

Original Article

International Organizations and the Operational Challenges of Arms Proliferation in Conflict Zones: Evidence from Northwestern Nigeria

Mubarak Sulaiman Jamiu ^{a,b*} and Muhammad Febriansyah ^b

^a Department of Political Science, School of Social Sciences, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11700 Gelugor, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia. febrian@usm.my (M.F.)

^b Department of Politics and Governance, Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria; mubarak.jamiu@kwasu.edu.ng (M.S.J.)

* Correspondence: mubarak.jamiu@student.usm.my (M.S.J.)

Citations: Jamiu, M.S. & Febriansyah, M. (2025). International Organizations and the Operational Challenges of Arms Proliferation in Conflict Zones: Evidence from Northwestern Nigeria. *International Journal of Advances in Social Sciences and Humanities*, 4(2), 87-100.

Received: 2 February 2025

Revised: 22 April 2025

Accepted: 8 May 2025

Published: 31 May 2025

Abstract: This study examines how the unchecked proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) undermines international aid efforts in conflict-prone areas, with a particular focus on northwestern Nigeria. Despite regional and global treaties, technical assistance, and funding from organizations like ECOWAS, the United Nations, and the European Union, implementation often stalls. Porous borders, weak enforcement, local distrust, and bureaucratic inertia leave key programs exposed and ineffective. This study the research identifies how armed violence reshapes humanitarian access, disrupts mobility, and undermines the effectiveness of international interventions. The study examines regional cooperation in curbing the spread of arms proliferation, drawing on the theory of structural realism. Drawing on 25 semi-structured interviews and qualitative data collected across five high-risk states, namely Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, and Jigawa. Additionally, this study examines the impact of armed violence on the access, mobility, and engagement of relief agencies on the ground. It finds that treaties and reintegration initiatives often fall short when local institutions lack capacity or coordination. The work also highlights the gap between international planning and the realities of volatile regions, where rural communities are left stranded, and operational teams are forced to retreat to urban centers. In highlighting these structural and situational barriers, the study proposes policy recommendations aimed at strengthening oversight, enhancing local partnerships, and adapting arms control frameworks to address the on-the-ground challenges of conflict zones, such as Nigeria.

Keywords: Insecurity; Northwestern Nigeria; International Organization; Small Arms and Light Weapons.



Copyright: © 2025 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

1. Introduction

International organizations still view themselves as first responders whenever war breaks out or order breaks down. They send food trucks, blue-helmeted patrols, and teams that teach local police how to maintain peace. Even so, those missions bump into hard walls once the daily violence is fed by an invisible flood of small arms and light

weapons. AK-47s weigh barely ten pounds, slip into backpacks, and keep community militias, insurgents, and city gangs dug in for years. Their endurance turns each neighbourhood into a no-go zone for humanitarian crews, election monitors, or civil-service advisers who hoped to reopen schools or hold a ballot. Nigeria tells a poignant and troubling cautionary tale. Analysts estimate that roughly 10 million small arms and light weapons now circulate inside the country, lending it the grim distinction of being the hardest-hit state in sub-Saharan Africa. Carrying roughly 70 percent of the world's documented SALW stockpile (Small Arms Survey, 2022; Adebayo & Okonkwo, 2023), Nigeria finds those guns doing far more than fueling daily crime. They stubbornly reshape the overall security calculus, making even short-term humanitarian corridors harder to establish and maintain, putting field offices under constant duress, and leaving supply chains vulnerable.

The regional bloc ECOWAS and the UN both drafted guiding treaties aimed at curbing the spread of lethal cargo. Within Nigeria, the National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) stands as a nominal sign of official resolve, yet real-world follow-through is patchy at best. Porous borders invite new inflows, enforcement varies with the prevailing motive, and a persistent street-level appetite for hardware undermines nearly every stopgap measure (Ogundele, 2023; Sule & Deribe, 2020). International organizations now face an acute set of operational hurdles that few anticipated. Field commanders like to tally achievements-witness the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration programs that have reclaimed thousands of stray rifles-but the very guns they collect leave communities too dangerous to enter. Partnerships with local NGOs fray when those groups cannot venture outside their own neighbourhoods, and even the most seasoned expatriates begin working from hotel lobbies instead of village squares.

The present study examines the relationship between armed violence and small arms in fragile landscapes. Nigeria serves as the primary laboratory here, a country where occasional partnerships with United Nations agencies quickly soured when militants fired on convoys last summer. Finding, limiting, then sometimes reversing those security shocks becomes an urgent task if global support is to avoid imploding in the next downturn. This study addresses a significant gap in the current literature by focusing on the operational challenges faced by international organizations when working in ungoverned areas, which are often plagued by issues of arms proliferation and insecurity along their borders. Although existing literature has examined the significance of international assistance or SALW management independently, most of them have neither examined the cumulative impact of both forces in the field in a high-risk area like Northwestern Nigeria. Capturing perceptions and experiences at the ground level provides context-specific insights into the discrepancies between the global and the local in the implementation of security and aid measures in this study.

International organizations habitually move to the front lines when crises erupt, yet the deepening insecurity in places such as Nigeria tests their endurance. There, barrels and magazines of small arms circulate freely, and convoy windows that once signalled mobility are now just thin glass. Although the United Nations, the Economic Community of West African States, and several capitals boast colourful treaties and national papers, guns still slip through unseen gaps in the system. Insurgents, highway bandits, and syndicate enforcers then multiply the effects until entire localities resemble no-go zones. The fallout is rarely captured by casualty tallies alone; missions bog down before anyone gets shot. Logistical charts become entangled, consortium partners hesitate, and supply trucks sit idle or disappear en route. In extremis, agencies retreat to hotel ballrooms in city centres and direct money and messages via satellite, which leaves rural villagers feeling abandoned and sceptical. That desperation stunts the very peace, and development hopes the outside teams are supposed to nurture. Long after the headlines fade, the hidden cost is still measured in stalled classrooms, unopened clinics, and lost trust.

The present inquiry examines the ways continuous gun violence and everyday insecurity, particularly the Nigerian experience, affect the ability of donor agencies and multinational outfits to set foot in deeply troubled districts. Researchers have noted that the problem is not merely a shortage of armoured trucks or twilight curfews; it also runs through the bureaucratic DNA of how fragile polities are assessed and funded in the first place. If the conversation stays stuck on headlines and safety numbers, outside gestures will remain theatrical props, leaving people living through the crises even more estranged from international goodwill. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of international and regional organizations in curbing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Northwestern Nigeria. To identify challenges and propose practical policy measures that enhance local engagement in international funding and arms control initiatives, aiming to reduce insecurity and improve operational outcomes for international organizations in conflict zones. To assess the utility of structural realism in explaining international operational limits in fragile states.

2. Literature Reviews

2.1. Human Security Frameworks

Human security is more than a lofty slogan; it is a UNDP blueprint that places ordinary people at the center of international concern. The framework demands not only personal and economic safeguards but also reliable food supplies, adequate healthcare, and the preservation of human dignity. The 1994 Human Development Report listed seven interlocking pillars-each one a potential flashpoint: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community,

and political security. Together, these pillars remind policymakers that preventing war often starts with shielding men, women, and children from hunger, fear, and outright violence. Northern Nigeria tells a grim counter-narrative. Banditry and insurgency routinely blow up police stations, raid military outposts, and disable the very power lines that light up hospitals. When the Shiroro-Kaduna 330kV corridor and the Obajana switching yard are wrecked, entire towns slip into weeks of darkness and helplessness (Aina, 2024). Economic security is the cushion that allows households to meet their most basic needs without constant dread of catastrophe. It encompasses steady access to food, shelter, healthcare, education, and a reliable income stream. The same foundation vanishes quickly in conflict zones. In Nigeria, ongoing violence by armed militias has stamped out whatever confidence investors once had in the market, leaving trade corridors eerily quiet (Ibrahim & Dauda, 2024). Both domestic firms and foreign players have pulled back, and the few remaining marketplaces continue to operate under heavy duress.

Onime (2018) describes a landscape where fear has sapped energy, halved working hours, and in many towns simply shut commerce down for weeks at a stretch. Food availability tells a parallel, yet even more alarming, story. Farther north, where smallholders plant millet and maize, bandits now intercept farmers at the very edge of their own fields. Growers either pay extortion fees to militia checkpoints or watch their crops wither untended after being chased off (Isenyo, 2024). Whole harvests disappear overnight when attackers march through and uproot plants for fun. The toll adds to a humanitarian ledger that already counts more than two million displaced people. Disruption in rural economies has spread outward, undermining trade that has long been regarded as the backbone of small towns. Livestock markets have collapsed, local herders find their losses mounting season after season, and the routes that once carried grain and groceries from field to village are effectively gone. In the southeast, a patchwork of sit-at-home orders, dictated by separatist groups, has frozen shops, crippled transportation, and left entire districts with no cash flow. A parallel crisis looms in the South-South, where repeated oil theft and pipeline sabotage have crippled the very industry that generates revenue for state coffers. Skirting northward, travel corridors through the Southwest have become a gamble at dusk. Armed gangs now flag buses, strip luggage, and leave burnt chassis as a warning; Ogun and Ebonyi suffer the worst flash points.

Schools, once regarded as safe, have slipped into the line of fire. Children are scooped from classrooms, teachers are singled out for murder, and the reverberations reach communities that had never felt such fear. Statistics tell only a part of the story: between 2009 and 2022, more than 2,000 instructors were killed, nearly 20,000 were uprooted, and over 1,500 campuses simply shut their gates. The toll on learning runs deeper still. Rough estimates suggest that close to one million pupils now wake up in a world without lessons, and UNESCO classifies this group as the largest assembly of out-of-school children anywhere: north Nigeria accounts for almost all of them. International organizations routinely encounter acute obstacles in conflict zones, and the fallout from protracted violence can be crippling. Rampant insecurity puts personnel and equipment in immediate jeopardy while locking vulnerable neighborhoods outside the reach of mobile clinics and food convoys. When those twin pressures mount, global responders are often compelled to replace sustainable programs with stopgap measures that rarely address the underlying causes of the crisis.

2.2. Regional Efforts to Combat Terrorism and Arms Proliferation

Terrorism and arms trafficking shake sub-Saharan Africa, and the wider world has promised to help. Arms embargoes issued by the United Nations Security Council now line the registry of fragile states. The bans are a blunt attempt to freeze munitions traffic and keep war-grade rifles out of non-governmental hands. UN and African Union advisers fly into tutor police and border squads on counting crates, sealing crossings, and managing seized hardware. Parallel Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration projects offer cash, counselling, and vocational classes to fighters willing to swap their guns for a ticket back to civilian streets. Sub-Saharan governments have not waited for outside powers to act. Regional bodies such as ECOWAS and IGAD now serve as clearing-houses for firearms information, permitting joint exercises and the slow, frustrating task of aligning national laws on arms control. Their agendas cover everything from safe-storage audits to public campaigns that discourage small-arms demand and the painstaking marking and tracing of seized weapons. Because terrorist networks often exploit the same black markets that supply loose guns, any sensible response has to be coordinated on multiple tiers. The African Union supports this logic through its Peace and Security Architecture and the standby force, nicknamed the ASF, while the European Union backs a range of training missions aimed at providing member states with a credible first-aid kit for security shocks. Naysayers often point out the gaps, yet even modest bursts of cooperation can help slow down a crisis.

On the wider stage, the United Nations remains the connective tissue. Resolutions emerging from the Security Council pair counter-terrorism language with sanctions on arms traffickers, and bodies such as the CTC and UNODC follow up with workshops, template legislation, and the occasional forensic grant. Diplomats sometimes complain about red tape, but the basic rule is simple: without visible follow-through, promises to lose their effectiveness. Tackling the spread of small arms across sub-Saharan Africa cannot succeed as a stand-alone project; it must unfold simultaneously at the national, regional, and global levels (Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime, 2020). Strengthening the everyday capacity of police, border guards, and customs officers sits at the center of any such design. Longer-lasting solutions will still depend on genuine governance reforms and on economic programmes that take root

where insecurity has begun. When the smuggling of weapons intersects with the spread of terrorism, the fallout rebounds beyond Africa's borders, endangering global stability and development. A workable response, therefore, blends tight arms-regime controls, robust conflict-prevention measures, sustained humanitarian assistance, and partnerships that outlast the headlines.

Regional cooperation and open data-sharing channels address multiple security challenges simultaneously. Stronger rule-of-law institutions, steady resource inflows, and steady international backing help bind the system together. Weak institutions allow corruption to thrive, and UNODC research shows that such vacuums enable the expansion of terrorism and arms smuggling (UNODC, 2019). Building transparency and accountability into everyday governance gives both citizens and officials a stake in stability (Ibrahim Index of African Governance, 2020). Ojewale points out that poverty, inequality, and perceived injustice create a recruitment target for marauding groups; ignore those gaps, he insists, and no amount of hardware will quash the violence (Ojewale, 2024). Ongoing international backing proves crucial in stabilizing at-risk states. A wide range of external agencies—from the United Nations to smaller regional clusters—deliver technical know-how, problem-oriented seed money, and day-to-day coordination (UNODC 2019). Parallel bilateral projects encourage real-time exchanges of know-how, threat data, and operational assets (Obi, 2017). Only a pageant of complementary moves like these can hope to untangle the knot of terrorism and illicit arms flows that repeatedly choke conflict-embattled communities.

Although the topic of arms proliferation and its synergy with international organizations has been studied over the past few years, there is a paucity of studies that incorporate these two factors in conflict-prone areas, such as the Northwestern part of Nigeria. Most studies either revolve around theoretical arguments in arms control or examine the problems encountered by international organizations in their work as stand-alone cases. This paper aims to fill that gap by examining the connection between arms proliferation and international aid work in a specific conflict area, offering an insightful perspective on how arms proliferation creates operational challenges for humanitarian agencies. This is achieved by concentrating on the local-level effects and the interaction between global formats and realities on the ground, thereby providing insight into the constraints and possible avenues for enhancing the international response, which can be provided to conflict zones.

2.4. Theoretical Framework

Structural realism, especially as outlined by Kenneth Waltz (1979), offers a powerful theory for understanding the constraints on international activity within a conflict region. This theory is based on the premise that the international system is anarchic, meaning it lacks a governing body above the state sovereigns. The main actors in this structure are the states, and their activities can be explained by the necessity to survive. Only by doing so can their interests be secured in a system that is not evenly distributed due to the unequal distribution of power among states. Waltz claims that peace and stability could be maintained only on the condition of maintaining the balance of power between states. This realist approach assumes that security and order do not arise from collaborative institutions, but rather through the reasoned actions of powerful states in their efforts to achieve equilibrium through the practice of self-help and strategic coalitions. Mingst (2004) adds to this by highlighting two main schools of thought in the realist approaches to power, which include offensive realism and defensive realism. The former promotes the need to maximize power and act domineeringly among states, whereas the latter focuses on defending sovereignty and thwarting aggression. The two strategies are highly dependent on the states' abilities to extend or defend their strength. The emphasis is particularly placed on deterrence because the threat of specific retribution is enough to stop the attacks, allowing states to maintain peace (Mingst, 2004). In short, structural realism views the world as one in which peace is achieved either through force or the credible threat of force, a logic that implies that international organizations. However, those devoid of coercive capabilities and those without sovereign authority have inherent limitations.

Similarly, Ahmad (2021) argued that the state-centric orientation creates a structural barrier to international organisations such as the United Nations, ECOWAS, or the African Union, whose interventions are often restricted by the sovereignty of host states and a lack of hard power. They usually operate on the basis of consent, negotiation, and cooperation and are therefore weak in a very volatile milieu where state control is being confronted by non-state armed organizations. Structural realism explains why such organisations cannot perform effectively in war zones. They are highly dependent on member states in terms of financial, logistical, and political aid, keeping them largely beholden and at the mercy of their member states, especially when those member states either do not care about or are divided in their strategic interests. Structural realism, in the context of northwestern Nigeria and other regions, highlights the reasons why external interventions aimed at addressing insecurity often prove ineffective.

The spread of non-state armed actors, loss of state authority, and the multitude of local, national, and transnational interests expose the failure of global engagement approaches based on the normative idealist framework, rather than hard power. International organizations have been in a challenging position of operating across a divided environment without the power to enforce agreement or prevent violence, an aspect that structural realism predicts but fails to provide solutions for overcoming. Therefore, the application of structural realism in this research work is not intended to lend credence to its normative stance, but rather to play an analytical role in demonstrating the structural limits that

disempower the capacity of international organizations to carry out their activities effectively in conflict regions. The theory has been found useful in explaining why global interaction, irrespective of its motives, tends to stumble at its edges when confronted with the deeply embedded facts of power, sovereignty, and aggression.

Structural realism is a powerful analytical tool that can be used to comprehend the limitations of international organizations in every war-torn setting, despite its own shortcomings. Among the crucial shortcomings would be that structural realism, with its focus on the state, can overshadow the role of the non-state actors, which are also present on the ground, including insurgent groups, militias, and local non-governmental organizations, which can severely impact the processes of both arms proliferation and humanitarian aid operations in the presented area. Additionally, the emphasis of the theory on power relations and power balancing could not capture the nature of local governance, cultural influences, and backgrounds that affect security and aid assistance on the ground. By understanding these limitations, it becomes clear that a more comprehensive approach, which considers the viewpoints of other theoretical points of departure, such as humanitarianism, local agency, or conflict theory, will be required in any future study one may undertake.

3. Materials and Methods

This research employs a qualitative method due to its promotion of openness, avoidance of preconceived judgements, thorough exploration of the subject matter under investigation, and stimulation of individuals' curiosity regarding their distinct viewpoints. This research employs a purposive sampling technique for effective recruitment and justifiable data collection. The sampling technique aligns with Creswell's (1998) argument, which proposes a range of five to twenty-five (5-25) for comprehensive data sourcing. The breakdown of respondents selected for Key Informant Interviews (KIs) is across five states in Northwestern Nigeria. The states covered include Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, and Jigawa, with one local government area and one village or town sampled from each state. A total of 25 key informants were interviewed, with five respondents drawn from each of the selected locations. These five states were specifically chosen because they represent critical areas where the proliferation of SALWs, border dynamics, and high levels of conflict converge, making them highly relevant for understanding the operational challenges faced by international organizations. They were also selected because of their proximity to transnational smuggling routes, coupled with weak state presence and intense local conflict, which makes them hotspots for the study of arms proliferation and its impact on humanitarian access.

There is also a deliberate attempt to ensure balanced representation across the region's core conflict-affected areas. The local governments chosen for the KI are Dandi, Sabon Birni, Zurmi, Jibya, and Maigatari, as situated in borderland or peripherally located zones that are often characterized by porous boundaries and weak state presence. These areas have been consistently identified in reports and scholarly works as critical hotspots for the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), owing to their proximity to transnational smuggling routes and limited law enforcement reach. The study's interview questions will be guided by the themes of operational impact of small arms and light weapons (SALWs) proliferation on international organizations, local security dynamics, the effectiveness of regional and international interventions, and the logistical challenges faced by humanitarian organizations. These themes were carefully selected to guide the exploration of how arms proliferation disrupts humanitarian operations and poses obstacles to relief efforts in conflict zones. Furthermore, the selection of one location per state underscores a methodological commitment to geographic spread while maintaining a sample size that is focused enough for qualitative depth. The uniform allocation of five interviews per site enhances comparability across locations and helps uncover region-wide patterns in the dynamics of arms proliferation and insecurity. In summary, the methodology section outlines a structured and purposeful sampling strategy designed to capture localized knowledge from areas with direct experience of the SALW crisis. These insights are vital for understanding community-level perceptions, institutional responses, and the everyday implications of the ongoing security crisis in the region. On a final note, the data analysis was conducted using NVivo 15 software.

4. Results

This section presents the results of findings gathered from the interviews conducted and the analysis of the interviews using NVivo 15 software.

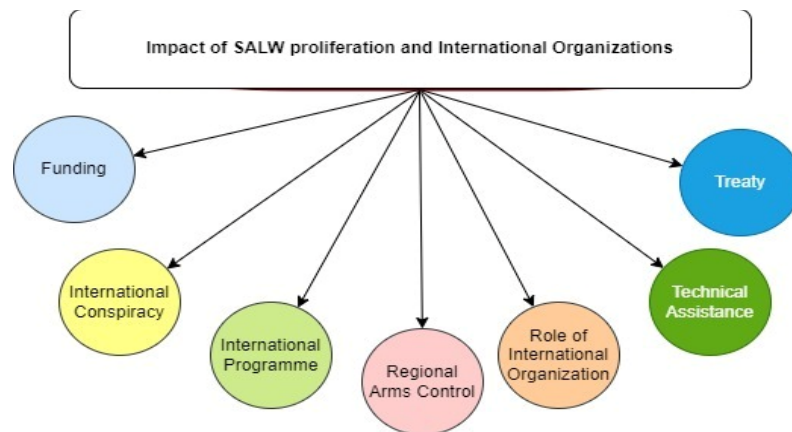


Figure 1. Multifaceted impacts of arms proliferation

Figure 1 illustrates the multifaceted impacts of arms proliferation and the corresponding roles of international organizations, highlighting key mechanisms such as treaties, technical assistance, regional arms control, international programmes, funding, and international conspiracies. The following shows the Impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons on International Organizations, based on the analysis of interviews.

4.1. Funding

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons has an impact on International Organizations. The interviews conducted revealed that: “International organizations, such as the United Nations and ECOWAS, have supported Nigeria through arms control treaties, security funding, and capacity-building initiatives. However, weak implementation, corruption, and porous borders continue to undermine these efforts, limiting their overall impact (INF_4)”. Another informant added that “Through funding, capacity building, and policy support, international organizations have played a vital role. Nigeria receives assistance from the United Nations (UN) in tracking and managing illicit weapons through its Programme of Action on Small Arms. Another tool for controlling the flow of weapons within West Africa is the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms. Amnesty International and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) are two organizations that raise public awareness of the humanitarian consequences of arms proliferation (INF_10).

4.2. Regional Arm Control

There is an issue of regional arms control, as the informant also highlighted, “ECOWAS's Small Arms Convention promotes regional arms control, while UNODC supports arms tracing programs. The EU-funded “SALW Control” project aids disarmament and community resilience, though enforcement challenges persist in Nigeria (INF_4). Similarly, an informant buttressed that “Insecurity in Northwestern Nigeria is increasing, with rising banditry, kidnappings, and communal violence despite government efforts and military interventions” (INF_6). Another impact is that “It has impacted the region negatively as tension is built among those in residence there with a high rate of political violence, illicit arms smuggling, and insecurities. This has led people to defend themselves without relying on the government (INF_8). In addition to the above, an informant further added that: “Measure unbearable penalty for any smugglers of SALW proliferation, to also encourage the state security at the border with postmodern weapons and incentives, to digitalize the smuggling check at the border in such a way that corruption will reduce among the officers in charge. Regarding this, anyone caught will be automatically captured and brought to face the law (INF_11). There is “Collaborating with neighbouring countries and international organizations to tackle arms proliferation holistically” (INF_3). Finally, it tightens border control by closing the importation of certain goods from neighbouring countries.

4.3 International Conspiracy

The Nigerian government is not doing well enough to tackle the issue of arms proliferation and insecurity at large due to an international conspiracy. The analysis shows that “In America, a Congressman recently accused his government of sponsoring Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria” (INF_1). Another informant said that “High-income countries might also export arms, contributing to the global distribution of SALWs” (INF_2). Another informant stated that: “Nothing much, while in some cases, they participate in enhancing it. For instance, the international community supplies a certain number of bandits to guide the goldmine of Zamfara state, and that singular act has increased the availability of these weapons (INF_3)

4.4 Role of International Organizations

International organizations have played a significant role in combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Northwestern Nigeria. The interviews conducted show that: "International organisations, with their efforts, have collaborated with regional and national initiatives, with the sole aim of mitigating the impact of SALWs' proliferation in Northwestern Nigeria. e.g., United Nations Security Council Resolution 1467, which was adopted unanimously on March 18, 2003, to express concern over the proliferation of SALWs and mercenary activities in West Africa (INF_8). Another informant said that: "The ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP) helps Nigeria and other West African nations stop the spread of small arms. It focuses on enhancing arms stockpile management, bolstering border controls, and disarmament initiatives to reduce the flow of illicit weapons (INF_10). Similarly, an informant put it that: "They are trying through the peacekeeping operations of the UN and ECOMOG group in Ecowas, but requires more effort. United Nations Peacekeeping Operations through the UN Security Council have always ensured sensitization across most of these regions, but need to do more (INF_11 & INF_14). ECOWAS has been trying to maintain peace in the West African Region. The interviews further revealed that "the Nigerian government collaborated with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) to implement disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs" (INF_18).

In addition, another informant said, "The UNDP supported the Nigerian government in implementing disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programs. The EU supported the Nigerian government in strengthening its SALW control capacity, particularly in the North-West region (INF_18). The international organizations also play a role in "Implementation of policies and external support, both financially and in manpower" (INF_19). In another development, an informant said, "Trying to enforce the ECOWAS protocol to ensure peace and stability in the region. There are different programmes and plans that are being executed by international organisations, even though most of these interventions are being arrested by saboteurs during execution (INF_5). One of the most effective ways the government can prevent the proliferation of SALW is to ensure that it conducts thorough and timely operations whenever there is an attack on any community in the region. Also, stringent laws should be made to control arms proliferation across borders. The interviews further revealed that: "International organizations have not been fighting the war against the proliferation of SALW effectively, even though they can assist the Nigerian government to combat the menace by helping them with the necessary things needed (INF_24). Another informant observed that: "International bodies have pressured the Nigerian government to adopt stricter measures on arms proliferation. While some weapons have been recovered, the overall effectiveness of disarmament programs remains low due to poor implementation. Implementing well-structured, incentivized weapons collection programs to reduce arms circulation (INF_25).

An informant added that: "The UN and ECOWAS have provided technical support to improve Nigeria's arms control mechanisms. ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP): A regional initiative aimed at strengthening national arms control institutions in West Africa (INF_22). In support of the above, another informant said, "International bodies have pressured the Nigerian government to adopt stricter measures on arms proliferation" (INF_17). Also, an informant said that, "International organizations control the sale of weapons to non-government actors. They also conduct joint patrol exercises with the Nigerian government. For instance, during the Buhari government, countries like Mali, Niger, and the rest did a joint force exercise to eradicate banditry" (INF_12). In addition, an informant said, "International organization helps cushion the effects of insecurity in the region even though it seems not enough" (INF_17). However, "There are NGOs such as NSAID that provide aid for those displaced by the crisis and others who have been supporting the military" (INF_10). Informant further said that: "United Nations' "Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects" (UN PoA), which includes the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), allowing for improved national controls on weapons, tracing mechanisms, and international cooperation to combat illicit trafficking (INF_16):

International organizations have played a significant role in combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Northwestern Nigeria, such as "There are NGO funded by the UN that operate in these areas, but mostly they are to provide relief for victims of small and light weapons proliferation, not to address the root cause (INF_20). In support of the above, another informant observed that: "International organizations like the Small Arms Survey have played an important role in research, data collection, and public awareness campaigns related to the impact of SALWs. Their publications and reports have been instrumental in raising global awareness about the scale of the small arms problem in West Africa, influencing policy changes in Nigeria and throughout the region (INF_20). Given that many small arms are smuggled into Nigeria from neighbouring countries, international organizations have focused on enhancing border security and law enforcement capabilities to prevent illicit arms trafficking. The interview further revealed that: "International organizations, like the UN and ECOWAS, support Nigeria with technical assistance, funding for disarmament programs, and promoting regional cooperation to curb arms trafficking (INF_22). Successful interventions include ECOWAS's small arms control program, UN's disarmament initiatives, and awareness campaigns promoting non-violence and community security in affected regions.

4.5. Technical Assistance

Another contribution of an international organization is technical assistance, as the informant put it, "United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA): UNODA has provided technical assistance and support to the Nigerian government to develop and implement effective SALW control measures" (INF_19). Another area of the contribution of international organizations is programmes, as the interviews show: United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): UNDP has implemented programs aimed at reducing the proliferation of SALW, including community-based initiatives and support for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs (INF_19)

4.6. Treaty

Part of the contributions of international organization is also in area of security as the informant interviewed said: The European Union's Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Implementation Support: The EU's ATT implementation support project has helped to strengthen the capacity of countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to implement the ATT, reducing the risk of small arms and light weapons proliferation (INF_11).

5. Discussion

5.1. Operational Constraints

5.1.1. Regional Arm Control

The finding also shows that ECOWAS's Small Arms Convention promotes regional arms control, while UNODC supports arms tracing programs. The EU-funded "SALW Control" project aids disarmament and community resilience, though enforcement challenges persist in Nigeria. According to Bankole et al. (2021), ECOWAS is among the top regional economic communities (RECs) on the African continent. All except Cape Verde, an island nation off Africa's Atlantic coast near Senegal, ECOWAS member states are connected regionally. Some of these regions are Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo. Most of the instability found in the West African region is caused by recurring intra-state conflicts. Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALWs) are illegally distributed, which greatly contributes to this situation. To add to this challenge, weak borders, corruption within the country, growing capabilities to manufacture weapons locally, and low standards for physical protection and stockpiling make things more problematic.

5.1.2. Technical Assistance

Also, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) has provided technical assistance and support to the Nigerian government to develop and implement effective SALW control measures. Bassey et. Al (2025) submits that, according to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), SALW proliferation takes place more easily and more SALW are smuggled in regions like sub-Saharan Africa due to weak governance, open borders, and ongoing conflicts. Adebowale I. et. al. (2024) further argued that the UN Convention against Transnational Organised Crime, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the Economic Community for West African States' (ECOWAS) Convention on SALW, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are all in existence and have served in various capacities of providing essential help in the form of technical assistance to the fight against transnational crime and arms proliferation in Africa.

5.2. Perceptions Of International Actors

5.2.1. Role of International Organizations

International organizations have played a significant role in combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) in Northwestern Nigeria. International organisations, through their efforts, have collaborated with regional and national initiatives aimed at mitigating the impact of SALWs' proliferation in Northwestern Nigeria. e.g., United Nations Security Council Resolution 1467, which was adopted unanimously on March 18, 2003, to express concern over the proliferation of SALWs and mercenary activities in West Africa.

5.2.2. International Conspiracy

The findings also show that there is an international conspiracy in armed control in America, a congressman recently accused his government of sponsoring Boko Haram terrorists in Nigeria. On 25 January 2025, the Chief of Defence Staff, General Christopher Musa, spoke with Al Jazeera and mentioned an international conspiracy behind, in his words, the effort to destabilize Nigeria. The General left the call deliberately vague about who might be pulling the strings. Three weeks later, on 18 February 2025, Congressman Scott Perry disclosed in a House committee hearing that USAID directs \$690 million annually into various anti-insurgency projects across Africa, money that, by extension,

reaches Boko Haram. The pattern starts to make sense the moment we gain ground; out come the blanket charges of human-rights abuses, as if to distract both the public and the courtroom.

International Programmes

The UNDP has implemented programs aimed at reducing the proliferation of SALW, including community-based initiatives and support for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs. Olagoke et al. (2023) posit that the UN Security Council arms embargoes for countries or areas experiencing violence and instability are sanctions specifically designed to maintain peace and promote sustainability. The sanctions were also designed to stop unauthorised groups from acquiring weapons. Capacities have been enhanced among national security forces and border control agencies through collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union. The sanction also served as a training offered to cover arms control, border porosity, and law enforcement. Another project launched by the international community was put in place to help disarm and reintegrate people who fought in conflicts, and to also support the handing over of firearms from repenters for them to fit back into society.

5.3. Governance Gaps

5.3.1 Funding

The findings reveal that international organizations, including the United Nations and ECOWAS, have supported Nigeria through arms control treaties, security funding, and capacity-building initiatives. However, weak implementation, corruption, and porous borders continue to undermine these efforts, limiting their overall impact. Akinyemi and Adeoye (2022) argued that funding initiatives are less effective due to a lack of political foresight, low budgets, and insufficient cooperation at the regional level. In assessing funding as a weakness in the existing control methods, they suggest steps and methods to prevent the problem of arms proliferation. They further posited that if SALW are more prevalent, it lowers the success of efforts in government and development in all ramifications, including collaborative efforts with international organizations. Additionally, economic activities such as farming and commerce are disrupted by armed violence involving SALW, which also reduces the amount of investment from both domestic and international sources. The weak enforcement of laws, such as the ECOWAS Convention and Nigeria's Arms Trade Treaty, is primarily due to a lack of sincerity of purpose, insufficient funding, and low technical skills within law enforcement agencies (Aluko & Ajala, 2021). Against this backdrop, it is safe to say that one of the reasons why it has been so difficult to curb the proliferation of SALW in northwestern Nigeria is funding issues. Corruption and lack of technical know-how.

5.3.2. Enforcement of Regional Treaty

The European Union's Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) Implementation Support: The EU's ATT implementation support project has helped to strengthen the capacity of countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America to implement the ATT, reducing the risk of small arms and light weapons proliferation. Bassey et al. (2025) posited that the ATT, which began in 2014, is a binding document that oversees all international trade in conventional arms, including SALWs. The ATT aims at stopping and eradicating the illegal trade in weapons by setting up common protocols for the transfer of arms. The treaty equally calls on states to ensure potential abuses or conflicts involving the weapons are not possible prior to approving their transfer. To provide a clearer overview of the distribution of the key themes identified in the study, we present the following cross-tab table, which outlines the relative frequency of the themes across different gender categories. This table gives a quantitative perspective that supports the qualitative findings discussed in the thematic clusters.

Table 1. Result of Cross-Tabulation the relative frequency of the themes across different gender categories

Cross Tab	Gender = Male (20)	Gender = Female (5)	Total (25)
Funding	4.65%	0%	4%
International Conspiracy	6.98%	0%	6%
International Programmes	2.33%	0%	2%
Regional Arm Control	9.3%	14.29%	10%
Role of International Organizations	39.53%	0%	34%
Technical Assistance	2.33%	0%	2%
Treaty	2.33%	0%	2%
Total (unique)	67.45%	14.29%	60%

A cross-tab analysis of the Impact of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Northwest Nigeria, showing all the sub-themes developed and analysed. It revealed that the role of international organizations has the highest percentage at 34%, while international conspiracy comes second at 6%, and others follow. This implies that international organizations have a significant role to play in both arms proliferation and curtailing the menace. The findings of this research not only confirm but also expand the application of structural realism in understanding the operational constraints of international organizations within conflict areas, specifically in Northwestern Nigeria. By structural realism (as Kenneth Waltz suggested), the perspective focuses on the limitations that international organizations face within the anarchic international system, with the sovereignty of states as its core value, and the absence of a power that would be considered coercive of any kind of international organization. These findings resonate with this theory framework because they underscore the high operational obstacles that organizations such as the UN and ECOWAS must deal with, given a system where governance structures within countries are weak and the mechanisms for enforcing them are defective.

The structural limitations that realism structuralists expect are the same as the Operational Constraints identified, including porous borders, corruption, and poor law enforcement. Such problems create a situation where international bodies, despite their efforts and the assistance of agreements such as the ECOWAS Small Arms Convention, struggle to exert significant influence over the proliferation of arms. The presuppositions of structural realism are also disputed by the Perceptions of international actors, along with their tendency to refer to the role of non-state actors and international conspiracies. The role of power plays between states in determining interventions according to structural realism, but our research results deny the effectiveness that might be instilled in international interventions because of the role played by local parties to the conflict, including insurgent factions and corrupt elements within the state governments, hence complicating the concept of state-based interventions.

Besides this, the Governance Gaps evident in the study may also be viewed as an expansion of the theoretical framework, as they illustrate how weak points in the state structure act as barriers to the effectiveness of international interventions. The assumption of structural realism that the key international players are states does not apply to our findings, as our findings indicate that regional treaties and international programs are frustrated not just by the weakness of states, but also by regional and global system phenomena, including international conspiracies and a lack of cooperation. Put simply, structural realism represents an effective tool in understanding the constraints that international organizations must contend with. This paper has demonstrated, however, that local, transnational, and non-state factors are crucial in determining the success of arms control and humanitarian interventions in conflict regions.

5.4. Recommendations

5.4.1. Short-Term Strategies (Immediate Actions)

Match Grants with Public Budget Screens and Audits

In the short term, international organizations and donor agencies should ensure that all grants and funds allocated to arms control and disarmament are transparent. One of the main difficulties noted is the ineffectiveness and possible misallocation of resources, as governance and corruption are weak. The process of money dispersion can be tracked better by adopting the practice of line-by-line budget publicity and quarterly audits (organized, possibly by the local watchdog organizations or academic institutions). Transparency will ensure that the misappropriation of funds is minimized, ensuring that the money is, in fact, used where it is needed, particularly in the delivery of infrastructure and support to communities affected by the proliferation of SALWs. The efforts will eliminate stagnation due to political inactivity and enhance the credibility of international interventions.

5.4.2. Medium-Term Strategies (Structural Changes)

Build Lasting Capacity in Border and Customs Agencies

In the medium term, there should be a push towards ensuring the capacity of local institutions, especially the border and customs agencies. The operational limitations singled out, including the poor functioning of law enforcement, porous borders, and the lack of adequate capacity to curb the smuggling of arms, demand a long-term strategy of establishing local skills. Training of border personnel in both theory and practical field exercises, as opposed to a simple workshop, will promote sustainability. These performances can be enhanced by giving them more explicit equipment, computerized records to track confiscated weapons, and regular performance reviews. There will also be regular progress reports that will provide an instructional trace of achievements, such as enhanced stop rates and accurate inventories, as well as a decrease in discrepancies among global structures and local implementation.

5.4.3. Long-Term Strategies (Sustainable Solutions)

Tune Regional Treaties to Hustler Markets

Regional treaties, such as ECOWAS, should be tailored in the long term to address the specific realities of arms smuggling and illicit trade at the grassroots level. Enforcement and cooperation, so far, remain weak and inefficient indicators of the necessity of feasible and effective solutions. International agreements are to be modified to consider local issues, including smuggling and the use of other markets for arms sales. A major conclusion drawn was the sense of an international conspiracy, characterized by a lack of collaboration between local power structures and international forces. To overcome this, real-time intelligence sharing, cross-border patrol, and the imposition of fines on non-compliant member states should be put into regional frameworks. This would ensure that the treaties are not merely symbolic but will ultimately lead to a reduction in illegal arms trafficking. More coordinated activity will also disrupt the shoddy networks that support the proliferation of weapons and domestic challenges.

6. Conclusions

A recent study scrutinized how the rapid spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons SALWs intertwines with the day-to-day hurdles that plague relief operations in Northwestern Nigeria. The case remains illustrative despite its local hue. International umbrellas-Un-sponsored grants, ECOWAS seed money, EU tech packages, even imported rule-books-strike a familiar pose on paper yet yield patchy dividends on the ground. Weak governance, leaky borders, entrenched petty corruption, and limited bureaucratic expertise often overlook the fine print. Treaties such as the ECOWAS Convention or the UN Arms Trade Covenant gather digital dust while muskets and pistols slip hand over hand toward insurgents and street gangs. Spotty enforcement, weak interagency links, and uneven political will undermine whatever good intentions may linger. UNDP reintegration pushes, backed by UNODA muscle, stall outright whenever a dependable local partner fails to shoulder the load. Doubts about outside powers secretly engineering the region's turmoil still linger; the rumours, however inflammatory, make observers question whether today's global involvement is principled or merely tactical. Various international agencies still draft memoranda and dispense expertise, yet their impact often buckles under the weight of local disorganization. Expertise delivered from abroad means little if the ministries it is meant to strengthen are starved of staff, money, and coherent leadership.

The epidemic rise of small arms and light weapons in north-western Nigeria starkly illustrates the limited leverage external actors possess once bullets, buyers, and brokers fill the vacuum. International missions have poured expertise, logistics, and financial resources into the region, yet any lasting impact they leave is circumstantial at best. Absent a stronger political spine in Abuja, more effective funding protocols, and police systems that can bridge the gap between statutes and streets, these overseas bursts of energy will remain fleeting. Observed on the ground, the crisis is not deafening neglect from afar but rather a local habit of half-measures and forgetfulness. Treaties, signature pages, and conference caf-culture, though valuable, accomplish little without thorough follow-through. A workable path, therefore, pivots on uprooting petty graft, elevating institutional know-how, and welding accountability to the daily routine of enforcement.

Based on the above conclusion, future studies would find it useful to compare them with similar fragile environments where small arms proliferation is a problem and poor governance prevails. Observing other areas of concern where problems are similar to those in the Sahel in Africa or areas in Central America would help investigators understand how various international organizations, local institutions, and government systems interact with arms control actions. Comparative studies would also enable a better understanding of why regional responses to arms proliferation vary, thereby providing insight into the determinants behind the success or failure of international interventions. Future research will also be able to test the direct effect of local politics and institutional capacity on the performance of international treaties and disarmament programs. Examining how an intervention by the international community, which is usually external, can be better accommodated to suit local contexts without compromising sovereignty may offer a clue to strengthening the relationship between international actors and fragile states. Lastly, potential research directions may study the role of non-state actors and other informal networks in arms proliferation. Since local actors often play significant roles in conflict areas, their contributions to the supply and demand of weapons are vital in crafting more effective intervention strategies.

Author Contributions: Conceptualisation, M.S.J and M.F.; methodology, M.S.J.; software, M.S.J and M.F.; validation, M.S.J and M.F.; formal analysis, M.S.J and M.F.; investigation, M.S.J; resources, M.S.J and M.F.; data curation, M.S.J.; writing – original draft preparation, M.S.J.; writing – review and editing, M.F.; visualisation, M.F.; supervision, M.F.; project administration, M.S.J.; funding acquisition, M.S.J and M.F. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

Data Availability Statement: Not applicable.

Acknowledgments: The authors would like to thank each respondent for taking the time to provide their meaningful input. The authors would also like to thank the reviewers for their constructive comments and suggestions.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Table 2: Demographic data of the informants

INF 1	Jigawa	Custom Officer	35	Male
INF 2	Jigawa	Vigilante (Local Security)	40	Female
INF 3	Jigawa	Navy	51	Male
INF 4	Jigawa	Public servant	40	Male
INF 5	Jigawa	Youth Leader	38	Male
INF 6	Katsina	Immigration officer	40	Male
INF 7	Katsina	Vigilante (Local Security)	35	Female
INF 8	Katsina	Custom officer	52	Male
INF 9	Katsina	Traditional ruler	45	Male
INF 10	Katsina	Immigration officer	43	Male
INF 11	Kebbi	Traditional ruler	41	Male
INF 12	Kebbi	Public servant	40	Male
INF 13	Kebbi	Navy	45	Male
INF 14	Kebbi	Public servant	35	Male
INF 15	Kebbi	Vigilante (Local Security)	35	Male
INF 16	Sokoto	Custom Officer	54	Male
INF 17	Sokoto	Police	40	Male
INF 18	Sokoto	Repentant Bandit	48	Male
INF 19	Sokoto	Traditional Ruler	40	Male
INF 20	Sokoto	Vigilante (Local Security)	42	Female
INF 21	Zamfara	Navy	32	Male
INF 22	Zamfara	Custom officer	37	Male
INF 23	Zamfara	Vigilante (Local Security)	43	Female
INF 24	Zamfara	Army	44	Male
INF 25	Zamfara	Traditional ruler	41	Male

Table 2 presents the demographic data of the informants, whose ages range from 19 to 54. The majority of the informants interviewed were males (21), while only 4 were females. The categories of informants include Traditional Rulers, the army, Vigilantes, Repentant Bandits, immigration personnel, and other security and paramilitary personnel. Informants were coded INF_1 to INF_25 for confidentiality, in line with Creswell's (2008) suggestion that confidentiality is crucial in qualitative research.

References

- Adebayo, T., & Okonkwo, J. (2023). The dynamics of small arms proliferation in sub-Saharan Africa: Implications for regional security. *African Security Review*, 32(1), 15-29.
- Adebowale I. A. et al (2024). Appraising The Multi-Dimensional Consequences of Arms Proliferation on Internal Security in Nigeria. *Sejarah: Journal of the Department of History, Universiti Malaya*; Vol. 33 No. (2) 2024:142-159; <https://doi.org/10.22452/sejarah.vol33no2.8>
- Ahmed, T. M. (2021). Banditry dynamism and operating pattern of crime in north-west Nigeria: A threat to national security. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350158153>.
- Aina, D. (2024). Armed men attack Obajana transmission station, destroy power transformers. PUNCH 14th November 2024.
- Aina, T. (2024). Nigeria's unemployment rate rose to 5.3% in Q1 – Report. PUNCH 24th September 2024.
- Aisedion, R. (2022). The Supply of Small Arms and Light Weapons to Conflict Zones: The Bane of Onset, Intensity and Duration of Armed Conflict in Africa. *International Journal of Research Culture Society*, 6(1), 98-105.

- Akinyemi, K. and Adebayo L. (2022). Corruption and political complicity in arms trafficking across Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 42(1), 67-85.
- Aljazeera, 25th January, 2025. human rights abuse reports and security. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b826cT1ROa8>
- Awotayo, O.O., Akinrinde, O.O., Oyebade, O. (2022). Proliferation of illicit arms and control mechanisms in Nigeria: A critical socioeconomic analysis. *Acta Politica Polonica*, 1 (53), 5–14. DOI: 10.18276/ap. 2022.53-01.
- Bankale, O.B., Uchegbu, C.J. (2021). West Africa: Regional Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation. In: Tar, U.A., Onwurah, C.P. (eds) *The Palgrave Handbook of Small Arms and Conflicts in Africa*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-62183-4-43>
- Bassey et. Al. (2025). Small Arms and Light Weapons Proliferation in Nigeria: Problems and Prospects. *International Journal of Humanities Social Science and Management (IJHSSM)* Volume 5, Issue 1, Jan.-Feb., 2025, pp: 233-244 ISSN: 3048-6874.
- Conflict Armament Research. (2018). Weapons of the Islamic State. <https://www.conflictarm.com/reports/weapons-of-the-islamic-state/>
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions: thousand oaks*, ca: Sage.
- Ibrahim Index of African Governance. (2020). Retrieved from <https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/iiaq/>
- Ibrahim, L. O., & Dauda, A. (2024). Insecurity and its implications on Economic Development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)*, 8(7), 1563-1570.
- Institute for Security Studies. (2020). Terrorism in Africa. <https://issafrica.org/research/books-and-other-publications/terrorism-in-africa>
- International Crisis Group. (2019). The Crime-Terror Nexus in Africa. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/crime-terror-nexus-africa>
- Isenyo, G. (2024). Outrage as bandits burn harvested maize on Kaduna farms. PUNCH 13th November.
- Mingset (2021). Economic integration and border security: A holistic view. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*, 36(1), 1-14. doi: 10.1080/08865655.2020.1860113
- National Centre for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (NCCSALW) 2021.
- Obi, C. (2017). Terrorism, banditry, and criminality in West Africa: A threat assessment. Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. Retrieved files/bueros/nigeria/13723.pdf
- Ogundele, R. (2023). An evaluation of Nigeria's arms control policies: Successes and limitations. *Policy and Security Review*, 19(4), 231-245
- Ogunnaike, J. (2024). Bandits attack luxury bus, rob passengers, set bus ablaze in Ogun. Vanguard April 2
- Ojewale, J. S., Oyewole, S., & Aina, F. (2024). Forces of terror: Armed banditry and insecurity in north-west Nigeria. *Democracy and Security*, 1-28
- Ojewale, O. (2024). Nigeria bandits strategically target school children for kidnapping – here's why. An Empirical Evidence from Nigeria. *Journal of Economics and Policy*, 6(2), 46-66. The Conversation March 26.
- Okoli, C.A. (2019). Kidnapping for ransom has become Nigeria's latest security problem. QUARTZ AFRICA 2019 available at Quartz>Africa>1624376 accessed 21/10/2024
- Olagoke O. A. Et al (2023). Terrorism and Arms Proliferation in Sub-Saharan Africa: A Comprehensive Analysis. *IJINLE JOURNAL* Vol. 6. NO. 1. 2023, Pp160-175. ISSN: 3027-2475.
- Onime, B. E. (2018). Insecurity and Economic Growth in Nigeria: A Diagnostic Review. *European Scientific Journal*, 14(4), 377-391.
- Prasad, C., & Gupta, P. (2020). Educational Impact of the Society. *International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning*, 7(6), 1-7.
- Small Arms Survey. (2022). The global flow of illicit arms: Regional trends and implications. *Small Arms Survey Report*, 2022(1), 15-38.
- Sule, B., & Deribe, A. (2020). The impact of small arms and light weapons (salw) in the proliferation of armed group conflicts in northeastern Nigeria: Interrogating the Boko Haram phenomenon. *International Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences*, 6(4), 152-160.
- Tanko, A. (2021). Nigeria's security crises – five different threats. BBC News <https://www.bbc.com > news> accessed 11/11/2024
- Theophilus, O. A., Alagh, T., Chinyere, H. D., Sunday, B. A., Stella, O. O. and Gambo, Y. C., 2023. "Systematic Analysis of the Security and Economic-Implications of Migrations and Regional Conflict in West Africa". *Global Journal of Social Sciences*. Vol 22 No. 1 Nov, 9 2023. Doi: <https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/gjss.v22i1.13>

TVC News. USAID Spends Six Hundred And Ninety Million Dollars Annually - Scott Perry. Feb 18, 2025. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9GsWViX4Q0Q>

UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) 1994. Human Development Report 1994: New Dimensions of Human Security. New York.

UNESCO (2022). Out-of-school number are growing in sub-Saharan Africa – UNESCO www.unesco.org > gem-report accessed 23/11/2024

United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA). (2020). The Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons. United Nations.

United Nations. (2021). Arms Control Measures. Retrieved from [UN Website] (<https://www.un.org/disarmament/arms-control-measures>).

UNODC. (2019). Terrorism Prevention and Criminal Justice. Retrieved from <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/terrorism/index.html>

Waltz, Kenneth N. 2000. Structural Realism After the Cold War, International Security 25, no.1: 5- 41.

World Bank. (2018). Inclusive Growth. Retrieved from <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/inclusive-growth>