

The debate over early warning conflict prevention is no longer whether it is necessary but how to sustain it with timely coordinated appropriate responses. The Early Warning and Early Response Program, WARN, focuses on enhancing human security in West Africa by detecting and preventing conflicts that could turn violent; prevent or mitigate ongoing conflicts from further escalation; working with countries in post conflict stages to ensure that “never again” should there be relapse to violence. The institutionalization of early warning (particularly community-based early warning) as an integral part of peacebuilding has yielded tremendous dividends and constituted the basis for the WANEP-ECOWAS partnership for conflict prevention that has existed since 2002. The now operationalized ECOWAS Early Warning System (ECOWARN) is the outcome of joint efforts between the two organisations. WARN’s goal is to go beyond the ECOWAS level and be linked to the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) of the African Union (AU).

Objectives:

- Build the institutional capacity of WARN at national and sub-regional levels, including the equipping of the Peace Monitoring Centre (Situation Room);
- Build the capacity of civil society organizations to alert, mitigate, prevent and/or resolve violent conflicts at national and regional levels;
- Consolidate the institutional capacity of WANEP in conflict prevention and collaborate with inter-governmental bodies such as ECOWAS, AU, UN (OCHA), and other relevant partners to coordinate early warning and response efforts

WARN intends to produce weekly early warning reports for West Africa, monthly early warning bulletins, policy briefings at ECOWAS, situation reports, quarterly early warning briefings at the AU Peace and Security Council and a publication on the state of peace and security in West Africa.

In the coming years, WANEP plans to take WARN to the grassroots and community level and also engage government institutions. This will bring to light the underlying causes of conflict across the region, from community level to national; backed by substantive evidence arising out of meticulous monitoring using systematic open sources as its information base. WANEP’s networks will play a critical role in this process in data collection, collation, analysis and timely reporting. In the next three years, WANEP intends to make a major difference by institutionalizing and operationalizing a sub-regional decentralized conflict prevention mechanism which will be networks driven and managed by its Peace Monitoring Centre (PMC). WANEP will focus on regular training and re-training of field monitors and analysts. WANEP will provide trainings at local and national levels aimed at providing timely and appropriate responses to conflict alerts. It is hoped that this will help build a strong capacity to avert and prevent, rather than the hitherto style of reaction to violent conflicts. WARN will continue to

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produce and disseminate situation reports and policy briefs on the state of peace and security in the sub-region to influence policy at governmental and inter-governmental levels.

Expected Outputs

- Regional and national Early Warning programmes strengthened (coordinators and desk officers recruited);
- The Peace Monitoring Centre (PMC Situation Room) equipped;
- Monthly early warning bulletins,
- Policy briefings at WANEP PMC for policy makers/ambassadors and partner organisations, and ECOWAS;
- Situation reports, quarterly early warning briefings at the AU Peace and Security Council.