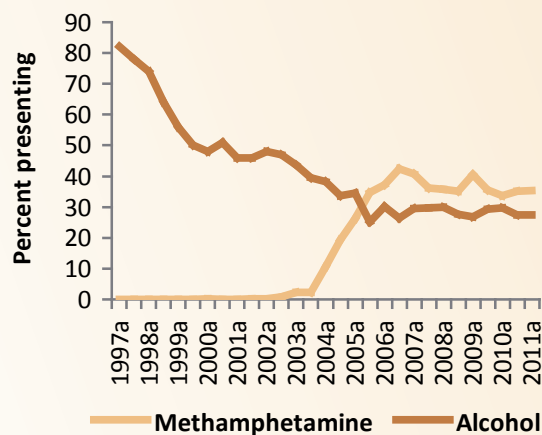
Methamphetamine in South Africa

Ironically, it was likely Asian syndicates who introduced methamphetamine to Africa.³¹ In the early 2000s, Chinese organized crime groups were active in the Western Cape of South Africa, dealing in a range of commodities including abalone, a protected shellfish harvested illegally by local gang members. Shortly after this commercial link was established, the local gangs began dealing in methamphetamine, a drug new to South Africa. In the course of two years, it became the most problematic substance in Western Cape. According to the Medical Research Council (MRC), Cape Town now has the highest metham-

phetamine prevalence in the world, with 2% of the adult population consuming the drug.³²

As a result, South Africa has become a regional hub for the production and trafficking of methamphetamine. Most production is centered in Gauteng province, the primary industrial area of the country.³³ Most laboratories are small-scale operations, often located in residential areas. Detections of these have declined since 2008, while seizures of methamphetamine have increased. There has also been a decline in the amounts of precursors imported to South Africa.³⁴ All this suggests a shift to an external source of supply – perhaps West Africa.

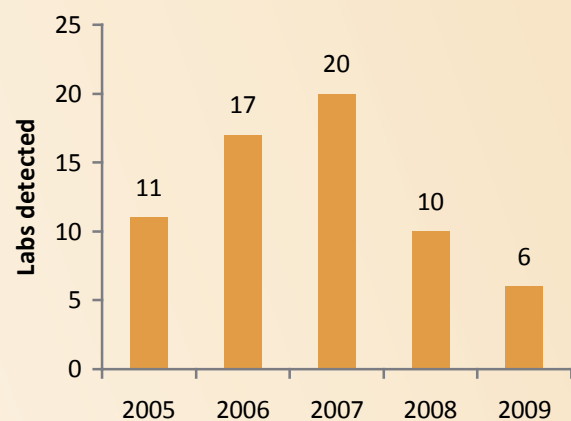
Figure 17: Primary substance of abuse of those presenting for treatment in the Western Cape, South Africa*



Source: South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU)

*As of 2007, the data is for Western Cape; prior to 2007, all data is for Cape Town only; "a" denotes the first half of the year

Figure 18: Methamphetamine labs detected in South Africa



Source: South African Police Service

How big is the flow?

While methamphetamine trafficking could become problematic for West Africa, regional output is modest in global terms, and is likely to stay that way for several reasons.

First, West African manufacturers face considerable competition in the primary destination market: East Asia. Rivals in China have direct access to ephedrine and geographic proximity on their side. Competitors located in the rebel-controlled areas of Myanmar face even less enforcement attention than those in West Africa, and have a long history of making methamphetamine for the local market. West African producers may have succeeded initially due to their novelty – no one had seen methamphetamine coming from Africa before – but their ability to out-compete local producers in the long-term is dubious.

Second, most of the detected trafficking has been by commercial air courier. Given the extreme distances involved –

it is nearly 14,000 km from Lagos to Tokyo – there are limited prospects to expand into larger volume smuggling techniques. In the end, there are limits to the amount that can be exported over such a long route, one kilogram at a time.

Approximately 10% of the methamphetamine air couriers arrested in the primary destination countries of Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Republic of Korea and Thailand in 2010 were West Africans, predominantly Nigerians.³⁵ The enforcement agencies of these countries are well aware of the role of both West Africa and West Africans in the trafficking of the drug, so it is likely that the interception rate is high. Traffickers make use of couriers of other nationalities and transit countries, however, so it is unclear what share of airport interceptions can be attributed to West African groups. Still, there are probably less than 1500 methamphetamine couriers of any foreign nationality arrested in any given year in the five main destination countries.³⁶

If 5% of the couriers were detected and 10% of the couriers

were West African,³⁷ then around 3000 West African methamphetamine couriers would have flown to Asia in 2010. If each were carrying an average of about a kilogram of methamphetamine apiece,³⁸ then around 3000 kilograms were imported by West Africans per annum. With wholesale prices ranging from about US\$40,000 in Malaysia to as much as \$200,000 in Japan and the Republic of Korea,³⁹ this would produce a gross income of some US\$360 million a year for West African traffickers. The figure could be even higher given that West African groups are employing couriers of many nationalities.

But given growing awareness of the threat, the intercept rate of methamphetamine couriers could be much higher than one in 20. If one in five were detected (20%), this would imply around 750 West African couriers per year, for 750 kilograms of methamphetamine imported. Using the same wholesale prices, this would produce a gross income of US\$90 million for the West African traffickers. Assuming the true number lies between these two extremes, the volume of methamphetamine trafficked from West Africa to East Asia can be estimated at some 1525 kilograms, for a gross income to traffickers of about US\$225 million.

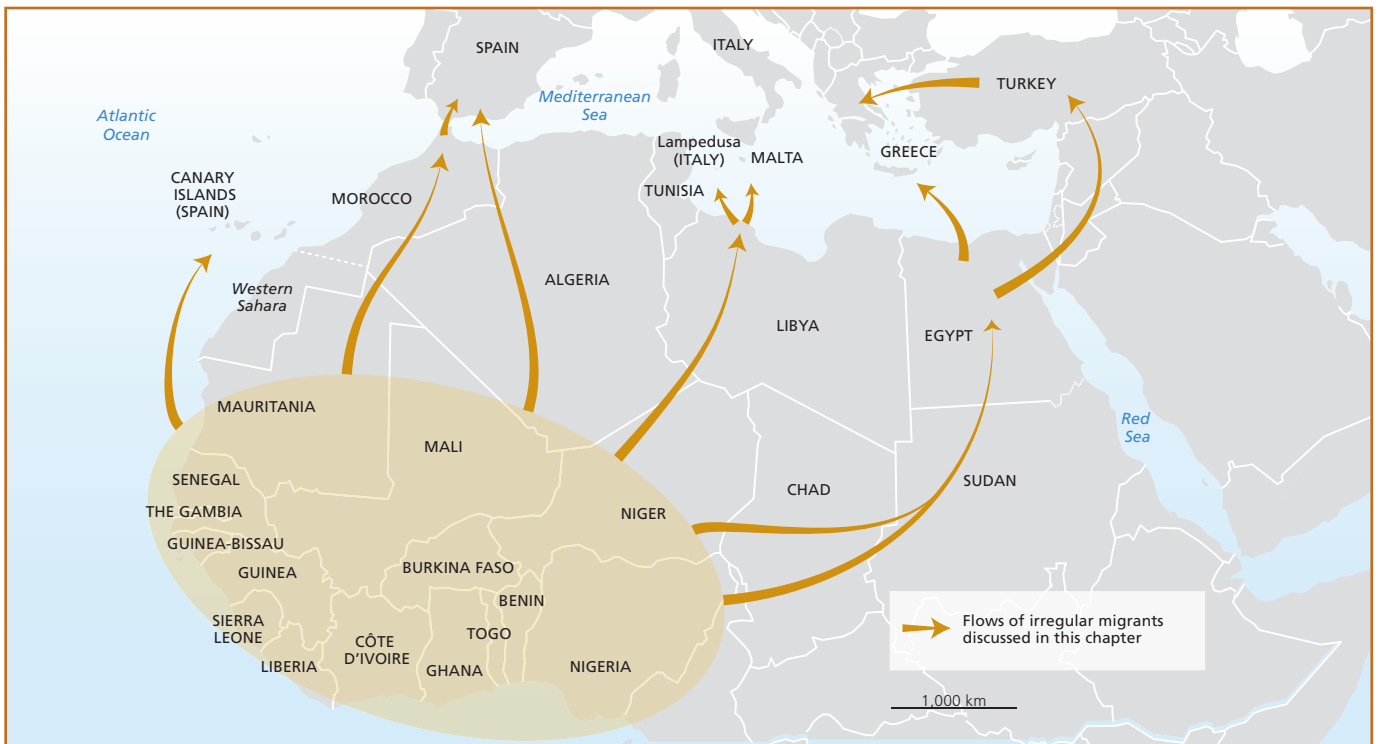
Implications for policy

The income from trafficking West African methamphetamine to East Asia is remarkable for such a new flow – in the high tens to the low hundreds of millions of dollars. But, as has been argued above, the long-term prospects of this flow are limited in light of competition from producers located in the destination markets. The greatest risk, then, is not that the income from methamphetamine trafficking will become destabilizing. It is that traffickers impeded from entering Asian markets will dump their product in West Africa, creating an additional problem the region is ill-positioned to handle. To avoid this outcome, measures need to be taken now, while the problem is still young.

One of the main reasons the region is vulnerable as a site for methamphetamine production is that the capacity for regulation of precursor chemicals is limited. It is therefore incumbent on the international community to ensure that West Africa receives only the ephedrine it needs for legitimate pharmaceutical use. In particular, flows from China – the primary source of ephedrine globally – should be monitored. Since the ECOWAS agreement allows free flow between borders, these needs should be assessed on a regional, rather than a national, basis.

At present, Asia is the primary destination market for West African methamphetamine. To eliminate the involvement of West African groups, it is only necessary to render them uncompetitive compared to local groups, which, given the distance involved, should not be difficult to do. The potential vectors for trafficking are limited. In keeping with the methods most used by Nigerian groups internationally, controls on air couriering and postal (including express

mail) shipments are likely to reach most of the flow. Profiling of couriers and full controls on any direct flights from the region will limit the potential for running a large number of couriers on a single flight, a technique employed by Nigerian traffickers all over the world.



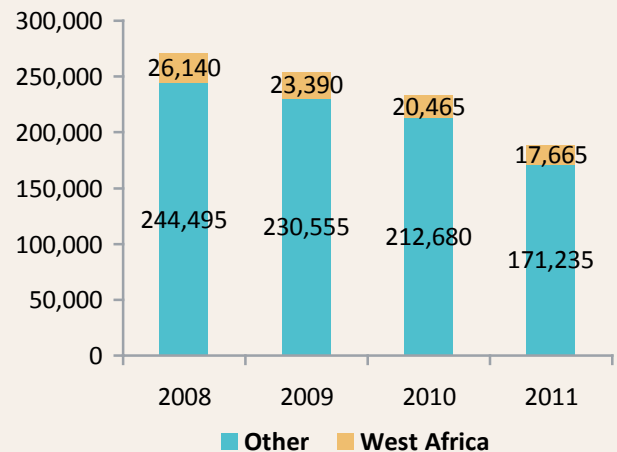
SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS FROM WEST AFRICA TO EUROPE

Migrant smuggling occurs most frequently along the fault lines between two regions of vastly different levels of development, such as West Europe and West Africa. Though the Sahara Desert and the Mediterranean Sea pose formidable obstacles, thousands of people cross them each year in order to migrate irregularly. Almost all of those who choose to do so require assistance, and the act of rendering this assistance for gain constitutes the crime of migrant smuggling.⁴⁰

In recent years, about 9% of irregular migrants detected in Europe came from West Africa. Due to the economic downturn, this flow has declined, but unpredictable geopolitical events (such as the recent crisis in Libya) can rapidly increase the demand for smuggling services. The easiest way to migrate illegally is to fly into a country with a fixed-period visa and simply overstay that visa. The visa itself may be legitimate, fraudulently acquired, or completely forged. It remains unclear what share of irregular migrants do, in fact, take this route, but estimates typically range from 75% to 90%.⁴¹ Migrant smugglers make money by helping people to fraudulently acquire visas and coaching them to pass the inspection of border officials.

For a variety of reasons, though, some migrants prefer to make the overland journey to Europe, and migrant smugglers are present all along the popular routes to facilitate their crossing. Some migrants earn the money needed to pay the smugglers during their journey, and may linger for extended periods at various points along the way. Many choose to attempt some parts of the journey unassisted – within the ECOWAS area, for example, no visa is required to cross borders. But today, nearly all irregular migrants

Figure 19: Region of origin of irregular migrants detected in Europe



Source: EUROSTAT⁴²

attempt to cross the Mediterranean in the final leg of their journey, and for this, professional assistance is required.

What is the nature of the market?

Migrant smugglers feed on the pathways of irregular migration – the number of smuggled migrants is necessarily a subset of the number of irregular migrants. The share of migrants who employ smugglers varies in proportion to the perceived threat of interdiction. In other words, migrants only pay smugglers when they believe that they are likely to be apprehended if they don't. As a result, the scale of migrant smuggling is dependent on two things: the number of people who want to migrate irregularly and the barriers to be overcome in successfully making the journey.

Migrant smuggling from Africa to Europe is relatively new,

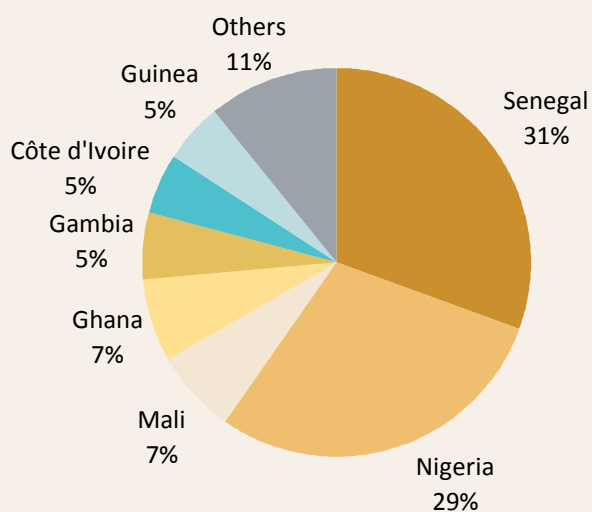
and seems to have taken off in the 1990s when Spain and Italy implemented stricter visa regimes. It was North Africans, rather than West Africans, who initially bore the brunt of the tightened controls, since historically they had migrated in much larger numbers. At first, they chose the easiest route, entering Europe from Morocco across the tiny Strait of Gibraltar, less than 13 kilometres across at its narrowest, or through the Spanish enclave cities of Ceuta and Melilla. With increased Spanish vigilance, the number of routes diversified. As the North Africans changed routes, so did the West Africans who followed them.

The routes taken have varied greatly over time, in response to law enforcement initiatives and shifts in the geopolitical climate. To a large extent, demand for smuggling services relocates whenever there is a blockage. Those who live near a popular smuggling route will travel thousands of kilometres to access a clearer thoroughway if the route near their home becomes blocked. But there may also be an element of opportunism involved. When a route becomes popular, even those who would not otherwise consider migrating may take advantage of the open door.

For example, Senegal is situated 839 nautical miles from the Canary Islands, which is legally European soil. In 2006, a surge of at least 8,000 Senegalese took advantage of this proximity and embarked for the islands, up from 30 the previous year. UNODC research in Spain suggests that many of these migrants were either fishermen or from fishing communities.⁴³ More than half of the irregular migrants from West Africa arriving in Spain around that time had never gone to school (58% according to one study) and only 50% were literate,⁴⁴ which differs from the typical migrant profile (see Box: Who migrates?).

Once migration and concomitant remittances start in a community, smuggling can take on a momentum of its

Figure 20: Nationality of West African irregular migrants detected in Spain, Italy, Malta and Greece, 2008-2011



Source: EUROSTAT

Who migrates?

In 2009, UNODC conducted a survey of migrants in six of Nigeria's 36 states. Most of the migrants heading north were male, 20 to 30 years of age, and single. Most (63%) had completed secondary school, and 13% were college graduates. A UNODC survey at the same time in Mali also found that the majority of migrants interviewed had completed secondary school. More than half of intended Nigerian migrants said they are not poor by local standards. Some two-thirds were farmers, taxi-drivers or petty traders before their departure. More than 80% had family members living in Europe. Most were not fleeing utter destitution, but were making "a conscious choice...to enhance their livelihoods."⁴⁵ As a result, the decision to buy smuggling services is likely to be reached after a rational assessment of the costs and benefits of doing so.

own. Since 2006, migrants from Senegal have been greatly over-represented among the irregular migrants detected in Spain, Italy, and even Greece. Looking at all irregular migrants detected in the traditional countries of clandestine entry (Greece, Italy, Malta, and Spain) between 2008 and 2011, Senegalese were the single largest national group, comprising 31% of the migrants detected. Senegalese comprise only 4% of the regional population.

Smuggled migrants are extremely vulnerable to exploitation, both during their journey and upon arrival. It is unknown how many are lost crossing the Sahara, but hundreds die every year crossing the Mediterranean or off the coasts of Senegal and Mauritania.⁴⁶ They aspire to invisibility, and this is often their undoing. Unwilling to report abuses to the authorities, they may be victimised with impunity.

How is the smuggling conducted?

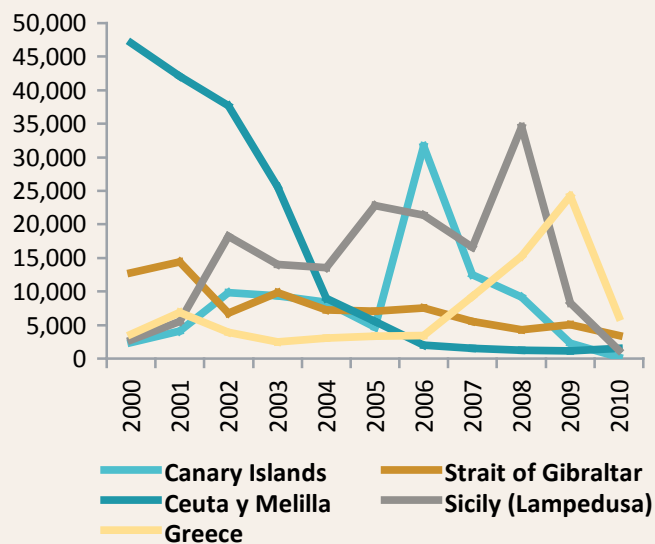
There are at least five routes along which smugglers have historically moved migrants from West Africa to enter Europe without a visa:

- By sea to the Canary Islands (Spain)
- By land to Spanish North African enclaves (Spain)
- By land and sea across the Straits of Gibraltar (Spain)
- By land and sea across the Mediterranean to Lampedusa (Italy) or Malta
- By land and sea across the Mediterranean to Greece

The prominence of these routes has shifted quite a bit over the past decade.

- In 2000, the chief points of entry were the Spanish enclaves (Ceuta and Melilla), small bits of Spanish soil along the coast of Morocco. Over 47,000 irregular

Figure 21: Irregular migrants detected entering through key points of entry



Source: UNODC elaboration on national sources and FRONTEX⁴⁷

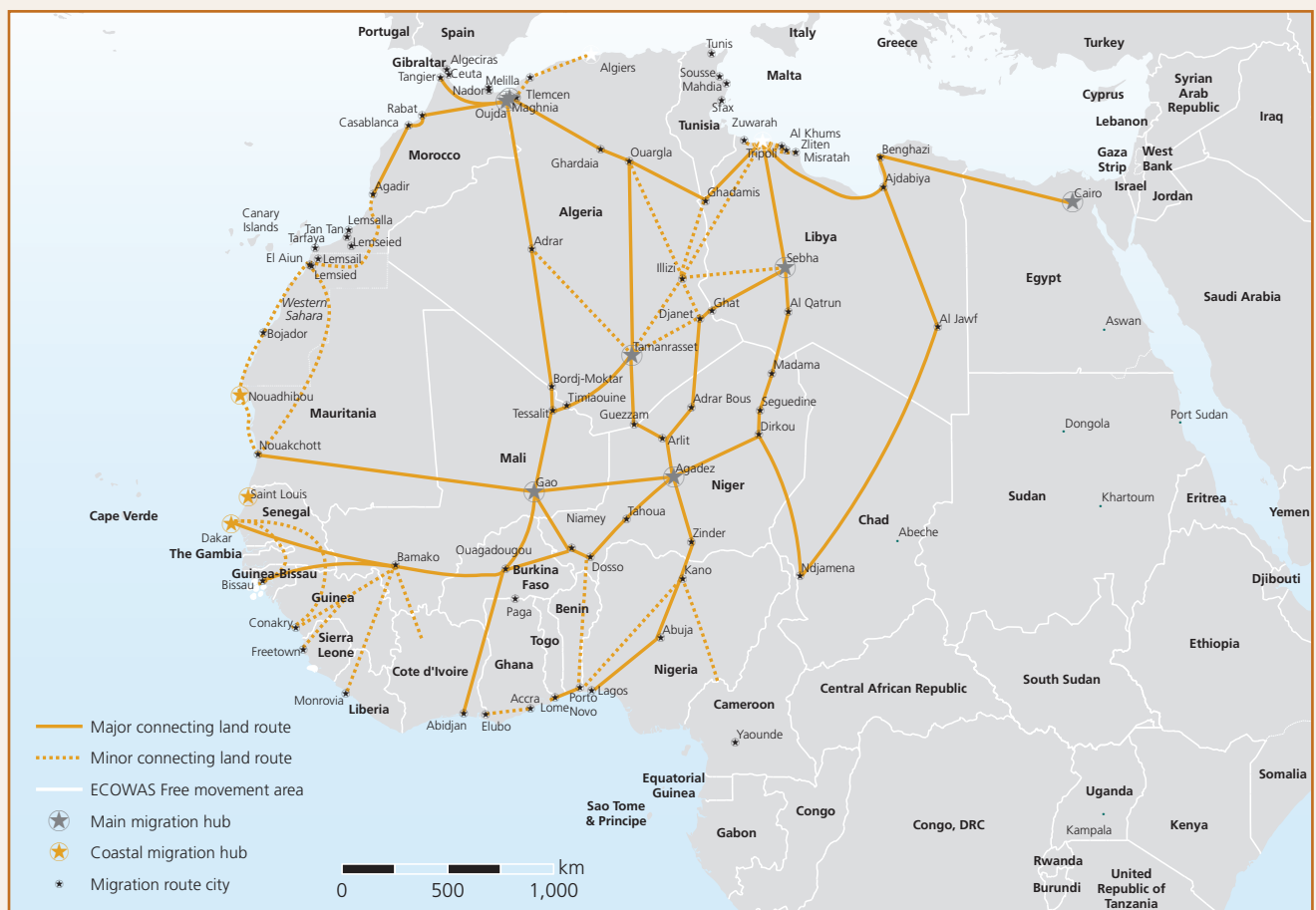
migrants were detected entering the enclaves in 2000. The ease of entry encouraged smugglers to move migrants from as far away as South Asia to attempt the route, until additional fencing was added and controls strengthened. Another 13,000 irregular migrants were detected making the short dash across the Straits of Gibraltar to the Spanish mainland in 2000.

- As the Spanish authorities focused attention on these obvious vulnerabilities, the smuggling routes shifted to the Canary Islands (peaking in 2006 with some 32,000 irregular migrants detected), and Lampedusa (peaking in 2008 with some 35,000 irregular migrants detected). Malta is a place migrants wind up when they “miss” Lampedusa, since being detected there means no trip to mainland Europe. The number of irregular migrants entering Malta also peaked in 2008 (at 2,500).
- Changes in policy in both the Canaries and Italy pushed the flow further east. Irregular migrants from West Africa are now heading towards Egypt with a view to crossing by sea to Greece, or travelling to Turkey in order to enter the European Union by land from the southeast. Detections in Greece peaked at more than 24,000 in 2009.

In effect, the key points of entry have been pushed further and further eastward as enforcement measures blocked the most popular channels. Past routes could become current again if circumstances change.

The route to get to these entry points depends on where you start. Citizens of ECOWAS countries can visit any other ECOWAS country for 90 days before requiring a residence permit, so there is no need to pay smugglers before entering North Africa or departing the West African coast. To access the Canaries, irregular migrants moved to coastal towns like Saint Louis (Senegal) or Nouadhibou

Map 4: Irregular and Mixed Migration Routes, 2012



Source: Dialogue on Mediterranean Transit Migration

(Mauritania). For the Mediterranean embarkation points, West Africans need to cross the Sahara. Along the way, they generally rally at several key hubs, including Gao (Mali) and Agadez (Niger), which have been gateways to the Sahara for centuries. To get to the Strait of Gibraltar, they usually proceed via Tamanrasset, Algeria. To get to the Libyan coast, they have historically transited Sebha (Libya) and Dirkou (Niger). Even before the recent violence in the Sahel, the road from Agadez to Dirkou had become hazardous, and smugglers were compelled to follow the monthly military convoy between the two cities. To reach Greece, migrants have moved through north-eastern Nigeria and Chad to Egypt, proceeding to Turkey by land or directly to Greece by sea.

These routes can be clustered into two distinct groups: direct departure from West Africa (Senegal and Mauritania) to the Canary Islands, and the various points of departure along the Mediterranean coast in North Africa.

via the Canary Islands

Only 340 irregular migrants arrived in the Canary Islands by sea in 2011. Although it is not an active smuggling route at present, it could be re-activated if vigilance were to drop or if instability prompted large-scale migration. The situation on the Senegalese coast is probably the best studied, a market that clearly grew in sophistication over time. In the early years, fishermen were simply subsidising their income by dropping migrants off in the Canaries. In the run-up to 2006, though, migrant smuggling became a serious business, involving dedicated Senegalese smugglers and businessmen, not always Senegalese, often with backgrounds in the fishing industry. These businessmen bought cayucos (small boats) from fishermen and used networks of coxeurs (touts) to recruit customers. Several pilots, usually Senegalese fishermen, were recruited for each cayuco in return for a free passage. When these fishermen were unavailable, other migrants were trained for the task. Bailers, usually minors, were also recruited from among the migrants.⁴⁸

After 2006, due to growing law enforcement vigilance, the business moved north to Mauritania. Here, as in Senegal, the heads of the smuggling organizations bought *cayucos* from local fishermen and assured safe passage by bribing the authorities.⁴⁹

Law enforcement pressure has sent the remaining business south again, south even of Senegal, to places quite remote from the Canaries. The length of the journey may necessitate more sophisticated and better-resourced smugglers.⁵⁰ Since 2007, there has been a shift from the wooden cayucos to inflatable motorized boats purchased for the sole purpose of smuggling migrants.⁵¹ A greater range of nationalities has become involved: the 208 people prosecuted by the Spanish courts for migrant smuggling via the Canaries in 2008 included Senegalese (72), Gambians (37), Mauritians (25) and Guineans (14).⁵²

via North Africa

While smuggling via the Canaries became more sophisticated over time, it remained relatively informal compared to the business along the Mediterranean, where professional brokers negotiate all passage. These brokers, known as “connection men,” are West Africans responsible for collecting groups of migrants and arranging transport with North African boat-owners, known to migrants as “Arabo men.” Certain ports are dominated by certain nationalities, such as Tangiers (Nigerians) and Nador (Ivorians). Malians are said to be prominent at other ports along the northern coast of Morocco.⁵³

The handling of finance has evolved into an established ritual. Once the migrant and the connection man agree on a fee, a “banker” known to both is designated to collect and hold the money. The migrant pays normally a third of the fee to the connection man and gives the remaining two-thirds to the banker, to be paid only when the migrant arrives safely in Europe. The agreement generally grants the migrant several attempts for the agreed fee if the first one fails for some reason.

With this upfront money, the connection man arranges the transport, including the necessary bribes for the authorities. One Nigerian connection man, working out of Tangiers, reported paying half the fee to a Moroccan shipper, with the shipper being responsible for bribing the navy and police.⁵⁴

Since it takes time to gather enough migrants to fill a boat, migrants are massed at a safe house for some time prior to departure. Here, they pay perhaps 20 euros per day for their food and lodging, further income for the connection man. They are cared for by employees of the connection man, known as “guide men,” who will eventually be given free passage for their assistance. Their SIM cards are removed from their mobile phones to assure security. Waiting time varies greatly – boats are generally overbooked, so some migrants may linger for weeks. All this time, they remain uncertain whether a boat will ever depart, because fraud is common.

When the time for departure comes, they pay for the trip to the embarkation point, typically a remote beach controlled by the boat owner. There have been cases of rival firms battling over particular stretches of beach.⁵⁵

For the most part, migrants pay for the journey piecemeal, seeking help only when faced with insurmountable obstacles. Francophone Africans may even cross the Sahara bit by bit, paying as they go.

Who is doing the smuggling?

Those who participate in migrant smuggling can be pictured in a pyramidal hierarchy. At the bottom are people whose participation is temporary or peripheral, and this includes a number of active migrants. Above them are the many touts

One migrant's journey

One Ivorian migrant was interviewed in Algeciras in November 2009, shortly after crossing to Spain. He made the crossing with 67 others in a boat piloted by a Senegalese. He said his Nigerian connection man regularly brought in experienced sailors from Senegal and The Gambia specifically for this purpose. The boat was detained by a Moroccan coast guard vessel, but was allowed to proceed once it was determined that only migrants were being transported. The Moroccans took pains to ascertain that only the one vessel of migrants was being moved that day, as apparently this was all they had been paid to allow.⁵⁶ Other migrants interviewed asserted that the vessels on which they were transported were actually owned by officers of the Moroccan navy.

and *passeurs*, often former migrants who have learned to make a living from the activity. They are surmounted by professional businesspeople who themselves have little contact with the migrants, whose role is to negotiate the means of transport and the bribes necessary to ensure successful passage. It is debatable whether the officials they corrupt should be placed above or below them in this hierarchy, since their relationship is essentially symbiotic.

Under the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol,⁵⁷ anyone who facilitates illegal entry for profit can be deemed a smuggler, and thus a large number of people along the route could be considered complicit. Those who drive the trucks, maintain the safe houses, and provide the food all make the business of smuggling possible. Many of the drivers who take the migrants through the Sahara are from nomadic groups, some of who lost their livestock in the droughts of the 1970s and subsequently made a living transporting people and goods across the desert. Examples include the Tuareg in Niger and Mali, the Toubou in Chad and Libya, and Zaghawa in Chad and Sudan. Some Tuareg guides may be tied to the rebel groups or may be veterans of former Libyan leader Gadaffi's Islamic Legion. Also at this level are the many active migrants who aid the smugglers in a variety of ways in exchange for various types of compensation, often smuggling services. As discussed above, migrants may be recruited as touts, "guide men," boat captains, bailers, and brothel recruiters.

The next stratum is the public face of migrant smuggling, the full time operators. Many of these are former successful migrants who have transformed their experience into a livelihood. In Kano, Nigeria, they are known as 'burgers,' a reference to a successful sojourn in Germany. On the Mediterranean coast, these are the connection men; further south, they play a similar role. They organize the trade on the ground, running the touts to gather the migrants, lodging the migrants in the safe houses, collecting the fees, and

generally keeping the business running. Some of the most successful are Nigerian and Ghanaian.

At the top are the business owners, those who make the high level arrangements necessary for the smuggling to continue. In some areas, these people are well-known and respected for their work. In Agadez, for example, they are known as *In Tchaga*, a Hausa expression meaning "business operator." There are perhaps a dozen major *In Tchaga* in Agadez, including West Africans from a range of nationalities. Many of these are former migrants who returned from Algeria or Libya. The *In Tchaga* own the safe houses, known as "ghettos," and so are also called *maassou ghetto*. They often run a side business in procuring sex workers for North African brothels. In Gao and Kidal, in northern Mali, many of the business owners are traders who import goods from Algeria and return the trucks full of migrants.

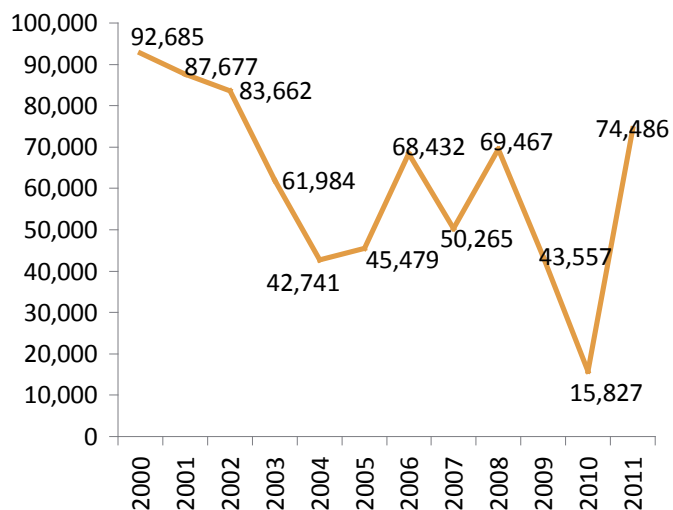
One smuggler's story

One researcher working in the early 2000s recorded his conversations with a professional transporter of migrants, a Tuareg working for a Nigerian Arab. The Tuareg driver had for fifteen years made his living by hauling millet over the desert roads from Bilma to Dirkou and returning with salt. Since the 1990s his boss, like many others in his line of business, had switched to transporting migrants, hiring his lorry to the travel agencies that had already sprung up in Agadez. "Since then," the driver stated, "I have transported more people in my lorry than all the grains of salt I carried in fifteen years."⁵⁸

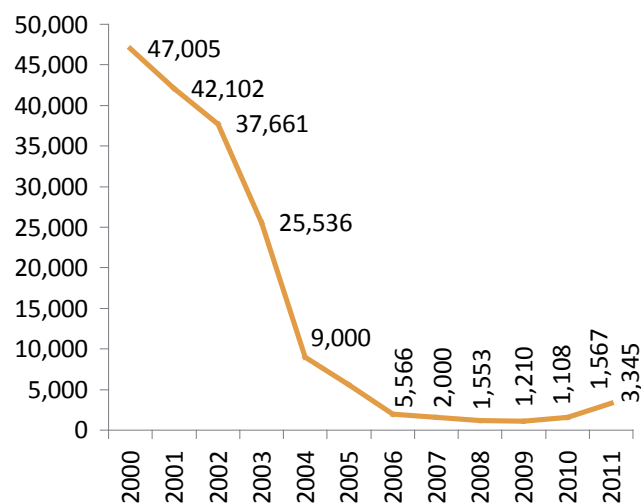
Official corruption occurs at all stages of the route but is particularly obvious on the desert crossing. In addition to looking the other way, officials can be bribed to procure fraudulent paperwork. Of 50 migrants interviewed by UNODC in Mali, 22 men and three women said that they acquired fraudulent documents through corrupt officials. These documents may be sold-on to other migrants after their initial use. Malian passports are particularly sought after because they convey the right to enter Algeria, a right not shared by other ECOWAS nationals.

How big is the flow?

In the recent past, the number of smuggled migrants detected by the European authorities was very close to the number entering, because migrants wanted to be detected. Being detected usually meant being transported to a major city in mainland Europe, being issued a return decision, and being released. But as European governments have worked to tighten the loopholes, more and more migrants may be seeking to avoid detection. As a result, it is more difficult to ascertain the number entering without paperwork.

Figure 22: Migrants detected entering Spain, Italy, Malta, and Greece by sea⁵⁹


Source: UNODC elaboration on official figures⁶⁰

Figure 23: Irregular migrants detected entering Ceuta and Melilla


Source: Ministerio del Interior, Spain⁶¹

All indications are, however, that the number has diminished in recent years. The flow of migrants has been knocked eastward over the last decade. From the Canaries to Lampedusa to Greece, each route was addressed, and smugglers were running out of options. Then came the economic downturn in 2008-2009. In addition to a sharp dip in the number of irregular migrants entering, there were qualitative indications that the downturn deterred migration. Migrants interviewed by UNODC mid-way to Europe were electing to turn around, as they had been told that opportunities were drying up. By 2010, the number of irregular migrants detected entering Europe by sea plunged to less than 16,000, one-sixth the number of a decade before.

But 2011 brought the unexpected: conflict in Libya and regime change in both Tunisia and Egypt. All the established points of entry experienced an increase in arrivals between 2010 and 2011, but the most striking was Lampedusa, which was overwhelmed with nearly 60,000 incoming migrants. But it appears few of these were from West Africa: Italy as a whole experienced a sharp decline in detected West Africans, with less than 4,000 recorded.

In total, just over 17,000 irregular migrants from West Africa were detected in Spain, Italy, Malta, and Greece in 2011. This includes all migrants detected, not just those arriving without paperwork. This is about one-third less than the figure in 2010, when UNODC last assessed the flow. The flow at that time was assessed at 55,000, which would suggest a figure of some 37,000 migrants in 2011.

Not all of these migrants will have paid smugglers, but the vast majority will have. Those who manage to acquire a visa on their own may overstay it without help, but few face the

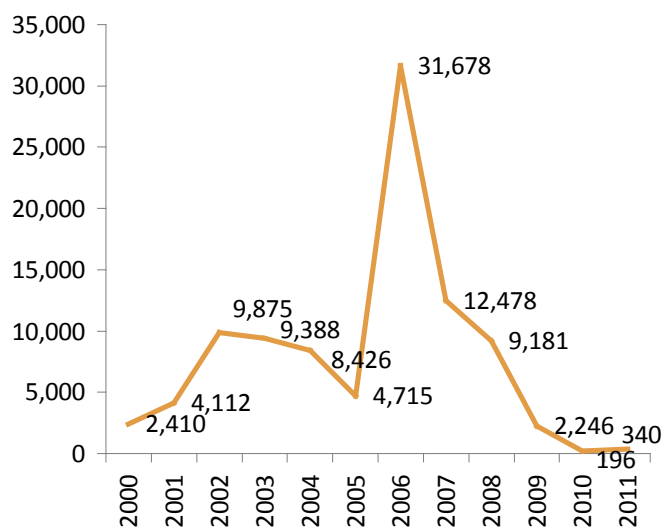
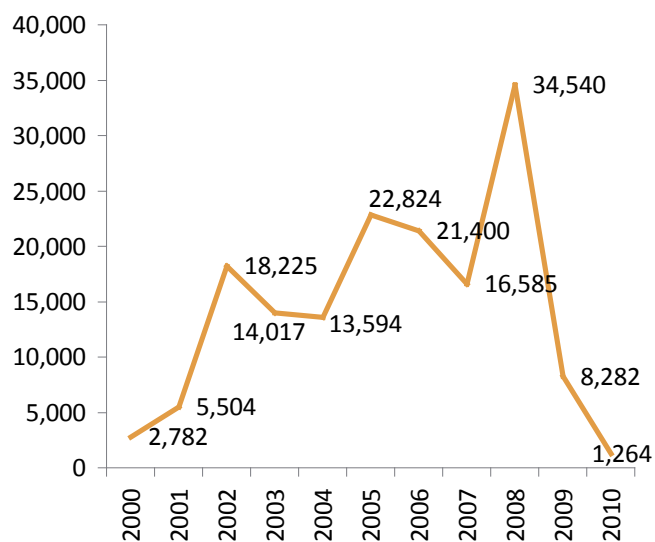
dangers of the Sahara and the Mediterranean without some paid help. The amount paid varies greatly between migrants, but the total was placed at US\$155 million in 2010, suggesting a total of about US\$105 million in 2011.

Implications for policy

The discussion above highlights the fluid nature of the smuggling routes. They have shifted from the Atlantic coast to points spanning the entire Mediterranean in the course of a decade. The primary driver of these shifts has been successful enforcement efforts. As the routes become more difficult to cross, the share of migrants employing assistance in traversing them will surely increase.

Spain was able to decimate migrant smuggling through the enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla simply by holding the migrants there indefinitely. Since the migrants wanted access to the continent, not the enclaves, this measure (teamed with stronger fences), cut irregular migration by 95%. Spain resolved smuggling through the Canaries through agreements with the Senegalese and Mauritanian authorities for the immediate return of detected irregular migrants emanating from those countries, whatever their nationality. And when, in 2008, the governments of Libya and Italy agreed to a similar return policy, smugglers based in Libya lost most of their market overnight.

But in each case, enforcement efforts displaced the flow somewhere else. What sharply reduced smuggling opportunities was the economic downturn in 2008. In the course of two years, the number of migrants detected entering Spain, Italy, Malta, and Greece by sea dropped by over 75%.

Figure 24: Irregular migrants detected entering the Canary Islands by seaSource: Ministerio del Interior, Spain⁶²**Figure 25:** Irregular migrants detected entering Sicily (mainly Lampedusa) by seaSource: Camerai dei deputati, Italy⁶³

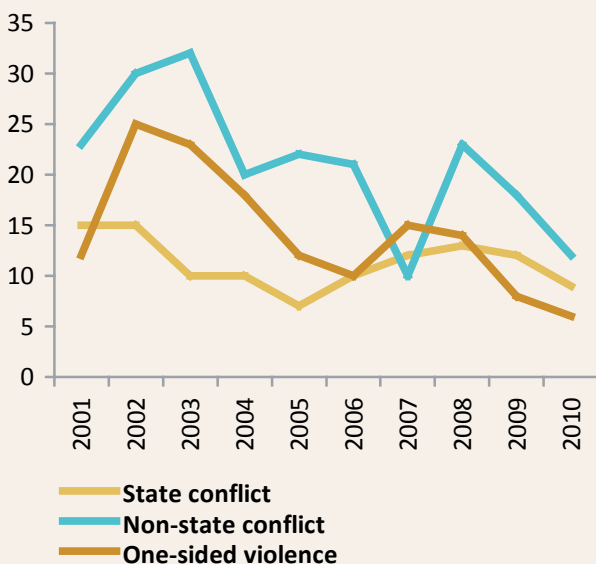


FIREARMS TRAFFICKING IN WEST AFRICA

What is the nature of the market?

After the Cold War, there was a time when West Africa received tons of armaments from outside the continent.⁶⁴ This era has largely passed, because today, regional supply can satisfy local demand. On the one hand, the number of civil wars in Africa has declined since the 1990s, reducing demand. On the other, the firearms trafficked during those years did not evaporate, and continue to be re-circulated throughout the region.

Figure 26: Armed conflict in Africa (2001-2010)⁶⁵

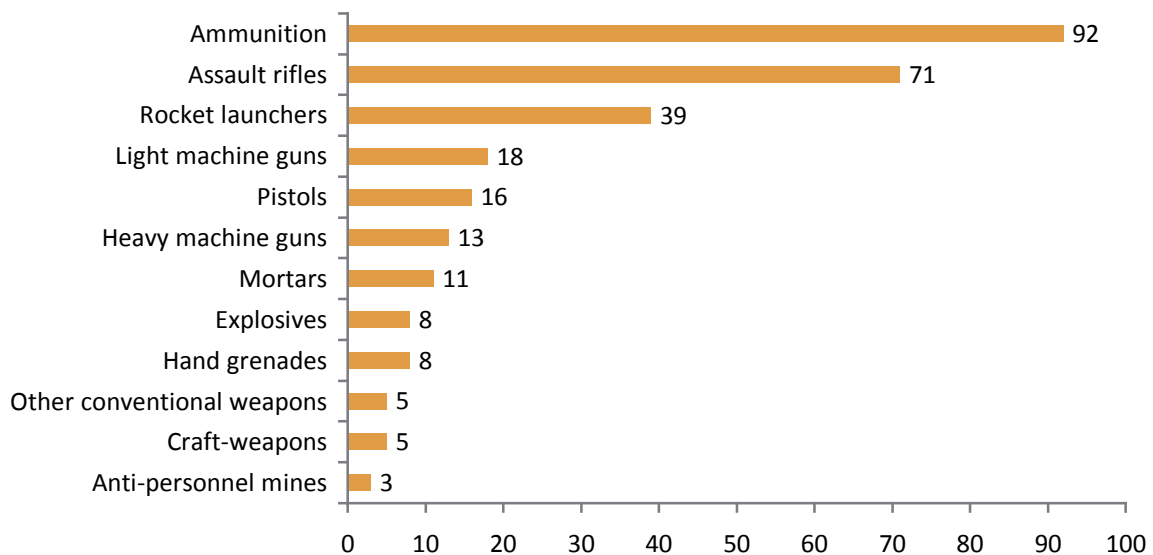


Source: Uppsala Conflict Data Program

These legacy firearms are primarily of interest to those looking to start a revolution. For daily use, the primary source of arms appears to be official state stocks, legitimately procured but diverted to the illicit market. Criminals seem to be able to get what they need from the local security forces, buying or renting weapons from corrupt elements in the police and military. The imports that do occur are not made through underground arms brokers, but rather through mainstream commercial channels, and then directed through corrupt officials or complicit governments to criminals and rebel groups.

The need for extra-regional supply was further undercut when the Gaddafi regime in Libya collapsed in 2011. The scale of Gaddafi's arsenal is still being evaluated by the United Nations, but all indications are that it was vast and sophisticated. The more complex weapons systems are mainly of risk in the Middle East, because most West African groups lack the expertise to make optimal use of the latest technology. But a large number of more common firearms were also amassed during Gaddafi's 40 years of rule, including tens of thousands of firearms in recent years.⁶⁶ These firearms could be sold, albeit for relatively low prices per unit, to any of a number of rebel or criminal groups in West Africa. Armed groups of particular concern include:

- The non-state armed groups in northern Mali, including the various factions of Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), the *Mouvement national pour la libération de l'Azawad* (MNLA), *Ansar Dine*, and the *Mouvement pour l'unicité et le jihad en Afrique de l'Ouest* (MUJAO);
- The secessionist groups in northern Niger, including *Mouvement des Nigériens pour la Justice* (MNJ), the

Figure 27: Seizures of weapons in West Africa, 2008-2011

Source: Analysis of 38 major weapon seizures between 20 March 2008 and 14 November 2011⁶⁷

Front for the Liberation of Air and Azaouak (FLAA), and the Front for the Liberation of Tamoust (FLT);

- Boko Haram in Nigeria;
- The *Mouvement des forces démocratiques de Casamance* (MFDC) in Senegal
- The “third phase rebels” of the Niger Delta in Nigeria
- Forces loyal to former Ivorian president Laurent Gbagbo (such as the Young Patriots), who are now refugees or hiding out in neighbouring countries.

Empowerment of these groups could result in long-term conflict, as the region remains highly unstable. Political instability has also been demonstrated through recent coups in:

- Mauritania (2008)
- Guinea (late 2008)
- Niger (2010)
- Guinea-Bissau (2012)
- Mali (2012)

The international community has been trying to foster stability in yet another set of countries: those recovering from full scale civil war. Large United Nations Peacekeeping operations are still active in:⁶⁸

- Liberia (since 2003, currently 7,869 soldiers)
- Côte d’Ivoire (since 2003, currently 9,596 soldiers)

In sum, despite the decline in active conflicts, many countries in West Africa are still affected by the presence of militant groups, irregular changes of government, or the aftermath of civil war. Though the location of demand shifts over time, there is no shortage of potential buyers for

firearms in the sub-region. Since these weapons mainly come from national stocks, such as those in Libya, it is important that the international community keep careful tabs on licit imports to the sub-region.

How is the trafficking conducted?

West Africa presently lacks the capacity to produce its own weapons, so most of the guns in circulation originated from outside the sub-region.⁶⁹ Warsaw Pact weaponry dominates the market. For reasons of training, parts, ammunition, and habit, these weapons continue to be preferred two decades after the end of the Cold War.

Consequently, most of the assault rifles detected are of the Kalashnikov variety. Today, though, the newer ones are mostly of Chinese manufacture (Norinco Type 56). Similarly, the light machine guns encountered today are mostly PK-pattern, such as the Norinco Type 80. In keeping with these preferences, most of the ammunition detected is 7.62 x 39 mm (for Kalashnikov-type assault rifles) or 7.62 x 54R mm (for PK-type general-purpose machine guns), as well as Warsaw Pact heavy machine gun ammunition. Much of this ammunition originates from Iran, Sudan, or China.⁷⁰

Pistols come from a greater variety of sources. France supplied regional security forces in 1970s and 1980s with pistols such as MAB PA-15. There are also Tokarev-pattern pistols as well as modern commercial varieties in the more urban areas, from makers such as Glock and Beretta. In general, pistols tend to be seized in much smaller batches than long arms.

It is difficult to speak of consistent flows, because both the source and the destination shift with the progression of political events. Since most flows are intra-regional, almost

Map 5: Major seizures of illicit weapons and direction of movement in West Africa, (2008-2011)



Source: Analysis of 38 major weapon seizures between 20 March 2008 and 14 November 2011⁷¹

all of the trafficking takes place by land, although air shipments have been detected. These weapons may be destined for particular buyers, or they may be offered at one of a number of well-known trading hubs, particularly in the Sahel. These include the areas around the Aïr, Hoggar and Tibesti mountain ranges, in addition to traditional arms trading centers, such as Agadez (Niger) and Gao (Mali).

The best way to determine the source and patterns of firearms trafficking is to examine recent seizures, but, given local enforcement capacity, seizures are relatively rare. The map below plots 38 major arms seizures made between 2008 and 2011 and the direction of movement at the time of interception.

These seizures indicate that there are essentially five main sources of illicit firearms in West Africa:

- Legacy weapons from past conflicts in the region;
- Weapons from recent conflicts in neighbouring regions;
- Weapons sold by or rented from corrupt security officials;
- Weapons transferred from sympathetic governments;
- A relatively small number of weapons imported from outside Africa.

An example of the first source (legacy weapons) can be seen in seizures made in Liberia. Recent seizures were comprised of weapons from the second Liberian civil war (1999-

2003), and ammunition from the war in Sierra Leone (1991-2002). Firearms from conflicts that ended more than a decade ago continue to surface, despite efforts to clean up these weapons.⁷²

The second source (neighbouring sub-regions) can be seen in a wide variety of seizures. In addition to Libya, weapons have been transferred from past conflicts in Algeria (1992-1998), Chad (1990-2010), Ethiopia (1974-1991), and Sudan (1983-2005). Today, most come from Eastern Chad and the Darfur region in Sudan. Sudanese weapons and ammunition have been detected in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Mali – all countries that do not procure from Sudan.⁷³ It is likely that this supply will soon be eclipsed by supply from Libya, though. There has been a significant escalation in arms seizures in northern Niger (headed for Agadez, a regional sales hub) and southern Algeria (transiting in the direction of Niger and northern Mali). The President of Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou, has warned that Libyan weapons are “being disseminated all over the region.”⁷⁴

Flows from the third source (corrupt security officials) remain strong because few states in the sub-region have records of all the weapons they possess, and thus cannot detect when some disappear. Accounting for ammunition is even weaker, and sales of odd rounds supplement the meager incomes of police and soldiers in many parts of the sub-region. Where soldiers and police cannot part with

their weapons indefinitely, they may rent them to the very people they are meant to be combatting. In Nigeria, for instance, police recently arrested three officers for renting Kalashnikov-pattern weapons and selling 1,200 rounds of ammunition to local criminals.⁷⁵ A 2008 enquiry by Burkina Faso's National Small Arms Commission found that about half the weapons seized in the country came from the national security forces, while only just over 10% had been smuggled across the border.⁷⁶ These sales can occur across borders, as can be seen in seizures crossing from Guinea into Mali. Once stolen, the weapons and ammunition were transported to Mali in civilian trucks, often secreted under local produce.⁷⁷ Malian Customs officials report having seized Kalashnikov-pattern assault rifles, PK-pattern machine guns, RPG-7 rocket launchers and various types of ammunition.⁷⁸

The fourth source (sympathetic governments) is probably best exemplified by the conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. Côte d'Ivoire remains the only country in West Africa under a UN arms embargo.⁷⁹ Successive UN Groups of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire have presented evidence of weapons flows from the territory of Burkina Faso to the *Forces nouvelles* rebel group.⁸⁰ The 2011 Group of Experts concluded that Burkina Faso had "played an increasingly important role in providing military assistance to the *Forces nouvelles*."⁸¹ In response to the threat, the government of Côte d'Ivoire armed militia groups and Liberian mercenaries. This, alongside a large number of desertions, spread weapons throughout the society. Fleeing forces loyal to the former government, including returning Liberian mercenaries, moved military weapons across the border into Liberia, and at least three major caches were discovered in 2011.⁸² These weapons are subject to further trafficking into neighbouring countries, including Burkina Faso.

Recent seizures coming from the fifth source (outside Africa) are relatively rare and often disputed. The best examples took place in Nigeria. On 26 October 2010, Nigerian authorities discovered 240 metric tons of ammunition from Iran in 13 shipping containers. The destination of this shipment remains unclear: while in bond, the documented consignee was changed to The Gambia, but it has been alleged that the shipment was in transit to a destination outside West Africa. A lesser-known seizure occurred on 17 June 2009, when Nigerian authorities in Kano seized an aircraft transporting weapons from Croatia to Guinea-Bissau. The aircraft was later released following assurances by the Government of Guinea-Bissau that the cargo was for official use.⁸³

Who is doing the trafficking?

The identity of the traffickers depends on the source and destination, which vary over time. Security forces, former or current militants, mercenaries: all may be involved in procuring, transporting, and selling firearms. The flows from both Libya to Mali and from Côte d'Ivoire to Liberia

are conducted by large numbers of former soldiers transporting their arms. The next buyers for these weapons could be anyone in the region.

For long distance deliveries, professional transportation agents may be involved. These include both formal and informal enterprises. Due to differences in national regulations, there exists a class of professional smugglers and traders who profit from the differences in taxation and subsidization. These agents may be involved in moving weapons along with many other forms of merchandise, licit and illicit. Cross-border ethnic linkages, of which there are many in the region, may promote these transfers.

In the Sahara, nomadic groups dominate the off-road movement of contraband, including cigarettes, fuel, and arms. Without specialized knowledge of the desert, the four-wheel-drive trucks that are used to move this merchandise would soon become stranded, or taken by bandits. Their unique familiarity with the terrain allows them to transport weapons from East to West as well as North to South. These groups rarely own the merchandise they are moving, and so profit only by fees paid for their services.

How big is the flow?

It would be impossible to estimate the amount of small-scale weapons trade that occurs in all 15 West African states. Rather, this section focuses on one flow, the one where the threat is most acute at the moment: the flow of assault rifles from Libyan stocks to the rebels of Mali. Because the rebels are smuggling weapons largely on their own behalf, there is no need for a value estimate. The damage done by this flow is more direct.

Estimating the supply is difficult for several reasons. First, it is unclear how many weapons Gaddafi amassed over his 40 years of opaque rule. Second, it is unclear what share of these weapons are available for the rebels to loot. Still, looking at the range of possibilities is helpful in getting a sense of proportion.

How many guns did Gaddafi possess? One approach is to start with the size of his security force and estimate the ratio of guns per soldier. In 2011, the International Institute for Strategic Studies estimated that Libya's armed forces comprised 76,000 active personnel and 40,000 reserve personnel.⁸⁴ Soldier to weapon ratios vary widely, from less than one gun per soldier to more than 10. Looking just at similarly situated countries, though, it seems likely that the ratio was between two and six firearms per soldier. This would suggest between 250,000 and 700,000 firearms, of which (based on typical arsenal composition), 70% to 80% are likely to be assault rifles.

Of these, how many are available for trafficking? One way of calculating this would be to compare the total number of weapons available to those accounted for and those seized. For example, various estimates suggest there were

22,000 man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS) in Libya's pre-conflict stockpile. Of these, some 5,000 have been secured in Libya, leaving 17,000 unaccounted for. Only 43 have been seized, all in Algeria.⁸⁵ If 10% of the flow had been seized, this suggests about 400 MANPADS might have been trafficked. This is about 2.5% of the whole supply.

If the ratio between soldiers and guns were four per soldier, there would be just over 450,000 firearms in Gaddafi's arsenal. Applying a trafficking rate of 2.5% suggests some 12,000 arms may have been trafficked, of which around 9,000 are likely to have been assault rifles. Since there has been less concern about assault rifles than MANPADS, the interception rate could be lower, and the number of weapons double or triple this number as a result. A figure in the low tens of thousands seems reasonable.

In terms of demand in Mali, the number of rebels remains unknown. It has been estimated that perhaps 1,500 to 2,000 Tuareg mercenaries recently returned from Libya,⁸⁶ carrying at least their own weapons. Census data indicate that there are some 800,000 Tuareg in Mali today, of whom about 80,000 would be adult men.⁸⁷ If 20% enlisted in the conflict, this would represent 16,000 soldiers.⁸⁸ While non-Tuareg peoples of the north are also enlisted in the struggle, it seems likely that the number of soldiers is also in the low tens of thousands.

Among the rebels are deserters from the Malian army, who would also have brought their own arms, and some rebels could be armed through caches from previous rebellions. Some indication of weapon demand might be gleaned from earlier disarmament programs in the Sahel region. As many as 12,000 rebel soldiers, mostly Tuareg, were demobilized

after the first rebellion in Mali (1996-2003), but only about one third presented weapons, suggesting caches of thousands of weapons are possible. Much smaller numbers demobilized after the second rebellion in 2009, all with their weapons.

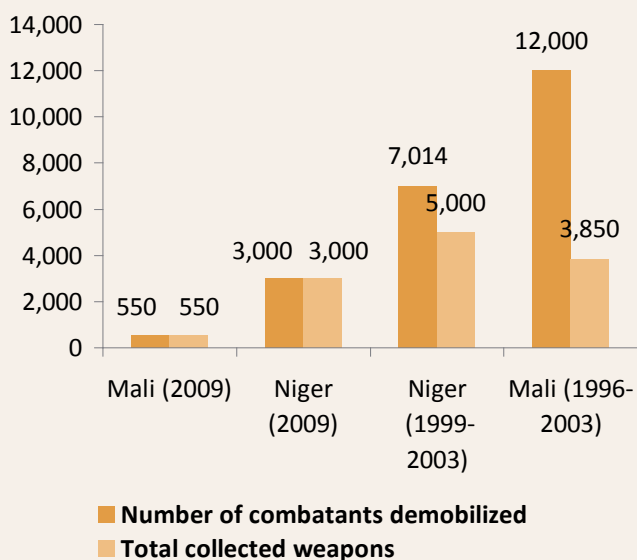
Weapons per soldier ratios tend to be much lower for rebel groups in Africa than for conventional militaries, on the order of one weapon per soldier.⁹⁰ Based on both supply and demand side estimates, the number of weapons trafficked is likely to be in the low tens of thousands, perhaps 10,000 to 20,000 in 2012.

Implications for policy

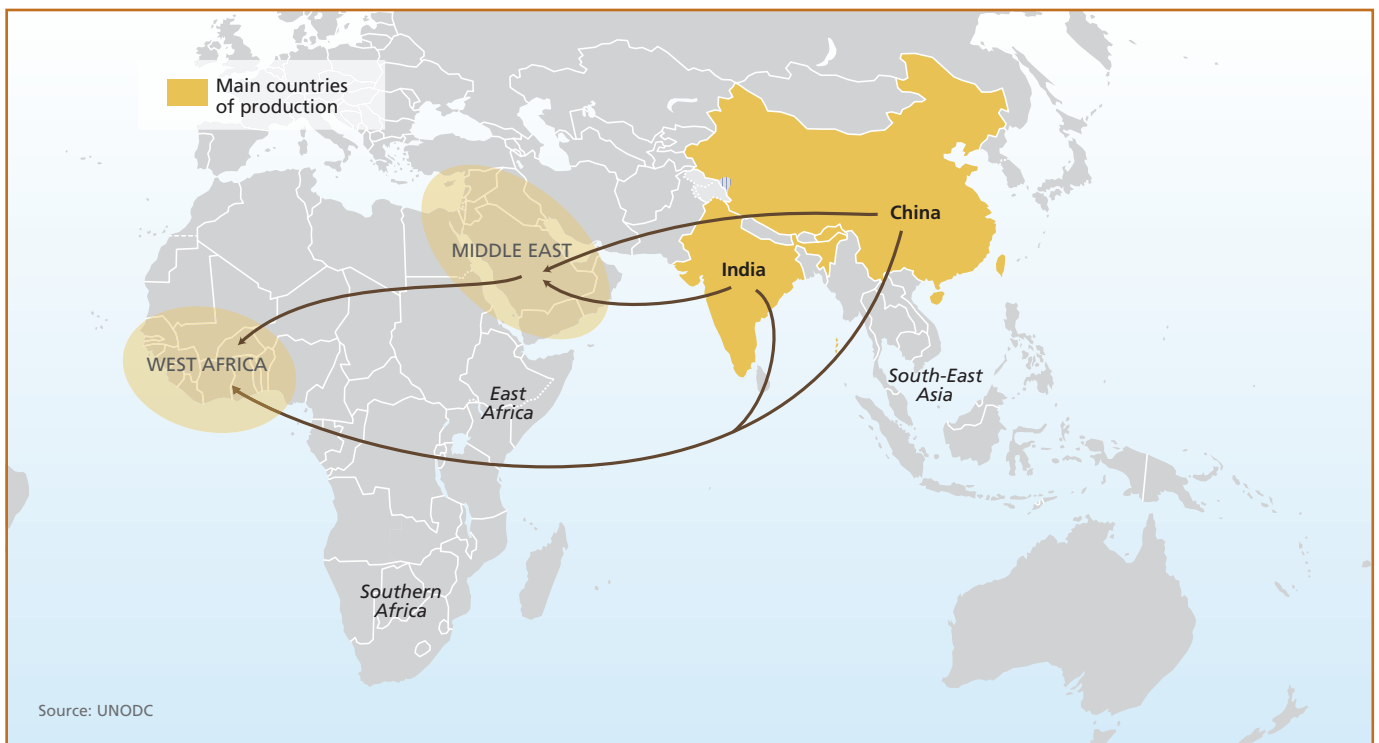
Because most of the illicit flow is coming from licit stocks, improving control of these stocks is essential. A simple starting place would be an inventory of both state and private firearms. The military and the police should, at the very least, have records of their weapons and the officers responsible for them. Accounting for ammunition should also become routine. A registration and licensing drive could help bring privately owned firearms under control. The fees collected could bring this process close to being self-supporting.

Most official stocks are out of proportion to local needs, so reducing their size would be advisable. When the ratio of security forces to firearms approaches parity, personnel will be more likely to be held accountable when weapons go missing. In order to keep stocks proportionate, imports should be monitored and unusual orders queried.

Figure 28: Rebels demobilized and arms collected in past conflicts in the Sahel



Source: Multiple source⁸⁹



FRAUDULENT ESSENTIAL MEDICINES FROM SOUTH ASIA AND EAST ASIA TO WEST AFRICA

What is the nature of the market?

Many of the flows described in this study can affect grand-scale geopolitical events. Cocaine trafficking has fed instability in Guinea-Bissau; firearms trafficking has fueled a rebellion in northern Mali; maritime piracy threatens to undermine commerce in the Gulf of Guinea. These flows demonstrate that transnational organized crime has truly risen to the level of a security threat in West Africa.

The importation of fraudulent essential medications does not have this kind of dramatic impact. The profits appear to be too diffuse to make corrupt officials into millionaires, and are too small to be of much interest to non-state armed groups. Rather, the effect is subtler, almost impossible to measure. The sick get sicker and resistant strains of disease evolve that won't make headlines until it is too late.

In terms of quality of life for the people of West Africa, however, it would be difficult to imagine an issue of greater importance. There have been very few reliable studies of the quality of medicines in West Africa, but those that have been done suggest a very large share of pharmaceuticals circulating in the region are ineffective or worse. In the richer parts of the world, it is taken for granted that medicines contain what they say they contain. In West Africa, consumers cannot make this assumption. Even doctors and pharmacists cannot know for sure that the drugs they are administering will do what they intend them to do.

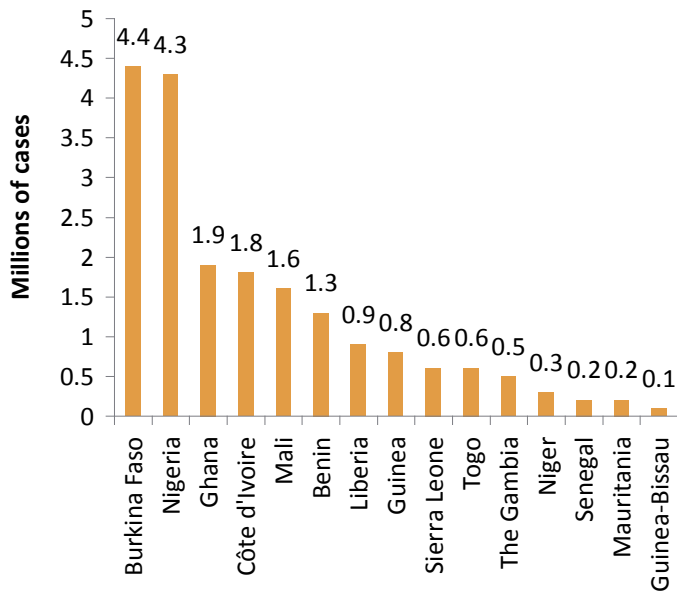
Defining fraudulent essential medicines

In the absence of a universally accepted definition, various terms are used, sometimes interchangeably, to designate the same problem or some of its partly overlapping elements. The difficulty to reach a consensus on the matter was again recently illustrated by the decision of governments, gathered at the May 2012 World Health Assembly, to “use the term substandard/spurious/falsely-labeled/falsified/counterfeit medical products until a definition has been endorsed by the governing bodies of WHO.”⁹¹

This report uses the term “fraudulent medicines,” but different terms appear as well in relation to original data drawn from other sources. The crime of fraud is committed when a product is sold deceptively. For example, a vendor selling bags of sand labeled as ‘sugar’ would be guilty of fraud. This is as true with medication as it is with other products, except the consequences are far more grave – rather than simply losing their money, the defrauded parties could lose their lives. Pharmaceuticals are considered fraudulent if they differ substantially from what is indicated on the packaging. Vendors would be guilty of fraud if they were aware of this difference at the time of sale.

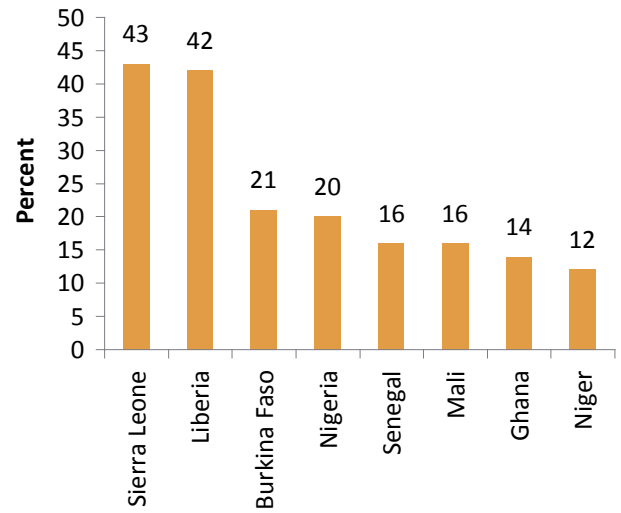
One of the best-studied examples is anti-malarial medication. West Africa suffered from some 21 million cases of malaria in 2010.⁹² All of these people could have benefitted from appropriate medication, but it appears that even those who managed to access the recommended pharmaceuticals might have seen no benefit.

Figure 29: Millions of cases of malaria in 2009 in West Africa



Source: World Health Organization⁹³

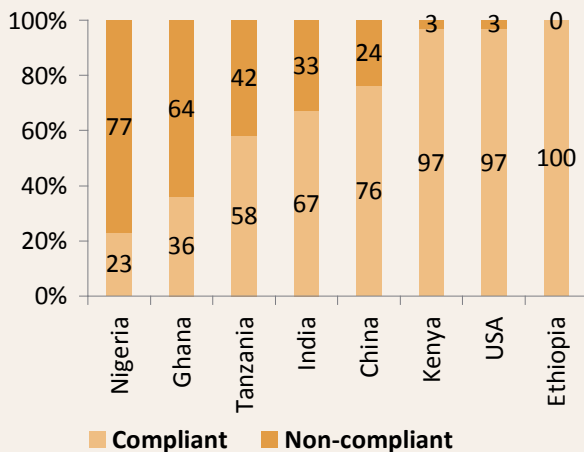
Figure 31: Share answering "yes" to the question "Have you yourself or a member of your household been a victim of fake medicine?" in 2010



Source: Gallup⁹⁸

In 2011, a World Health Organization cross-national study of anti-malarial medication quality in Africa and elsewhere found the highest rates of failure in the West African region.⁹⁴ Individual studies conducted in the region since 2000 found varying shares of anti-malarial medication failed chemical assay analysis, ranging from 27% (in Nigeria in 2009) to 82% (in Ghana in 2009).⁹⁵ Thus, even in the study where performance was best, almost a quarter of the anti-malarial medication in circulation was found to be ineffective.

Figure 30: Share of anti-malarial medication found to be compliant with quality standards in selected countries



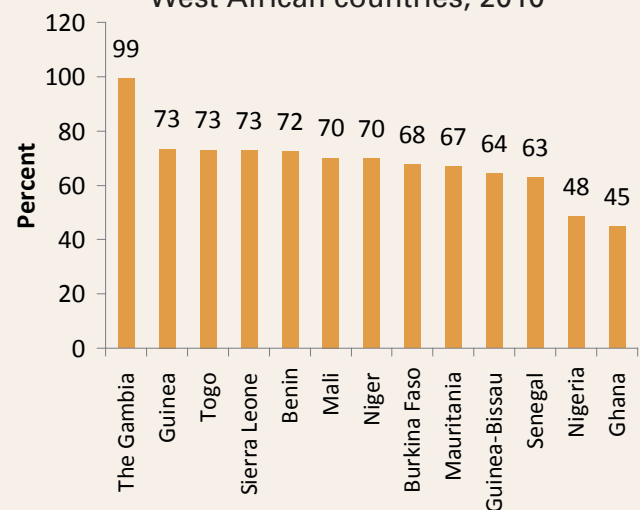
Source: World Health Organization⁹⁶

West Africans are acutely aware of the problem. In one recent poll,⁹⁷ an average of 74% of respondents in eight West African countries said they knew of fake medicine in their countries, and significant shares reported having been victimized themselves.

How is the trafficking conducted?

Not all of the pharmaceuticals consumed in West Africa are imported. Most West African countries manufacture at least some pharmaceutical products. The share of imports in total pharmaceutical expenditure varies by country, but mostly ranges between two-thirds and three-quarters. At least one study found that locally manufactured drugs were even more likely to be fraudulent than imported ones.⁹⁹

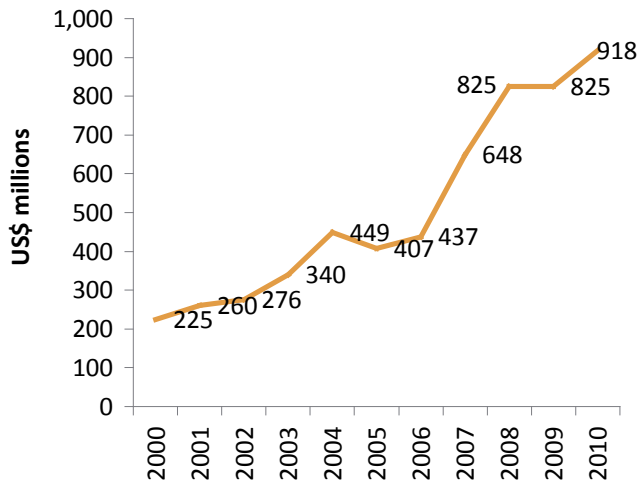
Figure 32: Pharmaceutical imports as a share of total pharmaceutical sales in 13 West African countries, 2010



Source: International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations¹⁰⁰

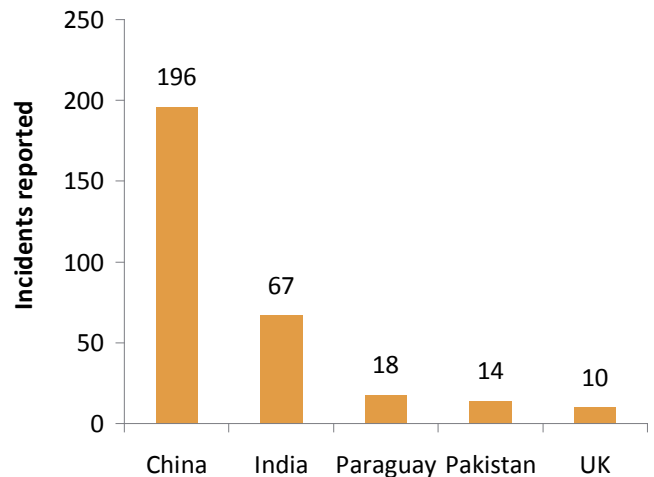
The amount of pharmaceuticals imported into West Africa has grown remarkably in recent years, with the value of imports more than tripling between 2004 and 2010. It appears most of these drugs are generics imported from China and India, which host two of the fastest growing

Figure 33: Pharmaceutical imports for eight West African countries,¹⁰¹ in millions of US\$, 2000-2010



Source: World Trade Organization database

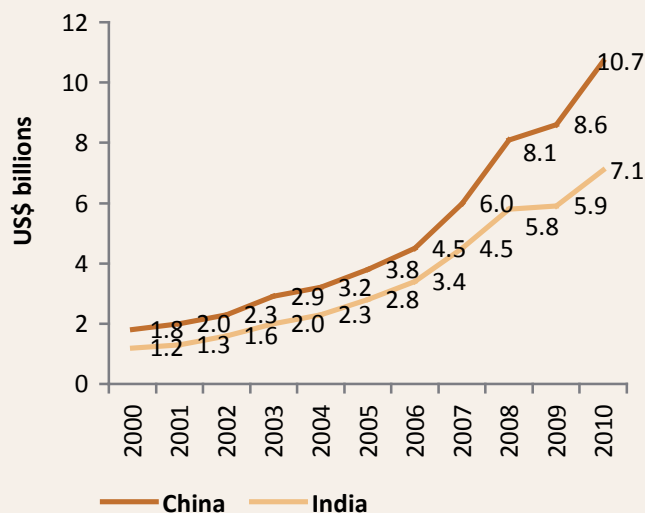
Figure 35: Top five origins of counterfeit medicines detected worldwide, by number of incidents reported to the Pharmaceutical Security Institute, 2010



Source: Pharmaceutical Security Institute 2010 Situation Report

pharmaceutical industries in the world.¹⁰² China and India are also the two most frequently identified sources of fraudulent medicines globally, as reflected, for instance, in the incidents reported to the Pharmaceutical Security Institute.¹⁰³ A recent forensic study of fraudulent medicines detected in Africa confirmed an Asian origin for these drugs.¹⁰⁴

Figure 34: Pharmaceutical exports from India and China, in billions of US\$, 2000-2010



Source: World Trade Organization database

The nature of the firms producing the fraudulent medicines ranges from crude warehouse operations to legitimate drug producers fallen on hard times. Any entrepreneur with a laser printer can produce fraudulent packaging and affix it to medications that are expired or are of lower value than the forged product. On the other end of the scale, formal

drug manufacturers may feel compelled by economic conditions to reduce the amounts of active ingredient or to substitute cheaper substances that have little or no therapeutic value. Factories that produce legitimate medicines by day may bolster their profits by producing bogus drugs at night. Companies that may be licensed to produce chemicals or precursors for the domestic market may sell their products as pharmaceuticals for export. If necessary, these may be repackaged for retail sales in transit or at destination.

These drugs proceed to their destination through the mainstream channels of international commerce. Containerized shipment is used for larger volumes, while air or postal shipment suffices for smaller amounts. Fraudulent medicines have even been exported using commercial air couriers – a number of these have been apprehended in China en route to African countries.¹⁰⁵ But for most products, large volumes are required for a reasonable profit to be realized, so containers are typically the preferred method of shipment.

Containerized shipments of fraudulent medicines have been detected transiting northern Europe, but more frequently proceed via free trade zones. These areas accept freight for storage and re-routing without requiring the payment of import duties, and provide an opportunity for fraudsters to repackage and mislabel products that were legitimately exported. The Jebel Ali Free Zone in Dubai appears to be a particularly popular hub in this respect.¹⁰⁶

Containerized shipments may be marked as destined for inland markets, thus avoiding controls at the ports of ingress. Niger is a popular putative destination for a wide range of products seeking to avoid inspection on making

landfall.¹⁰⁷ Once within ECOWAS territory, the cargo may be directed anywhere in the region.

Within the destination country, pharmaceuticals are delivered to the West African public through four main channels:

- The national public health systems
- Faith-based and other non-governmental public health programs
- Private health care practitioners and formal pharmacies
- The informal market

All are vulnerable, to varying degrees, to the introduction of fraudulent medicines. One 2008 study of anti-malarial drugs in Senegal found that one-quarter were found deficient in the public sector, 35% in the private sector, and 68% in the informal sector.¹⁰⁸

Historically, the procurement and distribution of public medicines has been a function of national “central medical stores,” which are usually maintained as a division of the Ministry of Health. But these institutions have been typified by malfeasance and inefficiency, so governments have come under growing pressure to expose central stores to market competition.¹⁰⁹ Private sector providers have grown to address the shortcomings of national health programs. Even in a country as poor as Mali, polls reveal that a large share of the population obtains its medications from both formal and informal private providers.¹¹⁰

The nature of the pharmaceutical supply chain varies dramatically between countries. In Mali, 85% of imported medications come from two large wholesalers, while in Ghana there are 60 importers, 12 manufacturer/wholesalers, 166 wholesalers, 328 wholesaler/retailers, 700 retail pharmacies, and 11,159 registered ‘chemical sellers.’ In both countries, vendors with no medical qualifications (known as ‘chemical sellers’ in Ghana, or *dépôts de vente* in Mali) are allowed to sell a wide range of medications, including anti-malarial drugs.¹¹¹ The idea behind registering these dispensaries is to increase access to medicines, which they certainly do, but they also pose a point of vulnerability to the introduction of fraudulent medicines.

Informal dispensaries are popular because they are cheaper than using the formal system. Because no prescription is required, there is no need to pay for a consultation with a doctor. A 2003 survey in Benin found that over one third (36%) of household heads reported purchasing medicine from the illicit market at least once, although 82% said they were aware of the risks of doing so. Over 86% said they thought these medicines were cheaper than in pharmacies, and 82% said they were cheaper than in public health centers. Two main sources for these drugs were cited: just under 65% said that they were visited by itinerant salesmen several times per month, and the same share said that these drugs were available at a nearby market.¹¹²

Who is doing the trafficking?

Investigations have revealed a wide range of participants in fraudulent medicines manufacturing and distribution. From former high-level executives in the pharmaceutical industry right down to mom-and-pop shops, the trade has proven attractive to all manner of opportunists.

It appears that both West Africans based in Asia and Asians based in West Africa play a special role in facilitating the illicit commerce. For example, in one case prosecuted by the Chinese government, a Nigerian businessman resident in China placed an order with a Chinese medicine exporter for fraudulent anti-malarial medication. The job was then sub-contracted to a pharmaceutical company employee, packaging specialists, and a shipper who combined the order with an unrelated lot of fraudulent drugs. The case resulted in the seizure of 43 tons of fraudulent medication.¹¹³

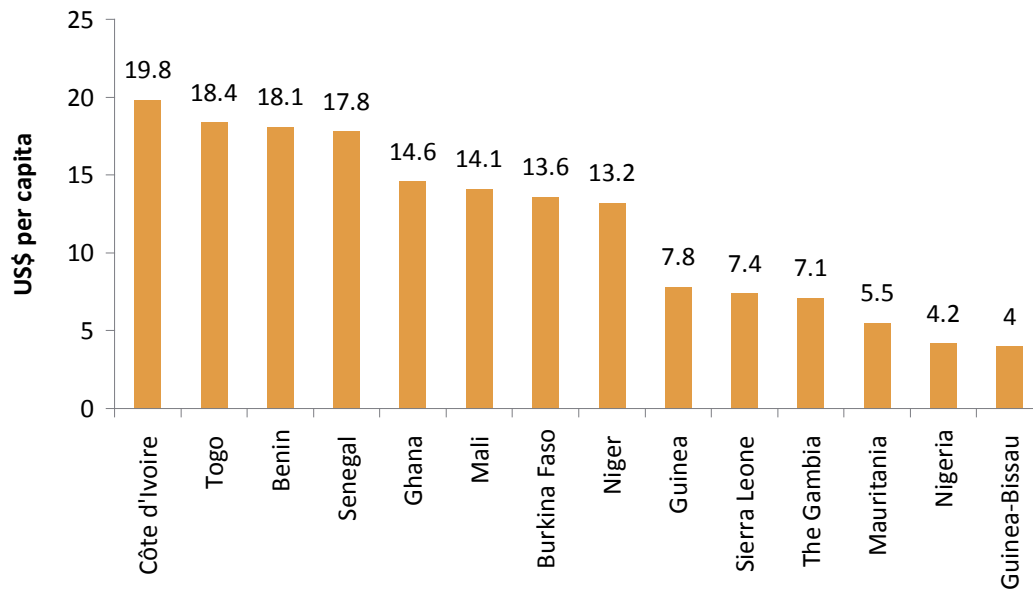
In 2009, staff from UNODC’s Laboratory and Scientific Section were asked to inspect a fraudulent pharmaceutical manufacturing operation in Guinea. Allegedly linked to the Conté family, this facility had equipment for producing bubble packs and cardboard packaging mimicking that of a well-known French pharmaceutical firm. What was presented as amoxicillin was, in fact, flour packed in gelatin capsules. The government reported that several Chinese citizens had been arrested in connection with this operation, and the flour was packed in bags with Chinese markings.

Of course, these linkages are just part of the increasing integration of the Chinese and African economies. As Chinese investment in Africa has grown, so have Chinese expatriate populations in Africa. Both Chinese and Indian pharmaceutical manufacturing firms have also opened factories in the region. And as the Chinese economy has opened, the West African diaspora in China has also expanded. These links provide a platform for both cooperative development and transnational organized crime.

How big is the flow?

There can be little doubt that a large share of the essential medicines circulating in West Africa are not what they appear to be. The main question is: how much of this is a product of intentional fraud, and how much is simply negligence? Certain indicators, such as counterfeit packaging or drugs containing substitute chemicals (included to mimic the effects of the active ingredient) strongly indicate fraud, while others (such as having too much of the active ingredient) imply negligence.

Many samples fall into a grey area, however. Those deficient in the active ingredient could indicate a number of things. Fraudsters often put enough of the active ingredient in their product to pass simple reagent (qualitative) tests. Legitimate pharmaceutical producers who under-dose to cut

Figure 36: Annual pharmaceutical expenditure per capita in 2010

Source: International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations¹¹⁴

costs could also be deemed guilty of health fraud. But under-dosing could also result from poor batch mixing or other simple mistakes. Due to this uncertainty, low-dose medication cannot be assumed to be fraudulent without other supporting evidence.

There is clearly an opportunistic character to medicinal fraud. The prevalence is highest not in the markets where profits would be greatest, but in those where the chances of detection are lowest. Global pharmaceutical sales were almost one trillion US dollars in 2011.¹¹⁵ West African sales were just under US\$3 billion in 2010,¹¹⁶ or less than 3% of the global total. Pharmaceutical imports to West Africa were just US\$1.5 billion.

What share of this US\$1.5 billion in imports was fraudulent? The most recent cross-national study by the World Health Organization indicated that most of the anti-malarial medication tested in Nigeria (77%) and Ghana (64%) did not pass quality tests.¹¹⁷ Other studies have found lower shares.¹¹⁸ The fact that some of these medicines were likely domestically produced complicates the picture. Using the most conservative figures, at least one quarter of the anti-malarial medication in circulation is not what it is purported to be. Testing of other essential medicines has found comparable results.¹¹⁹ But many of these failures may have been cases of under-dosing, and so cannot be classed as fraudulent.

Scholars have recently tried using a set of indicators to determine whether a given sample is “falsified” or not. Newton *et al.* reviewed a series of studies, noting cases where analysis satisfied one of three criteria of falsification:¹²⁰

- Falsified packaging

- No active ingredient
- Active ingredients other than the ones specified in the packaging.

On the basis of this work, it appears that between 40% and 100% of samples failing chemical analysis were found to be falsified. Again, taking the lower figure, this would suggest that at least 10% (40% of 25%) of the imports are fraudulent. This would amount to at least some US\$150 million of fraudulent medicines in annual imports to West Africa in recent years.

Implications for policy

West African pharmaceutical markets are greatly in need of regulation, but it is unlikely that many West African states will have the capacity to regulate them in the near term. Past experience with bureaucratic and inefficient central medical stores has demonstrated that poorly managed regulation can greatly increase costs and reduce access. On the other hand, the current situation affords consumers very little protection. Other market-based solutions should be pursued.

At present, the region has both very open borders and completely disparate pharmaceutical distribution systems. Since medicine entering the region at any point can easily find its way to any other point, a regional approach should be taken to pharmaceutical procurement. One way of limiting abuses would be to create a region-wide list of approved producers. Manufacturers who repeatedly introduce substandard medications would be blacklisted. Medicines from non-approved sources would be subject to confiscation. This list should be centrally managed to reduce abuses and to promote competition.

MARITIME PIRACY IN THE GULF OF GUINEA

What is the nature of the market?

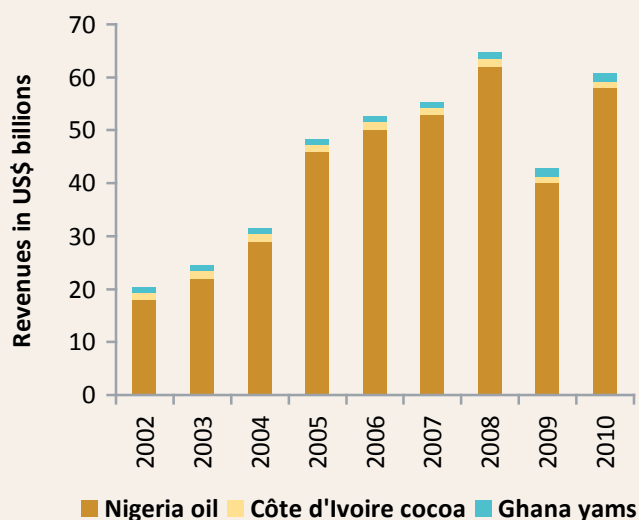
Much of the piracy that affects West Africa is a product of the disorder that surrounds the regional oil industry. A large share of the recent piracy attacks targeted vessels carrying petroleum products. These vessels are attacked because there is a booming black market for fuel in West Africa. Without this ready market, there would be little point in attacking these vessels. There are indications that oil may also be smuggled outside the region.

Nigeria contains half the population of the region, and contributes more than half of the regional GDP. Oil is the source of 95% of Nigeria's foreign exchange earnings and up to 80% of budgetary revenues. It is the single most important industry in the entire region, and for two decades has been threatened by transnational organized crime.

Despite oil revenues of US\$52 billion in 2011, Nigeria remains one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 156 out of 187 countries in terms of human development.¹²² Revenues would be much higher if the oil industry was not subject to continual criminal predation. Nigeria's natural resource wealth is diverted in a variety of ways, including:

- **Bunkering:** oil is stolen directly from pipelines, artisanally refined, and sold in local and international markets;
- **Kidnapping:** oil company employees are subject to kidnapping for ransom;
- **Extortion:** oil companies pay protection fees to communities and security companies to ensure pipelines are not sabotaged;

Figure 37: Comparison of revenues from selected regional industries



Source: OPEC, FAO STAT¹²¹

- **National embezzlement:** massive subsidy fraud has recently been uncovered by the Nigerian parliament (see Box: Nigerian fuel subsidy fraud);
- **Smuggling:** Subsidized fuel is smuggled across borders to markets where it is worth three times as much, at a direct cost to the Nigerian people;¹²³
- And, most recently, piracy.

In the past, a good deal of this activity was tied to the conflict in the Niger Delta. A wide range of militias have emerged over the years, engaging in a campaign of theft and sabotage to undermine the oil industry. The conflict cut production by as much as one-third, while bunkering grossed around US\$1 billion for oil thieves each year.¹²⁴

Nigerian fuel subsidy fraud

Because of insufficient refining capacity, Nigeria imports almost all of the fuel it needs to function. In compensation, the government provides a subsidy on fuel imports, keeping prices as low as one-third of those in neighbouring states. This subsidy comes at a great cost to the public coffers, but by lowering the cost of transportation, it reduces the price of virtually everything. In addition, a large share of the electricity used in Nigeria comes from private generators, so the subsidy allows power expenditure that would be impossible otherwise, greatly boosting productivity.

Between 2009 and 2011, the amount the government paid in subsidies tripled, from US\$5 billion to more than US\$15 billion. Clearly, legitimate consumption did not increase at this pace during this period.

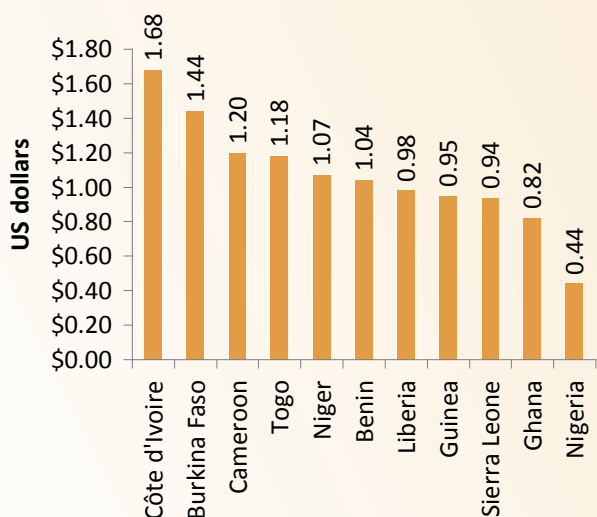
The executive took action, and on 1 January 2012, the Nigerian government removed the subsidy. The price of fuel rose from N65 (US\$0.41) to N140 (US\$0.89) overnight, sparking demonstrations and a week-long nation-wide strike. Some of the subsidy was restored two weeks later, and the petrol price was set to N97 (US\$0.61) per litre.

From January through April 2012, the Nigerian Parliament conducted a series of investigations. It found:

- The number of fuel importers increased from six in 2006 to 140 by 2011.
- Many of these new “importers” had no permits, no storage tanks and no experience in oil trading.
- While Nigerians consumed only 35 million litres of fuel per day, subsidies were being provided for 59 million litres per day.
- US\$6 billion had been defrauded from the country’s Petroleum Support Fund in 2011.

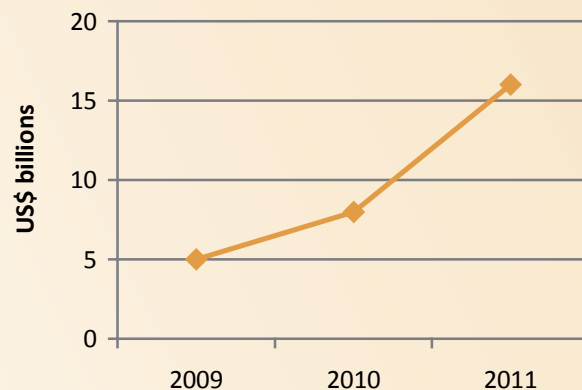
A very wide range of techniques were used to defraud the fund, from crude embezzlement to methods that may be technically legal. For example, it appears that some importers collected the subsidy through “round-tripping”: i.e. exporting and re-importing the same fuel. It is possible that some of these vessels were the targets of the pirate attacks.

Figure 38: Price of a litre of petrol/gasoline in 2010



Sources: Platts 2010; ICC Commercial Crime Services; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit

Figure 39: Costs of fuel subsidy to the Nigerian Government, 2009-2011



Source: Government of Nigeria, House of Representatives. Report of the Ad-Hoc Committee ‘To Verify and determine the actual subsidy requirements and monitor the implementation of the subsidy regime in Nigeria,’ Resolution No. (HR.1/2012).

Groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) admitted to stealing and smuggling oil. This theft was rationalized as reappropriation of wealth and as a form of protest, but the line between political and criminal activity has always been blurry.

The Nigerian government recently offered amnesty to the Delta militants, and virtually all of the recognized leadership laid down their arms. Insofar as such uprisings are subject to negotiation, the Niger Delta conflict effectively came to an end in 2011. Some still claim to be fighting for the cause,¹²⁵ but the link between political activism and oil theft has grown increasingly tenuous. This is likely one

reason why, for the first time, petroleum theft has spread beyond Nigerian territory. With the political pretence lost, there is no longer any need for oil thieves to limit themselves to targets in the Delta.

Piracy itself is not new to the region. Maritime trade is a key source of income for the coastal states of West Africa and, like oil, it is subject to predation. In the past, most of the incidents have been nothing more than maritime robbery. Sailors are often targeted for robbery on shore – they are displaced, generally uneducated, and usually carrying cash. With containerized shipping, shore leave is often reduced to a limited number of hours, and so they are

Figure 40: Acts of Piracy conducted off the coast of Benin, 2011

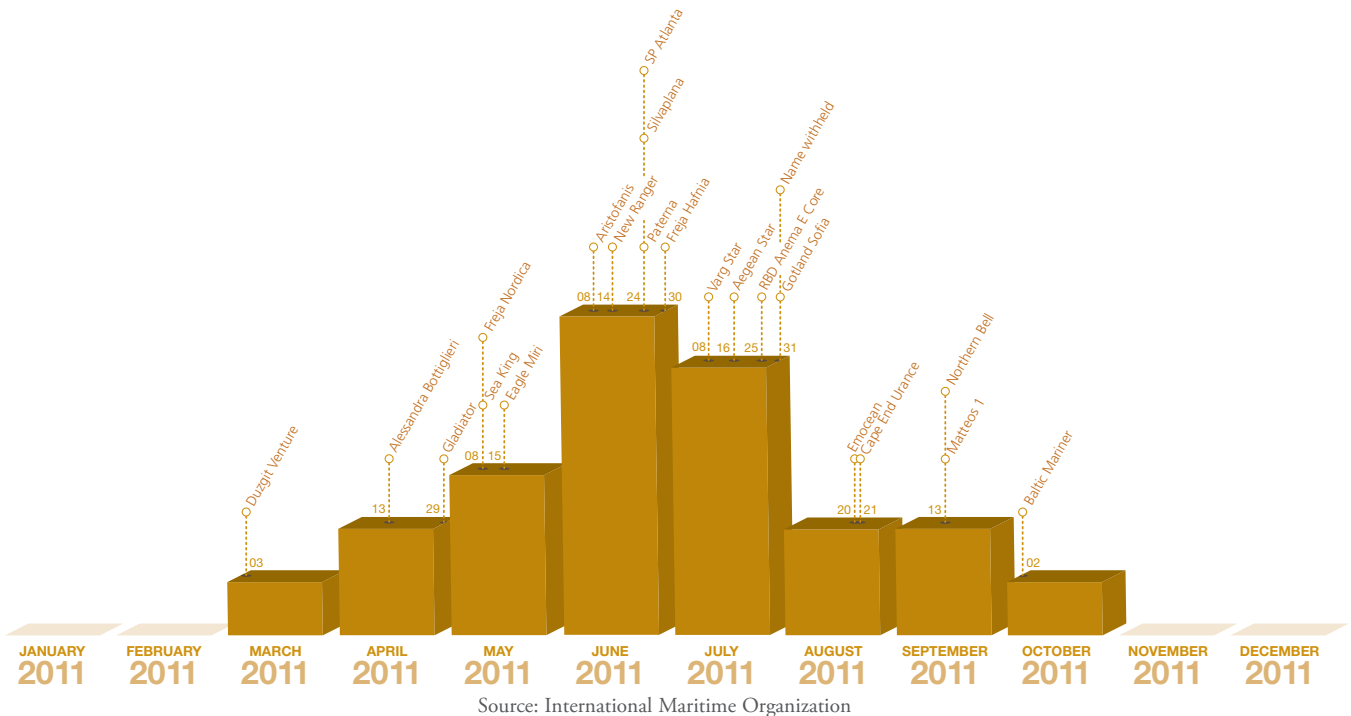


Figure 41: Piracy incidents by location of the attack, 2007-mid September 2012

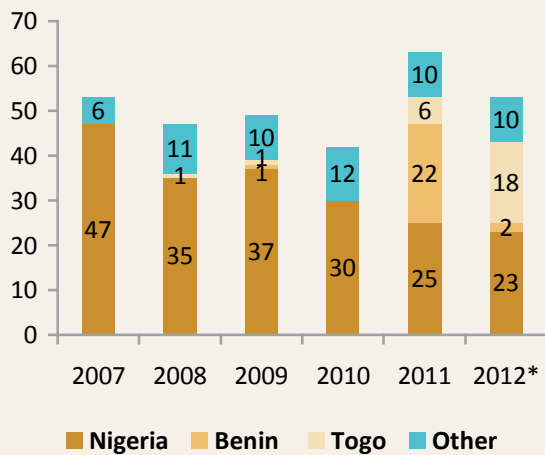
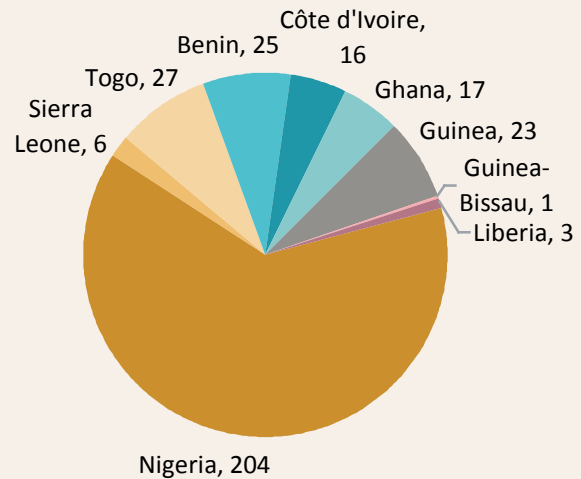


Figure 42: Location of piracy attacks, 2006-mid September 2012



unlikely to report being victimized. The same is true at sea – vessels are often under tight schedules, and unlikely to delay their voyage to report a local crime, particularly in areas where contact with the police may lead to further victimization. Local robbers are aware of this, and attack opportunistically when ships are at port or transferring cargo close to shore.

The most recent wave of attacks differs from this profile. Against a background of low-level robberies, there have been more serious attacks, aimed at acquiring cargoes. In particular, these attacks have involved refined petroleum products, typically carried in fairly small craft known as “product tankers” or “chemical tankers.”

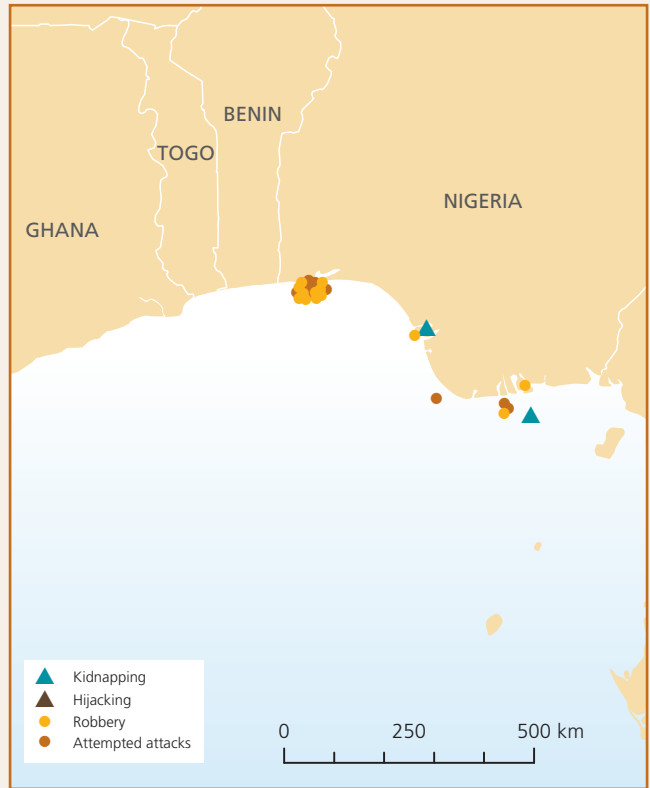
In 2011, 22 attacks took place off the coast of Benin, a country that had been mostly unaffected by the continual piracy around Lagos, just a few kilometers away. These attacks stopped as quickly as they started, and only two attacks have been recorded in 2012 to date. But there were 18 similar attacks in Togo by the middle of September 2012, another unprecedented wave. The petroleum-related attacks have also fed a coincident wave of robberies in formerly safe waters. These could be the work of foiled hijackers, or other groups inspired by the successes of the petro-pirates. In either case, the robbery clearly feeds on the momentum generated by petroleum theft, and so most piracy in the Gulf of Guinea can be traced back to the Niger Delta.

Map 6: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2006



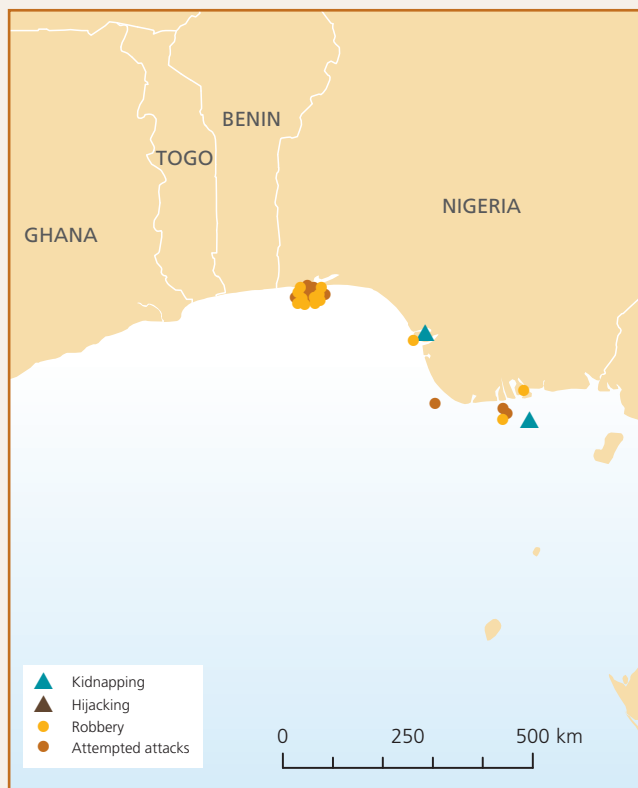
Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

Map 7: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2007



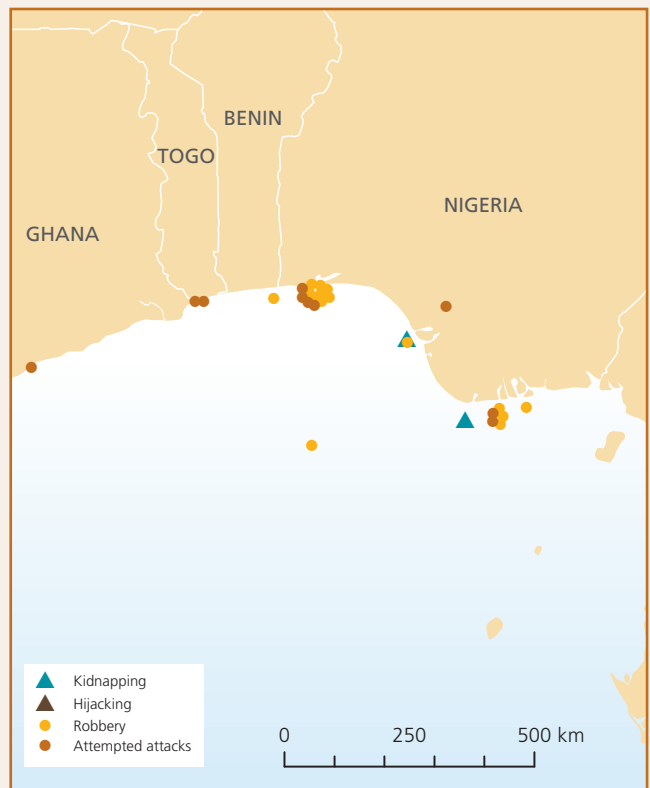
Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

Map 8: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2008



Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

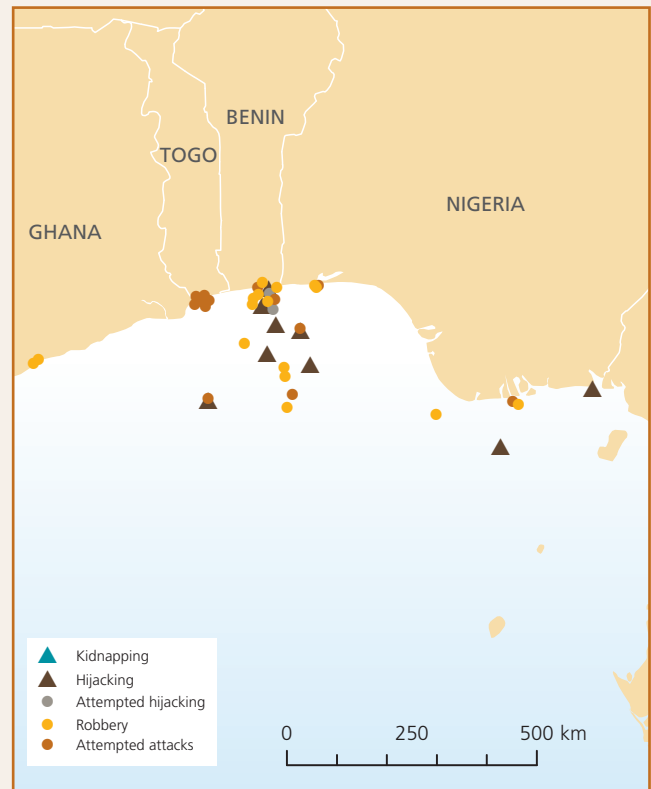
Map 9: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2009



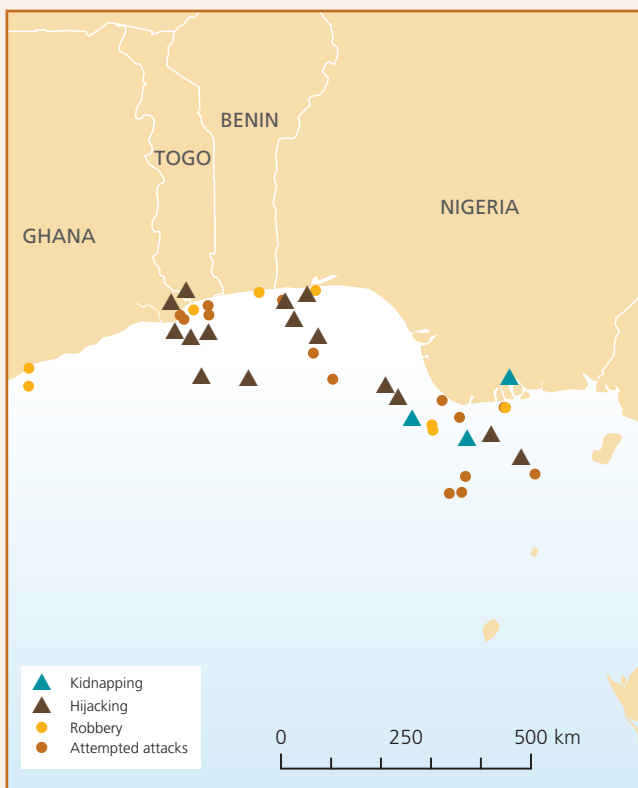
Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

Map 10: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2010

Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

Map 11: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2011

Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

Map 12: Piracy incidents in the Gulf of Guinea, 2012

Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

Bringing order to the local petrochemical industry is particularly important because Nigeria is no longer the only oil producer in the region. Offshore reserves like those off the coasts of Ghana and Mauritania are set to come on line in the near future. Unless controls of the regional market in petroleum products are reinforced, it is likely that the bunkering and piracy will only expand.

How are the attacks conducted?

The international definitions of “piracy” are broad,¹²⁶ encompassing several distinct kinds of offences, including:

1. Kidnapping for ransom, typical of the attacks seen off the coast of Somalia;
2. Hijacking with the intent to steal the vessel or the cargo, as is common in the Far East;
3. Simple maritime robbery, which occurs throughout West Africa.

For policy purposes, however, it is important to distinguish between these offences. Kidnapping for ransom is usually the most profitable, but very difficult to carry off successfully. It requires:

- Intelligence to locate target vessels far out at sea;
- Heavy armament, to subdue the vessel and deter rescue attempts;

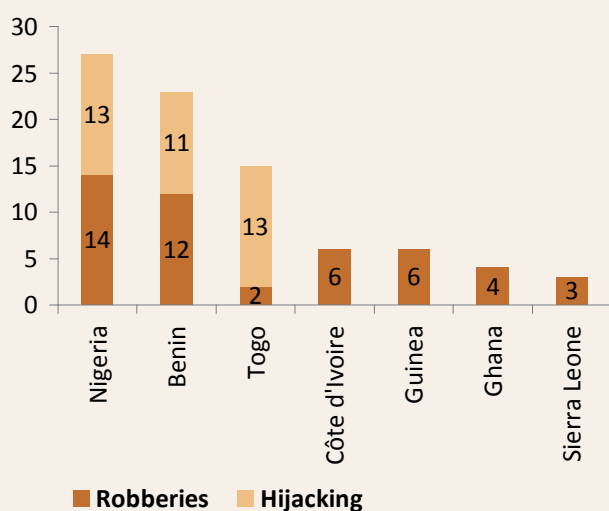
- Long-term commitment and shore support, to weather the protracted negotiation process;
- Money laundering, to allow the ransom (in international currency) to be digested.

Hijacking a vessel to steal it or its cargo can also be profitable, but it is an altogether different offence. The crew of the target vessel, rather than being the object of the attack, is simply an impediment, to be offloaded as quickly as possible. As a result, many of these attacks involve violence. To be successful, some unpatrolled retreat is necessary, either to repaint the target vessel or to offload the cargo. Finally, there must be a nearby market for either second-hand ships or cargo of questionable provenance. Altogether, both kidnapping and hijacking are tasks of considerable logistic complexity, indicating group cohesion, planning, financing, and often official corruption.

In contrast, armed robbery at sea differs little from armed robbery on shore. A few men with knives can easily overpower an unarmed crew and take their belongings. Since the value of this booty is generally rather limited, these crimes tend to be opportunistic, occurring when the vessel is at port or when plans for a grander undertaking go astray. If hostages are taken, it is to ensure a clean escape, not to extort ransom.

Looking at the profile of these crimes in West Africa, very few kidnappings for ransom have been reported in recent years, and those that have been reported all occurred in Nigerian waters. Kidnapping oil company employees was one of the many activities of the Niger Delta militants, and these kidnappings occasionally occurred at sea. But even in Nigeria, these attacks have declined in recent years. Almost everything that remains falls under one of two headings: attacks aimed at hijacking petroleum product tankers and opportunistic robberies.¹²⁷

Figure 43: Piracy incidents by type: 2011-mid September 2012



Source: Elaborated from International Maritime Organization data

In 2011 and 2012, all of the hijacking-type crimes have occurred in just three countries: Nigeria, Benin, and Togo. In these countries, hijackings comprise 63% of the recent attacks. All of these hijackings involved tankers, presumably carrying refined petroleum products. All attacks outside these three countries were simple robberies. If these hijackings had not occurred, there would have been no net increase in piracy incidents in 2011.

The wave of incidents that hit Benin actually began on Christmas eve of 2010, with the hijacking of the *Valle di Cordoba*, an Italian tanker, and the theft of large volumes of refined petroleum. This was followed by the March hijacking of the *Duzgit Venture*, in which the pirates directed the ship first to Gabon and then to Warri (Nigeria), before panicking and abandoning their attempt near Lagos. The incidents that followed were a mix of failures and successful attacks, with the petrochemical cargoes taken in several incidents. Of 24 attacks recorded in Benin in 2011-2012, 23 involved chemical or product tankers, compared to about 60% in the region as a whole. All involved international vessels, most took place at night and most occurred within 22 nautical miles of the port of Cotonou.

The attacks in Togo conform to a similar profile. Of the 18 recorded attacks in the region from 2011 to date, 15 involved product or chemical tankers. In a number of incidents, petrochemicals were successfully stolen.

Who is responsible for the attacks?

Where information on the attackers is available, almost all of the piracy attacks along the Bight of Benin have been linked to Nigerian pirates. In the Benin attacks, many of the participants were from along the Nigeria-Benin border. Victims in the Benin attacks report that both English and French have been spoken by the pirates. For example, William Locky, a Nigerian arrested in Cotonou on suspicion of piracy, speaks basic French and has parents who come from the border area. On 4 August 2012, five men were arrested in Nigeria and several others in Benin in connection with a pirate attack. Two of these men were brothers – one arrested in Benin and one arrested in Nigeria.

Fuel thieves must have links to the cross-border black market, and so often have links to the Niger Delta. At least one Beninois was recently arrested in Nigeria in connection with bunkering where the destination of the cargo was Benin. The players in the oil bunkering industry are diverse, including corrupt officials, the armed groups they sponsor, corrupt elements of the military, corrupt oil industry officials, militants, and professional thieves.

How big is the offence?

Estimating the value of piracy is challenging. The first problem is to estimate the extent of under-reporting. There are many reasons an attacked vessel may opt not to report, including the fact that the cargo they were carrying was

itself illicit. The Nigerian navy has estimated that there have been ten to 15 attacks every month in recent years, and that the monthly tally can rise as high as 50.¹²⁸ In contrast, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has recorded about 50 successful attacks annually for the entire region in recent years. The International Maritime Bureau (IMB), however, concedes that the real number of pirate attacks is at least twice as high as the official figure.¹²⁹ Allowing for 100 successful attacks per year would loosely fit both the IMO's and the Navy's estimates, particularly if the overall rate has declined slightly with the militant demobilization.

As noted above, about three-quarters of these attacks are simple robberies, netting very little for the pirates. According to past research, the amounts taken have been valued at US\$10,000 to US\$15,000 per attack. It is unlikely that the robbers realized all this value, but if they did, they would collectively gain as much as US\$1.3 million annually in recent years.

Much greater profit could be derived from theft of refined petroleum products. For a number of reasons, the precise amount of the loss is rarely reported, but those reports that have been made suggest that successful attacks result in the loss of thousands of tons of fuel, equivalent to hundreds of thousands of gallons. Refined products destined for the local market have to compete with subsidized fuel, pushing down the price considerably, but this could still represent a very profitable criminal activity. According to Lloyd's, losses of oil have ranged from US\$2 million to US\$6 million for these attacks.¹³⁰ Value realized for the thieves would likely be around half this amount, or as much as US\$30 million for the year.

Implications for policy

The biggest concern for the countries of the region is not the direct losses to the pirates, but the way these losses impact international insurance rates. In Benin, a country whose lifeblood flows through a 121-kilometer sliver of coastline, taxes on trade account for half of Benin's government revenues, and 80% of these are derived from the port of Cotonou.¹³¹ The wave of attacks in 2011 led international maritime insurance adjusters to place Benin's waters in the same category as Nigeria's, greatly increasing the costs of shipping to the country. According to the navy chief in Cotonou, there was a 70% decrease in maritime traffic in the third quarter of 2011 due to these increased costs.¹³² This implies a possible 28% loss in government revenue. In addition, Benin's relative maritime safety record has allowed it to maintain a healthy business in re-shipping goods to Nigeria, and the re-categorization of its waters as "risky" effectively eliminates this business. The adjustment also affects the costs of living for all citizens of Benin, by increasing the cost of imports and decreasing the competitiveness of exports. Given that there have been only two attacks so far this year, a case could be made for re-categorization.

It is unclear why the attacks stopped off the coast of Benin, but their displacement to Togo is not encouraging. Most of the pirate attacks to date have been close to shore, and none have involved ships actively underway ("steaming"). This could indicate a lack of sophistication, but the ability of the pirates to relocate operations in response to enforcement shows some adaptability. The Niger Delta militants were able to attack targets far offshore. Given the value of the targets, it is likely the pirates will soon acquire this ability as well.

The greatest risk is that piracy will become broadly popular. The hijackings to date are few enough in number that they could be the work of a single syndicate. If the black market for fuel is sufficiently open, there are many dissidents, out-of-work fishermen, and marginalized youth who could be attracted to the trade. The potential for a million-dollar payoff could well attract participants from outside Nigeria as well.

Strengthening maritime interdiction capacity would provide some deterrent to this expansion. It is important to keep in mind, however, the corrupting effect oil wealth has had on the Nigerian forces deployed to prevent bunkering. In addition to building local law enforcement capacity, measures must be taken to better regulate the local fuel trade.

There are few places in the world where one can offload thousands of tons of stolen fuel. Even in West Africa, those with the ability to purchase and resell these volumes must be relatively few in number. It hardly seems possible that all this fuel could be sold at roadside stands, or that thieves would be willing to receive their payoff a few dollars at a time. Rather, a buyer with links to a formal distribution operation seems likely.

These links form a point of weakness in the illicit supply chain. If all volume dealers were compelled to account for the fuel they purchased, it could become increasingly difficult to unload the stolen merchandise. Such an effort would require substantial cross-border cooperation, however. National markets without this level of accountability would quickly become dump sites for stolen fuel.

The Niger Delta amnesty

In June 2009, Nigerian President Umaru Yar'Adua announced an amnesty programme, whereby any militant surrendering themselves and their arms within two months would be granted immunity from prosecution and would be given financial and educational support toward finding an alternative livelihood. He also promised that a greater share of oil revenues would be allocated to the Delta state governments.

Some 26,000 militants turned themselves in, including prominent leaders such as Ateke Tom, Boyloaf, Farah Dagogo, Tom Polo and Soboma Jackrich. In October 2009, Yar'Adua held talks with militant leader Henry Okah, said to be the leader of the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the largest umbrella militant group.¹³³ After the meeting, MEND announced the commencement of an indefinite ceasefire.

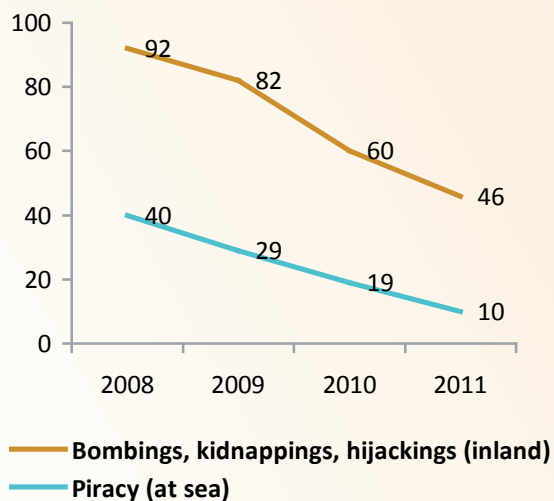
Despite this initial success, there has been discontent with the pace of delivery on promises made, and some are angered at having been excluded from the amnesty process. In January 2010, MEND spokesman Jomo Gbomo threatened "an all-out onslaught" on oil companies unless more resources were allocated to the people of the Delta. Bombs were detonated in Abuja on Independence Day, a

crime for which Henry and Charles Okah were later arrested. Threats from people allegedly speaking for MEND were made several times in 2011, but nothing materialised. Whatever remnants of MEND remain in the field, they are a shadow of the group's former self.

So-called 'third-phase militants,' demanding to be included in the amnesty process, continue to launch sporadic attacks, particularly in Bayelsa State. Some of these militants may be new entries hoping to receive the benefits of demobilizing, including training and job placement. This is a chronic problem associated with demobilization programs – since they provide resources to those responsible for violence, it appears the state is caving to extortion. This provides incentives for others to lodge extortionate demands of their own.

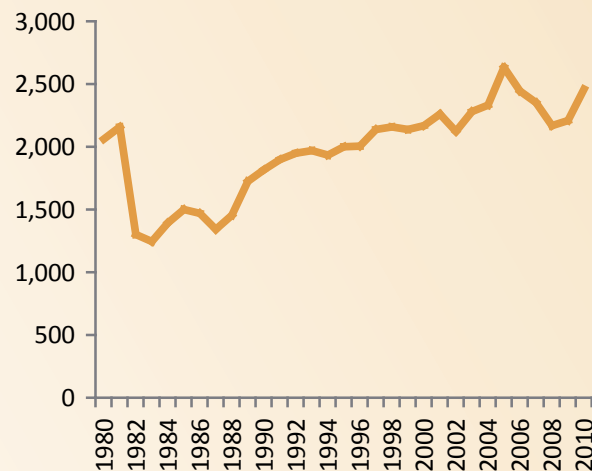
Despite these lingering issues, the amnesty appears to have had a positive effect on the oil industry. Production has risen 15% since 2008, and is closer to the former peak (reached in 2005). The number of recorded attacks on the industry – including bombings, kidnappings, hijackings, and acts of piracy – has declined remarkably since 2008. Some 26,000 militants are now out of the field, and, with international support, they may stay there. Making use of some of these newly minted law abiding citizens to root out bunkering could help advance the cause further still.

Figure 44: Attacks in Nigeria, 2008-2011



Source: Elaborated from IMB data and Bergen Risk Solutions

Figure 45: Nigerian oil production, 1980-2011



Source: Energy Information Administration



Conclusion

Cocaine has garnered most of the international attention, but the transnational organized crime problems affecting West Africa are manifold. Some, like fraudulent medicines, may pose a greater threat to public safety than illicit drugs. Others, like firearms trafficking, make violent uprisings possible. Still others, like petro-piracy, could blossom to become much greater problems than the situation currently reflects. Each of these issues requires a tailored response, because the commodities involved respond to distinct sources of supply and demand.

While each flow discussed in this study represents an independent problem, all are enabled by weakness in the rule of law. This weakness makes the region vulnerable to smuggling of all sorts.

The interventions required, then, must occur on at least two levels:

- commodity-specific programmes to reduce contraband flows and the damage they inflict, and
- more general efforts to enhance the rule of law and reduce corruption in the region.

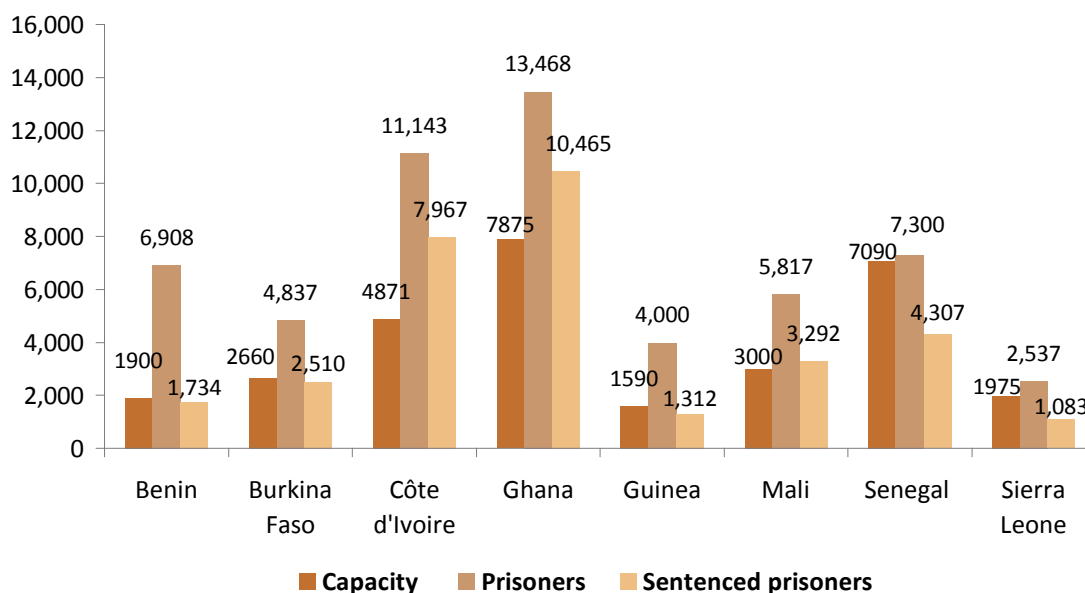
International cooperation is key to such efforts. Since most contraband flows are transcontinental, there must be provision for global exchange of information, coordinated strategies and operations, mutual legal assistance, and extradition. To address rule of law issues, technical assistance and anti-corruption programmes are needed. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its protocols, as well as the Convention against Corruption and the drug control Conventions provide a framework for developing many of these interventions.

Of the flows affecting West Africa, most involve goods traf-

ficked to or through the region, as opposed to goods sourced within it. Even the methamphetamine produced in the region would not exist without the precursor chemicals smuggled in. In the interest of promoting stability, development, and peace, West Africa needs to be insulated from contraband flows entering the region. Due to its extreme vulnerability, and since the national law enforcement agencies are unable to create enough of a deterrent, it is incumbent on the international community to participate in the effort. International cooperation must include and coordinate interventions both in West Africa and outside the region. In practice, some of this is already happening.

For example, most of the large maritime cocaine seizures made in the region came about as a result of international action, either in the form of direct seizures or tip-offs. This bilateral assistance continues. The international community is also supporting interdiction of containerized shipments. Under the Global Container Control Program – a project of UNODC and the World Customs Organization – specialized Joint Port Control Units have been established in Benin, Cape Verde, Ghana, Senegal and Togo. These units identify and inspect suspect containers, and in addition to large cocaine seizures, they have stopped shipments of heroin, counterfeit cigarettes, and counterfeit goods.

The international community has been less successful in identifying suspect private air flights, but further efforts could be made in this area. In 2010, the Airport Communication Project (AIRCOP) was launched by UNODC, Interpol and the World Customs Organization. Its objectives are two-fold: first, to install Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces at priority international airports in West Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and second, to connect them to secure communication networks to enable the

Figure 46: Prison capacities, prisoners, and sentenced prisoners in 2012 or most recent year available

Source: World Prison Brief

sharing of operational information in real time. There are AIRCOP units in Cape Verde, Mali, Senegal and Togo, and these have been responsible for seizures of cannabis, cocaine and gold.

Air couriering through the Caribbean has been significantly reduced in the past due to “100% control” programmes on vulnerable flights. Traffickers typically send multiple couriers on some flights, with the knowledge that limited capacity to screen suspects in receiving airports will ensure that most of the couriers get through. This “shotgunning” approach can be defeated by screening all suspects on both ends of the most heavily used air flights. For example, the Dutch government was able to halt couriering through Curacao by installing scanners in the sending airport and detaining all suspected couriers on the receiving end. A similar programme was established by the governments of the United Kingdom and Jamaica. Direct postal and container shipments between South America and West Africa could be subjected to equivalent “100% control” measures.

The goal of such efforts would be to reduce the attractiveness of the West African route relative to its alternatives. It is essential that the international community work to protect those regions with the least capacity to protect themselves.

The same type of global approach could be afforded with regard to other suspect commodities. Special scrutiny could be applied to medicines exported to Africa, for example, both in the exporting country and at all transit stops along the way. This need not be a technology-heavy exercise: some shipments are clearly fraudulent based on their packaging or storage conditions. Some of these irregularities are most evident at the source, so if exporting countries paid as

much attention to what they are shipping to Africa as they do to what is sold on the domestic market, tragic consequences could be avoided.

The private sector is often the source of the problematic materials, and, in some cases, professional codes of ethics could prove more effective than government regulation. For example, producers of synthetic opiates or chemical precursors or firearms should query orders from West Africa where the quantities appear excessive, but they are unlikely to do so unless they are confident that their competition is doing the same. Industry-wide agreements to exercise restraint could, if monitored, pressure all parties to observe socially responsible business practices, particularly with regard to transactions with vulnerable regions, such as West Africa. Through partnership with the international community, industry leaders could greatly reduce the abuses associated with the products they sell.

Well-designed public education campaigns regarding the risks of buying medicine of questionable provenance, coupled with efforts to facilitate access to affordable quality medicines, could help West Africans reduce the impact of fraudulent medicines on public health by raising awareness among the population and offering affordable alternatives to its poorest segments.

In the short term, it is important to address the contraband flows currently afflicting West Africa, but the region’s long term stability requires that its resistance to trafficking be strengthened. There are two main reasons why West African law enforcement agencies cannot put up much of a defense against traffickers: lack of capacity (including resources and training) and corruption.

Security sector reform generally, and criminal justice reform in particular, is needed to rationalize the existing institutions, taking into account existing resource constraints. A functioning criminal justice system requires the right ratio of patrol officers, investigators, prosecutors, judges, and corrections officials. The infrastructure assigned to each must also be proportionate. The police cannot produce more arrests than prosecutors can process, and the courts cannot produce more convicts than there are cells to hold them.

Criminal justice systems everywhere struggle to bring detained suspects to trial promptly. In West Africa as elsewhere, much of prison overcrowding could be eliminated if un-sentenced suspects were not occupying the majority of the berths. But the need for court efficiency and non-custodial alternatives is particularly important in resource-challenged environments.

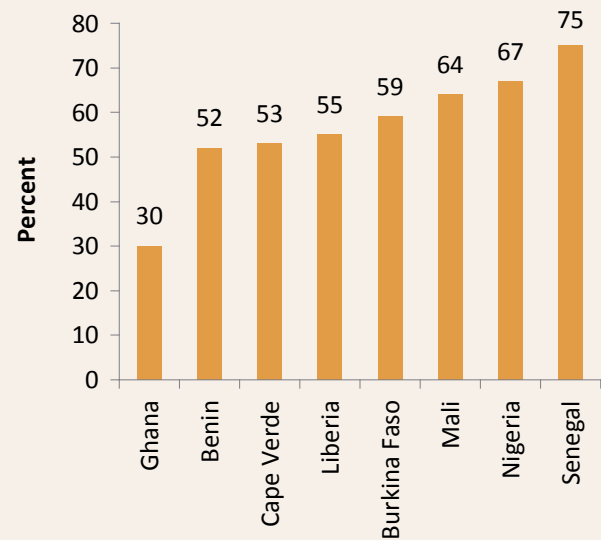
Investigations of transnational organized crime are one area where a small number of highly skilled staff can have a big impact. The West Africa Coast Initiative (WACI) – a joint program of UNODC, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), UN Department of Political Affairs (DPA) (through the UN Office for West Africa - UNOWA) and Interpol – has supported the development of specialized Transnational Crime Units in a number of countries in the region. These units have begun sharing information and best practices. WACI will expand in the future to engage in other areas of local capacity building and law enforcement reform.

Law enforcement is impossible without the cooperation of the public, and the police in particular are not well regarded by the citizens of West Africa. A recent survey of citizens in 100 countries around the world found that West Africans have the least favourable view of the integrity of their law enforcement agencies, and that the majority of citizens who came in contact with the police in the previous year felt compelled to pay a bribe. It is imperative that measures be taken to address this corruption and to improve the public image of law enforcement agencies in the region.

Of course, law enforcement does not stop with the police, and provision must be made for supporting justice and correctional reform. In 2010, the Judicial Regional Platform for the Sahel was formed, an informal network of criminal justice officials from Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. This network seeks to facilitate mutual legal assistance and extradition requests. Similar efforts could be supported in other countries in West Africa to further support the strengthening of the criminal justice system.

Law enforcement is important, but it is only one aspect of the rule of law. Authoritarian regimes can have strong law enforcement without the rule of law, which includes democratic participation and respect for human rights.¹³⁴ Programmes to enhance the rule of law are thus necessarily

Figure 47: Share of West Africans who say culpable officials “often” or “always” go unpunished



Source: Afrobarometer

broader. They involve strengthening governance at all levels. In particular, when it comes to preventing transnational trafficking, preventing corruption is essential.

So long as the actions of public officials can be influenced by private payments, the contraband will continue to flow. Recent global surveys show that West Africans are more likely to feel compelled to pay a bribe than citizens in most other countries, and the situation appears to be getting worse. For example, in the two countries for which consistent time series data were available, bribery rates doubled or tripled between 2005 and 2011.

With the exception of Ghana, the majority of respondents in West African countries said that culpable officials are likely to escape punishment. This perception undermines trust in public institutions and can foster political instability.

In the interests of both peace and preventing contraband flows, it is essential that corruption be addressed. The United Nations offers a range of programmes designed to reduce corruption and support the rule of law.

Key Recommendations

- Mobilize States of the region to provide valid and reliable data, in order to better assess and analyze drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse problems affecting the region.
- Improve regional and international coordination efforts in dealing with the drug problem, as well as with respect to all related organized crimes in the region, through facilitating the exchange of criminal intelligence.

- Fight impunity through the harmonization of national legislation and strengthen current legal frameworks in order to effectively sentence identified criminals.
- Create, strengthen and mobilize synergies between relevant law enforcement structures to better respond to the threat of drug trafficking and TOC.
- Develop integrated programmes to combat drug trafficking and organized crime at the national and regional levels in full coherence with existing international standards.
- Focus on financial flows related to drug trafficking and transnational organized crime in order to cut off sources of funding.
- Facilitate quality drug treatment and rehabilitation services to contribute to the reduction of demand for illicit drugs, HIV transmission amongst drug users, drug-related crimes, incarceration and recidivism.



Endnotes

- 1 Transnational Trafficking and the Rule of Law in West Africa: A Threat Assessment, UNODC, July 2009.
- 2 In fact, a number of large seizures were made before 2005, but it was only around that time that the cumulative evidence caught international attention.
- 3 In addition to outright theft of the evidence, this includes cases where smaller amounts of drugs were reported seized than intelligence indicated were present (such as the MV Benjamin case in Ghana), where inert substances were substituted for drugs in police custody (such as the 2011 Martin case, also in Ghana), or where seizures initially identified as cocaine were later said to be cannabis (cases in Mali and Senegal).
- 4 UNODC ARQ 2011 - Brazil.
- 5 Interviews conducted with Colombian and Venezuelan law enforcement authorities in April and May 2012.
- 6 Interviews with Brazilian Federal Police, May 2012.
- 7 Interviews with Brazilian Federal Police, May 2012.
- 8 Mazzitelli A., "The New Transatlantic Bonanza: Cocaine on Highway 10", Western Hemispheric Security Analysis Center, March 2011, p.28.
- 9 Interview with the National Antidrug Agency, Caracas, Venezuela. 3 May 2012.
- 10 The 'Illicit Drug seizures with relation to European Airports' (IDEAS) database contains some 500-600 seizure records a year from airports in 15 European countries (Austria, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Spain, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Serbia and the United Kingdom) as well as from airports used in transiting Europe.
- 11 Refers only to the top 10 nationalities arrested. "West Africa" refers to Guineans, Nigerians, and Sierra Leoneans. "North Africa" refers to Moroccans and Algerians.
- 12 For example, Colombians have been arrested in West Africa in the 2008 airplane case in Sierra Leone, the 2008 Gulfstream case in Guinea-Bissau, one 2008 case in Togo, and six were arrested in connection with the two-ton seizure in The Gambia in 2010.
- 13 Refers only to the top 10 nationalities arrested. "North Africa" refers to Moroccans and Tunisians. "West Africa" refers to Nigerians, Senegalese, Gambians, and Gabonese.
- 14 Refers only to the top 10 nationalities arrested. "West Africa" refers to Bissau-Guineans, Cape Verdeans, and Nigerians.
- 15 UN Security Council S/PV.6754, 19 April 2012. <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF96FF9%7D/GB%20SPV%206754.pdf>
- 16 UN Security Council S/PV.6754, 19 April 2012. p. 4. <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF96FF9%7D/GB%20SPV%206754.pdf>
- 17 UN Security Council S/PV.6754, 19 April 2012. p. 4. <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF96FF9%7D/GB%20SPV%206754.pdf>
- 18 A study of waste water conducted in 19 European cities by the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA) in Oslo and the Mario Negri Institute in Milan produced a Europe-wide estimate of 350 kg of cocaine per day. This is equivalent to 128 tons per year, which is almost identical to the UNODC estimate.
- 19 Tramadol was rescheduled by Minister of Health Fouad el-Nawawi under Decree No. 125 of 2012 to Section II of Schedule 1 of the Anti-Narcotics Law 182 (1960).
- 20 NDLEA Press release, 26 November 2011. Available: <http://www.ndlea.gov.ng/v1/?q=content/ndlea-intercepts-130kg-heroin-worth-99-million-destined-europe-us-nigeria-relations-drug-con>
- 21 UNODC, Drug Situation Analysis Report Islamic Republic of Pakistan, November 2011.
- 22 UNODC ROSEN database.
- 23 Benin, presentation to HONLAF 2011 (21st Meeting of Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies, Africa, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 5-9 September 2011).
- 24 For a description of the way this works in South Africa, see Leggett, T., *Rainbow Vice: The drugs and sex industries in the new South Africa*. London: Zed Books, 2000.
- 25 'Japan Country Report', Drugs and Firearms Division, National Police Agency of Japan, presented at the Sixteenth Asia Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference (ADEC), Tokyo, 22-24 February 2011.
- 26 Malaysia country report, Narcotics Crime Investigation Department, Royal Malaysia Police (RMP), presented at the Sixteenth Asia-Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference (ADEC), Tokyo, 22-24 February 2011.
- 27 Thailand country presentation on African Drug Trafficking Organizations, Narcotics Suppression Bureau (NSB), Royal Thai Police, presented at the International Drug Enforcement Conference (IDEC), Far East Regional Working Group Meeting (FEWG),

- Bangkok, Thailand, 1-3 March 2011.
- 28 Interview with Igbo drug dealers in Bangkok, 5 April 2012.
- 29 Country report of China, China National Narcotics Control Commission (NNCC), Ministry of Public Security, presented at the Regional Seminar on Cooperation against West African Syndicate Operations, Bangkok, 9-11 November 2010.
- 30 For example, see Xinhua.net, '2 Nigerian women arrested for drug trafficking', 22 May 2012. Available: http://big5.xinhua-net.com/gate/big5/news.xinhuanet.com/english/world/2012-05/22/c_131604528.htm
- 31 Steinberg, J., 'The illicit abalone trade in South Africa'. *Institute for Security Studies Paper* 105, 2005.
- 32 Kapp, Clare. "Crystal meth boom adds to South Africa's health challenges." *The Lancet*, Vol 371, Issue 9608, pp. 193-194, 19 January 2008. Available: [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(08\)60120-8/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(08)60120-8/fulltext)
- 33 UNODC. Global SMART programme, October 2010.
- 34 UNODC. 2011 Global ATS Assessment.
- 35 According to information provided through the Annual Reports Questionnaire, approximately 12% of foreign methamphetamine traffickers arrested in Japan were from Africa; 10% were African in Malaysia, and 7% were African in Indonesia. Taking an average, this is approximately 10%.
- 36 According to information provided through the Annual Reports Questionnaire, approximately 275 foreign methamphetamine couriers were arrested in Malaysia, 76 in Indonesia, and 650 in Japan. Extrapolating from these numbers produces a five-country estimate of 1500.
- 37 An interception rate of 5% has been proposed by the Centre for Social and Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation (SHORE) in "The Socio-economic impact of amphetamine type stimulants in New Zealand." (Auckland, 2004). These figures are volatile, however, and change significantly year to year.
- 38 UNODC Annual Reports Questionnaire 2010.
- 39 UNODC. World Drug Report 2012.
- 40 According to the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime: "smuggling of migrants" is defined as "the procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident." While data are not available on the share of West African migrants who are smuggled, data are available for the comparatively simple land crossing from Mexico to the United States, where over 90% of migrants interviewed in recent years have reported paying for assistance in crossing the border. With the exception of the Spanish enclaves in Morocco and the land route through Asia Minor, all routes to Europe involve a maritime crossing. Very few of the boats detected were constructed by the migrants they contain, so nearly all of these migrants were smuggled on at least the maritime leg of their journey.
- 41 Since Europe does not maintain a database of visa overstays, it is impossible to say how many West African immigrate in this way. The United Nations Office in West Africa states that '[t]he canoes, pateras or other means of irregular entry into Europe, although attracting the most media attention, do not account for the majority of irregular migration', and quotes a Spanish finding that only 8% of irregular arrivals in Spain are by sea. See United Nations Office for West Africa. *Migrations irrégulières en provenance d'Afrique de l'Ouest: description du phénomène et analyse des causes et conséquences des flux migratoires*. Etudes thématiques, September 2008 p.25.
- 42 "Third country nationals found to be illegally present". Database available from EUROSTAT: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database
- 43 Interviews with West African migrants, Madrid, Canary Islands, Algeciras and Ceuta, October-November 2009. See also Coslovi, Lorenzo. *Brevi note sull'immigrazione via mare in Italia e in Spagna*. Rome: Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale, 2007. p.4.
- 44 Accem, *Estudio sobre la Población Subsahariana llegada a las Costas españolas-2008*, www.accem.org. Spanish statistics on nationality need to be treated with caution, as many Senegalese migrants may claim to be of a different nationality due to the existence of an effective expulsion agreement between Spain and Senegal.
- 45 De Haas, Hein. *The Myth of Invasion: Irregular Migration from West Africa to the Maghreb and the European Union*. IMI Research Report. Oxford: International Migration Institute, October 2007, p.10.
- 46 The UN office in West Africa quotes an estimate by the *Commission mondiale sur les migrations internationales* that 2,000 migrants lose their lives each year trying to cross the Mediterranean. See United Nations Office for West Africa. *Migrations irrégulières en provenance d'Afrique de l'Ouest: description du phénomène et analyse des causes et conséquences des flux migratoires*. Etudes thématiques, September 2008, p.9. The same figure is quoted by Adepoju, Aderanti. *Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa*. This number includes North Africans, though, who comprise perhaps two-thirds of the irregular migrants crossing the Mediterranean. Fortress Europe, a website that gathers information on immigration to the European Union, calculates on the basis of press reports that 14,797 people died on Europe's frontiers in the 21 years from 1988 to 2009. Of these, 10,816 died or went missing on sea-crossings via the Atlantic or the Mediterranean. Since the figures have been gathered over a period of twenty years, they imply an average of less than a thousand fatalities per year on the sea-routes from Africa to Europe. If one-third of these were sub-Saharan, it would imply some 300-350 deaths of sub-Saharan migrants per year on the sea-lanes.
- 47 Ministerio del Interior (Spain), Ministero dell' Interno (Italy), Hellenic police and FRONTEX (Greece).
- 48 Interview with Mauritanian and Senegalese migrants, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, 11 November 2009.
- 49 Interview with Senegalese migrants, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Canary Islands, 10 November 2009.
- 50 Interview with source from *Guardia Civil*, formerly stationed in the Canary Islands, 23 October 2009.
- 51 Interview with source from *Guardia Civil*, formerly stationed in the Canary Islands, 23 October 2009.
- 52 Annual Report Office of Prosecutors of Immigration Affairs, 2008. Available: www.fiscal.es [accessed on 21 November 2009].
- 53 Interview with Cameroonian migrant, Melilla, 24 November 2009.
- 54 Interview with Ivorian migrant, Algeciras, 7 November 2009.
- 55 Interview with Guardia Civil, Madrid, 8 November 2009.
- 56 Interview with Ivorian migrant, Algeciras, 7 November 2009.
- 57 The Smuggling of Migrants Protocol supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.
- 58 Bensaâd, Ali. *Agadez, carrefour migratoire sahélo-maghrébin*, Revue Européenne des Migrations Internationales, Vol. 19, No. 1, 2003, para 22.
- 59 Includes Ceuta and Mellila.
- 60 Ministerio del Interior (Spain), Ministero dell' Interno (Italy), Hellenic Police and FRONTEX (Greece), Maltese Police.
- 61 Gobierno de España, Ministerio del Interior, *Balace 2011 de la Lucha contra la Inmigración Ilegal*.
- 62 Gobierno de España, Ministerio del Interior, *Balace 2011 de la Lucha contra la Inmigración Ilegal*.
- 63 Camera dei Deputati XVI Legislatura. Bollettino Delle Giunte e Dello. Available: <http://documenti.camera.it/leg16/resoconti/commissioni/bollettini/html/2011/06/08/01/allegato.htm>
- 64 For example, the wars of the 1990s in Liberia (1989-2006) and Sierra Leone (1991-2002) involved large-scale transfers of weapons and ammunition from East European and former Soviet states. A 2000 shipment of 5 million rounds of 7.62 x 39 mm ammunition from Ukraine to Liberia provides an indication of the scale of trafficking during this period. See UNSC, 'Report of the Panel of Experts pursuant to Security Council resolution 1343, paragraph

- 19, concerning Liberia.' S/2001/1015 of 26 October 2001.
- 65 Armed conflict is defined as the use of armed force between the military forces of two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state; non-state conflict is the use of armed force between two organized armed groups, neither of which is the government of a state; and one-sided violence is the use of armed force by the government of a state or by a formally organized group against civilians. All definitions are for the occurrence of at least 25 battle-related deaths.
- 66 Wezeman, P. *Libya: Lessons in controlling the arms trade*. Stockholm Institute for Peace Research, 11 March 2011. Available: <http://www.sipri.org/media/newsletter/essay/march11>; UN GA A/65/133/Add1; United National General Assembly. A/65/133, 15 July 2010. United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Report of the Secretary General. Available: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/65/133
- 67 The seizures reviewed are captured in the table on the next page.
- 68 The UN Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) currently has 249 uniformed personnel.
- 69 Nigeria is the only state in West Africa to host industrial small arms production, in addition to ammunition manufacturing capacity. Its output of weapons is very limited and the country's armed forces are primarily dependent on imported weapons. A small number of other countries manufacture ammunition, including Burkina Faso and Cameroon (civilian market shotgun cartridges) and Guinea (current status unclear, possibly dormant). There is some small scale manufacturing, mostly of simple shotguns, known as "craft" manufacturing, but these weapons have limited security implications. In Ghana, for example, a 2010 report suggested as many as 80,000 illegal weapons in circulation in the country, of which the majority were domestically craft-manufactured.
- 70 Based on the field observations of James Bevan, as relayed to the International Institute of Security Studies on 7 June 2012: <http://www.iiss.org/events-calendar/forthcoming-events/tracking-weapons-flows-in-africa/>
- 71 Ibid.
- 72 The Sierra Leone UN Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program (DDRP) was officially completed in February of 2004 (UNDDRRRC, 2011a). The Liberia DDRP programme ended in October 2004, with continued activity by the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to disarm in locations that were difficult to access (UNDDRRRC, 2011b).
- 73 The 2009 UN Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire highlighted widespread distribution of Sudan-manufactured ammunition in northern part of that country. United Nations Security Council, 'Letter dated 7 October 2009 from the Chairman of the Security Council Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council.' Enclosure: Final report of the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire established pursuant to paragraph 11 of Security Council resolution 1842 (2008). S/2009/521. New York: UNSC. 9 October 2009, paras. 138-151. Similarly marked Sudan-manufactured cartridges have been observed in Guinea and southern Mali.
- 74 Statements by President Issoufou reported in the *Wall Street Journal* (2011).
- 75 Reports by Yola police headquarters, reported in the *Daily Trust* (2011).
- 76 Statements by the *Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères*, reported in *Siwaya*, 'Prolifération des armes légères au Burkina: de nouveaux acteurs engagés contre le phénomène.' Ouagadougou: Les éditions Sidwaya. 10 November 2011.
- 77 In one case on 8 February 2011, traffickers concealed a consignment of 17 warheads (PG-7) in sacks containing sweet potatoes, which were destined for a market in Mali. Reported in *Le Coq* (2011).
- 78 Interview with Malian customs authorities in Bamako, March 2010.
- 79 Resolution 1903 (2009) terminated the arms embargo with respect to arms and related materiel to the Government of Liberia (UNSC, 2009b, paras. 4 and 6).
- 80 As of 17 March 2011, President Ouattara announced the creation of the Republican Forces of Côte d'Ivoire (Forces Republicaines de la Côte d'Ivoire – FRCI), which consists of personnel from the Forces Nouvelles and defectors of the Defence and Security Forces of former president Gbagbo. (Background Note: Côte d'Ivoire. Bureau of African Affairs, U.S. Department of State. 17 February 2012. Available: <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2846.htm>)
- 81 United Nations Security Council, 'Letter dated 20 April 2011 from the Chairman of the Security Council Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004) concerning Cote d'Ivoire addressed to the President of the Security Council.' Enclosure: Letter dated 17 March 2011 from the Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire addressed to the Chairman of the Security Council Sanctions Committee established pursuant to resolution 1572 (2004). S/2011/272. New York: UNSC. 27 April, pp 92-117
- 82 Email correspondence with officials in the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), the United Nations Operation in Liberia (UNMIL) and Liberian customs authority representatives, October and November 2011.
- 83 Holtom, P. 'Ukrainian Arms Supplies to Sub-Saharan Africa.' *SIPRI Background Papers*. Stockholm: International Peace Research Institute, February 2011.
- 84 International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). 2011. *The Military Balance 2011: The annual assessment of global military capabilities and defence economics*. Routledge: Colchester. p. 320.
- 85 UN Report of the Assessment Mission on the Impact of the Libyan Crisis on the Sahel Region. 18 January 2012, S/2012/42.
- 86 Statement of B. Lynn Pascoe, 22 March 2012. Available: <http://www.columbiainmissourian.com/stories/2012/03/22/location-malispresident-unknown-after-coup/>
- 87 Based on census data, about 11% of the Malian population are males between the ages of 15 and 64.
- 88 The size of rebel armies varies considerably between conflicts, but looking at four conflicts in Africa (Sudan, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Mozambique) the share of adult males in the general population who enlisted in rebel armies varies from 4% in Mozambique to 24% in Liberia.
- 89 Florquin, Nicolas and Eric Berman. 2005. *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns and Human Security in the ECOWAS region*. Geneva: Small Arms Survey. pp. 313 and 321; Keita, Kalifa. 1998. 'Conflict and Conflict Resolution in the Sahel: The Tuareg Insurgency in Mali.' Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute. pp. 33-34. <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/pub200.pdf>; National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). 2012. 'Al-Qa'ida in the Lands of the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).' Washington: NCTC. <http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups/aqim.html>; Jane's. 2008. 'Nigerien Tuareg Groups (Niger), GROUPS - AFRICA - ACTIVE.' Jane's World Insurgency and Terrorism. Coulsdon: Jane's Information Group. 23 September; Jane's. 2009. 'Non-state armed groups (Mali), Non-state armed groups.' Sentinel Security Assessment - North Africa. Coulsdon: Jane's Information Group. 8 September.
- 90 Small Arms Survey. 2012. 'Arms Holdings.' Sudan Human Security Baseline Assessment. Geneva: Small Arms Survey. <http://www.smallarmssurveysudan.org/facts-figures-arms-holdings.php>
- 91 WHO A65 R19. http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA65/A65_R19-en.pdf
- 92 WHO World Malaria report 2011.
- 93 WHO Global Health Observatory Data Repository. Available: <http://apps.who.int/ghodata/>
- 94 Survey of the quality of selected antimalarial medicines circulating in 6 countries of sub-Saharan Africa, January 2011.
- 95 Gaurvika, M., B Nayyar, J. Breman, P. Newton, and J. Herrington, 'Poor-quality antimalarial drugs in southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa'. *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, Vol. 12, No 6, pp. 488 - 496, June 2012.
- 96 Survey of the quality of selected antimalarial medicines circulating

Table of endnote 67

Date seized	State of seizure	Place of seizure	Mode of transport	Craft-manufactured	Pistols	Assault rifles	Light machine guns	Heavy machine guns	Rocket launchers	Grenades (hand)	Mortars	Mines (anti-personnel)	Explosives (military)	Conventional weapons	Ammunition (various)
20 March 2008	Liberia	Border with Sierra Leone	Land												
23 May 2008	Niger	Iférouane, northern Niger	Land												
11 August 2008	Mali	Séléfougou, Mali-Guinea border	Land												
06 September 2008	Mali	Gao	Land												
29 January 2009	Togo	Aflao, Ghana border	Land												
08 February 2009	Senegal	Senegal-Guinea-Bissau border	Land												
20 February 2009	Mali	Kangaba, Mali-Guinea border	Land												
28 February 2009	Mali	Northern Mali	Land												
23 April 2009	Liberia	Jacob's Town, Monrovia	Land												
17 June 2009	Nigeria	Mallam Aminu airport, Kano	Air												
16 September 2009	Mali	Mali border with Mauritania	Land												
29 October 2009	Algeria	Niger, Libya, Algeria border	Land												
09 January 2010	Mali	Sébéninkoro, southeast of Bamako	Land												
06 February 2010	Nigeria	Jigwa State	Land												
29 July 2010	Mauritania	Malian border	Land												
29 July 2010	Cameroun	Douala	Land												
26 October 2010	Nigeria	Lagos, seaport	Sea												
23 November 2010	Nigeria	Lagos, seaport	Sea												
08 February 2011	Guinea	Koulikoro, Malian border	Land												
20 February 2011	Mali	Mali-Algeria border	Land												
26 February 2011	Nigeria	Maiduguri, border with Chad	Land												
19 March 2011	Guinea	Siguiri, Malian border	Land												
06 April 2011	Liberia	Border with Côte d'Ivoire	Land												
24 May 2011	Mauritania	Malian border	Land												
12 June 2011	Niger	Arlit, northern Niger	Land												
16 June 2011	Liberia	Border with Côte d'Ivoire	Land												
20 June 2011	Algeria	Southern Algeria-Libya border	Land												
07 August 2011	Liberia	Border with Côte d'Ivoire	Land												
18 August 2011	Nigeria	Border with Chad	Land												
03 September 2011	Algeria	Southern Algeria-Libya border	Land												
13 September 2011	Nigeria	Maiduguri, Border with Chad	Land												
15 September 2011	Niger	Air region, northern Niger	Land												
02 October 2011	Algeria	Niger, Libya, Algeria border	Land												
06 November 2011	Niger	Libyan border region	Land												
06 November 2011	Niger	Arlit-Agadez road, northern Niger	Land												
08 November 2011	Morocco	Laâyoune	Land												
09 November 2011	Algeria	Niger, Libya, Algeria border	Land												
14 November 2011	Cameroun	Douala	Land												
Percentage of cases involving particular type of weapon / ammunition:				5	16	71	18	13	39	8	11	3	8	5	98

- in 6 countries of sub-Saharan Africa, January 2011.
- 97 Gallup Survey, 2010. Available: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/149942/Fake-Medicine-Common-Sub-Saharan-African-Countries.aspx>
 - 98 Ogisi, Mitchell. "Fake medicine common in many sub-Saharan African countries." Available: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/149942/Fake-Medicine-Common-Sub-Saharan-African-Countries.aspx>
 - 99 The World Health Organization, *Survey of the quality of selected antimalarial medicines circulating in six countries of sub-Saharan Africa*, January 2011.
 - 100 The International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations, *The Pharmaceutical Industry and Global Health: Facts and Figures*, Issue 2011, Annex VI, pp.88-93.
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 - 123 For example, the IMF estimates that smuggled oil and fuel from Nigeria comprised 20% of Benin's consumption in 1986, rising to 68% by 1991, and 17% of Cameroon's consumption by the same year, despite the fact that the latter was and remains a net oil exporter. Officially recorded sales of oil and oil products in Benin fell from 134,800 tonnes in 1986 to 63,300 tonnes by 2001. Actual consumption increased over this period, so the fall in sales is attributable to the smuggling of oil and oil products. The IMF estimates that the consumption of such products increased from 33,900 tonnes in 1986 to 133,200 tonnes by 2001. It is no surprise that the difference between fuel prices in Nigeria and Benin increased during this period. See Wang, Jian-Ye, "Macroeconomic Policies and Smuggling: an analysis of illegal oil trade in Nigeria", IMF Policy Development and Review Department, September 1994. In addition, in an interview with UNODC in November 2011, Benin's Minister for Economic Affairs stated that the proportion of smuggled Nigerian fuel out of total fuel consumption in Benin had reached almost 80%.
 - 124 UNODC, *Transnational trafficking and the rule of law in West Africa: A threat assessment*. Vienna: UNODC, 2009, p 26.
 - 125 The demobilization program has been administered in two phases, the first involving just over 20,000 militants and the second another 6,000. Some claiming to be militants are demanding a "third phase", but their goal seems to be accessing the benefits granted under the amnesty.
 - 126 Under Article 101 of the United Nations *Convention on the Law of the Sea*, "piracy" is defined as: *any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by ... a private ship... directed... on the high seas, against another ship...*
As this act occurs in international waters and involves nationals of one country attacking vessels of another country, usually involving crew of additional countries, these offences are inherently "transnational." They are also "organized crime," in that the offence is serious, and it involves groups of people working together for material gain.
The United Nations *Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Maritime Navigation* of 1988 also applies to offences committed in territorial waters, and includes the seizure of ships by force and acts of violence against persons on board ships.
The United Nations International Maritime Organization tracks the incidence of both piracy and maritime robbery (in both national and international waters) in their statistics, and it is on these statistics that this chapter is based.
 - 127 For the purposes of this analysis, all attacks that showed signs of being aimed at acquiring cargos have been classified as hijacking incidents, even if the pirates failed to achieve their objective. In order to come up with a sound policy response, it is important that the intent of the pirates be clarified, not their competence.
 - 128 "Pirates Take New Territory: West African Gulf of Guinea", *Christian Science Monitor*, 15 January 2010; "Tanker Trade Group Seeks Action on W. Africa Piracy", Reuters, 3 December 2009.
 - 129 "IMB Piracy Report and Implications for Nigerian Shipping", *Daily Independent* (Lagos), 4 February 2010.
 - 130 Lloyd's Market Association, *Joint War Committee*. Available: http://www.lmalloyds.com/Web/market_places/marine/JWC/Joint_War.aspx
 - 131 World Bank, *Diagnostic Trade Integration Study: Benin*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2005.
 - 132 UNODC interview with Chief of Navy, Benin, 3 November 2011. As a result of the attacks in 2011, the country's exclusive economic zone was included in the *Hull War, Strikes, Terrorism and Related Perils Listed Areas* by Lloyd's Joint War Committee on 1 August. The territory in question is given as "Gulf of Guinea, but only the waters of the Beninese and Nigerian Exclusive Economic Zones north of Latitude 3 degrees north". This designation allows insur-

ance companies to impose additional premiums on vessels sailing through the country's maritime territory.

133 Nossiter, Adam "Poverty Could Imperil Amnesty in Niger Delta, New York Times, November 26, 2009.

134 In the UN, "rule of law" is defined as "a principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency." See UN Doc. S/2004/616 (2004), para. 6. See also UN Doc. A/61/636-S/2006/980 (2006).