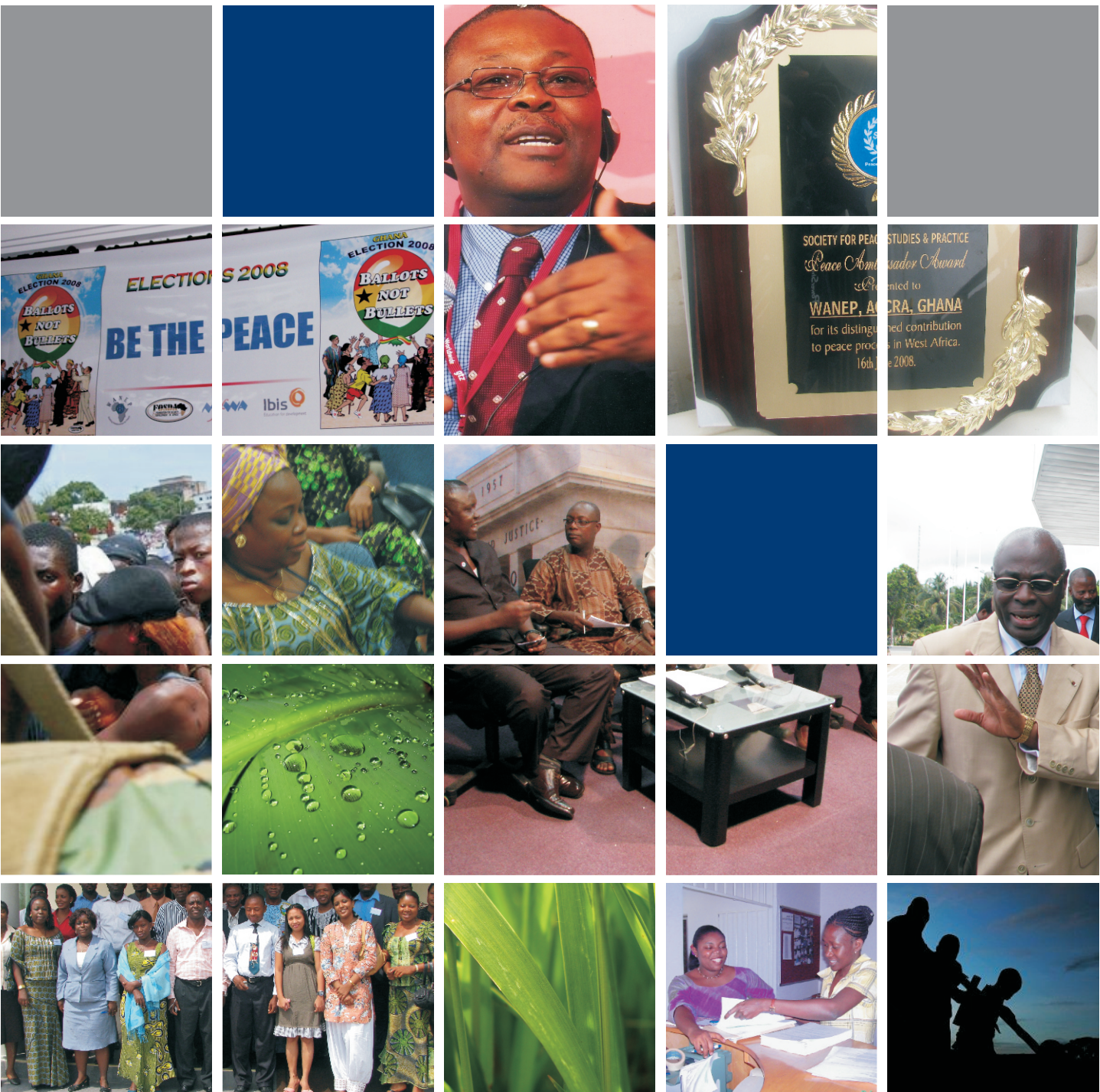
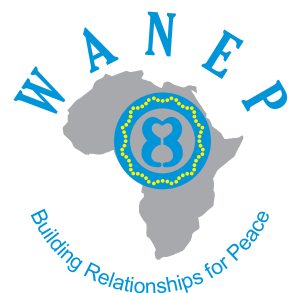


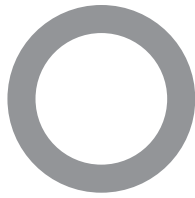
WEST AFRICA NETWORK FOR PEACEBUILDING
ANNUAL REPORT

08



Building Relationships for Peace





*We acknowledge in a very special way
the contributions of our Partners and
Donors in support of building peace
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UNDP
UNICEF
USAID

Community House Church



DUTCH GOVERNMENT



Mennonite Mission Network



FOR WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS



USAID
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» ABOUT WANEP

ABOUT US

The West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) is a not-for-profit organisation working in collaborative peacebuilding. WANEP was founded in 1998 as a response to the civil wars that plagued West Africa in the late 1980s. WANEP has National Networks in twelve of the fifteen countries in West Africa and will soon expand to Cape Verde, Mali and Niger. Its Regional Secretariat is located in Accra, Ghana. Currently, WANEP network membership is over 450 Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) spread across its 12 national networks throughout West Africa.

VISION

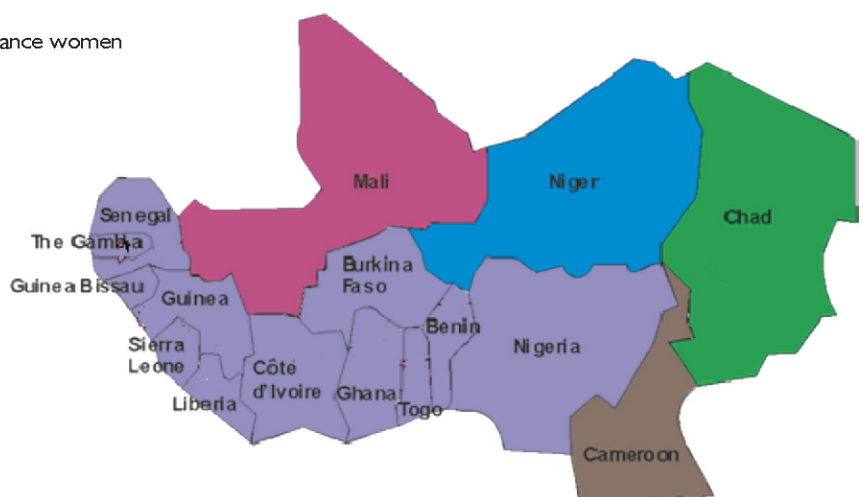
“A West Africa region characterized by just and peaceful communities where the dignity of the human person is paramount and where the people can meet their basic human needs and decide their own direction.”

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

- Strengthen the capacity of peacebuilding organisations and practitioners in West Africa to engage actively in the transformation of violent conflicts through the use of non-violent strategies
- Develop a conflict prevention mechanism in West Africa to monitor, analyse and respond to conflicts
- Engender peacebuilding policy and practices in West Africa and enhance women leadership in peacebuilding practice
- Promote a culture of non-violence and social responsibility among young people in West Africa
- Strengthen the conceptual base of WANEP programmes through research, documentation and Monitoring and Evaluation
- Enhance policy formulation and influence on peace and human security through regional and international linkages and advocacy.

MISSION

“To enable and facilitate the development of mechanisms for cooperation among civil society-based peacebuilding practitioners and organizations in West Africa by promoting cooperative responses to violent conflicts; providing the structure through which these practitioners and institutions will regularly exchange experience and information on issues of peacebuilding, conflict transformation, social, religious and political reconciliation; and promoting West Africa's social cultural values as resources for peacebuilding.”



» MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR

CELEBRATING TEN YEARS OF PEACEBUILDING: FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Ten years of continuous and uninterrupted service in the life of an organisation is something worth celebrating, especially in a context where we have witnessed initiatives conceived today and die the next day. WANEP over the years has developed the capacity to manage a network of hundreds of organisations from different backgrounds, during which it went through a transition of leadership. As WANEP counts its achievements and the immense and unique contribution to peacebuilding in West Africa, there is every reason to hope for better and brighter years ahead.

The year 2008 was particularly challenging. WANEP sailed through a myriad of difficulties in sustaining itself as a result of funding exigencies. Permit me to acknowledge and thank the Government of Finland and CORDAID in particular for the financial support that kept the institutional fabric of the organisation alive. We must also recognize all donors, partners, friends of WANEP who supported the organisation financially, morally and in a big and small way because no contribution to peacebuilding is small. In the course of its ten year history, WANEP has undoubtedly distinguished itself as a strong and resilient network. There is therefore cause for celebration.

However, given the realities of our time, it is important not to sit on our laurels. The emerging challenges such as the global food crisis that hit Africa hard in 2008, the scramble for the world's dwindling natural resources, the credit crunch and the looming world economic depression, constitute a great threat and brings to fore the inherent risks associated with our largely interdependent world. The issues aforementioned have direct bearing on peace, human security and sustainable development in Africa as we acknowledge that the world has become a global village. From past experiences, there is justifiable fear that whenever Europe or America sneezes, Africa catches flu. We must begin to strategise how we would deal with these issues to ensure peacebuilding is still a priority for policy makers in 2009 and beyond.

The recurrent issues of human security, that is, putting the human person at the centre of our development drive and decision making cannot be over-emphasised. I am happy to note that WANEP's work in 2008 has been largely informed by this new perspective to peacebuilding, thanks to ECOWARN early warning indicators developed in the framework of the partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). WANEP's medium and long term strategies and programmes should therefore seek to make a rapprochement between these human security challenges by seeking means to break even. This demands commitment, engagement and sustained support.



It has always puzzled me that the world has built military academies, war colleges, and created defence and security ministries with billions of dollars of budgetary allocations. Yet when it comes to peacebuilding, we have made a lot of rhetoric and lip service. It is time to build and invest in building and sustaining organisations and institutions, institutes and ministries working for peace. Eleanor Roosevelt affirmed: "It isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at [achieving] it." International organisations and institutions, world economic powers, including emerging ones, must begin to set a new paradigm in investing in grassroots peacebuilding more than ever before. Our corporate and business world in Africa must begin to see themselves as peacebuilding partners and support indigenous institutions like WANEP.

I am consoled by the United States President elect Barack Obama's assurance in his victory speech when he promised to support all those working for peace and security. Yes, we can build a foundation for peaceful relations across Africa through organizations like WANEP. As my term comes to an end, let me take this unique opportunity to congratulate the Management and staff of WANEP for their professionalism, perseverance, dynamism and resolve to make peace a part of their life despite all the odds and challenges. I wish all the staff of WANEP and their families a Happy New Year 2009. May God bless WANEP; May God bless Africa.

Rev. Professor Emmanuel Anyambod Anya

*Board Chairperson, WANEP
Rector, Protestant University of Central Africa, Yaounde, Cameroon*

» MANAGEMENT REPORT

In September 2008, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) accomplished 10 years of collaborative peacebuilding in West Africa. This is remarkable. Sustaining institutional capacity as a regional network organisation though challenging has been rewarding and appreciated not only in West Africa but on the African continent and globally. Following its establishment in September 1998, WANEP sustained the efforts of Civil Society collaborative efforts in building peace. At the time WANEP was founded, the West Africa landscape was blighted with unprecedented levels of violence and destruction particularly in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Internal upheavals spread to other countries including Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea Bissau, and Guinea. The violent militant insurgency in the Niger Delta and sporadic communal violence in Nigeria has continued and remained a daunting challenge to peace and stability in the sub-region. In many other West African countries where relative peace has prevailed, the challenge of good governance, organising free, fair and peaceful elections continue to threaten peace and the enshrinement of a culture of democracy. Inter-ethnic strife, religious instigated violence, land, chieftaincy disputes and conflicts over resources continue to be prevalent in almost all West African countries. New threats have re-emerged in the Sahel belt with the upsurge of violence in northern Niger and Mali.

All these sources of violent conflicts notwithstanding, the resolve of West African States to engage comprehensively on conflict prevention is extraordinary. West Africa's internal capacity to resolve and prevent conflicts is now a reference globally. Specifically, the Early Warning Mechanism, ECOWARN is an example that many other sub-regions are now replicating. WANEP is proud to associate itself with the West African resolve to prevent violent conflicts. WANEP's contribution as a regional civil society organisation has popularised and made peacebuilding a house hold expression in all West African countries. WANEP's partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in particular is also a reference that has tremendously redefined inter-governmental and civil society collaboration.

A WANEP institutional appraisal was conducted in 2008 as part of the process of implementing the strategic plan (2006-2009). Consistent with the restructuring of WANEP within the framework of the strategic plan, most national networks are now self-sufficient in national capacities for fund-raising and implementation of national peacebuilding programmes. The harmonisation of institutional structures now reflects the uniqueness of WANEP as a regional civil society organisation with the same norms, principles, core values and objectives of collaborative peacebuilding from national to regional level. The regional secretariat is now focused on fund-raising and coordinating regional based peacebuilding programs as well as providing technical back-up support to the national networks. Mali and Niger continue to receive special attention as organisations in these countries strife to develop into fully functioning national networks.



WANEP partnership with ECOWAS was enhanced during the year under review. The ECOWARN system; the mechanism for early warning and conflict prevention of which WANEP is the strategic civil society implementing partner is now fully functional and operational. WANEP also contributed to the development of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Strategy Framework and participated in key meetings of Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) of the ECOWAS Commission. WANEP is currently discussing with the Humanitarian and Social Affairs Department of ECOWAS to broaden its partnership base. Across the sub-region, WANEP is now active in responding to various levels of conflicts and engaging with Governments as well as the inter-governmental body, ECOWAS. The experiences that have accumulated over the past decade are now important resources attracting solicitation of WANEP's expertise in other African inter-governmental organisations including the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in the Horn of Africa (IGAD), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), and the African Union (AU).

In 2008, WANEP attended important meetings of the Economic, Social and Cultural Council of the AU, the pre-AU summit Civil Society Conference in Alexandria, Egypt and the United Nations Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence both at the Africa and International levels in Nairobi and Geneva respectively. WANEP also participated in the Global Article 9 conference to abolish war in Tokyo, Japan.

Consistent with its strategic plan, WANEP continues to facilitate international partnerships for collaboration with WANEP national networks as well as in various regional activities. In the past year, such partnerships included collaborative efforts with Coexistence International at Brandeis University on the theme "Coexistence, peacebuilding an democracy in West Africa, InWent,

» MANAGEMENT REPORT

a capacity building institution in Germany and the Woodrow Wilson Centre for International Scholars of the United States. Under the Africa Alliance for Peacebuilding (AfAB), WANEP continues to work closely with the Africa Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), and the Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa (NPI). WANEP now works closely with the Kofi Anan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in many areas but particularly in the organisation of the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI).

WANEP coordinates a platform for regional activities in West Africa within the framework of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (GPPAC). WANEP is host of the Africa Desk of the Women Peacemakers Program and is building synergy between this initiative and the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) a key programme at WANEP that continues to mobilise and capacitate women in building peace.

The Ghana Elections 2008 constituted a major landmark event as its stakes went beyond the Ghana frontiers. WANEP in partnership with the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD-Ghana), African Security Dialogue and Research (ASDR), Christian Council of Ghana formed a formidable watch dog and vigil team under the banner of Civic Forum during the December polls. The monitoring and tracking of hotspots and issues and immediate mobilisation of responses (media statements, interventions and personal contacts with actors and stakeholders) to avert elections related crises turned out to be one of the most outstanding achievements of Ghanaian civil society in ensuring peaceful elections. WANEP provided analytical insights from a peacebuilder's perspective. (This story would be told in detailed in an ongoing research).

WANEP is most grateful to its partners for funding support particularly the Government of Finland, ECOWAS, German Technical Cooperation-GTZ, CORDAID, IBIS-West Africa, Oxfam-West Africa and the Ghana Research and Advocacy Project (G-RAP). As we leap forward into another decade of peacebuilding, we are humbled by our achievements, motivated by commitment, privilege and resolve to remain advocates of peace in 2009.

Emmanuel H. Bombande
Executive Director



2008: OVERVIEW OF PEACE AND HUMAN SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA



A significant development that marked the year 2008 was the adoption by the ECOWAS Summit of Heads of State and Government of the *Conflict Prevention Strategy Framework* document in January, in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The document seeks to respond to worries most actors and development partners have for a long time expressed as to what the sub-regional conflict prevention strategy was, beyond the available protocols. It represents a giant step in charting a comprehensive approach towards conflict prevention and human security in West Africa. A fundamental statement in the new document affirms a paradigm shift from a long created impression of an “ECOWAS of Heads of State to an ECOWAS of the people.” With this document, we can rightly say that change is coming to West Africa.

Our bird's eye view of West Africa in 2008 saw captivating developments as well as significant human security 'eyesores'. The Conflict, Peace and Human Security monitoring through the sub-regional early warning database (ECOWARN) recorded a grand total of 2537 incidents of all categories in 2008. Critical developments in the political and security, social and economic, environmental and health domains gave us an idea of a sub-region with major risks yet full of opportunities for the consolidation of peace and stability, and great expectations in 2009 and beyond.

West Africans suffered the ripple effects of the hike in the price of crude oil in the world market, soaring as high as \$150 per barrel. This provoked tremendous increase in prices of basic necessities, particularly food items and transportation fares. In Guinea, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Cameroon, mass street protests resulted in hundreds of deaths, and the destruction of property and infrastructure. The governments' response was as brutal as it was repressive. Other countries in the sub-region continued to battle, albeit difficulties, with the rising inflation rate and a very slow economic growth rate.

Negotiations between West Africa and Europe in the framework of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) remained a contentious issue as critiques are worried about the consequences of such an agreement on Africa's economic future.

Elections have become a major cause of tension and a trigger of violence and destabilisation as a result of the overwhelming zeal and resolve of politicians to control power and resources at all cost. Successful and violence free elections held in Benin Republic, Guinea Bissau, Sierra Leone and Ghana, although isolated cases of elections related tensions were not completely absent. Nigeria's elections saga was finally put to rest when the country's highest judicial body—the Supreme Court—confirmed President Umar Musa Yar'Adua as winner of the May 2007 elections after more than eighteen months of legal battle. The Ivorian elections that have been postponed many times due to inadequate preparations were again shifted to 2009.

Threats of political instability and insecurity remained a major cause for concern in West Africa in 2008. Guinea's deteriorating socio-economic situation aggravated as soldiers went on rampage and even clashed with the police resulting in the shooting of several police officers and helpless civilians. The worrisome situation of uncertainty in Guinea worsened further with the sacking of the 'consensus' Prime Minister, Lansana Kouyaté and the incapacity of President Lansana Conté to put order in his government due to his failing health.

On December 22, 2008, President Lansana Conté finally passed on after 24 years in power. With the weak institutional structures in place and a parliament whose mandate expired more than two years ago, the president's demise created room for confusion, and provided an opportunity for the demons of coup d'états to resurface. History repeated itself as the same scenario that happened when the Sékou Touré (Guinea's first president and father of independence) died unfolded. A few hours after the announcement of the President's death, Captain Moussa Dadis Camara seized power in a bloodless putsch. Curiously, the Guinean masses in their majority as well as political leaders, including the supposed legal successor, cow thawed and openly pledged allegiance to the military junta. Guinea's experience certainly constitutes a serious indictment to Africa's democracy, especially the version practised by sit-tight leaders in the name of continuity and stability.

The coup d'état in Guinea came barely a month after a failed assassination attempt on the life of neighbouring Guinea Bissau's President Joao Bernardo 'Nino' Viera on November 23, 2008. After years of peace efforts by ECOWAS and the rest of the international community, peace in Guinea Bissau remains fragile due to threats of infiltration of narcotic cartels into the country's governance system as a result of abject poverty, corruption and weak institutional control mechanisms. The fear of Guinea Bissau becoming a narcotic state was variously expressed in 2008.



2008: OVERVIEW OF PEACE AND HUMAN SECURITY IN WEST AFRICA

Drug trafficking constituted one of the main security threats, given the 'faceless' nature of the illicit multi-million dollar trade, in 2008. Tons of drugs from Latin America destined for European markets were seized in African shores and airports. Drug trafficking became such a huge security menace affecting almost all countries in West Africa that an ECOWAS ministerial conference was convened in Praia, Cape Verde in October 2008. Working in tandem with the United Nations Office for Drug Control (UNODC) in West Africa, the "Political Declaration on the Prevention of Drug Abuse, Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime in West Africa" was produced and later adopted by the ECOWAS Summit of Heads of State and Government. Laudable as these documents and declarations are, the major concern remains the effective implementation, given the financial lure associated with drug trafficking and over-bearing influence of the 'powerful' drug dealers and their protégées within political systems.

Health hazards were reported almost all over the sub-region, with cholera outbreaks in Guinea Bissau, meningitis epidemics in Burkina Faso, polio cases in northern Nigeria, and bird flu incidents in parts of Togo. Flooding in most of West Africa aggravated the already challenging health, food and shelter needs of the impoverished population.

The Tuareg 'rebellion' in the northern belt of Mali and Niger remained on the news headlines. Despite efforts to bring lasting peace and deal with the criminal dimension of the Tuareg problem in Mali and Niger, a worrisome security threat in the sub-region was the increasing fears of links between this 'rebellion' and radical Islamist groups with international terrorist connections in North Africa. Insecurity in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria persisted, with resultant effects on the world crude oil market prices. President Yar'Adua however brought an innovative measure to the many initiatives aimed at putting an end to the Niger Delta crisis by creating a Ministry of the Nigeria Delta.

The Nigeria-Cameroon dispute over the supposed oil rich Bakassi Peninsular took a giant step forward with Nigeria formally handing over sovereignty of the piece of land to Cameroon during a ceremony in Calabar, eastern Nigeria, in August 2008 in accordance with the Green Tree agreement and the International Court of Justice ruling. This handover came at a moment of increased sea borne militant cum pirate attacks on military and oil interests in the on/off-shore coast of Cameroon and Nigeria respectively. The handover of Bakassi sealed a significant development in African conflict resolution which so far attracted little attention from the international media.

The year 2008 was certainly a 'Ghana Year.' The year started with a successful hosting of the African Nation's (Football) Cup judged as the best in the history of the nation's cup tournament. The year ended with historic elections in Ghana during which John Evans Atta Mills emerged winner thereby registering yet another power alternation in Ghana in eight years.

The contest was so close after a re-run that, it took a 'third round' voting in the Tain constituency to produce the final winner. Victory for the opposition National Democratic Congress (NDC) produced Ghana's third successive John (Jerry John Rawlings, John Kuffour and the newly elected vice president is also a John) as President of the Republic.

Despite the tension that characterised the polls, Ghana 2008 elections constituted a landmark event. The Electoral Commission (EC) proved its integrity and independence as an electoral organ and arbiter; the political maturity and mettle of Ghana's political leaders and parties was tested; the vigour and mediating role of civil society (with WANEP playing a pivotal role) was demonstrated; the vigilance and neutrality of Ghana security forces constituted in the Elections Task Force was affirmed; the vibrancy and effectiveness of the media was confirmed; and above all, the exemplary politically sensitive and informed Ghanaian voters was ascertained. No single life was lost. Ghana's election 2008 has re-established hope in democracy in Africa (even as Guinea was undoing that process).

By Takwa Zebulon Suifon,
Programmes Director

» HIGHLIGHTS OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES



WANEP Staff at the January 2008 Retreat

WANEP Staff Retreat

WANEP resumed work in 2008 with a staff retreat. All National Network Coordinators and Regional Secretariat staff met at Agona-Swedru in the Central Region of Ghana from the 7th to 12th January. With facilitation from Nkum Associates, a consultancy firm in organisational development, the retreat reviewed progress in the implementation of WANEP's restructuring and three-year (2007-2009) strategic plan.

Early Warning and Conflict Prevention

In accordance with its major role of coordinating and providing technical oversight on regional and national level activities, WANEP-Regional Secretariat focused its attention on the following key programme activities.

ECOWARN, ECOWAS-WANEP Partnership Programme: The role of Civil Society in the Early Warning and Response programme-ECOWARN- in which WANEP has partnered with ECOWAS was ably coordinated from the Regional Office in Accra, Ghana. Difficulties in securing funding for the next phase of the WANEP-ECOWAS partnership in conflict prevention and peacebuilding which is focused on early response generation to conflicts and threats to human security greatly slowed the momentum of work. However, this did not totally hamper WANEP's mobilisation and coordination of data collection and input into ECOWARN data base by the fifteen civil society Focal Point (conflict and peace monitors) in the fifteen Member States of ECOWAS. More than 80 percent of all inputted data (Incident Reports--IncReps and Situation Reports--SitReps) into ECOWARN in 2008 was collected by WANEP coordinated civil society monitors. Between January 8, 2008 and January 8, 2009, a total of 1394 situation reports were submitted by civil society; and 2537 incident reports out of a total of 3395. WANEP's Zonal Coordinators worked in collaboration with the ECOWAS Heads of Zonal Bureau to produce weekly update of analyses of peace and conflict evolution in the respective zones.



Partners meeting at the ECOWAS Commission in Abuja

Liaison Office at ECOWAS: An important component of WANEP's work is not only to complement ECOWAS' quest for a peaceful and stable West Africa, a condition sine quo non for sustainable development. WANEP also has been influencing policy debates and decisions on peace and security through its effective presence in the ECOWAS Commission headquarters in Abuja. Until September 2008 when the liaison officer was relocated to the Regional Office (pending his replacement), WANEP continued to actively engage ECOWAS and offer technical support, especially the Political Affairs, Peace and Security (PAPS) department in various capacity. WANEP is looking for funding to fully reactivate its liaison office operations in 2009.

Policy Briefs: WANEP produced a total of five published and shared policy briefs (excluding briefings undertaken together with ECOWAS for the attention of the President of the ECOWAS Commission). Three very incisive end of year policy briefs on stakes of the Ghana 2008 elections, attempted assassination of the President of Guinea Bissau and the coup d'état in Guinea contributed immensely to the peace and security debate in West Africa.

Integrated & Collaborative Conflict Prevention & Crisis Management Programme

With the support of the Government of Finland, this very strategic programme activity was coordinated from the Regional Secretariat. The thrust of this project included the production and broadcast of radio programmes to enhance adequate sensitization and societal transformation; focused symposia on governance issues capable of orchestrating major crises; ensuring and deepening the full participation of women in peace and security issues; and policy influencing through debriefings of stakeholders and policy makers.

» HIGHLIGHTS OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Guinea Symposium: Electoral Process in Guinea: In December 2007, plans were underway to organise legislative elections in Guinea but the process was rescheduled to a later date in order to enable the Government put in place the requisite institutional structures that would create a conducive environment for the organization of free, fair, transparent and credible elections. Both Presidential and Legislative elections in the past have been marred by fraud, boycotts, arbitrary arrests, and low voter turnout. The symposium which took place on February 19, 2008, brought together all the relevant stakeholders including the Ministry of the Interior, a member of the Electoral Commission and civil society organisations to share ideas and propose concrete steps for the organisation of a free, fair, transparent and credible election. (Details of this programme are captured in the national reports section in this report).

Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (GPPAC)

In 2008, WANEP, Regional Initiator for GPPAC in West Africa continued with its advocacy work under the GPPAC platform to strengthen and promote human security and sustainable peace. The key activities were a national consultation in Senegal, a seminar on Political Dialogue for Benin Parliamentarians, a national consultation on the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission process in Togo (see details of these events under reports from Networks), and participation in the Peace Education conference in Kenya where WANEP shared its experience in West Africa with specific reference to Ghana. WANEP through its Executive Director was elected onto the Executive Committee of GPPAC. WANEP role in GPPAC has therefore been elevated to include the governance of the global network.



Janet Mohammed, WAHRD Project Director (IBIS) at one of the Peace Campaign Workshops in Tamale, Ghana

Justice Lens Programme:

(a) West Africa Human Right and Democracy (WAHRD) Project

Civil Society Engagement with ECOWAS Parliamentarians in Ghana: In the framework of the West Africa Human Right and Democracy (WAHRD) Project funded by IBIS, a two-day meeting was organised at Regency Hotel on March 17th and 18th 2008,

to engage ECOWAS parliamentarians in Ghana's Parliament. The event was organised by the CSO coalition comprising of WANEP, the Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA) and the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) to facilitate the interface between CSOs and ECOWAS parliamentarians.

Peacebuilding Workshops in Northern Ghana: Given the strategic importance of the December 2008 Ghana Elections, the West Africa Human Rights and Democratisation (WAHRD) Rapid Response Initiative project financed by IBIS-WEST AFRICA was launched. WANEP in partnership with the Foundation for Security and Development in Africa (FOSDA) and the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) organised a workshop in Tamale on 'Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution and Peace Journalism', to promote peace and security in Northern Ghana before, during and after the December 7th polls. The workshop was held at Modern City Hotel from October 28-30, 2008 and a total of 45 participants, including media practitioners, political party representatives, The Regional Coordinating Council, Electoral Commission (EC), National Commission on Civic Education (NCCE), youth, religious and traditional Leaders, and women's groups.

The participants led by the political party representatives delivered a press statement pledging to engage in peaceful activities throughout the electoral period and beyond. WAHRD partners distributed over 2500 campaign materials in the form of t-shirts, posters, car stickers, banners and mini bill boards with a simple message: 'BALLOTS NOT BULLETS: ELECTIONS 2008 – BE THE PEACE'.

As a follow up activity, a three-day capacity building workshop was organised on Conflict Resolution and Peace Journalism in Bawku, a volatile area in Northern Ghana from November 18 to 20, 2008 at the Bawku Municipal Library Basement with the theme: 'Elections 2008, Be the Peace'. A total number of 60 participants drawn from the six ethnic groups (namely; Maprusis, Kusasis, Moshies, Bimobas, Hausas, and Bissass), political party representatives, media outfits, security agencies, Electoral Commission, the National Commission on Civic Education within Bawku West, Garu, Tempene and Bawku municipality participated.



One of the Ghana Elections 2008 peace campaign materials

» HIGHLIGHTS OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

(b) Transitional Justice Project

WANEP in collaboration with the Nairobi Peace Initiative-Africa (NPI-Africa) engaged in a research project entitled '*Transitional Justice Experiences and the Rise of TRC model in Africa; Emerging Lessons and Implications for Post-Accord Societies*'. This project, funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), aimed at seeking and drawing out lessons emerging from transitional justice experiences in Africa. This occurred in a context of increasing popularity of TRC as an instrument to deal with historical injustices and gross human rights violations in the aftermath of conflict. But the ultimate objective of the project was to stimulate public debate and contribute to policy on Transitional Justice in general and TRCs in particular.

The research, focused on respondents' expectations and perceptions of TRCs, examined three countries that have concluded their TRCs or equivalents (Ghana, Sierra Leone and South Africa), one that was in the process of implementing (Liberia) and two that were still considering setting up TRCs (DRC, Kenya). Respondents were drawn from a wide sample of victims, experts, former commissioners, civil society actors, government officials, perpetrators, individuals who gave testimonies or submitted statements to the commissions, relatives of victims, care professionals and researchers, among others.

A dissemination conference was planned for August 2008. Following the unprecedented political crisis and violence triggered by the December 2007 presidential election in Kenya, the parties to the dispute signed the National Reconciliation Accord in February 2008. One of the provisions of that agreement was the formation of a Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC). Thus, our partner, in Kenya (NPI), instead, envisaged the need to organise the conference earlier than anticipated in Nairobi, so that the research findings could inform the already proposed TJRC in Kenya.



Mr. Kalie Sillah, WANEP Lead Researcher presenting the findings of TRC experiences of West Africa



Group photo of invited guests and participants @ the Opening Ceremony of WAPI 2008

West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI)

The 7th session of the West Africa Peacebuilding Institute (WAPI) opened in Accra, Ghana at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC). The peacebuilding training course was officially opened on Monday, 1 September, 2008 by Ghana's Deputy Minister of Interior, Hon. K.T. Hammond in the presence of the Commandant of the KAIPTC, Maj. Gen. John Attipoe, Executive Director of WANEP, Emmanuel Bombande, GTZ Technical Advisor, David Nii Addy and Maulvi Wahab Adam from the National Peace Council of Ghana.

The three-week training course ran from September 1-19 and covered six thematic areas namely: Introduction to Peacebuilding Paradigms; Facilitated Dialogue and Mediation; Justice Building and Conflict Resolution; Youth and Peace Education; Human Security and Peacebuilding; Early Warning and Early Response; and Women and Gender Mainstreaming in Peacebuilding.

A total of 50 participants from 23 countries including Zimbabwe, Kenya, Gabon, Central African Republic, DR Congo, Burundi, Rwanda, Somaliland, Ethiopia, Chad, Germany, Great Britain (in addition to West African participants) attended the training. Profound gratitude goes to GTZ and the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre for their support to WAPI 2008. The Integrated Regional Information Network (IRIN) of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) supported the training with advocacy material.



The Dep. Minister of Interior, Rep. of National Peace Council, the Commandant of KAIPTC and Exec. Dir of WANEP exchange pleasantries after the Opening ceremony of WAPI 2008

» HIGHLIGHTS OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES



Group picture of participants of Horn of Africa ToT

IFOR/ WPP Africa Desk

During 2008, the Africa Desk of International Fellowship for Reconciliation (IFOR) Women Peacemakers Programme (WPP) which has been hosted by WANEP since 2007 continued to pursue its quest to enhance the capacity of African women to transform societies for peace through gender sensitive active nonviolence. The Desk set itself to: build the capacity of African women peacemakers in gender sensitive non-violence through training of trainers (ToTs); Facilitate networking, coalition building and advocacy of African women peacemakers; Increase visibility of African women peacemakers through documentation and dissemination of information; offer financial support and mentorship support to grassroots-women-led CSOs; mobilize resources to ensure sustainability of the Desk beyond 2008, and; Strengthen collaboration between the Desk and stakeholders.

In this regard the activities carried out during the year included:

ToT in gender and Active Non-violence: Inroads were made into the Central Africa Region with training of Trainers held in Bujumbura, Burundi. The aim was to reach out to parts of the French speaking African countries that have not benefited much from previous WPP activities. Sixteen (16) women peace activists from Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi were equipped with practical skills in Gender and Active non-violent peace building and training.



At the Launch of the WPP Africa Desk

This training specifically explored the link between Gender and the Environment and the conflicts arising from exploitation of environmental resources. The role of women in active nonviolent conflict prevention was extensively discussed using UNSCR 1325 and other human rights instruments as tools. Participants' capacity in leadership, facilitation and fundraising were also enhanced.

WPP- Burundi Women's Training Program: The second ToT in gender and non-violence in Bujumbura, Burundi from 21st April to 2nd May 2008. Sixteen (16) women peace activists were drawn from 4 countries in Central Africa namely; Burundi, Cameroon, DR Congo and Rwanda. The training resulted in the formation of six WPP networks in the various countries with a strong commitment to promote active nonviolence as a way of life. Seed funding and mentorship support for trainees to replicate the trainings in Uganda, Eritrea, Kenya, Cameroon, Dr Congo, Rwanda and Burundi was provided.

Support to Women CSOs: The Desk supported 7 grassroots women civil society organizations that would not, otherwise, be able to access funds from main donors to carry out non-violence education and training activities. Selection should be spread equitably across the five regions of Africa.

Launch of the WPP/ Africa Regional Desk: The Africa Regional Desk was formally launched by the Minister of Women and Children's Affairs in Ghana in Accra on Thursday 21st August 2008. The ceremony brought together eminent and leading women activists in Africa. The Africa Regional Desk has received funding from the MDG3 Fund in order to continue its work from January 2009 to June 2011. The MDG3 Fund is an initiative by the Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation to improve the situation of women worldwide in conformity with the UN Millennium Development Goals. Out of the 454 projects received from all over the world, the WPP Africa Desk project entitled "Strengthening African Women Peace Movement through Active Non- Violence" was one of the 45 projects selected and awarded the grant.



Group picture of participants of Burundi ToT

» HIGHLIGHTS OF REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Peace Ambassador Award

WANEP was awarded the Peace Ambassador Award in recognition of the tremendous efforts and achievements in the area of conflict prevention and peacebuilding in West Africa. The solemn award ceremony held at the Sheraton Hotels and Towers, Abuja, Nigeria had as its theme: “Consolidating Democracy through Peacebuilding and Collective Security.”



WANEP Program Director and WANEP Nigeria Network Coordinator with the peace award, shortly after the ceremony

The event was organised by the Nigerian Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP), which brings together prominent universities that undertake peace studies such as University of Ibadan, University of Ilorin and University of Abuja, and the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR), the Presidency, Nigeria. Awardees included distinguished Nigerians who have contributed immensely to peace in Nigeria, West Africa, Africa and the world. These included members of the Nigerian Armed and Civil Defense Forces, distinguished peace scholars, and international organisations - WANEP, UNDP Nigeria, the Department for International Development, UK; and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The Chief of Staff of the Nigerian Army, Lt Gen. Luka N. Yusuf who had served in various capacities, was rewarded for his meritorious achievements that had made Nigeria the fourth largest contributor to peacekeeping in the world.



Peace Ambassador Award

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS



Press Conference by civil society stakeholders involved in governance issues

WANEP-Benin

Benin Republic went through major challenging events on the political, economic and social fronts during the year 2008 that seriously threatened the largely hailed democratic transformation the country has enjoyed of late. The organisation of legislative and municipal elections suffered hiccups with repeated postponements prior to the reinstatement of the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI). Hurdles later on emerged in the rank and file of the CENI even during the election period. The election results declared on May 20th, 2008 sparked off street protests; predominantly led by the foot soldiers of the ruling party who were disappointed with their failure to win. Some irregularities were recorded leading to the re-run of the elections in some constituencies.

On another front, misunderstanding between members of parliament and the President of the National Assembly (Speaker) disrupted the smooth functioning of parliament. The Speaker was accused of being influenced by the Executive, thus breaching the principle of separation of powers. As a result, no bill was voted into law during the first ordinary session of parliament in 2008. On the social dimension, the surging cost of living resulted in street demonstrations led by the labour union demanding salary increments. Repeated workers' strikes affected service delivery especially in the health sector. It was in this context that WANEP-Benin in 2008 diversified its interventions to match the challenges.

Activities

Research: Since January 2008, WANEP-Benin has been implementing an action oriented research on the theme 'Reducing the chain of risk in illegal sale of fuel in Southern Benin'. This project highlights WANEP's action in minimizing the high risk traders and clients are exposed to in the sale of dangerous and highly inflammable fuel products that subjects human security to jeopardy.

Pre-electoral assessment: Prior to the local council elections of April 2008, WANEP-Benin was solicited by the electoral unit of ECOWAS to undertake a pre-electoral assessment in collaboration with other CSOs. The meeting of the ECOWAS experts and Benin CSO was initiated by the President of Benin to gauge popular perception regarding the elections. Some key challenges that would hinder the smooth running of the elections were identified and recommendations were made to reduce their effect, including an invitation to ECOWAS to sensitise the politicians to ensure free, fair and credible polls.

International Women's Day: From March 03-08, 2008, the WIPNET programme in collaboration with other women organisations systematised a week long commemoration of the International Women's Day. The theme of the event was 'Representation of Benin Women in Decision-making Processes'.

Peace and Security Regional and International Cooperation: On September 20th, 2008, WANEP-Benin hosted 23 diplomats and experts from all over Africa representing Regional bodies focused on peace and security in Africa. Initiated by the Kofi Annan International Peace Keeping Training Center in partnership with a German based organisation, InWent, the mission aimed at improving Regional and International cooperation in the framework of the Diplomacy and Development Programme (DDP).

Engaging Decision Makers: In the midst of the daunting challenges associated with the preparations and organisation of the elections in Benin, WANEP-Benin made a series of interventions at various levels, aimed at contributing to the diffusion of tension between the various actors. Press statements were released on invalidations and the repeated elections of members of the Independent Electoral Commission and on the in-fighting in parliament. In this regard, radio discussion programmes were organised mobilising the citizenry and political candidates to exercise restraint and promote peace.

Symposium on Political Dialogue: Given the crisis that engulfed the state institutions in Benin in 2008, and in an effort to add content to its social alert and actions, WANEP-Benin with technical support from the Regional Office organised a two-day symposium on political dialogue in November. Co-sponsored by GPPAC, Government of Finland and the Benin National Assembly, the main political actors in parliament, civil society and media were brought together to deliberate on the theme 'Political Dialogue, Gauge for Peace and All Development'.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

Others

In terms of capacity building, seminars and workshops on personnel development, human rights concepts (specifically economic and social rights) and management trainings integrated with the *do no harm* concept were organized for the member organizations of WANEP-Benin.

A delegation of three from WANEP-Benin participated in a regional workshop held on June 5-6, 2008 in Calabar, Nigeria on the theme: "Petroleum resource conflict in the Maritime zone of the Gulf of Guinea". The aim of the training was to pre-empt petroleum resource violence in Ghana and Benin and attempt to resolve the Niger Delta crisis by developing a comprehensive intervention strategy so as to promote regional peace and security. The national network coordinator and ECOWARN focal point attended a workshop organized by ECOWAS in Cotonou, Benin, from June 26-27, with the theme: "The cost of elections in West Africa."

WANEP - Burkina Faso

Although Burkina Faso is one of the countries in West Africa that has been referred to as stable, the country experienced many security challenges as a result of instability in neighbouring countries. Burkina Faso's vulnerability to conflict and instability is compounded by small scale agro-pastoral conflicts that should not be underestimated. WANEP-Burkina Faso has been active in helping to offset the rising security challenges through various peacebuilding, early warning conflict prevention, as well as gender mainstreaming in the country.

Activities

Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management project: Under the framework of the Integrated and Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management project, WANEP-Burkina Faso, in an effort to disseminate the operational structure of the Conflict Prevention Framework (ECOWARN) to all relevant stakeholders, organised the fourth debriefing session on Friday, 26th June 2008 at Palm Beach Hotel in Ouagadougou. Approximately thirty participants took part in the meeting centred on the theme: "*Réunir nos forces pour mieux prévenir les conflits*" in French (Let's combine our strengths to prevent conflicts).

Various civil society organisations (CSOs) implementing early warning and conflict prevention mechanisms at various levels (including those intending to do so) shared their works and visions. This was the first time that most of the actors working on a common vision had the opportunity of coming together to deliberate on ways of combining efforts to deal with these issues collectively.

WANEP –Burkina Faso through its former national coordinator, Michel Sinaré (in association with Dr Sawadogo Poussi) was associated with the survey (study) on agro-pastoral conflict initiated by the ECOWAS zone II bureau in Burkina in May 2008.

Radio Program: The community radio program in Burkina Faso is a community opinion exchange forum focusing on thorny topics of relevance to the society. The programme initiated by WANEP-Burkina also aimed at discussing and sharing information on some of the critical socio-political and security issues affecting the lives of the people. Mainly, sensitizing the public on how to prevent conflict and improve relationships at all levels. The methodology adopted by WANEP-Burkina, has been interactive debates, allowing people to actively participate on live radio discussions. The debates are often recorded and are later widely broadcast on community radios.



Participants at the ECOWARN debriefing session in Burkina Faso

WANEP - Côte d'Ivoire

Efforts at dealing with the crisis that engulfed Cote d'Ivoire following the 2002 failed coup attempt that transformed into a rebellion intensified in 2008. The peace process that gained momentum following the signing of the Ouagadougou Peace Accord has continued to pave the way for national reconciliation and complete reunification of the hitherto divided country. The following are some of the significant results achieved so far: reunification of the country by integrating the two opposing 'north and south' forces; significant progress made in the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration processes; redeployment of the governmental administration in former rebel zones; and the launching of the identification operation and the registration of voters.



A Cross-section of participants at the Dissemination Workshop on crime and criminal justice study

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS



International Women's Day celebration at Biaka Boda stadium in Gagnoa

Though the Accord made provision for the holding of Presidential elections on November 30th and Legislative elections two months later, it became apparent that the deadlines could not be met. Preparations are ongoing to implement this vital activity at a later date and the seeming understanding between the former rebels and the Government of President Gbagbo has taken the radar of the world away from Cote d'Ivoire. However, the social tension as a result of the increase in the cost of petroleum products and basic food commodities in the first half of 2008 reached worrisome proportions, characterised by violent strikes and mass demonstrations. This constituted a major security risk in a fragile and delicate country like Cote d'Ivoire.

Activities

Community radio programs:

Part of WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire strategy has been disarming the mind sets of the population that has been subjected to years of tense and traumatic experiences. Community radio programmes that targeted the affected populations were aired regularly in the savana region throughout the reporting period on peace and reconciliation related themes.

Annual General Assembly Meeting:

WANEP-CI held its AGM on February 02, 2008. The Board of Directors presented the financial and activities report to the national network general assembly for 2007 fiscal year. The General Assembly approved the report, congratulated the national secretariat for its accomplishment, and the strategic plan was reviewed and the internal regulations amended appropriately.

Workshop on human rights:

In the framework of the Justice Lens Program, WANEP-CI organized a three-day capacity building workshop from May 8 to 10, 2008, for its member organisations, other CSOs and the media in Cote d'Ivoire on human rights issues to enable them to contribute effectively to the mechanisms of conflict prevention in the sub-region.

Workshop on Human Rights and Early Warning:

With financial support from IBIS, WANEP-CI organized a two-day workshop in Abidjan in the effort to build the capacity of CSOs on the rights based approach to peacebuilding. Over 20 participants were drawn from the Mano River Basin countries including Cote d'Ivoire and Benin among who were eight (8) women. Focus was put on early warning of human rights violations in the sub-region through consistent monitoring and community initiated responses to mitigate conflicts from escalation in the context of the WANEP-ECOWAS early warning partnership (ECOWARN).

Official Declaration on Elections

On August 1st, 2008, the platform for elections comprising of COSOPCI (Collectif des Organizations de la Société Civile pour la Paix), le SYNAPPCCI (Syndicat National de la Presse Privée) and WANEP-CI made an official declaration on the electoral process in Cote d'Ivoire. The declaration on the implementation modality of the elections was written and read in the presence dozens of outlets in the print and electronic media in Abidjan.

Restitution trainings

On August 06, WANEP-CI in an effort to build the capacity of its member organizations implemented replication training in Abidjan at their head quarters for trainings received by some staff members. In total, ten member organizations benefited from this exercise in addition to seven resource persons who are also members of the network. Among others, the themes included Early Warning (the ECOWARN program) and Human Rights as well as Refugees Rights.

Workshop on the observation of the Ouagadougou Peace Accord:

With financial support from OSIWA, WANEP-CI organized a day workshop in August as part of the process of instituting an observatory body for the implementation of the Ouagadougou peace Accord. The observatory team set up consisting of 25 (including 11 women) members drawn from CSOs in Abidjan and the provinces of the country. As an outcome of this endeavor, the observatory team made an official declaration on October 17 in Abidjan.



Meeting of the delegation of the convention of Cote d'Ivoire civil society with President Blaise Compaore

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management project:

In the framework of the Integrated and Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management project, WANEP Cote d'Ivoire hosted the second debriefing session in Abidjan on February 21, 2008. Participants were drawn from all ECOWARN focal Points, WANEP Regional and the board chair. The session evaluated the progress of work done under ECOWARN during the past seven months.

InWEnt-Germany in partnership with ECOWAS and WANEP organised a peace and conflict assessment and data management training workshop from 18 to 22 February 2008 at hotel Tiama in Abidjan. This training targeted the Francophone and Lusophones monitors of the ECOWARN system.

Others

February 25-March 07, the National Network Coordinator participated in the 52nd Session of the United Nations on the status of women in New York. The theme of the session was financial support in favour of equality and autonomy of women'. WANEP Cote d'Ivoire participated in the elaboration of the code of good conduct (from civil society) for the upcoming elections on August 12th at Golf hotel under auspices of independent electoral commission (CEI). WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire delivered the press statement on behalf of the Ivorian civil society organisations aimed at ensuring that forthcoming elections are free, fair and credible. The WIPNET Programme Officer also took part in a two-day replication workshop for the operationalisation of the strategic plan of the women groups and associations vis-a-vis their participation in politics.



WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire AGM working session

WANEP-The Gambia

The Gambia continued to weather the storm on all fronts, particularly in the economic sector with regards to the global financial crisis. Food was available throughout the year, particularly rice, the staple food. Nonetheless, the cost of rice increased sharply making accessibility a challenge for the majority of average Gambians. Other basic commodities such as sugar and fuel equally soared in 2008. Crime rate continued to rise, fanned mostly by the high cost of living and the economic malaise of the country. Politically, the country remained stable and relatively peaceful. The Local Government Elections conducted at the beginning of the year passed on peacefully without an incident of violence. Like the Presidential and National Assembly elections, the ruling party won overwhelmingly. However, the sackings and arbitrary arrests continued unabated given rise to increased fear and insecurity among the populace.

Activities Implemented

Local Government Elections – January 2008: With support from UNDP, WANEP-The Gambia coordinated the Civil Society Coalition on Elections created by WANEP to observe the Local Government Elections held on the 22 of January 2008 for the third time. The coalition is made up of twenty (20) civil society organizations. Series of refresher trainings were conducted for domestic observers in each of the six regions of the Gambia. For the first time ever 60 monitors were trained to monitor the campaign leading up to the elections. Altogether, a total number of 120 highly trained domestic observers 40% of whom were women monitored and observed the local government elections. According to observers, the elections that the ruling party won 90% of the seats were free and fair.

Peacebuilding & Community Development in West Africa, February – November 2008: In February this year OXFAM Great Britain approved a one year transition phase of the Sub-Regional Small Arms and Light Weapons Pilot Programme that technically ended in November 2007. The objective of transition programme referred to as the Peace Building and Community Development in West Africa was to consolidate the gains made during the pilot phase through reinforcement activities for the purpose of sustainability in preparation for the next phase. The transition phase focused on three broad areas; Peace Education, Capacity Building and Micro credit Project. Thirty participants (18 men and 12 women) participated in three-day Peace Education training in April. The participants were drawn from the community and comprised local government authorities, teachers, community leaders, religious elders, youths and local women organizations.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS



A session of the Capacity Building Training on Peace Education

A total of 30 radio programs were broadcast and 12 weekly markets were visited as well as 16 focus group meetings held to further sensitize the communities on issues of peace and security. Considering the link between security and development, the project installed an additional milling machine in September to strengthen the income generation program of Koina village amidst great jubilation. The primary beneficiaries of the project are the women with the machine strategically located in Jeddah to serve four villages. The income generated from the machine will go towards other women's community projects.

DFID Legal Capacity Building Program Phase II (LCBP): The Legal Capacity Building Programme (LCBP) Phase II is a three year project funded by DFID. DFID contracted Atos Consulting to manage the planning and implementation of the project. The local partner of Atos Consulting in The Gambia is West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP) The Gambia. WANEP recruited the Project Coordinator in August to coordinate the LCBP II Project. The objective of DFID's support is to ensure that the Gambian legal system is strengthened through the introduction of incremental reforms that will improve efficiency and effectiveness to better ensure access to justice for the poor. The project provides support to three main beneficiary institutions.-the Judiciary, Department of state for justice (DOSJ) and the Gambian Bar Association (GBA).



Portrait of conflict analyses

The Launching of GANSA Network: The Gambia Network on Small Arms (GANSA) is the focal point for the Small Arms project and the leading organization for related programme on cluster munitions campaign and the Arms Trade Treaty. In collaboration with West Africa Action Network on Small Arms (WAANSA), the Network coordinated and formally launched Gambia Action Network on Small Arms on the 5th of March 2008 to create awareness and to lobby government for the ratification of the ECOWAS Convention. The Network comprises of 12 civil society organisations mainly working on areas of peacebuilding, security and development. Supported by OXFAM Great Britain through WAANSA for three months, the Network conducted a two day sensitisation workshop for 20 civil society organisations and two radio programmes.

The Launching of Cartoon entitled; '*My Strength is in Peace*' on June 30, 2008 was jointly launched by the GANSA network and Konrad Foundation, a German organisation based in Senegal. The Austria Ambassador based in Senegal together with the Secretary of State for Interior formally launched the cartoon in Banjul. 5, 0000 copies were presented to GANSA for country wide distribution to schools. The cartoon is targeting young people and it is an educative material on the dangers of illicit small arms. Over 100 schools benefitted from the distribution.

UNDP/ECOSAP Project: October – December: The three months project supported by UNDP through the ECOWAS Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP) commenced a campaign in October for the ratification of the ECOWAS Convention. As part of the activities of the project, a two-day sensitisation workshop was conducted for the newly elected parliamentarians, ECOWAS parliamentarians and members of a selected committee for Security, since they formed about 90% of the total number of parliamentarians. The Speaker of the House delivered the opening statement. The parliamentarians were also exposed to the Oslo process on the Cluster Munitions Treaty and an Arms Trade Treaty. Community radio programmes as well as billboards, posters and T-shirts were printed as part of the sensitisation activities.

International Day of Peace: 21 September: On International Day of Peace, the secretariat sent out a press release to all the major newspapers as a way of creating public awareness on the importance of the day.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

WANEP Ghana

Ghana by all standards is described as a peaceful and stable country. However, chieftaincy and land disputes have adversely undermined the peace and stability the country has enjoyed over the years. The most violent forms of conflicts have been recorded in Northern Ghana comprising the three regions of the Upper West, the Upper East and the Northern Regions. Preparations towards the 2008 Ghana anchored on how to prevent the possibility of politicising grievances and exploiting them for votes. It is in light of this background that WANEP Ghana has undertaken various activities during the period under review.

Bawku Peace Initiative: WANEP Ghana has been actively involved in the development of a comprehensive response for durable peace in Ghana, particularly the volatile northern part of the country through collaborative approaches and facilitated dialogue. As an active member of the civil society coalition, the secretariat has implemented many peacebuilding, early warning conflict prevention, and gender mainstreaming in development initiatives. In the context of the Bawku Peace Initiative (BPI), WANEP-Ghana participated in the Meetings of the Upper East Regional Coordinating Council organised on 18th February 2008. Prior to that, members of the Civil Society Coalition, under the Bawku Peace Initiative (BPI) met in Bolgatanga on September 17th, 2008 to collectively reflect on finding comprehensive strategies towards conflict transformation in the Bawku municipality.



Representatives of Political Parties issuing a statement pledging peace at a press conference at the end of the workshop in Tamale on Peacebuilding, Conflict Resolution and Peace Journalism

Radio Programs: WANEP-Ghana with the financial support of the Government of Finland, implemented radio programs, which were designed and transmitted in the Northern Region of Ghana. The programs were carried out from 2007, to continue sensitising on various activities including the rising tensions of funeral arrangements of the late Ya Naa Mahamadu, a former King of the Dagbon traditional kingdom. This is one of the contentious issues in the protracted Dagbon chieftaincy conflict in the Northern Region of Ghana. Amidst persistent tensions related to the performance of the funeral rites of the late Naa Mahamadu Abdullai in the Dagbon conflict, the radio programme became an outreach opportunity to sensitize and raise security awareness.

An official of the Ghana Police together with the National Network Coordinator were the panellists for the program.

As Tamale, the Northern Regional Capital was one of the host cities for the 2008 African Cup of Nations; a radio program was aired aimed at sending conflict prevention and early warning messages throughout the tournament. The programme emphasised the need for all the feuding factions in the north to bury their hatchets during the period to provide safe environment for visitors coming from all over Africa and the world to enjoy the tournament.

Civil Society Early Warning and Response Initiative: WANEP-Ghana has (5) regional chapters working as a team to tailor peacebuilding initiatives to the needs of their regions and share their experiences across the national secretariat of the network. In total, 68 peacebuilding organisations, including district level NGOs, national and international NGOs, women and faith based organisations constitute the membership of WANEP-Ghana. With support from DFID and in partnership with Christian Aid, WANEP-Ghana through the Civil Society Collaborative Early Warning and Response Initiative is contributing towards grassroots peacebuilding initiatives and practices. The program is designed to link community based early warning to the national early warning initiative and subsequently to the regional West Africa initiative ECOWARN level through WANEP.

The program is working to: 1) Strengthen the regional chapters of WANEP-Ghana and their interface with the state, 2) strengthen grassroots participation and ownership of peacebuilding initiatives, 3) establish a national early warning system that is led by WANEP-Ghana; and 4) establish systems for election monitoring by civil society

The target areas include the five current regions of WANEP-Ghana membership: Northern, Upper West, Upper East, Brong Ahafo and Volta Regions and two new members regions: Central and Eastern, with emphasis placed on the Eastern Corridor as the most conflict-prone area. While the project target groups revolve around the member organisations of WANEP-Ghana, the youth are a special target as they are often manipulated by the elders to resort to violent conflicts.

Monitoring visit: Within the scope of the 'Integrated and Collaborative Conflict Prevention and Crisis Management' project funded by the Government of Finland, WANEP Ghana hosted the first monitoring visit conducted by the WANEP Regional Secretariat in Tamale, in the Northern Ghana on May 7th to 9th.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

WANEP-Guinea

Guinea's long expected legislative elections in a precarious socio-economic and political context characterised by extreme poverty, price hikes, unemployment, lack of basic necessities such as water and electricity (cumulative factors that engendered the strikes in 2007) never held. The tense socio-economic and political situation caused by the deteriorating security situation and military suppression put Guinea in a permanent state of uncertainty. The peace accord that was signed between the government and the labour unions was repeatedly flouted by the President who went ahead and sacked the prime minister of consensus, Lansana Kouyaté.

In view of the political stalemate, a national dialogue was organized from August 12 to 14, 2008 at the initiative of the socio-economic advisory board and the civil-military committee with the support of the International Federation of Elections Systems (IFES) to promote national reconciliation especially between the military and the population. To accompany this process, the local affiliate of the Canada based organisation, CECIDE in collaboration with the civil-military committee requested WANEP-Guinea to build the capacity of CSOs and cadres of the military on the mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution. The activity was facilitated by the National Network Coordinator of WANEP-Guinea in all of the four geo-political divisions of the country.

Activities

Workshop on Human Rights and Conflict Prevention : As part of the Justice Lens programme (JLP), WANEP-Guinea organised a three-day workshop on Human Rights and Conflict Prevention in Conakry in April for 30 (12 women, 18 men) participants drawn from peace building, human rights and media organizations, government representatives and the Justice Lens Committee members. The training focused on strengthening the synergy that was built in previous JLP activities for an efficient, systematic monitoring of human rights issues thereby preventing the degeneration of conflicts into violence in Guinea. Given the poor records of human rights in Guinea where violations are often committed by members of the administration, the workshop served as a forum to reinforce the partnership between the various actors.

The workshop also established a strategic framework for collaboration between human rights actors, peacebuilding and media organizations in order to advance the mechanisms of early warning and conflict prevention in Guinea and the sub-region at large. With the Justice lens Committee serving as a rallying point, the workshop undertook to promote and develop scopes for networking and advocacy in the defense of human rights. To facilitate this, the mandate, composition and clear terms of reference of the Justice Lens Committee was defined as was recommended by the national consultation that held in August 2007.

Voices of Women Radio Program: WANEP – Guinea's strategy to increase women's involvement in Peace building processes through the Voices of Women community radio was sustained in 2008 on a monthly basis. The programme provided a forum for grass roots women to participate in local, national and regional debates on key peace and security issues affecting their communities. The radio episodes were aired in collaboration with rural stations in Kindia, Kissidougou, Guéckédou, and Kankan. In the capital city, Conakry, private FM stations such as Familia FM and *la Liberté* FM. Various themes of national interest in accordance with trends and dynamics of the situation were developed and broadcast by women leaders and community representatives.

Discussants also focused on international legal instruments promoting women's rights such as CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women) and resolution 1325 in a bid to mitigate discrimination against women and promote their participation in governance respectively. This was to remedy the skewed socialisation syndrome where women occupy relegated back seats through structurally embedded socio-cultural, religious, political and economic dispositions. Panel discussions were in most cases preceded by capacity building workshops using the translated WIPNET community training manual into the Malinke local language.

Annual Review of the 'Tuning to Democracy' Project: In partnership with CRS-Guinea and in collaboration with Search for Common, WANEP-Guinea implemented various capacity building activities aimed at providing support to the government in civic education to promote participation, accountability and transparency of governance and administrative structures at local, regional and national levels. This was to pre-empt voter apathy and encourage active participation of the general populace especially women and children in decision making processes in the country. The two-year project targeted 15 districts in the volatile regions in Upper and Forest areas of Guinea. Through the field animators, hundreds of youths, community leaders and women were been trained in resource mobilisation, resource management and governance.



Group photo of participants of the MRU Consultation

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

An annual review meeting organised in October revealed tremendous achievements of the project. Challenges were also identified and recommendations made to fine-tune the second phase of the project. WANEP-Guinea enhanced its profile in 2008 at the national platform by strengthening collaboration with relevant state departments in the implementation of a cross section of activities.

Guinea ended the year on a sad note. The President of the Republic, General Lansana Conté died on December 22 and the military swiftly took over power in a bloodless coup d'état. WANEP-Guinea's challenge in 2009 would be focused on how to work with other stakeholders towards the restoration of constitutional democratic rule in the backdrop of sanctions by the international community and suspension of Guinea from ECOWAS and the African Union (AU).

WANEP - Guinea Bissau

After many postponements, Guinea Bissau finally held a successful and historical free and fair legislative election amidst political and financial insecurity in November 2008. The PAIGC, an opposition party won this election with 67 seats from a total of 100 seats in the national assembly. Guinea Bissau is turning a new page in its history even as rumours of coups d'états and attempted coups remained rife throughout 2008. There are many justifications to conclude that Guinea Bissau has various unresolved peace and security dilemmas, and the November 2008 failed coup attempt is ample evidence. The country is still considered a major risk with the proliferation of small arms and pending security (or defence) sector reforms. WANEP-Guinea Bissau alongside its Women in Peacebuilding Programmes implemented many peacebuilding and conflict prevention, gender mainstreaming and development initiatives in an effort to contribute to stability in the country.



Debriefing session of the ECOWARN System in Guinea Bissau

Cross Border Collaboration Initiative: WANEP-Guinea Bissau participated in a two-day workshop organised by AECOM/PADCO, and funded by USAID. The theme of the workshop was "Cross border Collaboration for Peace". The workshop brought civil society representatives from Senegal, The Gambia and Guinea Bissau to deliberate on how to promote peace in the sub region. Participants shared their experiences on cross border collaboration and how to create opportunities for conflict transformation across the borders.

ECOWARN Debriefing Session: On the 3rd of April 2008, WANEP-Guinea Bissau in collaboration with ECOWAS Zonal Bureau Head of zone I, organised a debriefing session at Azalai Hotel in Bissau - aimed at launching the ECOWAS Early Warning and Early Response Network (ECOWARN). The debriefing session provided the opportunity to inform the public on the existence of the Early Warning system of the ECOWAS, which is implemented in partnership with various governments in the sub-region.

Establishment of Women Committees: As part of the sensitisation and the dissemination of the ideals of the UN Resolution 1325, WANEP-GB in partnership with UNOGBIS contributed in the creation of two women committees in the second quarter of 2008. The committees were the "Women Ex-combatant Committee" acronym (COOMUCGB), and the "Military Women Committee" (COMUNGB). The main objective of these committees is to help promote women's participation in decision making processes nationwide – with respect to peace, security and national reconciliation.

Representation of Women in the UN Peacebuilding Commission: The incessant lobbying and advocacy carried throughout the country by women leaders under the WIPNET programme in Guinea Bissau succeeded in affording WIPNET a space in the national pilot committee of the UN Peacebuilding Commission. Two women from CSOs have been integrated into the pilot committee. The principal function of this commission is to implement, manage and monitor action plans and strategies as defined by the UNPB geared toward the achievement of the Strategic Plan for the consolidation of peace in Guinea Bissau.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

WANEP LIBERIA

While world attention was focused on the trial of former Liberian president Charles Taylor in The Hague, Liberia under President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf witnessed great efforts at putting the country back on its rails after years of conflict and destruction. Post conflict reconstruction is consolidating amidst daunting challenges such as donor dependence, inadequate funding (as a result of non-respect of pledges by some of the donor communities), rising crime wave, and corruption within the government structures.

WANEP-Liberia went through the restructuring process, and in spite of the various difficulties, the secretariat undertook various activities in 2008 especially the WIPNET programme as summarized below:

Activities Implemented

Early Warning Conflict Prevention: WANEP-Liberia is still actively involved with early warning activities. The Danish Refugee Council is currently working with WIPNET in the area of conflict prevention in Nimba County. Under this project, over 50 women have been trained as conflict and/or border monitors. Moreover, WANEP Liberia feeds into the wider ECOWAS early warning program through a new programmatic area, the Justice Lens Programme, with specific focus on issues of human rights.

At the national level, the Justice Lens project conducted one training workshop and one consultation meeting for WANEP Network members, Media practitioners, and Civil Society Organizations and Human Rights groups. The training held from April 16- 18, 2008, and brought together 30 participants. Participants developed a Terms of Reference (TOR) to create a tripartite partnership with peacebuilding institutions, human rights organisations and media practitioners/institutions in Liberia.



Group picture of some of the students who were trained

Peace Education: Through financial and material support from UNICEF, WANEP-Liberia has been actively involved with the implementation of the Community Education Investment Program (CEIP) since 2005. The project seeks to reintegrate child soldiers into their communities in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Sinoe Counties, with focus on the identification and enrollment of children into private and public schools. WANEP-Liberia, in collaboration with the concerned communities, formulated community child protection structures to assist the identification, enrolment, and monitoring of these children. So far, WANEP-Liberia identified and enrolled 466 Children Associated with Fighting Forces (ex-CAFFs) in 66 schools in three counties – Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Sinoe.

Ending Violence against Women (2007- August 2008): WIPNET along with the Foundation for International Dignity (FIND) and Women NGO Secretariat (WONGOSOL) won grants from the UNIFEM Trust Fund to help end violence against women. WIPNET's component of the project implementation was to work with community members to understand their perception of violence against women, identify service providers for victims, engage community leaders and or authorities on issues of violence against women and create awareness on Violence against Women issues with the 12 districts of the four (4) targeted counties. As a result, a total of 500 persons (400 men and women and 100 youths) were trained to deal with these issues in 12 districts in four (4) counties (Montserrado, Margibi, Bong and Lofa), 216 volunteers engaged to carry out the community sensitisation campaigns.

Women Building Peace Project: With funding from the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), WIPNET in partnership with the Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) embarked on the Women Building Peace project, covering six (6) communities in Nimba County. The project which has an aim of empowering community women and men to get involved with peacebuilding initiatives at the local community level and as well build up an early warning and early response community network/system has had the following results up to present: 150 men and women trained in 6 communities, 6 border monitors regularly monitoring about 45 border points with the 6 targeted communities, 4 exchange visits were organised and held with more than 50 women participants learning and sharing experiences of Peacebuilding, more than 6 community peace initiative teams, one 'peace hut' constructed and being used for regular team meetings, more than 24 voices of women radio programme emissions produced.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS



Participants of Workshop on Human Rights in group work session



Some Liberian Women attending the restitution workshop

Isis Women's Cross Cultural Exchange Institute (October 2007 and October 2008): The Women in Peacebuilding Network of WANEP Liberia, in collaboration with Isis-WICCE and the Ministry of Gender and Development, hosted the 2007 and 2008 International Exchange Programme Institute in Liberia on October 15 - 26, 2007 and October 13 - 24, 2008 for the first time in Liberia. These trainings were aimed at creating a vanguard of women with the knowledge and practical skills of investigating and documenting violations of women's human rights. The bilingual (English and French) training facilitated the building of skills for 46 women leaders from countries experiencing or which have experienced armed conflict from Africa, Asia, Europe and Latin America.

Community Women Political Mobilization & Democracy Project (May 2008 - Present): With funding from the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), this program undertook to promote the process of legislative engagement amongst women in 10 communities in 5 targeted counties namely: Montserrado, Bomi, Bong, Margibi, and Bassa). A total of 90 women and girls have been trained and encouraged to engage with their legislators and advocate for accountability, more than 10 awareness creation sessions were held in the 5 counties, more than 12 voices of women radio programme emissions held within the targeted counties.

Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) and Peacebuilding: The Sexual Gender Based Violence and Peacebuilding project funded by DFID through UNIFEM covered 8 Districts, and 12 communities in 4 counties (Nimba, Grand Gedeh, River Cess and Grand Bassa Counties). This project was implemented by WIPNET in partnership with the Bassa Women Development Association (BAWODA), and the Southern Eastern Women Development Association (SEWODA) in the targeted counties. Thirty community development workers trained as trainers to replicate the training and helped deal with SGBV and peacebuilding issues at the local community level, and 75 men and women also benefited from training replicated by 6 of the first 30 participants trained as trainers

Interfaith Dialogue (February - April 2008): Funded by the Urgent Action Fund, WIPNET succeeded in identifying some of the underlying issues of land conflict in Nimba County which include but are not limited to issues of discrimination, stereotyping, prejudice and other general socio economic issues. This pilot project served as an entry point for the bigger Women Building Peace project which is currently on-going in Nimba County. A total of 60 women and Men (Christians and Muslims) were engaged, about 5 meetings involving Imams, Pastors, and youth and women leaders held to encourage them to take up joint peace initiatives as a means of helping to bridge the gaps of division that have subsisted among them over the years.

WANEP-Nigeria

In 2008, the fallout of the May 2007 elections tribunal litigations placed the political life in Nigeria in a dilemma due to the uncertainty of the outcome of the judicial cases. Nonetheless, the Nigerian judiciary remained a source of hope to many pundits of the Nigerian scene and news of court rulings in Anambra and Edo States constituted landmark decisions. Governors Peter Obi and Adams Oshiomole became beneficiaries of justice that was hitherto denied.

They have since then become political heroes. It was not until November 2008 that President Umaru Yar'Adua was finally confirmed winner of the 2007 elections. The Niger Delta crisis remained a thorn in the flesh of the Nigerian Federation and in an unprecedented move, President Yar'Adua created the Ministry of the Niger Delta. The demon of communal conflicts once more resurfaced in Jos as the Muslim-Christian crisis claimed hundreds of lives following a disputed local council election results. These challenges and the delayed elections' verdict constituted a psychological impediment to governance in Nigeria although the country continued to move forward economically and socially.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

Key Activities

Collaboration for Peace in the Niger Delta: WANEP-Nigeria in collaboration with Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) of the Catholic Church of Calabar in the Cross River State organised a four-day capacity building workshop for religious leaders, heads of industries and community leaders on “Appropriate Dispute Resolution Mechanism” from January 28-31, 2008. The training was aimed at fostering unity among the groups for sustainable development in the oil region of Niger Delta.

International Women's Day & International Women's Day for Peace and Disarmament: The Programme Manager of WANEP-Nigeria's Women in Peacebuilding Programme (WIPNET) was a guest at the Africa Independent Television (AIT) to discuss the idea behind the International Women's Day, March 08, 2008, as well as provide insights into the activities of WIPNET in Nigeria. She was also guest to the National Television Authority (NTA) on May 24, 2008 to discuss the effects of armed violence especially on women and children.

Disaster Risk Reduction: WANEP-Nigeria was commissioned by OXFAM GB to review and update its contingency plan for Nigeria. Further to this, WANEP-Nigeria organised a meeting that had in attendance critical stakeholders such as CSOs, Nigeria Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Nigerian Red Cross, international non-governmental organisation (INGOs), amongst others, to reflect on challenges and opportunities to improve partnership and collaboration towards effective monitoring and preparedness of humanitarian emergencies in the country. The contingency plan specifically made effort to identify hazards and vulnerabilities that could place significant number of Nigerians at risk and warrant possible support from international humanitarian agencies.

Gender and Early Warning Training Manual: The Women in Peacebuilding Program organised a stakeholders' brainstorming meeting between May 14 and 16, 2008 at Enugu South East Nigeria. The meeting was aimed towards the development of a gender based early warning training manual and enriching the capacity of women in early warning monitoring and analyses.



The representative of the Hon. Minister for Women Affairs presenting the WIPNET Community Women in Peacebuilding Manual to the delegates at the Annual Lesson Learnt Conference

Community based Early Warning System: WANEP-Nigeria presented its electronic community based early Warning system for critique to major stakeholders in early warning and disaster management in Nigeria at the Chelsea Hotel Abuja in June 2008. In attendance were partners like UNDP, UNHCR, NOVIB Oxfam, Save the Children UK, and NEMA.

Assessment of Ijegun Fuel Explosion in Lagos: The visitation of the site of the fuel explosion at Ijegun, Lagos State by a team from the National Network secretariat on May 19, 2008 afforded WANEP-Nigeria the opportunity to assess the damage caused as well as determine appropriate response mechanism in line with its three-year project on Disaster Risk Reduction through Community Based Early Warning and Response.

Development of Gender Sensitive Indicators for Women Peace & Human Security: WANEP-Nigeria's Women in Peacebuilding developed a gender sensitive community based early warning system in order to bridge the gap that exists in ECOWAS early warning System – ECOWARN. A three-day brainstorming session with community women from four geo political zones (Benue, Lagos, Plateau and Delta) of the country was organized. The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs participated in the session. At the end of the three-day brainstorming meeting, gender sensitive indicators which will be used in monitoring Women, Peace and Human Security in addition to the indicators (already being tested) on the WANEP Early Warning web portal.

Training of Community Women in Conflict Monitoring for Early Warning: The training was aimed at developing and strengthening the capacity of women in four pilot communities for conflict monitoring and analysis as a response mechanism for conflict prevention and resolution. Also, it offered opportunity for selected women to brainstorm on modalities as well as identify critical stakeholders needed for the implementation of a community based early warning system where women shall play strategic roles.

Development of Community Based Early Response Mechanism: WANEP-Nigeria has identified and engaged various levels of stakeholders ranging from the police, State security officials, vigilante groups, women groups, youths, religious/traditional institutions to play key roles in responding to community early warning signals and reports. In the month of August and September, four communities in Lagos; Delta, Plateau and Makurdi were engaged for this purpose. At the end of the stakeholders' meeting, modalities for the process of early warning and response mechanism was introduced, WANEP linked the Conflict Monitors and the stakeholders to the traditional institutions to ensure continuity, credibility and sustainability. All the stakeholders expressed enthusiasm towards the processes while the traditional institutions agreed to lead the process to ensure local ownership.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS



WANEP Nigeria NNC being received by the Adakaji I of Abraka Kingdom in Delta State – in his palace

Disaster Risk Reduction: National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) in collaboration with WANEP-Nigeria organised training for various stakeholders in the South west zone of Nigeria on Disaster Risk Reduction. The training focused on providing strategies to reduce the vulnerability of stakeholders towards floods which was identified as a major impending hazard in most states. The Conflict Prevention Program Manager facilitated the training on strategies for averting and minimising floods through a consolidated community based early warning system.

Partnership with USIP: WANEP-Nigeria proposal for Active Non Violence and Peace Education in the oil producing Delta region of Nigeria has been approved by the United States Institute for Peace (USIP). The project will kick start from two pilot states (Rivers and Delta); teachers and students at primary and secondary school level will be trained on spectrum of peace education using the WANEP manual. Peace clubs will be established in selected schools within the pilot states.

Publications/documentary: WANEP-Nigeria published its periodic policy brief titled “Niger Delta Crisis and Yar Adua's Administration: Critical Issues and Hurdles” and the second edition of its journal titled *Women in Peacebuilding*. The journal contains seven articles written by both men and women of diverse background and opinions. The articles are well articulated to provide answers to some of the frequently asked questions concerning the issues of women peace and security. A forty five minutes informative documentary was recorded to explore the activities of the network in the past five years, its challenges and lesson learned and a projection of where the network wishes to be in the next five years.

Other activities

Representations: WANEP-Nigeria participated in a 2 day meeting organized by The Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) in Geneva Switzerland titled “Building a New Consensus,” a meeting of experts held in Geneva, between 21 and 22 January, 2008. The event explored the ways that civil society can contribute to the reduction of armed violence through development programming. It was planned as part of the effort by NGOs to support the Geneva Declaration (GD) process, which is now endorsed by 70 states worldwide.

WANEP-Nigeria represented WANEP at the AU ECOSOC Composite Elections held in Nairobi, Kenya from 15-17 April 2008 under the oversight of the Office of the Legal Counsel of the African Union to elect the various CSO that will represent different nations and regions in Africa. At the end of the highly contested election, WANEP and Réseau des Organisations Paysannes et des Producteurs Agricoles de L'Afrique de L'Ouest (ROPPA) were elected to represent the western civil society at the General Assembly.

OXFAM NOVIB Partners Meeting: Oxfam NOVIB Netherlands organised a partners' meeting in Kaduna to review the progress made on the HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy in the organisations they are funding. The meeting also served as an opportunity to discuss NOVIB's core Country Evaluation/Mid-term Review of current Nigeria programmes being supported by it. Partners were intimated on the Gender Policy which NOVIB tends to mainstream in its entire programme, participants also reviewed special Oxfam NOVIB strategy for the Niger Delta. The National Network Coordinator and the Coordinator Special Project represented WANEP-Nigeria at the Meeting.

Capacity Building Programs: Various opportunities were opened at different times to secretariat staff, including: The ECOWAS Workshop on Mainstreaming Gender in ECOWARN in Dakar, Senegal between May 26 -29, 2008; Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) workshop in West Africa from April 7-9, 2008 at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana both attended by Programme Manager Women In Peacebuilding; ECOWAS in collaboration with the office of UNHCR in Nigeria organised a workshop on “Developing Capacity for Emergency and Humanitarian Response for ECOWAS and Civil Society's” April 28- May 1, 2008 which was attended by the National Network Coordinator; Program Officer (WIPNET) and Coordinator Special Projects participated in the ECOWARN Initiation Training organised by WANEP regional in Accra, Ghana. The Accountant and Secretariat/Admin Assistant were given the opportunity to attend WAPI 2008 held at the Kofi Anna International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana, September 1 - 19, 2008.

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

ECOWAS Emergency Response Team (EERT): The National Network Coordinator, WANEP-Nigeria attended the EERT training in Nairobi, where he made a presentation on the role of civil society organisations in early warning response for disaster risk reduction in the sub region. The participants noted the key function of coordination in emergencies, the need for coordinated framework for decision making to include benefits such as improved efficiency, cost effectiveness, speed of humanitarian assistance, decision-making and unified strategic approach to eliminate gaps and duplication of services.

The Programme Manager and Program Officer for Women in Peacebuilding programme of WANEP-Nigeria participated at the 41st Session of Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) held between 30th of June to 18th July, 2008 in the United States of America. Their participation gave WANEP-Nigeria a better direction to implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 which WIPNET is working towards its actualization in Nigeria.

WANEP-Senegal

The situation in Senegal in 2008 could be qualified as a major setback. Politically, the quarrels and tension created by the constitutional tampering by the ruling party and the organisation of National Talks forum by the opposition parties and civil society organizations were very controversial and put unnecessary heat on the country's political life. Matters were aggravated by the conflict between the government and the private media. The situation in the Casamance remained largely unchanged as the region lived in a state of 'no peace no war.'

Economically, the soaring prices of crude oil in the world market resulted in the exponential rise in prices of basic commodities resulting in violent street protests in Dakar. The educational sector was not spared the strife as the academic year was negatively affected by teachers' and students' strikes. On a positive note, solace came from the agricultural sector following the 'launching of the grand offensive for abundant food' programme with a promising harvest.

Activities

Workshop on Mediation in Casamance: In collaboration with its member organisation, PACTE requested WANEP-Senegal to organise and facilitate a capacity building workshop in February for 50 delegates and administrative advisers in Casamance on mediation and other conflict resolution techniques.

Capacity building workshop: In the framework of the programme *Support to the Initiatives of the South*, WANEP-Senegal in consortium with three CSOs organized a capacity building workshop on program design and implementation with emphasis on budgeting. This was in an effort to increase the outcome of the third phase of the project to be financed by OXFAM GB.

Radio Programs: WANEP-Senegal organised eleven (11) radio emissions on Radio Television Sénégalaise (RTS) in Casamance to promote women's rights and reconciliation. Different themes were developed for each episode addressing diverse issues in a context of reconstruction of the social fabric of the society following decades of violent conflict. Focus was made on sensitisation and conscientisation of the population on the culture of peace and the negative impact of violence especially against women. During the International Women's Day celebration, a passionate call was made to all organisations working in the region for women's needs to be taking into consideration in their programmes and budgets.

Cross-Border Initiative, March 28-29: WANEP-Senegal participated in a cross border cooperation workshop organised by USAID to promote collaboration for peace of CSOs in The Gambia, Guinea Bissau and Senegal. In April 21: WANEP-Senegal collaborated with UNICEF; a Human Right Spanish based CSO and the Human Rights Institute in Senegal in a working session on *the universal declaration on human rights*. The objective was to bring African perspective and approach to bear in its implementation.

Peace Evaluation workshop, May 6-7: WANEP Senegal participated in a validation workshop in Dakar organised by Oxfam-America under the theme: *'Evaluation of peace and security in West Africa'*



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

WANEP-Sierra Leone (WANEP-SL)

By December 2008, WANEP-Sierra Leone had a membership of 55 civil society organisations. Member organisations at the District and Regional levels have been formed into District Peacebuilding Teams and Regional Peacebuilding Committees to engage with the local authorities and the press for reforms that would promote best practices in the consolidation of peace. This engagement was formalised through the signing of a MoU with the member organisations

During the year under review, WANEP-SL received support from Christian Aid for core funding and networking while Japan Platform provided support to implement the Early Warning and Early Response project in Kono Districts for a period of twelve months. The Women in Peacebuilding Programme was funded by OXFAM GB through WANEP Regional Secretariat in Accra, Ghana and Cordaid Netherlands for the development of a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325. The Justice Lens project was supported by IBIS West Africa.

Activities

Engagement with the UN Peacebuilding Commission: The UN Peace Building Commission was established by the United Nations with the aim to bridge the gaps in the coordination of peacebuilding activities in countries emerging from violent conflict. Sierra Leone and Burundi are the first two focus countries to pilot the commission's mandate. WANEP-SL convened five (5) civil society consultation/meetings at both national and regional levels. Additionally, more than ten (10) formal and informal meetings were held with the Government, UN and relevant civil society members on the formulation of the peacebuilding cooperation framework. The Framework was finalized and adopted with civil society inputs. The programme is funded by the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict – GPPAC.

Conflict Prevention through Early Warning and Early Response Project: WANEP-SL implemented this project through its member organisations in the border districts of Kono and Kailahun. The project trained one hundred and twenty (120) monitors including CSOs and community members who are now well positioned to identify early warning signs of conflict in their chiefdoms. Result oriented response plans were developed to guide the operations of the field monitors and other stakeholders. In the response plans, provision is made to ensure the community stakeholders' involvement in the prevention of conflict through the formation of community based early warning response committees. These committees serve as a stop-gap measure to intervene and mitigate conflict situations while efforts are made to elicit early action from the appropriate authorities.

Women in Peacebuilding Network – WIPNET: “Voice of Women” Radio Programme: WIPNET has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with five community radio stations in Bo, Makeni, Kenema and Freetown. Nineteen (19) radio discussion programs were organised each directed by a hostess and debated by five discussants/panelists. The themes for discussion are chosen from wide range of contemporary issues such as; women's participation in politics/decision making/empowerment, gender based violence, HIV/AIDS, economic and sustainable livelihood, gender justice, gender equality and equity and other emerging societal issues. As a result of VOW more women's groups and organisations have joined the WIPNET program from 23 to 30 in the second semester of 2008.

Training Community Women in Peacebuilding: WANEP-SL through the WIPNET programme conducted series of peacebuilding trainings for rural women to capacitate them with basic tools for self realisation and encouragement for recognition of their full potentials/values in a safe environment. The training attracted one hundred and fifty (150) women networks representatives drawn from three districts.

Kick Starting National Action Plan (NAP) 1325 Project: WIPNET and MARWOPNET (Mano River Women Peace Network) have commenced implementation of the project towards developing and full implementation of a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 women, peace and security. Consultations/meetings have been held with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, relevant UN Agencies and women groups to solicit support for inclusive programme planning and implementation. WIPNET and MARWOPNET in partnership with the ministry have also conducted a national assessment and mapping of existing initiatives and priority areas for baseline information. The raw data will be collated, analysed to inform the project implementation.



WIPNET march through the streets of Sierra Leone to create awareness on International Women's Day

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS

Justice Lens Program (IBIS West Africa Funded): WANEP-SL in collaboration with 45 Human Rights, media and Peacebuilding organisations including 15 women's groups, related Government Institutions, National Human Rights Commission and the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) held a national civil society consultation and a stakeholders' symposium on the Justice Lens Programme. The aim of the symposium was to assess progress made on the implementation of the PBC priority areas, particularly on those that relate to the protection, promotion and fulfilment of human rights and justice. A total of 65 organisations including relevant UN and Government bodies took part in the activities.

Communication/Documentation Unit: In the spirit of exploring effective communication and documenting the process, an INGO and peacebuilders – the Japan Platform-- donated two glass shelves and exciting assortment of books, journals, magazines, and pamphlets on peacebuilding, governance, politics, women and children. In addition, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Integrated Regional Information Network in Kenya posted copies of their DVD film "Love, Positively" to WANEP-SL. Efforts are underway to install three computers on internet so that WANEP members can have access to project writing, sourcing funds and other peacebuilding issues.

WANEP-Togo

During 2008, Togo passed through a period of relative peace and progress after years of tension as result of the disputed transitional experience. Since the legislative elections in 2007, Togo has turned a new page in its political history culminating in the renewal of cooperation with European Union and other international partners such as the Bretton Woods institutions-the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Activities

Debriefing of Election Observation Mission: WANEP-Togo was accredited as an international organization for election observation during the Togo 2007 legislative elections. The network trained and deployed many observers across the country. In a bid to map out lessons learned, WANEP-Togo convened a meeting in February 2008 with the election observers and its member organisations to evaluate the outcome of the election observation mission and the elections in general. Representatives of partner organizations were also present.

Forum for Youths: With financial support from United Nations Democracy Fund, WANEP-Togo initiated and trained 800 youths on the culture of good citizenship and peace in five administrative regions comprising of 31 prefectures (districts). With what was started in November 2007, this activity was completed on novembre 15, 2008 at a forum held in Sokode, situated at 350km from Lomé.

In addition to reaching beneficiaries in Lomé, the trainings were also carried out in many regions such as Golfe, Tsevie in the Maritime area, Plateaux, Kara, Savanna and the Central Region.

Annual General Assembly Meeting and Strategic Planning: Having exhausted the stipulated time frame of the WANEP-Togo 2003-2007 strategic plan, another strategic plan was developed and validated during the AGM in 2008. Outstanding among the issues embodied in the new strategic plan was the evolving and dynamic political environment, with emphasis on key interventions to ensure successful Presidential elections in 2010. The strategic Plan was developed on the 27th and the AGM was held on the 28th of March 2008 at the Caritas International conference hall. The two events served as an opportunity for the 17 active member organisations that make up WANEP-Togo to evaluate the functioning of the network and chart the way forward in order to effect positive change in terms of culture of peace.

In April 2008 WANEP-Togo undertook various activities, the most important of which was the consultation workshop between stakeholders of the Togolese socio-political and economical life. Under WANEP-TOGO's initiative with financial support from the Dutch Embassy in Accra, about thirty stakeholders of the Togolese socio-political and economical life including parliamentarians, political leaders, journalists, police officers and members of CSOs met from 23 -25 April 2008 to reflect on the theme: *APRIL 2005-APRIL 2008: What achievements have been made so far in democracy and non-violence, and what else needs to be done?* WANEP's objective was to create a favourable environment for participants to make a fair diagnosis of the socio-political and economic situation in the country and come out with a list of issues that need to be addressed in order to bring the socio-political and economical life of the country back on track. Following heated and interesting debates, participants identified a number of achievements made during the period under review as well as a catalog of issues to be addressed.



Opening remarks by the Togolese Minister of Justice and Democracy
Consolidation at the consultation workshop between stakeholders of
the Togolese socio-political and economical life

» HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE NATIONAL NETWORKS



A cross section of participants at workshop on small arms



WANEP-Togo Strategic Planning meeting & General Assembly

Small arms and cluster munitions: As an outcome of the celebration of the week of Disarmament and Actions Against Cluster Munitions and Light Weapons, WANEP-Togo established a partnership with Handicap International and the United Nations Regional Center for Peace and Disarmament (UNREC) to organise a public conference on November 07, in Lomé, Togo. Among the participants were the Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, representatives from the Ministry of Defence, Diplomatic Missions, consultants from Guinea and Senegal, international organisations, faith based organisations and other NGOs.



Women deliberating on issues during one of the radio events



MEETINGS, EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENTS IN 2008

Partnership Meeting in Abuja: In preparation of the next phase of WANEP's programme in Partnership with ECOWAS to enhance ECOWARN, WANEP held meetings at the ECOWAS Commission from the 22nd to 23rd January 2008 with the Director and staff of the Early Warning Department.

Meeting with Special Advisor to the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN: On 12 January 2008, the Special Advisor to the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, Mr. Naoki ISHIKAWA was in Ghana on a working visit. The Japan Permanent Mission by then presided over the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) of the United Nations. Mr Ishikawa convened this meeting in his capacity as Advisor to the President of the PBC.

Meeting with La Francophonie: WANEP participated in a two-day meeting of La Francophonie on Early Warning and conflict prevention convened by the Department of Democracy and Human Rights. Intergovernmental organisations including the European Union, the Central African Economic Community (CEEAC), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Commonwealth and Lusophone Community of Nations participated. Other participants included governments from Romania, Canada and France. As the only CSO invited, WANEP shared its unique experience of cooperation in early warning with ECOWAS in the operationalisation of ECOWARN.

Bawku Peace process: Following the upsurge and recurrence of violence in Bawku in the Upper East Region of Ghana, WANEP convened a meeting of key actors of civil society organisations working in development and peace in the region to formulate a comprehensive and strategic conflict transformation programme. The programme is now being implemented through collaborative peacebuilding efforts with religious bodies, government and civil society.

Oxfam GB Review Meeting, February 12-16: WANEP took part in the Oxfam GB partner review meeting in Ziguinchor, Senegal in the framework of the control arms programme. Achievements in the last semester of 2007 were reported and plan of actions updated for the next six months.

Sub-regional Consultation, February 21-23: WANEP organized a sub-regional consultation in Guinea to map out lessons learned in the implementation of the Mano River Union (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) three-year WIPNET Programme and fine tune the final phase of the project.

Monitoring visit, April 16-18: WANEP regional conducted a monitoring visit to Liberia to assess with Staff of WANEP-Liberia on the Human Rights and Justice programme sponsored by IBIS West Africa.

Conference of Transitional Justice Project: WANEP and the Nairobi Peace Initiatives- Africa (NPI-Africa) organised a dissemination conference on 28th – 29th April 2008, in Nairobi – Kenya to share findings of a research project entitled 'Transitional Justice Experiences and the Rise of TRC model in Africa; Emerging Lessons and Implications for Post-Accord Societies'. The research, focused on the respondent's expectations and perceptions of Truth and Reconciliation (TRCs) in Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, South Africa and impending TRCs in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Kenya.

Global Article Nine Conference to Abolish War May 4-6: WANEP participated in the Global Article Nine Conference to Abolish War in Tokyo-Japan. The conference brought together CSO's across the World with a number of Nobel Peace Laureates to highlight article 9 of the Japanese constitution and its value in "creating a world without war"

May 7- 9: WANEP Regional conducts monitoring visit to WANEP Ghana under the project financed by the Government of Finland

Validation Workshop, May 19-21: WANEP attends Oxfam America validation meeting on the evaluation of peace and security in West Africa held in Dakar, Senegal.

Monitoring Visit, May 22-23: WANEP conducted a monitoring visit to WANEP-Senegal at Ziguinchor, to assess the impact of the radio programs supported by the Finnish Government.

Monitoring Visit to Sierra Leone, June 18 – 19, 2008: WANEP Regional Secretariat undertook a monitoring visit to Sierra Leone. This was to assess the progress made with regards to the synergy created between Peacebuilding, Human Rights and Media organisations with the view of consolidating the peace process in the country. This monitoring visit was a follow up to the national consultation with Peacebuilding, Human Rights and Media organisations.

Partner meeting, Oxfam GB, August 20-22: In the framework of the Oxfam GB Regional control arms programme, WANEP participated in a three-day partnership review meeting aimed at assessing Oxfam GB implementing partners' completed activities for the period of March – August 2008.

ECOWAS Council of the Wise, August 20-23: WANEP participated in the ECOWAS Council of the Wise Meeting in Bamako-Mali.

Transitional Conference in Partnership with Co-Existence International, 8-12 October: Co-Existence International of Brandeis University in the United States collaborated with WANEP and the centre for Democracy and Development in a conference on Transitions in West Africa.



MEETINGS, EVENTS AND PARTNERSHIP ENGAGEMENTS IN 2008

International Steering Group Meetings-GPPAC, 20-24 October: WANEP attended the International Steering Group Meetings of GPPAC in Holland

International Peacekeeping Association Annual Summit 28-30 October: In addition to attending a conference on “Building the Whole of Community” organised by 3D Securities, the Alliance for Peacebuilding and GPPAC, WANEP participated in the Annual Summit of the International Peacekeeping Association in Washington-USA and delivered a paper on Africom.

Workshop on Media and Conflict: As part of its contribution to peaceful election in Ghana in December 2008, WANEP in collaboration with Public Agenda, a Media and Development Agency in Ghana facilitated a Conflict and Media workshop for Media Houses in Ghana. The workshop examined the role of the Media in Conflict with emphasis on their roles during the highly competitive electioneering period leading up to the elections.

Symposium on Sierra Leone Peacebuilding Commission: A symposium on the theme “Post Transition Achievements and Challenges of Peace Consolidation in Sierra Leone: A review of the priority areas of UNPBC” was organised on the 20th June, 2008, with financial support from the Government of Finland on the UN Peacebuilding Commission in Sierra Leone. The main objective of the symposium was to create a forum to identify and analyze the post-transition achievements and challenges with a critical look at the priority areas of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in consolidating the peace in Sierra Leone.



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*We acknowledge in a very special way
the contributions of our Partners and
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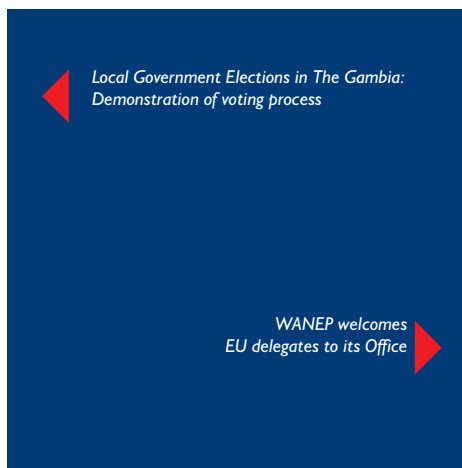
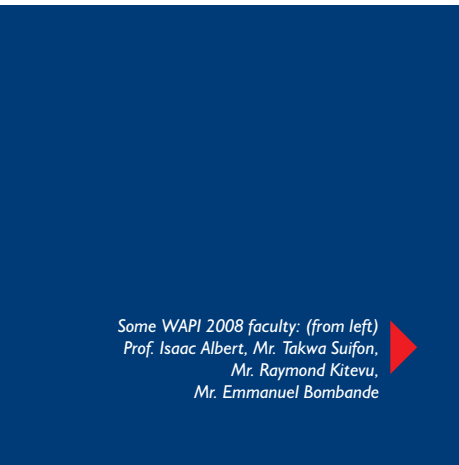
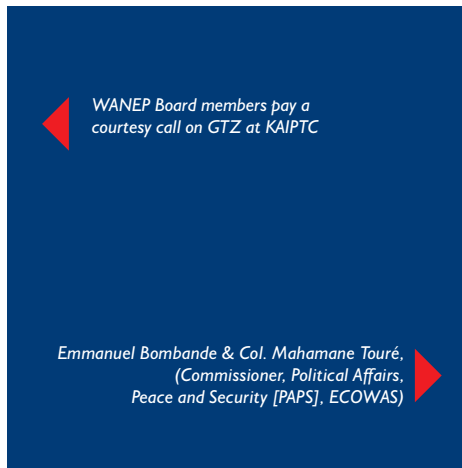
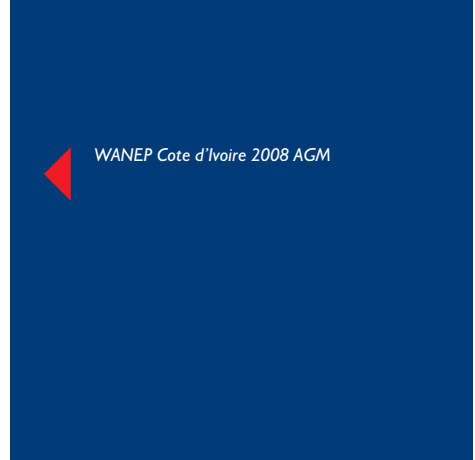
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