

Niger busts fake medicines lab

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Police in Niger said Tuesday they had closed down a lab in the capital Niamey making bogus drugs and fake beauty products for sale in local markets and neighbouring Nigeria.

"We seized no less than 10 tonnes of fake medications made from local plants and other ingredients imported from abroad," police spokesman Adily Toro said on state TV.

Nine people, "none of whom had any [medical knowledge](#)," were arrested, he told AFP.

Some of the products aimed at regional tastes in beauty—one, called "Dynawell," was supposed to help women to become obese, and another, "Bobaraba," to develop their breasts and buttocks, Toro said.

Others were supposed aphrodisiacs and anti-haemorrhoid [medication](#).

Bogus, counterfeit or sub-standard medicines are a major health issue in developing countries, but especially so in Africa.

The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene estimated in 2015 that 122,000 children under five died due to taking poor quality anti-malaria drugs in sub-Saharan Africa.

Anti-malarials and antibiotics are the two medicines most likely to be out-of-date or cheap copies, it said.

In 2016, an operation launched by the Paris-based International Institute of Research Against Counterfeit Medicines (IRACM) and World Customs Organization (WCO) seized 113 million items of fake medication and 5,000 bogus medical devices at 16 African ports.

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