

## WANEP QUARTER ONE REPORT 2018



**Jan - March 2018**

## Overview of Peace and Security in the Quarter

**Women, Peace and Security:** In spite of the popularization and implementation of the UNSCR 1325 and related instruments across the region, Gender-Based Violence (GBV) including rape, murder, beating/molestation and abduction of women and girls still remain issues of grave concern in the reporting period. Data originating from the WANEP-National Early Warning System (NEWS) revealed that countries like Guinea, Senegal, The Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria recorded the most incidents related to GBV. There were recorded cases of killings of women and girls in Guinea, abduction, rape and killing of an eight-year old girl in Senegal, murder of a 12-year old and a schoolteacher in Ghana to mention just a few. In addition, domestic violence was rife in the identified countries within the same period lending credence to the fact that the battle against GBV is far from being won.

**Governance/Political:** The electioneering process in Sierra Leone caused tension and polarization within and between political parties, which heightened during the General Elections in March. The period before, during and after the March 7 elections and the run-off on March 29 was characterized by hate speeches, intimidation and pockets of violence especially between the two major parties; the All People Congress (APC) Party of the incumbent government with Samura Kamara as presidential candidate and the opposition Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) led by Retired Brigadier (Dr) Julius Maada Bio who eventually emerged the winner. Although the incumbent President Ernest Koroma was not a candidate having completed his tenure, the election was keenly contested with palpable fears of implosion of the political situation.

Public demonstrations in **Togo** escalated this quarter due to the breakdown of dialogue between the coalition of 14 opposition parties and the Government. The lull in the demonstrations during the dialogue sessions facilitated by Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo picked up again as the two parties to the conflict – opposition and incumbent government failed to call a truce. Togo has been embroiled in public demonstrations following allegations of the President's planned review of the Constitution to extend his tenure in office.

In a related development, **Benin** witnessed massive protests in the education, health, justice and safety sectors following the enactment of a law preventing personnel of those Ministries to participate in strike actions. The situation led to a breakdown of order as several Unions have embarked on strike actions calling for the withdrawal of the law, which they say is an encroachment on the fundamental human rights of the affected Ministries. As a result of this development, the education sector has been affected with intermittent closure of schools while students of high schools and colleges hold public demonstrations regularly to register their protest.

**Crime and Violent Extremism:** Suicide bombings, sporadic shootings and raids claimed by Boko Haram, Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al-Mourabitoun persisted across West Africa and the Sahel in the review period. Nigeria witnessed regular attacks on worship places, markets and the abduction of 110 school children in Dapchi, a rural community in the Northeast. Military installations in Niger and more recently the Military Headquarters and the French Embassy in Burkina Faso also fell under the insurgent attacks. In addition, armed Fulani herdsmen continued deadly attacks on unarmed civilians, destroying foodstuffs and farmlands in most parts of Northeast Nigeria especially in Benue state. The attacks have led to massive displacement and dislocation of the villagers who are taking refuge in various IDP camps within and outside the affected states. There were also reports of armed robbery, herders-farmers conflicts, gang violence, community and inter-ethnic clashes, arms trafficking among others in Ghana, Liberia, Guinea, Gambia, Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire and Togo. Apart from the security

threats posed by extremist groups, countries in West Africa continue to grapple with other complex security challenges including drug trafficking, proliferation of Small Arms and illegal migration.

## **REGIONAL AND NATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS**

### **1.0. ENHANCING AND SUSTAINING ELECTORAL SUPPORT THROUGH NEWS**

#### **1.1. Establishment of Election Situation Room (ESR) in Sierra Leone**

In tandem with WANEP's philosophy of collaborative approaches to Peacebuilding, the organization established an Election Situation Room (ESR) in Sierra Leone during the country's General Elections. WANEP and its partners set up the ESR to specifically monitor, report, analyze and facilitate response to violent threats to the peaceful conduct of the presidential and parliamentary elections held on March 7, 2018 and the run-off held on March 29. The ESR was under the auspices of the USAID/WANEP Project on Mitigating Electoral Violence through NEWS. It was a platform to monitor and report on voter corruption, youth participation and compliance to the Sierra Leone Electoral Code at polling stations using online data gathering portal and social media tracking.

The ESR was set up in two locations in the first phase of the elections; a central unit in Freetown and a satellite situation room in Kono. The choice of Kono as a satellite situation room was based on findings of a hotspot mapping undertaken prior to the elections, which identified Kono as a hotspot. The situation room operated for four days and hosted data gatherers, Analysts, communication team and Decision-makers made up of Eminent Persons. The multi faceted observation effort is a departure from traditional election observation, and is uniquely developed to ensure that the ethics and integrity of the election is upheld to minimize the violent incidents capable of marring the peaceful conduct of the election.

**Key Partners, Major Stakeholders Visit WANEP ESR:** The WANEP ESR played host to strategic partners and relevant stakeholders across the region and continent who visited to get first hand information on the happenings in the field before, during and after the elections. Some of the visitors included local, regional and international representatives from the African Union Commission, UN, USAID, ECOWAS and Commonwealth. Others included government and intergovernmental organizations, other Civil Society Organizations as well as the top hierarchy of all the leading political parties in the country. Some of the visitors had this to say about WANEP and the ESR;

***"Impressive collaboration, USAID and WANEP for a successful election in Sierra Leone."*** – HE John Dramani Mahama, Head of Mission, Commonwealth

***"This WANEP Situation Room is indispensable for accurate projection and prompt response to any evolving situation. AU mission can only say; 'all power to your elbows' - Kgalema Motlanthe, African Union Head of Observers***

***"Very much impressed with the remarkable work WANEP is doing in the sub-region. We especially appreciate the setting up of the election situation room to ensure close monitoring of the electoral process. Well done!!!"*** - HE Mohamed Ibn Chambas, SRSG, UNOWAS

***"When the boat is moving to its destination, people may not be aware of the propellers underneath the boat. WANEP is that unseen propeller and we are thankful for your work behind the scenes!"*** – Political Party Rep

**Training and Deployment of Monitors:** Prior to the elections, WANEP in collaboration with the National Election Watch (NEW) of Sierra Leone trained and deployed 500 accredited observers in prioritized risk areas based on hotspot mapping analysis across the 16 Districts of Sierra Leone. During the elections, the observers communicated information observed from the field to the Situation Room using a checklist specially designed for the purpose through an online Short Message Service (SMS) platform. Additional information was uploaded through dedicated WhatsApp platforms and telephone communications from the Situation Room to the observers in the field. To ensure quality output, the observers were trained on the use of the checklist and other documents needed for monitoring the elections. Orientation sessions were held for all the other members of the Situation Room. This was specifically to ensure that everyone is on the same page and is conversant with their roles and responsibilities.

WANEP embarks on regular training, orientation and refresher training of community conflict monitors at the national level as part of its continuous efforts to ensure quality, accurate and timely report of threats and incidents into the NEWS platform. In addition to Sierra Leone, community monitors in the Gambia, Ghana, Togo and Benin received various levels of training to further enhance their reporting and monitoring skills. The trainings were also necessary for countries preparing for different levels of elections. Sierra Leone held its general elections in March while the Gambia is preparing for parliamentary elections in April. Following on these trainings, there have been significant improvements in the quality of reports shared on the WANEP NEWS platform, ECOWARN and the AU African Reporter.

**Media Sensitization and Awareness:** As part of efforts to sensitize the media and create public awareness during the Sierra Leone elections, WANEP actively engaged the media before, during and after the elections. The press statements gave concise and situational analysis of the events as they unfolded. It was based on data gathered from the field by the community monitors.

**Building sustainable peacebuilding platforms:** In preparation for the Sierra Leone general elections, WANEP and its partners established the National Election Response Group (NERG) and the District Election Response Group (DERG). This Group composed of key state and non-state actors drawn from Civil Society Organizations, security agencies, government and non-governmental institutions, faith-based groups, development partners as well as the media, women and youth group. The Group was mandated to monitor, deliberate and recommend response strategies to violent threats to the elections and report to the relevant agencies/bodies for immediate action. Members of this Group made up the Eminent Persons who were part of the Decision-makers in the WANEP Situation Room. The Group engaged in shuttle diplomacy throughout the electoral process with relevant stakeholders including key political parties and relevant government institutions to keep them informed of the issues emanating from the polling centers for their immediate action, regularly interacted with the media to provide situational reports and generally appealed for calm and urged respect for the electoral process.

**The Gambia Prepares for establishment of ESR:** The CSO-Coalition on Elections spearheaded and coordinated by WANEP-Gambia will be operationalizing an Election Situation Room for the April 12 Local Government (LG) election with funding from UNDP. In preparation for the ESR, the Network in collaboration with its partners conducted risk-mapping exercise to identify hotspot areas, reviewed and validated the pre-determined election monitoring indicators to reflect current dynamics. Refresher training was also conducted for 30 Conflict monitors while orientation exercises were held for 120

domestic election observers. These activities were necessary to ensure a hitch-free exercise as well as ensuring timely and analysed data provided to critical stakeholders for response options.





The networks' experience and proven expertise in election observation has continued to attract rave reviews from relevant partners thus boosting its reputation as the go to network. More and more individuals and organizations have committed to working with WANEP-Gambia in ensuring a peaceful electoral outcome. In addition, UNDP has also committed funding for the electoral cycle 2021 – 2023. A National Election Response Group (NERG) comprising representatives from government, inter-governmental organizations, CSOs, the media, women and youth groups has been set up.


## 2.0. STRENGTHENING CITIZEN CAPACITY IN PEACEBUILDING AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

### 2.1. Peace Education/Awareness Activities

#### 2.1.1. WANEP Commemorates 2018 International Women's Day

In commemoration of the International Women's Day, the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding WANEP at the Regional and National Offices held several activities to mark the day. The theme for the 2018 IWD was "Time is Now: Rural and urban activists transforming women's lives" with the tagline #Pushing for Progress! The theme once again brought to the fore contributions of grassroots and urban women activists and the progress so far made in ensuring gender parity. Across the Networks and at the Regional Office, WANEP released press statements drawing attention and urging more political commitment to addressing issues of concern to women such as Sexual Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), inclusion of women in decision-making, leadership and peace processes among others. The release further recommended the passage and domestication of all Bills pertaining to women in order to equip women with the necessary tool for advocacy. Some of the activities carried out were as follows;

-  **WANEP-Nigeria** held peace talks with the students of Methodist Girls High School, Yaba, Lagos on the theme: "Time is Now: Transforming Women's Lives through Peacebuilding". The Network also held discussions with an urban activist, Mrs. Ada Agina-Ude, Executive Director, Gender and Development Action (GADA). Both activities geared towards generating awareness on the role of WIPNET in utilizing the strong potentials of women in building relationships and peace within communities in Nigeria.
-  **WANEP-Cote d'Ivoire** issued a press statement specifically canvassing for harnessing the potentials of women and girls in the rural areas through financial inclusion and empowerment. The Network took this advocacy to the Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) in the US where they made presentations on the progress of women in Cote d'Ivoire.
-  **WANEP-Togo** produced and shared videos highlighting contributions of leading women who have made their mark on the world stage. This was to showcase the contributions of these women in order to motivate young women and girls and encourage and prepare them for leadership in line with vision 50-50 by 2063.
-  **WANEP-Liberia** conducted a peace parade in Monrovia with over 500 women in attendance. The Swedish Ambassador to Liberia was the keynote speaker at the event.

 **WANEP-Burkina Faso** held a breakfast meeting with selected teenagers to discuss the growing spate of violence against women and collectively proffer strategies on how to curb the trend. The platform was also used to discuss prevention strategies and steps to be taken for providing care and ensuring justice for the victims.

## **2.2. Enhancing Community/Local Peacebuilding Initiatives**

WANEP's principle of collaborative peacebuilding involves supporting community and local peacebuilding initiatives based on the understanding that communities can contribute to sustainable peace. In the reporting period, the following initiatives were recorded;

**WANEP-Ghana** continued its peace engagements and interventions in the Bimbilla chieftaincy disputes as well as other conflict zones in northern Ghana. The Network facilitated the establishment of peace platforms coordinated by the Regional Peace Council and House of Chiefs and composed of key stakeholders in the conflict. The platform met regularly in the quarter as part of efforts to find lasting solutions to the lingering conflict. The Network also developed and disseminated IEC materials on land-use and natural resource-related conflicts. The manuals will serve as a resource for training and generating awareness on natural resource related conflicts.

**WANEP-Guinea** supported youth clubs to develop and design peace messages on peaceful co-existence in four local languages. The messages were broadcasted live on community radio reaching an estimated audience of 13,000 people and also shared on all social media platforms.






**WANEP-Togo** held several dialogue sessions with relevant stakeholders on the political impasse in Togo in the reporting quarter. The dialogue sessions are part of the second phase of the Education à la paix, à la non-violence et à la justice sociale (EPNV- JS) project funded by UNDP. In addition, the network in collaboration with other CSOs produced a press release on February 14, 2018 calling for all stakeholders in the conflict to embrace dialogue towards finding a lasting solution to the political impasse in the country. Proceedings from the dialogue were synthesized into a bulletin tagged 'Citizen Regards' and disseminated to keep the public informed on the progress of the dialogue.

**WANEP-MALI** held community dialogue sessions, public meetings and joint peace initiative as part of the implementation of the "Together for Our Security" project. A total of 43 community dialogue sessions, 18 public meetings and nine peace initiatives were held in the reporting quarter. The sessions and public meetings served as a platform for building capacities of border communities in Human Security, Conflict Transformation and Violent Extremism. As a result of increased awareness on border security, seven Local Community Coordination Committees were set up in the period for the prevention and management of conflicts through social cohesion and coexistence.



**WANEP-Sierra Leone** provided technical support to the District Committees in Kono, Kenema and Kailahun under the USAID/REWARD Project to monitor party compliance with electoral code of conduct, as well as mediating and resolving intra and inter party conflicts. As a result, 130 members of community based organization, (comprising 70 men and 60 women) drawn from the three districts received training in Conflict Prevention, Management and Dialogue and Mediation. The trained mediators received material resources and technical expertise to facilitate peace initiatives and mediate already identified long-standing disputes in their respective districts.

**2.2.2. Preventing/Countering Violent Extremism in the Sahel Region:** Concerned with the increasing spate of terrorism and violent extremism in the Sahel and its adverse effects on young people, WANEP and the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC) in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission held a two-day Experts Meeting with the theme: ***Developing a Framework for a Curriculum on Countering Violent Extremism in the Sahel Region***. The meeting held from February 22 to 23, 2018 in Accra, Ghana to review existing knowledge and skill gaps in Peace Education and design a framework which will guide the development of the CVE component of Peace Education curriculum. The meeting brought together participants including curriculum experts and practitioners across the Sahel Region. The framework developed from this meeting and Recommendations generated will be used for the development of the CVE curriculum for the Sahel Region and Nigeria.

### **2.3. Peace and Peer Mediators Club Activities**

-  **WANEP – The Gambia** in its capacity as the leading peacebuilding organization championing the inclusion of Peace Education into the Gambian school curriculum, provided technical support for the drafting and validation of a Conflict Analysis Manual. The Manual will be used for training on Peace Education and also serves as an advocacy tool to relevant stakeholders to solicit for the inclusion of Peace Education into the Gambian education curriculum.
-  **WANEP-Togo** under the second phase of the EPNV-JS project funded by UNDP trained 163 persons including school Directors, Advisers and Inspectors in Kpalimé community in February. The training was geared towards getting the commitment and buy-in of the Directors for the establishment of Peace and Peer Mediators Clubs in selected schools in the project implementation area. The training helped to broaden the participants’ perspectives on the modalities for establishing Peace Clubs in their schools as well as afforded them a better understanding of Non-violence and Peace Education curriculum.
-  **WANEP-Guinea** trained 20 young leaders (8 women and 12 men) on leadership, resource mobilization and conflict management in Kankan and Conakry. Several cultural events were organized in the quarter to raise youth awareness on non-violence and foster peaceful co-existence.
-  **WANEP-Cote d’Ivoire:** As part of continued efforts to ensure effective integration of non-violence and Peace Education into the Ivorian education system, the Network paid advocacy visit to the Ministry of National and Technical Education. During the visit, the Network made presentation on the WANEP Active Non-violence and Peace Education (NAPE) program and shared success stories on how Peace Clubs have contributed to the culture of non-violence in other countries.
-  **WANEP-Nigeria** met with officials of the Lagos State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) to discuss modalities and seek approval for the commencement of Peace Education activities in more schools in the state. The Network is currently supporting the Peace Education project in 12 Primary Schools in Kosofe Local Government of Lagos State. In another development, 700 students, 20 teachers and 15 community leaders were sensitized on the dangers of Drug and Substance Abuse in Bassa, LGA of Plateau State.



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**WANEP-Burkina Faso** trained six members of the Peer Mediators Club from three high schools in Ouagadougou on non-violence strategies and conflict management. This is part of a deliberate strategy to include and involve young people in peacebuilding as stipulated under UN Resolution 2250.
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**WANEP-Guinea Bissau** organized ‘a day of reflection’ on February 6, 2018 with Peace club members from two schools in the capital. The discussion centered on early childhood and conflict resolution and included teachers and school administrators from the schools. Regular monitoring and engagement with the Peace Clubs is yielding fruits, as there is a strong demand by other school Directors for extension of the program to their schools. In addition, there is a significant increase in the culture of non-violence in the pilot schools.

### **3.0. PROMOTING PEACE AND SECURITY THROUGH RESEARCH**

#### **3.1. Influencing Policy through Research**

Consistent with its function as a think-Tank and Research advocacy in the region, WANEP conducts as well as deploys its professionalism for evidenced-based research that influences policy discourse and developments in the region. In the reporting quarter, WANEP conducted a survey to determine usage of its Early Warning and Response outputs by relevant stakeholders and how the products are impacting on policy discourse in the region. WANEP’s research documents, publications and policy briefs serve as a key reference source on peacebuilding and conflict prevention in ECOWAS and Africa, therefore, findings from the survey are expected to inform future distribution and dissemination of the products. Further, WANEP shared insights and perspectives into the position paper on PVE in its capacity as member of the GPPAC working group on PVE and based on its expertise in the field.

**WANEP-Togo** through the EPNV-JS project conducted a survey on utilizing traditional mechanisms for peaceful transformation of conflicts. The survey was conducted from 29 January to 2 February 2018 and covered 29 cultural areas in 31 chiefdoms, targeted by the project. Another study aimed at assessing the violent situation in the city of Kpalimé and its surroundings was conducted in March and will provide the baseline for the institutionalization of peace clubs in the locality.

**WANEP-Nigeria** conducted a field assessment on the persistent Farmer-Herders Conflict in Benue State of Nigeria. The assessment covered the root causes, consequences and implication of the conflict on peaceful cohesion. Based on WANEP’s proven experience in research, Local, National and International Agencies rely on WANEP’s analytical reports for intervention.

### **4.0. ENHANCING GENDER/WOMEN CAPACITY IN PEACEBUILDING**

#### **4.1. Support to the development and implementation of UNSCR 1325 NAPs**

In the reporting quarter, WANEP through the WIPNET Program continued to provide support and facilitate the development and implementation process of the UNSCR 1325 National Action Plans (NAPs) across the Networks as some Member States are in the process of reviewing their NAPs. WANEP is leading the NAP review process in Togo whose NAP expired in 2016 in collaboration with the Ministry for the Advancement of Women and other relevant Ministries and agencies. The revised NAP for UNSCR 1325 was validated on 22 March 2018 and covers the period 2018 to 2022. In Ghana, WANEP working with the Ministry of Gender and the Working Group on Women and Youth Peace and Security



(WGWYPS) made technical inputs into the revised GHANAP. The document is undergoing the final review.

## **4.2. Increasing women's inclusion and participation in decision-making**

**4.2.1. Dialogue on Women's Political Participation in The Gambia:** The Gambia national office held one-day dialogue with Political Parties on "Women's Political Participation" aimed at raising awareness amongst political parties on the need for women's inclusion and representation in decision-making processes. The Forum, which held on 7 February 2018, was in partnership with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights – West Africa Regional Office (OHCHR - WARO), CSO Gender Platform, Women's Bureau and the Government of the Gambia. This forum was timely particularly coming in the wake of the upcoming Local Government Elections slated for April 12 and May 12, 2018 in the country. All nine political parties in the Gambia attended the meeting and committed to enhanced and increased women's participation in politics and decision-making positions in their Parties. Following on this, the Parties nominated 43 women to participate in the LGA elections where 40 of the nominated women successfully contested as Councilors for the LGA elections. In this view, the parties unanimously endorsed WANEP-The Gambia to provide technical support to building the capacity of the nominated women aspirants.

**4.2.2. Mitigating electoral violence:** Concerned with the growing political tension in the country ahead of the March 7, 2018 elections, WANEP-Sierra Leone through the WIPNET program held a forum on mitigating electoral violence against women with support from UN Women. The forum, which held in Freetown, was also replicated in five other districts in the country and was an opportunity to discuss the root causes of electoral violence and its impact on women and girls as well as the concerted efforts by different actors to tackle the problem. The forum brought together 70 participants comprising 35 men and 35 women drawn from CBOs, women's groups, youth groups, traditional leaders, teachers, law enforcement agencies, people with disability and religious groups. The specific goal of the forum was to prepare women and encourage their participation in the electioneering process.

## **4.3. Promoting Gender-Responsive Peacebuilding**

**4.3.1. Increased Awareness on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV):** In the review period, WANEP-Liberia made significant progress in raising awareness on SGBV and other harmful traditional practices (HTP) as well as on Masculinity. The Network facilitated outreach programs across the counties as well as conducted Training of Trainers (TOT) for 12 community members in six counties to equip them with the requisite skills for intervention. The faculty for the TOT relied on the Training Module on SGBV, HTP and Masculinity developed by the Network. The series of outreach and sensitization activities reached a total of 3000 community members across the counties of the country. The activity was supported by UN Women and aimed at raising awareness on GBV in these communities. In addition, community dialogue with key stakeholders on SGBV culminated into the development of community action plans for effective intervention on issues of SGBV.

**4.3.2. WANEP-Sierra Leone** continued to air the monthly live radio programs to raise public awareness on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and Violence Against Women (VAW), especially in relation to elections,

and its impact on women and children in remote communities. The highly interactive and participatory radio discussions attracted incisive responses from listeners and reached a wide audience.

**4.3.3. WANEP-Benin:** As part of its women empowerment program, WANEP-Benin designed IEC materials aimed at generating awareness on women's right of access to rural land and landed property. To garner support on the subject matter, the Network held capacity building activities for community based journalists and gender rights advocates and held advocacy workshop for religious, traditional and elected leaders. A total of 12 journalists, six gender activists including nine women participated in the capacity building workshop. Further, representatives of Farmers Organizations were also sensitized on the land code to ensure deepened understanding of the provisions of the code and how women can benefit from it.

## 5.0. CAPACITY STRENGTHENING AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1. BUILDING NATIONAL CAPACITIES FOR EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION

**5.1.1. Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs):** The WANEP 2018 Participatory Review and Analysis Processes (PRAPs) held on January 24 to 26, 2018 in Accra under the theme: **Harmonization and Institutional Reforms: Repositioning WANEP to meet Current and Emerging Challenges**. The biennial event was aimed at bringing together all parts of the organization in a friendly but critically reflective process to assess current human security context of the region, organizational gains and challenges, demands from ECOWAS and AU and to plan together for the ensuing year. Specifically, the meeting provided a platform to assess WANEP's operations against current and emerging human security challenges, determine next steps, responsibilities and timeline, plan collectively in reaching expected outcomes and deepen the understanding of current reforms at ECOWAS among others. In this wise, the meeting brought together WANEP National Network Coordinators (NNCs), Regional Coordinators, National Board Representatives, Regional Analysts, and Liaison Officer to ECOWAS, National Network Administrative Officers and other Regional staff.

At the end of the highly interactive and participatory meeting, participants came up with key recommendations and agreed directions on how to reposition the organization for greater efficiency. Some of the agreements reached were as follows; NNCs to inform their respective Boards of any funds transfer within 48 hours. There should be a standard orientation guide for orientating new staff especially with regards to Board-Secretariat relationship and a uniformed salary structure to be adapted by the networks when finalized. The networks are also expected to adapt the Regional Constitution, finance and accounting manuals/models to their specific context to ensure uniformity. However, in the event of conflict, the Regional Constitution takes precedence. A Comprehensive 2018 work-plan incorporating National Networks' and Regional priorities including agreed roles/responsibilities and timelines was developed at this meeting.

**5.1.2. General Assembly:** In the reporting period, WANEP-Benin held its 2018 General Assembly, which brought together representatives of member organizations, National Board members and national office staff. The General Assembly is the highest decision-making body of WANEP and provides a platform for the organization to take stock of activities, evaluate its programmatic and financial strategies as part of efforts to strengthening its institutional and governance structure.

## **5.2. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

**5.2.1. Validation of AU Continental Results Framework:** WANEP participated actively in the meeting to validate the AU Continental Results Framework on UNSCR 1325 and made valuable inputs into the implementation status of the document. The meeting was also attended by representatives of 13 West African countries viz; Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Mali, Gambia and Togo. The countries provided updates on the implementation status of UNSCR 1325 in their various countries and acknowledged the support of WANEP in developing the NAP and in the implementation process, which led to various achievements made in the countries. A key outcome of the meeting was the development of a baseline for the implementation of 1325 in Africa. As a result of this meeting, WANEP in collaboration with ECOWAS will embark on an exercise to update the implementation status and achievements made in all ECOWAS member states.

**5.2.2. Review of ECPF Action Plans:** WANEP supported ECOWAS to review the Plans of Action for the 15 Components of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) for the period 2018-2020. WANEP specifically supported in reviewing the actions related to the Early Warning, Political Affairs, Gender, Youth and Sports and Education Directorates. The Action Plan is expected to be validated by key stakeholders, including CSOs and ECOWAS Member states and be made operational through ECOWAS statutory organs.

**5.2.3. UN WOMEN:** WANEP Regional is leading the implementation of a project on Promoting Women's Engagement in Peace and Security in Northern Nigeria with WANEP-Nigeria and the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR) as Support Partners. The six-month (April – August) project is funded by EU and implemented by UN Women in collaboration with UNICEF in three Northeast states of Adamawa, Gombe and Plateau. The initiative supports the Federal Government, three Northern States of Nigeria, and selected constituted Local Government Areas (LGAs) to strengthen women's leadership, advance gender equality and improve protection for women and children in conflict setting. Prior to the commencement of the project, the partners met in Abuja in March to fine tune the detailed implementation plans, assign roles and responsibilities and agree on the Teaming Agreement.

## **5.3. ADVOCACY AND OTHER VISITS**

**5.3.1. WANEP/NORDIC DIPLOMATIC MISSION:** WANEP Executive Director, Dr Chukwuemeka Eze met with the Norway diplomatic mission in Nigeria in February. The meeting was specifically aimed at meeting potential partners in the quest to broaden the WANEP partnership portfolio. During the meeting, Dr. Eze briefed the Norway diplomatic mission about the work of WANEP in the area of peace and security within the framework of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) and the ECOWAS conflict prevention program (ECOWARN). The mission presented an avenue to explore the possibility of Norway joining the Joint Financing Arrangement (JFA) with Sweden and Austria to implement the WANEP strategic plan (2015 – 2020).

**5.3.2. WANEP/GIZ MEETING:** Representatives of the GIZ led by Ludwig Kirchner, the Head of program, GIZ office in Abuja, visited the WANEP-Regional Office on 16 February to discuss their ongoing partnership support to ECOWAS through WANEP. The meeting was to explore partnership opportunities

and provided opportunity for deepened understanding of WANEP, its partners and mode of operation. The WANEP/GIZ collaboration expected to commence in the third quarter of 2018 was on the top burner of discussions while current threats and dynamics of peace and security in the region including the farmers and herders conflict were also discussed. According to the Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP), the first activities in the proposal are scheduled to commence in April 2018. In the spirit of partnership, WANEP received the GIZ appraisal mission in Accra on March 2 as part of the assessment of the German support to ECOWAS.

**5.3.3. CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES:** WANEP received representatives of the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) comprising the West Africa Regional Director, Jennifer Overton and Country representative for Ghana, Kris H. Ozar on January 22, 2018 at the Regional Office. The purpose of the meeting was for the team to familiarize themselves with WANEP and to discuss areas of possible collaboration. Key areas of interest for the two organizations were children in peacebuilding and migration. WANEP has had fruitful partnership with CRS over the years while some of the national networks are working with CRS at the national level.

**5.3.4. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP CENTER:** Dr. Matthew LeRiche, Director of the Global Leadership Center and Assistant Professor, Ohio University visited WANEP office on February 23, 2018 and was received by the Executive Director, Dr. Chukwuemeka Eze. The two organizations have shared interest in Internship and scholar-in-residence programs and thus the meeting was a platform to discuss possible collaboration with WANEP on those areas and also explore the opportunity of getting Peacebuilding Professionals for the University's Peace and War program.

**5.3.5. WANEP MEETS OXFAM DELEGATES:** WANEP team of Executive Director and Program Director met with a delegation from Oxfam International at the Oak Plaza Hotel, Accra on February 20, 2018. The delegates were Mie Roesdahl, Secretary General, Niels Hjorddal, Director of International Program, and Tijani Hamza, Ghana Country Director. In recognition of WANEP's leading role in the promotion of peace in the region, the meeting was to discuss a possible partnership between Oxfam and WANEP as Oxfam IBIS is looking at possibilities of developing a regional peacebuilding program with initiatives in West Africa and South Sudan. Although South Sudan is not part of WANEP area of operation but WANEP contributed to the development of an early warning system for the country and to the peace architecture process. Another key area of interest was WANEP's interventions in Mali. WANEP's operations in Mali included the development of a human security strategy from the civil society perspective, contribution to MINUSMA's agenda, inclusion of women and youth in peacebuilding processes, Peace Education Program (PEP), and election support among others. Currently, Oxfam is supporting WANEP national offices of Nigeria, Gambia and Senegal on different programs.

**5.3.6. GHANA TRANSFORMATION AGENDA:** In recognition of WANEP's significant contributions to peace and stability in the region, the Ghana Police Service chose the organization and six other CSOs as its strategic partners for their Transformation Agenda. Other CSOs were Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC), Centre for Democratic Governance (CDD), Institute of Democratic Governance (IDEG), Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA), IMANI Centre for Policy and Education, and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI). The Transformation Agenda is aimed

at improving services of the Police especially police/civilian relationship which if not well managed could trigger conflict.

**5.3.7. CANADIAN ENVOY VISITS WANEP-GB:** The Ambassador and Personal Representative of the Prime Minister for La Francophonie of the Republic of CANADA in Dakar, Her Excellency Mrs. Lise Filiatrault accompanied by Mr. Matthieu Kimmell, Counsellor of Policy and Public Affairs paid a courtesy visit to WANEP-Guinea Bissau in the review period. The visiting dignitaries were briefed on the issues of peace, security and political situation in the country and WANEP's interventions and contributions to the reduction of violence in the country and region at large. This visit has paved the way for future collaborations with Canada and the Ambassador assured of future commitments with the network.

## **6.0. CONCLUSION**

WANEP continued to maintain its lead in peacebuilding and conflict resolution in the region. WANEP's proven expertise and professionalism in election management was increasingly recognized by key stakeholders and major partners with the successful establishment of an Election Situation Room (ESR) which was set up to monitor, analyze, report and facilitate quick responses to identified threats before, during and after the general elections in Sierra Leone. The impeccable coordination of the ESR for the first and second rounds of the elections received rave reviews and boosted WANEP's profile in the public domain especially its presence on social media platforms.

Another significant achievement in the quarter was the renewed interest in WANEP as several groups, institutions and organizations expressed interest in partnerships and collaborations with WANEP at the national and regional levels. Further, WANEP's resources and expertise were increasingly sought after and relied on by key stakeholders such as policy makers, the media, the academia, ECOWAS, UN, and AU etc. Thus, WANEP staff participated and made presentations at national, regional and global arena.

These laudable achievements were however not without challenges and constraints. The late disbursement of funds from our partners and competing/conflicting activities impacted significantly on program implementation in the first quarter. This resulted to the postponement, rescheduling or cancellation of planned activities.