

#### WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEAC

# PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF PEACEBUILDING AMIDST A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

#### A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANISATION WORKING ON COLLABORATIVE PEACEBUILDING





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BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS FOR PEACE

# PUSHING THE BOUNDARIES OF PEACEBUILDING AMIDST A GLOBAL PANDEMIC



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# ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

CLED	Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project
DA	Austrian Development Agency
GM	Annual General Meeting
ISA/HSRC	Africa Institute of South Africa/ Human Sciences Research Council
PSA	AU Peace and Security Architecture
SPR	Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution
TJLF	Africa Transitional Justice Legacy Fund
VU	African Union
U PSD	African Union Peace and Security Division
PfA	Beijing Platform for Action
All	Creative Associates International
EWS	Continental Early Warning Systems
FLI	Canada Fund for Local Initiative
fCG	Search for Common Ground
OPAC	Civil Society Organisations for Peace and Conflict Prevention
ORAFID	Civil Organisations Research Advocacy and Funding Initiatives Development
OSEF	Centre Coordonné d'Observation de la Sécurité Electorale des Femmes
OVID	Coronavirus disease
OVID-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
RS	Catholic Relief Services
SO	Civil Society Organizations
SO-REC	Civil Society Organizations -Regional Economic Council
VE	Countering Violent Extremism
ANIDA	Danish Agency for International Development
DG	Danish De-mining Group
SH	Human Security Division
CCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
COWARN	ECOWAS Early Warning and Response Network
COWAS	Economic Community of West African States
CPF	ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework
MAM	Election Violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation
PNV-JS	Education à la Paix et à la Non-violence

ESR	Election Situation Room
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAS	Femmes Afrique Solidarité
FES PSCC	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FLP	Female Leadership Program
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GHANAP II	Ghana National Action Plan II
GIS	Geographical Information System
GIZ	German Society for International Cooperation
GPPAC	Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict
GTS	Gender Talk Series
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
HAWA	Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa
HIV-AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus-Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPYDC	Inter-Party Youth Dialogue Committee
ISS	Institute for Security Studies
IWD	International Women's Day
IYD	International Youth Day
JFA	Joint Financing Arrangement
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
LAP	Local Action Plans
LDTF	Local Dialogue Facilitation Team
MARAC	Central African Early Warning Mechanism
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Plans
NAPE	Active Nonviolence and Peace Education
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NERG	National Election Response Group
NEWRC	National Early Warning and Response Centers
NEWS	National Early Warning System
NPC	National Peace Council
NWC	National Women Coalitions
ODI	Organizational Development Index
OSIWA	Open Society Initiatives for West Africa
PLF	Female Leadership Program



PRAPS	Participatory Review and Analysis Processes	
PVE	Preventing Violent Extremism	
SAWD	South African Women in Dialogue	
SDF	Security and Defense Forces	
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals	
SEMA	State Environmental Management Agency	
SGBV	Sexual and Gender-Based Violence	
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency	
S.O.	Strategic Objective	
SVNP	Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding	
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats	
SYNPHOT	Syndicat National des Praticiens Hospitaliers du Togo	
TV	Television	
UN	United Nations	
UNDP	United Nations Development Program	
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund	
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	
UNOWAS	United Nations Office in West Africa and the Sahel	
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution	
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women	
USAID	United States Agency for International Development	
USD	United States Dollar	
VP	Vice President	
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding	
WAPI	West Africa Peacebuilding Institute	
WARN	West Africa Early Warning and Response Network	
WCP	Women Caucus for Peace	
WESOC	Women Election Observation Security Center	
WGWYPS-GH	Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security – Ghana	
WHO	World Health Organisation	
WIPC	Women's International Peace Centre	• •
WIPNET	Women in Peacebuilding Network	•
WOCA4PEACE	Women's Caucuses for Peaceful Elections 2020	
WODI	WANEP Organisational Development Index	
WPS	Women, Peace and Security	
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security	

# **ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE**

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is the leading regional Civil Society Organization in conflict prevention and peacebuilding conceived in 1996, and officially launched in 1998 in response to the civil wars, instabilities and humanitarian crises that plagued West Africa in the 1990s.

WANEP has succeeded in establishing strong National Networks in every Member State of ECOWAS, with over 500 member organizations working in peace and security across West Africa. WANEP has credibility and a wide recognition both internationally and locally due to its outstanding work in the areas of peacebuilding and conflict prevention in the ECOWAS region. It is a key player in major global peacebuilding efforts.

In 2002, WANEP entered into a historic partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the implementation of a regional early warning and response system referred to as ECOWARN. A standing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between WANEP and ECOWAS in 2004 guides this partnership and constitutes a major strategic achievement for WANEP and West African civil society as it offers the much-desired opportunity to contribute to Track I responses to conflicts and policy debates.

In August 2015, WANEP signed an MOU with the African Union Commission to provide support to the Commission's Peace and Security Department in the implementation of the AU Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) including the gender mainstreaming of the architecture. At international level, WANEP is a leading member of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC).

WANEP provides professional courses in conflict prevention and peacebuilding informed by several years of practical experience to governments, businesses, and practitioners throughout the region and beyond. Underlying its work is a commitment to professionalism and a dedication to a world of mutual respect, tolerance and peace.

Capacity building remains the bedrock of WANEP's goal of enhancing the skills and expertise of ECOWAS citizens',

#### **OUR VISION**

WANEPs' vision is a "West Africa region characterized by just and peaceful communities where the dignity of the human person is paramount and where the people can meet their basic human needs and decide their own direction".

#### **OUR MISSION**

To enable and facilitate mechanisms for cooperation among civil societybased peacebuilding practitioners and organizations in West Africa by promoting cooperative responses with State actors to address the root causes of violent conflicts; providing the structure through which these practitioners and institutions regularly exchange experiences and information on issues and influence policy on peacebuilding and conflict transformation; and promoting West Africa's social and cultural values as resources for peacebuilding.

#### OUR OPERATING PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

- Belief in mutual respect;
- Transparency and accountability;
- Gender equality and zero tolerance to discrimination (sex, tribe/ethnicity, race, HIV-AIDS status, etc.);
- Collegiality, teamwork and dedication to duty;
- Tolerance and respect for diversity;
- Justice for all;
- Quality delivery;
- Collaboration and consultation



intergovernmental organizations, state institutions, CSOs and the business community in the area of conflict prevention, conflict management and peacebuilding. The West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) established in 2002 is the official training/capacity building platform of WANEP. WAPI strives to overcome the gap in practice, knowledge and skills in peacebuilding in the region and increase the number of competent, active peacebuilding practitioners in West Africa. In addition, WANEP is also providing support to the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in the operationalization of civil society organizations' components of the Central African Early Warning Mechanism (MARAC).

#### **OUR APPROACH**

WANEP is a Think Tank, training and research-based advocacy organization with the undergirding principle of collaborative approach to peacebuilding. Instead of adopting an activist approach, WANEP functions as a professional partner of State, interstate and international actors to develop, implement and evaluate peacebuilding and conflict prevention approaches and instruments.



#### WHAT WE DO

The West Africa Early Warning and Response Network (WARN) is WANEP's flagship program instituted in 2000 with the aim to provide early warning information and design timely responses to prevent the outbreak or mitigate the escalation of conflict. NEWS is the most viable tool for prevention of violent conflicts and generally informs WANEP's program. designs and interventions and seeks to enhance human security in the region by monitoring and reporting on socio-political situations that could degenerate into violent conflicts.

**Youth, Peace and Security:** Based on the conviction that the young population hold the key to future stability of West Africa, WANEP introduced the Active Nonviolence and Peace Education (NAPE) program in 2001 to address the rising level of children and young people

involvement in violent conflicts in the region. NAPE seeks to promote a culture of non-violence and social responsibility among young people in West Africa as a platform for achieving sustainable peace in the region.

**Gender, Peace and Security:** WANEP is focused on promoting gender-responsive peacebuilding and strengthening women's capacity for the promotion of peace and human security in the region through the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) Program. WIPNET relies on regional and global policy frameworks including UNSCR 1325, the AU gender mainstreaming instruments and the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) as guide and reference. The creation of the WIPNET program was informed by the victimization of women in the civil wars of the 90s and their marginalization in the peace processes.

**Dialogue and Mediation:** WANEP undertakes a special intervention in dialogue and mediation with the aim of promoting inter and intra communal dialogue and peaceful coexistence as

well as enhance the mediating capacities of communities and other relevant state and intergovernmental bodies. This intervention helps to transform crisis at its nascent stage before it escalates into violence.

**Infrastructure for Peace (I4P):** WANEP is a strong advocate for National Peace Architectures as a national and decentralized mechanism for responding to conflicts and mitigating its effects on civilians.

**Election Management:** WANEP engages with diverse stakeholders in promoting peaceful democratic transitions, and partners with other civil society organizations to monitor and mitigate election-related conflicts, promote dialogue towards the attainment of peaceful elections. WANEP's electoral management support strategy involves developing nationally led collaborative mechanisms for monitoring, analyzing, reporting and responding to electoral violence under the Election Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation Project (E-MAM). The project aims to contribute to a reduction in electoral violence through strengthened regional and national capacities to enhance peaceful electoral processes in the region.

**Peacebuilding Program Design, Monitoring and Evaluation:** WANEP through this platform develops and implements effective peacebuilding programs, projects and interventions reflective of the organizations' research, monitoring and evaluation experiences.

**Countering Violent Extremism (CVE):** WANEP has an established monitoring and analysis mechanism focused on Countering Violent Extremism both at continental and regional levels. This mechanism also supports designed interventions by WANEP in the areas of youth and women, peace and security agenda.

**Media, Peace and Security:** West Africa remains one of the continent's most unstable regions, with increased insurgency and cross-border terrorism broadening the scope of conflicts in the region. In the face of a wide range of social, political and economic conflicts, the media has become a pivotal influence in peacebuilding and constitutes a major human resource with the potential to help prevent and moderate violence. WANEP recognizes that a comprehensive effort to build peace must take the media into consideration as an active and positive partner and thus works in collaboration with the media to ensure conflict sensitive reporting in the promotion of peace and stability.

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## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Madam Antoinette Yawavi Mbrou Regional Board Chair

It is my great pleasure to present to you our 2020 Annual Report chronicling progress made across the region in a very daunting context. The outbreak of COVID 19, declared as a 'global pandemic' by the World Health Organisation (WHO) was an unanticipated threat with significant negative impact to planning and resources of many institutions including WANEP. Despite the pandemic which was compounded by regional insecurity, we were determined to re-strategize and refocus our programs and institutional administration to maintain our commitment to peace and security at all level. The Regional Board took up the challenge of ensuring that necessary precautionary measures were instituted to safeguard our staff and their families from the security and health hazards. The reality of the situation warranted the suspension of all international travels and workshops with strict observance of the preventive guidelines issued by WHO and other health agencies. No doubt, the year 2020 will be unforgettable in the annals of our global community!

While funding continues to shrink and financial conditions remain tough for charities, particularly in light of the uncertainties caused by the COVID19 pandemic, WANEP has been fortunate and grateful for the continued support and generosity of our existing and new donors. At a period when many of our counterparts were challenged by dearth of funds to sustain their programs and workforce, our partners recommitted support to our vision to surpass our consistent annual income target of USD 5m since 2015. In 2020, through the generosity of our partners, we raised over USD 10m across the 15 National offices and the Regional Secretariat that enabled us to achieve over 90% of our strategic objectives despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

As this year marks the 20th Anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, I am delighted that we have continued to pay attention to our gender parity policy across board and indeed in the design and implementation of our programs. The resolution reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. The crucial role of women in maintaining peace in the region and the need to further involve them in conflict prevention and peace initiatives remain paramount to us.

The successful completion of the 2015 – 2020 WANEP strategic plan has led to the development of a new five-year plan covering 2021 – 2025 which will be presented to the General Assembly in early 2021 for approval. The end of our current strategic plan coincides with the much-touted

ECOWAS vision 2020 geared towards transforming the organisation from an ECOWAS of the states to ECOWAS of the peoples and provides an opportunity for a retrospection of the progress and encounters in the journey. The **ECOWAS Vision 2020** aimed at setting a clear direction and goal to significantly raise the standard of living of the people through conscious and inclusive programmes that guarantee a bright future for West Africa. It will shape the destiny of the region for many years to come and this is central to our collective aspiration. The year further presents us with the opportunity to review the advancement made by ECOWAS and WANEP in contributing to the peace and security narrative of the region, as well as strategies to address the many challenges that confront our community and peoples.

Our new five-year plan focuses on greater integration between programmes, research and policy/advocacy towards **an enhanced citizens and state capacity for sustainable peace.**" The strategic plan seeks to expand the scope of the organisation to include improvements for state-citizen relations, reduce intergenerational gaps, focused collaboration with the private sector and governance concerns that create structural causes of conflict in the region. These engagements will require new partnerships and more vigorous cooperation arrangements with ECOWAS, AU and Member States.

The peacebuilding sector has realised that the key to sustaining community resilience and co-existence is investment in local capacity. This is a mantra WANEP has preached over the years and there is no doubt that partners and stakeholders has shifted significantly in this direction. WANEP now accesses direct funding "As this year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, I am delighted that we have continued to pay attention to our gender parity policy across board and indeed in the design and implementation of our programs... The crucial role of women in maintaining peace in the region and the need to further involve them in conflict prevention and peace initiatives remain paramount to us."

from governments and intergovernmental organisations such as The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), Austria Development Agency (ADA), Danish Agency for International Development (DANIDA), European Union, United Nations systems including United Nations Development Program (UNDP), national governments and other partners that traditionally had strict policies of providing resources to Non-Governmental Organisations through third parties and the state. This shift in funding strategy is a testament to the greater recognition of the role that organisations such as WANEP play in stabilizing communities and consolidating peace and also conviction of the institutional credibility and capacity of our organisation through solid systems and procedures established over the years.

I am delighted to report that WANEP is expanding across geographies and boundaries, building bridges across regions and states, impacting institutions and communities, supporting Africa integration and cohesion, and indeed touching lives in many ways. This would not have been possible without the determination and remarkable efforts of our management, staff across the region and our professional and dedicated Board members who are resolute in building an African brand that will continue to stand the test of time in peacebuilding and human security in the region and the Continent. We are grateful to our partners for their confidence and generosity and look forward to our continued collaboration especially in the execution of yet another ambitious strategic plan.



**WANEP Regional Board Members: (Clockwise)** Board Chair – Madame Antoinette Yawavi Mbrou; Mrs. Salamatu Hussaini Suleiman, Professor Patricia Donli; Professor Oumar Ndongo; Madame Mariam Dao Gabala; Rev John Nkum





#### WANEP Management Team 2021

Anti-clockwise: Executive Director, Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze, Deputy Executive/Program Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah, Administrative/Human Resource Manager, Mrs. Esther Gordon-Mensah, Finance Manager, Mr. Raymond Darko







# MANAGEMENT REPORT

**Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze** Executive Director

2020 was to represent a landmark year in many respects within the peace and security arena. At regional, continental and global levels, various mile stoned frameworks were commemorated, namely, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Vision 2020 envisaged as a transformational agenda focussing on individual citizens of the Community rather than on the State, the Africa Union's Agenda 2020 of Silencing the Guns and the 20th anniversary of the United Nations' Security Council Resolution 1325. For WANEP, having commemorated the two decades of our operations in 2019 with the keynote theme on *"The Future of Peace and Security in Democratic Societies: The Complimentary Roles of CSOs"*, we started out 2020 looking forward with great enthusiasm to beginning the next decade of peacebuilding leading towards the attainment of Agenda 2030 and drawing out our pathways towards these aspirations within our new Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025. To this end, we successfully organised our Participatory Review and Analysis Process (PRAPS) at the beginning of the year and generated from this process, our theory of change and key strategic objectives for our new Strategic Plan.

However, by the end of the first quarter, we were hit with a global pandemic that instantly generated a string of unprecedented challenges across the globe with potential adverse effects on our operations across the entire West Africa region. Management working with the regional Board therefore had to promptly review the plans for the year and institute proactive measures to ensure the safety of all staff and their families, as well as continuity in all facets of our operations at both regional and national levels. In compliance with international and relevant national COVID related regulations and guidelines, we suspended all international travels and in-person activities and established virtual platforms. With the backing of our regional and national Boards, interim policies were introduced to enable staff work effectively from home while Management continued to review the context and amend directives accordingly.

In navigating the throes of the pandemic, our staff in the regional office, liaison offices and national secretariats have demonstrated extensive coping and adaptive capacities, remarkable dedication, tenacity and creativity which have collectively resulted in our ability to implement over 85% of our 2020 planned activities across the region with key results around all our key strategic objectives. Our achievements were also possible because of our partners who have been positively responsive to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on our operations and have demonstrated sustained commitment and flexibility. WANEP's JFA partners of the Governments of Sweden through SIDA and Austria through ADA maintained their commitment to



supporting peace and security in Africa through their funding to WANEP. Despite the pandemic, the duo remitted 100% of its funding to WANEP in the year under review and in essence, enabled us sustain the 15 national networks through quarterly institutional support, and the regional office through over 60% of our overhead cost. This is notwithstanding its program support as reflected in the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan and firm commitment to continue its partnership with WANEP in the implementation of the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan

Beyond our funding partners, we have also been able to sustain existing partnerships with international state and non-state institutions. In terms of partnerships, we maintained our rigorous engagements with ECOWAS, working throughout the year on developing and implementing joint activities under our Early Warning, Women Peace and Security and youth-focused programs as well as the EMAM project<sup>1</sup>. This broad-based collaboration is anchored within our new MOU with the Commission which envisages an expansion of our cooperation beyond the Early Warning Directorate. Leveraging on our enhanced Early Warning systems at regional and national levels, as well as on the commitment of our over 550 community monitors, our NEWS Managers and Analysts across 14 ECOWAS member states, we effectively provided capacity building and varied peace and security data and analysis to ECOWAS, AU, UN and other critical stakeholders to inform policy and programme development.

Our scope for engagement on elections and mitigating electoral violence expanded through an increased funding envelope from the European Union enabling implementation of our Election Violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation (EMAM) project in eleven ECOWAS member states instead of the initial seven countries. In addition, a new partnership was signed with GIZ to support the EMAM project through the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) project. Through these funding streams we effectively contributed to mitigating electoral violence in Togo, Mali, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Ghana.

"In navigating the throes of the pandemic, our staff in the regional office, liaison offices and national secretariats have demonstrated extensive coping and adaptive capacities, remarkable dedication, tenacity and creativity which have collectively resulted in our ability to implement over 85% of our 2020 planned activities across the region with key results around all our key strategic objectives." In consolidating further our Strategic Objective on Gender, Peace and security and the implementation of our Gender Policy, an add on to our already planned 2020 activities was a three-month UNDP funded project titled "Building an inclusive post-COVID-19 recovery, crises transitions and governance reforms in the Sahel" focussing on reinforcing governance systems and structures for empowering women in Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger and Cote d'Ivoire. Through this project, we have made a significant contribution to consolidating platforms to enhance women's participation in governance. The UNDP project has also served as a strong complement to our 2020 Women, Peace and Security program within which the context of COVID 19, also instituted two innovative initiatives, namely the "Gender Talk" series, a virtual discourse platform and the "GenderConnect" online publication. Both initiatives are dedicated to highlighting women's

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contribution to peace and security to enhance their visibility while also serving as advocacy platforms for furthering the aspirations of UNSCR 1325 and other Women, Peace and Security normative frameworks. With Youth, Peace and Security being a strategic focus in our new Strategic Plan, another initiative introduced within the year was an online platform titled "Youth Perspectives". This platform provides a critical space for appreciating the resilience of young people particularly in the face of COVID 19 and contributes to changing the dominant negative narratives around their agency.

Electoral violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation (EMAM), is an integral part of the overall Strategic Plan/framework of WANEP, which seeks to enhance the capacity of civil society and relevant state institutions for the promotion of human security, conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

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On the institutional development front, our financial management system continues to remain robust and meet international standards as evidenced in various audits and assessments undertaken in the year, including a HACT assessment commissioned by the UN. The positive findings from this assessment led to the UNDP Africa Regional Office providing for the first-time direct funding to a civil society organisation. A similar assessment undertaken by the Danish Embassy in Ghana also led to the signing of an agreement between WANEP and the Danish Embassy for core funding support to WANEP for a period of 3-years (2020 – 2022). Other funding agreements signed included with GIZ on the EPSAO project and a renewed funding from Wellspring Foundation allowing us to sustain our support to building collaborative frameworks for CSO -REC partnership in the ECCAS Region. Throughout the year, we witnessed the growth of our national networks based on two assessments conducted within the year using the WANEP Organisational Development Index (WODI), a tool that allows us to undertake a 360-degree assessment of the performance of all our National networks. The growth of our Networks was also reflected in their ability to mobilise resources from a variety of partners, including in some instances, receiving funding for COVID-19-related response initiatives.

In line with our statutory provisions, we successfully held two regional Board meetings which were complemented by frequent virtual consultations with the Board to ensure effective and efficient governance. Our monitoring and evaluation mechanisms were also fully activated throughout the year. At both regional and national levels, physical and virtual quarterly review and reflection sessions were held and provided critical information for management decisions as well as for programme implementation. However, the planned evaluation of our 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, though eventually conducted, was significantly delayed as a result of the COVID-related travel restrictions. On the human resource front, we have strengthened our research capacity by engaging for the first time, a Regional Coordinator for Research and Capacity building. This is in addition to building the capacity of the Regional Researcher who benefitted from a two-month fellowship from the Woodrow Wilson Centre and led to major contributions to knowledge and discourse on key peace and security issues through seminars and publications especially on violent extremism.

Looking back on the year, there have indeed been extremely challenging moments as a result of the ongoing global pandemic and its cascading effects on every aspect of our lives. We have had to grapple with increased cost of operations in some respects, travel restrictions and adapting to new forms of working while also being attentive to the varied implications of the pandemic on our staff, partners and their families based on our common humanity. Nonetheless, with a strong will to succeed and unity of purpose among our staff and with our partners from community to global levels, we have made significant contributions to peace and security across our region. We are therefore grateful for the various support received throughout the year and look forward to an exciting 2021.





# WANEP 2015–2020 Strategic PLAN At a Glance

Strategic Priorities	Our Focus	Our Goal
National Early Warning and Response Systems are functional in all Member States and linked to ECOWAS Early Warning and Response System	Strengthen national early warning and response systems in the region	An established and functioning early warning and response system in all the 15 ECOWAS member states leading to improved links between early warning and early response at the national and regional levels
Citizen capacity is developed and deployed in peacebuilding and conflict prevention interventions at community, national and regional levels	To build/develop citizens' capacity in peacebuilding and conflict prevention to handle local level responses; and report promptly to NEWRS and ECOWAS-EWRS	WANEP's partnerships and relationships are formalized in addition to its traditional competence as a professional and implementing partner to ECOWAS in the ECOWAS early warning and early response mechanism; Peacebuilding and conflict prevention structures established in collaboration with other CSOs and local authorities including national governments, intergovernmental organizations, traditional rulers and faith-based organizations
Research results are utilized in policy advocacy to promote peace and security	WANEPs' research capacity is enhanced and formalized with notable think-tanks, academia and research institutes to promote the utilization of research for peace and security	The organization transforms into a Think-Tank and Research Advocacy resource in the region to influence policies and contribute to global discourse in peace and security especially in the African continent
Gender capacity in peacebuilding and conflict prevention is developed and deployed at community, national and regional levels	Mainstream gender in peacebuilding and conflict prevention especially in the context of the UNSC Resolution 1325 at regional, national and local levels to address the peculiar needs of women in conflict	Gender policies are adapted and mainstreamed into national peacebuilding and conflict prevention programs
Institutional and financial sustainability of WANEP (National Networks & Regional Secretariat) ensured	Put in place an innovative Business Plan to guide WANEPs' transformation from a Project Driven Organization to a Vision Driven one	WANEP is transformed from a project-based organization to a sustainable vision based regional organization

### S.O. 1: NATIONAL EARLY WARNING AND RESPONSE SYSTEMS ARE FUNCTIONAL IN ALL MEMBER STATES AND LINKED TO ECOWAS EARLY WARNING AND RESPONSE SYSTEM

#### 1.1. ELECTORAL VIOLENCE MONITORING, ANALYSIS AND MITIGATION (E-MAM)

WANEP utilizes the Electoral Violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation (E-MAM) platform to provide electoral support and undertake several interventions geared towards promoting peaceful elections and transitions in West Africa. WANEP is currently implementing a European Union funded Electoral Violence Monitoring, Analysis and Mitigation (E-MAM) project in 11 countries of Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Togo. Others are Benin, Ghana, Mali and Niger. The project aims to "contribute to a reduction in electoral violence in West Africa through strengthened regional and national capacities to enhance peaceful electoral processes." WANEP also commenced a project titled; "Building an Inclusive Post COVID-19 Recovery, Crises Transitions and Governance Reforms" in collaboration with ECOWAS and supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).



Former President of Sierra Leone, Madam Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, who was the Head of ECOWAS Election Observation Team visited the WANEP ESR Decision Room during the Ghana Presidential Elections

**1.1.1. Election Situation Room (ESR) Activities:** In the reporting year, various levels of elections were held in seven ECOWAS member states of Togo, Guinea, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Niger. As part of measures to mitigate electoral violence and ensure peaceful electoral processes, WANEP established viable platforms such as Electoral Dispute Management Expert



Clusters and National Election Response Groups (NERGs) in countries whose elections held in the year. WANEP also collaborated with selected Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as subgrantees to provide strategic responses to threats of electoral violence in identified hotspots. Through these platforms, strategic response actions carried out contributed to curbing identified electoral threats in the targeted countries as captured by the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) platform. The platforms continue to serve as national and community mechanisms in the prevention of violent conflicts in the target countries.

In addition, WANEP facilitated the establishment of a uniquely designed three-day Election Situation Room (ESR) in Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Niger, Guinea, Togo, Mali and Ghana, with a total of 2095 election observers deployed in the election countries. Throughout the electoral process, members of the ESR regularly kept the public updated with credible information on the electoral process through robust media interactions and engaged in preventive shuttle diplomacy to elicit support of key political actors to take action in mitigating electoral violence in their communities. These efforts led to addressing issues with electoral materials, intimidation by security personnel, and mitigating electoral violence. For instance, it resulted to the success rate of over 76% mitigation in reported incidents in Guinea and Togo and in Benin, out of the over 300 incidents recorded, 113 were successfully mitigated.

The ESR hosted very important and highly-influential individuals from across the region who were united in their resolve to ensure that credible elections are witnessed in the region. These individuals recognized and unanimously endorsed WANEP's work in mitigating electoral violence and contribution to credible electoral processes as captured in the box: Echoes of ESR.

#### **ECHOES FROM THE ESR**

Congrafilations WANEP !!! Ce 31/10/2020. nom de la CEBERO an in d'operation yra l'élècter i derhele de 31 oktober 2020 en ma men pressonel en auchter de reconsection We apprecist the work being done herein Cose & Ivoire and across the UNS-ragion to Empport holding of credible, inclusive and reached doctions. We especially appreciated de commissaire Polikique, Paula the role of women's participation in all la CEOEA OJ a performances let l'efficient appects The electoral process in particular at this observation situation room. an WANEP dent j'ai enbre de caser l'diadministrate De courre ge ! Bor continution !!!! mark T. On Cambrie what and the former a Mohamed Ih CHAMBAS Guet africand mente kut UNOW AS, Datas, Sonegod 1 November, 2020 her Ta Several frances BEHANZIN Politicas

ne o pui nore kuon loujouk su kannai daus andele cau er eugikes in normalise Felicitations WANEP qui pu KONATE, CEDENO

« La mission d'expertise électorale de l'Union Européenne a vraiment apprécié cette visite au COSEF et toutes les explications données sur le travail et l'esprit de la mission déployée au Burkina Faso. Tous nos encouragements pour encourager la participation des femmes dans le processus électoral. » – **Dr. Mohamed IBN CHAMBAS** 

"Merci pour votre service et travail!

Thank you for the opportunity to visit and see the great work you are doing. You are making the world a better place for all women! Thank you" - *Aaron CODISPOTI, Deputy Chief of mission US. Embassy* 

Heureur de voir l'excellent travail fait for le WANEP qui va primettre de prendre de bonnes décisions fondées sur faits bien documentes-Pere Arsene Buice BADD, SJ, CERAP Rafdo prevention des elections ses à travers le territ compte de la percapta le d'une permettive fo-consellent à pressouver de de Jacques NGIMBOUS Dectorant Contracture Etides Politiques EHESS. Paris.

"We highly appreciate the efforts of the organization, as well as what they stand for. We observed that they are well coordinated and are certain that their contribution to the success of the election will be immense." - Embassy of Nigeria in Burkina Faso • • •

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1.1.2. Women Election Security Observation Center (WESOC): WANEP in the review year facilitated the set-up of a Women Election Security Observation Center (WESOC) under the UNDP funded gender-sensitive The project. Coordinated Center is the first of its kind in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina and Niger and contributed significantly to increase women's roles in election management support as observers, data collectors, data analysts and response groups to ensure a gender lens in the electoral process. During the elections in the target countries, the Center hosted 27 eminent women, 37 young people as data collectors, 600 women trained election observers. 18 Analysts, nine (9) communication specialists and 30 women in the security sector.

The trained women facilitated gender-sensitive election security towards providing a secured environment for women's participation in the respective 2020 elections. The Center also created an opportunity for inter-generational linkages and advocacy through on-the-spot engagement with visiting delegates and other stakeholders to the Center.



Above: ECOWAS Vice-President Madam Finda Koroma (5th left); H.E. Pierre Buyoya, ex-Burundian President and High Representative of the African Union in Mali and the Sahel; (4th left); Mr. Jo Scheuer, UNDP Resident Rep in Mali (2nd left); Hon Iva Denoo, the Charge d' Affaires of the Ghana High Commission in Mali (3rd left); WANEP Executive Director, Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze (first left) with other dignitaries and representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and ECOWAS at the official launch of project on 'Building an Inclusive Post COVID-19 Recovery, Crises Transitions and Governance Reforms.' The project is implemented by WANEP in collaboration with ECOWAS and supported by UNDP.





**Left:** Representatives of the European Union being briefed by WANEP rep during their visit to the ESR in Ghana **Right:** WANEP Deputy Executive Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah explaining a point at the preliminary declaration of proceedings during the presidential elections in Cote d'Ivoire

#### 1.2. ENHANCING CAPABILITIES FOR DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

WANEP has entrenched a robust capacity building strategy through regular orientation, training, re-training and appraisal of community monitors and National Analysts as part of measures to enhance operationalization of the National Early Warning System (NEWS) as well as consolidate local ownership of peacebuilding and conflict prevention processes. A total of 79 community monitors were trained in the review year leading to significant improvements in the quality and timely reporting of relevant data shared on the WANEP NEWS platform, the AU African Reporter and ECOWARN. In this wise, the trained conflict monitors, observers and analysts deployed for election observation under the EMAM project were able to utilize the Arc GIS (survey 123) online application portal to monitor specific election violence in identified hotspot areas and report on the stipulated electoral monitoring platforms to engender prompt and effective response. These regular trainings and orientation exercises further resulted to strengthened NEWS platforms particularly in Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Guinea, Togo, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire and Niger. In addition, Togo now has a Peace Monitoring Centre (PMC) with improved data submission and early warning reports, becoming the first National Network with a full-fledged PMC.



WANEP - Togo well-resourced new Peace Monitoring Center (PMC)

The WANEP NEWS application platform is continually upgraded to accommodate new features to ensure its functionality and also to ensure that the monitors are in tune with current peace and security dynamics in their contexts. The regular update enables WANEP to strengthen its support to ECOWARN, the Africa Union Continental Early Warning Systems (AU-CEWS) and the ECOWAS National Early Warning and Response Centers (NEWRC). Based on the upgrade, new features were added including, incident and situation reporting templates, graphic features and various navigational tools like the Arc GIS. This exercise strengthened reporting and data input standards for ease of use by community monitors across the target countries ensuring that reliable data were well captured, analysed and reported in order to activate the right response actions. The data generated from this system was utilized by the National Election Response Group (NERG) to inform their shuttle diplomacy and was also used to track the positive impact of mitigation activities by the CSO sub-grantees.

#### **1.3. INFLUENCING POLICY AND RESPONSE ACTIONS THROUGH EARLY WARNING OUTPUTS**

WANEP has been utilizing its analytical, timely, effective and evidence-based Early Warning products generated from its NEWS platforms across the Networks to influence policy discourse and advocate for peace and stability at the regional and continental levels. State, non-state and International Partners rely on the WANEP Early Warning outputs to inform their planning and regional interventions. In the intervening period, WANEP churned out 13,937 outputs from its NEWS platform, submitted 6,373 Incident reports, 454 Situation Reports to ECOWARN and 5, 424 Incident Reports and 214 Situation Reports to Africa Reporter. The outputs, which highlight human security realities, threats and interventions in the region are shown in Table 1;



#### Table 1: List of WANEP NEWS Outputs

OUTPUTS	NEWS	ECOWARN	AFRICA REPORTER
Incident Report	9,673	6,373	5,424
Situation Report	3,248	454	214
Weekly Highlight	672		
Monthly Bulletins	168		
Situational Tracking on COVID 19	112		
Policy Brief	11		
NEWS Weekly Report	24		
Quick Update	9		
Thematic Report	4		
Peace and security reports	6		
TOTAL	13,927	6,827	5,638

The publications have contributed significantly to enhancing WANEP's advocacy and policy influencing portfolio with current and potential partners and proffers response options for policy makers, and other relevant key stakeholders. Some of the successes recorded in this wise are highlighted below;

- WANEP-Guinea advocacy to community members led to the amicable resolution of five communal conflicts before it escalated into violence.
- In Burkina Faso, the relationship between Security and Defense Forces (SDF) and the community have improved significantly with less recorded tensions
- In Sierra Leone six land-related disputes out of the 33 identified were successfully mediated and documented.
- WANEP-Nigeria was acknowledged by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and partners at State level for its contribution to providing timely peace and security outputs.
- WANEP-Burkina Faso now deploy its expertise to support the implementation of projects on elections, democracy and governance by various organisations.
- Recommendations by WANEP-Togo through the early warning publications for the safety of road users are being utilized by road safety experts in designing their interventions.

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## SO2: STRENGTHENING CITIZEN CAPACITY IN PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

### 2.1. STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE AND CAPACITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE PEACE

**2.1.1. Improving Capacities for effective conflict prevention:** Relying on its strategy of collaborative approach to peacebuilding, WANEP in the review year partnered with relevant stakeholders to carry out trainings and other capacity building initiatives. These initiatives aimed to respond to the current peace and human security dynamics and equip the beneficiaries with the requisite skills to respond to the issues identified. In this wise, a total of 4211 actors comprising 1585 (37%) women, 1901 (45.1%) men and 725 (17.2%) non-disaggregated participants benefitted from these trainings across the region. Various peacebuilding and conflict prevention components were covered with the cardinal goal to build sustainable peace and create an enabling environment for development in the region as shown on the table below;

Areas	Women	Men	Not disaggregated	Total
Gender Based Violence	3	2	0	5
Climate change and agricultural resilience	8	47	0	55
Early Warning and Response Mechanism	30	27	0	57
Communication, visibility action plans and operational skills management for journalists	31	71	0	102
Combating/Preventing Violent Extremism	35	25	0	60
Self-Development	36	32	0	68
Conflict prevention	48	66	151	265
Peace Education	48	77	30	155
Human right	61	41	0	102
Operation, organizational and Financial management/Assessment	291	303	0	594
Good Governance, Leadership, and Electoral Process	963	1149	505	2617
Preventive diplomacy, Advocacy, Dialogue and Mediation	31	61	0	92
Awareness on the fight against COVID-19	0	0	39	39
	1585	1901	725	4211

#### TABLE 2: Total number of people trained in year 2020 per thematic areas







As is the practice with WANEP, gender was a key consideration in the selection of target beneficiaries for the training both as facilitators and as trainees. Therefore, this year saw a heightened increase in the number of women beneficiaries in the various trainings held (37%), which resonates with WANEP's efforts of ensuring gender parity towards the attainment of SDG Goals 5 and 16, as well as the gender-related aspirations of the AU Agenda 2063. The beneficiaries have gone on to utilize the skills acquired to make significant contributions to the sustenance of peace and stability in their respective localities.

#### **2.2. PROMOTING YOUTH PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA**

**2.2.1.** Ensuring Coordinated Action on YPS Agenda: In the review year, WANEP facilitated the establishment of four youth4peace<sup>2</sup> networks in Togo, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Guinea-Bissau to mobilize various youth actors from the different countries to provide coordinated action to support the effective implementation of the YPS agenda in the region. The platform relies on collaborative approach to peacebuilding to promote and consolidate youth contributions to peace processes. WANEP also utilized the Youth Peace Camp concept, an innovative strategy for deepening youth reflection and commitment to peace and security. The Camp allows young people in conflict affected areas to engage in dialogue and conflict transformation activities. For instance, a beneficiary of the Youth Camp organized by WANEP Burkina Faso was able to secure some funding to set up a mobile phone shop as an economic empowerment initiative and employ other youth in his locality (see box: In His Own Words!) WANEP-Senegal through the ECO Citizen Camp<sup>3</sup> raised a pool of youth advocates for environmental protection and safety.

2 Youth4Peace is the AU programme to promote youth participation in peace processes

3 The ECO Citizen Camp is a platform for promoting young people's contribution to environmental safety in line with climate change



 WANEP supports youth platforms across the region to carry out coordinated action in contribution to the effective implementation of the YPS Agenda.
Above left, Youth4Peace Network members in Sierra Leone discuss youth empowerment strategies. Above Right: Tree planting session by Youth Club members in Burkina Faso

Based on WANEP's cumulative experience in developing strategic documents, the organization initiated the process of developing a Guiding Document for the development of National Action Plans, (NAPs) for UNSCR 2250 implementation. The document will serve as a roadmap to guide the process of developing the UNSCR 2250 NAP covering the whole process from consultations to validation and eventual implementation, including monitoring and evaluation. The document will be used to conduct advocacy and provide technical support to various countries in developing and implementing their respective programmes for UNSCR 2250 and related youthfocus normative frameworks. In Guinea, the Young Peace Ambassadors trained by WANEP are using social media platforms and face-to-face engagements to advocate for increased youth participation in peace processes. Benin is using the youth-friendly apps<sup>4</sup> and songs on YouTube⁵ to engage with young people and sensitize them on the electoral code and non-violent behavior during elections. One user had this to say about the app; "It is a good initiative in that it allows one to know a little about the organization of communal elections and all types of elections in Benin. It allows you to get information and encourages you to read the electoral code. I will be happy to see this initiative extended to other challenges on the Constitution and for other elections."

- 4 https://challenges.vote229.org/
- 5 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YYdOn0A8f8o



#### In His Own Words!



"I am BOUDO MALIKI, Ist-year university student in the Faculty of Economics and Management at THOMAS SANKARA University. I am currently the Secretary General of the National Network of Peace Clubs of WANEP-Burkina.

I participated in the summer peace camp initiated by WANEP-Burkina on the theme: **Building youth resilience to violent extremism, held from September 07 to 12, 2020.** During the camp, we heard of the opportunities offered by the Ministry of Youth in the field of entrepreneurship. After the training, I put into practice the skills acquired and applied successfully to the Economic Recovery Fund of the FASI (Support Fund for the Informal Sector). I was awarded a fund amounting to 450,000Fcfa.

This fund allowed me to expand my phone sales and repair shop by equipping it with phone and cell phone accessories. A dream that has since been a reality because it changed my life.

I would therefore like to encourage my peers to always seek opportunity for capacity building and economic empowerment. This is one of the strategies to build their resilience to violent extremism.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank WANEP-Burkina and its partners for supporting youth development and initiatives. My appreciation goes to the Ministry of Youth for its financial support."

Testimony from one of the youth beneficiaries of the ECO Peace Camp in Burkina Faso organized by WANEP

**2.2.2. Harnessing Youth Perspectives:** WANEP in the review year, created opportunities to harness youth perspectives on topical issues of YPS through a series of webinars. Two key webinars held in the year; the first one discussed "The Impact of COVID-19 on Youth, Peace and Security in West Africa: Youth Perspectives on Existing Responses and Post-Recovery Plans" and saw the participation of 70 actors including youth from across the West African region. The webinar offered a platform to highlight the impact of COVID-19 on youth education, employment, security, peace initiatives etc. and made recommendations for a youth-sensitive recovery plan to reduce their vulnerabilities to violence. The second webinar on "Silencing the Guns, Strengthening Democratic Governance and Peaceful Elections in West Africa", was attended by 75 participants. It provided space to raise awareness among youth for their active involvement and contribution to peaceful elections in West Africa. The webinars created opportunities to deepen youth reflections and enhance

their commitment to peace, security and good governance for sustainable development in the region. Discussions, recommendations and lessons learned from the webinar formed part of materials for a biannual E-Bulletin titled "Youth Perspectives!"

**2.2.3. Peace Club/Peer Mediators Club Initiatives:** Spurred by the success of the WANEP facilitated Peace/Peer mediators' clubs, more clubs sprung up in Cote d'Ivoire, Mali and Senegal. WANEP Burkina Faso created a National Network of Peace Clubs as an empowering platform for coaching current and past students to jointly plan and implement youth peace activities. Members of the club regularly undergo training and refresher courses to improve their skills to effectively contribute to the implementation of the YPS agenda. In Djougou community in Benin Republic, the intervention of WANEP-Benin's Peace Club Facilitator, led to the rescue of four girls aged between 15 to 17 years from forced marriages. The rescued girls are undergoing counseling sessions preparatory to their returning back to school. In addition, the community and its neighbours have achieved high school retention rates for girls and commitment by their parents to keep girls in school as well as recorded significant reduction in sexual violence in the area. Peace Club members in Burkina Faso, used their creativity and innovation to curtail the spread of COVID-19 in schools. The club members manufactured 30 hand washing equipment for use by the students as well as produced and distributed 800 soap bars and 400 litres of liquid soap.



 Peace Club members in Burkina Faso used their creativity to manufacture 30 hand washing equipment for students as part of their contribution to the fight against
COVID 19, produced and distributed 800 soap bars and 400 litres of liquid soap. Above the students showcase one of the hand-washing equipment they created

**2.2.4. Entrenching Peace Education in Schools:** WANEP national networks continued to make significant progress in entrenching peace education in schools' curriculums across the region. WANEP-Burkina Faso developed a basic peace education manual that was adapted by the curriculum directorate with full implementation budget. The network has consolidated its partnership with the Ministry of National Education and played a key role in the creation of education awareness tools to deepen understanding on issues of citizenship. In Togo, the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education charged with the institutionalization of peace education in schools, validated a framework for integrating peace values in "Social Education" training based on WANEP Togo's Guide on Peace Education in Basic Schools. The Network further launched an Academy of Youth and Journalists for Peace to strengthen the Youth for Peace agenda of training young people on peace-related issues. So far, a total of 50 young people have benefitted from the Academy.



#### 2.3. ADVOCACY, LOBBYING AND CAMPAIGNS

**2.3.1. International Youth Day:** The 2020 International Youth Day (IYD) was celebrated around the topic: "Youth Engagement for Global Action". WANEP Regional in collaboration with the National Secretariats, conducted a 14-day campaign as part of their contribution to commemorate the IYD and in line with the UNSCR 2250 and UNSCR 2419. The dialogues and online campaigns helped create awareness and underscore youth participation and innovation in the fight against COVID-19. Through these initiatives and activities carried out by the 14 National Networks, more than 42,000 people were reached on various social media platforms.

**VOICES OF YOUTH:** WANEP carried out a robust 14-day campaign in commemoration of the 2020 International Youth Day. The campaign provided the space to amplify the voice of youth and showcase their role and meaningful participation to the sustenance of peace and security. Through this campaign, the youth shared their work and contributions in the fight against the COVID 19 pandemic across the region.



**2.3.2. International Campaign to end Violence against Women and Children:** WANEP employed the same online tactics to carry out the United Nations 16 Days of Activism for No Violence against Women and Children Campaign, which takes place annually from 25 November (International Day of Non-Violence against Women) to 10 December (International Human Rights Day). The 2020 global theme was: Orange the World: Fund, Respond, Prevent, Collect! With the overarching theme, "Leave No One Behind: End Violence against Women and Girls"— reflecting the core principle of the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The campaign messages were carefully selected to bring issues of SGBV into the public domain, address the causes, effects and preventive measures of SGBV, draw attention of relevant stakeholders to the scourge and proffer response options.

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Posters designed with thought-provoking messages calling for coordinated action against gender-based violence

**2.3.3.** *International Women's Day 2020:* The 2020 International Women's Day with the theme; I AM A GENERATION EQUALITY: Advancing Women and Girls Rights, provided the opportunity to deepen reflections on achievements and gaps in promoting women's rights and gender equality. Through panel discussions, inter-generational dialogues, debates, peace rallies and live radio discussions, WANEP supported and empowered young girls and women across the region to play key roles in challenging oppressive patriarchal systems, abuse and violation of their rights and poor representation in politics and decision-making. In Ghana, WANEP teamed up with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) with support from UNDP to hold panel discussions under the auspices of the UNOWAS Working Group on Women, Youth Peace and Security in Ghana (WGWYPS-GH) convened by WANEP. Across the regional and national offices, WANEP and its member organizations relied on this theme to raise awareness on the yawning gap between the older and younger generation of women, called for increased participation of women in all sectors and demand justice and an end to all forms of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence.



Panelists discuss meaningful involvement of women and youth in peace and security and modalities for bridging the inter-generational gap as part of activities to mark the 2020 International Women's Day in Accra-Ghana





**2.3.4. Lobby and Advocacy Efforts:** WANEP's advocacy efforts in the review year resulted to significant results across the region. In Mali, beneficiaries of the Female Leadership Program (FLP) used the *Buran Sukaro* campaign translated in English as 'Sugar for in-laws' to address the recurrent conflict between in-laws in marriage, which often heightens gender-based violence. The 'Media Voices for Peaceful and Inclusive Elections in Mali,' under the UNDP supported project helped to mitigate communal conflicts in the Mopti region. In Togo, an estimated 100,000 inhabitants in the Savannah region were sensitized on the culture of peace and non-violence through community radio programmes and advocacy initiatives. This has helped to secure the commitment of community and religious leaders to promote peace and stability throughout the electioneering period and beyond. During one advocacy visit, a participant said,

#### "these exchange meetings made me change my mind about a revenge that I wanted to take during the election period because I had suffered a lot of injustices but today, I forgive."

Further, the Network's sustained advocacy under the EPNV-JS (Education a' la paix et a' la nonviolence) Project on the removal of violent and erotic content on TV and radio resulted to a marked decrease in the broadcast of violent and erotic content in at least five TV channels and seven radio channels monitored by the Network. Sensitization on the harmful effects of drug use on weekly radio programs in Senegal and Sierra Leone led to a drastic reduction in the number of complaints from community members in relation to drug abuse among youth while the youth in Sierra Leone are now actively engaged in conflict prevention in their communities. Efforts of WANEP-Benin's ongoing advocacy for the passage of the Access to Information Bill was recognized in the year leading to the acquisition of funding support from the Swiss Development Cooperation to strengthen this process.

**2.3.5.** Sensitisation and awareness creation on COVID-19: In the face of the COVID 19 pandemic, WANEP and its local partners constituting more than 50% of women groups provided palliatives to women, girls and other vulnerable groups and generated awareness on preventive measures to tackle the pandemic across the region. These included the donation of items ranging from food rations to hygiene kits to the elderly, persons living with disability and other vulnerable groups. The Young Peace Ambassadors, a youth group and members of the WANEP-Guinea peer mediators club, mobilized resources (approximately 1200 euros) to purchase and distribute protection kits in their localities. WANEP Cote d'Ivoire working with other partners and supported by Médica Mondiale donated health kits to women community leaders and women victims of violence while WANEP-Togo in partnership with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and Syndicat National des Praticiens Hospitaliers du Togo (SYNPHOT) supplied medical kits to six hospitals in strategic locations across the country.



COVID 19 Palliatives: WANEP and its local partners constituting more than 50% of women groups provided palliatives to women, girls and other vulnerable groups and generated awareness on preventive measures to tackle the COVID 19 pandemic across the region. (L-R): These images from The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Niger showcase some of the palliatives contributed by WANEP national networks across the region

Aside from providing palliatives, the networks carried out vigorous sensitization activities through community radio platforms such as the 'Women's Voices for Peace,' live radio discussions aired on seven radio stations in seven states of Nigeria. A 30 seconds video in Senegalese local dialects of Wolof, Peulh and French was used to sensitize local communities on the COVID 19 safety measures while WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire also used video messages in the main spoken languages and creative posters to disseminate information on the pandemic. In Guinea, 20 young leaders are utilizing on-line platforms facilitated by WANEP to share experiences and efforts in the fight against the pandemic leading to the establishment and operationalisation of a Peace and Security Agenda in the country. WANEP-Guinea Bissau's "Stop Coronavirus in Guinea Bissau" campaigns have increased youth awareness and participation in community sensitization on COVID-19 through the activities of the Youth Ambassadors who use local languages to create awareness about the pandemic.

#### 2.4. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY COHESION

**2.4.1. Building and Sustaining effective Peace Platforms:** A key strategy of WANEP community intervention is the establishment of peace committees with trained members to position them to contribute meaningfully to conflict prevention in their locality. For instance, members of the Local Dialogue Facilitation Team (LDTF) set up and trained by WANEP-Ghana played a key role in resolving a potential dispute arising from discrepancies in financial statements presented by an outgoing Assembly member in the Western Region of Ghana. Also, the Inter-Party Youth Dialogue Committee (IPYDC) members and Women Caucus for Peace (WCP) members of the various political parties relied on their early warning skills to identify and analyze early signals of election-related and politically motivated conflicts preparatory to the Ghana 2020 General Elections. In Togo, trained women community mediators made significant contributions to settle a land dispute in the Savannah, Central and Plateau Regions before it escalated into violence while members of the regional peace and security committees established with WANEP-Togo support were instrumental in the amicable resolution of tensions between civilians and Security Forces in Tsévié county. WANEP-The Gambia, trained mediators who succeeded in brokering peace between the "three years jonta" Movement and the Government after months of stalemate.

2.4.2. Deepening/Strengthening VE Strategies: WANEP continued to partner with local, national and international partners in its efforts towards deepening and strengthening strategies for countering violent extremism (CVE). WANEP, with support from the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) and in collaboration with ECOWAS and UNESCO, developed a teaching guide to support efforts aimed at preventing violent extremism in the Sahel and Nigeria, 60 primary school teachers trained on the manual have in turn coached over 1,125 students on peaceful co-existence. The trained beneficiaries in Niger, Mali, Burkina Faso and Nigeria cascaded the training to the communities where the community beneficiaries have put in place concrete action plans on ways to prevent violent extremism among the youth. The Guide has received wide acceptance and support from institutions such as UNESCO, ECOWAS and the UNDP. Research lends credence to the critical role of religion and tradition in influencing ideologies and changing mindsets and its huge impact on the rise of violent extremism. In line with this realization, WANEP-Togo successfully solicited the commitment of religious and traditional leaders in several communities in Togo in the fight against violent extremism. As a result, some selected religious leaders are using their platforms to sensitize their adherents especially the youth on strategies for countering CVE.



### S.O. 3: RESEARCH RESULTS ARE UTILIZED IN POLICY ADVOCACY TO PROMOTE PEACE AND SECURITY

#### 3.1. ENHANCING KNOWLEDGE, INFLUENCING POLICY AND IMPROVING PEACEBUILDING PRACTICE

**3.1.1 Youth Perspectives:** Youth Perspectives is an initiative of the WANEP Youth and Peace Education Program to promote and create avenues for youth participation and engagement in peace and security policy making processes in the region. The rationale behind this is that, although young people in West Africa constitute about 53%<sup>6</sup> of the overall population of over 400 million<sup>7</sup> people, there is limited space for their active participation in policy making. For this reason, "Youth Perspectives" seeks to harness youth potentials by providing them with a space to share their views on peace and security issues in the region and make constructive and actionable recommendations. It is a semi-annual activity targeting West Africa young people living in the region or in the diaspora with the expectation that the youth through this platform will positively influence policies and help build resilience to varied threats to peace and security in their communities.

**3.1.2. Gender Connect:** From the stables of WANEP came a novel E-publication dubbed; 'Gender Connect,' a monthly publication of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Desk. The publication chronicles WANEP's interventions, initiatives and efforts towards actualising its WPS commitments across the region in order to ensure that women security issues and concerns continue to be in the front burner. The 2-pager publication made its debut in May 2020 and is focused specifically on information and news about Gender including country context of WPS agenda and NAPs development progress. Four issues of the publication were produced in the reporting year and it tackled various topics such as interventions undertaken across WANEP's Networks to curtail the spread of COVID 19, GBV, Male involvement in driving the WPS agenda and community interventions in achieving the effective implementation of UNSCR 1325. The publications were widely ddisseminated among relevant stakeholders with positive reviews.

#### **3.2. ACHIEVING INCLUSIVE PEACE THROUGH EVIDENCE-BASED RESEARCH**

As a Think-Tank, Research and advocacy institution, WANEP has the leeway to deploy its timetested expertise to team up with key stakeholders and make significant contributions to a wide range of issues culminating into the production of high-quality research documents. The WANEP Head of research, was a fellow of the Southern Voices Network for Peacebuilding (SVNP) under their Africa Program at the Woodrow Wilson Center for International Scholars, Washington DC, where he honed his expertise in the production of several research publications. The research contributions have strengthened the partnership between WANEP and the SVNP, Africa Program, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars. Similarly, WANEP's skills were much sought after leading to significant contributions to three research papers and two book chapters<sup>8</sup>. WANEP-Burkina Faso's research on the Impact of COVID-19 on women undertaken by the beneficiaries of the Female Leadership Program has been cited as a reference for women, peace and security issues. WANEP-Ghana's case study publication on the role of Peace Committees in Conflict Management provides research resource on how Peace Committees as Early Warning infrastructure can be a viable tool for conflict resolution in the community.

6 The\_Youth\_and\_Development\_Planning\_in\_West\_Africa,

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320880634\_The\_Youth\_and\_Development\_Planning\_in\_West\_Africa 7 lbid

8 The State of Peacebuilding in Africa: Lessons Learned for Policymakers and Practitioners https://www.springer.com/in/book/9783030466350.

### 4.0. ENHANCING GENDER AND WOMEN CAPACITY IN PEACEBUILDING

#### 4.1. CONSOLIDATING THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA



Dr. Afisah Zakariah, Chief Director, Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), launching the Ghana National Action Plan 2 (GHANAP II) on behalf of the Ghana Minister for Gender, Hon Cynthia Mamle Morrison

**4.1.1. Support to NAP development and implementation:** The year 2020 is significant in the WPS Agenda as it marked the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA). In this regard, WANEP worked collectively with relevant stakeholders to establish alliances and partnerships for effective development and implementation of UNSCR 1325 NAPs resulting to 13 out of the 15 ECOWAS Member States with NAPs in different stages of development and implementation. Building on this milestone, the Council of Ministers in Burkina Faso validated the National Action Plans for Resolutions 1325, 1820 and 2242. Nigeria has developed its third phase of NAPs while some states have gone a step further to develop Local Action Plans (LAPs) and have been advocating for budgetary allocation for the implementation of the LAP. In Ghana, key partners including the UNDP, High Commissions of Canada and Sierra Leone to Ghana, Embassy of Togo and GIZ supported the launch of Ghana's second phase of the National Action Plan is more elaborate with the inclusion of the Relief and Recovery Pillar, which provided an entry point for post COVID 19 interventions.



**4.1.2. Achieving Gender Parity:** The demand for WANEP's expertise and experience in driving the WPS agenda keep growing as WANEP WPS staff across the region engaged in global conversations, made presentations, facilitated sessions and led discussions to share insights and perspectives on their work. WANEP engaged strategically with national, regional, continental and global groups including the AU, the UN and other high-level WPS platforms to speak to issues of gender parity in the attainment of the WPS commitments. In partnership with relevant CSOs including the Africa Institute of South Africa/ Human Sciences Research Council; (AISA/HSRC), Women's International Peace Centre (WIPC); Institute for Security Studies (ISS); South African Women in Dialogue (SAWD) and Femmes Afrique Solidarite (FAS), we co-hosted an online Continental Dialogue to share Civil Society perspectives on 20 years of African Women's Participation in Women Peace and Security. WANEP's contributions at UN-CSO digital conversation on preventing violent extremism (PVE) was included in a Publication released at the end of the consultations.

#### 4.2. PAVING THE WAY FOR WOMEN'S GOVERNANCE AND POLITICAL INCLUSION

**4.2.1. Increasing Women's Political Inclusion:** In the review year, WANEP made significant efforts to pave the way for women's meaningful inclusion in political process through capacity building initiatives, consistent advocacy, mentoring and coaching. With WANEP's support, more women and young people took on leadership roles and are driving social change in politics and decision-making. The mentoring programs for young women and emerging women leaders instituted by WANEP national networks of Guinea, The Gambia and Sierra Leone have raised women's full participation and inclusion in political processes. In Cote d'Ivoire, 400 women made it to the 2020 electoral list for local elections following the passage of the landmark bill on increasing women's quota for political participation. WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire played a key role in carrying out consistent advocacy, which contributed significantly to the passage of the bill.

Series of advocacy and capacity building initiatives undertaken by WANEP-Benin aimed at increasing women's political participation yielded fruits in the reporting year with 49 women emerging as Communal Councilors in the May 2020 municipal elections in Benin compared to 42 in the previous elections, indicating an increase of 16.67% in women leadership. Additionally, three women emerged as Mayors as against only one female mayor in previous tenure. WANEP under the Female Leadership Program (PLF) in partnership with the Danish De-mining Group (DDG) created a pool of 18 female Experts who continued to engage with civil society organizations to amplify the voices of women in security sector governance and successfully mediated in various community conflicts with significant results. The project titled; 'Female Leadership Program (PLF) for inclusive governance in the Sahel,' aims to amplify the voices of women from civil society in the governance of the security sector in Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso. In the review year, WANEP-Togo has put modalities in place to engage the current government institutions to demand for increased representation of women and young people in the new government of Togo.

#### 4.3. UTILIZING SUSTAINABLE PLATFORMS TO AMPLIFY WOMEN'S VOICES

**4.3.1. National Women Coalitions:** WANEP facilitated the establishment of four National Women's Coalitions under the UNDP funded project on "Building an Inclusive Post COVID-19 Recovery, Crises Transitions and Governance Reforms." The Coalitions contributed significantly to strengthen women's sustainable platforms to enhance their participation in political governance in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The Coalition comprised 120 women (30 per country), selected based on their influence and remarkable contribution to peace, security and governance issues. With the skills acquired, the NWC members were able to mobilize over 240 women to engage authorities at national and community levels through advocacy and national policy dialogue to demand for women's meaningful inclusion in governance and political transition in their countries. In Mali and Burkina Faso, the NWC and the community women groups advocacy activities led to the commitment of administrative and traditional authorities to support the effectiveness of the gender quota laws and women's participation in governance. In Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Mali, the NWC provided palliatives to vulnerable and refugee women affected
by political tensions and violent extremism and provided economic empowerment activities such as Soap making (in Burkina), while sensitizing on COVID-19 safety protocols. These initiatives contributed to strengthening the women's resilience and confidence to positively contribute to providing security and sustainable development in their communities.



Left: Group discussion by members of the National Women Coalition during their orientation in Niger. Right: Ms. Alice Kambire, WANEP Regional Analyst facilitating a training session for NWC members in Burkina Faso

**4.3.2. Working Group on Women, Youth, Peace and Security -Ghana Chapter:** The Group focused its activities this year mainly on increasing women's meaningful involvement in politics in Ghana in preparation for the 2020 General Elections. In this wise, the Group convened gender experts from around the country to deliberate on modalities for increasing women's political participation and bridge the inter-generational gap. For instance, the panel discussions held to mark the 2020 International Women's Day (IWD), successfully put the spotlight on women's role in the promotion of peaceful electoral process and made major contributions to the thematic discourse on bridging the generational gap. At the Working Group's inaugural Annual General Meeting (AGM), held in Accra-Ghana, representatives from the 16 regions of Ghana, including women and gender activists, international partners and youth groups united with the common passion of attaining the goal of gender equality and expanding opportunities for women to participate in shaping public policy. This scenario provided a unified voice for change thus reinforcing the message that sustainable peace and development as stipulated by UN Agenda 2030 cannot be achieved without gender equality.



Group working session at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Working Group on WPS held at the KAIPTC, Accra-Ghana



**4.3.3. Gender Talk Series:** In tandem with restrictions imposed by the COVID 19 pandemic, the WANEP WPS Desk initiated a novel digital platform aptly tagged; Gender Talk Series (GTS). The virtual platform brought together experts and professionals in the field of gender, peacebuilding and conflict prevention to share best practices and lessons learned on the actualization of the WPS Agenda. It debuted in September 2020 to rave reviews from internal and external audiences. At the maiden edition held on September 22 and 23 for Anglophone and Francophone audiences respectively, WANEP Program Director, Mrs. Addae-Mensah, said she was impressed with the quality of conversations adding, 'the panelists spurred us into good reflections and good discourses. This was an opportunity to walk the talk!' Similar sentiments were echoed by Hajia Raheemat Momodu of ECOWAS. In her words; "This is a very good initiative, well-articulated. Kudos to WANEP! I want to assure you that ECOWAS is very proud to be associated with this novel idea!"

Key outcome of this engagement is the increased visibility and profile of WANEP as a force to be reckoned with in the WPS agenda paving the way for growing demands for collaboration with critical stakeholders. For instance, a panelist in one of the series, Mr. Nathaniel Awuapila had this to say; "In furtherance of the good work in this direction, CORAFID would like to work with WANEP to develop an initiative/project to advance the role of men in the WPS Agenda." Another panelist Ms. Stella Sabiti a consultant supporting the AU PSD to develop a program on Positive Masculinity also expressed interest in future collaborations stating; "I'll be leaving the AU after having been Team Leader for beefing up the African Peace and Security Architecture APSA, set up FemWise-Africa and now Positive Masculinity program. I've already included WANEP as one of those key partners that should be brought on board."

#### 4.4. LET'S TALK SGBV! DRIVING TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE THROUGH COMMUNITY-LED INITIATIVES

**4.4.1. Coordinated/Collective Action Against SGBV:** WANEP is strongly committed to addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and doubled its efforts this year to demand practical action from governments for the protection of women and girls from the scourge. With the escalation of SGBV cases due to the COVID 19 pandemic lockdowns, WANEP utilized platforms such as the Peace Huts' (operational in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire), women-led community radio programs and sustained advocacy across the region to push for a change in the oppressive patriarchal systems that continue to deepen women's vulnerability. Consistent court monitoring by Peace Hut members in Liberia with secure funding from Kvinna till Kvinna, led to the prosecution of 35 rape cases in Montserrado county involving victims between ages 2 to 17 years with the perpetrators serving various jail terms. The members continue to engage government agencies, traditional and religious leaders to demand protection for women and girls against SGBV and other harmful traditional practices with added support from the UN Women.

In Senegal, a guidance desk for women survivors of SGBV is providing succor and immediate response for the victims, especially women and children, and has significantly increased citizen's awareness of the dangers of SGBV. The center is an outcome of the pilot project implemented by WANEP-Senegal entitled "Help for victims of violence in the municipality of Thiaroye Gare." An estimated 40 women trained under the project are currently providing counselling and psychotherapy services in the center. In Burkina Faso, intense advocacy campaigns led to a marked increase in the number of reported cases of SGBV thus providing an opportunity for redress for victims and survivors. Burkina also formalized its partnership with the Provincial Directorate of social action on the monitoring of the "Centre d'écoute" in Pabré to support and counsel girls who are victims of violence while Cote d'Ivoire has signed a new agreement with relevant partners towards revitalizing the Yopougon Peace Hut. Focal points in the communities known as 'gender-champions' are providing immediate support to SGBV victims by promptly reporting identified cases.

Young women in Guinea, empowered through the Mentorship programme facilitated by WANEP-Guinea created a platform for insightful discourse and experience sharing in order to create

awareness and seek collective solution to SGBV cases. Sierra Leone continues to experience a disturbing rise in SGBV despite the recent declaration of rape and sexual violence as a "National Emergency" and imposition of life imprisonment for perpetrators by President Julius Maada Bio. In the quest to find lasting solution to this scourge, WANEP has been assiduously advocating to relevant government institutions calling for the immediate implementation of the various anti-SGBV laws and policies, particularly, the Three Gender Acts of 2007 and the Sexual Offenses Act of 2012 in bringing perpetrators to book.



WANEP is strongly committed to addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and utilizes platforms such as town hall meetings, awareness and sensitization events to enlighten community women on issues of SGBV as shown at the sensitization forum facilitated by WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire and Town hall meeting organized by WANEP-Nigeria





# S.O.5: INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF WANEP

#### 5.1. ENHANCING CAPACITY BUILDING FOR CONFLICT-SENSITIVE PEACEBUILDING

WANEP recognizes that Capacity Development and Institutional Strengthening components are integral to organizational success and sustainability. Several staff capacity building initiatives were carried out in the reporting year despite the challenges of the COVID 19 pandemic. Most of these initiatives including trainings, workshops and seminars held remotely in the reporting year reaching more staff than may have been anticipated with significant results. For instance, 13 National Network Secretariats and 6 network member organizations who received training in basic monitoring and evaluation now demonstrate enhanced skills in result-oriented planning, implementation and reporting. These various levels of training and other capacity building initiatives through coaching, mentoring, advocacy and networking have contributed significantly to the quality of program delivery across WANEP regional, national offices and among member organizations.

WANEPs' quest for quality program delivery is further boosted by its robust and highly specialized Internship Program. Although the pandemic with its attendant restrictions impacted on the internship program in the year, few interns were engaged to support program implementation. WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire engaged interns and a volunteer to support their program coordination and implementation, WANEP Guinea engaged an intern to support its finance and administration functions while WANEP-Regional also recruited an intern to support its communications portfolio.

5.1.1. Evaluation and Learning: The WANEP biennial Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs) held within the year with the overarching expected outcome of strengthened institutional systems and frameworks for effective and efficient operations in support of continental, regional and national peace and security architectures. The review focused on harmonization and institutional reforms in response to the human security context of the region and brought all parts of the organization together to analyse actions and achievements made over the year, examine the implementation of the 2015-2020 Strategic plan and collectively project WANEP's 2021-2025 strategic focus. At the end of the two-day working session, a draft Theory of Change, proposed strategic direction and the consolidation of the strategic focus were developed. Aside PRAPs, WANEP holds regular review and reflection sessions to evaluate its program implementation to ensure that it meets the vision and expectations of the organization.



**5.1.2. Deploying Peacebuilding Expertise through Strategic Relationships:** WANEP's expertise is regularly sought after for deployment in peace, development and other areas of focus. For instance, WANEP through its research unit provided primary sources of data to support students' Doctor of Philosophy and Masters academic theses in the areas of women peace and security,

violent extremism and terrorism, climate change and conflict in West Africa. This contributed to strengthening partnership with academic institutions in the area of peacebuilding practice. WANEPs' membership of Southern Voices Peacebuilding Network (SVNP) provided an opportunity to interact and interface with other like-minded organisations on the continent and America. In tune with this relationship, the WANEP Regional Researcher, Mr. Baffour Osei Frimpong, earned a three-month fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson Centre in Washington DC. During the fellowship tenure, Mr. Baffour utilized numerous platforms such as panel discussions and contributions to key papers and publications<sup>9</sup> to showcase WANEPs' work and its significant contributions to countering violent extremism (CVE), strengthening human security and early warning systems as well as mitigating electoral violence.

#### 5.2. IMPROVING AND SUSTAINING INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

5.2.1. Strengthening and Managing Internal Operations:

At the administrative level, WANEP reviewed its human resource manual and code of conduct to respond to current dynamics. Similarly, the WANEP website was revised and updated to expand on content and make it more user friendly while a video conferencing facility was installed to enhance effective and efficient communication with external and internal partners. Towards strengthening its financial system, WANEP recruited a top-notch bilingual expert to review its landmark accounting software – the Tally system to make it adaptable to francophone countries and carried out its statutory audit.

The review year witnessed very few staff movement and recruitments as WANEP over the years has earned a track record of high staff retention. Dr. Festus Aubyn was recruited as Regional Coordinator Research and Capacity Building at the Regional Office while the Programme Officer Research and Capacity Building, Ms. Beatrice Brew moved on in the year. At the national level, National Network Coordinators were recruited for Guinea Bissau and Burkina Faso. Togo, which marked its 18-year anniversary, recruited a Communication and External Relations Officer to boost its visibility, publicity and social



Above: Ms Edwige Mensah, former Coordinator WANEP-AU Liaison office with her successor at the AU, Mr. Baffour Osei Frimpong

media portfolio. Towards maintaining its lead in community early warning and response, WANEP recruited NEWS Managers in Togo, Senegal, Mali and Burkina Faso. Besides recruitment, WANEP staff are regularly re-assigned in accordance with their areas of core expertise. For instance, the Regional Researcher Mr. Baffour Frimpong was reassigned to the AU Liaison Office to replace Ms. Edwige Dede Mensah as the Coordinator AU Liaison Office. Ms. Mensah was moved to the ECOWAS liaison Office in replacement of the erstwhile Liaison Office Coordinator, Mr. Francis Acquah-Aikins, who has since moved on.

Research Papers: Climate Change & Violent Extremism in the Lake Chad Basin: Key Issues and Way Forward https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/climate-change-and-violent-extremism-lake-chad-basin-key-issues-and-way-forward

- Violent Extremism in West Africa: Are Current Responses Enough?
- https://www.wilsoncenter.org/publication/violent-extremism-west-africa-are-current-responses-enough with the second sec
- Policy Brief: Terror Surge in West Africa: Enhancing Regional Responses

https://www.wilsoncenter.org/sites/default/files/media/uploads/documents/Policy%20Brief%20-%20Terror%20Surge%20 in%20West%20Africa%20Enhancing%20Regional%20Responses.pdf

Blog Posts: Gender Dimensions of COVID-19 Responses in Wes Africa: A Reflection

https://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/gender-dimensions-of-responses-to-the-covid-19-crisis-in-west-africa-a-reflection/ 1. Climate Change and Fragility in the Lake Chad Basin

- https://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/climate-change-and-fragility-in-the-lake-chad-basin/ 2. Social Media in West Africa: A Security Quagmire?
- https://africaupclose.wilsoncenter.org/social-media-in-west-africa-a-security-quagmire/



**5.2.2. Governance and Leadership Oversight Functions:** WANEP relies on professional boards that support and oversee the performance of WANEP, provide strategic guidance, professional advice and policy oversight at the Regional and National levels. In the reporting year, the Regional and National Boards in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, held their statutory meetings in accordance with their corporate governance functions. The Regional Board is the second highest decision-making body after the General Assembly. Decisions taken at the Board level have to be ratified at the General Assembly before it comes into force. WANEP has also put in place a robust governance structure, which ensures that the Regional Office provides oversight responsibility for the National Networks. By virtue of this oversight function, the regional office facilitates, coordinates and supports the Networks in designing program direction, ensuring financial accountability and the effective functioning of the entire organization.



Regional Board members take time out of their statutory meeting to celebrate one of their member Mrs. Salamatu Hussaini Suleiman (middle), seen here cutting her birthday cake flanked by other Board members and supported by Management staff and Administrative team



5.2.3. Establishing Pathways for the Next Decade of Peacebuilding (Strategic Plan 2021 – 2025): Within the reporting period, WANEP developed a new Strategic Plan to guide its operation for the next five (5) years covering the period 2021 to 2025. The overall goal of WANEP is to enhance the capacity of citizens and States towards achieving sustainable peace and development. The new plan built on recommendations and lessons learned from the robust evaluation of the 2015-2020 Strategic plan carried out by independent external evaluators. This assessment once againcinfirmed WANEP's capability to

deliver its mandate in the context of the external environmental scan, supported by a SWOT analysis. Structurally, the plan outlines the successes gained during the 2015 – 2020 strategic period, spells out the current and emerging threats in West Africa and presents situation analysis to put WANEP's mandate in context and outlines the strategic priorities and objectives that WANEP seeks to achieve in the next five years. The new strategic plan seeks to enhance the use of early warning in support of response initiatives, strengthen women and girls' capacity for policy influencing, broaden the Peace Education programmes and support youth participation on issues of governance, peace and security among others. The plan, which was developed through a robust peer review will be approved by the General Assembly at its meeting in 2021.

5.2.4. WANEP Organizational Development Index (WODI): The WANEP Organizational Development Index (WODI) is an institutional development tool designed by WANEP and used to assess governance, accountability, institutional capacity and growth path of the organization and its network members. Measuring WANEP's development and implementation rate against the 2015 to 2020 Strategic Action Plan reveal an overall significant improvement in its operations, program delivery and in the performance assessment of the National Networks. The WODI assessment revealed that WANEP's development and growth rate recorded a marked increase from 74.8% to 80.00%, between 2015 to early 2020, translating to an average 5.2% increase over the last five years. This growth continued and consolidated throughout 2020. In 2020, based on the recommendations from our 2019's PRAPS, our Networks in Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Senegal and Burkina Faso underwent a mid-term WODI covering the period January to June 2020. This process contributed to a marked improvement in the governance processes of the national networks as evident with nine networks now in category 'A', four in category 'B' and only Guinea Bissau in Category C. No networks are in categories D and E as in previous assessments. WODI allows WANEP to build and sustain a strong institution able to respond to the prevailing peace and security challenges by facilitating funding opportunities to its networks and member organizations through resource generation and grant making.

#### **5.3. BUILDING AND CONSOLIDATING NEW AND EXISTING PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **5.3.1. SUPPORT TO ECOWAS AND AU PEACE AND SECURITY ARCHITECTURE**

**ECOWAS-WANEP Renew MOU:** In the year under review, WANEP strengthened its relationship with ECOWAS with the renewal of their long-standing MOU for another five-year period. A key development in the new MOU is that WANEP now maintains a full Liaison Office and not just an Officer at ECOWAS. Earlier in the year, WANEP played host to H.E. Finda Koroma, Vice President (VP) of the ECOWAS Commission, who paid a working visit to the WANEP Regional Office in Accra to discuss key areas of collaboration as outlined in the MOU. During the visit, the VP expressed appreciation to WANEP and commended the organization for its professionalism and expertise in the discharge of her duties. The renewal of the MOU and the visit of the VP clearly indicated the strong partnership between the two institutions, which continues to be touted as the best example of how a civil society organization can relate seemly with a Regional Body. The WANEP strategic direction showed key similarities and areas of focus between WANEP and ECOWAS, specifically in areas such as Migration, Youth Bulge and State Fragility. Others are Urban Crime, Natural Resource Governance and Management of renewable energy among others. The two institutions are also planning to work together to further consolidate and sustain gender transformative action.

Joint Planning and Implementation: On the strength of the WANEP-ECOWAS partnership, the two institutions continued to carry out several engagements in the course of the year. The MOU paved the way for the two institutions to plan and execute joint activities based on key areas of collaboration with concrete deliverables. In this wise, WANEP built capacities of ECOWAS National Early Warning Centers and developed an induction package for the Center. As a result of the technical support, the initial five Early Warning and Response Centres in Guinea Bissau, Mali, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Burkina Faso are now functional and are helping to ensure early response to identified violence indicators. The current success in the establishment of the five centres has paved the way for the establishment of similar centres in the remaining ECOWAS member states.



A concept note on strategies to address the perennial road accidents in the region developed by ECOWAS and WANEP has drawn needed attention of relevant stakeholders to respond to the persistent incidents of road accidents as captured by the WANEP National Early Warning System (NEWS) platform. WANEP, ECOWAS, GIZ and AU, jointly developed a 5-year implementation plan on Youth, Peace and Security and a regional framework on YPS. These engagements contributed to strengthening WANEP's partnership with ECOWAS and AU on the YPS Agenda. Similarly, WANEP held two debriefing sessions with ECOWAS Ambassadors, AU and the UN on Peace and Security Dynamics in West Africa with particular focus on Mali and Cote d'Ivoire. The sessions provided a platform for WANEP to share ideas on viable strategies for addressing the peace and security issues in the region. Proceedings from the debriefings were published and widely disseminated across the region.

**5.3.2. WANEP-GIZ:** WANEP in the year under review, renewed its partnership with GIZ under the ECOWAS Peace and Security Architecture and Operations (EPSAO) project implemented by GIZ and co-funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and the European Union. The project aims to strengthen multi-stakeholder response to electoral violence in West Africa. The project has helped in consolidating WANEP's contribution to mitigating electoral violence and opened up spaces for accessing resources and further reflection on electoral security. Through this engagement, capacities of civil society organizations have been reinforced for advocating for electoral reforms in the region.

#### 5.4. COLLABORATION WITH THE UN SYSTEM

WANEP has long-standing relationship with the UN Systems and the two institutions have collaborated on a number of projects including election observation, early warning, women and youth initiatives. Building on this existing relationship, WANEP in collaboration with ECOWAS commenced implementation of a project titled; "Building an Inclusive Post COVID-19 Recovery, Crises Transitions and Governance Reforms" in Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Niger with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Africa Bureau. The project is articulated around a range of strategic multi-stakeholder engagements and interventions with the aim of strengthening systems and structures that empower women at local and national levels as critical stakeholders in governance and political transitions in target countries. It sought to respond to the weak representation and participation of women in political governance, peace processes and crisis transitions, compounded by the multi-layer effects of COVID 19 in the region, especially in the Sahel.

Across the networks, the UN system also supported various initiatives as follows;

- WANEP-Ghana, with the UNDP and the National Peace Council, Ghana (NPC) collaborated on an insider mediation project with support from DANIDA to engage with political party members during the Ghana 2020 General Elections.
- National networks of Burkina Faso, Niger, The Gambia, Mali, Togo and Nigeria all signed new partnerships with the UNDP for various projects covering infrastructures for peace, advocacy, violent extremism, democratic governance, farmer/herder conflicts, preventive mechanisms among others.
- WANEP-Burkina Faso in partnership with UNHCR and UNFPA, is implementing a project to support strengthening social cohesion in the North Central region of the country
- WANEP-The Gambia has signed three contracts for the implementation of scheduled activities with UNDP, UNFPA and UNDP/FAO.
- WANEP continued its relationship with the United Nations Office in West Africa and the Sahel (UNOWAS) working together under the EMAM project to share resources and hold periodic briefings on the peace and security discourse in the region.

#### **5.5. STRENGTHENING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS**

**5.5.1. JOINT FINANCING ARRANGEMENT (JFA) PARTNERSHIP:** WANEP's core funders represented by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and Austrian Development Agency (ADA) visited the Regional office to discuss previous engagements/ interventions, sustainability and ways of improving the partnership.

**5.5.2. WANEP/KAIPTC:** In the review year, WANEP renewed its MOU with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Center (KAIPTC) covering the period 2020 to 2025. The partnership between WANEP and the KAIPTC dates back to September 2005 when the two institutions commenced working closely to organize and facilitate the WANEP flagship capacity building training institute, the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI). As stipulated in the new MOU, the two organizations will work jointly to develop action plans and implement programs in areas of research, capacity building as well as develop curriculums for training. The MOU resonates with the United Nations recognition of the increasing contribution of civil society in post-conflict peacebuilding buttressing the need for formal collaboration between intergovernmental organizations and civil society. Similarly, *WANEP-Senegal* partnered with the Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR) and the KAIPTC on the coordination and delivery of the Humanitarian Assistance in West Africa (HAWA) Course in Ziguinchor.

**5.5.3. Wellspring Foundation US:** WANEP with its partners met in Libreville in March 2020 under the auspices of the one-year project on 'Strengthening a gender-sensitive early warning and response mechanism for the West and Central Africa region' implemented by WANEP with support from the Wellspring Foundation, US. It was an opportunity for CSOs from Central Africa, within the Coalition of Civil Society Organisations for Peace and Conflict Prevention (COPAC), to benefit from the fruits of the effective collaboration between ECCAS, ECOWAS and WANEP, that each party pledged to scale up in order to have more impact in terms of peace, security and conflict prevention in the Central and West African regions. The workshop resulted in the adoption of documents and instruments such as the COPAC Organisational Development Index (INDOC), inspired by WANEP's WODI and the MARAC system's tool for collecting and reporting early warning information.

**5.5.4. Expansion of the WANEP-EU EMAM Project:** In 2018, WANEP entered into a historic partnership with the European Union (EU), to implement a project aimed to "contribute to a reduction in electoral violence in West Africa through strengthened Regional and National capacities to enhance peaceful electoral processes." The project, which marked the first time WANEP was accessing direct funding from the EU, commenced with seven states of Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Togo was expanded at the behest of the EU to cover four more countries of Benin, Ghana, Mali and Niger, bringing the total number of target countries to 11. EU is to inject a total of one million Euros (€1,000,000) for the added countries. In the reporting year, the project suffered a set-back due to the effects of the global COVID 19 pandemics leading to the organization readjusting its implementation timelines in countries whose elections took place in the year. Despite the restrictions however, WANEP was able to efficiently utilize its internal capacity to deliver on the project garnering a buy-in and commitment of relevant partners and stakeholders including the NPC, ECOWAS, AU, UNOWAS and the EU. There has also been improved communication/relationship between WANEP, ECOWAS, UNOWAS and AU for the implementation of the EMAM project across the region.

**5.5.5.** WANEP-SVNP Collaboration: In the review year, WANEP in its capacity as member of the Southern Voices Network (SVNP) collaborated with other West Africa members of SVNP to convene an inaugural Regional Policy Conference from February 6 to 7, 2020 in Accra-Ghana under the theme 'Progress and Retrogression on Electoral Processes and Transitions in West Africa: Peace and Security Concerns and Consequences.' The conference was timely coming in the year when seven West African countries had scheduled presidential and parliamentary elections. As electoral processes and consequences for peace and security are key issues on the African continent, the conference was a platform to share knowledge on the current state and status of electoral processes and transitions and interrogate the progress and retrogression in the conduct of elections in West Africa. It provided an avenue to harmonize stakeholders'



perspectives on strategies and policy options for effective election management. In her opening statement at the conference, Dr. Monde Muyangwa, Director, Africa Program Woodrow Wilson Centre said, "I am a big fan of WANEP. I call them warriors of peace. Peace cannot be sustainable in Africa unless it is driven by Africans. WANEP's interventions and contributions show that peacebuilding is a mission worth pursuing and worth investing in." WANEP Executive Director, Dr Chukwuemeka Eze in a vote of thanks expressed utmost appreciation to the Woodrow Wilson Centre and SVNP members for 'not just allowing us space to freely discuss the challenges and prospects of elections on the continent, but also for believing in Pan-Africanism!' Other SVNP members who teamed up with WANEP were Ghana Center for Democratic Development (CDD), Initiative for Public Policy Analysis (IPPA) and the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET). The conference was supported by the Woodrow Wilson Center (Secretariat of the SVNP) and brought together high-level representatives from the political sector across the region.





Above: from left; Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze, Ms. Nana Asantewa Afadzinu of the West Africa Civil Society Institute (WACSI), Dr. Emmanuel Akwatey of the Institute for Democratic Governance IDEG, Dr. Monde Muyangwa, Dr. Kojo Asante and Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah, WANEP Program Director with other participants at the conference

Left: Mrs. Josephine Nkrumah, Chairperson, National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) with Mr. Evans Nimako – Head of Elections and Research, of the New Patriotic Party (NPP) and Mr. Edem Agbana, Deputy Youth Organizer of the National Democratic Congress (NDC). The two main opposition parties in Ghana.

**5.5.5.** WANEP-Bilateral Partnerships-Resource Generation: Across the networks, new bilateral partnerships were formed in the review year leading to increased fund generation and expansion of sources of funding. (see Table below), For instance, WANEP-Ghana utilized funding from the Canada Fund for Local Initiative (CFLI) to implement a project titled "Women's Caucuses for Peaceful Elections 2020" (WOCA4PEACE) as part of measures to increase women's meaningful inclusion and participation in the 2020 Ghana General Elections. Other bilateral relationships forged in the reporting year included;

- National Offices of Niger, Burkina Faso and Mali accessed funding from Search for Common Ground (SfCG) to carry out activities geared towards increasing cohesion and accountability of security services in the communities
- WANEP-Sierra Leone with funding from the Africa Transitional Justice Legacy Fund (ATJLF) under the "Join Han" campaign is supporting community initiatives to access reparation and institutional reform and accountability. The network is also building capacity of women farmers on financial education and conflict mitigation with funding from the International Labour Organization (ILO).
- The US Embassy in Lome is supporting WANEP-Togo on activities to counter violent extremism.
- The GIZ is supporting WANEP-Benin on gender parity initiatives and WANEP-Togo on COVID 19 sensitization activities.
- WANEP-Liberia is working with the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), to build a culture of peace and social cohesion in the communities and on strategies to counter Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) with UNWOMEN and Kvinna Till Kvinna.
- Cooperation Suisse provided support to WANEP-Benin on election related interventions.
- More COVID 19 sensitization interventions were carried out by WANEP-Senegal with support from Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES PSCC), WANEP-Guinea with support from the Open Society Initiatives for West Africa (OSIWA) and WANEP-Mali with the support of the Creative Associates International (CAI) among others.

#### 5.6. COURTESY VISITS/NETWORKING AND COLLABORATION

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In accordance with WANEP's collaborative approach to peacebuilding, the organization played host to numerous partners and stakeholders across the region in the review year. The visits presented opportunities to explore areas of mutual interest and collaboration and led to joint program planning and implementation and, in some cases, secured new and renewed partnerships between WANEP and the relevant partners.

- For instance, the visit of the NATO Southern Hub to WANEP-Senegal office has led to the network participating in their thematic exchange platforms and in international seminars at the behest of NATO. This engagement has opened up possibilities of linking up with potential donors.
- WANEP has signed an agreement with the Crisis Action Group to campaign for strengthened action towards the protection of civilians in the context of the fight against violent extremism in the Sahel countries of Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso.
- WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire has strengthened its engagements with other CSOs and has also signed an MOU with Médica Mondiale and ACLED (Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project) to reduce the spread of the Corona Virus induced Gender Based Violence, and data sharing on political violence in Côte d'Ivoire respectively.
- WANEP-Togo has commenced discussions about a research and training partnership with the Peacekeeping Operations Training Centre and with the Ministry of the Armed Forces to establish a mutual training partnership. The network further met with a team of experts from the Human Security Division (DSH) of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, the Centre for Security Sector Governance and the Centre for Higher Defence and Security Studies to document and examine the conceptual, political and legislative frameworks promoting SDF engagement in the prevention of violent extremism in Togo.





Courtesy Visits: WANEP played host to numerous partners and stakeholders across the region in the review year. Some of the personalities that visited the organization included the SRSG, H.E Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas pictured above with WANEP staff; Below left: H.E. Mrs. Finda Koroma, Vice President of ECOWAS; Below right; UNDP representative flanked by WANEP Deputy Executive Director, Mrs. Levinia Addae-Mensah and Mr. Mahamady Togola, NNC WANEP-Mali during her visit to WANEP-Mali office

- WANEP-Guinea Bissau hosted the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Local Authority to enable the Ministry to familiarise itself with WANEP's work. Based on this familiarization visit, WANEP is now integrated into the Peace Committee created for the management, prevention and resolution of the conflict in the northern region of the country near the border between Guinea-Bissau and Senegal. The team also visited the WANEP Regional Office to learn from WANEP's experience of facilitating and supporting the establishment of Infrastructures for Peace (I4P) in West Africa.
- WANEP- Nigeria has initiated collaboration with the Lagos State Ministry of Education to educate students in Post Primary Schools on Peace Education and Peer Mediation. The network in the review year renewed its partnership with the State Environmental Management Agency (SEMA) to continue its interventions in disaster management, which has been widely recognized and endorsed by Lagos state of Nigeria.

### 6.0. CONCLUSION

The fragile peace and security situation on the West African region was further challenged in the reporting year with the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic. The resultant lockdowns occasioned by effects of the pandemic coupled with heightened incidences of violent extremism and terrorism, challenges of governance and political instability and rising food insecurity all have grave consequences on the lives and livelihoods of the citizenry. The daunting security situation has considerable implications for both state and human security and impacted significantly on program implementation in the review year.

Despite these challenges, WANEP was able to employ creative ways to deliver on its planned activities towards achieving its goals and objectives in the year in review. WANEP joined the global community in adjusting to the 'new normal' occasioned by the effects of the COVID 19 pandemic lockdown to increase its online portfolio utilizing webinars and zoom meetings to carry out a number of trainings, sensitization and awareness initiatives across the region. WANEP consistently enhanced its capacity to strategically positioned itself to provide quality service to communities, national governments, intergovernmental bodies and other institutions and partners towards ensuring peace and security in West Africa. WANEP regularly deployed its expertise in peace, development and other areas of focus to wide audiences by providing technical and facilitation support in its areas of primary focus. WANEP's creativity and innovative ideas in addition to its robust networking and collaboration with key partners and major stakeholders led to renewed interest in WANEP work in the year and attracted new partnerships and strengthened old ones.







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- 01. Maryse Glele Ahanhanzo NNC WANEP Benin
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- 08. Victoria W. H. Wollie NNC WANEP Liberia
- 09. Mahamady TOGOLA NNC WANEP Mali

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- 10. Clement K. Gbedey NNC WANEP Niger
- 11. Chief Bridget Osakwe NNC WANEP Nigeria
- 12. Alfred GOMIS NNC WANEP Senegal
- 13. Isata Mahoi. PhD NNC WANEP Sierra Leone
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