

EXERCISE BENIN 2004



BLUE COUNTRY STUDY

Version as of April 2004

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CAVEATS

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BLUE COUNTRY STUDY

Identification

Conventional long form:	Blue Republic
Conventional short form:	Blue
Local long name:	République Bleue
Local short name:	BLEU
Nationality noun:	Blue
Nationality adjective:	Blue
Language:	The official language is French. English is taught at school. However, traditional African languages are widely used for everyday life.

Overview

BLUE like several of the countries of the area reached independence in 1960. After a period of tension, the relations with the former French colonial power became completely normal in a climate of mutual respect and cultural and economical exchanges proceeded harmoniously. The relationships with neighbouring countries are rather casual; however the YELLOW Za-Tanta (HIZAN KOGEDE) province could become an issue. This area was allotted to YELLOW at the time of the colonization whereas in fact its population is ethnically and culturally linked to that of the province of ABOMEY.

Ethnic rivalries, in particular in the south of the country (province of ABOMEY where the Chawomba ethnic group prevails) create areas of tension which sometimes, exacerbated by a bad perception of the equal treatment between the citizens, can turn to violent demonstration.

The discovery and the exploitation of oil in the area of ABOMEY showed great signs of richness to come to the inhabitants. After several years of oil exploitation, the population has seen few improvements to their daily lives, and their resentment appeared to have increased significantly lately.

GEO STRATEGIC OVERVIEW

Historical Background

The area of present-day Blue has been controlled throughout history by various regional powers. In the early 1700s, the Kingdom of Blue covered a much bigger geographical area in the North, including most of the Northern Country.

The ancient capital of Blue was Abomey, but the French changed the capital to Savalou during the time of colonization.

Important Recent Events

Towards mid-nineteenth century, Portugal, Great Britain, Germany and France became interested in what is currently Blue.

In 1896/97, France achieved the conquest of the country that became the protectorate of BLUE.

In 1932, Following a rebellion of the CHAWOMBA tribe that had spilled over the entire protectorate Blue, it was abolished and replaced by a direct colonial regime with application of martial law. The country was partitioned in three regional regions: BLUE (the capital city was transferred from Abomey to Savalou), yellow region and Northern region.

In 1947, Blue that had given many combatants to the Free French was reestablished as a colonial region, however no change was made to the geographical partition.

On 5 August 1960, Blue acceded to independence.

The First Republic lasted from 1960 to 1975. On 8 April 1975, following a crisis in social conditions, the people came out into the streets to call on the army to take over the conduct of State affairs. This date marked the beginning of a period of instability.

On 13 September 1975, a new Constitution was adopted, thus initiating the Second Republic.

On 18 May February 1982, the army seized power.

On 20 December 1985, the Third Republic was ushered in with the adoption of a new Constitution.

On 25 February 1990, the army seized power again.

On 4 July 1997, a new Constitution was adopted and the Fourth Republic came into being.

The country developed republican institutions. The Constitution of 4 July 1997 lays down a republican structure for State authority in both form and content, with clear separation between the legislative, executive and judicial powers.

On 15 June 2002, President Vincent Diabale was elected by a very small majority. He designated Jean Samady to be his Prime Minister.

May 2003, Blue civil servants went on strike and paralyzed the administration. Prime Minister Samady had to promise a huge increase of the salaries to put them back to work.

Constitution and Institution

A committee appointed by parliament and chaired by then Prime Minister Diabale drew up the new constitution in 1997. It replaced the previous one written and adopted in September 1975. It was approved in referendum, held at the same time as the parliamentary election on 4 July 1997. The constitution lays down a tripartite system of government - the executive with limited presidential powers, the legislative, and the judiciary. The constitution spells out a number of Human Rights and, for the first time in Blue, establishes the principle that those arrested are innocent until proven guilty.

Oil/Gas Overview

The so-called "Tri-borders region" has huge oil reserves, estimated at 900,000,000 barrels for the entire region, 20 to 25% of which is located in the Abomey province, the rest in Yellow territory. In addition, Blue might have important natural gas reserves that have not yet been exploited.

At present oil export levels are 10,000 BPD, this gives annual revenue of \$97.2 Million.

The future of the Blue oil industry is linked to the unobstructed exportation of oil via the main oil pipelines that links the Abomey oilfield to the Hizan-Kogede in Yellow and continues to

the Cotonou Seaport. This pipeline has been built following an international agreement signed in 1993 by Blue, Yellow and Orange.

Many foreign experts have come to work in the oil sector during the past ten years, living mostly in city of Abomey. Due to the relative unrest in the province, some of them started to send their families back home during the last two years.

Geographical Constraints

Blue is a landlocked country that depends on its neighbouring countries for access to the sea for exports and imports.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

Terrain Overview

The country is divided into natural geographic regions. In the south, the Abomey province lies within a plateau made of iron clay with marshy dips. A silica clayey plateau with wooded savannah extends north of Abomey to the foothills of the Atakora hill in the north.

Two main rivers and their tributary flow from northwest to southeast.



Total Area:	21,200 Sq Km
Land Area:	21,200 Sq Km
Comparative Area:	About half the size of Netherlands
Time Zone:	A (GMT+1)

Boundaries:	520Km
Boundaries Coastline:	Landlocked
Lowest Point:	73 m
Highest Point:	658 m

Climate Overview

The climate of Blue is tropical, therefore it is hot and humid in the south and drier in the north, and the average daily temperature reaches 28°C. The Dry season is from December to April. Humidity is lower in the North but the temperature is generally hotter.

Rivers

The two main rivers in Blue (the Zou and Koffo) flow from the northwest to southeast. They divide the country into three main geographic regions

Natural Resources

Blue's natural resources include manganese, limestone, marble; small deposits of gold, antimony, copper, nickel, bauxite, lead, phosphates, zinc, and silver. Most of these resources are still to be exploited.

ENERGY

Electricity

Blue electricity produced was 50 million kWh in 2001 and its consumption reached 47 million kWh. This was generated from fossil fuel (70%) and hydroelectric (30%).

Oil Consumption

Blue's oil consumption reached 2000 bbl/day in 2001.

Food Supply

Agriculture represents 15% of the economy's production, cotton, peanuts, shea nuts, sesame, sorghum, millet, corn, rice and livestock being most important.

The poverty of the country is reflected in the condition of many farms. The production levels are not enough to ensure self-sufficiency. Therefore, Blue has to import more than 30% of its food requirements and depends on international assistance to provide for food in the poorest regions of the country

LAND USE

The Blue land use consists of arable farming (12.43%) and orchard crops (0.18%), the other 87.39% is not cultivated (1998 est) and left open to cattle grazing or forest.

Environmental Current Issues

Recent droughts have severely affected the marginal agriculture in north, due to the inadequate supplies of potable water. Poaching threatens the wildlife population; there is also widespread deforestation and desertification.

Environmental Natural Hazards

The hot, dry and dusty Harmattan wind may affect north of the country during the dry season.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Roads

Of the total road network of about 1000 km, more than 600 km are merely earth tracks. One of the country's two main routes links Abomey to Savalou and the second links Atakpame to Abomey and then continues eastward towards the Yellow oilfield region. The poverty of the nation is obvious when the condition of much of its infrastructure is examined.

Railways

Blue and Orange share a common railroad system that is a remnant of colonization. The rail line links Cotonou to Abomey and then follows, almost exactly, the border between Blue and Yellow. It is a narrow gauge railway and is singled-track on most of its course.

A convention signed between Blue and Orange in 1962, which is still current, organizes the maintenance of the railroad.

Trains

After de-colonization, Blue gained possession of 4 diesel locomotives and 150 freight cars, these are very poorly maintained.

Waterways

The rivers in Blue are not navigable.

Pipelines

Following an agreement signed between Blue and Yellow in 1993, a 40 cm pipeline was built to connect the Abomey oilfields to the main pipeline linking the Yellow oilfields to Cotonou. This connection pipeline crosses the border with Yellow in the northern suburbs of Bohicon and joins the north - south line at Madje in Yellow. The total length of the connecting pipeline is 20 km, 9 of which is in Blue territory.

Airfields

Blue has two airfields open to CAP, the main one is at Savalou, and this has a 1700 metre concrete runway and is capable of handling regional aircraft. The second at Akakpame-Temeja has a 1000 metre grass runway that is used by Twin-Otter type aircraft.

Civil Airlines

Blue has no national airline, only a private company that operates a Twin-Otter aircraft.

Ports and Harbours

There are no ports or harbours in Blue; it is a landlocked country.

Telecommunications

Blue's telecommunications network is of poor quality and nowhere near comprehensive in its accessibility to the population, which explains the success of the "telephone cafes". The average citizen waits on a 50,000 person list for access to the telephone service.

Internet and e-mail services are only available in Savalou and Abomey and in the "internet cafes".

Radios	No data available	As of	2001
Televisions	No data available	As of	2001
Telephones	5000	As of	2001
Mobile Telephones	1000	As of	2002
Internet Service Provider (ISP)	1	As of	2002
GPS GLONASS	Not Available	As of	2001

SOCIOLOGY

The sociology of Blue is shown in the following tables:

Population

Population:	1,110,000	As of	2003
Population Growth:	0.27 (per 1000 popl.)	As of	2001
Birth Rate:	44.78 (per 1000 popl.)	As of	2003
Death Rate:	18.76 (per 1000 popl.)	As of	2003
Migration Rate:	.1 (per 1000 popl.)	As of	2003
Infant Mortality Rate:	99 (per 1000 popl.)	As of	2000

Age Structure

Age Range	% of total popl
0-14 years	46.1%
15-64 years	51%
65 years and over	2.9%

Median Age

Total for popl:	16.8 years
Males:	16.4 years
Females:	17.2 years
	(2002 est)

Other Characteristics

Life Expectancy		Literacy	
Total	44.46 Years	Total	26.6%
Male	43 Years	Female	36.9%
Female	45 Years	Male	16.6%

Population Centres

The population of Savalou is about 90,000. Other main population centres include Abomey (population 60,000) and Atakpame (population 40,000). About 80% of the population live in rural areas.

Religion Overview

Of the total population, 93.4% practice traditional African religions (Animist/Voodoo). Religious affiliation is still nominal in Blue; therefore the numbers of actual practicing adherents are much lower.

Ethnic Composition Overview

The population of Blue is comprised of 6 major ethnic groups identical to these existing in Yellow. These groups are distributed evenly in the country with the exception of the Chawomba who live mostly in the Abomey province where they constitute the majority of the population.

Since independence, Blue has made progress toward becoming a multi-ethnic society. The Government has implemented policies to put an end to any discrimination. Many ethnic minorities have entered the political process and have begun working toward integration. However, some of the Chawomba tribe members keep alive the idea that an organized discrimination against them exists at the government level.

Population Distribution Overview

In 2001, the population density in Blue was approximately forty-five people per square kilometre.

Education

Although Blue government intends to make education compulsory, nearly 75 percent of the entire population is considered to be illiterate. However, during the recent years, a huge effort has been conducted and 50 percent of the children under 12 years of age are currently attending school. The percentage for male literacy is slightly higher than for females.

Health

President Diabale has declared that universal health care should be one of his government's main objectives. However medical facilities are very limited. Sanitation, pharmacies, health care delivery remains at relatively low levels. Medicines and equipment are also in short supply; therefore the Blue medical facilities suffer a severe shortage of basic medical supplies. The three hospitals in the country are located in Savalou, Abomey and Atakpame.

Health receives 4.5 per cent of the state budget. However, under the current conditions this allocation does not meet even minimal requirements. There are inadequate resources to maintain current facilities and provide care in adequate volume or quality.

Diseases and pandemics

HIV/AIDS is currently the leading cause of death. It is assessed that the HIV/AIDS adult prevalence rate had reached 6.5% in 2001. Today, the number of adults living with HIV/AIDS could reach 100,000 people. It is estimated that 10,000 people died from AIDS in 2002.

In the recent past, the poor quality of water has led to outbreaks of acute intestinal diseases. Also, inadequate sanitary conditions have led to a high percentage of invalidism among people with diseases.

Extremism

The only source of extremism is constituted by the "Parti Independantiste Vert (PIVERT)" which is rooted within the Chawomba ethnic groups that originates in the Abomey province where it constitutes the majority of the population. The radical activists demand the creation of an ethnically pure green country that would regroup the tribes distributed in Blue and Yellow countries. This would allow the Chawombas' to take advantage of the immense benefits drawn from the oil exploitation in the area.

Organized Crime

The domestic confusion bred by PIVERT activism in the region bordering Orange has increased customs violations and threats to the populace by criminal bands ("road cutters"). Besides, Chawomba groups have always been involved in various trafficking activities across the borders.

There is increasing evidence that, at least one organized crime syndicate is established in Abomey, there are reports that provincial government representatives might protect it, although no firm evidence has been presented.

Media

Freedom of the press is part of the 1997 Blue Constitution. News media censorship constraints on human rights were then eased. However, there has been some tightening of Government controls since the Chawomba ethnic groups increased their "rebellious" activities.

There is a daily newspaper with a total daily circulation of 10,000. There is one publicly owned television broadcast station that covers only the Savalou area (from 06 AM to 2400) and 6 FM radio stations that cover the entire country. Recently some satellite dishes have appeared mostly amongst foreign workers and the Abomey province richest blue.

Cultural Sites

The most important cultural site in Blue is constituted by several historical vestiges of the ancient capital city of Abomey.

Sociological Situation

The sociological situation has become increasingly unstable as a result of persistent poverty, the disproportionate distribution of wealth, and poor health conditions.

POLITICAL SITUATION

Political System:	Constitutional Government.
Type Of Government:	Parliamentary Republic.
Multi Party:	Yes.
Independence:	1960.
Constitution:	1997.
Legal System:	Civil Law.
Judicial Review Of Legislative Acts:	Information Not Available.
Accepts ICJ Jurisdiction:	Yes.
Age Of Voting:	18.
Suffrage:	Universal.
Head of State:	President Vincent Diabale came to power winning the presidential election in 2002. The next Presidential election is scheduled for 2007.
Head Of Government:	Prime Minister Jean Samady since 20 June 2002. Cabinet: Council of Ministers are appointed by the President and confirmed by the National Assembly.
Elected Term:	5 Years.
Selection Process:	National Election.
Elections:	President is elected by popular vote to a five-year term.
Election Results:	President Diabale was elected President with 51% of the vote.
Legislative Branch:	Unicameral National Assembly (63 seats; members elected by popular vote to serve five-year terms).
Last Legislative Election:	10 September 2002.
Judicial Branch:	The President appoints Constitutional Court members. Appeal Court Judges are subject to parliamentary approval.

Political Parties

The main political parties in the country are; Blue Democratic Alliance for Democracy (DAD), Confederation for and Democracy (CFD), Party for Democracy and Progress (PDP), Movement for Progress (MFP), Party for African Independence (PAI), Party for the Development of Blue (PDB) and Blue PIVERT (BP).

Political Pressure Groups

The principal political pressure groups are; Blue Confederation of Labor (BCL,; Blue Movement for Human Rights (BMHR) and National Organization of Workers (NOW)

Election Results

At the last election the number of seats by party was; DAD and allies 33, CFD 15, PDP 5, MFP 4, PAI 4, PDB 1 and the BP 1.

Administrative Divisions

The country is divided into 3 regions; Savalou (Region and State Capital), Atakpame, and Abomey.

Relations with Regional States

Relations with the regional powers have not always been smooth, especially with Orange which is thought to be supporting the Chawomba activism. However, due to the country's geographical landlocked position, successive governments have tried their best to smooth most issues that have come up.

Relations with International Community

Blue is a member of many International and regional organizations, including: ACCT, ACP, AfDB, ECA, ECOWAS, Entente, FAO, FZ, G-77, IAEA, IBRD, ICAO, ICC, ICCT (signatory), ICFTU, ICRM, IDA, IDB, IFAD, IFC, IFRC, ILO, IMF, Interpol, IOC, IOM, ITU, MONUC, NAM, OAU, OIC, OPCW, PCA, UN, UNCTAD, UNESCO, UNIDO, UPU, WADB (regional), WAEMU, WCL, WCO, WFTU, WHO, WIPO, WMO, WtoO and the WTrO.

Environment international agreements

Blue is party to: Biodiversity, Climate Change, Desertification, Endangered Species, Hazardous Wastes, Marine Life Conservation, Ozone Layer Protection and Wetlands. Blue has signed, but not ratified: Law of the Sea, and Nuclear Test Ban agreements

International Disputes

Although Blue entertains mostly casual relationships with its closest neighbors, it still has some divergence with Yellow and Orange.

Dispute with Yellow. Blue remains in an on-going dispute with Yellow about the Za-Tanta (Hizan Kogede) province. At the time of colonization this area was allotted to Yellow (during the repression following the 1932 major riots), whereas in fact its population is ethnically linked to that of the province of ABOMEY. When decolonization occurred, the borders remain unchanged. In addition, the oil exploitation and the resources it provides worsened the relationship.

Many inhabitants of the Abomey province ethnically linked to the Chawomba tribe have been demanding for years that the Za-Tanta (Hizan Kogede) province should be given back to Blue and attached to the Abomey province.

Dispute with Orange. Blue has recently pointed the finger at the Orange government who they blame for having covertly supported the Chawomba activists with financial and material assistance. In addition, some villages on the border are claimed by both nations.

ECONOMICAL SITUATION

Overview

Blue used to be one of the poorest countries in the world until 1990 when oil was discovered north of the town of Abomey.

Blue has few other natural resources, a fragile soil structure, and a highly unequal distribution of income. About 80% of the population was engaged in (mainly subsistence) agriculture, which was vulnerable to variations in rainfall. Industry remained dominated by unprofitable government-controlled corporations.

Following the African franc currency devaluation in January 1994, the government updated its development program in conjunction with international agencies, and exports and economic growth have increased. Maintenance of macroeconomic progress depends on continued low inflation, reduction in the trade deficit, and reforms designed to encourage private investment.

Since 1990, Blue's economy has been dominated by petroleum extraction that accounts for more than 80% of the country's income.

Other industries include cotton lint, beverages, agricultural processing, soap, cigarettes, and textiles.

Currency

The currency of Blue is the Franc CFA" (Communauté Financière Africaine), this has the currency code XOF. The official exchange rate XOF per USD has been 696 (2002), 733 (2001) and 711 (1999).

Purchasing Power Parity:	\$532 Million	As of	2002
Real Growth Rate:	4.7 %	As of	2002
GDP per Capita:	\$1070	As of	2002
GDP Sector Composition Agriculture:	35 %	As of	2002
GDP Sector Composition Industry:	26 %	As of	2002
GDP Sector Composition Services;	39 %	As of	2002
Inflation Rate:	18.9%	As of	2002
Unemployment Rate (est):	31%	As Of	2003
Industrial Production Growth Rate:	14%		2002

Labour Force

The total available labour force is approximately 4500,000 (2000 est). The distribution of this is:

Agriculture: 88%.

Oil extraction and related industry: 2%.

Commerce and service: 10%.

These percentages do not take into account unemployment for which there is no data available.

FOREIGN TRADE

Exports

The main export commodities are Oil, cotton and livestock. The largest export markets are Orange 17%, Singapore 14.7%, Italy 11.3%, Colombia 8.6%, France 7.7%, India 6.9%, West Country 6%, Japan 4.4% and Thailand 4.3% (2002)

Imports

The principal imports are Capital goods and foodstuffs. The largest import sources are France 27.7%, Orange 17% and East Country 4.3% (2002).

Economic Aid

In 2002, Blue received \$32 million of economic aid.

Banking System

In 1963, the National Bank of Blue (NBB) was established as the top level of a new system with commercial banks on the second level. There are 5 bank companies in Blue, one of which is State-owned and controls 61 percent of all credit portfolios. The four private banks (subsidiary to French and German companies) account for only 20 percent of Blue's banking establishments; they work mainly with foreign workers established in the country.

Initially the system was undermined by poor technology, large unresolved debts among state-owned enterprises, and bank delays in transferring funds.

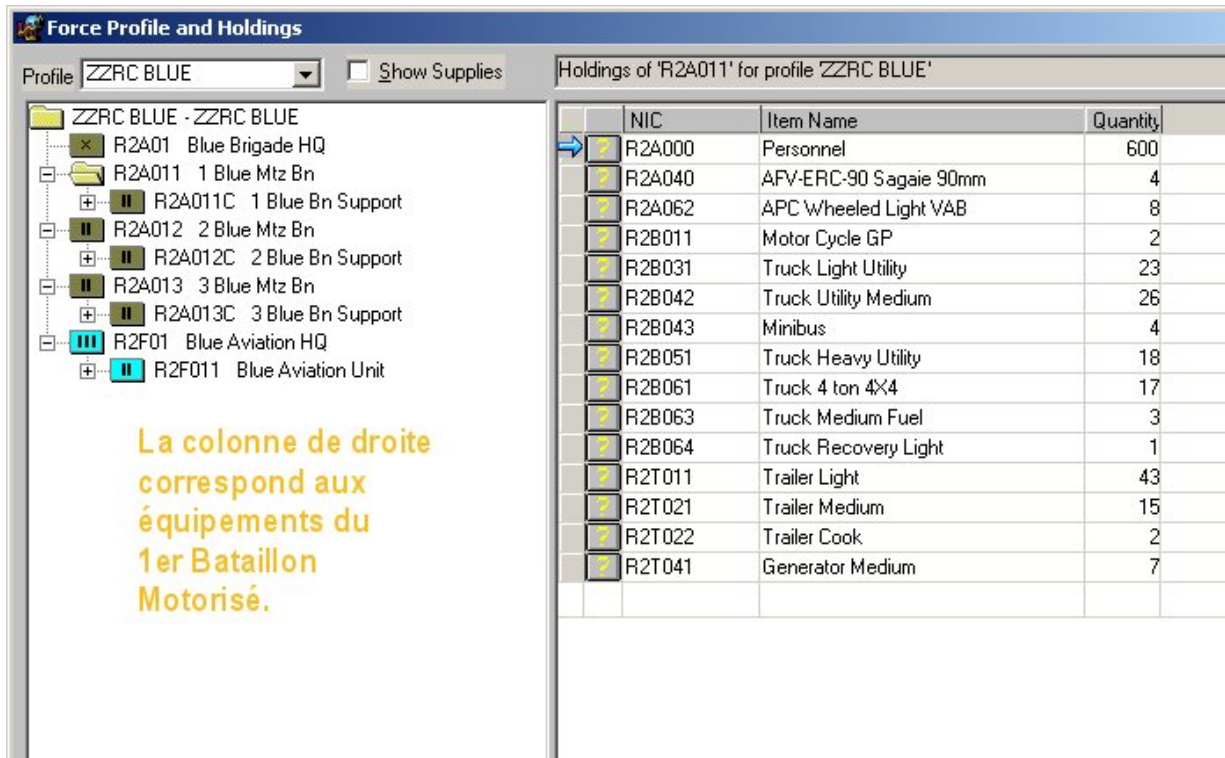
Currently, a financial sector restructuring is underway, which is bringing consolidation to the banking industry

DEFENCE

Military Overview

The Blue armed forces include a brigade headquarters located in Savalou with two motorized infantry battalions and a mechanized infantry one.

Aviation has two planes and two helicopters for transportation tasking with headquarters in Savalou.



The gendarmerie manpower is very reduced and concentrates in the capital with a mission of protection of the governmental authorities.

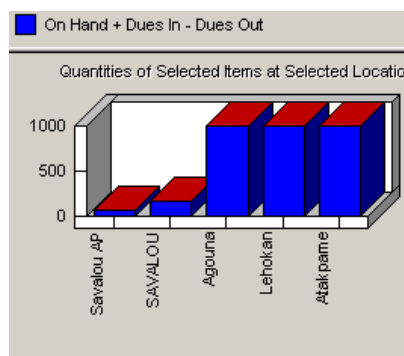
The organization of the police force is decentralized at the provincial level, its manpower is insufficient to maintain law and order, and therefore its missions are limited to the activities of simple police force. The armament of the police force is very rudimentary (it is not certain that each police officer has even his own weapon: gun or pistol).

Much of the armed forces are national service conscripts completing their 16 months service.

Military Chain of Command

According to legislation and a decree promulgated in 1992, the President serves as the Commander in Chief of the Blue armed forces. A Ministry of Defense and Defense Council advise the President on national security policy. The President exercises his authority over the Armed Forces through a Chief of Defense Staff.

Military Regional Overview



Blue has established three military administrative and C3 regions; these are North, West and South. These areas correspond to the political administrative regions.

The three regions administer the three land battalions with 1st Motorized Battalion in Atakpame, 2nd Motorized Battalion in Agouna and 3rd Mechanized Battalion in Lehokan.

Intelligence Overview

Blue relies on HUMINT for intelligence collection. The duty of intelligence collection is vested in the Gendarmerie. There is no capability for intelligence collection abroad.

Mobilization Overview

Blue's mobilization capabilities are limited to areas of personnel, funding and nationalization of civil assets. There is a limited capacity to increase the size of the forces by emergency recall of former members of the armed forces and emergency conscription. Existing units could be brought up to strength. However, without adequate plans for equipping and training an expanded force, the pay-off is assessed to be limited. There are no organized reserve units. Increased funding and the nationalization of civil assets would primarily provide improved sustainment.

Counter Terrorism Overview

Blue has been trying to combat Chawomba's terrorism unsuccessfully since 1960. The lack of doctrine, national intelligence and specially trained units has contributed to the general lack of success. The Gendarmerie and regular Army units have increased physical security around key facilities and stepped up internal control measures, but with little effect.

Reorganization Overview

The organization of the Blue armed forces remains largely unchanged since they were established in 1962. There are no current plans for any major reorganization.

Major Equipment

The major equipment of the land forces is 14 X Sagaie, 24 X VAB and 18 X 120mm Mortars.

Operational Effectiveness Units

Operational effectiveness at small unit levels is generally limited by the lack of trained personnel, equipment and logistical support. In addition the Blue Army has not demonstrated the capability of conducting coordinated operations above battalion level. However, an exercise led by the brigade headquarters took place last year that demonstrated the ability of the Blue armed forces to tailor its units in order to create a battalion (+) size battle group by mixing companies from motorized and mechanized battalions together. The Abomey battalion has been set up accordingly.

Sustainment and Logistics

The Blue Army faces a chronic shortage of resources and depends heavily on foreign assistance for equipment provision and maintenance. Operational logistics cannot support efficiently operations of deployed forces in the long term.

Command, Control and Communications

The Blue Army lacks modern, secure communications and has nothing in the way of automation or information systems. Radio communications are unreliable, especially in the hilly areas due to the poor quality of equipment.

Para Military Overview

Since the Independence of the tri borders countries, the Chawomba ethnic groups, living in North of the Abomey province, have demonstrated their willingness to gain their own independence. Their actions usually included both peaceful demonstrations and some terrorist bombing against government buildings. More recently the “Force de Liberté” group that regroups about 200 fighters has committed more serious crimes against government officials. It is assumed that this group has the sympathy of the Abomey governor who belongs to the same ethnic group.

It is also assumed that Orange could bring a significant financial and material support to the rebels. The Blue government has not been able to successfully fight these separatist groups.

Internal Security Structure

The Gendarmerie has changed little in the last several decades. It reports to the Ministry of Defense.

Customs

Blue has its own customs service, the priority of which is to check for illegal import and export of weapons and drugs, and currency counterfeiting.