

West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP)



**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ECOWAS MECHANISM FOR
CONFLICT PREVENTION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE**

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Forward and Acknowledgements

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To all, thank you.

Executive Summary

The Economic Community of West African States was founded on 28 May 1975 during the Summit of Heads of State and Governments. The purpose of the Community has been the promotion of economic development, co-operation and sub-regional integration. For fourteen years, the Community has been confronted with extreme violence and armed conflict, particularly in the Mano River basin countries. The net results have been loss of lives, wanton destruction of property, disruption of economic infrastructure and the displacement of thousands of West Africans who have become internally displaced persons and refugees.

The civil war in Liberia (1989 -1997, 1999 - 2003), Sierra Leone (1990 - 2001) and the violent conflict in Guinea-Bissau (1997 - 1998) have had catastrophic consequences on the sub-region, placing it at the top of the world's poorest and most unstable regions. These experiences have further highlighted the inseparable link between economic development and integration and peace and conflict. A combination of poverty and bad governance is no doubt a great part of the causes of the conflicts in West Africa. Accordingly, there can be no economic advancement without a peaceful, stable and secure environment. It is in the light of this assertion that ECOWAS leaders started to seek ways to manage and resolve conflicts and ensure the establishment of an environment conducive to economic development.

On 10 December 1999, the Authority of the Heads of State and Government signed the Protocol relating to the *Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security* in Lomé, Togo. Prior to the signing of this historic document, two major legal instruments, the Protocol on Non-aggression (1978) and the Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence (1981) were signed to promote peace within the sub-region. But these instruments mainly addressed matters of inter-state conflicts at a moment when intra-state conflicts were escalating in the sub-region. Issues of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and humanitarian action and peacebuilding were equally not catered for.

With fratricidal conflicts almost becoming a trade mark of the sub-region, ECOWAS was compelled to undertake conflict management initiatives and thus became the first African sub-regional block to launch a major military intervention in member states, breaking the tradition of ‘non-interference in internal affairs of other states’ that had persevered even when thousands of lives were being lost and humanitarian disasters were looming.

The successive operations under the aegis of the ECOWAS Cease fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) were not without controversy. They raised issues such as the composition of forces, mode of deployment, command and control of the operations, lack of involvement of some ECOWAS members, conflicting and competing national interests, and the sidelining of the Executive Secretary by forces on the ground.

In view of these challenges, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Governments were encouraged and empowered by Article 58 of the Revised ECOWAS Treaty of 24 July 1993 to consolidate the sub-regional experiences in conflict management and set a Mechanism for collective sub-regional security. The Mechanism comprises key institutions, organs and strategies such as: the Authority of Heads of State and Governments; the Mediation and Security Council, the core Institutions; the Defence and Security Commission made up of Defence Chiefs and Security technocrats; ECOMOG (now formally recognised as the multi-purpose standby force); the Early Warning System; the Council of Elders and eminent personalities; and the Executive Secretariat.

In order to address the root causes of conflicts, ECOWAS further adopted a Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance to anticipate and prevent violent conflicts. The Supplementary Protocol deals with issues of elections and accession to power, decentralisation of power and participatory democracy, poverty alleviation, human rights and education. These are salient areas from which indicators for monitoring can be developed and analysed for conflict prevention.

The modalities for the implementation of the Mechanism are well elaborated but the conflict in Côte d’Ivoire in 2002 reminded ECOWAS that much needs to be done to ensure the relevance of the Protocol. It is essential that the Mechanism be seen as a flexible framework, subject to improvements. In spite of the fact that very few countries have ratified the Mechanism, what matters most is its implementation to ensure successful conflict prevention and good governance. It takes the political will of governments in the Community, pressure of civil society, and the support of partners and stakeholders to ensure that this happens.

This assessment pays particular attention to:

- The human resource capacity which findings reveal is greatly understaffed due to financial constraints and the political factor which makes recruitment to be politically rather than technically driven. New recruitment underway may partially resolve this hurdle.

- ECOWAS' limited financial capacity. Given the fact that West Africa is made up of the world's poorest countries, with 11 out of the world's most poor located in this part of the world, poor contributions and donor dependence makes the Mechanism an ambitious and perhaps virtuous aspiration.
- The technical capacity of personnel needs to be constantly developed and strengthened to match contextual demands and challenges.
- The Security Observation and Monitoring dimension, a strong and rather militarily focused security. The human security dimension still needs to be enhanced.
- Sub-regional infrastructure and communication systems, as they are still an impediment to effective work.

Key constraints and challenges to the Mechanism include the non-ratification of the protocols by member countries; inadequate resources; emerging and protracted conflicts; overlapping responsibilities; lack of political will.

Early warning and early response, peace-building, peace-keeping, conflict resolution and mediation skills, fundraising and resource mobilisation, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, information communication technology (ICT), early warning report writing, building and strengthening partnerships, rapid response to humanitarian crisis, gender sensitivity, and free and fair electoral processes are some of the areas identified that need support in terms of training and capacity building.

Introduction and Methodology

West Africa represents one of Africa's most politically dynamic and challenging sub-regions. Ghana (formerly referred to as the Gold Coast) became the first British colony in Africa to achieve independence when Kwame Nkrumah led the country to self rule as early as 1957. Guinea's nationalist drive pioneered by the courageous Ahmed Sekou Toure was the first French colony to defy all the odds and pull out of the French community by voting against any form of quasi independence in 1958. These early political goals for West Africa were to be short-lived as the *Coup d'État* syndrome infested the entire sub-region. From 1960 to date, only Senegal has so far avoided the *Coup d'État* phenomenon as military adventurism into governance has spread from one country to the other.

Although Africa is reckoned for being a continent of conflict, some scholars maintain that apart from the Nigeria-Biafra war (1966 - 1970) and the civil war in Liberia (1990 - 1996), West Africa has been able to manage its conflicts¹. This assertion may now be challenged as Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, and Côte d'Ivoire have all been destabilised by bitter and destructive civil strife as the fragile governance structures started collapsing. An off-shoot of *Coup d'États* in West Africa is the advent of armed rebellions that have continued to undermine the state in West Africa, rendering the latter weaker and more vulnerable to collapse. Increasingly, West Africa like most of the African states is suffering from a variety of debilitating effects such as blockage of the governing process, a widening gap between the state and society, sporadic outbreaks of violence as a means of expression, and state collapse.² Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau are vivid examples of state collapse as well as the justification for the creation of an ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Mechanism. ECOWAS' intervention attempts in these three countries became the testing ground and at the same time, the *raison d'être* for the establishment of a sub-regional framework for interventions in conflict situations. In the framework of the Capacity-Building Programme for Conflict Prevention and Good Governance for ECOWAS and Civil Society Organisations in West Africa, WANEP was commissioned to conduct an assessment of ECOWAS' Conflict Prevention Mechanism and both its capacity and training needs.

Although looking at the larger context of ECOWAS as an institution, this assessment will focus on ECOWAS' Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security; and ECOWAS' supplementary (to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention) protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

Assessing the mechanism for collective security and peace, otherwise known as the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution and Security, and the additional protocol on Democracy and Good Governance constitute the basis to determine the effectiveness of ECOWAS' institutional capacity for Conflict Prevention

¹ I. William Zartman (editor), *Governance as Conflict Management: Politics and Violence in West Africa* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institute Press, 1997), p.1.

² Ibid.

and Good Governance. The assessment would provide a clear picture of the material, human, financial and technical resources of the Community. Assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the Mechanism³ and having a deeper understanding of the issues at stake would serve as the benchmark for the development of effective and appropriate capacity building interventions.

Our methodology includes interviews, review of existing literature, and the administering of an elaborate questionnaire developed by WANEP. A summary of the results is presented at the end of the narrative assessment.

The institutional assessment can also serve as a useful tool for the Mechanism as a process of self introspection, thinking, learning and evaluation of weaknesses and strengths and the generation of new policy options in a changing environment. In so doing, indicators can be developed to monitor and evaluate improvements in the Mechanism's effectiveness and the role of capacity building. It should be stressed that WANEP does not claim to 'build the capacity' of the Mechanism, but would rather build on the existing capacity by reinforcing it through training, provision of technical input, experience and knowledge sharing, building of coalitions, analyses, and collective generation of appropriate responses and policy options.

Moreover, the capacity assessment of the Mechanism would inform training needs. Critiques have blamed ECOWAS for failing to prevent violent conflicts in West Africa and the consequent flood of the humanitarian crises these (conflicts) have unleashed in the sub-region. It is our hope that this assessment would provide the necessary information that can enhance the effectiveness of the Mechanism through appropriate training and capacity building processes.

An effective institutional assessment of the Mechanism would not only serve as an appropriate guide for WANEP, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and its partners to development strategies for collaborative peacebuilding and / or partnership with ECOWAS but also an important tool for ECOWAS' collaboration with the international community. Such collaboration would seek to increase the efficiency of the Mechanism by increasing its capacity to manage changes in the West African sub-region, manage institutional consolidation and growth, target and use resources efficiently, assess and respond to the needs of the Mechanism's target (governments, citizens of the Community⁴ as well as the international community) and become more visible, viable and sustainable.

Genesis of the Mechanism

Founded in 1975 as an economic umbrella organisation for economic development and integration, ECOWAS had to engage in a plethora of conflicts that have debilitated its

³ Mechanism would henceforth refer to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security as well as the additional protocol on Democracy and Good Governance.

⁴ Community refers to the Economic Community of West African States

resources intended for economic development and regional integration. Over the past twelve years, the sub-regional organ has witnessed extreme violence and armed conflict resulting in loss of lives, wanton destruction of property and economic infrastructure, and the displacement of thousands, most of whom have been rendered homeless. Prolonged civil war in Liberia (1989 - 2003) and Sierra Leone (1990 - 2001), military disturbances in Guinea Bissau (1997 - 1998) and of late the armed rebellion in Côte d'Ivoire (2002 - 2003) have wrought acute suffering on the citizens of these countries, constituting a major set-back to economic development. There is no doubt that economic prosperity, co-operation and integration prosper in an environment that is peaceful, stable and secure. Peace and security are therefore pre-requisites for sustainable economic development and advancement as these largely determine the direction and pace of economic and political reforms in a given country⁵.

Prior to the development of the Mechanism, two legal instruments, the Protocol on Non-aggression (1978) and the Protocol on Mutual Assistance in Defence (1981) were signed to promote peace within the sub-region. But these instruments mainly addressed matters of inter-state conflicts at a moment when intra-state conflicts were rapidly increasing all over the sub-region. There were equally little or no provisions for issues of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and humanitarian action and peacebuilding.

Successive outbreaks of conflicts led ECOWAS to undertake several conflict management initiatives. For instance, Liberia presented a challenge that ECOWAS leaders resolved to face. The autocratic regime of Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe was a major factor in the emergence of the Liberian civil war. However, a root cause of the crisis lay in the power struggle between the Americo-Liberians who had monopolised the political power machinery and the Africo-Liberians who aspired for political control and tilt the balance to their favour.⁶ In May 1990, Charles Taylor, the rebel leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPLF) had rejected the idea of the holding of free and fair elections in which President Doe was to be exempt. Despite attempts by the Inter-Faith Mediation Committee (IFMC), Taylor was intransigent and demanded the outright resignation of Samuel Doe. ECOWAS stepped in and started a mediation process, not fully aware that it was going to be an arduous and costly experience in sub-regional conflict resolution, management and peacekeeping⁷.

The rationale was that ECOWAS was well-placed to find an African solution to an African problem, a concept that was being promoted since the 1960s when many African nation states started the process towards independence. The ECOWAS initiative involved the mobilisation of the political will, the diplomatic, economic and military resources required to handle a problem that had the potential for a destabilising as well as a spill

⁵ Cheick Oumar Diarra, "ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism on Conflict Prevention", Paper delivered at a Consultative Meeting organized on Human Security Mechanism for EAC and GIL", Nairobi, 24-28 February, 2002.

⁶ For more on the dynamics of the Liberian civil war, see Festus B. Aboagye, *ECOMOG: A Sub-regional Experience in Conflict Resolution, Management and Peacekeeping in Liberia* (Accra: Sedco Publishing Limited, 1999), pp.19-39.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.57.

over effect in the sub-region and one for which the international community had not much concern⁸.

The Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security

On 10 December 1999 at Lomé, Togo, the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (otherwise known as the Mechanism) was signed. Composed of thirteen chapters, the Mechanism is an elaborate framework document that encompasses the security sector and its relationship to peace in West Africa. Four years of existence may be little time to make a comprehensive assessment of the achievements and / or failures of structure of ECOWAS and its implementation of the Mechanism. However, with regards to conflict and related issues, much has occurred that merits an assessment.

The OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution in Africa, otherwise called the Cairo Declaration of 1993, greatly inspired the West African initiative to ensure that it is not at variance with the continental body's goals and objectives.

The preamble recalls the international and sub-regional texts upon which the Mechanism is based; of particular importance are the protocols relating to: the free movement of persons, the right of residence and establishment in ECOWAS, non-aggression and mutual assistance in defence in case of armed threat or aggression, and the ECOWAS Declaration of Political Principles. It also takes into consideration the sub-regional declaration of the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons adopted in 1998. Due to ECOMOG experience in West Africa, this introductory part of the document gives the background of an informed and contextually relevant document.

Principles and Objectives of the Mechanism

The principles of the Mechanism are in accordance with the Charters of the UN, OAU (now Africa Union) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights⁹. Key elements of the principles worth noting are the provisions that emphasise: the economic and social development and the security of the peoples and the States are inextricably linked; the promotion and reinforcement of the free movement of persons; the right to residence and establishment which contribute to the reinforcement of good neighbourliness; and the promotion and consolidation of a democratic government as well as democratic institutions in each country.

⁸ Ibid., p.58.

⁹ ECOWAS, *Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security* (Abuja: Executive Secretariat, 1999), Article 2.

Four years since its creation, economic and social development is still a major hurdle in a West Africa beset by crippling poverty. The Human Development Report 2002 places a vast majority of West African countries as the least developed of the less developed, with Sierra Leone and Liberia tailing the index classification. The heavily indebted countries initiative of the Bretton Woods institutions has not redeemed the vast majority of masses from the abyss of abject poverty. This has led the endorsement of human security ideals to remain an illusion.

Freedom of movement and right of residence in ECOWAS member countries is still an up hill task as national interests and policies are still hostile to free movement across borders. Within this context, sub-regional settlement and establishment is even more taxing. The culture of democratic governance (discussed in detail under the Additional Protocol on democracy and Good Governance) is still evolving although countries like Ghana, Senegal, Mali, and Benin have made great strides towards democracy. Nigeria successfully broke the curse of a difficult civilian to civilian transition although the April/May elections were marred by irregularities.

The objectives of the Mechanism¹⁰ shall be discussed in relation to the various sections of the assessment. Overall though, the Mechanism is still a relevant framework to tackle sub-regional security.

Institutions of the Mechanism

The Authority, the Mediation and Security Council, the Executive Secretariat, and any other organ that may be established by the Authority¹¹ constitute what is referred to as the Institutions of the Mechanism. Composed of the Heads of State and Governments of member states, the Authority is the highest decision making organ of the Mechanism. Thus far, this is one body that has consistently adhered to its responsibility by meeting as often as possible on ad hoc and burning issues. The main critique here is perhaps the fact that the Authority has not been preventive enough in a sub-region riddled with conflicts. Because of lack of a proactive strategy and clear indicators to prevent violent conflict, the Authority acts as a fire extinguisher. The coming into effect of the Africa Union Peer Mechanism may usher in a new era in conflict prevention.

The Mediation and Security Council is a core structure of the Mechanism. It was initially comprised of nine member states, seven of which were to be elected by the Authority and the remaining two being the current and previous chairman of the Authority. The Mediation and Security Council is mandated to take decisions on issues of peace and security in the sub-region on behalf of the Authority and implement all the provisions of the Protocol¹². The relationship between the Authority and the Mediation

¹⁰ Ibid., Article 3.

¹¹ Ibid., Article 4.

¹² For details on decision making process, quorum, functions, meetings and various levels, see ECOWAS Mechanism, Articles 9, 10, 11, 12 13 and 14.

and Security Council was tested during the Ivorian crisis in September 2002 when the Authority went ahead to create a Mediation Committee. The leadership struggle that ensued between Presidents Wade of Senegal and Eyadema of Togo over the Ivorian peace negotiations was very unfavourable to the ECOWAS Mechanism. The major breakthroughs in the Ivorian peace process occurred when the leadership went to President Kuffour of Ghana. Kuffour's success in dealing with the Ivorian crisis was also an indication that peace does not have linguistic barriers. This is especially important within the context of ECOWAS deliberations where countries identify themselves first and foremost as Francophone or Anglophones. ECOWAS has since increased the number of the Mediation and Security Council to 10.

A Committee of Ambassadors meet in Abuja once every month; Foreign, Defence and Internal Affairs Ministers meet quarterly and the Heads of State meet at least twice a year. Decisions are to be made on a two-thirds majority. However, the Mechanism does not say what would happen if the two-thirds majority is not reached on crucial issues in future¹³. If this is not dealt with accordingly a stalemate may occur in future where member states differ on key issues.

ECOWAS Rapid Response Force Meeting in an extraordinary session of the Authority of Heads of State and Governments in Abuja on 28 May 2003, a declaration on a sub-regional approach to peace and security was made in the context of the growing threat to sub-regional security. The West African leaders resolved to re-energise their efforts to restore and preserve peace and security in the sub-region, particularly in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. Besides the pledge to increase the level of troops in Côte d'Ivoire, the Authority resolved to activate stand-by units within the armed Forces of member states for the establishment of an ECOWAS Rapid Response Force¹⁴. West African leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to abide strictly by the ECOWAS Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons and the provisions of the UN and AU Conventions on the banning, recruitment, use, financing and training of mercenaries. Mercenaries are in legions in West Africa and the recent war in Côte d'Ivoire made great use of these armed groups. Furthermore, the Authority of the Mechanism undertook to ban the recruitment and training of militias and irregular groups and, to make efforts to disarm them immediately. If fighting in Liberia is becoming too difficult, it is thanks to the efforts of these militias.

In the political front, the 28 May declaration reaffirmed ECOWAS' commitment to promote and consolidate democracy, good governance and the rule of law in the sub-region and renewed the commitment not to recognize any body who should take power by force; recourse to dialogue as a preferred instrument of conflict resolution; encourage and promote initiatives by non-governmental organizations and civil society groups aimed at promoting peace and ensuring regional integration¹⁵.

¹³ Adebajo, *The ECOWAS Security Mechanism*, p. 6.

¹⁴ ECOWAS: "Declaration on a Sub-regional Approach to Peace and Security" (Abuja: Executive Secretariat, May 28, 2003), p.3.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

Supporting Organs

Supporting the Mediation and Security Council are three organs: the Defence and Security Commission, the Council of Elders, and the ECOWAS Cease-Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

The Defence and Security Commission is charged with scrutinizing and assessing the technical, administrative issues, logistics requirements for peacekeeping operations; formulate the mandate of the peace-keeping force, define the terms of reference, appoint the Force Commander, and determine the composition of the contingents.

The Council of Elders is made up of eminent personalities from within and without Africa, including women, traditional rulers, religious and political personalities. Appointed on ad hoc basis, they met for the first time in Niger between 2 and 4 July 2001. Former Nigerian leader, retired General Yakubu Gowon was elected as the Council's Chairperson. An organ like the Council of Elders is most welcome for consultative needs, but the fear is risk of duplication of roles and / or too much bureaucracy in the whole structure.

*ECOMOG*¹⁶ as a supporting organ of the Mediation and Security Council has come to be seen as the only face of ECOWAS. The economic, social, political and cultural objectives for which ECOWAS was created have been submerged due to the challenging conflict environment. Many West Africans interviewed believe ECOWAS is ECOMOG, especially those from the war torn Mano River basin countries of Liberia and Sierra Leone. ECOMOG is a multi-purpose body with multi-purpose functions which include observation, monitoring and peace-keeping.

Since the Protocol relating to the Mechanism was signed in 1999, ECOMOG has carried out five interventions. However, the civilian component of ECOMOG has always been under looked. Most of the humanitarian and relief responsibilities undertaken can benefit from civilian expertise. At a time when civilian peacekeeping is becoming more prevalent, it is perhaps ideal to give this aspect of ECOMOG renewed impetus. The challenges of immediate post conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction demands the effective role of civilian peacekeepers for which there is ample provision in ECOMOG.

The Executive Secretariat

The Executive Secretariat is empowered to initiate actions for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peacekeeping, and security in the sub-region. The responsibilities may involve fact-finding, mediation, facilitation, negotiation and reconciliation of parties in conflict¹⁷. The issue of conflict prevention features prominently not only in the *Executive Secretary's* functions but has been given due

¹⁶ See Articles 21 and 22 for composition and role of ECOMOG.

¹⁷ For details of functions of Executive Secretary see ECOWAS Mechanism, Articles 15.

attention with the creation of the post of *Deputy Executive Secretary* in charge of Political Affairs¹⁸. The Deputy Executive Secretary is in charge of the Departments of Political Affairs, Humanitarian Affairs, Defence and Security, and Observation and Monitoring Centre. Appointments to these positions are influenced by political considerations. The current Executive Secretary is Dr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas from Ghana, while his Deputy is General Cheikh Oumar Diarra from Mali.

Pundits believe that the Secretariat has lived up to expectation despite the enormous challenges faced by the sub-region. The main critique, however, is that the Secretariat has continued to be reactive, intervening in conflicts when they have already erupted. Also, many latent conflicts have remained unaddressed making the notion of early prevention barely applicable.

West Africans want to see a more pro-active engagement of ECOWAS in early detection of conflict and appropriate early response, and the Secretariat should be seen taking the lead.

ECOWATCH: the ECOWAS Early Warning System

In accordance with Article 58 of the ECOWAS Revised Treaty for use by the Executive Secretariat¹⁹ and as a necessary conflict prevention strategy, the Mechanism established an Early Warning System that would detect, monitor, analyse and make reports on signs of breakdown in relations (conflict indicators) within or between member states.

ECOWATCH is an important component of the Mechanism as far as preventive measures are concerned. It is made up of an *Observation and Monitoring Centre* (OMC) located at the Executive Secretariat, with four zonal information and reporting bureaux in the following capitals: Cotonou (Benin, Nigeria and Togo), Ouagadougou (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger), Monrovia (Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ghana), and Banjul (The Gambia, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal).

The Monitoring and Observation Centre consists of two departments: the Department of Operations, Peacekeeping, and Humanitarian Affairs (POPHA); and the Department of Political Affairs and Security (DPAS). While the first aims at formulating and implementing all military, peacekeeping, and humanitarian operations, the latter is called upon to organize, manage, and provide support for activities related to conflict prevention, including policies on cross-border crime, circulation of light arms, and drug control.

Donor assistance from the European Union (EU) helped in the recruitment of the Director of the Centre, the Programme Manager and the heads of the four zonal bureaux²⁰. As far as military monitoring and information gathering is concerned, the team in the Secretariat

¹⁸ Ibid., Article 16.

¹⁹ Ibid. Articles 23 and 24 gives details of the Observation and Monitoring Centre and Zones.

²⁰ Adebajo, *ECOWAS Security Mechanism*, p. 7.

has been effective and productive following years of experience in ECOMOG interventions. While this angle is strong, human security indicator monitoring as well as political monitoring such as state collapse and governance related issues has been weak or absent.

This structure has remained predominantly a project, as little work has been done at the level of these zonal offices to make the ECOWAS early warning reporting effective. The US European Command in Germany also undertook to equip the ECOWAS Early Warning System with advanced communication instruments²¹. As the EU programme rounded up in November 2002, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) initiated a two year project aimed at increasing the capacity of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Mechanism. In the framework of this USAID-ECOWAS co-operation, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), a sub-regional NGO with headquarters in Accra in Ghana has been commissioned to reinforce the capacity of the ECOWAS early warning system. The project provides for a WANEP liaison office at the ECOWAS Secretariat.

Invocation and Implementation of the Mechanism

The importance that member states attach to the Mechanism is best demonstrated by the approach to its implementation. In 1999, the Protocol relating to the Mechanism was unanimously adopted with a provisional agreement for the Mechanism to be implemented upon signatories' ratification. This paved the way for immediate implementation. The scope for the application of the Mechanism²² includes involvement in internal conflicts. This is an important clause as State sovereignty has often been an impediment to intervention by the international community. Conflicts that threaten to trigger a humanitarian disaster or pose a serious threat to peace and security in the sub-region or serious and massive violation of human rights and the rule of law, or the overthrow or attempted overthrow of a democratically elected government could therefore invite the invocation of the Mechanism. This is a revolutionary clause that made ECOWAS a relevant body in the context of an emerging international world order where inter state wars are giving way to more deadly intra-state conflicts.

Barely three weeks after its adoption, member-states' commitment to the Mechanism was put to test when Côte d'Ivoire suffered a *Coup d'État* in December 2000. The Authority and the Mediation Council met to propose a line of action principally, meditative in nature, that was intended to stem the tide of the impending unrest in that country²³. The Council has subsequently held more than ten meetings in response to the situations in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire and the precarious rebel border attacks in the Mano River Union countries.

²¹ Mohammed Ibn Chambas, "Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism on Conflict Prevention, management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security", Paper presented at the International Peace Academy, New York, April 29, 2002.

²² See Article 25 and 26 of the *Mechanism* for details.

²³ Chambas, "Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism", Conference paper, IPA.

The visibility and even the much needed credibility and relevance that an organisation needs to operate, is no longer a problem for ECOWAS. What matters most now is the political will to act. Yet ECOWAS' problems are a direct mirror of individual problems at country level. Member states have shown a great reluctance to intervene in politically sensitive cases. Vivid signs of trouble have been ignored, as leaders adopt a wait and see attitude that evades confrontation with de facto governments. In spite of these limitations, ECOWAS has performed far better than other African organisations as their action has been results-oriented²⁴.

ECOWAS can boast of a functioning but still evolving security mechanism that has come to play a great peacekeeping role with the blessing of the UN. A case to cite is the collaborative relationship with the UN in Sierra Leone in 2000, the result of which was the birth of the UN, ECOWAS, Government of Sierra Leone coordination mechanism that has substantially advanced the peace process in Sierra Leone. A recommendation from the Mediation and Security Council gained immediate approval of the Authority of Heads of State at the 25th session in Dakar, relating to the assistance from the Community to strengthen and advance the national reconciliation process in Liberia. The recommendation stemmed from the recognition that the crisis in Liberia precipitated by rebel incursions into Liberia with attendant instability, loss of lives and property and the displacement of its peoples, is partially attributed to the incomplete process of peacebuilding, amongst stakeholders, post-war reconstruction and restructuring of the Liberian army which should have begun immediately after the Liberian war and the elections that took place²⁵.

The mediation efforts in Liberia culminated in the formation of the International Contact Group for Liberia, from where Gen. Abdusalami Abubakar, former military leader of Nigeria and a member of the Council of Elders emerged as the chief mediator of the Liberia crisis. A peace deal has been signed, following ECOWAS' successful removal of Charles Taylor from power and provision of asylum in Nigeria, paving the way for an Interim Transition Government. Taylor's departure is unprecedented and a plus for ECOWAS' mediation. The Council of Elders has also observed elections in the Gambia, Zimbabwe, Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

One great step towards the operationalisation of the Mechanism is the ECOWAS Moratorium on Small Arms, declared in 1998 for an initial period of three years and renewed for another three years in 2001. The Moratorium seeks to control the importation, exportation and manufacture of small arms within the sub-region as means of limiting the proliferation of small arms that end up in the hands of unauthorised personnel. UNDP has assisted ECOWAS in training at several levels within the member countries such as in law enforcement for agents, customs, border and security officers in methods of efficient arms control and detection²⁶.

²⁴ IPA-ECOWAS, *Institutionalization of the ECOWAS Mechanism*, p. 16.

²⁵ Chambas, "Operationalizing the ECOWAS Mechanism".

²⁶ For control of proliferation of small arms and preventive measures, see Articles 50 and 51.

Member states have shown remarkable commitment to the observance of the Moratorium as the West African initiative has been cited in many international circles as an example worth emulating. Unfortunately, availability of arms in West Africa and their use by armed groups have remained a challenge. Illegal arms trafficking possession encouraged by the proliferation of armed marauders, mercenaries and criminal gangs is a daunting task that ECOWAS must face. These lethal instruments have become West Africa's weapons of mass destruction and Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia can attest to these unfortunate developments.

Financing the Mechanism

As far as financing the operations of the Mechanism are concerned, ECOWAS relies on the annual financial contributions of member countries. The Executive Secretary draws the annual budget. A percentage of the proposed Community Levy would be used to finance part of the Mechanism operations. However, since issues of peacekeeping are in effect the domain of the UN, ECOWAS depends on the UN to make funds for peace operations as well as other international agencies. The AU and other bilateral and multilateral donors have come to the aid of ECOWAS in times of need. Few countries have respected their commitment in terms of annual dues and in 1999 alone, unpaid arrears stood at \$38.1 million (United States)²⁷. Dependence on external sources of finance is helpful but is certainly not a sustainable measure. ECOWAS' ideas and ideals risked being sacrificed at the cost of dependence and poverty if sustainable sources of finance are not ensured.

Humanitarian Assistance

This is an important part of the Mechanism that has not been given due attention because it has been overshadowed by other organs. ECOWAS is mandated to intervene to alleviate the suffering of the masses and restore life to normalcy in the event of crisis, conflict and disaster. It is also mandated to develop capacity to efficiently undertake humanitarian actions for the purpose of conflict prevention.

Given the special role women play in society, ECOWAS pledges to encourage and support the role of women in its initiatives for conflict prevention, management, resolution, peace-keeping and security. Organisations like the Mano River Union Women Association have been in the forefront of women mobilisation for peace and security in the Mano basin. More recently, the Women in Peace Network (WIPNET) of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding have taken great strides in the training and mobilisation of Women in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire in the context of a deteriorating security environment characterised by war and violence. In addition, ECOWAS is committed to co-operate with national, regional and religious organisations among others.

²⁷ Adebajo, ECOWAS Security Mechanism, p.11.

Steps to formalise this co-operation with civil society organisations are already underway with the creation of the civil society desk in the Executive Secretariat.

Usually, theory and conceptualisation precede practice in the establishment of security structures. In ECOWAS, practice in three regional interventions preceded theory. It is important to note once more that the Mechanism should be seen as a flexible framework whose principles are applied accordingly to specific contexts. In the same vein and given the dynamic nature of conflicts, lessons learned from such applications should further guide the constant zeal to improve the document²⁸. The greatest concern is that out of the fifteen member ECOWAS countries, only Mali, Burkina Faso and Togo have so far ratified the Mechanism Protocol.

Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance

Addressing the root causes of conflicts is a sure way of resolving the myriads of West Africa conflicts. Conflict resolution is one of the objectives of the security mechanism. It is for this reason that the Community adopted a specific Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance as a supplement to the 10 December 1999 Protocol.

The Democracy and Good Governance Protocol adopted at the 25th Summit of Heads of State and Government in Dakar in December 2001 set out guiding principles for intra-state relations that would help foster participatory democracy²⁹, good governance, the rule of law, respect for human rights and a balanced and equitable distribution of resources. All the previously mentioned issues constitute some of the structural or root causes of conflicts and instability in West Africa.

The Protocol emphasises the convergence principles of the various constitutions of the member countries³⁰, some of which include: separation of powers; independence of the judiciary; every accession to power must be made through free, fair and transparent elections; zero tolerance for power obtained or maintained by unconstitutional means; and popular participation in decision making, strict adherence to democratic principles and decentralisation of power at all levels of governance. It condemns discrimination, be it racial, ethnic, regional or religious in character.

The challenge here is that despite these provisions, rebel forces are still shooting their way to power forcing ECOWAS and the international community to agree on power sharing formulae as a way of resolving conflicts in violation of the Protocol. After the 19

²⁸ Florence Iheme, "Peace and Security Mechanism: The ECOWAS Experience" being paper prepared and presented at the Africa International Conference on "Linking Peace, Security and Regional Integration", University of Bradford, UK, June 2, 2003.

²⁹ For more on participation see "African Charter for the Popular Participation in Development and Transformation" (Arusha, Tanzania, 1990).

³⁰ ECOWAS, Protocol A/SPI/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance Supplementary to the Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (Dakar: Executive Secretariat, December, 2001), Article 1.

September coup attempt in Côte d'Ivoire and the subsequent armed rebellion that lasted for more than six months, the Linas-Marcoussis Peace Agreement of Paris gave rebels ministerial posts and major concessions. The message ensuing from this was the legitimisation of the **barrel over the bullet** and quasi supports armed rebellion since the use of arms may yield a seat in government³¹.

In countries like Guinea and Togo, the Constitutions have been changed to allow for de facto governments to seek new mandates through elections which verdicts have either been contested by the opposition or where the electoral process has been boycotted for lack of transparency and fairness. Elections have become a potential source of violent conflicts in West Africa. The additional Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance elaborately addresses the issue of elections³² ranging from registration, to voting and declaration of results. However, it is worth noting that although democracy is not all about elections, there can be no democracy without free and fair elections.

Free and fair elections have taken place in Ghana and in Senegal with incumbent presidents bowing to the opposition leaders in what has been described as Africa's most successful transitions. Elections in The Gambia, Cape Verde, Benin, Mali, and Sierra Leone have also been described as free and fair. These are positive developments.

2004 is another electoral year in some of the sub-regional countries and it will be an opportunity to test the level of democracy and good governance in West Africa once again. Whether the trend of peaceful and transparent elections would continue depends on the collective effort of the Mechanism and the political will of the various governments, opposition, civil society and other stakeholders. Experience from the April-June elections in Nigeria did not give the assurance of transparency as many observers including the EU Observer Mission qualified the polls as heavily flawed. Conversely, the ECOWAS Parliament endorsed the elections as free and fair and challenged the EU position in a motion passed during their June 2003 session in Abuja. Fear is that what started in Nigeria could rapidly spread to the sub-region and impede the democratic process in West Africa.

The role of the armed forces, the police and the security forces in a democracy is highlighted in the Protocol.³³The armed forces and police are called upon to be non-partisan and shall remain loyal to the nation. While the armed forces shall defend the territorial integrity of the state and its democratic institutions, the police and security agencies shall maintain law and order and protect persons and property. In anticipation of the role the military can play and should play in a democracy with years of military rule, West African leaders want the military and security forces to be perceived as pillars of democracy, not as a threat³⁴. In Senegal for instance, the military neutrality in politics is

³¹ See WARN Policy Brief, "Cote d'Ivoire: Saving the Peace", www.fewer.org/wafrica, February 2003.

³² Protocol A/SPI/12/01 on Democracy and Good Governance, Articles 2-18. This covers the practical modalities for an election organization, election monitoring and observation and reporting.

³³ Ibid., Articles 19-24.

³⁴ Chieck Oumar Diarra, speaking on occasion of the visit of cadets of the Nigeria War College to ECOWAS, September 10, 2003.

interpreted to mean abstention from political activities including the right to vote in elections. In other countries, non partisanship does not take away the right of vote, with the argument that first of all, soldiers are citizens enjoying civic rights as any other person.

One of the root causes of conflicts in West Africa is the level of poverty and social discord in the Community. Poverty alleviation and promotion of social dialogue are therefore important factors for peace. The masses must be able to reap the dividends of democracy through the provision of basic needs of the population. West Africa happens to be the poorest sub-regions in the world, and arguably the most troubled sub-region, hosting some of the least developed countries in the planet. Mass and excruciating poverty and unemployment, corruption and an unfair international economic environment has stripped some West African states of their credibility and power. The high level of youth disaffection has continued to widen the gap between them (the leaders of tomorrow) and they are increasing being used as instruments of electoral destabilization with the growing number of “area boys” phenomenon, use of political thugs, and militias/vigilante groups. All this has greatly undermined democracy.

Culture and religion are important facets of society in West Africa. In order to appreciate and respect one another’s culture and religion, a diversity ECOWAS seeks to preserve, emphasis is laid on education. Part of the Community’s levy is meant to fund educational and cultural exchange programs, evoking again the crucial problem of funding. The gender dimension is iterated as primordial in the success of the endeavour in the field of education as Africans have come to acknowledge that educating a woman is educating the entire community.

Good governance and press freedom are ingredients for preserving social justice, preventing conflict, guaranteeing political stability and peace and for strengthening democracy. The rule of law and human rights involves the promulgation of good laws, a good judicial system, good administration, and good management of the states apparatus. Good governance entails accountability, professionalism, and transparency. Transparency International, an international non-governmental organization has rated some leading West African countries as the most corrupt in the world. The Executive Secretariat is charged with the responsibility to establish appropriate mechanisms to address issues of corruption within the community³⁵.

According to General Cheick Oumar Diarra, the Supplementary Protocol is an anticipatory document which would go fully operational only when it has been ratified by at least 8 of the 15 member states. Only then would default countries be sanctioned³⁶. Only Ghana has so far ratified this particular Protocol.

Critiques of the Mechanism are of the view that although the ECOWAS Mechanism offers a good approach to designing a peace and security framework, it has largely been over-ambitious in terms of mandate, structure, human and logistical capacity in managing

³⁵ Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance, Article 38.

³⁶ Ibid.

West African conflicts. ECOWAS' anticipation capacity by acting to 'nip conflicts in their bud' thus far has not been evident. That most of West Africa's leaders who even lead mediation processes in the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Cote d'Ivoire are themselves dictators in their own backyards is one of the ironies of the Mechanism.

ECOWAS Resources Capacity

Human Resources: One grey area in the overall analysis of the Mechanism is that the "harvest is rich but the harvesters are few". ECOWAS as a structure is greatly understaffed, particularly staff directly related to the implementation of the Mechanism. Due to an embargo on recruitment, which has just been lifted and more than 25 vacant posts advertised since August 2003, the few staff available have been overburdened with responsibilities. The Liberian crisis for instance took almost every body from the Secretariat directly related with the Mechanism to fill in the ad hoc committees in the mediation process in Accra. The multiplicity of conflicts and ECOWAS' interventions has derailed the staff orientation and few are those who have concentrated on their assigned responsibilities for which they were recruited. Staff complains of working under pressure due to an increase in responsibilities are legion. In the Monitoring and Observation Unit which is an important component of the Early Warning System for instance, there are only three key staff at the Secretariat and four officers in the four zonal bureaus³⁷. This is insignificant given the task expected of them. It is hoped the new recruitments would alleviate the situation.

Financial: ECOWAS' financial capacity is so limited given the magnitude of the task involved in rendering the Mechanism effectively operational. ECOWAS relies on the Community levy and donor assistance. Records show that only countries like Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, and Nigeria have consistently honoured their financial obligations towards the Community. Nigeria has borne the greatest burden of the financial load. During the ECOMOG interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Nigeria spent close to \$12 billion US which has not been bankrolled by the international community especially the UN whose role is to keep peace. Nigeria expected that its debts vis-à-vis the international donor community to be written off as compensation³⁸. Poor contributions and dependence on donor support which is not very consistent constitutes a serious draw back to the Mechanism.

Technical: In addition to the problem of inadequate staff, there is the lack of specialists and competent personnel with tested international exposure and experience. Being an inter-governmental structure, appointments, recruitments and decision making is sensitive more to the political/diplomatic considerations, quota systems, and linguistic factors than

³⁷ Result from assessment questionnaire.

³⁸ President Obasanjo over the BBC in August 2003 on a visit to the UK to rally support for ECOWAS intervention which Nigeria again accepted to lead with the deployment of a vanguard force of two battalions.

to the technical competence. This weakness seems to have been acknowledged as the new recruitments in process promises to be competence based.

Strong Military strategists: One area where the Mechanism seems strong is the presence of military strategists with years of experience. General Chieck Oumar Diarra, the Deputy Executive Secretary in charge of Security and Political Affairs, himself an experienced soldier is leading a team of military strategists including American, British and French military liaison officers to ECOWAS in setting the pace for effective security monitoring and analysis in the sub-region. The risk of prioritizing military security at the detriment of human security cannot be ruled out. Military experience gathered from years of ECOMOG interventions is a great asset for the Mechanism. The recent appointment of a retired Ghanaian General with years of experience in UN interventions all over the world as director military security has boasted the military unit of the Early Warning System. Therefore, there need to be a balanced of priorities and focus if the Mechanism is to live to its expectations.

Infrastructure: Adequate infrastructure is vital to the success of the Mechanism. The Early Warning System in particular must be able to communicate adequately from the field to the central unit at the Secretariat. Donors recognized this necessity and the inability of ECOWAS to respond to the needs. The EU for example has financed the creation of four zonal observation units in Ouagadougou, Banjul, Monrovia, and Cotonou and recruitment of observation heads, and has equipped the offices with computers. The US through USAID buttressed the communication infrastructure by providing enhancing equipment for the Early Warning System. Given the magnitude of work, these are still inadequate. Communication from Secretariat to the field and vice versa is still a problem due to the poor state of telecommunication networks in member states (see technical assessment at end for a detailed dissection of capacities and challenges).

Key Constraints

Ratification: The laudable decision to establish a security and peace Mechanism seems to be giving way to weariness and disappointment. Although it is not fair to make a concrete judgment after four years, the ECOWAS Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security has only been ratified by three countries-Mali, Burkina Faso, and Togo. Ironically, a country like Nigeria that has played a lead role in past interventions and continues to do so has not ratified the document. In addition, the Supplementary Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance has only been ratified by Ghana.

Popularisation of Mechanism: Perhaps the underlying problem with the non-ratification of the Mechanism is the ignorance of the existence of such a valuable document. Even members of the ECOWAS Parliament³⁹ did not know of the existence of a Protocol on

³⁹ ECOWAS, A/P2/8/94 Protocol relating to the Community Parliament, REV.3 of 6 August 1994. Chat with a member of Parliament in Abuja in May, 2003.

Democracy and Good Governance. Members of the civil society are not equally aware of some of these instruments which they could use in lobbying and advocating for more security, democracy, respect for human rights, good governance and accountability.

Inadequate Financial resources: The lack of financial resources is great impediment to the effectiveness and efficiency of the Mechanism. This means the Mechanism would depend a lot on external assistance to implement its activities. Dependence on donors may also mean losing the original ideas and buying the donor's agenda.

Overlapping responsibilities: There is the fear of overlapping responsibilities due to the creation of so many institutions and supporting organs of the Mechanism. It has been commented that certain responsibilities of the Executive Secretary and the Deputy overlap but this could be due to delegation of responsibilities which is vital for the smooth functioning of the Mechanism and suggestions to raise the Deputy Executive Secretary post to a full fledged portfolio to avoid bureaucracy in cases of emergency. Role of Council of Elders in practical terms also overlap with that of Mediation and Security Council. For instance, the role Retired General Abdusalami Abubakar, former President of Nigeria played in the Liberian peace talks in Accra as a member of the Council of Elders is the same role President Eyadema, a member of the Authority played in the Ivorian peace process in Lomé.

Lack of political will: Adoption, ratification of protocols is not enough. The political will to implement the texts is the final purpose of the Mechanism. ECOWAS has adopted scores of protocols and agreements but what is lacking is the will to foster the implementation process. This again is an area the civil society, the media and other related organizations have to come in and pressurize the governments to action.

Ambitious program: Some pundits are of the view that the Mechanism as a whole is an ambitious program which though might be difficult to implement has given a sense of direction to ECOWAS as a sub-regional body. In a globalizing world characterized by cooperation and interdependence, ECOWAS' ambitions are a driving force in this dream.

Capacity and Training Needs

- Training of civilian peace keepers of civilian peacekeepers is a fundamental need. This important dimension would certainly be enhanced with the appointment of a director of humanitarian affairs, a department hitherto neglected to back yard.
- Training of peacebuilders is also a priority. Reference to peacebuilding in the Mechanism can only be more realizable if more West Africans, including ECOWAS staff are periodically groomed in lessons of best practices of peacebuilding. Even stand-by units of ECOMOG should also receive lessons in peacebuilding and civil-military relations as humanitarian intervention is becoming a central theme in present day and future interventions.
- There is apparently a lack of conflict and peace analysts in West Africa. Information and facts may be available but the lack of well informed sub-regional analysts as

evidenced in the available conflict and peace literature in the media and internet is an area that must be given due attention.

- Monitors/observers appointed in the various zonal offices cannot do the job alone. More over, they may not be as impartial as civil society actors due to their close ties with host governments. Therefore, combined trainings of ECOWAS and civil society monitors and the forging of relations between them can help improve the data collection and collation phase that is so important for good analysis.
- Mediators need to be drilled in mediation skills. Being an eminent personality does not guarantee ability to bring conflicting parties to an agreement. Bad mediation it self can be a liability to the peace process. Leaders with poor democratic credentials and a record of high handedness and bad governance cannot pretend to mediate in conflicts for they lack the moral authority to offer what they themselves lack.
- Training in ICT for all staff; need to update ECOWAS website to accommodate a proper early warning reporting.

Recommendations for Ways Forward

- The four zonal Monitoring and Observation units should be increased to 15 so that each country has its monitoring centre that would serve as an interface between civil society early warning and ECOWAS. They should become national ECOWAS Offices with monitoring and observation as one of the desks.
- Harmonizing the Early Warning System and the ECOWAS Regional Information Exchange System (ERIES) set up by the American Government in the 14 of the 15 ECOWAS Member States.
- Popularization of Mechanism: A strategy should be drawn to popularize the ECOWAS Mechanism and a spirit of integration throughout the Community. The civil society, national governments, and the media should play an active role in this endeavour. Part of the responsibility of the popularization plan, a time frame for ratification by all the member states should be drawn.
- The need to professionalize the Mechanism is imperative. Apart from hiring experts on a temporary and long term basis, creating synergies with civil society, international organizations, professional associations, and inter-governmental structures like the AU and UN, professionalism must be the guiding principle of work in the Secretariat. Job definitions must be clear and work plans, time sheets, and strict supervision should replace the rather precipitated manner of work.

Conclusion

Mechanism must not be seen as a Secretariat affair; must be seen as a sub-regional commitment. To do this, it there must be a political commitment and the people must identify them selves with it. A pro-active approach to conflict prevention of addressing the root causes of conflicts is the way out. West Africa cannot do this alone. Years of economic restructuring have not moved Africa forward. The crippling poverty, mass unemployment, would continue to undermine democracy and peace, hence instability and

conflict. Civil society must play a great role if the Mechanism would remain relevant. Above all, democracy must yield dividends for it to continue to have any appeal to the youths and the masses at large.

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Summary of Questionnaire (Technical) Assessment

Dimension of Capacity	Specific Tasks or Capacity Domain	Average Score (0-5) ⁱ	Explanation / Reason for Score	Capacity-Building Measure(s) / Needs	Performance Target / Criteria
Institutional Identity	Pertinence of values and principles	5	Persistent conflicts in West Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensitization ▪ Popularization 	Improve visibility
	Knowledge of Mechanism	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Known only during conflicts ▪ Late application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sensitization ▪ Popularization ▪ Ratification 	Ensure relevance
	Strategy	2.5	Reactive posture	Proactive/pre-emptive	Enhance effectiveness
	Accomplishment of Mechanism	3	Came into effect April 2003	Implementation	Enhance efficiency
Institutional Legitimacy	Legitimacy through proven performance	4	Enormous international support and recognition	Resource mobilization and information dissemination	Improve avenues to target groups and beneficiaries
	Involvement of stakeholders	4	Primary beneficiaries	Effective mobilization	Enhance legitimacy/credibility
	Demonstrated competence	4	Achievements on the ground	Record and document achievements	Improved information sharing techniques

	Signing and Ratification of Protocol	1	Reluctance to ratify	Sensitization/popularization	Enhance legitimacy
	Checks and balances	3	Varied Institutions & Organs	Separation of functions and powers	Enhance effectiveness
	Stakeholder satisfaction	4	Continuous support	Level of power struggle and duplication of functions	Improve efficiency and impact
Institutions of the Mechanism	Technical and administrative competence	3	Inadequate resources	Institutional output and verifiable results	Enhance efficiency
	Staff competence	3	Inadequate resources	Staff output and/or results	Ensure impact and sustainability
	Prompt and timely decisions	2	Top heavy (bureaucracy)	Early response to crisis	Ensure efficiency and appropriate response
	Structure of Mechanism	4	Elaborate structure/Institutional chart	Clear distinction of roles	Avoid duplication of roles
	Effective functioning and delegation of powers	3	In principle and practice	Power devolution	Enhance effectiveness and efficiency
	Relevance of institutions today	4	Still being tested	Link between concept and practice	Ensure relevance
Supporting Organs of the Institutions of the Mechanism	Adequate peacekeeping contingents	3	Poor logistics and financial back-up	Mobilization and Fund raising	Enhance efficiency and impact

	Success of previous ECOMOG intervention	3	Cote d'Ivoire is first ECOMOG intervention after signing of protocol; Liberia in process	Achievement of purpose (Capacity building)	Establish relevance
	Success of ECOMOG	3	Troops commitment, international support, and success of negotiations	Verifiable evidence (Monitoring)	Ensure relevance and impact
	Civilian peacekeepers	1	Still a new concept	Training civilian peacekeepers	Promote civilian involvement in peacekeeping
	Timeliness of interventions	1	Resource constraints	Rapid deployment	Ensure efficacy
	Leadership tussle among ECOWAS leaders	4	Conflicting interests	Common vision, sense of purpose	Ensure maximum cooperation & collaboration
	Culture of self evaluation	3	Reports, briefings, internal evaluation and workshops	Lessons learned	Enhance efficiency
	Relevance of ECOMOG today	5	Persistent challenge of violent conflicts	Needs-based assessment	Ensure relevance
ECOWAS Early Warning System	Adequate staffing	2	Inadequate resources	Human resource capacity	Improve staff capability and capacity
	Gender sensitivity	1	Cultural stereotypes and context	Gender balance	Promote equality and human rights

	Equipment of OMC with ICT (Secretariat)	3	Procurement in process	Infrastructural (ICT) capacity	Enhance effectiveness
	Daily data collection form Zonal Offices	1	Adequate infrastructure at zones	Data collection and analysis capability	Enhance early warning capability
	OMC collaboration with other Warning Systems	3	ECOWAS open to collaboration and complimentary initiatives	Strengthening partnerships	Promote and strengthen partnerships and performance
	Data base for conflict/peace indicators	0	Not yet developed	Training in data base design and collection	Ensure effective monitoring of conflict/peace trends
	Overall performance of OMC	3	Commitment strong but constrained by inadequate resources	Capacity building trainings	Ensure efficiency, relevance and impact
	No. of early warning reports	0	Insufficient capacity; report writing not planned	Writing skills and conflict analysis	Improve visibility and relevance
	Zonal bureau Staffing	2	Professionally insufficient	Staff capacity	Enhance efficiency and effectiveness
Zonal OM Bureaus	Zonal Bureaus equipped with ICT	1	Inadequate resources	ICT capacity	Ensure early warning reports
	Daily collection and compilation of data by Zonal OMBs	1	Inadequate resources	Recruitment, training	Ensure efficiency and proficiency
	Collaboration with other stakeholders in data	1	Will be when fully functional	Structural capacity	Make the system functional

	collection				
	Secretariat generated response	5	No local response generation framework	Local ownership of peace processes	Ensure ownership
	Collaboration with Civil Society	3	Process just started	Building and strengthening partnership	Ensure sustainability and continuity
	Reciprocal and prompt communication with Secretariat	2	Inadequate facilities	Infrastructural capacity	Enhance effectiveness
	Competence, zonal OMB staff	3	Need more training and facilities	Technical capacity	Enhance capacity and proficiency
Humanitarian Assistance	Functional Department	2	Just been established	Human resource capacity	Establish relevance
	Design & Implementation of Emergency Response Plans	0	Not yet available	Rapid Response to Humanitarian Crisis	Enhance effectiveness
	Recognition and Involvement of women in decision making	1	Mechanism recognizes but not applicable	Gender sensitivity	Promote Gender balance
	ECOMOG equipped for Humanitarian Intervention	2	In concept	Humanitarian Crisis Response	Promote and enhance Human Security
	Collaboration with international relief organizations	3	Provides security for relief workers	Alliance and partnership building	Enhance international cooperation

Institutional Capacity for Peacebuilding	Monitors/supports democratic institutions	3	Stated principles of the Protocol	Democratic Governance	Ensure Democracy and Good Governance
	Assistance in Post-Conflict Reconstruction	3	Stated objective of ECOWAS	Post-Conflict Reconstruction	Ensure sustainability
	Mobilization/Fundraising for re-integration and reconstruction	3	Expected to improve through community levy collection	Fundraising	Improve financial sustainability
	Restoration of eroded political authority	4	Examples of Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia and Guinea Bissau	Democratic Governance and respect for legality	Address state collapse and promote democracy
Sub-Regional Security	Cooperation in curbing trans-border crime, mercenary, soldiers of fortune, proliferation of small arms and light weapons, illicit trafficking in drug and people, money laundering	3	Protocols and conventions are there but the problem is effective implementation	Trans-border crime control	Ensure Human Security and reduce criminal activities
	Proper coordination and apprehension of criminals	2	Inadequate cooperation	Security, Police and Judicial Reforms	Ensure Human Security
	Harmonized legal procedures for arrest, extradition, restraint of criminal syndicates, terrorists, bandits, etc	1	Provisions in the protocol but yet to implemented	Judicial Reforms on Sub-regional criminality	Ensure Human Security and Justice

	ECOWAS Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Centre is operational	1	Exists in text but not yet functional	Crime Surveillance and Monitoring	Guarantee Human Security and Justice
	ECOWA Moratorium on Small Arms and Light weapons implemented	2.5	Singed, renewed for another three years but yet to be ratified by all	Popularization, ratification and implementation	Enhance effectiveness and relevance
Democracy and Good Governance	Zero tolerance for unconstitutional power take-over/maintenance	3	On power takeover but not same for constitutional tampering to cling to power	Democratization and Good Governance	Enhance the democratic process
	Popular participation in decision-making, power decentralization	2	Periodic elections and referenda but member states reluctant to ratify protocol	Electoral/Decision making reforms	Ensure popular and transparent decision making
	Armed forces are apolitical	2	Soldiers still political in many countries	De-politicization of the military	Ensure sustainability of democracy
	Secularism/neutrality of State vis-à-vis religion	2	Most countries still cannot separate State and Religion	Distinction between State and Religion	Ensure effective governance
	Cases of ethnic, racial, regional or religious discrimination	4	A typical characteristic of West African sub-region	Civic education on National Integration and Unity	Ensure sense of belonging by all citizens
	Access to justice avenues/instruments	2	Access to justice is a reserve for the rich	Equitable and affordable justice	Enhance equity and equality

	Political tolerance and freedom	2	Embedded culture of intolerance	Democratization and Good Governance	Promote socio-political tolerance
	Press freedom guaranteed in member states	2	Not respected in all countries	Free and Responsible Press	Ensure effective communication/information dissemination and watchdogs
	Status of former heads of state guaranteed	2	Protocol makes provisions but not all countries comply	Power Alternation and transitions	Encourage democratic power alternation
	Constitutional tampering prior to elections	3	Incumbents want to cling to power	Power alternation and transitions from one government to another	Enhance democratic and credible elections
	Transparent, credible, free and fair elections	3	Few success stories	Free and Fair electoral processes	Enhance democratization
	Active participation of/involvement women in electoral positions	1	Marginalization of women	Women Empowerment	Guarantee equal opportunities
	Active involvement of Civil Society by Member States	3	Process is gaining momentum	Strengthening partnership and synergies	Ensure link with target groups and appropriateness of activities
	Acceptable of electoral verdicts	3	Decrease in post electoral violence	Violence free elections	Enhance transparent electoral processes
	ECOWAS participation in conduct and monitoring of elections	3	Still on ad hoc basis	Electoral Observation and Monitoring	Ensure transparency and legitimacy

	Improved civil-military relations	3	Military dictatorship disappearing	Improving civil-military relations	Enhance national cohesion
	Strengthened sub-regional frameworks for preventing and combating terrorism	3	Provisions in protocol	Combating terrorism	Ensure human/State security
	Realization that poverty is a major source of conflict or consequence of previous conflicts	4	11 of the last 20 most poor nations in the world are in West Africa	Poverty alleviation/eradication	Ensure sustainable development and peace
	Recognized link between Good Governance and conflict prevention	3	Bad governance at the centre of most conflicts	Attributes of Democracy and Good Governance	Ensure sustainable democracy
	Established national Independent Human Rights structures	2	Still suffering from government interference	Human Rights	Ensure protection of Human Rights
	Information pluralism, equal access to media	2	Government and ruling party usurping state media	Media access	Enhance media pluralism and equal access to public media
	Special programs to address youth unemployment and disaffection	1	Unemployment and disaffection a major source of violent conflict	Youth unemployment	Enhance equitable distribution of national cake
	Effective implementation of protocol and sanctions	1	Only four countries have partially ratified	Advocacy towards ratification and implementation of	Establish relevance and commitment to regional

	regime		the document	protocols	peace and stability
Specific Training Requirements	Staff in various institutions adequately trained	2	Some have undergone such trainings	Capacity building trainings	Ensure efficiency and impact
	Constant refresher courses for staff	2	International conferences and sub-regional/regional seminars/workshops	Capacity building/strategic planning	Enhance performance
	Human Security oriented and gender sensitive trainings	0	Human Security still a new concept	Human Security	Promote man centered development
	Linguistic diversity a problem in ECOWAS	4	A strong perception divides ECOWAS on linguistic blocs	Regional Integration	Enhance Institutional unity
	Council of Elders or Mediators have undergone trainings in mediation	1	Relies on past administrative skills and African wisdom	Mediation skills	Ensure effective resolution of conflicts
	Training of composite stand-by multi-purpose military and civilian units is regular	1	Civilian peacekeepers are still to be trained	Training in peacekeeping	Improve skills and capability
	Lessons learned workshops/forums	1	Learning lessons the hard way	Lessons Learned workshops	Experiential learning

OMC Staff, Secretariat & Zonal levels	Trained in data collection, processing and analysis	2	Training inadequate	Conflict/Peace analysis	Enhance efficiency
	Information Communication Technology (ICT) capacity of staff	1	Inadequate skills	ICT Training	Effective communication and information dissemination
	Techniques of Early Warning Reporting	0	Not yet	Early Warning Report writing	Effective communication for effective response
	Local response generation abilities	0	Still dependent on Secretariat	Local response generation	Promote local solutions to local problems
	Appropriate planning, monitoring and evaluation systems in place	0	Not in program	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation	Ensure appropriate monitoring and evaluation of programs
	Joint ECOWAS-Civil Society trainings	0	Already planned in this project	Interface with Civil Society	Strengthen local partnership
	Post Conflict Reconstruction and Peacebuilding skills	1	Role played mostly by relief agencies and international organizations	Post-Conflict Reconstruction	Ensure effective and sustainable peace
General Observation	State of ECOWAS Peace Fund and funding	1	Meagre contribution from member states	Fund raising	Ensure sustainability

	in general		and dependence on donor charity		
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ⁱ The score is an average aggregate of the respondents to the questionnaire, especially the ECOWAS staff directly involved with the daily operation of the Mechanism.

Key Remarks:

- **The draft questionnaire was shared with ECOWAS before administering**
- **Seven out of 10 targeted staff responded partially or completely to the questionnaire.**
- **The questionnaire thought to be detailed, concise and simple was however judged bulky and scaring some of the respondents and it took more than four months and pressure before responses started coming.**