

REGIONAL CONTROL ARMS PROGRAMME UPDATE DECEMBER 2006

INTRODUCTION

Since 2003, the Regional Office of Oxfam GB assists its partners in developing a regional programme for reducing conflicts in West Africa.

The Swedish co-operation, convinced in the pertinence of the programme and its impact on the populations, has decided to sponsor the Control Small Arms Program in West Africa for a three-year period (2006-2009).

This program, emanating from an innovating approach, rests on two essential goals:

- to improve security of local populations in West Africa;
- to fight against poverty by supporting income generating activities for local population.

Before the start of this program, we've carried out an evaluation of each partner and a re-adaptation of already existing contract patterns in order to

integrate the new demands of Oxfam GB and those of the sponsor.

A particular emphasis has also been laid on supporting the partner for a better understanding and respect of the organization procedures.

We've managed to do all this work thanks to the support from Oxfam GB colleagues and, mainly, from the Finance Team and the Funding Team. The mission of the conflict program team, about to be set up, is to achieve the goals of the program and face up to the challenges. To reach these goals, we rely on the support of each and everyone.

This report, which aims to be periodic, provides you with an outline of the program achievements.

Mohamed L. Coulibaly
Regional Conflict Transformation Programme Manager

Regional Control Arms Program Sponsored by SIDA

The Sida programme aims at increasing the capacity of communities and governments in West Africa to control the proliferation of small arms and reducing demand for arms in the region.

Its main objectives are to :

- build the capacity of civil society groups and community leaders on conflict prevention, management and arms control issues ;
- increase the understanding among governments, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and ECOWAS of the root causes for arms in West Africa ;
- reduce demand for arms through sensitisation campaign and voluntary collection of illegal weapon detained by local population.
- raise awareness and build regional consensus towards a convention on small arms through an control arms campaign.

This programme will be implemented through or in collaboration with following strategic partners in the region :

- Economic Community for West African States (ECOWAS)
- Ecowas Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP)
- Africa Strategic and Peace Research Group (AFSTRAG)- Nigeria
- West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) - Women's Initiative for Peace network (WIPNET)- Ghana
- Afrique Enjeux Casamance (AFE) – Senegal
- Foundation for Security and development in West Africa (FOSDA) – Ghana
- National Commission on small arms (Nat.Comm) -Mali
- United Nations Regional Centre for Peace & Disarmement in West Africa (UNREC)- Togo
- West Africa Action Network on Small Arms (WAANSA)- Ghana

The programme main intervention zones are : **Ghana, Senegal, Mali, and Mano River union countries (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea.C).**

Partners Section

The Pan African Strategy Research Group (PANAFSTRAG)

Since the signature of the agreement with Oxfam GB in September 2006, the Pan African Strategy Research Group, based in Nigeria, has implemented a methodology workshop in Banjul from 18th – 19th October 2006; field studies to identify the strengths, deficiencies and gaps in existing gun control laws of member states of ECOWAS countries have begun. Governments in ECOWAS countries have shown deep interest in the project.

The United Nations Regional Center for Peace & Disarmament (UNREC)

based in Lome (Togo) has now signed an agreement with Oxfam GB. Through this grant, UNREC will train Civil Society representatives and National Commission representatives to better understand techniques related to small arms control.

Afrique Enjeux (AFE)

The official launch of the Arms for Development (PARSED) project as part of the regional conflict transformation programme was done on November 22nd in Adeane in Casamance (Senegal). The Senegalese Ministry of Defense, Oxfam partners in Casamance, OGB conflict team and more than sixty community representatives in the area were present during the launch. Ibrahima Diedhiou, president of rural council of Adeane, a beneficiary of the project is keen to see this initiative extended to the villages around the Guinea Bissau cross border that have **been** affected by the conflict in Casamance.

Currently 15 villages out of 84 in the area of Adeane and balantacounda are still displaced.

General Ishola Williams, Panafstrag Executive Director accompanied by Ms Helene Cissé, signing the contract with OGB



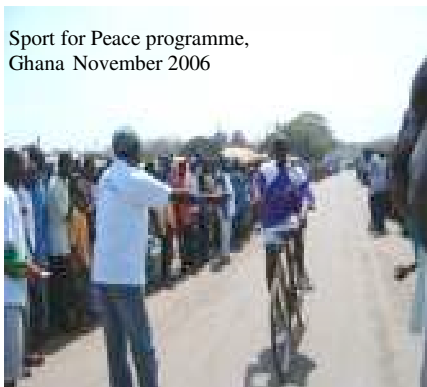
West African Network for Small Arms (WAANSA)

based in Ghana, the West African Network for Small Arms is now legally registered since October 2006. Thanks to Oxfam GB funds, a well resourced and functioning secretariat has been set up as well as an operational office.



The Official launch of Parsed was an occasion for populations who have been separated for a long time to be together...

Sport for Peace programme,
Ghana November 2006



Foundation for Security and development in Africa (FOSDA)

has launched in Tamale (Northern Ghana), programme activities on November 2006, on the presence of government officials and the media.

At the 'Sport for Peace' programme organised in Yendi district, in the Northern region on November 30, 2006, two political heads of Government honoured Fosda's invitation to attend. Also the Regional Minister sent a speech which was read on his behalf by the District chief executive of Yendi.

Partners Section (cont)

The National Commission of Mali (NCM)

is implementing the Arms for Development project in the Werstern Sahel region of Mali- communities of Niore Kayes and Kenieba. The project consists of sensitizing local population on the danger of illegal detention of weapons, collecting voluntarily these illegal weapons and supporting income-generating activities.

After several field visits in project, the National Commission and OGB will officially launch the project in January 2007.

The West African Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)

will implement Women in Peacebuilding Program (WIPNET) in Mano River Countries (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Conakry). The Voice of Women Programme is a radio programme for rural women to raise awareness on arms issues. WANEP will hold capacity building workshops.

ECOWAS SMALL ARMS CONVENTION ACTIVITIES

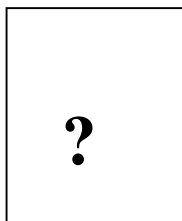
Oxfam and its partners have been active supporting the transformation of ECOWAS moratorium on small arms into a regional convention which finally has been adopted by ECOWAS member states in June 2006. As part of the Control Arms campaign, Oxfam is still supporting our partners in West Africa to facilitate the ratification of the convention and strong support of West Africa countries to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) :

- **In Togo**, the CJSP (Cercle des Jeunes pour une Société de Paix) association, thanks to Oxfam GB support , organized a two days workshop on ECOWAS convention, in collaboration with the Ministry of integration and Foreign Affairs, and the National Commission , on December 8, 2006.
- **In Niger**, the National Commission organized a workshop on the ECOWAS convention from 12-15th December 2006. This workshop aimed at facilitating the understanding of Ecowas convention of key actors and gathered representatives from Ministries, Parliament and local distictics .
- **In Senegal** 2 days workshop were organized by the **National Commission for Small Arms** in order to present and explain the ECOWAS convention on small arms to actors. This activity was held from 15-16th December 2006 Dakar, with the presence of members of parliament, the Senegalese Ministry of Defense, Youth, Interior, Economy, Civil Society organizations, etc.

Conflict Programme Team



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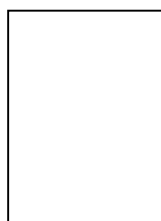
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